

# Piscataquog News

## The Piscataquog Land Conservancy Newsletter

### Clarkridge Farm Conserved!

The Piscataquog Land Conservancy is thrilled to announce the completion of our eighteen-month campaign to conserve Clarkridge Farm, a historic hilltop farm located along the General John Stark Scenic Byway (Rt. 13) in Goffstown. Sixty-nine acres of the farm are now permanently protected by a conservation easement that includes hayfields, hardwood and pine forest, and a large wetland.

The farm has been owned and operated by members of the Clark/King family for over one hundred years, and currently produces grass-fed beef, pastured pork, maple syrup and timber. The land protected by PLC's easement includes a fifteen-acre pasture that had historically been part of the farm but was sold off more than two decades ago. In early 2022, the family got the opportunity to purchase it back and prevent it from being sold for development. The land had already been subdivided by the seller into five house lots. The sale of the conservation easement to PLC allowed the family to recoup the funds they borrowed to purchase the subdivided land.

Speaking for the family, Dan King said "adding this piece of land back into the farm keeps so many doors open as we move into the future and we're so thankful to all the support from so many different people within the family and our community. We are humbled and honored by the chance to help protect the ecological integrity and the agricultural viability of our little corner of Goffstown. We can't thank PLC enough!"

PLC ultimately raised \$616,000 in public and private funds to complete the Clarkridge Farm

project, anchored by two large state grants: \$300,000 from the State of New Hampshire's Aquatic Resources Mitigation (ARM) fund, and \$200,000 from the state's Land and Community Heritage Investment Program (LCHIP).

"The Clarkridge Farm project is a prime example of successful funding collaboration to protect significant ecological resources and sustain continued agriculture use," said Emily Nichols of the NH Department of Environmental Services. "The flexibility of the landowner and ingenuity of PLC led to a conservation easement that aligns with the NHDES ARM's mitigation obligations and ensures the protection of noteworthy aquatic resources in perpetuity."

"Those who travel the General John Stark Scenic Byway from Goffstown center to Dunbarton know this picturesque farm as one of the byway's most scenic locations, but they may not realize that it is also one of the last working farms in Goffstown," remarked Paula Bellemore, executive director of the Land and Community Heritage Investment Program (LCHIP). "LCHIP is pleased to support PLC in conserving this productive and scenic landscape, which has produced local food and fiber for well over 100 years".

Additional funding for the project came from the Town of Goffstown's conservation fund, the state's Conservation License Plate grants program, and the Merrimack Conservation Partnership, a conservation collaborative administered by the Forest Society. Several private foundation grants and local grassroots fundraising rounded out the funding.

PLC Land Protection Specialist Tom Jones said "the family and PLC both took a big leap of faith on this project, and it is rewarding to see the incredible support that came together to conserve this beautiful place."

Clarkridge Farm was a true all hands-on deck effort, and PLC wishes to acknowledge the contributions of past and current staff members Laura Weit Marcum, Jill Ketchen and Dan Ewald to its success. Thanks also to David Nieman and the Goffstown Conservation Commission for their help bringing town funding to the project, and to the many friends, family and neighbors who made personal contributions to the Clarkridge campaign. For a complete list of contributors to the Clarkridge Farm project, see pages 5 and 6.



Three generations of the King family  
Photo Credit - Britta King



To conserve the natural and scenic landscapes of the Piscataquog, Souhegan, and Nashua River watersheds of New Hampshire.



A Year to Celebrate

On September 17th, about one hundred people gathered for PLC’s 53rd Annual Meeting and Fall Harvest Dinner at the Mile Away in Milford. It was a beautiful day, a great venue, and a truly good time was had by all. The following is a recap of my report to the attendees on PLC’s achievements over the past year:

- We completed our eighteen-month campaign to conserve Clarkridge Farm in Goffstown.
- We completed a one-month flash fundraising campaign to add a key 22-acre parcel to our Rose Mountain Preserve in Lyndeborough, and received a generous gift of land that grew our Tarr Refuge in Bedford and Goffstown by twelve acres.
- We started work on three new land conservation projects in Temple and New Ipswich that when completed will protect almost three hundred acres in the headwaters of the Souhegan River watershed.
- We once again monitored 100% of our properties and did major trail and view improvement work at our Rose Mountain Preserve and Rice Natural Area (see story on page 7), thanks to our amazing volunteers and staff.
- We started work on a new strategic conservation plan for the 26-town PLC region. When completed at the end of 2023 the plan will guide our land protection work for the next decade.
- We renewed our national Land Trust Accreditation and passed with flying colors.
- We ran our 8th Rose Mountain Rumble, which was enjoyed by 150 cyclists and yielded the event’s biggest fundraising result yet.
- Thanks to several generous donors we were able to add to long-term funds that will support our land protection, stewardship and outreach work for years to come.
- We balanced our FY23 annual operating budget with a surplus of \$26.

The RMR Rides On

After heavy rain the day (and night) before, the sun came out just in time for PLC’s 8th Annual Rose Mountain Rumble on August 26th. 150 riders from our area and around New England explored the tree-shaded dirt roads and scenic vistas of Lyndeborough and surrounding towns. Lyndborough’s historic Center Hall once again served as the RMR’s home base, and the Wilton-Lyndeborough Women’s Club put on another amazing post-ride lunch. Thanks to our business sponsors Hitchiner Manufacturing, Sheehan Phinney, Sunrise Labs and Airmar Technology for their generous underwriting, to Doug Powers, Doria Harris and Kris Henry for making this ride happen every year, and all the volunteers that helped with registration, parking, and the water stations. Last but not least, thanks to all of you who came out to ride and support the conservation work of PLC.



Chris Wells  
PLC President  
Executive Director

During the brief business meeting, the minutes of the 2022 Annual Meeting were presented and approved, and the following slate of candidates was elected to the PLC Board of Trustees:

- Rita Carroll, Bedford – to serve second 3-year term, 2023-26
- Jess Charpentier, Henniker -- to serve second 3-year term, 2023-26
- Andrew Eills, Amherst -- to serve first 3-year term, 2023-26
- Aaron Gill, Mont Vernon -- to serve 1 additional year, 2023-24

Outgoing board members Ben Hubrich of Francestown and Gene Van Loan of Bedford were recognized for their longtime -- nine and seven years respectively -- service. After the business meeting closed, Stewardship Committee Chair Mike Boyko and PLC staff Dan Ewald presented a well-deserved 2023 Volunteer of the Year award to property monitors Jerry Jaworski and Greg Martin of Brookline.

Thank you to our 2023 Fall Harvest Dinner underwriters – Millyard Bank, Curbstone Financial, and Marianna Vis. Thanks also to Becky Kellner for donating an awesome door prize, and Joey Clark and the Big Hearts for their great music. It was a truly fun party that brought together PLC members old and new. If you couldn’t make it this year, I hope you will in 2024!



Team Sunrise Labs. Photo Credit - Dee Cleary

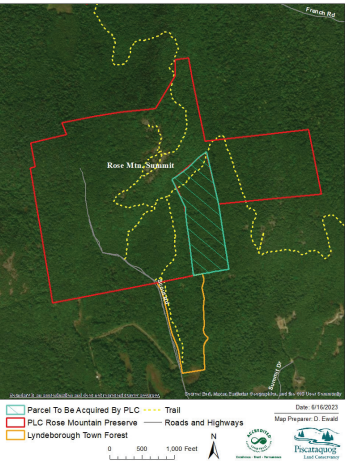


Photo Credit - Emily Hague

22 Acres Added to Rose Mountain Preserve

On July 14th the Piscataquog Land Conservancy completed the acquisition of a key 22-acre property on the slopes of Rose Mountain in Lyndeborough. The new land increases the size of our Rose Mountain Preserve to 211 acres and secures a key segment of the trail system on the mountain. The opportunity to acquire the property came up suddenly in early June, and PLC had to move fast or lose the land to an out-of-state buyer. In two weeks, we negotiated and signed a purchase agreement that gave us an additional month to raise the \$50,000 required to cover the land purchase and closing costs. We were hopeful that people would want to help, and the response turned out to be overwhelming.

In just thirty days, more than ninety individuals, families, and organizations contributed to the campaign, and we reached our \$50,000 goal with a few hours to spare. To every one of you who answered our urgent call for help, THANK YOU! Whether you contributed a lot or a little, your donation helped make this project happen. Your personal messages of encouragement and goodwill were a reminder of what a special community this is.

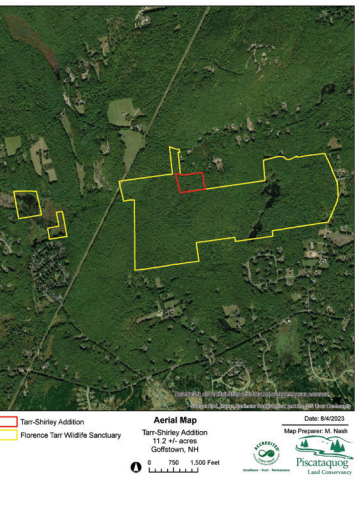


Thanks also to PLC Trustees Ben Haubrich and Doug Powers for their behind the scenes help with the flash fundraising campaign, and John Pomer and the Lyndeborough Conservation Commission for their support of the project in the closing days of the campaign. Finally, a big thank you to our friend and colleague Steve Perron for his incredibly fast (and affordable) work surveying the property!

For a complete list of donations to the Rose Mountain Addition project, see page 6.

Souhegan Projects Progress

As regular readers of this newsletter will recall, PLC has been working since last year on a pair of conservation easements in New Ipswich, the southwestern corner of PLC’s service area. Once complete, the donated easements will conserve a total of 252 acres of land in the headwaters of the Souhegan River. Both projects are progressing, and we aim to complete them by the end of this calendar year. More recently, we began working with the owner of a 68-acre property in Temple, which is also located in the Souhegan headwaters area. PLC will acquire the land via a donation, and it will be our first ownership in the town. The property is close to NH Route 101 on the Wapack Ridge, and directly abuts the 344-acre Temple Mountain State Reservation. We will close on the project by the end of this year.



Donation Expands Tarr Sanctuary

In late September, PLC received a generous gift of land that adds twelve acres to our Florence M. Tarr Wildlife Sanctuary in Goffstown. Landowner John Shirley had inherited the property from his late parents. After some deliberation with his brother, John decided that rather than sell the parcel he would donate it to PLC in honor of his parents Robert and Althea Shirley, who had visited the land to walk and cut firewood over the decades. The donated property’s topography and landcover are similar to adjacent Tarr Sanctuary lands, featuring hardwood and hemlock forest, rocky outcrops, vernal pools and mountain laurel. It also has an existing trail that interconnects with the Tarr trail system and will create a new loop trail in the western part of Tarr Sanctuary.

When the donation was complete John Shirley said “my father, Robert L. Shirley, and his father Thomas E. Shirley before him, wanted to preserve the beauty of the forest. I’m pleased to donate my family’s woodlot to the PLC because I can be assured their wishes will be honored and the land will be conserved as a memorial to them.”



# PLC Supporters Honor Roll

Contributions received during PLC’s Fiscal Year 2023 (July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023)

*Please note that donations received after June 30, 2023, will appear in next year’s honor roll.*

**Did you know?** Nearly all of PLC’s operating income comes from the annual contributions of people like you, one gift at a time. To learn more about how you can financially support PLC, including monthly “sustainer” gifts, gifts of stock, and making PLC part of your estate plan, contact Chris Wells at 487-3331 or cwells@plcnh.org

## PRESIDENT’S CIRCLE \$15,000 +

Anonymous (2)  
Davis Conservation Foundation 🐿  
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Grappone Automotive Group  
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Lake Horace Land Owner Corporation  
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Steve’s School Bus Service, Inc.  
Summit Computer Services – In Kind  
Studio Buteo  
Sunrise Labs

Marianna Vis

## IN HONOR / MEMORY OF

Larry Ames  
*In memory of Mark Ames*  
Phillip Brooks  
*In Memory of Ginny Brooks*  
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Dalrymple  
*In Memory of J. Robert Dumouchel*  
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*In Honor of Jerry ad Carolynne Shinn*  
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*In Honor of Mike Boyko*  
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*In Memory of Linda Hockman*  
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*In Memory of Tom Pine*  
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*In Honor of Jimmy Shirley*  
Marion Stoddart  
*In Memory of Bob Todd*  
Megan Thomas & Duncan Coakley  
*In Memory of George Thom*

## LAND & SPECIAL PROJECT CAMPAIGNS

The supporters lists below include  
ALL donations from project inception  
through completion, regardless  
of which PLC fiscal year they were  
received in.

### CLARKRIDGE FARM

(completed August 2023)

Anonymous  
Paul R. Belyea  
Francis & Celeste Catano  
Mark & Linda Clark  
James Clark  
Cathleen Clark  
Maureen and John Clark  
Bryan Comeau  
Stephen & Suzanne Covino  
Daniel & Shelley Dal Pra  
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Patricia & Timothy Finn  
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Comeau  
Greg Kreider  
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NH DES Aquatic Resources Mitigation  
(ARM) Fund  
NH Land and Community Heritage

## SUSTAINING SUPPORTER

Has a monthly contribution  
with automatic payment

## LIFETIME PLC MEMBER

Donated a conservation  
easement to PLC

## PISCATAQUOG LEGACY SOCIETY MEMBER

Has donated land to PLC or  
included PLC in their estate  
plans

## DONATED TO A LAND PROTECTION PROJECT



Investment Program (LCHIP)  
NH State Conservation Committee  
Tim O’Neil & Susan Peace  
Dana & Louise Robie  
Stephen Roy  
Joyce Ryan  
Fred & Marie Williams  
Sarah Zeller  
**ROSE MOUNTAIN ADDITION**  
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Larry Ames - In memory of Mark Ames  
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Andrea Badger  
Dudley & Jeannette Baker  
Michael Beebe  
Joslin & Ross Bennett  
Stewart & Carol Brock  
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**PLC LAND CONSERVATION  
PLAN UPDATE**  
Open Space Institute  
RiverStone Resources LLC

PLC OFFICE  
603.487.3331  
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**LAND PROTECTION SPECIALIST**  
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Rita Carroll  
Paul Doscher  
Carrie Finke  
Tim Finn

How I Spent my Summer

By Matt Nash

My name is Matt Nash and I’ve had the pleasure of working as a seasonal Stewardship Assistant with PLC this summer/fall. I was tasked with helping PLC complete several backlogged Baseline Documentation Reports, Risk Assessments, and other stewardship jobs as needed. While I came into this job with a lot of independent field work experience, I really enjoyed how collaborative the land conservation process is– from coordinating with private landowners to completing a site visit with a licensed surveyor– and this is something I will absolutely seek out in jobs moving forward. One of my favorite days on the job was a rainy volunteer trail-maintenance day at the Alan and Edgar Rice Nature Preserve; despite the weather, spirits amongst the group were high and we constructed two great-looking stairways in the blink of an eye. Another highlight was completing the Rose Mountain Rumble in August, which was a great, unique way to tour the area and acquaint oneself with many PLC properties along the way. Additionally, I’m working towards a graduate certificate in GIS and working for PLC has been helpful in honing those skills and realizing the various ways GIS can be used to aid in the conservation process. Many thanks to PLC for having me, and I look forward to crossing paths with many of you in the future!



Stewardship Stories

Volunteers Renew Trails at Rice Natural Area

By Dan Ewald

Since early 2022, PLC’s Stewardship staff and some dedicated volunteers have been making improvements to the Two Brook Trail at PLC’s Alan and Edgar Rice Natural Area in Lyndeborough. As the site of scenic Senter Falls, the Rice property is one of our most-visited preserves. The goal of our trail work has been to make it safer and more enjoyable for visitors.

The effort began by replacing the bridge over Scataquog Brook. Then over the course of three days in the fall of 2022, PLC Stewardship staff and a group of volunteers started working on improving the section of the trail that runs along Cold Brook. This work included the construction of a staircase to help visitors navigate a steep section of trail, the replacement of several slope retention boards to help stabilize the soil on sections of trail that traverse the side of an esker, and the widening of the trail in several places.

In June of 2023, we picked up where we left off, and started working on the remaining trail sections. Over the course of four days, PLC Stewardship staff and a group of volunteers rerouted two perilously steep sections of trail, built two more staircases, replaced and added several more slope retention boards, and widened the trail in several places.

With the trail improvements done, the Two Brook Trail is now safer and more enjoyable than ever! The final touches will be to add a kiosk and trail map at the trailhead, update and republish a trail guide written by Gordon Russell, and improve the parking area. If you would like to help out with any of these finishing touches, please contact Stewardship Specialist Dan Ewald at dewald@plcnh.org or 603-487-3331.

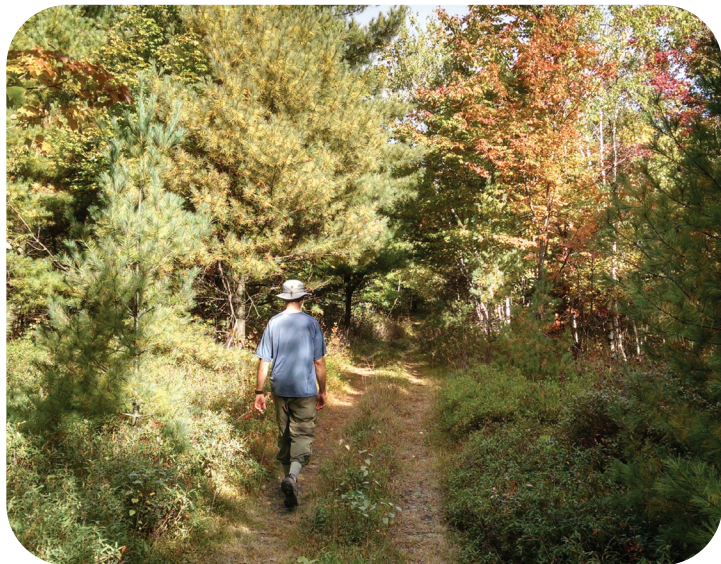
Special thanks to our fantastic volunteers who worked on this project: Mike Boyko, Dave Butler, Scott Chouinard, Peter Markarian, Curt Spacht, Tim Finn, Ben Haubrich, Paul Doscher, Tim Allen, Erik Tolf, Graham Pendlebury, Chris Ewald, Jerry Durst and Matt Caron.







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## New Land Expands Rose Mountain Preserve

# Piscataquog News

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## We Did It! Clarkridge Farm Protected



Photo Credit - Britta King



To Conserve the natural and scenic landscapes  
of the Piscataquog, Souhegan, and Nashua River  
watersheds of New Hampshire.