Overcoming Community Forest Obstacles: A Success Story*

Rebecca Brown
Northwest Community Forest Forum
May 10, 2016
Portland, OR
*We Owe it all to Our Failures!
Where is New Hampshire?
EcoRegional Priorities for Biodiversity Conservation

Legend:
- Conservation Focus Area
- Priority Rivers and Streams
- Additional Ecoregional Priorities
- N.H. Chapter Offices
- Ecoregional Boundary
- Conservation and Public Lands

Map Produced by TNC, 2008
Datasets: Ecoregional data; Ecoregional boundary; Population data from the U.S. Census Bureau; Water bodies from LERMA (GMAQ)
Obstacles
Gardner Mountain Conservation Project

The Partnership

The Trust for Public Land (TPL) is a national nonprofit organization dedicated to conserving land for people to improve the quality of life in our communities and to protect our natural and historic resources for future generations. Since its founding in 1972, TPL has helped to protect more than 3 million acres nationwide, including close to a quarter of a million acres in New Hampshire. TPL depends on the support and generosity of individuals, foundations, and businesses to achieve its land for people mission. For more information, visit www.tpl.org.

Ammonoosuc Conservation Trust (ACT) protects open spaces with conservation, historic or scenic value, including agricultural and forested lands, wetlands, and wildlife habitat, within the western White Mountains region of northern New Hampshire.

New Hampshire Fish and Game Aguardian of New Hampshire’s fish, wildlife and marine resources, the New Hampshire Fish and Game Department works in partnership with the public to conserve, manage, and protect these resources and their habitats inform and educate the public about these resources; and provide opportunities for the public to use and appreciate these resources.

The Facts

Location
Lyman, New Hampshire

Size
1,081 acres

Benefits
1,081 acres of productive timberland
Critical habitat for 2nd largest population of bats in New Hampshire
Guaranteed recreational access
Viewished protection for the Gardner Range

Partners
Ammonoosuc Conservation Trust
New Hampshire Fish and Game
The Trust for Public Land

The Trust for Public Land and the Ammonoosuc Conservation Trust have the opportunity to conserve 1,081 acres on Gardner Mountain, including some of the most important wildlife habitat in New Hampshire. Specifically, the land contains the Paddock Mine, an abandoned copper mine that is now home to the second largest bat hibernacula in New Hampshire. Bats are under severe stress from a new and mysterious disease known as White Nose Syndrome, which is causing high mortality rates amongst several common species of bats. New Hampshire Fish and Game and the US Fish and Wildlife Service believe that conservation of the Paddock Mine hibernacula is critical to the success of the White Nose Syndrome in New Hampshire.

The property contains a significant portion of the Gardner Ridge, which forms the scenic backdrop of Lyman, a rural community that has maintained its heritage of agriculture and forestry and open recreational access. Western views from the church and fields in the center of town are of the subject property and any development of this ridge would significantly detract from the scenic and pastoral landscape. The project also furthers local goals as set out in the Lyman Master Plan, which includes “Preserve Lyman’s rural character,” “Encourage conservation easements as a way to protect Lyman’s natural resources;” “Promote wildlife habitat throughout Lyman” and “Protect Gardner Range from overdevelopment.”

For more information

Ammonoosuc Conservation Trust, Rebecca Brown, Executive Director, 603-646-3445 or rebecca@ammonoosuc.org
New Hampshire Fish and Game, Emily Breindel, Wildlife Biologist, 603-274-3960 or Emily.Breindel@wildlife.nh.gov
The Trust for Public Land, J.T. Hone, Project Manager, 603-223-1373 x11 or J.T.Hone@tpl.org

View the background property located toward the upper Ammonoosuc Valley basin and the White Mountains.

Photo courtesy of The Trust for Public Land.
Energized volunteers
Vision
Money
Time
Broad local support
Energized volunteers
Cooley – Jericho Community Forest
Cooley-Jericho Community Forest

- 840 acres in Easton
- Major impact on four towns (Easton, Sugar Hill, Landaff & Franconia)
- Superb recreational potential
- Highest ranked wildlife habitat in NH
- Long-term timber income
- Part of one of largest privately owned, highest elevation, unfragmented forests in the region
• Land trust ownership and project management
  • Four towns invested in purchase
  • Four towns will receive back income from timber harvesting, proportional to their investments over time
• Forest maintenance and stewardship fund will be replenished first
LOTS of public land already
Locally Controlled • Community Owned
• Conserved Forever
Project land
From Route 116, Franconia
Across Pearl Lake into Landaff
From Lovers Lane & Grandview Rd., Sugar Hill
A Community Forest for Our Towns

Information Meeting & Discussion
Wednesday, August 29
Town Hall, Franconia
5:30 p.m.

- mountain bike • equestrian • backcountry ski • hunt • hike • explore
- wildlife viewing • outdoor classroom • timber management
- potential ownership, management, and how to get involved

This is a community forest – decisions are made and implemented by us - members of the whole community!

www.townforest.org
Bird Walks
Hikes
Lots of Hikes
Trail Work
COMMUNITY FOREST

Painting by
Lynn Bane
Franconia, NH
Threats are helpful: urgency
What happens if we don’t purchase the land?
Large Lot subdivision

Opportunity: turnover and generational change, private landowners
I want to take a moment to arm our community of the wonderful opportunity we are to be involved in the Cooley-Jericho Community Forest. This beautiful 840-acre parcel is located in the northeast corner of Easton, sharing boundaries with and also accessible from Sugar Hill and Landaff. This available parcel, previously proposed for usage as a large subdivision, is currently well under way to be chas the parcel by the Ammonoosuc Conservation Trust (the $600,000 purchase has already been raised by $1). Future annual expenses, if any, are estimated at only $2,500 a year. This minimal annual expense will not require funds affecting our tax rates, and the current landowner will already have contributed $28,000 for annual expense funds.

The Community Forest is clearly the best use for this land, providing a scenic backdrop for the area, a prime wildlife habitat, recreational trail opportunities, preservation and maintenance of a plot of land that will provide many recreational opportunities for generations to come. This 840-Acre plot of land could act as a classroom in and of itself, teaching our children the importance of managing a forest responsibly and recognizing the return of a managed forest. Our children would be able to observe wildlife habitat in its natural environment, learn to appreciate what the forest and wildlife offer to this community and the connection between our history and the land we walk on.

Supporting this proposal guarantees that future generations will maintain a local voice in governing the use of this piece of the forest. Think of the future generations and the possibilities this land can offer to the community if preserved on Tuesday, March 12, 2013.

Betsy Stoudt
Lisbon

Community Forest a unique opportunity

On Tuesday, March 12, voters in Easton, Sugar Hill, Landaff and Franconia are being asked to support the proposed Cooley-Jericho Community Forest. This is a unique opportunity to preserve and maintain local control of a plot of land that will provide many recreational opportunities for generations to come. This 840-Acre plot of land could act as a classroom in and of itself, teaching our children the importance of managing a forest responsibly and recognizing the return of a managed forest. Our children would be able to observe wildlife habitat in its natural environment, learn to appreciate what the forest and wildlife offer to this community and the connection between our history and the land we walk on.

Vote Yes for Cooley-Jericho Community Forest

As the world faces the depletion of its natural resources, the towns of Easton, Sugar Hill, Landaff and Franconia are poised to create a new, renewable resource yielding perpetual benefits through a conservation trust.

In a 1968 article in Science, Garrett Hardin described “The Tragedy of the Commons,” the tendency of individuals or communities to overuse the grazing land, forests and fisheries that we all share. Over 50 years later, the lesson remains the same, as we struggle with carbon in our global atmosphere, overfishing in ocean waters or the improbable quest to squeeze more fossil fuels and fresh water from the earth’s crust.

How exciting, then, is the Cooley-Jericho Community Forest? This town initiative to permanently protect an 840-acre upland forest in Easton is a new “commons”, to be sustainably managed, in perpetuity, for recreation, wildlife, scenic value and ongoing income from forest management.

Congratulations to Rebecca Brown and the Ammonoosuc Conservation Trust for raising the funds to purchase this tract, identified by the Forest Service as the top community forest project in the country. Now it is our turn, as residents of the four towns, to vote at our respective town meetings to approve participation in the project and limited additional funding to complete this important investment in the future.

Roy Steever
Easton
Support the Cooley - Jericho Community Forest
Town Meeting, Tuesday March 12, 7:00 p.m.

- mountain bike • horse • backcountry ski
  - hunt • hike • explore
- wildlife viewing • outdoor classroom
  - timber income to the towns

*Community Owned - Locally Controlled - Conserved Forever*

www.townforest.org
er Angela at (978) 828-5903, ambroscoc@yahoo.com
Locally Controlled • Community Owned • Conserved Forever
Governance: Who Decides?

We all do: it’s our forest.
Planning Committee is hard at work creating a governance model that includes the towns and user groups (hikers, skiers, bikers, etc.)
Obstacles – or challenges
Areas for creative tension & growth

- Finding common ground
- Developing shared values
- Creating a space where this can happen
- Letting go of our own agendas, expectations
- Focus on the process, not the outcome
- Be comfortable with uncertainty
Overview of Stewardship Planning for the Cooley-Jericho Community Forest

Consultants
- Facilitate and record proposed working group activities
- Coordinate and support citizen scientist data collection
- Identify, map, and assess sensitive features, natural communities, wildlife habitat, and timber resources
- Participate in collection of wildlife tracking, bird, and recreation data
- Compile, analyze and present inventory results
- Participate in developing plans for recreation and education resources
- Develop management alternatives for wildlife and timber resources
- Host community/citizen scientist showcase hikes and walks
- Draft stewardship plan

Working Group Members and Citizen Scientists
- Participate in property goal setting, community value mapping, and stakeholder assessment
- Attend and recruit attendees for showcase hikes and walks
- Attend data collection trainings
- Participate in collection of wildlife track & sign, bird, and recreation data
- Participate in developing plans for recreation and education resources
- Select management alternatives for wildlife and timber resources
- Attend presentations on inventory results and stewardship plan
- Review and provide feedback on stewardship plan
“The purpose of the CJCF is to ensure that through community ownership, the land will forever be available to all members of the surrounding communities and remain as an ecologically healthy working forest.”

-Community Forest Plan
“The Community Forest is a place to foster the understanding of interconnections between land and people.”
“It is created with the conviction that it will be a long-term timber resource and a place for growing people’s understanding of what good forestry is, and how working forests are integral in our region’s future economic prosperity.”
“The Forest is a place for students to learn about the natural world and experience it as artists and writers as well as young scientists and naturalists.”
“Recreation in the Community Forest is both a key benefit, and an effective way to build social capital.”
“The Community Forest is a meeting place where people exercise local control by creating their own ethic around land use, stewardship, and accountability.”
No Lights. Not ever.

Thank you