FALL | WINTER 2025

Piscataquog News

The Piscataquog Land Conservancy Newsletter

Townes Trust Property, New Boston

PLC Launches New Land Projects in New Boston and Mason

PLC is thrilled to announce two new conservation projects that have been in the works for decades. The first is a newly signed agreement with the Townes Family Trust to permanently conserve about four hundred-fifty acres of their property on South Hill in New Boston. The agreement comes eight years after PLC and the family began discussions about conservation options for the land. Ninety-six percent of the forested property ranks as a priority in PLC's land conservation plan, and it interconnects with thousands of acres of existing protected land in the surrounding area. This includes the Frances Hildreth Townes Forest, which was previously donated by the late Charles H. Townes in honor of his wife.

Under our agreement, the current generation of the Townes family will donate conservation easements to PLC on six parcels totaling 407 acres and sell one 48-acre parcel to PLC outright at a substantial discount. Conserving the Townes lands has long been a top priority for New Boston's Conservation Commission, and PLC is hopeful that the town's conservation fund will be able to cover costs on the project.

Speaking for the Townes Trust, Ellen Townes-Anderson says "this agreement with PLC comes from a long-standing interest by our family in nature, conservation, and farming. We have long enjoyed the beauty and rural nature of New Boston and are pleased to be able to contribute to the community in this way."

Anderson Property, Mason

The second new project under way is the purchase of about 140 acres along the Massachusetts border in Mason as a PLC preserve. Ninety percent of the forested property is identified as a priority in PLC's land conservation plan, and it also ranks high in the state's Wildlife Action Plan. The land has excellent recreational potential with an existing trail that connects to the adjacent 3,000-acre Townsend State Forest in Massachusetts.

The Mason property is owned by Judy and Jerry Anderson, who purchased the land over many years with the intention of someday placing it in permanent conservation. When the time came to look for a conservation partner to work with, Judy Anderson says "I was pointed towards the Piscataquog Land Conservancy and found our values and goals closely aligned. I am grateful for the conservation team at PLC who listened closely to our needs and desires and crafted a viable plan."

The Andersons are selling the property to PLC for 50% of its full appraised value. The total budget for the Anderson land acquisition is about $580,000, which we hope will be largely covered by the state's Land and Community Heritage Investment Program (LCHIP) and a generous private donor.

Judy Anderson says "we are now beginning our journey to transition the majority of our land to perpetual conservation. This is an amazing conclusion to our life's work to preserve and protect the land and the many creatures that call it home."

Our agreements with both the Andersons and the Townes Family Trust give us until June 30, 2026 to complete the land and easement transactions. Watch our monthly e-newsletter for updates in the coming months.

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

From My Corner

Autumn Milestones

Chris Wells
PLC President
Executive Director

As we turn the corner into another fall, PLC can look back with satisfaction on a very successful year of conserving land, water and wildlife in our region. In our most recent fiscal year ended June 30th, the Piscataquog Land Conservancy completed five land conservation projects protecting 628 acres. Each had its own unique story, twists and turns, and transactional complexities, some of which are detailed on the next page of this newsletter. Taken together they brought PLC's land and easement holdings to 142 properties, and for the first time more than 10,000 acres protected (10,292 to be exact). More than eighty percent of the newly protected acres were within geographic areas identified as high priority in our 2024 land conservation plan.

On the stewardship front, more than eighty volunteers and staff monitored every one of our lands and easements over the past year and completed on-the-ground projects that make our properties more inviting, safe and accessible to the public (see page 7 for the details). PLC also continued our much-loved Rose Mountain Rumble cycling event and offered other free public walks aimed at engaging the community with our properties. Organizationally, we took the big step of adding a new full-time stewardship staff position in our FY26 budget. It was quite a year!

I am also happy to report that our mighty little land trust once again ended the year with a balanced budget, and set a new record for contributions from individuals, families and businesses in the communities we serve. To everyone who financially supported this organization over the past year, a heartfelt thank you. I hope to see many of you at our 55th annual business meeting on Saturday morning, November 1st in Deering.

PS - Speaking of our annual meeting (did I mention there will be donuts?) a main agenda item is the election of new members to PLC's Board of Trustees. We also recognize trustees who are completing their tenure on the board. This year we will be saying a very fond farewell to veteran trustee **Gary Samuels** of Deering, who has loyally and ably served for the past nine years. Gary brought deep knowledge of, and passion for, our region's plants and animals to the board, and to our land protection committee, which he chaired for many years. He is also one of the most thoughtful and good-hearted people you'll ever meet. Thank you Gary…we'll miss you!

Gary Samuels

Late Summer Events Recap

PLC held the 10th Annual **Rose Mountain Rumble (RMR)** cycling benefit on August 23rd. We were once again blessed with spectacular weather, and everyone got back safe, tired and happy. Big thanks to the Town of Lyndeborough, the Wilton-Lyndeborough Women's Club for putting on another incredible lunch, and all the volunteers who helped out throughout the day. Huge thanks also to our generous business sponsors Hitchiner Manufacturing, Sheehan Phinney, Sunrise Labs, Airmar Technologies, and Grappone Automotive Group. Above all, thanks to all of you who traveled from across New Hampshire and New England (and even California, Colorado, New York, etc.) to be part of this year's Rumble.

We also had perfect weather and a sold-out crowd for PLC's **Fall Harvest Dinner** on September 21st. To everyone who came out to the event, thank you for making it a great party! Thanks also to Lake Shore Village Resort in Weare, the Treetellers, and the food and beverage team for making the event a pleasure from start to finish. Thank you, Curbstone Financial Management of Manchester, for their continued generous sponsorship of the event, and congratulations to Laurie MacKenzie of Weare for being named PLC's Volunteer of the Year!

Burton Reynolds (right) and PLC's Jonathan Beck at the Fall Dinner

Bedford and PLC Agree to Amend Joppa Hill Easement

After many months of discussion, a town-appointed working group (of which PLC was an advisory member) agreed in June to create an exclusion area from the existing Joppa Hill conservation easement in Bedford, which was originally put in place in 2005. The proposed exclusion area would comprise 8.3 acres around the existing Educational Farm at Joppa Hill (EFJH) farm buildings and parking, and one acre immediately across the street from the farm for overflow parking and a trail head. In return for taking the 8.3 acres out of the easement, the town of Bedford will extinguish a 25-acre "municipal zone" included in the original easement which would have allowed a range of non-conservation uses including new municipal buildings, parking lots etc.

The new exclusion area will align the easement with standard practice and simplify PLC's stewardship responsibilities. It will also give the Educational Farm more options for revenue-generating activities that are not possible under the existing easement. The Bedford Town Council has already unanimously approved the working group's proposed "swap," and PLC and the Town of Bedford are close to completing a draft easement amendment to implement the exchange. This draft amendment will be brought to the NH Attorney General's office for review, and hopefully approval, by the end of this year.

Land Protection News

Great Meadow-Follansbee Preserve, New Boston

RECENT PROJECT CLOSINGS

Great Meadow – Follansbee

On June 30th, PLC completed its purchase of the final unprotected private property bordering New Boston's Great Meadow wetland -- a 295-acre parcel owned by the estate of Alice Follansbee. PLC was first approached by the Follansbee heirs in the summer of 2023, and by December we had a signed agreement that gave us until the end of June 2025 to purchase the land. Over the ensuing eighteen months, we raised $560,000 required to complete the purchase, perform immediate post-closing stewardship tasks (boundary marking, gates, signage, etc.), and fund a longer-term wetland restoration project on the parcel. The project was funded almost entirely by the state of New Hampshire's Aquatic Resources Mitigation Fund (ARM). Under PLC ownership the land will be primarily managed for natural resource protection, with some timber harvesting if and as appropriate. The land will be open to the public for a wide range of non-motorized recreation, including hunting and fishing. We thank the many people who contributed to making this project a success, the Follansbee heirs for giving us the time we needed, and the late Alice Follansbee for keeping the land intact and in the family, so her children could see it protected forever.

Sylvia Pope Preserve & Easement

On May 30th, PLC finalized the protection of seventy-nine acres of forest and wetlands surrounding a historic hill farm on Flanders Memorial Road in Weare. Longtime landowner Sylvia Pope generously donated fifty-eight acres outright to PLC, and a conservation easement on another twenty-two acres. The property includes two large wetlands, and frontage on Peacock and Breed Brooks, which are both identified as key wildlife habitat corridors in PLC's recently completed conservation plan. Transaction expenses on the Pope project were covered by the town's Emma Sawyer Trust and a generous anonymous donor.

Seepack-Reynolds Easement

On May 21st, PLC completed the "Seepack" conservation easement in Lyndeborough. We had worked for more than a year with town native Burton Reynolds to place a conservation easement on about twenty-seven acres of his property that includes a scenic hayfield behind Lyndeborough's town office, and seven hundred feet of frontage along Stony Brook, a headwater stream of the Souhegan River. Burton generously donated the easement and all the transaction costs. As if that wasn't enough, he also gifted about 4/10 of an acre to the town, which earned him a standing ovation at town meeting in March!

Seepack-Reynolds Easement

PLC Supporters Honor Roll

Contributions received during PLC's Fiscal Year 2025 (July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025)

Please note that donations received after June 30, 2025, will appear in next year's honor roll. The list does not include rider registrations for the Rose Mountain Rumble cycling event or ticket purchases for the Fall Harvest Dinner.

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 (603) 487-3331 or cwells@plcnh.org

Give Now!

PRESIDENT'S CIRCLE

$15,000 +

Aquatic Resources Mitigation Fund (NH DES)
Barbara DeVore
Bethany Kacich & Jordan Meisner
John & Anne McCausland
New Hampshire Charitable Foundation
Burton Reynolds
Emma Sawyer Trust (Town of Weare)
The Estate of Lawrence Sunderland
Marilyn Jordan Taylor
Town of Temple Conservation Commission

$10,000 +

Anonymous
Adelard A. and Valeda Lea Roy Foundation
Susan & Bill Tucker

$5,000 +

Dudley & Jeannette Baker
Studio Buteo - Rosemary Conroy
Jane B. Cook 1992 Charitable Trust
The French Foundation
Doug Powers & Doria Harris
Ellen Townes-Anderson & Craig Anderson
Marianna Vis

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

$2,500 +

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John W. & Clara C. Higgins Foundation
Hitchiner Manufacturing Co.
Land and Community Heritage Investment Program (LCHIP)
Gail Parker
Gary Pelletier
RiverStone Resources LLC
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Lora Sabin & Jonathan Hecht
James & Sara Shirley
Joshua & Hollis Young

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$500 +

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Roger Dignard
Andrew Eills
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Piscataquog Area Trailways
Kelly Richey
Marcy Stanton
Jacqueleen Storro
Michael & Sue Thomas
Merrimack River Valley Chapter Trout Unlimited
Zulip Farms

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$250 +

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Dylan Cruess
Jim Curtis & Sue Curtis
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Todd Fahey & Lois Fahey
Neil Faiman
Erik Fey & Kathleen Rutty-Fey
Patricia & Timothy Finn
David & Anne Foley / Foley Logging
Melinda Gehris & Richard Head
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Beth & Dan Gresham
Don & Patricia Grosso
Barbara & Fred Hayes
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George Holt & Dr. Deborah Sellars
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Laurie MacKenzie
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Louis Springer
Jeffrey & Lynne Stone
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Aquatic Resources Mitigation Fund (NH DES)
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Curbstone Financial Management
Dalton Mountain Forestry, LLC
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Dodge Stores
Ecosystem Management Consultants of NE
Foley Logging
French Foundation
Goffstown Community Garden Club
Grappone Automotive Group
John W. & Clara C. Higgins Foundation
Hitchiner Manufacturing Company
Innovative Natural Resource Solutions, LLC
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Land and Community Heritage Investment Program
Meadowsend Timberlands
McLane Middleton
New Boston Bookkeeping & Payroll
New Hampshire Charitable Foundation
PayPal Giving Fund
Red Tail Farm
RiverStone Resources LLC
Adelard A. & Valeda Lea Roy Foundation
Emma Sawyer Trust (Town of Weare)
Sheehan Phinney Bass & Green PA
State of New Hampshire – State Conservation Committee (Moose Plate Grants)
Summit Computer Services – In Kind
Studio Buteo
Sunrise Labs
Town of Temple Conservation Commission
Trout Unlimited (Merrimack River Valley Chapter)
Vanguard Charitable Foundation
Marianna Vis

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Laurie MacKenzie

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In Memory of Rodny Richey

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In Honor of Jim Shirley

Ellen Townes-Anderson & Craig Anderson

In Memory of Charles & Frances Townes

Rick Van de Poll

In Honor of Dan Ewald

Cynthia Wilson

In Honor of Gordon Russell

LAND CONSERVATION PROJECTS

Fiske Hill Conservation Easement

200 Acres, Temple, completed March 2025

Town of Temple Conservation Commission

State of New Hampshire – State Conservation Committee (Moose Plate Grant)

Jeffrey & Lynne Stone

Great Meadow – Follansbee Preserve

295 Acres, New Boston, completed June 2025

Aquatic Resources Mitigation Fund (NH DES)

Studio Buteo / Rosemary Conroy

Stephen & Suzanne Covino

Patrick Richard

Piscataquog Area Trailways

Sylvia Pope Preserve & Conservation Easement

79 Acres, Weare, completed May 2025

Sylvia Pope, Landowner

PLC Weare-Deering Land Conservation Fund (Anonymous)

Emma Sawyer Trust (Town of Weare)

Seepack -- Reynolds Conservation Easement

27 Acres, Lyndeborough, completed May 2025

Burton Reynolds, Landowner

Rose Mountain Preserve – Conrey Addition

27 Acres, Lyndeborough, completed December 2024

Dudley & Jeannette Baker

Kathy Byrne

Scott & Claire Chouinard

Larry & Brigitte Cook

Andrew Jaworski

Barbara & Robert Joy

George Kocur

Ralph & Elizabeth Lavallee

David Lewis & Honey Weiss

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PLC Adds Stewardship Staff

PLC is pleased to announce that Ariyah Proulx of Merrimack has joined the PLC staff as our new full-time Stewardship Assistant. Ariyah is a recent graduate of Southern NH University and just finished up her second year as PLC's summer stewardship intern. The Stewardship Assistant is a new entry-level position created to help ensure PLC's stewardship program can keep pace with the growth of our land holdings, be more proactive in managing our lands, and make them even more accessible and welcoming to the public. The new position is made possible by a multi-year grant from the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation's John F. and Dorothy H. McCabe Environmental Fund and several generous individuals.

Stewardship News

2025 Spring/Summer Stewardship Recap

By Dan Ewald, PLC Stewardship Specialist

PLC's stewardship program had another busy and successful field season, and here are some of the highlights:

Our staff and volunteer trail work group cleaned up trails at the Clark Conservation Easement in New Boston -- clearing blown-down trees, trimming back encroaching vegetation, and clearing out drainage. We also made reroutes and built three bridges at the property. At the Ferrin Pond Preserve in Weare we also cleaned up the trail, refreshed trail markers, and unblocked the pond's outflow which was causing flooding of the pond's beach area and part of the trail system. We created an informal bridge and trail at the George Thomas Wildlife Sanctuary in New Boston to aid ongoing monitoring and stewardship projects. Finally, we installed a gate to deter motor vehicle use at our Corbit Conservation Easement in Goffstown.

PLC completed a series of land conservation projects during the spring, and staff were kept busy posting boundary markers and property signs at the new properties. These included the Fiske Hill Conservation Easement in Temple, the Seepack-Reynolds Conservation Easement in Lyndeborough, the Sylvia Pope Preserve and Conservation Easement in Weare, and the Great Meadow-Follansbee Preserve in New Boston. In coordination with the New Boston Conservation Commission and NH Department of Environmental Services, PLC staff and volunteers began work on a trail system at the Great Meadow-Follansbee Preserve and installed gates and trail cameras to assess and mitigate unauthorized motor vehicle use on the property.

In other news, PLC staff began using new purpose-built stewardship software that promises to greatly streamline property monitoring and other fieldwork. We also trained several "early adopter" volunteers to use the new tool. We attended continuing education opportunities for identification and control of invasive species and used what we learned to conduct an assessment and inventory of invasive plants on two of our fee-owned properties. PLC's Stewardship seasonal intern program continued to be a success, with Ariyah Proulx returning for a second summer after her graduation from Southern NH University. We recently welcomed SNHU sophomore Laken Graham as our academic intern for the fall 2025 semester.

We continued work on refreshing PLC boundary markers and survey blazing at our existing properties, and helped land protection staff assess stewardship needs on potential new conservation projects. Finally, we continued to work through the backlog of Baseline Documentation Reports (BDRs) on some of our older conservation easements and stewardship risk assessments on our fee ownerships. All BDRs are now complete, and just two risk assessments remain to be completed in coming months.

As we head into another fall (and property monitoring crunch time) a big thank you to all the volunteers who continue to contribute their time and efforts to the stewardship of PLC's lands. We are always looking for new volunteers and invite everyone in the community who is interested in working on the land to get in touch. You can use our online volunteer inquiry form or contact me directly at dewald@plcnh.org or (603) 487-3331. See you in the woods!

5A Mill Street, New Boston, New Hampshire 03070
603.487.3331 | plcnh.org | plc@plcnh.org

FALL EVENTS

Sunday, October 5
Hike at Fiske Hill Conservation Easement, Temple

Saturday & Sunday, Oct. 18 and 19
Guided Walks at Marston-Dunlap Conservation Area, Bedford

Saturday, November 1
55th Annual Business Meeting, Deering

To register for PLC outings, please visit our website: plcnh.org/events/

Piscataquog News

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New PLC Projects in New Boston & Mason - Learn More Inside!

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