



The Newsletter of the Francestown Land Trust, Inc.

Fall 2018

NH Forestland Timber Harvests: **Beyond the Mess**

Timber harvests are usually quite messy and noisy; no doubt about it. Chainsaws, skidders, and other machines make a lot of noise; trucks go in and out of the log landing, often many times a day, disrupting the peace and quiet of a neighborhood. And forests can look very different for a while, which can be upsetting (after all, who likes change?). But this is all just for the short term, for the long term, working forests sustainably managed for multiple goals and objectives are important to the environmental, economic, and social well-being of our state.

Local Wood, Local Good!

More than 80 percent of New Hampshire today is covered with forests. Historically, harvesting timber from our forests has been important to the economy and to the landscape, and remains so today. Timber harvests provide a whole supply chain of jobs, generate tax revenue for municipalities, create diverse wildlife habitat, and provide us with local wood products and renewable energy sources.

Managed forests also help maintain our rural character and quality of life. For some landowners, the income from timber harvests is what allows them to keep their land as open space and this, in turn, also helps support our economy through tourism and outdoor recreation.

Much to Consider

There is much that goes into developing a good management plan and implementing a timber harvest, and a great way to learn about it is to attend an educational program with a forester or other natural resource professional.

Several of our regional conservation organizations have
Beyond the Mess *Continued on page 2*



Part of a timber harvest in the Shattuck Pond Town Forest.

New Director Elected

FLT is pleased to welcome Paul Lawrence as the newest addition to the Board of Directors. He was elected at the annual meeting in June. He has a long history of civic involvement in Frankestown and has a keen interest in conservation.

Paul moved to Frankestown with his wife, Jane, and their daughter, Jessica, in 1980, later to be joined by their son, Duncan, in 1982. Both Paul and Jane became active in Frankestown early on, taking over the running of the Frankestown preschool for sever-



al years as well as reviving the Frankestown Elementary School PTO.

Paul served on the Board of Adjustment for approximately five years, part of that time as chair, and served on the Frankestown Recreation Committee for about 15 years, helping to develop, along with a number of other people, the soccer field and hard court, as well as refurbishing the town beach.

Paul has been the town moderator for 15 years. He was a principal in the founding of FLT in 1986, so in a way, he is coming back home.

Beyond the Mess *Continued from page 1*

harvested timber on their properties, including the Society for the Protection of NH Forests, Harris Center for Conservation Education, Piscataquog Land Conservancy, and Frankestown Conservation Commission. Sometimes these organizations also host an educational event on the property where a forester or other resource professional explains the nuts and bolts of the



Before taking his saw to the tree, this professional logger is taking a moment to look for overhead safety issues, like dead or hung up branches and checking to see which way the tree may be naturally leaning.

harvesting process. Presentations typically cover the thinking behind how to lay out skid roads; how and why a particular forest management technique is chosen; how water quality is protected; what kind of wildlife habitat is being created; and much more. These events are usually advertised in local papers or on the organization's website.

Another good resource to learn more about developing a forest management plan and implementing a timber harvest is our Hillsborough County Cooperative Extension forester Ethan Belair. His office is located in Goffstown and he can be reached at 603-641-6060.

In our Future

The Frankestown Land Trust owns more than 1,000 acres of land in fee, most of which was harvested just prior to being acquired and so will not be ready to be cut again for many more years. Some of the properties will never be commercially harvested due to specific features of the property, including sensitive habitats such as shorelands or wetlands, rare plant communities, or rare species that would be negatively impacted by a timber harvest. But at some point in the future many of the properties will likely be assessed for a timber harvest. Beyond revenue to support future open space initiatives, likely goals and objectives might include: improving or diversifying wildlife habitat; improving the health of the forest; enhancing opportunities for low-impact recreational opportunities; and protecting water resources.

The Frankestown Land Trust looks forward to the day when we work with a forester to do what we can to manage our forests for a good and sustainable future.

Betsy Hardwick

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**FRANKESTOWN
LAND TRUST**

Founded in 1986

FLT Dedicates Samuels Forest, Protecting 120 acres of highly ranked wildlife habitat

On a balmy Saturday afternoon, a week after Labor Day, the Franconia Land Trust held a celebration and dedication ceremony for the recently acquired 120-acre piece of land on the west slope of Crooked Mountain in Bennington, New Hampshire. Known previously as “Crooked Mt. West” for fundraising purposes, the property was officially christened the Samuels Forest. The property scored as some of the highest ranked wildlife habitat in the biological region and in the state.

Scot Heath, the project manager for this FLT acquisition, made opening remarks at the Whittemore Lake Beach parking area where the group first gathered. He thanked the Samuels family for their part in insuring that this last large unprotected piece of land on the mountain would remain undeveloped and continue to provide recreational and conservation value to the community.



Above right: Shirley Samuels, representing the Samuels family, addresses the group gathered for the dedication of the Samuels Forest.
Above: Shirley Samuels looks on as Kim DiPetro and Barbara Thompson examine the map of FLT and other conserved lands.
Right: Director Larry Ames mounts the permanent Samuels Forest sign as Shirley Samuels stands nearby.

Valerie Germain, co-chair of the Bennington Conservation Commission, reiterated the importance of conservation land and thanked FLT and Scot Heath for spearheading this project.

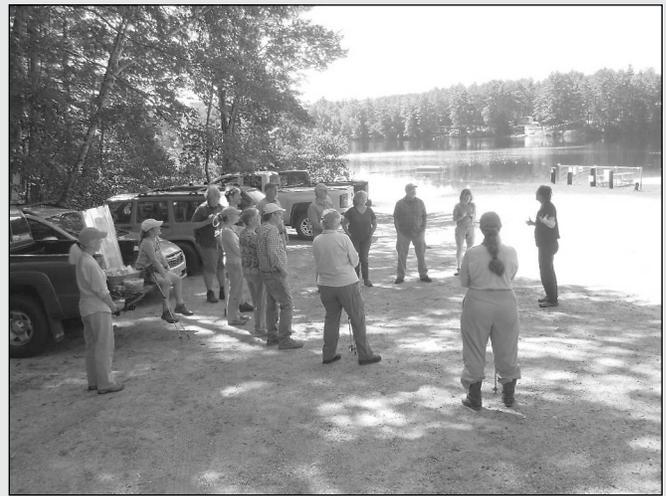
Shirley Samuels, representing the Samuels family, spoke about her family’s history with the property, what it meant to her and her siblings growing up, and her joy that the land would now remain a resource for generations to come to enjoy.

Ben Haubrich concluded with details about the property and outlined hiking options and the day’s logistics for getting to the trailhead. After lemonade and some home-baked cookies, courtesy of Hannah Proctor, the group set off to experience the forest.

Signs of bears and moose

After carpooling to the access point, we utilized paths that cross the property to ascend about halfway to the summit. We got a hint of what the vistas from the summit will be when passing near the border of a recently logged adjacent lot.

The lower portion of the Samuels Forest had been logged sometime in the last 50 years, so the forest was of mixed age and species



of trees. We noted beech drops, coral fungus, and some tired black trumpets in the undergrowth.

We also spotted many bear claw marks on the beech trees, some moose scrapes from feeding activity on red maple trees, and moose tracks. Descending through the property, we eventually met up with the Bennington Trail and followed it back to our vehicles on Mountain Road. After returning to the beach parking lot, we said our goodbyes, and Shirley Samuels continued to relive her childhood experiences by going for a refreshing swim in Whittemore Lake.

Larry Ames



The Chairman's Letter

Dear Friends and Supporters of the Francestown Land Trust,

It is difficult to refrain from talking about the weather when writing these letters from one season to the next. When you read this, Summer will officially be over. And what a Summer it was! Mother Nature sent everything in her arsenal to keep us from becoming bored: record heat waves, humidity, drought, severe thunderstorms, and a stretch of daily downpours usually seen in the tropics.

Our weather may have interfered with our gardens and lawns, outdoor plans, and general comfort level, but it was nothing like the catastrophic events (wildfires, flash floods, volcanic eruptions, hurricanes) experienced by our fellow citizens.

Francestown is fortunate in so many ways. The Francestown Land Trust, with help from volunteers and donors, is ensuring that one of those "ways" is the protection of our region's natural resources for the enjoyment of current residents and generations to come.

On a beautiful Saturday in late Summer, FLT celebrated its most recent success with a ceremony and hikes in the new Samuels Forest, one of the last remaining large parcels of land on Mount Crotched in Bennington. Approximately 120 acres will be protected forever, thanks to the generous support of individuals and organizations, including \$75,000 from NH LCHIP.

If you donated your time, talent, or financial support to this effort, I thank you. With several other exciting projects currently in the works, your continued participation and support is most appreciated.

Chris Rogers, FLT Chair

Three Bad Bugs at FLT Annual Meeting Attendees introduced to HWA, EAB & ALB

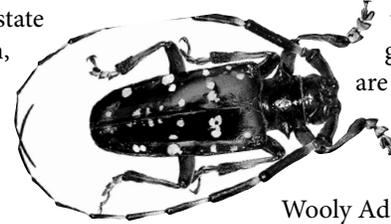
The 2018 FLT Annual Meeting was held June 7th at the Old Meeting House of Francestown and more than 30 people were treated to a fantastic talk on three harmful exotic insects that have found their way into New Hampshire.

Ethan Belair, UNH Cooperative Extension Forester for Hillsborough County used slides to spin a fascinating story of "NH Bugs: The Big Three." He described who they are, where they came from, how to identify them, what the state is doing to manage them, and what we can do locally to minimize their impacts.

We learned that:

- The Hemlock Woolly Adelgid (HWA) is our neighbor, right here in Town
- The Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) is moving closer and may soon be knocking on our door
- The Asian Longhorn Beetle (ALB), luckily, has not yet moved into our area **at least not yet**

The Asian Longhorn Beetle is a big insect (1" – 1-1/2") that makes large holes and infests a wide spectrum of trees, including many species of maple, as well as birch, elms, horse chestnut and willows. It was responsible for the removal of acres of trees in Worcester, Massachusetts in 2008. We were told that if you suspect an Asian longhorn beetle infestation, collect the adult beetle in a jar, place the jar in the freezer, and contact your state officials. But beware, the White Spot-



Asian long-horned beetle

ted Sawyer is a native beetle that looks almost identical!

White, Green and Black Ash Trees, all true ash species, are considered at risk in New Hampshire to the Emerald Ash Borer. Mountain Ash, not being a true ash, is not susceptible. We learned that it can be difficult to detect the EAB in newly infested trees because the trees exhibit few external symptoms. You might observe holes excavated by woodpeckers feeding on larvae or D-shaped holes where adults emerged but once a tree succumbs to the infestation and the bark is removed, galleries etched in the sapwood are a dead give-away.

What can we in Francestown do to minimize the impact of the Hemlock Woolly Adelgid that might be our yard or our neighbor's? We learned that this small, unassuming insect, which doesn't move far once it settles on a hemlock tree, most likely arrived via a bird. Situating bird feeders away from hemlock can help minimize the likelihood that birds visiting your bird feeders will transfer the HWA. You can also thin stands of hemlock to help keep them healthy and better able to weather an infestation.

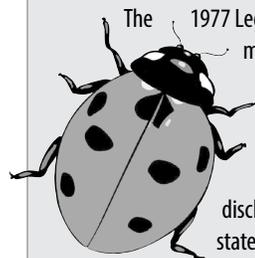
Ethan's final word was: "Help protect our trees – Don't move firewood!"

The talk was followed by refreshments and an opportunity to talk to Ethan, as well as to inspect a specimen case of the Big Three and peruse a wide variety of handouts.

If you are interested in learning more, www.NHBugs.org is a great website with lots of photos and information.

Hannah Proctor

Ladybug Wins State Crown



The 1977 Legislature voted the ladybug as New Hampshire's official state insect, in a history-making manner. The House of Representatives reversed an adverse committee recommendation on a ladybug bill, with a 185 to 135 standing endorsement. And then the Senate gave the measure such enthusiastic approval that all 24 members signed a copy of the bill, which was framed and presented to the Broken Ground grammar school of Concord, whose pupils sponsored the idea. As the ladybug became New Hampshire's official state insect; research disclosed that Massachusetts, Ohio, and Tennessee had already adopted the ladybug as their state insects.

Sources: New Hampshire Revised Statute (RSA) 3:11; Anderson, Leon. History. Manual for the General Court 1981.

Don't Get Rattled, Get Educated!

Naturalist Tom Tying returns to teach us about the Timber Rattlesnake

Tom Tying, recent guest speaker on Vernal Pools, is returning to the Joan Hanchett Nature Series at 6:30pm on Friday, November 9, 2018 at the Francestown Town Hall.

This time he will talk about the Timber Rattlesnake, New England's most endangered vertebrate.

The Timber Rattlesnake is already gone from two New England states and considered endangered in all the others, including New Hampshire.

The decline of this venomous snake may seem like good news to some, but new understanding of the snake's remarkable behaviors and survival strategies have led to conservation efforts.

The presentation will give us a close-up look at the status of this reptile in New Hampshire.

Tying, Professor of Environmental Science at Berkshire Community College is author of *A Guide to Amphibians and Reptiles*, published by Little, Brown

and Company. He only just recently ended his 15-year position as Managing Editor of the scientific journal *Herpetological Review*. His interest goes back to his BS (Wildlife Biology) and MS (Organismic and Evolutionary Biology) from the University of Massachusetts (Amherst), where he focused on the biology and conservation of the Timber Rattlesnake.

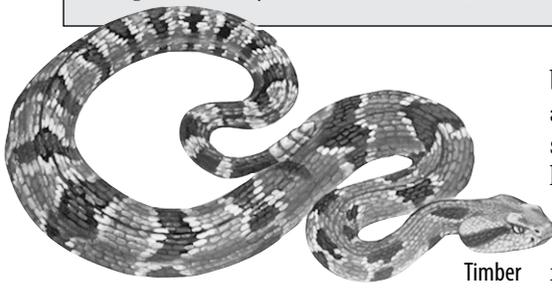
Tying has also been a field biologist and Master Naturalist with the Massachusetts Audubon Society for 24 years. He served for 15 years as an Adjunct Professor in the Environmental Studies Program at Antioch New England Graduate School (Amphibian Biology, Ornithology, Field Entomology, Reptile Biology) and at Springfield College (Ornithology). His weekly newspaper column on Nature ran in the *Springfield (MA) Union-News* for 25 years.

The Joan Hanchett Nature Series is a free program for adults and children of all ages. It is sponsored by Francestown Land Trust, George Holmes Bixby Memorial Library, Francestown News and the Francestown Conservation Commission.



Timber rattlesnake

Photo by Jonathunder - Own work, CC BY-SA 3.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=8340704>



Timber rattlesnake

Snakes of New Hampshire: Report Your Reptile Sightings

There are 11 species of snakes that are native to New Hampshire. Some of these species, such as the garter snake are common and widespread across the state. Other species like the tim-

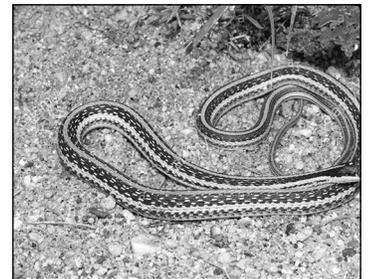
ber rattlesnake are extremely rare and are now state protected. Five of the 11 species (i.e., timber rattlesnake, eastern hognose snake, northern black racer, smooth green snake, and ribbon snake) were identified as species in greatest need of conservation in New Hampshire's Wildlife Action Plan completed in the fall of 2005 (updated 2015). Overall, snakes are poorly studied and basic distribution and life history information is lacking. The New Hampshire Fish & Game maintains a database of all reptile and amphibian reports through its Reptile and Amphibian

Reporting Program (RAARP). The first step to reporting a sighting is accurately identifying the species. Information and photographs were compiled for all of New Hampshire's native snakes to aid in this identification process.

PLEASE DO NOT KILL SNAKES.

New Hampshire has only one venomous snake, the timber rattlesnake, which is protected by law. If you think you see a timber rattlesnake, please leave it alone, and let NH Fish & Game know. There is no reason to kill a New Hampshire snake.

Source: <https://wildlife.state.nh.us/nongame/snakes.html>



Left to right: Eastern hognose snake, northern black racer, smooth green snake, and ribbon snake.



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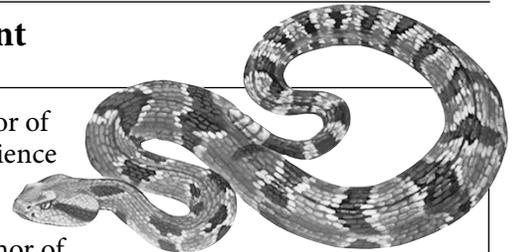
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The Timber Rattlesnake**
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Free program for adults and children of all ages!

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Did You Know?

Trail maps of the Rand Brook Forest, Schott Brennan Falls Reserve, Crotched Mountain and Miller/Dinsmore Brook Conservation Area, as well as the Frankestown Wildlife Action Plan map can be downloaded from francestownlandtrust.org

Join our email list to learn about our upcoming events. Contact us at info@francestownlandtrust.org to be added to this list.