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## The Newsletter of the Francestown Land Trust, Inc.

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Spring 2017

### 108 Acres of Critical Watershed & Habitat Protected in 3 Areas

Francestown Land Trust has acquired three new parcels that enhance existing conservation areas in three different locations in important ways. Like all property owned by FLT, these three new areas are open to the public for hiking, wildlife watching, hunting, fishing, and other non-motorized recreational activities. We invite you to get out and enjoy them!

**Rand Brook Forest** - In November, the Francestown Land Trust acquired a small 1.5-acre parcel along Russell Station Road. The parcel, surrounded on three sides by the existing FLT-owned Rand Brook Forest property, was separated from a protected lot when Russell Station Road was relocated many years ago. While it might be small, this parcel fills in a critical missing chunk in the middle of protected roadside land along the northerly side of Russell Station Road. The lot includes an old cellar hole and barn foundation, some fine stone walls, and the uncommon “cancer root” plant. A lot line adjustment action by the Francestown Planning Board formally made the parcel part of the Rand Brook Forest property.

**Collins Brook Headwaters** - Late in March, the Collins Brook Headwaters project was finalized with the purchase of 100 acres from the Brien Family Trust. A collaborative effort of the Francestown Land Trust and the Francestown Conservation Commission, this acquisition adds critical habitat and water resources to the Shattuck-Dinsmore land protection initiative, which includes the Dinsmore Brook Conservation Area and the Shattuck Pond Town Forest. The new property, accessed off Wilson Hill Road, is a diverse environment of mixed forest and wetland types, which, according to the NH Fish & Game Wildlife Action Plan map, includes about 40 acres of highest ranked wildlife habitat in the state, and about 50 acres of highest ranked habitat in the region. It contains headwater streams of Collins Brook, a direct tributary of the protected Piscataquog River. Other features include frontage on two ponds, wet meadow/shrub wetlands, several vernal pools, and a swamp. Evidence of mink, otter, beaver, fisher, bear, and many other species are found throughout this area. Ben Haubrich, FLT’s land manager, says this is the most prolific wildlife habitat he has encountered anywhere in the Monadnock Region. The

**108 Acres Protected** *Continued on page 3*

**FLT has acquired 3 new properties, L to R: the Brooks property along the South Branch of the Piscataquog River; Collins Brook Headwaters; Rand Brook Forest parcel.**



## The Chairman's Letter

Dear Friends and Supporters of FLT,

How does the childhood rhyme go? April showers bring May flowers. This year Mother Nature sent us April snow to ensure a longer mud season.

Although the seasons may change, there is a continuity in the dedication of the Frankestown Land Trust to protect our open spaces for the enjoyment of people and wildlife. The FLT has acquired three new properties which are profiled in this newsletter. I hope that you can take some time to explore them. They are really special!

Recent changes in the landscape are noticeable as one drives along the roads leading in and out of Frankestown. Large and small parcels have been harvested by landowners for a variety of reasons. New homes are under construction. Just as the landscape continually changes, we are continually gaining new insights into how best to protect our finite natural resources.

The success of the Frankestown Land Trust over the past 30-plus years is the result of the generosity of many individuals and organizations who have supported its efforts. Together, the gifts of land, money, time, and expertise have enabled FLT to preserve more of Frankestown's unique natural environment for generations to come.

We greatly appreciate your past support and hope that you will continue to help us in our efforts. Please plan to join us at our annual meeting on Thursday, June 8 at 6:30 pm at the Old Meeting House in Frankestown.

Chris Rogers

Come learn about, observe and handle caterpillars at FLT's Annual Meeting Thursday, June 8, the Old Meeting House, Frankestown NH

### The Caterpillars of New England: Their Natural History and Value as an Educational Resource

Sam Jaffe will discuss his work growing The Caterpillar Lab, from its roots in natural history photography to its current form as a multidisciplinary project focused on using native caterpillars to inspire interest in the natural world. Through a visually stunning presentation of slides and videos, Sam will explore the surprising diversity of caterpillars to be found in New England,



their particular strength as educational tools, and their value to us and to local ecosystems. Sam and other educators from The Caterpillar Lab will be on hand before and after the talk to display many live native caterpillars and answer questions and explore topics of specific interest.

### Be Careful Getting Rid of Invasives

It's that time of the year when we are spending time outside in our yards or working on property improvements. Should you decide to do battle with any invasive plants you encounter, the Frankestown Land Trust urges you to do all you can to make sure they don't come back or spread. Dispose of invasives carefully and adopt recom-



mendations described in *Methods for Disposing Non-Native Invasive Plants* from the University of New Hampshire Co-operative Extension. The summary can also be found on the Frankestown Land Trust website, [francestownlandtrust.org](http://francestownlandtrust.org), under "News and Links of Interest."

Top: Japanese knotweed  
Bottom: Ornamental bitterweet

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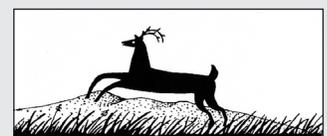
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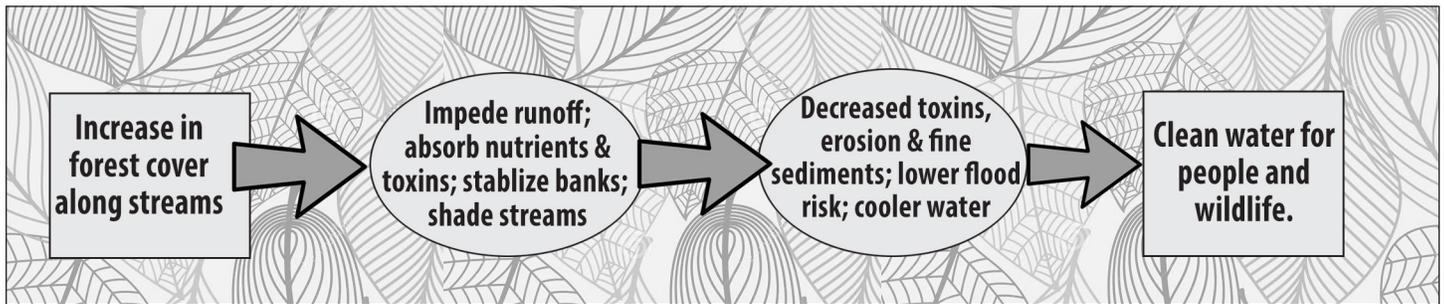
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LAND TRUST

Founded in 1986



**Results chain** showing the effect of increased riparian forests (forests situated on the banks of a river) on water quality.

**108 Acres Protected** *Continued from page 1*

purchase of this property was made possible by grants from New Hampshire Land and Community Heritage Investment Program (LCHIP), the NH State Conservation Committee (Moose Plate) program, the Fields Pond Foundation, the Quabbin-to-Cardigan Partnership, the Davis Foundation, and one anonymous grant. Funds were also contributed by the Conservation Commission, as well as a number of generous private donors. In addition to these grants and funding donations, many, many hours of donated time and services made the project a success.

**Brennan Brook Confluence** - Most recently, another small, but very important parcel was acquired along the Piscataquog River with funding help through the NH Department of Environmental Services Aquatic Resource Mitigation Fund (ARM) grant program. This 7+ acre property on Clarkville Road protects approximately 1,000 feet of forested river frontage and abuts over 180 acres of conservation land along the river on either side, linking these areas and extending protection of the river corridor, which is considered the highest ranked wildlife habitat in the state by the NH Fish and Game Wildlife Action Plan. Forested shore land areas like this are critical for people and wildlife, pro-

tecting water quality, habitat, corridors, and places of quiet beauty. Dense forest cover provides shade, impedes runoff, and aids filtration, decreasing nutrients and harmful toxins in the water; stabilizing banks and shades streams; reducing erosion and sedimentation; helping to lower flood risk; and keeping the water clean and cool for people, fish, and other wildlife. Eventually this area will be further protected by a permanent conservation easement, as required by the ARM grant conditions.

**Let's Celebrate!**

The Francestown Land Trust and the Francestown Conservation Commission will announce a celebratory hike on the Collins Brook Headwaters property sometime after the ground dries out. For more information on the Francestown Land Trust and a map (Miller and Dinsmore Brook Conservation Area) go to: <http://www.francestown-landtrust.org/> or the Francestown Conservation Commission: [http://francestown-nh.gov/Pages/FrancestownNH\\_ConCom/Index](http://francestown-nh.gov/Pages/FrancestownNH_ConCom/Index)

*Betsy Hardwick, Barry Wicklow, Ben Haubrich*

**Getting Vernal**

There was still snow on the ground on April 7th when the Joan Hanchett Nature Series **Amphibians and Vernal Pools** took place. But it was not too soon to start learning about the amphibian populations that would soon be returning. Some 60 people, including 16 young children, attended the presentation at the Francestown Elementary School, where Tom Tynning, professor of Environmental Science at Berkshire Community College, described the much-anticipated annual amphibian spring migration. It was fascinating to learn about the perilous journey these animals make—how they emerge from their overwintering retreats, and how



*Tom Tynning and friend.*

they navigate, at night, in the rain, to arrive at the specialized, ephemeral wetlands called 'vernal pools.'

Attendees of all ages were held spellbound by Professor Tynning's lively delivery, beautiful photographs, five-foot stuffed salamander, and frisky, live spotted salamander. They heard about the emergence and behavior of various salamanders, the wood frog, and the spring peeper. Of particular interest were different winter survival strategies. Salamanders cannot tolerate freezing temperatures and burrow deeply in mud during winter. On the other hand, frogs can freeze and form "frog popsicles" near the surface. This description delighted both children and adults.

## 2016 Francestown Land Trust Financial Report

preliminary, unaudited

### Statement of Income and Expense

#### Income

Cash Gifts	
Annual Fund . . . . .	11,847
Undesignated donations . . . . .	2,250
Membership Dues . . . . .	3,768
Non-Cash Gifts . . . . .	505,000
Investment Income . . . . .	8,948
Grant Income (designated) . . . . .	9,994
Other Cash Income . . . . .	614
<b>Total Income . . . . .</b>	<b>542,421</b>

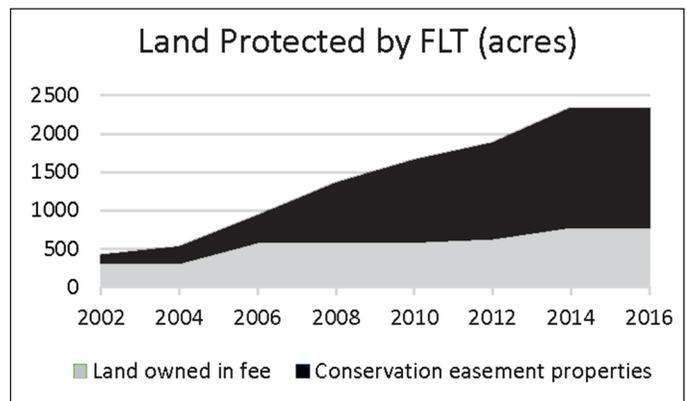
#### Expense

Member relations . . . . .	3,432
Operating Costs	
Postage and printing . . . . .	749
Accounting . . . . .	750
Fees . . . . .	75
Insurance . . . . .	743
Memberships . . . . .	350
Investment Fees . . . . .	1,402
Land Maintenance	
Property Tax . . . . .	755
Insurance . . . . .	1,956
General Maintenance . . . . .	1,381
Easement Stewardship	
Insurance . . . . .	1,595
New Project Expenses . . . . .	30,889
Reduction in FMV (easement) . . . . .	184,778
<b>Total Expense . . . . .</b>	<b>228,856</b>
<b>Total Net Income . . . . .</b>	<b>313,565</b>

### Statement of Financial Position

#### Non-fixed Assets

Cash and short term investments . . . . .	105,906
Land stewardship (LT investments) . . . . .	270,563
<b>Total Non-fixed Assets . . . . .</b>	<b>376,479</b>
<b>Fixed Assets</b>	
Fee owned land (819 acres) . . . . .	1,274,690
<b>Total Fixed Assets . . . . .</b>	<b>1,274,690</b>
<b>Total Assets . . . . .</b>	<b>1,651,169</b>
<b>Liabilities . . . . .</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Equity . . . . .</b>	<b>1,651,169</b>
<b>Total Liabilities and Equity . . . . .</b>	<b>1,651,169</b>



### Storm Doesn't Stop Winter Tracking and Snowshoe Hike

On Sunday, February 12th, the Francestown Land Trust and Francestown Conservation Commission co-sponsored a snowshoe hike through the then, yet to be acquired, Brien family property at the north end of town. FLT had just been awarded an LCHIP grant for what will be known as the Collins Brook Headwaters, and we figured, what better way to celebrate?

The event was billed as a Winter Tracking and Snowshoe hike and the snowshoes were a necessary part of the experience as it began snowing at around 11:00 am, had accumulated a few inches on top of a healthy existing snow pack by hike time, and continued through the hike, and into the night.

A collection of eleven intrepid souls gathered at George Sanderson's home on Old County Road North. We made our introductions and prepared to set off into the woods. Warm clothes, snowshoes, poles, gaiters, and goggles bedecked the group as we crossed Collins Brook, then followed a path through a recently logged section of George's property leading us to a large wetland area. After crossing the wetland, which feeds Collins Brook, we wound our way up a small frozen stream and across a pond until we were close to the Wilson Hill Road access to the property. The falling snow covered any existing wildlife tracks and most critters were hunkered down for the storm except for us bipeds.

**Snowshoe Hike** *Continued on page 5*

## Thank you to all our previous year's Donors

The Francestown Land Trust is dependent upon, and deeply appreciative of, community support. Whether you are a Francestown resident, a neighbor in the region, or you just have a special place in your heart for our town and its wild places, we would like to express our gratitude to all who have supported us during this past year:

Bev Abbott  
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 George & Pat Zink

### Snowshoe Hike *Continued from page 4*

The hush of the snow was broken only by the conversation of our subgroups and occasional descriptions of points of interest by hike leader Ben Haubrich. Under better conditions, we would have found tracks of otter, deer, fox, bobcat, coyote, and maybe fisher, but on this day, we had to settle for those of the "phantom skier." As we bushwhacked back to the wetland, we picked up the trail of a group of snowshoe hikers and followed it home.





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**Don't Miss These Upcoming Events!**

**Thursday, June 8, 6:30 pm • FLT's Annual Meeting  
The Old Meeting House, Francestown NH  
The Caterpillars of New England: Their Natural History and  
Value as an Educational Resource**

Through a visually stunning presentation of slides and videos, Sam Jaffe of the Caterpillar Lab will explore the surprising diversity of caterpillars to be found in New England. Come learn about, observe, and handle caterpillars!



*Read more  
on page 2*

**Saturday, June 24, 12-5pm • Arts Fest**

Francestown Arts Fest is coming to the FIHS Lodge on Main Street, Saturday, June 24th from 12:00-5:00 pm. There will be arts and crafts from the Monadnock region. Enjoy singing by locals like Ethel MacStubbs, beautiful silver jewelry by Anne Clark, paintings by Mackenzie West, weaving by Pat Thalhauser, and lots more.

All artists, crafts people, and musicians are welcome. There is no charge for showing. Please contact Marcy Tripp via Francestown Arts Fest on Facebook, call 547- 2548 for encouragement and scheduling, or just show up with your creations between 10:00 am and noon on the 24th.

This event celebrates the creativity of locals and the good works of The Francestown Land Trust.



**Join our email list to learn about our upcoming events.  
Contact us at [info@francestownlandtrust.org](mailto:info@francestownlandtrust.org) to be added to this list.**