

NORTHEAST



WILDERNESS
TRUST

*News and views from
the Northeast's only
wilderness land trust*



Spring 2017

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Together Our Shared Future is Wild!

In my first 100 days as volunteer Board President, I find myself very excited to support the work of the Northeast Wilderness Trust. We, in the United States certainly find ourselves in bizarre, even frightening political and social times, and you might wonder why investing in wilderness conservation is critical right now. I believe it is as important as ever. In fact, wildlands protection is essential to the values and goals of many Americans share.

First, we at the Northeast Wilderness Trust believe in science, which tells us that natural, unmanaged wild places not only protect the most biodiversity, but also provide a standard against which to compare human-managed forests and other landscapes. Without wild places, there is no way to know if what we are doing on the planet is safe, sustainable, or smart.

Science also tells us that wild forests are essential for resisting climate chaos. Older forests sequester more carbon than young forests, provide refuge for mobile species fleeing habitat loss, and are expected to slow the loss of northern forest types that is expected with climate change. More wild forests mean more carbon sunk into trees and soils, slower landscape change, and more homes for wild creatures on the run.

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Learn about our
latest land project
in Bridgewater Corners, Vermont!
see page 4

Above: Forest in the Split Rock Wildway region of New York State.

Susie is a true inspiration and we are excited to welcome her to the Trust.

Susie serves as a Research Associate at the College of the Atlantic, (COA) in Bar Harbor, Maine where she explores the ways in which poetic imagination can be developed and

applied as a valid form of inquiry in the field. Entitled *The Art of Reciprocity*, her work investigates how awareness of our indivisibility with all members of the larger life community is deepened through unique, individual experiences. *The Art of Reciprocity* builds on four

areas: the commitment to exploring one's inner world, the practice of deep attention, and the development of creative perception and expression through deep connection with, and affection for, one's subject of study.

She recently completed a field practice as an Artist in Residency with the Arts Alliance of Northern New Hampshire and the Forest Service. This practice took place in New

Hampshire's Wild River Wilderness, and is part of a larger effort to explore stories of rewilding in the Northeast. For the coming years Susie will be investigating the restoration of rivers and wild Atlantic salmon in Maine and Canada.

Susie holds a Master's of Science with distinction in Environmental Management from Oxford University, England. Fluent in French, Susie's professional experience ranges from comprehensive environmental policy to program creation and direction in the fields of local, organic agriculture and wildlife conservation.

In addition to writing poetry and teaching, Susie is an amateur photographer and gardener. She also directs the Anam Cara Forage Forest project, an effort to create a common forage forest where people gather free food, herbs, and medicine growing in a semi-wild or fully wild state.

Susie's commitment to wilderness and her understanding of the ways we connect with it will be a huge boon to Northeast Wilderness Trust.

We are happy to welcome her aboard!



Volunteer of the Year: Don Dixon

This year at Northeast Wilderness Trust we are starting a new tradition of gratitude for our wonderful volunteers.

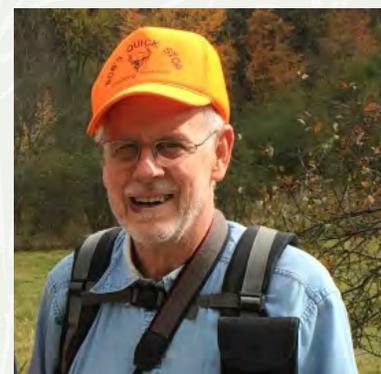
We are a small organization covering a huge geographic area, and without dedicated volunteers we could not be nearly as effective at stewarding the acreage in our care. All of our volunteers are wonderful, but we'd like to make a habit of recognizing one each year for their spectacular commitment to wild places.

This year we would like to express our deepest gratitude to volunteer Don Dickson of Burlington, VT. Don has been volunteering with the Trust for over 10 years, and has visited many of our properties in that time, traveling as far as the Adirondacks and New Hampshire to monitor for us.

A little closer to his home, Don has been the regular monitor for not one, but three, wilderness eased properties in Lincoln and Jericho, Vermont. In the time that he has been monitoring with us Don has watched these properties get wilder and wilder, the paths disappearing and the woods reclaiming them.

Don is retiring from being a regular monitor this season, and we are sad to see him go, but are also deeply grateful to him for sharing his knowledge and love of the land with us for these past 11 years.

Thank you Don!



—Shelby Perry, Conservation Assistant

Cool Ecology: The Smell of Spring

Spring is a time of transformation. The sleepy silence of the cold white winter recedes into a decadent symphony of sound and color, slowly at first, but with continually increasing vigor right on through until summer. There is so much to see and hear during this time of the year that it is easy to overlook one of my favorite spring sensations: the smell.

Usually described as “fresh earth” or “muddy” the smell is one we all know well. I associate it with those hardy little flowers known as spring ephemerals that come up as soon as the ground thaws, producing both flower and fruit before the trees above open their leaves and soak up all of the available sunlight. Trout lilies and spring beauties and trilliums—just writing their names brings the smell of spring to my mind; but it is not these flowers that give us that springy smell. So just what is it that we have to thank for spring’s classic scent?

It turns out the scent of spring is the very same substance responsible for the earthy taste of beets: a terpene known as geosmin. The name geosmin comes from the Greek words for



“earth” and “smell.” Geosmin is produced by blue green algae and certain kinds of soil bacteria called actinomycetes. These bacteria break down plant material, and in the process convert another soil chemical (farnesyl diphosphate) to geosmin in a two-step process.

Geosmin exists in the soil year round, but its smell is only noticeable under certain conditions—you might notice it when digging into soil, during spring thaw, and after a rain. This is because generally the gas pools in spaces beneath the soil surface and is only detectable when these pools are disturbed, like when digging turns over the soil or water soaks into it, displacing the gasses within. Sometimes the smell of geosmin is apparent before a storm hits, the result of decreasing pressure associated with the approaching weather causing the soils to off-gas geosmin and carbon dioxide that has built up beneath the surface.

With spring in full swing I hope you take the time to get out into the wild, where forests are coming to life and there is so much to see and explore. And while you are out there don’t forget to stop and smell the geosmin.

—**Shelby Perry**, *Conservation Assistant*

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Next, we also believe in widening the arc of social justice. To some of us, the ultimate social injustice would be to leave future generations of humans a biologically degraded and impoverished planet. We are also increasingly aware of the needs and rights of wild species, and the value of allowing the land itself to exist and evolve freely, without human interference. Wild places ensure that genetic and species diversity is preserved for the future of all life on Earth, and a better world for our kids and grandkids.

Wilderness conservation is a long-term investment, something that endures through political and economic cycles. At the Northeast Wilderness Trust we are committed to protecting wild places in perpetuity, which we fully expect will be a very, very long time.

Finally, wild places offer us a place to quiet our souls, to experience solitude, to refresh our bodies and our spirits after

work on the job or in the streets to make our country and the world a bit better. We need wild places to visit, and we need to know they exist, even if we can’t visit. Wild places give us peace, perspective, and humility—each often missing from our public and everyday lives.

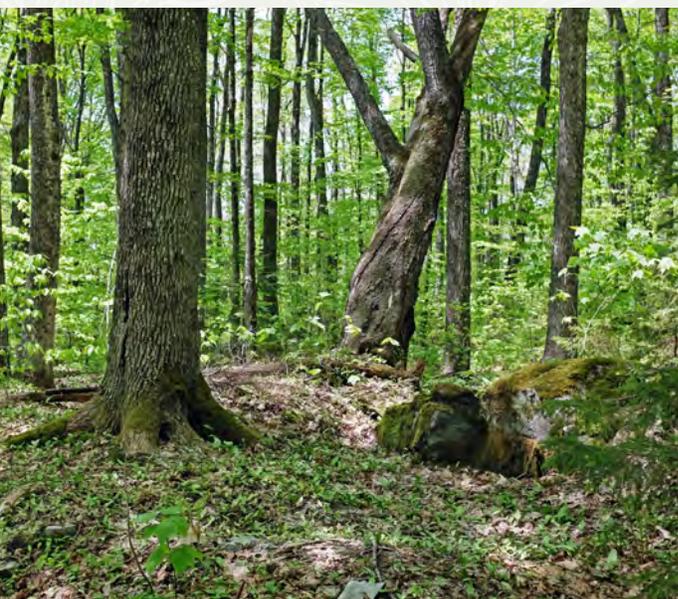
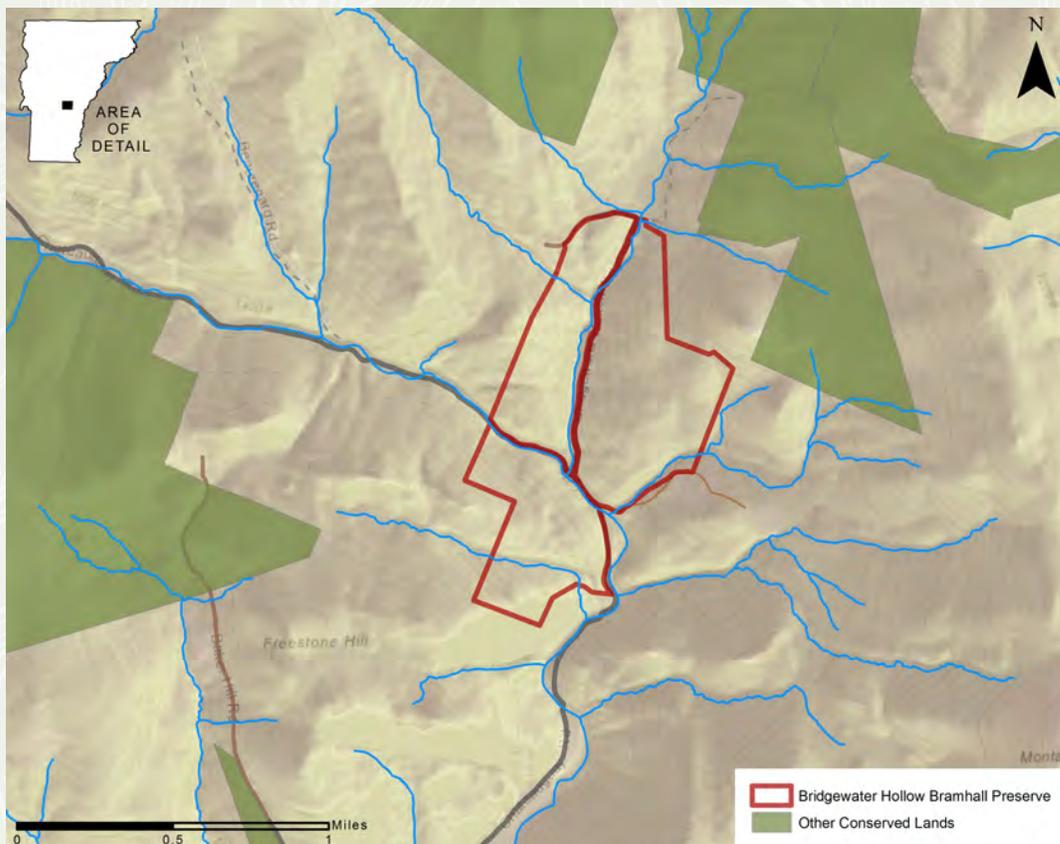
Since 2002 the Northeast Wilderness Trust has been hard at work establishing and caring for wild places in our home region.

We now protect nearly 25,000 acres of forever-wild forest in five states, and we aim to conserve another 10,000 acres by 2020. With 13 new projects underway covering over 3,000 acres, we are well on our way. And with 6,000 acres more in view, we can do it! But we need your help.

Your support makes this worthy and hopeful work possible. Please invest in our shared future and a wilder Northeast today.

Thank you.

—**Annie Faulkner**, *President*



Bridgewater Hollow Bramhall Preserve at a Glance

Size Approximately 350 acres

Location Bridgewater Corners, Vermont

Context Part of a 57,000-acre block of forest, deemed highest conservation priority by the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources for both habitat and connectivity values

Objective Conserve this mature, magnificent forest as forever-wild

Cost \$925,310

Seller Private landowner who has offered the Trust a bargain sale

Habitat Mature northern hardwood forest, many pocket wetlands and seeps, riparian corridors, diverse habitat features such as rocky outcroppings, patches of younger forest, vernal pools and many habitat trees, both standing and downed

Creatures Many mature forest bird species, moose, deer porcupines, and amphibians detected, many others likely

Threats Valuable standing timber on this property presents significant threat of logging

More Information Contact Marisa Riggi, Conservation Director, at marisa@newildernesstrust.org or at (802) 224-1000

*Wilderness is not—
and should not be—
a past and vanishing
force in life.
It is, as far as anyone
can see into the
future in our rapidly
changing world, an
abiding value.*

George Marshall

This year we celebrate our 15th Anniversary!

*With your help we have conserved nearly
25,000 acres of wilderness.*

*We are deeply grateful to be doing this work through
your generosity and commitment to wild places.*

Thank you!

*Please consider
supporting our goal of 10,000
acres by 2020 with a gift
by visiting our website.
newildernesstrust.org*

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