



SELT everlasting

NEWS FOR OWNERS OF LAND PROTECTED BY A CONSERVATION EASEMENT

SPRING 2026

Spring into a New Season

Though it seems hard to believe with the frigid temperatures and bouts of unexpected snowfall, spring has indeed arrived. For the Easement Stewardship team here at SELT, this new season means more than a welcome respite from snow shoveling and ice-scraping; we are ready to do what we enjoy most – getting outside, walking properties, and talking with you, our landowners.

It's monitoring season again, and our staff is excited to work towards our annual goal of monitoring the easements that SELT holds. As our conserved lands portfolio continues to grow (something we are so grateful for!), the monitoring process becomes more complex as well.

As such, we have expanded our staff to accommodate these responsibilities, welcoming back Sam Hereford to the team. Sam previously served as a Seasonal Land Steward in 2025. Now he joins us for another year, and we are thrilled to have him back – be sure to give him a warm welcome if you happen to meet him during a monitoring visit.

At SELT, we believe a key component for success is a strong partnership with our landowners. Conservation and stewardship have always been a two-way street, and we are grateful for the relationships that have formed between SELT and you, the true stewards of these wonderful lands.

To that end, I'd like to share a quick update about our monitoring process. To improve efficiency, we've divided our service area into specific geographic regions and assigned staff to oversee each one. As a result, you may have a different point of contact going forward. If you'd like to know your assigned steward ahead of your monitoring visit, please feel free to reach out to me or Katie Bates.

As always, please reach out with any questions you have about your land or your easements. Thank you, and happy spring!

Nicole DeCarolis
Easement Stewardship Manager

To update your contact information, please visit
seltnh.org/landowner-contact

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Healthy Soils are the Key to Healthy Lands

Healthy soils are the foundation of working farms and forests. Thoughtful management not only supports crop and timber production and harvesting but also protects water quality, enhances biodiversity, and reduces erosion.

Implementing best management practices (“BMPs”) helps ensure that working lands remain economically viable while also protecting the land’s natural resources. Here are some tips to maintain your soil health:



For Farms

- Use no-till or reduced-till planting methods to protect soil structure, improve water filtration, and maintain soil health.
- Avoid working fields when soils are wet or saturated to prevent compaction.
- Establish designated lanes for machinery to concentrate traffic and reduce spreading compaction across fields.
- Maintain cover crops and a diverse mix of plants during off seasons to protect bare soil, build organic matter, and support a healthy soil microbiome.
- Apply fertilizers and soil amendments based on testing to ensure crops receive necessary nutrients without overloading soils or nearby waterways - precision application reduces runoff.
- Use buffers, contour planting, and cover crops on slopes to reduce erosion, slow runoff, and protect water quality.
- Regularly monitor soil health indicators, such as organic matter, compaction, and pH, and adjust practices to maintain long-term productivity and resilience.

For Forests

- Operate heavy machinery on dry or frozen ground whenever possible to minimize soil disturbance and compaction.
- Limit machinery-use on steep slopes or near streams to reduce erosion and protect water quality.
- Leave leaf litter, woody debris, and tree roots in place to support nutrient cycling, maintain soil structure, and sustain soil microbiomes.
- Encourage understory plant diversity by including shrubs, ferns, and groundcover species to enhance soil microbial communities and ecosystem resilience.
- Plan logging and access routes carefully to minimize repeated soil disturbance and long-term compaction.
- Apply fertilizers only where needed and follow site-specific recommendations to prevent nutrient leaching into streams and protect nearby water resources.
- Maintain forested riparian zones and use erosion control structures during harvesting activities to filter sediments and support wildlife habitat.
- Monitor soil conditions before and after harvesting or management activities to guide future management and protect long-term soil health.

Source: <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/conservation-basics/natural-resource-concerns/soil/soil-health/soil-health-management>

Sign up for our next landowner workshop!

Field and Meadow Management

Wednesday, May 27 • 9:00 am - 12:00 pm

Burley Farms, 247 North River Road, Epping, NH

www.seltnh.org/meadow

Best Practices for Successor Landownership

As we know, easements are forever and run with properties, no matter who the owner is. For SELT, it is important to establish relationships with new landowners, also known as “successor landowners,” of conserved properties. As conserved lands pass to successor landowners, there can be an increased potential for violations of the conservation easement as they may not be fully aware of the easement’s restrictions.

Avoiding these challenges requires a collaborative approach among SELT, current landowners, and successor landowners. When SELT receives advance notice of a potential sale, we can connect with real estate agents to share information and helpful materials so potential buyers understand the easement’s allowances and restrictions, as well as SELT’s role in upholding the easement terms.

After a conserved property changes hands, SELT welcomes successor landowners with a packet of information about the easement, the conservation values of the land such as forest types and wildlife present, an overview of our monitoring and stewardship program, and an introduction to SELT and our mission. Our staff then makes it a priority to meet with the new owners, go over the easement documents together, discuss future plans, and answer questions.

All of this helps us reach our goal to create meaningful relationships with our landowners to ensure the conserved property is well cared for in perpetuity. If you are considering or planning to sell your conserved property, we’d love to hear from you to help ensure a smooth, positive transition for everyone involved.

The Ins and Outs of Adverse Possession

Adverse possession is common law that allows a person to acquire title to real property without mutual agreement between the parties. A special thank you to our friends at the **Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests** for providing the information below.

What is the standard for adverse possession in New Hampshire?

Case law in New Hampshire requires that the possessor must show adverse, continuous, exclusive and uninterrupted use of the land for 20 years.

What general steps should every landowner do to protect themselves?

1) Have a survey of your property completed so you can identify all your boundaries; 2) Follow-up on any encroachments identified on the survey; and 3) Walk, identify and maintain your boundaries on a regular basis.

I gave someone permission to use my land, could they still claim adverse possession?

An adverse possession use must be a trespassory use. Being able to prove that you gave someone permission to use your land will prevent them from making an adverse possession claim.

How should I handle unwanted encroachments?

If you do not want your abutter using your property, the first step would be to ask him or her to stop using your property and remove any of his or her personal property from your land. If the abutter is unwilling to comply, consult an attorney on how to resolve a trespass dispute.

Will a conservation easement prevent an adverse possession claim?

No. However, walking boundary lines and routine easement monitoring may help prevent the problem.

How can I stop the twenty year clock from running?

An agreement between parties stops the clock permanently. In addition, the clock stops running if the abutter ceases to use your property. However, sending a certified letter to the abutter asking him or her to cease use of your property does not stop the clock from running, unless the abutter in fact ceases using your property.

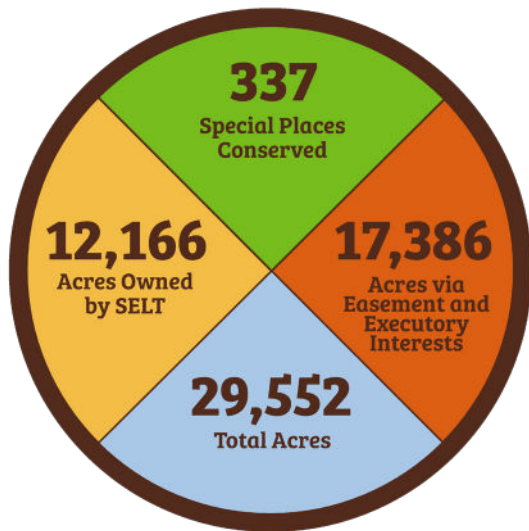
View the PDF at the link below for more actions you can take to protect yourself.
www.forestsociety.org/document/adverse-possession-handout.pdf



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As of March 2026

Contact SELT at 603-778-6088 or email info@seltnh.org. To update your contact information, please visit www.seltnh.org/landowner-contact or reach out to Nicole DeCarolis at nicole@seltnh.org or 603-658-9480.

SELT Everlasting is published twice a year and is the Easement Stewardship newsletter of SELT. Written and edited by Nicole DeCarolis and Dave Johnson.

Thinking of Selling Your Land?

More and more conserved land is selling – meaning there is a whole new generation of landowners who need to understand what a conservation easement is and the associated privileges and responsibilities.

SELT can help make your sale smoother by working with your realtor to properly inform buyers about your conservation easement. Once you've decided to sell and have selected a realtor, please have them call us.

We will provide an electronic packet of information to incorporate in your disclosures and can answer questions from buyers.

Once you've scheduled a closing, please remember to give us the required notification of transfer of title in accordance with the terms of the easement.