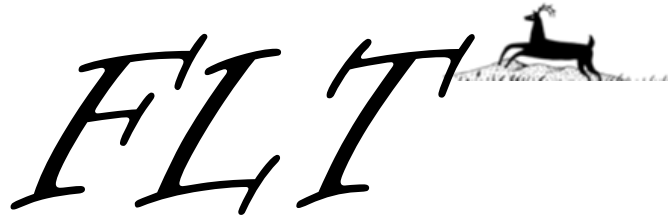


# Notes from



The Newsletter of the Francestown Land Trust, Inc. Fall 2013

## PUBLIC ACCESS TO BRENNAN FALLS AT RISK



**Martha Woodbury on a picnic circa 1892\*\*\*\*\*Hikers on the lookout for birds June 2013**

Brennan Fall and the area behind the Village loosely known as Oak Hill have been a recreational resource for townspeople since the 1800's. The 1895 Town History made note of the "remarkable fall of 20 feet, oft visited by ramblers and romance-lovers". The current owners of the Fall and the surrounding 149 acres have offered the Francestown Land Trust and its partners, the Conservation Commission and the Piscataquog Land Conservancy, the opportunity to purchase the land before they list it with a realtor. It is an offer we hope to be able to take advantage of.

In terms of cultural and historical significance, the

property also contains the summit of Oak Hill, the general area northwest of the Village which was the earliest settlement in "Francestown proper (1767), i.e. outside of New Boston. In addition, the property has cellar holes that were part of "Lost Village". While the 1895 History is not explicit about why or how the Bullard Hill settlement became "lost.", the authors do remark that Bullard Hill Road, which still runs from Campbell Hill Road to the Greenfield Road, was said to "have the steepest grade of any thoroughfare, deserted or in repair, in the Western Hemisphere." . However, they may be referring to

*(Continued on page 2)*

## *A Special Request from the Board*

Dear Friend of Conservation,

This fall the Land Trust is adding a special **community project** fund drive to its usual yearly undertakings. It is **not** a substitute for our upcoming annual campaign which covers operating expenses. That money is needed to pay property taxes and insurance on the 660 acres so many of you use on a regular basis as well as for educational programs and other necessities to keep us functioning.

On behalf not only of FLT, but also of the Frankestown Conservation Commission and the Piscataquog Land Conservancy, we are asking you to make a separate and extra gift to help us work with two families to establish memorial forests that will enhance the town's community resources. The families of John and Diane Schott and of Dotty and Bing Miller have deep connections with, and strong records of, committed public service, to the town. Both families have an appreciation of the importance of their land to the history and ecology of Frankestown and, accordingly, both have offered to sell their acreage to the conservation coalition for below market prices. Both properties have been identified as conservation priorities in the just completed 2013 Conservation Plan, developed by the FCC, and based on community input and scientific research.

The Land Trust has invested every penny of the proceeds from the sale of the house donated to in 2011 in conservation projects, including the two described in this newsletter. Our partners have committed all their available funds as well. We have six grant requests pending.

It is not enough.

We must have your help to succeed. Spread your donation over two years if that is more convenient, but please give as generously as you can.

Thank you.

Barry Wicklow   Ben Haubrich   Paula Hunter   Greg Neilley   Ted Graham  
Abigail Arnold   Chris Rogers   Ray James   Herb Bromberg

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*(Continued from page 1) Brennan Fall at Risk*

lost history: even then, no one remembered who lived where or exactly when.

Large, contiguous, undeveloped blocks of open space are becoming scarce resources in southern NH. The 149 acres we hope to purchase abut Bullard Hill Road, a gateway to a 6,126 acre block of working forests and fields. 2,600 acres have already been protected by FLT, the Town, the Monadnock Conservancy, SPNHF and the State of NH.

The property is primarily forested, with sloping terrain dotted large boulders and glacial erratics, vernal pools, wetlands, 3,000 feet of frontage along Brennan Brook, the waterfall, south-facing slopes, and an old mill/beaver pond. The area provides habitat for a wide range of wildlife species including birds known to be declining in the northeast, such as the scarlet tanager, eastern wood-pewee, veery, wood thrush, black-and-white warbler, and American redstart. Evidence of moose, bear, bobcat, otter, fisher, and mink have been found on the property.

Brennan Brook, is one of the most important headwaters to the South Branch of the Piscataquog, a state protected river. Due to its high water quality,

low summer temperatures, and low sensitivity/vulnerability to warming trends the Brook supports cold-water species such as brook trout.

The property owners, John and Diane Schott, have a long standing interest in conservation. They have served on the boards of SPNHF and the Monadnock Conservancy to whom they are donating a 200+ acre conservation easement on Shattuck Pond. Their other contributions to Frankestown have been many and noteworthy, including John's 1972 updated town history. Without their strong interest in Frankestown, we would not be able to proceed. But we need you to also make your mark on the town and contributed to this project.

PLC, FLT and the FCC will be leading hikes on this property on two Sundays in November: the 3rd and the 17th. Both hikes will start at the horse sheds on the Town Common at 1 pm. Please dress appropriately, carry a water bottle and leave your dogs at home. Rain or shine.

If you would like more information on the project, please contact Betsy Hardwick at 547-8773, Abigail Arnold at 547-6806 or Allison Gillum at 487-3331.

## Dorothy and Herman Miller Memorial Forest

The Land Trust and the Francestown Conservation Commission are working with the Herman Miller family to create a lasting presence in Francestown that reminds us of the past while providing an important resource for townspeople for generations to come.

The 37.4 acre target property includes vernal pools, floodplains, wetlands, 1,320+/- feet of Collins Brook and approximately 34 acres of working forest. It is surrounded almost entirely by approx. 1,300 acres of abutting land already protected by FLT, the Town and SPNHF. It is most important as part of a 2,000+ acre biologically diverse, multi-town area of open space most of which is designated on the NH Wildlife Action Plan maps as "Highest Ranked Habitat in NH". This Shattuck-Pond-Dinsmore Brook area includes working hemlock beech-oak-pine forest, ledges, south facing slopes, floodplains, and wetlands that provide a wide diversity of cover and food sources for wildlife. The northwest anchor of the area is Shattuck Pond with associated fens, bogs, floating bogs, shrub fen, emergent marsh, etc. which contain exemplary natural communities. To the west are extensive wetland complexes, floodplains and brooks, the importance of which "is heightened by their proximity to wetlands along Collins Brook and Dinsmore Brook . . ." Wildlife observed in the area include moose, otter, fisher, bobcat and black bear , American bittern, loon, American wood-

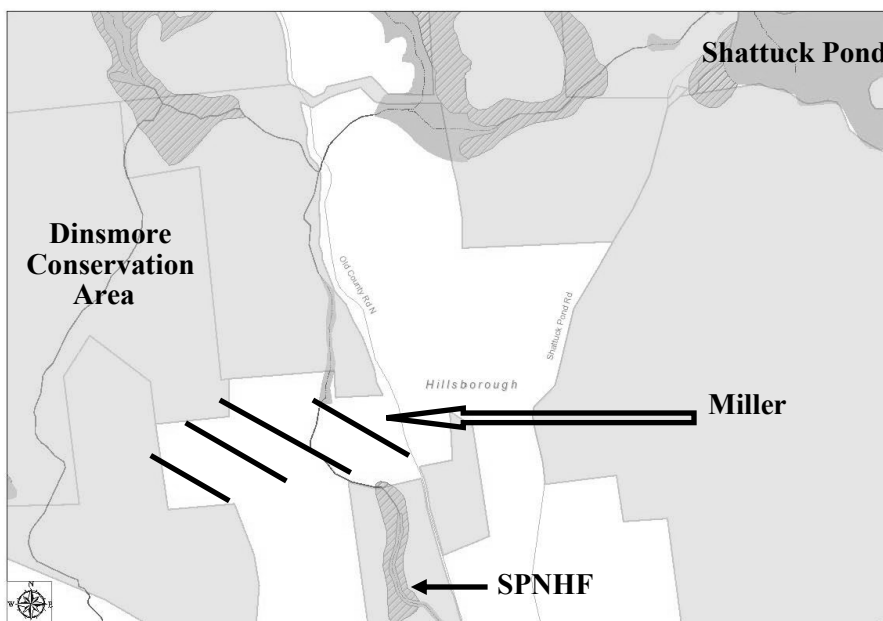
cock, blue heron, ribbon snake, eastern brook trout and several threatened species.

The property will provide access to town-owned property for logging, an extensive trail network between the 2nd NH Turnpike North and Shattuck Pond and convenient parking off Old County Road North.



The property has been used as a woodlot by the Miller/Woodbury family since the 1800's. The family has a long tradition of public service. Many of you will remember going to the Miller home to pay your taxes or register vehicles long before the town had offices for the tax collector and town clerk. Herman (Bing) was first elected town clerk in 1948 and he and his wife, Dorothy, continued to hold those positions into the 1980's until shortly after the town had official offices in the Annex. Herman, along with his brothers, served in WWII, was a Mason and served on Francestown's first planning board.

Fundraising for this project is under way.



**Post card  
Message  
Postmarked  
Francestown NH**  
(from page 4)

*Up here for a week. Nothing to do but rest.  
R. S. W.  
Remember you owe me a letter.*

**Map Key**  
Grey—Conserved Lands  
Diagonal lines—Target Property



## FRANCESTOWN LAND TRUST

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Francestown, NH 03043

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BRENNAN FALL, FRANCESTOWN, N. H.

### Sunday Strolls to Brennan Fall

November 3rd  
November 17th

Meet at 1 PM  
at horsesheds

**Crotched Mt.  
Town Forest**

← **August 22, 1883**  
*Postcard sent to Mr. Harry Draper, So.  
Dartmouth, Mass. To see how much life in  
Francestown has or has not changed since  
then, see text box at bottom of page 3.*

