



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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### **Land donation honors family, creates working forest legacy**



**Photo caption:** Supporters of John and Rosemarie Calhoun Family Forest project gathered at the Dec. 9 Monadnock Conservancy board meeting to celebrate the transfer of ownership. Shown are, from left, Rocci Aguirre, Monadnock Conservancy conservation project manager; Norman Mackenie, lawyer for the Calhoun family; Swift Corwin, consulting forester for the Calhoun family; Jack Calhoun, representative for the Calhoun family; Beth Healy, wife of Jack Calhoun; Ryan Owens, Monadnock Conservancy executive director; Phil Runyon, lawyer for the Monadnock Conservancy; and Tom Hanna, Monadnock Conservancy board president. Photo courtesy of the Monadnock Conservancy, © Emily Hague.

KEENE, N.H. — To honor their deceased parents, the children of John and Rosemarie (Studer) Calhoun recently donated to the Monadnock Conservancy 308 acres of the family’s property, which straddles the Gilsom and Sullivan town lines.

Jack Calhoun, Will Calhoun, Helen Mercer, Annemarie Calhoun and Ruth McQuade signed the deed to donate the two parcels of land to the Monadnock Conservancy. The Conservancy will maintain the property as a working forest and public recreation area. A conservation easement previously donated to the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests prevents development of the land.

“We are all delighted that the Monadnock Conservancy will continue to steward the property in a manner consistent with the aspirations and goals of our dad and mom,” said Jack Calhoun on behalf of the family.

The Calhoun family has a heritage of loving and using the woods and its trees: John and Rosemarie’s fathers were a lumberman and forester, respectively, and John was a career consulting forester in the Monadnock Region. Each generation has learned from an early age to love the land.

“In turn, we wanted to see [our parents’ property] be a place for others to do the same,” said Jack Calhoun.

The Calhouns’ Bingham Hill Forest property will now be known as the John and Rosemarie Calhoun Family Forest. The public will be welcome to walk and hike on the system of old logging roads, and in time signage and limited parking will be installed. The forest, which John began decades ago to manage carefully as a timber resource, will continue to be harvested sustainably, providing a perpetual source of revenue for the Conservancy and opportunities for forestry demonstration and education.

The property features over 10,000 feet of river and stream frontage, including White Brook and the Ashuelot River. The protection of the forest helps prevent water contamination, avoiding future public health threats downstream, and it helps moderate stream flow in times of drought and flood.

In addition, the property directly abuts 466 acres of contiguous conserved land—not bisected by any major roads—and is a part of a larger corridor, thousands of acres in size extending eastward into Sullivan and Stoddard, protected by the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests. Some of the benefits of unfragmented land are that it provides corridors for wildlife; allows water to filter through forests, wetlands and streams unimpeded; accommodates large-scale forest management planning; and prevents sprawl development. Such lands also preserve the scenic landscape and rural character of the area.

The action to donate the Calhoun Family Forest was praised by Ryan Owens, Conservancy executive director, “This donation provides not only a means for us to welcome the public to a spectacular landscape completely under our management, but also to meet our long-term funding needs through sustainable forestry. We’re thinking of it as an endowment, but one that’s much more interesting to manage than a stock portfolio. Plus, the Calhouns have assured us that John will haunt us all if we don’t keep this a working forest.”

The protection of the Calhoun family’s property doubles the acreage the Monadnock Conservancy owns in fee simple, or outright. The vast majority of the organization’s land protection has been accomplished through conservation easements, through which a private landowner continues to own the land.

“The addition of the Calhoun Family Forest to the local area’s protected lands will help define a core part of our Region,” said Rocci Aguirre, conservation project manager for the Conservancy.

**The Monadnock Conservancy**, founded in 1989, is the only land trust dedicated exclusively to the 35 towns of the Monadnock Region in southwestern New Hampshire. Its 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, N.H., the Conservancy is an accredited land trust and has protected more than 15,000 acres of forest, farmland, shoreline, wetlands, wildlife habitat and recreation trails in the region. For more information, visit [www.MonadnockConservancy.org](http://www.MonadnockConservancy.org).

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