



Together, protecting forever
the land we love

Newsletter

FALL/WINTER 2022

Larger Than Life

And Forever Conserved

1,200 acres is so large it is hard to imagine.

Picture roughly 900 football fields sitting side by side. This is the scale of the Wildwood, a large, forested property just north of Mount Monadnock that is now protected forever through a partnership between the Putnam Family, the Northeast Wilderness Trust, and the Monadnock Conservancy. We now hold a conservation easement on 570 acres of the Wildwood owned by the Putnams,

while the remainder of the land was donated by them to the Northeast Wilderness Trust to become a forever wild preserve. The achievement is the culmination of a decades-long effort to add this property to a massive block of conserved land surrounding Mount Monadnock. With great size comes great benefit, from scenic views that drive tourism to climate change mitigation and the protection of wildlife habitat.

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Larger than life, continued from page 1

The Wildwood features nearly two miles of scenic road frontage along Route 101 in Dublin, New Hampshire and connects with some 9,000 acres of other conservation land to the south. Although the leaf peepers, hikers, and other tourists drawn to places like the Wildwood might slow traffic, they are a vital part of the regional economy, pumping more than \$5.5 billion into local businesses statewide each year.

Mitigating the effects of climate change was arguably the most important reason to conserve this land. As atmospheric carbon dioxide levels continue to rise, New Hampshire is at risk from hotter summers, warmer winters, coastal flooding, and more intense storms. Fortunately, forests like the Wildwood—when they remain forests—store more carbon in plants and soil than they release, which is why conserving large tracts of forest is one of the simplest yet most effective natural climate solutions available. More than 100 acres of wetlands on the Wildwood are even more effective at storing carbon, and they have the added benefit of storing excess rainwater, mitigating floods during intense storms then slowly releasing water, even during droughts.

Climate change also affects plant and animal habitats. As temperatures rise, the conditions needed for certain species to thrive will shift northward. Conservation, by protecting continuous north-south land corridors, helps ensure species can shift with their habitats over time. The Wildwood links with other existing conservation land to form a continuous corridor from Jaffrey in the south to Harrisville in the north.

These benefits would not be possible without the dedication and generosity of the Putnam Family, who worked with the Conservancy to reach the right solutions for the Wildwood, ultimately placing a conservation easement on 570 acres of land to protect it from future development. It is their hope that the property will continue to be used for recreation, as it has for many years.



Thank you

The Monadnock Conservancy now oversees **more than 23,000 acres** of permanently conserved forests, wetlands, and farms. It is our duty and privilege to be the stewards of this land, but we could not do it without the support of donors. Your donations help ensure we have the staff, tools, and expertise to seize conservation opportunities when they arise. Whether you care about the local economy, clean water, wildlife habitat, or beautiful views, the Conservancy works to ensure that these resources are here for you and for future generations.

Farming into the Future

Prime farmland protected in Alstead

Earlier this year, 11 acres of productive farmland in Alstead, New Hampshire was forever conserved through a partnership between Kroka Expeditions and the Monadnock Conservancy. Kroka is a non-profit wilderness expedition school based in Marlow. They offer a variety of educational programs for youth of all ages, both onsite at their organic farm and further afield in locations across the globe. They also produce about a third of the school's food and sell their own milk, cheese, yogurt, eggs, and vegetables at their farm store.

The newly conserved land, located about a mile west of Kroka's headquarters, produces most of the vegetables and hay for the school's livestock. Nearly all the conserved acreage features soil classified as "prime" by the Natural Resources Conservation Service, a division of the US Department of Agriculture. The designation is reserved for the most fertile and productive farmland in the country.

Prime farmland, which is uncommon in New Hampshire especially outside the major river valleys, is important for conservation efforts. Soil this fertile took thousands of years to develop but is highly threatened by residential and commercial development, being flat and well-drained. Thanks to Kroka's strong environmental ethic and commitment to demonstrating their values, these 11 acres will forever remain available to future generations of farmers.

With the addition of Kroka's farmland, the Conservancy now holds conservation easements on more than 82 properties in some form of agricultural production, many of which produce food for local markets and restaurants. These small farms bolster our local economy, preserve inherited knowledge, and sustain the irreplaceable rural character of the region. Thank you for supporting this work, and, by extension, the hardworking farmers of the Monadnock region.



Beauty and the Beasts

Conserving habitats in Fitzwilliam

Mink, beaver, and many other native species make their home on a 79-acre parcel on Scott Pond in Fitzwilliam. Rick Bullock has seen them all. His family has been coming to this land for nearly 100 years to soak in the majesty of Mount Monadnock and the surrounding natural habitats. Out of respect for the land and the furry little troublemakers that live there, Rick worked with the Monadnock Conservancy to put a conservation easement on the property, protecting it forever for the people and beasts of the northern wild.

The newly protected land boasts nine acres of wetlands and 16 acres of shrubland habitat, which is in decline in New Hampshire. It also features a half mile of frontage on Scott Pond and a third of a mile on Scott Brook, allowing natural and unencumbered access for many semi-aquatic animals. Across the road to the south is another 125-acre conserved property that is owned by the Town of Fitzwilliam.

Over the last two years of working with Rick, our team saw firsthand many of the native species living on the property (including this mink seen here).

Along with the views of Mount Monadnock, the Bullock conservation easement is all about protecting what people love about this region: the beauty and the bounty of the land. Creatures of the forest can't ask for your help, but they surely need it when they can't access quality habitat on which to forage, graze, or hunt. So let us speak for them: Every donation to the Monadnock Conservancy, big or small, protects the habitat of all sorts of native critters, big and small. Whether it's a 1,500-pound moose or a 15-inch mink, the Conservancy is working to keep these species with us for years to come.



Water, Wetlands, and Optimism

Partnerships make for great gains in Rindge

It can be hard to remain optimistic about the future. To be sure, the need for conservation has never been greater, and the threats to our environment have never been more visible. How do we retain our optimism? At the Monadnock Conservancy, the projects—and the partnerships that make them possible—are one answer. Through our work, we see firsthand the passion and dedication of so many New Hampshire residents in their pursuit of a better future. The Mattabeseck Wildlife Corridor is one such example of partners coming together to protect land for the future of our region, state, and world.

In Rindge, this 228-acre parcel of land is now protected forever, thanks to a partnership between the Rindge Conservation Commission, which led the town in buying the property, and the Conservancy, which now holds a conservation easement on it. The environmental importance of the land is huge: 30 acres overlie a portion of a groundwater aquifer that serves the Town of Jaffrey's public water supply. There are 33 acres of wetlands, including 11 vernal pools and confirmed populations of blue-spotted

salamanders and a likely population of the state-endangered Blanding's turtle. A rare black gum-red maple swamp on the property hosts black gum trees more than 250 years old. The land abuts the 1,500-acre Annett State Forest, creating a larger stretch of conserved land that is important for plant and animal species as they adapt to climate change.

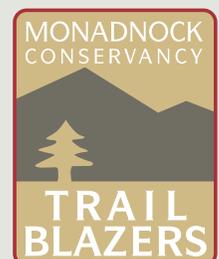
Mattabeseck, which means "land between the waters," comes from the language of the Abenaki people, the original occupants of the region. It is an appropriate epithet for the area, which straddles the watershed divide between the Contoocook and Millers Rivers.

No single tract guarantees the future of our environment, and work remains to be done. However, the partnership that led to the permanent protection of the Mattabeseck Wildlife Corridor is cause for optimism. We thank everyone involved who made this possible, and we hope you will take heart that there are dedicated people in our region working towards a greener future.



Would you like to protect forever the land we all love?

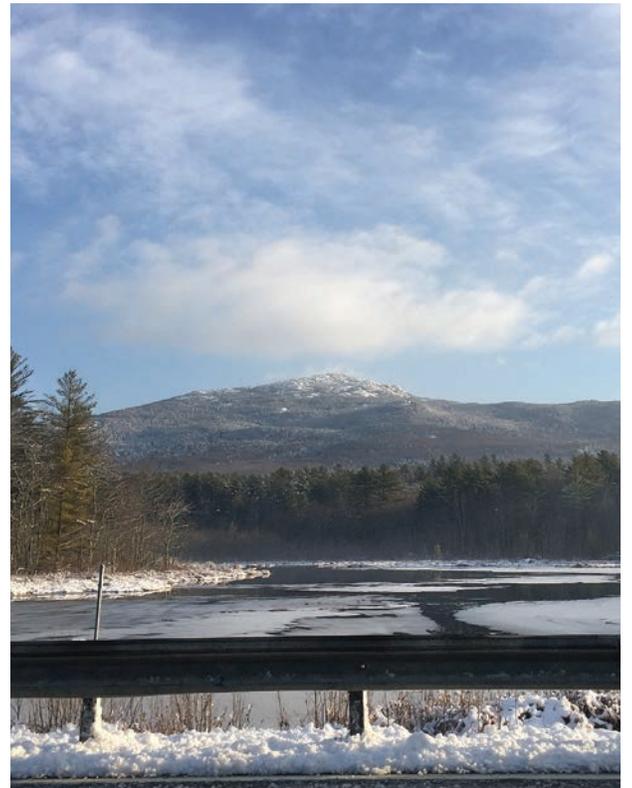
If you'd like to contribute to the annual fundraising campaign or become a member of the Monadnock Trailblazer monthly giving club, you can use the enclosed reply envelope or give online at [MonadnockConservancy.org/donate](https://www.monadnockconservancy.org/donate). Or, contact Lindsay Tafas, development director, at Lindsay@MonadnockConservancy.org or 603-357-0600, ext. 113. Thank you!



Living our Values

Just as local conservation can have global effects, so too can global forces—especially climate change—affect the land we have worked so hard to conserve here in the Monadnock region. Because of this threat posed by climate change, and because conservation is about more than land, we made the important decision to strip our institutional investment portfolio of companies that significantly contribute to climate change, including companies engaged in fossil fuel production, transportation, and distribution. It simply didn't make sense to be fighting climate change locally while our invested assets supported companies that perpetuate it.

As of spring of this year, the Monadnock Conservancy's entire portfolio of invested endowed, dedicated, and long-term funds was rebuilt to favor companies that meet high standards of environmental stewardship, social good, and responsible governance (this is sometimes referred to as "ESG" investing). We are committed to living our values in every aspect of our organization, including where and how we invest. To learn more about this shift, please contact Executive Director Ryan Owens at ryan@monadnockconservancy.org or 603-257-0600 ext. 103.



Welcome Martin Royle!

The Monadnock Conservancy is always striving to connect the community to our work and reach new audiences. We are thrilled to announce that we have hired a new Communications and Marketing Director to help identify, increase, and inspire supporters. Martin Royle comes to us from Washington, DC, where for the past 15 years he has worked with top-tier international non-governmental organizations—including The ONE Campaign, Tanager, and Eastern Congo Initiative—to connect audiences to impact. A new resident of Walpole, he is also an accomplished musician and an inspired, if unaccomplished, tennis player.



The Trail to Good Health

Exercise in nature improves physical and mental health, especially as we age. In late summer, the Monadnock Conservancy assumed leadership of the Cheshire Walkers, a weekly program of outdoor walks formerly managed by Cheshire Medical Center. The program, designed for seniors and anyone seeking outdoor activity at a welcoming and reasonable pace, meets every Tuesday morning in the spring and fall to explore a different trail in the region. Walks vary in length and terrain, but all are designed to be inclusive to people of varying abilities, whether new to outdoor recreation or a seasoned hiker. In addition to exercise, the outings provide opportunities for learning and social connection.

The outdoors is for everyone, and the Conservancy strives to provide access for people of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds. If you or someone you know is interested in learning more about the Cheshire Walkers, please contact Operations and Development Manager Kate Sullivan at kate@monadnockconservancy.org or 603-357-0600 ext. 101.



Welcome New Supporters

You make our work possible – Thank you!

Your donation to the Monadnock Conservancy supports land, water, and wildlife conservation in the Monadnock region. We are especially grateful to the following individuals who chose to make a gift for the first time between October 2021 and September 2022. Your donation shows your commitment to this region, its landscapes, its people, and its way of life.

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