



Gramwick
Trail

Stephen H. Gebelbach

Hike Local

Trails are the perfect antidote to life's current challenges

More than ever, people like you are finding respite in the out of doors, and land trusts like the Monadnock Conservancy are stepping up to meet that need.

With the well-known mountains and parks seeing record crowds, the trails highlighted here might be just right for your next outing. All are on land owned and managed by the Conservancy. For more details about each property, directions, and maps to download, please go to [MonadnockConservancy.org](https://www.monadnockconservancy.org).

Cunningham Pond Trail Network

Cunningham Pond Conservation Area, Peterborough

A 2-mile route is one of the best ways to see the Conservancy's most recent acquisition. The main trail travels through woodlands and a hemlock grove, crossing two streams on sturdy wood bridges. Then, it climbs to a large hay field with sweeping views. From the field, it continues down to an old carriage road, following the pond's edge before looping back to the main trail. The terrain is generally rolling, with only short steeper sections, and the surface is a mix of flat sections and some portions that require stepping over rocks and roots.

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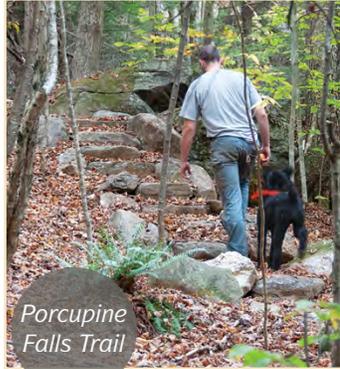
Cunningham
Pond trails

Katrina Farmer

Porcupine Falls Trail

John and Rosemarie Calhoun Family Forest, Gilsum

This meandering out-and-back trail (about 0.7 mile round trip) travels through a mixed hardwood-conifer forest rich with mosses and ferns. It follows the quintessential babbling White Brook and culminates at a bridge below “Porky Falls,” as the Calhoun family called it. There are a few stone steps to climb along the way, but elevation gain is minimal. To make the hike a loop, cross the bridge at the falls and follow the trail a short distance to White Brook Road, which returns to the parking lot at the beginning.



Gramwick Trail

Mountain Brook Reservoir Conservation Area, Jaffrey

This easy out-and-back trail (about 1.5 miles round trip) follows the shoreline of Mountain Brook Reservoir, offering multiple views of the water as it meanders through mixed forest and over short sections of boardwalk. Elevation change is minimal, and the path is generally flat, with a few places to step over rocks and roots. The trail is named after Herb and Colette Gramm, who donated the land to the Conservancy, and their friend, Tom Sedgwick, who helped them build the original trail.

McIntire Forest Trail Network

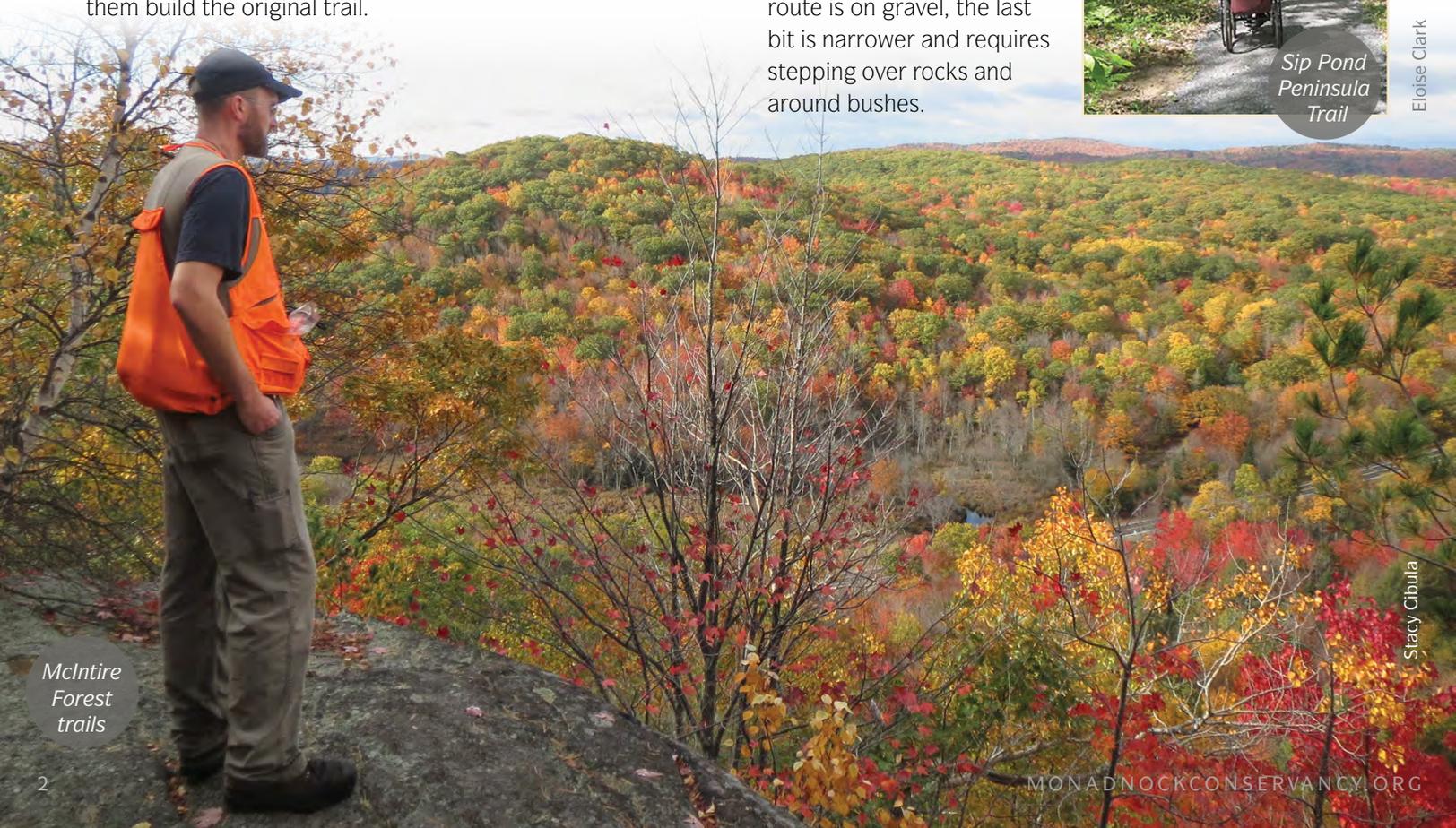
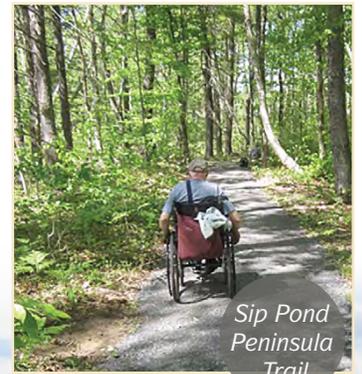
Elizabeth Burns McIntire Forest, Marlow

The network of moderately challenging trails (total 3.8 miles) in the Elizabeth Burns McIntire Forest travels through mixed forest, over a short boardwalk, along the base of Bald Mountain, and up to a summit lookout. Featuring multiple human-made rock features, the summit offers many areas to explore and stunning views of the nearby hills. The Sands Trail features uneven footing and steep sections to a popular rock climbing ledge as well as the summit, but the McIntire Trail is easier with less elevation gain.

Sip Pond Peninsula Trail

Chamberlain Conservation Area, Fitzwilliam

Panoramic views of Mount Monadnock and water access in all seasons from a rocky point await. The 1.6-mile round-trip walk follows the Cheshire Rail Trail for most of the route and is generally flat. From the trailhead parking area, a short spur trail leads to the rail trail, which follows the southern boundary of the conservation property, skirting a broad wetland on the edge of Sip Pond. Access to the peninsula trail is at an orange gate on the right. While nearly the entire route is on gravel, the last bit is narrower and requires stepping over rocks and around bushes.



Katrina Farmer

Eloise Clark

Stacy Cibula

When a Family Loves the Land

Wildlife habitat and wetlands provide big public benefit

“My great-grandfather bought this place. I have watched the seasons change for quite a few years, and it’s still something to look forward to,” Jim Bearce said.

Straddling the Jaffrey-Rindge town line near Mountain Brook Reservoir and the Contoocook River is this property owned by Jaffrey native Jim Bearce and his wife, Lisa. The land has been home to Jim’s family for five generations, since 1940. Now, 183 acres have been protected forever. Due to the amount of both land and water on this property, it is a haven for wildlife.

“There’s just about every species of wildlife you could see and find in New England here,” Jim said.

Conservancy Land Protection Director Anne McBride concurred.

“There’s an abundance of wildlife in the area because there’s a lot of undeveloped land for animals. The property is adjacent to Mountain Brook Reservoir and features 50 acres of wetlands, a vernal pool, and over

a mile of streams” she said. “It’s a pretty neat spot.”

The Bearces have seen all the locally common mammals, including moose, black bear, bobcat, deer, fisher, mink, porcupine, beaver, red and grey fox, opossum, skunk, and raccoon.

“We love the variety of wildlife here, including insects, reptiles, birds, and amphibians,” Lisa said.

“She awaits the sounds of the wood frogs, peepers and tree frogs, and the appearance of the toads each spring,” shared Jim.

“We will continue, as we have been doing, to conduct some habitat improvement projects, such as creating and maintaining small clearings, and fighting invasive species,” added Jim.

The Bearces’ decision to protect the land and care for it in perpetuity shows an intrinsic understanding that using the land also means giving back — to the plants and animals, and to the public who benefit as well.



Thank You

Funding for this project came from the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services’ Aquatic Resources Mitigation Fund, the New Hampshire Drinking Water and Groundwater Trust Fund, the New Hampshire State Conservation Committee Moose Plate grant program, the Jaffrey Conservation Commission, and C&S Wholesale Grocers.

Keeping the ‘Field’ in Chesterfield

Family conserves hay farm

Lucius “Lucky” and Barb Evans moved to this 37-acre property along Route 63 in Chesterfield only nine years ago. While they are not farmers themselves, they lease the fields to a local farmer who is able to harvest several thousand square hay bales in a good year, and the maple trees along the southern boundary are tapped each winter for maple syrup production. It’s this passion for agriculture that motivated the Evanses to conserve the property.

“Chesterfield is a good place to live. I have seen too many farms grow houses,” Lucky shared. “New Hampshire agriculture is rare and important. I’d like to see this land stay a hay field or a farm. I think it’s a choice for the future.”

The town’s master plan identified land along Route 63 as a top priority for conservation, since it anchors the scenic southern gateway into the village of Chesterfield.

The property’s road frontage and open fields also gave it great development potential, and there once was an approved plan to subdivide and build there. Instead, thanks to Lucky and Barb’s choice to conserve, the agricultural land will stay intact.

“I want to keep the fields in Chesterfield,” Lucky said. “I hope people enjoy [the property], not just driving by, but to walk, snowshoe, or crosscountry ski around too.”

“*In deciding to protect this land, Lucky’s heart was in the right place.*”

– Anne McBride,
land protection director

Thank You

Funders who supported the project include the Agricultural Land Easements program, the Land and Community Heritage Investment Program, the Thomas W. Haas Fund of the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation, the Town of Chesterfield, and anonymous donors.



Lucky & his daughter, Ingrid

A Partner in Caring for the Land

Award recognizes dedicated, thoughtful professional

Wendy Ward of Keene works with the Natural Resources Conservation Service to conserve soil and water quality and to guide wildlife habitat enhancement and restoration projects on private lands throughout the region.

Wendy received the John C. Calhoun, Forester, Professional Advisor Award for her 25 years at NRCS, as well as for her eight years volunteering on the Conservancy's lands committee. In both roles, she helps landowners better understand and care for their land.

The award recognizes individuals or professional associations whose

counsel and advice to clients over time represents an enduring legacy for conservation of natural resources important to the people and communities of the Monadnock region. It is only given when an appropriate recipient is identified.

"The Monadnock region is lucky to have such a thoughtful and dedicated professional," said Anne McBride, the Conservancy's land protection director.

"Wendy is usually the straggler on our hikes as she's busy identifying the birds, wildflowers, and grasses," Anne continued. "Her insights are highly valued by all."



Wendy Ward often spots bobolinks when walking on potential conservation lands. Her award is a framed bobolink photo.

2020 Volunteer of the Year

An honor for one who rises to the challenges

Peter Beblowski of Antrim was honored with the Volunteer of the Year Award. This award is presented annually to an individual for outstanding volunteer service to the Monadnock Conservancy.

"I am very pleased to be awarded Volunteer of the Year. I never thought that would be a possibility. I don't do my volunteer work for recognition, but it's very nice to be recognized," Peter said.

As a volunteer land steward for the past 15 years, Peter monitors nine conserved properties, many of which

have complicated and technical boundaries. His reports are always thorough and timely.

Peter, a retired geologist, extends his dedication to conservation and caring for his community well beyond the Conservancy, volunteering for six other conservation organizations.

"Peter is a dedicated and dependable land steward. He is an absolute joy to work with, always happy and quick to joke around but takes his conservation work seriously," said Rick Brackett, land manager for the Conservancy.



Peter Beblowski holds his award, a framed photo of Campbell Pond in Antrim.

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You can have it all — delivered right to your inbox each month. Sign up for our e-newsletter at [MonadnockConservancy.org](https://www.monadnockconservancy.org). You'll find out about current conservation projects, family-friendly hikes, natural history trivia, and upcoming virtual events.

Land as a Sacred Place

31st Annual Celebration highlights this theme

Do you hear the woods speak to you? Rev. Stephen Blackmer of Church of the Woods does. As keynote speaker for our 31st Annual Celebration, he talked about his journey from career conservationist to ordained priest, and encouraged people to develop a listening practice. “The woods speak to us through our experiences on the land,” Stephen said. “The woods heal us, but also in our presence we help heal the land.” In closing, he led an interactive experience on spiritual connection with nature, in which he invited attendees to visualize a place where they have encountered a sense of peace and healing.

Also as part of our 31st Annual Celebration, which was, of course, held virtually this year, the Conservancy’s Executive Director Ryan Owens highlighted projects completed in the past year and announced a partnership with the Winchester Learning Center to build a nature park for children (and adults) of all ages.

The recording of the one-hour event can be viewed at: [YouTube.com/MonadnockConservancy](https://www.youtube.com/MonadnockConservancy). You can also find videos from previous years’ Annual Celebrations, trail tours, and interviews with landowners.



Lucky Evans

Community Conservation 101

Grant funding, new committee that focuses on listening

The Conservancy is committed to learning about the needs and stress points of the region, and so has launched a campaign to reach out and listen to a wider variety of voices in our communities. These ongoing conversations are part of our efforts to expand “community conservation.” Just what is the meaning of the term? For us, it means undertaking conservation and related projects and programs in a manner that acknowledges, accommodates, and, ideally, helps to

remedy a broader array of social ills than have traditionally been linked to conservation.

To that end, over the past year, our board and staff attended a full-day retreat, put on with support from the Land Trust Alliance, which included a \$3,000 grant recognizing our commitment to

community conservation; formed a new committee to guide outreach beyond our regular supporters to listen and learn about the needs of our communities; and hosted monthly readings and discussions encouraging board members to reflect critically on the dynamics of power, privilege, and diversity in the conservation field.

We are dedicated to listening and being a leader in this outreach. We want to hear from you. Do you know someone we should talk to? Please reach out to Katrina Farmer, communications and outreach manager, at Katrina@MonadnockConservancy.org or 603-357-0600, ext. 111.



Rick Brackett

100+ New Supporters

Your passion and dedication to community are key to conservation

Protecting land, water, wildlife habitats, and recreation opportunities in the Monadnock region can only be done thanks to you, our amazing supporters. We extend a warm welcome to the people who made their first donation to the Monadnock Conservancy in the past year:

Anonymous (4)	Elise Grant
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“ Welcome! I'm so pleased to include you in the circle of people who care for the land in our region. Because of you, there will be more places for the young and young-at-heart to connect with nature. ”

— Steve Larmon, Monadnock Conservancy board president

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If you'd like to become a monthly

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fundraising campaign, please contact

Lindsay Taflas, development director, at

Lindsay@MonadnockConservancy.org or

603-357-0600, ext. 113. Or, you can use the

enclosed reply envelope or donate online at

MonadnockConservancy.org. Thank you!





Together, protecting forever
the land we love

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“This is the year that more people than ever discovered the value of locally conserved, accessible lands. Land trusts’ trail systems and preserves saw record numbers as people sought out open space for respite and recreation.”

– Andrew Bowman,
president and CEO of the Land Trust Alliance



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