



MONADNOCK CONSERVANCY

NEWSLETTER

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A Walk in Maynard Forest

Learning about sustainable forestry

By Katrina Farmer

On an early September day, I walk across the log landing at the Maynard Forest timber harvest. This opening, just off an old woods road in Gilsum, provides access to a hundred-acre tract owned by the Monadnock Conservancy.

I'm nervous about what I might see once I set off down the logging road. Near where I live in Dublin, a property—which is not under conservation easement—was heavily logged, using all sorts of big, noisy equipment this summer. The project left a bad taste in my mouth for forestry practices.

Here, however, logger Warren Spaulding with his son, Jason, cut each tree by hand using chainsaws. Their work follows the forest management plan developed by licensed forester Charlie Koch in consult with Conservancy staff. Today, Charlie and MC stewardship manager Emily Hague are showing a group of us how that plan translates from paper to practice.

We tramp a short way into the woods to see what the forest looks like before being cut. Charlie points out the blue blazes painted on various trees. Every tree within the marked area will be removed, creating an opening in the woods about a tenth of a mile wide.

"We need it big enough to get full sun down to the ground," says Charlie. This encourages oak and pine seedlings to take root. The goal is to create more age diversity across the greater property, fostering a more sustainable forest than the current even-aged stands.

As we hike to an already logged area, we run into Warren unloading felled trees from the forwarder. He shows us the different piles sorted for sale as firewood, saw logs, or pulp.

Someone wonders aloud about how the noise from the forwarder and chainsaw activity impacts the wildlife.



Large trees, like this white pine, have been left on the perimeter of the recently cut forest area as seed trees.



Hemlock timber (in foreground) will go to a local mill, and the oak, beech, and maple stacked behind will be sold as firewood.

"Machines definitely scare off wildlife, but it's temporary," says Steve Roberge, UNH Cooperative Extension forestry educator, who is part of today's group.

Charlie chimes in that many mornings he sees deer tracks all across the log landing. Sure enough, I find a pile of deer droppings.

We step out of the shade of the surrounding forest and into the first forest opening. It's a dramatic difference; the sun is like a floodlight. Slash from the cutting remains, which helps with erosion control and provides habitat for new tree seedlings, insects, and rodents. Charlie has already seen turkeys and hawks here. After a few years, a thicket will provide cover for towhee, woodcock, grouse, and rabbit.

As we continue, I am impressed by how each cut is on a human scale—unlike the logging I've seen elsewhere that creates overwhelmingly large openings. Here, one harvest area is hidden from the next. Even though there are ten forest openings, each about an acre in size, it would be easy to walk through the woods without knowing there's a logging operation nearby. And when you do come upon a cut ... then it's like finding a hidden cache, with treasures waiting to be discovered. 🍄

Two Schools of Thought



This summer, I had the opportunity to visit two local schools whose natural settings are central to the students' experiences.

Hampshire Country School occupies a remote corner of Rindge, and in early summer I spent a morning there touring the main campus and portions of the greater property, a rugged 1,300-acre wilderness that was permanently protected by a conservation easement in 2007. My guide was Bill Dickerman, a good friend of the Monadnock Conservancy and a long-time teacher, administrator, and now admissions director at the school. Expecting descriptions of science projects and guided adventures, I asked Bill how the property is utilized in the school's programming.

"It isn't," he replied. "It's just there."

How could the school not avail itself of such a spectacular resource?

Bill went on to explain that the land is most certainly a fundamental presence in students' lives, but that it's most often subconscious and intentionally so. Students come to HCS because conventional school settings just don't work for their bright, unique minds. At HCS, often for the first time in their lives, they can just be themselves. Some students may use the woods as a place to wander, play, or blow off steam, while others may not venture beyond the mowed lawns. No one tells them, "Look at this tree. Look at this view." Yet you can be sure they see the tranquil hillsides, fields, and ponds. Nature is simply ambient rather than a destination.

At the Dublin School, on the other hand, the outdoors play a deliberate and active role in the students' lives. The woods and wetlands offer myriad opportunities for classroom study and research. Outdoor sports and work provide fresh air and physical activity. (Head of School Brad Bates talked about these principles in his keynote address at our Annual Meeting; turn to article on page 4.)

I am struck, in reflection, by how these two schools mirror our greater relationship with this region. For those of us who came here "from away," our first visits were deliberate, structured, often physical: a hike up Monadnock, a tour of fall colors, a weekend in the old cabin. The place was a destination, an escape that stood in stark contrast to our daily lives.

In time, we began to see the region like those who have been here all along—a place to work and to play, a place to *live*. All of us, even the seasonal residents, discovered the difference between a vacation and a home. The landscape became a part of us, unconscious yet essential. 🍁

Support Our Work

Contribute to our Annual Fund

Gifts of \$250 or more to the Annual Fund will also renew your membership for the following year. Your contribution will help us move forward on several critical land protection projects this year.

Become a Monadnock Forever member

Individuals who name the Monadnock Conservancy in their will, trust, or other planned gift are honored with membership in our legacy society, Monadnock Forever.

Volunteer

Consider sharing your time or expertise: we could use help with general administrative work, event planning, and land stewardship.

Tell us how you'd like to help

Contact Pat Payne, development and office assistant, at (603) 357-0600 or online at Pat@MonadnockConservancy.org.



MONADNOCK
CONSERVANCY
PO Box 337
Keene, NH 03431
(603) 357-0600



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www.MonadnockConservancy.org

Info@MonadnockConservancy.org

Looking at Our Forestlands: An HWA Update

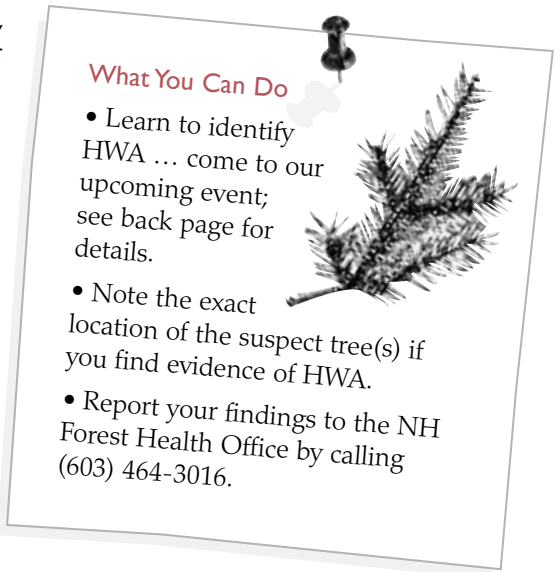
Earlier this year, MC stewardship manager Emily Hague and UNH Cooperative Extension forestry educator Steve Roberge were in the field scouting various types of forest openings. It was at one of these edge habitats, on a ridge in Greenfield, that Steve noticed tiny white sacs on the underside of a hemlock branch. He asked Emily for her binoculars.

On closer look, they positively identified the aphid-like insect called hemlock woolly adelgid (HWA). The first HWA infestation in New Hampshire was found in Portsmouth in 2000. It has continued to spread in the southeastern corner of the state. We are fortunate that HWA has been slow to advance in the Monadnock Region (although it has been found in Peterborough, Jaffrey, Hinsdale, Winchester, Richmond, and Chesterfield).

It has been assumed that HWA has not made good headway in Monadnock Region because the cooler microclimate does not

allow the insect to successfully overwinter. But now that the Greenfield infestation has been documented at a higher elevation (an infestation, by the way, can mean even one tree with HWA), it adds to the speculation over the future of hemlocks as the insect expands its range.

The trees in Greenfield were cut down in hopes that the insect would then be prevented from spreading to other nearby hemlocks. This infestation site will be monitored annually by the NH Division of Forests and Lands and the Conservancy's stewardship staff, since it is on MC conservation easement land.



What You Can Do

- Learn to identify HWA ... come to our upcoming event; see back page for details.
- Note the exact location of the suspect tree(s) if you find evidence of HWA.
- Report your findings to the NH Forest Health Office by calling (603) 464-3016.

MONADNOCK COMMUNITY CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP

MCCP Recognized for Its Vital Leadership Role

“Growth is inevitable and desirable, but destruction of community character is not. The question is not whether your part of the world is going to change. The question is how.”

—Edward T. McMahon, The Conservation Fund



Fitzwilliam residents use maps to identify special places in their town that they would like to see conserved.

Several for-profit and nonprofit organizations have recently recognized the Monadnock Community Conservation Partnership for its leadership role in working with local communities to consider how they want to steer the growth of their towns. The attention has resulted in a grant award and invitations to key events focused on citizen engagement. The MCCP strives to help community members identify and protect the most important natural and cultural resources in their towns. For further information, contact project director Pete Throop by calling (603) 357-0600 or online at Pete@MonadnockConservancy.org.

PSNH Grant Award Totalling \$20,000

Public Service of New Hampshire has generously responded to our proposal to expand the MCCP program to more towns in the Monadnock Region. The grant will be awarded in two \$10,000 annual payments, the first of which we just received for fall 2010.

CommunityMatters' 10 Conference

Pete Throop attended this four-day event in Denver in early October thanks to a scholarship from the Orton Family Foundation and supporting sponsors. Pete was chosen as a recipient because he is “engaged in [his] community, excited to learn, committed to [sharing] knowledge and skills with others back home, and ready....”

Presenter at Selectperson Institute

At a September training session for the 2010 cohort of New Hampshire selectboard members, Pete Throop's featured presentation highlighted the importance of balancing development and conservation to support the quality of life in our communities. The Selectperson Institute is a joint venture of Antioch University New England and the Local Government Center.



Annual meeting kicked-off with a breakfast reception and time to socialize; Alstead selectman Bill Moran (above) accepted the Philip Faulkner Award on behalf of the Town of Alstead for its conservation work aided by the MCCP; Richard Mellor of Rindge (above right) received the Abe Wolfe Land Protection Award for outstanding leadership in land protection; Brad Bates (below right) gave the keynote address.



“Finding What Matters”

Annual Meeting reminds us that by connecting with the land, we connect with each other

The Monadnock Conservancy held its 21st Annual Meeting in late August at the Dublin School. Head of School Brad Bates’ entertaining keynote address emphasized the need for getting kids outside and involved with their natural environment.

Brad advocated for personal interaction as a way to make this happen. With both younger children and teenagers, take them on walks and ask them what they observe in nature.

“Instead of saying ‘Isn’t that sunset beautiful?’ ask them what they see,” Brad said.

He talked about walking with his children, Calvin and Lily. If you asked Calvin what he sees, he’d show you animal scat. “Hey, if that’s what gets them out..,” laughed Brad.

He decried the zones of safety we’ve built around our children. Brad believes that by increasing the circumference of experience, we can foster smarter, more creative individuals.

At the Dublin School, every student participates in “work gang” on Saturdays. Organized into groups, the students do chores such as beekeeping, organic gardening, trail building, and shoveling. Last winter, one group hauled a wood shed down a slope and slid it into place to use as ski hut. Their efforts were captured in a Charlie Chaplin-esque video clip that Brad shared. (To see the video yourself, go to YouTube.com and search “dublin1935”.)

Using the outdoors as a classroom capitalizes on the setting of the Dublin School and its natural

resources. The 300-acre campus is mostly wooded, with an open quad and some playing fields. There are far reaching views of the Wapack Ridge to the east.

This backdrop was much appreciated by Annual Meeting attendees, many of whom commented on the lovely location which was enhanced by the warm weather.

Optional field trips further fostered a sense of connection with our region’s landscape by introducing hikers to trails at Dublin School, new trails on Beech Hill, and private carriage roads on an Old Troy Road property.

As executive director Ryan Owens said in closing, getting people to connect with the land means finding relevance—not only between each other, but also in how we value our surroundings. It’s because of the Conservancy’s success of doing just that, that over the past twenty years we have been able to protect nearly 15,000 acres and have another dozen projects currently underway. 🌿

THANK YOU! Special thanks are due to the following organizations, merchants, and individuals for their contributions to the meeting: **Dublin School, Dublin; The Works Bakery Cafe, Keene; Hancock Fire Department; Hamshaw Lumber/Ace Rental Place, Keene; Monadnock Berries, Troy; Norway Hill Orchard, Hancock; Greenwave International, New York; Hannaford, Keene; Beech Hill-Dublin Lake Watershed Association, Dublin; Hugh and Gay Eaton, Dublin; Watatic Notes, Ashby, MA; and the Monadnock Conservancy trustees and volunteers.**

**Trash Cleanup Day
Helps Restore Habitat**

A washing machine, tires, asphalt shingles, old siding, engines: all were removed from a remote corner of Otter Brook Farm in Peterborough this August. When the current owners purchased the property, they readily took on responsibility for an illegally constructed encampment that pre-dated their ownership. They wanted to see the place cleaned up and added to the recently conveyed Otter Brook Farm conservation easement. Six pick-up truckloads later, the woodland spot has been reclaimed and can now be protected. Special thanks goes to the nine volunteers and to the Town of Greenfield, which waived any solid waste dumping fees for the removed trash.

To help with future trash pick-up events, contact Emily Hague at (603) 357-0600 or online at Emily@MonadnockConservancy.org.

Staff, Board Attend Rally 2010

Lucky for us, Hartford, Connecticut, hosted this year's Land Trust Alliance National Land Conservation Conference. Everyone on staff was able to take advantage of the workshops and networking opportunities, as did Board members Suzanne Whittemore and Tom Hanna. Stewardship manager Emily Hague co-facilitated a roundtable discussion on conservation easement stewardship the last day. They talked about the most pressing stewardship issues, what to do about them, and how to get help from each other throughout the year. "It's extremely helpful to know what other land trusts are doing," she said.

**Throop Selected for
Conservation Committees**

Governor Lynch recently appointed M CCP project director Pete Throop as a voting member of the NH State Conservation Committee. Pete serves as the representative for Cheshire and Sullivan counties. In this role, he will also serve a three-year term on the Cheshire County Conservation District Board. Both are unpaid positions. The SCC and CCCD provide leadership and guidance for the protection of local land and water resources. Our stewardship manager, Emily Hague, also sits on the CCCD board as an associate supervisor.

**Conservation Celebration
at Tippin Rock Farm**

Conservancy members and conservation easement landowners had the opportunity in late September to mingle at our Conservation Celebration, the first-ever event of this type that we've hosted. The harvest-themed celebration was held at Tippin Rock Farm, a Swanzey property soon to be protected. The evening's highlight was an easy hike to Tippin Rock, a 40-ton glacial erratic boulder that can be made to wobble visibly by a single person, and to the nearby ledges at the top of Hewes Hill.

Invitations to events such as this are one benefit of being a Conservancy member. Join or renew now by contacting Pat Payne online at Pat@MonadnockConservancy.org or call (603) 357-0600.



Clockwise, from above: Marguerite Swain pushes the Tippin Rock; Randy Burnham finds a quiet spot at the ledges; a group of hikers enjoy the sunset.

photos by Emily Hague

Perfect for Any Occasion: Gift Memberships

Celebrate conservation and the person you'd like to honor with a gift membership to the Monadnock Conservancy. Your chosen recipient gets to be a member for 2011. We get to save more special places that define our region.

Present the gift yourself, or we'll send a note directly to the recipient. This holiday season, we'll even include a pack of note cards that feature photos from conservation easements around the Monadnock region as part of this special gift (with our compliments, as a limited time offer). Or, you can customize the gift membership by including a tote bag or hat featuring the Monadnock Conservancy logo at an additional cost.

Each \$35 individual membership includes a subscription to our quarterly newsletter and invitations to exclusive events. To give a gift membership, contact Pat Payne, development and office assistant, at (603) 357-0600 or online at Pat@MonadnockConservancy.org.



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About the Monadnock Conservancy

Founded in 1989, the Monadnock Conservancy is the only land trust dedicated exclusively to the thirty-five towns of the Monadnock Region in southwestern New Hampshire. Our mission is to identify, promote, and actively seek protection of significant natural, aesthetic, and historic resources in the area; and to monitor and enforce the protection of lands in the trust. Based in Keene, the Conservancy has protected nearly 15,000 acres of forest, farmland, shoreline, wetlands, wildlife habitat, and public recreation trails in the region.

Upcoming Events

Prentice Hill Hike

Saturday, November 6, 10 a.m. – noon
 Explore our Chase easement in Alstead. Donors Margaret (Chase) Perry and Ellen Chase will talk about the natural and cultural history of the property.

Silver Lake Conservation Success Tour

Saturday, November 27, 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.
 Nearly 200 acres on the western shore of Silver Lake in Harrisville were protected by conservation easement earlier this year. Come along for an easy walk of this area with Conservancy, Harris Center, and BB&N staff.

Silver Lake, NH



Hemlock Woolly Adelgid: A Threat to Our Forests

Saturday, December 11, 9 – 11 a.m.
 Learn about the woolly adelgid. We'll talk about how to recognize this aphid-like insect and what to do about an infestation. (First read our article on page 3.)

Register for any of these events by contacting Emily Hague, stewardship manager, at (603) 357-0600 or e-mail Emily@MonadnockConservancy.org. Get more info online: www.MonadnockConservancy.org/html/events.html