

NORTHEAST
WILDERNESS
TRUST

A natural classroom

Wapack Wilderness



In southern New Hampshire, the Northeast Wilderness Trust and partners are working with Hampshire Country School to preserve an exceptional wild forest, and keep an innovative learning community as vibrant as the surrounding landscape.

The land

Look down the Wapack Trail from the summit of Stony Top Mountain. You'll see a green carpet rolling towards a network of wetlands. To the northwest rises Mount Monadnock, one of the most-hiked mountains in America.

But here is a quiet place, mostly forested, with rich stands of hemlock, oak, and pine. Climb Pratt Mountain, paddle along one of the numerous streams, or ski through the gnarly old beech trees—in the Wapack Wilderness you'll find a sense of remoteness rare in southern New Hampshire.

With your help, it can stay this way.

The Wapack Wilderness is a refuge for people and nature, harboring eight distinct natural communities, including two rare ones. Its ancient trees, pristine waters, and rugged topography make it an ecological treasure; its landscape context makes it a regional conservation priority. The property abuts Binney Pond State Park and land conserved by the New England Forestry Foundation. Watatic Mountain Wildlife Area is two miles to the southeast, linked by the Wapack Trail, and Annett State Forest is two miles to the northeast.

Saving the Wapack Wilderness will link and expand a network of natural areas.

The threat

New Hampshire is facing unprecedented growth. By 2020, the N.H. Office of State Planning estimates a population increase of 38%, much of it concentrated in the southern part of the state. With rapid growth comes sprawl and habitat fragmentation. Each year, nearly 14,000 acres of open space are lost to development in New Hampshire. Property values are soaring, and the demand for developable land is great. With such pressures, an intact forest the size of the Wapack Wilderness is increasingly rare.

A footpath in the wilderness

The 1,400-acre Wapack Wilderness contains over one mile of the Wapack Trail, offering superb long-distance views and one of the most remote stretches you'll find on your hike. The Wapack Trail, one of the oldest footpaths in New Hampshire, stretches north from Mt. Watatic for 21 miles to the Pack Monadnocks near Peterborough. When you hike the trail, you'll be following some famous boots. Benton MacKaye, creator of the Appalachian Trail and co-founder of The Wilderness Society, delighted in the Wapack Trail, which he saw as a microcosm of his beloved "AT."



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Benton MacKaye's excursions in the Wapack Range provided some of the inspiration for a flurry of writing about his evolving philosophy of trails and wilderness. After taking students into the Wapack Range in the 1920s, Benton MacKaye wrote "A Boy's Project for a Balanced Civilization," an article published in the *Christian Science Monitor*, in which he vigorously argued that young people could play an important role in preserving the landscape.

In that spirit, for more than 50 years the Wapack Wilderness has been maintained as wild by its owner, Hampshire Country School, a family-style boarding school on 1,700 acres of forest, hills, fields, and waterways in the Mount Monadnock region. Since its founding in 1948, the school has taken pride in its stewardship of the land.

The opportunity

Hampshire Country School is a small educational community where students with special challenges fulfill their potential and develop a thirst for knowl-

edge, concern for people, confidence, and a land ethic. It is fitting that this haven for children who thrive in this unique rural, educational setting continues MacKaye's legacy of wilderness protection and low-impact recreation.

In recent years, however, the cost of maintaining such a large property has become a financial burden. Rather than developing its land holdings for maximum profit, the school found a solution that speaks to its values and history: its trustees have offered to sell a conservation easement on the school's 1,400 wildest acres to the Northeast Wilderness Trust.

Working with the Wilderness Trust and partners, the school will permanently preserve the Wapack Wilderness, maintain a natural classroom for its students, and generate needed revenue for its educational programs.

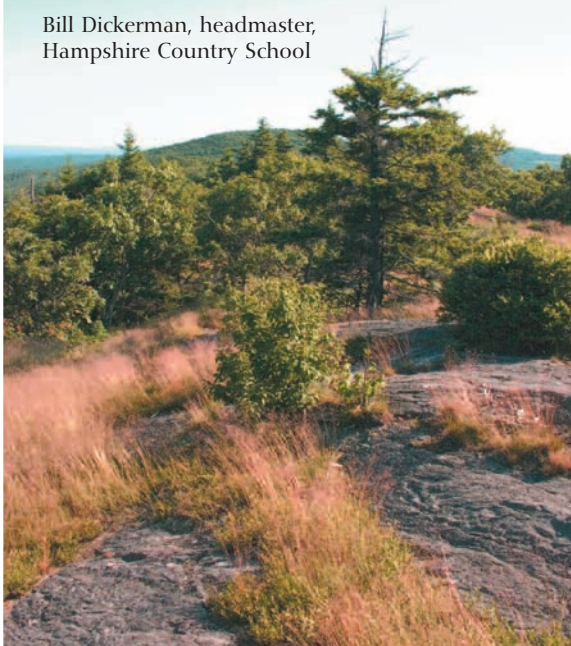
Students and school, land and wild creatures, residents and visitors to New Hampshire—all win.



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"Some schools have a memorial arch, some have a mascot. Our identity is our land."

Bill Dickerman, headmaster, Hampshire Country School



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river otters; Hampshire Country School students explore Millers River; Stony Top summit along the Wapack Trail; ovenbird; old beech tree on Pratt Mountain; overhead view of Wapack Ridge, Island Pond, and Mill Pond (above)



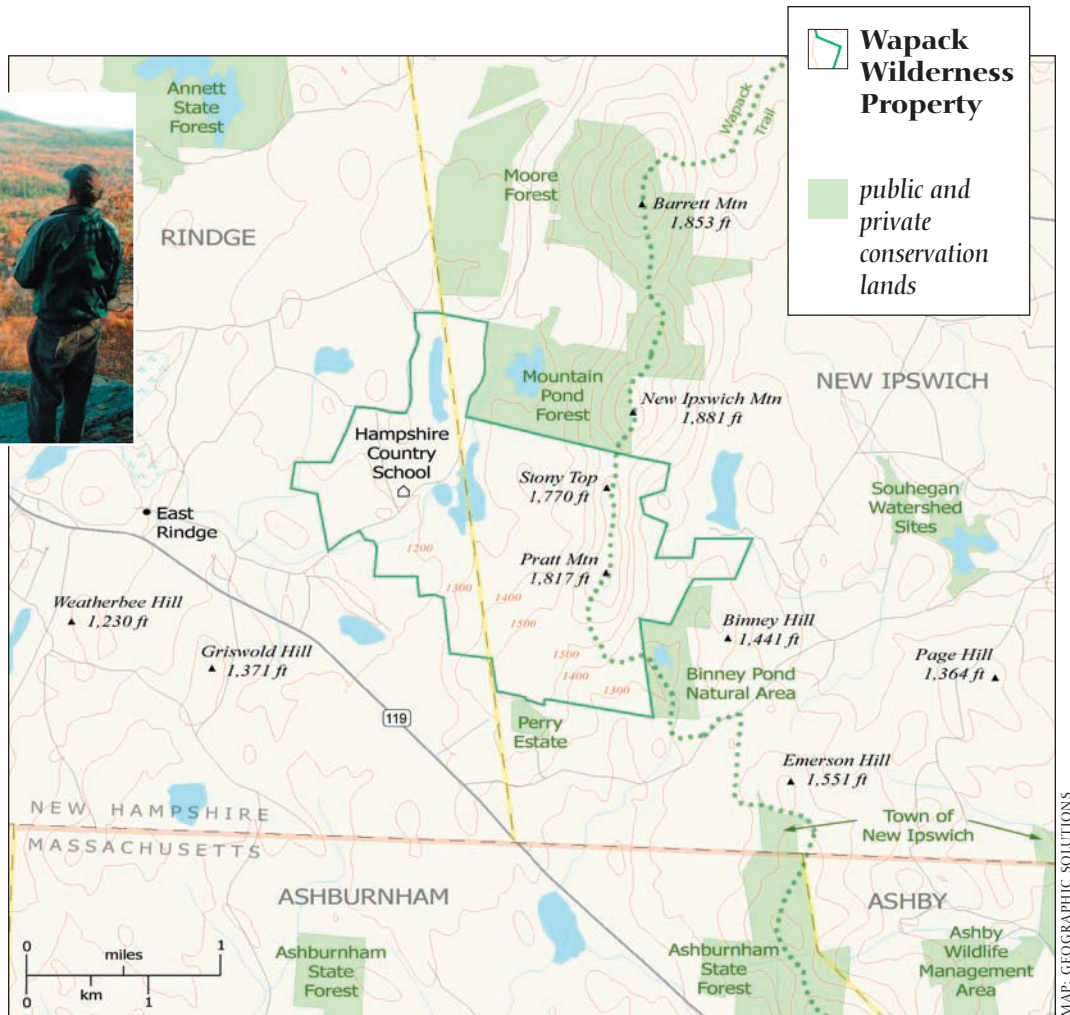
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“Over the years I’ve had the opportunity to roam almost every acre of this land. It is a wonderful place where nature heals and gives strength to body and soul; a spectacular natural environment that must be preserved for future generations.”

George Carmichael,
Rindge resident



Wapack Wilderness Property

- Location** Rindge and New Ipswich, New Hampshire
- Size** 1,400 acres
- Cost** \$1,400,000
- Habitat** Wetlands, rare natural communities, rocky ridges, old-growth forest
- Creatures** Moose, bobcat, fisher, mink, weasel, beaver, otter, deer, coyote, red fox, ducks, warblers, salamanders
- Values** Wildlife habitat, watershed protection, over one mile of the historic Wapack Trail, nurturing educational environment, part of conservation lands, headwaters of the Millers River

We need your help to create the largest forever-wild preserve along the Wapack Trail.

The Northeast Wilderness Trust is working with Hampshire Country School to raise \$1,400,000 to preserve the Wapack Wilderness. With your help, we will purchase a conservation easement that ensures the land will remain forever wild. Your support is crucial. Please make a contribution today and send it to:

NORTHEAST



WILDERNESS TRUST

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The Northeast Wilderness Trust is a regional land trust working to preserve and restore forever-wild landscapes for wildlife and people.