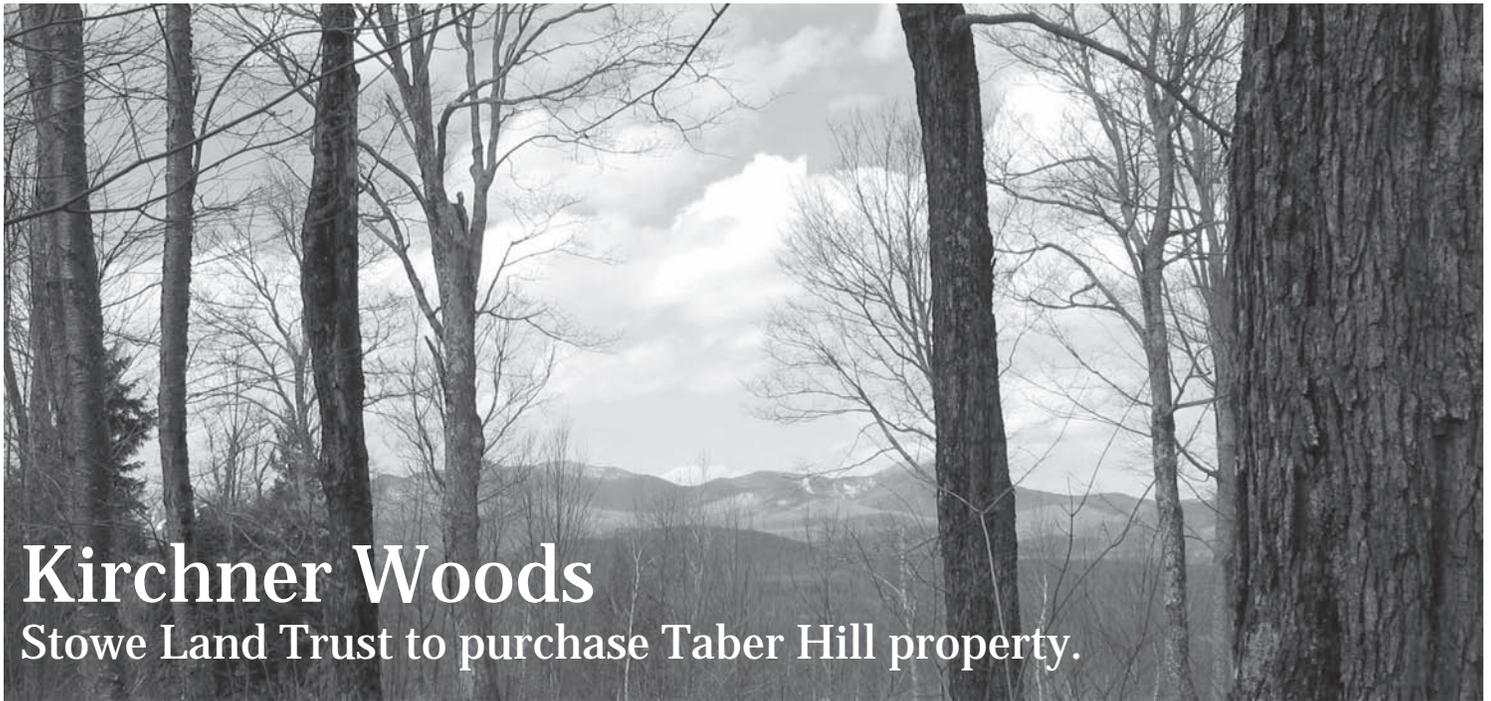


Mountain Views

Quarterly Newsletter of Stowe Land Trust

Spring 2009



Kirchner Woods

Stowe Land Trust to purchase Taber Hill property.

Gerard J. Kirchner, or “Jerry” to those who knew him, was passionate about many things. In the years before he passed away last September, Jerry could keep you entertained for hours with stories about Stowe’s early days, the Brother Dutton Society and the merits of an Electrolux. And Jerry was a passionate environmentalist, who strongly believed that working the land creates a deeper appreciation of its bounty. Jerry wanted everyone, regardless of their financial position, to have the opportunity to appreciate Stowe’s beauty, and he always made his land available for public use and enjoyment.

Jerry served on the Stowe Land Trust Board of Directors from 1990 – 1999. Over the years, he repeatedly expressed his desire to permanently conserve the immaculate sugarbush and working forest on his 75-acre Taber Hill property. With Jerry’s passing at the age of 84, Stowe Land Trust was given the first opportunity to purchase the Stowe Hollow property, and because of the generosity of an anonymous donor, Jerry’s vision will become reality.

In April, SLT will purchase the 75-acre property for \$900,000 and will donate a conservation easement to Vermont Land Trust. Because SLT can not hold a

conservation easement on itself (SLT will remain the owner of the property), it must partner with another organization that can enforce the conservation restrictions in perpetuity. “It’s a natural fit for us to work with VLT” said Heather Furman, SLT’s Executive Director, who worked with VLT’s Central Vermont Director, Mark McEathron to

develop the easement and management plan. The conservation easement will provide permanent protection from development and allow SLT to manage the property consistent with its mission and the vision held by Jerry and the anonymous donors.

The property will be available for all types of non-motorized recreation, including walking, mountain biking, skiing and snowshoeing. Because of nearby residential areas, hunting will be prohibited. This summer, SLT will work to improve the trails on the property, install signage and develop a small parking area. SLT will manage the property similar to Wiessner Woods, a 79-acre parcel off of Edson Hill Road that was donated by the Wiessner family in 1992. Over the years Wiessner Woods has become immensely popular with skiers and hikers, and has helped enhance Stowe’s recreational opportunities. “Because of the incredible generosity of the anonymous donors, this will be a wonderful asset for Stowe Hollow,” Furman said.

In the coming years, SLT will also explore the feasibility of reviving the sugarbush, and will undertake a natural resource inventory to determine actions that might help improve wildlife habitat.



“Our sense of community and compassionate intelligence must be extended to all life forms, plants, animals, rocks, rivers and human beings. This is the story of our past and it will be the story of our future.”
- Terry Tempest Williams

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Stowe Land Trust is dedicated to the conservation of scenic, recreational, and productive farm and forest lands for the benefit of the greater Stowe community.

All contributions to Stowe Land Trust are tax deductible. Please become a member today.

From the Executive Director and Board Chair



Elaine Nichols



Heather Furman

After a frigid and snowy winter, the long spring days are always welcome. As we walked the beautiful Kirchner Woods property last week, it was a joy to experience the ground free of snow, and listen to the Wood Frog’s noisy courtship in the vernal pools. Everyone at SLT is thrilled to have the opportunity to conserve this spectacular parcel. With its mature sugarbush, great views and southern aspect, the parcel’s network of old logging roads will soon be transformed into a spectacular recreational resource.



Wild leeks, commonly known as ramps, are spread like a carpet on the forest floor this time of year.

This issue of *Mountain Views* features our 2008 Annual Report. Despite recent economic uncertainties, SLT has been able to make adjustments that keep your membership dollar flowing directly toward the protection of our incredible natural resources. We thank you, our members, for all that you’ve done to support SLT this past year.

Spring is a time of renewal, so in celebration I hope you will join us in renewing your commitment to conservation by attending one of our many events this spring and summer! We are excited about our partnerships with local businesses, restaurants and other conservation organizations such as Audubon Vermont and the Lamoille County Natural Resource Conservation District in finding ways to enhance our conservation mission.

Happy Spring!

Stewardship Report

It’s Mud Season in Vermont!

During spring mud season, trails are particularly vulnerable to erosion because of excessively wet conditions. Hikers are asked to stay off high elevation trails until Memorial Day. Several conserved properties around Stowe are good places to stretch your legs this spring. The trail at Pinnacle Meadow is a great walk with an amazing view of town. Wiessner Woods is another location for early season hiking. Check out “Whats Happening at Wiessner Woods” on the SLT website for trail updates this month.



New Trail Signs in Sterling Forest

Visitors to Sterling Forest this summer will notice new signage for much of the trail network that criss-crosses the 1,500 acre municipal forest. The signs, purchased by Stowe Conservation Commission have been installed on Maple Run, Lauren’s Loop, Peek-a-View, Billings Road and the Marston Trail. Plans are to have the remaining trail signs up this summer. Many of the properties conserved by Stowe Land Trust, including Maple Run Lane, Page Forest and the Adams parcel guarantee public access to this exceptional resource.

Out of State Firewood Alert

Non-native insects and diseases are ‘hitch-hiking’ their way across the U.S. These pests which are harmful to our native trees normally move very slowly on their own and are therefore are typically easier to monitor and control. Unfortunately, unsuspecting campers are facilitating the spread of these destructive pests by bringing infested firewood from homes to their camping, sporting or second home destinations. For more information on how to prevent the spread of invasive pests, visit: www.dontmovefirewood.org



Stowe Land Jam with the Sugardaddies



The Matterhorn was packed with over 200 people rocking to the Sugardaddies and friends on Friday, March 27th at the Stowe Land Jam.

This wasn't just a great party, it was also a fundraiser for Stowe Land Trust. And by all counts it was a tremendous success - we had a lot of fun and we succeeded in meeting our goal of raising \$5,000. The support and generosity of our community never ceases to amaze us here at Stowe Land Trust. The success of the Stowe Land Jam would not have been possible without the participation of dozens of individuals and businesses.

Special thanks also to Jan Axtell, who won the 50/50 cash raffle and donated \$350 back to Stowe Land Trust!



Stowe Land Jam silent auction.

Many Thanks to Our Business Partners for their Support of the Evening with Bill McKibben!

Harrison's Restaurant offered a very special dinner promotion in support of land conservation, **Green Mountain Coffee Roasters** donated brewing equipment and hot beverages for the event, and **Bear Pond Books** made an impressive collection of McKibben's books available for sale at the event. We are also grateful for the extensive coverage this event received from the **Stowe Reporter**.

In a show of tremendous generosity following the event, **Green Mountain Coffee Roasters** donated three Keurig brewers to Stowe Land Trust for use at future functions.



The Matterhorn
The Sugardaddies
(Barry Lyden, Trevor Crist, John Spencer,
Chris Tagatac & Eric Gershman)
Guest Musicians
(Nifer Knight, Mike Colbourn, Javin Pierce & Mike Snyder)
Aardvark Tree and Excavation Services
Baker Distributing
Charlie Shaffer
Chip Knight
Danny Fitzko
Darn Tough Vermont
David and Trina Hosmer
Dynastar
Ferro Jewelers
Green Mountain Inn
Isis
Jake and Donna Carpenter
Ken and Elizabeth Squier
Level North America
Mammut
Nick and Ashley Sargent
Nebraska Knoll Sugar Farm
Old Town, Matt Yablonowski
Outdoor Research
Trisha Fong
Scarlett Strands
Stowe Mountain Resort

2008 Annual Report

A Year in Review

“Stowe Land Trust has been a huge benefit to the local mountain bike scene by keeping trails open.”

*- Rick Sokoloff, President
Stowe Mountain Bike Club*

Fred Chase wanted the 25 acre Maple Run property to remain an important public access point to the trails in Sterling Forest. The property was purchased by SLT at a bargain sale and donated to the Town. A conservation easement is held by Stowe Land Trust.



VMBA

Protecting River Corridors

2,000 feet of river frontage in Stowe's lower village has been protected by the first stand alone river corridor easement in Vermont. Landowners, Darrow Mansfield, RJ Alexander, LLC. and the Sweet River Offices, LLC. worked with Stowe Land Trust to ensure the Little River will have the freedom to access its floodplain, maintain equilibrium, and prevent flooding resulting from inappropriate development.



Caring for the Land

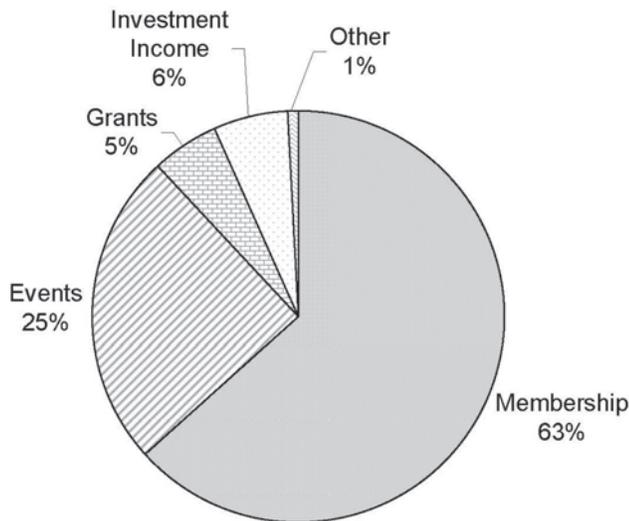
- SLT staff and volunteers completed and documented annual monitoring visits for all conservation easements held by Stowe Land Trust.
- Baseline Documentation Reports were developed for two conservation projects completed in 2008.
- Restoration of Mill Trail cabins began in order to make them available to the public.
- A UVM GIS student worked with SLT to update maps of conserved lands.
- Hundreds of SLT staff hours were spent providing assistance to owners of land with SLT conservation easements.
- Town of Stowe completed second phase of timber harvest at Sunset Rock & trail signs were installed at Sterling Forest.

Community Outreach

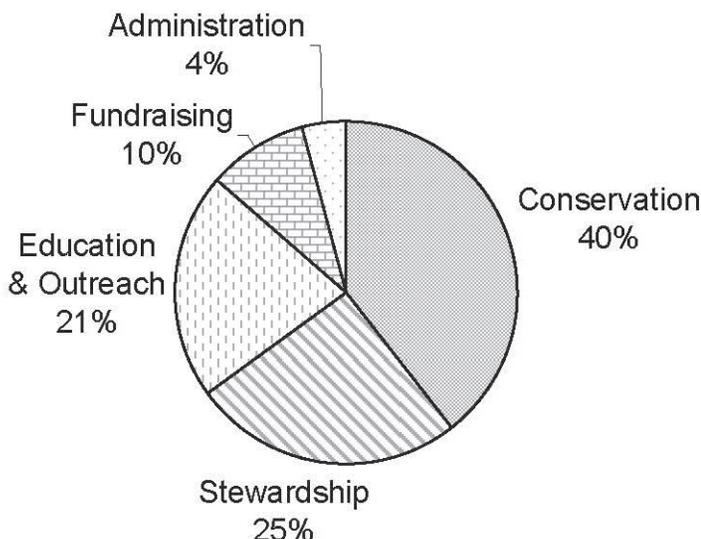
- SLT partnered with Audubon VT for a morning bird walk at Pinnacle Meadow.
- SLT staff and volunteers celebrated National Trails Day at Wiessner Woods with trail and bridge maintenance.
- Student interns spent a week at Mill Trail developing educational programs and learning more about land conservation in the Stowe area.
- Community gardeners at Mayo Farm had a productive year thanks to efforts by the Town Rec Department and volunteers.
- Stowe Land Trust's annual meeting was held at Stoweflake in advance of the Framing Our Future Art Auction fundraiser.
- A Community Leaders Forum was held to discuss important issues and strategies for land conservation in the Stowe area.



Operating Revenue \$175,945



Operating Expenses \$204,041



Financial Highlights

Membership continues to be the foundation of our operating budget with more than 77% of members renewing. In addition, 8% of members in 2008 were new members and 15% rejoined after missing a year or two. Most notably, 2008 marked the year Stowe Land Trust membership exceeded 1,000 with 1,033 members - a 13% increase from 2007!

Operational income increased by 14% due to an increase in membership and events income. Stowe Land Trust also received grants from the Town of Stowe, the Norcross Foundation, and the State Division for Historic Preservation to assist operations and stewardship projects. 2008 marked the first full year at the current staffing capacity and therefore posted a 27% increase in operational expenses. Over 3/4's of SLT's expenditures are in direct support of land conservation, stewardship and outreach programs.

The 2009 fiscal year operations budget was developed based on 2008 actuals. SLT has imposed a salary freeze and several cost cutting measures intended to have minimal impact on membership services. Stowe Land Trust staff and board are committed to developing additional sources of operational revenue.

Stowe Land Trust remains financially sound despite the operational loss. With your continued support, SLT will continue to conserve and steward the places we love.

Restricted Accounts Summary

Income	
Investment	\$ 8,478
Land Protection	\$56,907
Stewardship	<u>\$10,532</u>
	\$75,917
Expense	
Land Protection	\$67,707
Stewardship	<u>\$17,914</u>
	\$85,621

Volunteer Stewards Needed

Annual visits to conserved lands take you off the beaten path on spectacular properties protected by Stowe Land Trust. Volunteer stewards are needed to visit conserved properties at least once per year in order to ensure conservation restrictions are being upheld. This is a great way to practice your GPS or map and compass skills, learn more about land conservation and see the less traveled portions of our beautiful landscape. Lands in need of a volunteer steward are:

- Crawford - 63 acres, Waterbury & Stowe
- DuMont - 47 acres, Moscow
- Halvorsen - 32 acres, Stowe
- Little River Corridor - 10 acres, Stowe
- Maple Run - 25.6 acres, Stowe
- Moscow Recreation Field - 4.7 acres, Moscow
- Nichols Field - 37 acres, Stowe
- Sunset Rock - 23.3 acres, Stowe

To learn more about becoming a volunteer steward or to sign up for a property, contact Becca Washburn, Assistant Director at (802) 253-7221 or becca@stowelandtrust.org.



Join Our Email List!

Just enter your email address at our homepage www.stowelandtrust.org or send us a message at info@stowelandtrust.org.

You'll receive periodic news updates, announcements, and invitations to special events. You'll also help us use less paper and reduce printing and postage costs.

We won't overwhelm you with messages, and we never rent, sell, or loan your information to anyone.

Thanks for helping spread the word about Stowe Land Trust!



A Lasting Legacy: Making Charitable Contributions to SLT

Charitable Goals	What You Can Do	Your Benefits
Make a simple gift to SLT	Write a membership check today	An income tax deduction and immediate impact to SLT
Support SLT & avoid capital gains tax	Contribute long-term stocks or other securities	A charitable deduction plus no capital gains tax
Make a large gift with little cost to yourself	Contribute a life insurance policy you no longer need	Current and possibly future income tax deductions
Support SLT & avoid 2 fold taxation on IRA or other employee benefit plan	Name SLT as the beneficiary of the remainder of the assets after your lifetime	You are able to leave your family other assets with less income tax liability
Support SLT & avoid capital gains tax on the sale of real estate	Donate property or sell it at a bargain price to SLT	An income tax deduction, plus reductions or elimination of capital gains tax

LEAVE A LEGACY®



Matt Larson

Keeping Birds and People on Common Ground

It's no coincidence that Vermonters see a variety of bird species in our forests and backyards. Our northern forests are home to the highest concentration of bird species breeding in the continental United States. According to Audubon Vermont, "we share our forests with 90% of the global breeding populations of dozens of species of migratory birds, including the Bicknell's Thrush, Black-throated Blue Warbler, and Canada Warbler".

Recognizing the important role Vermont's forests play in the life cycle of so many bird species, Audubon Vermont started the Forest Bird Initiative. SLT spoke recently with Steve Hagenbuch, a Conservation Biologist with Audubon Vermont, to learn a little more about the initiative and how private landowners in the Stowe area can participate.

SLT: What is the Forest Bird Initiative?

Steve: The forested landscape of Vermont and northern New England is well known throughout the world as a place of outstanding recreational opportunities, a major producer of maple syrup, and the land of brilliant fall foliage. An often lesser known yet immensely important fact about our forests is that they provide summer breeding habitat for a high diversity of migratory and resident birds. Some of these species, such as the wood thrush, have been experiencing long-term population declines over the past 40 years. For other species, such as the ubiquitous ovenbird, our northern forest region is of high importance to their global breeding population. Audubon Vermont's Forest Bird Initiative is working to conserve quality breeding habitat for these species and others like them, termed responsibility species, by working one on one with forest landowners to ensure the necessary habitat conditions exist on the landscape.

Stowe Land Trust is partnering with Audubon Vermont this year to connect Stowe area landowners interested in having free forest habitat assessments done on their land in order to learn more about enhancing habitat for forest birds.

SLT: What is it about Stowe that makes it an important bird area?

Steve: Audubon Vermont worked closely with the University of Vermont Spatial Analysis lab to map bird "hot blocks." These hot blocks are areas that exhibit characteristics



Wood Thrush - USFWS

of high habitat quality and diversity of responsibility bird species. Stowe and its surrounding towns fall within what has been defined as the Mansfield/Worcester Block.

SLT: How important is private forest land to birds?

Steve: In Vermont approximately 80% of the land is in private ownership. Conservation programs, particularly those that are concerned with habitat, must work with the private landowner if they are going to be successful. When considered within the broader landscape, even the smallest properties can be critical parts of the large blocks of forest in our region that support breeding birds. Small actions by individual, private landowners can have a global impact.

SLT: What is a forest bird habitat assessment & what are you looking for?

Steve: Each forest offers unique opportunities for "bird-friendly" management. Through a forest bird habitat assessment Audubon conservation biologists evaluate the habitat for responsibility bird species that exist at different areas of the property in its current condition. Some of the habitat components that are evaluated include forest type (hardwood, softwood), age class (seedlings/saplings, sawtimber, etc.), and abundance and sizes of standing dead trees, called snags. These

habitat characteristics are then used, along with the landowner's other objectives for the forest, to develop practical recommendations for protecting and enhancing habitat for responsibility birds.

SLT: Are landowners required to follow the recommendations in a forest bird habitat assessment?

Steve: One of the main objectives of the Forest Bird Initiative is to create awareness among forest landowners of the value their land holds as breeding habitat for responsibility bird species. The real conservation value is when this awareness leads to implementation of the recommendations that a habitat assessment provides. Ultimately, it is the landowner who decides which, if any, of the recommendations are carried out, but there is no obligation to do so.

SLT: Can landowners still manage for timber and maintain bird habitat?

Steve: Absolutely! In fact the two routinely go hand in hand. Forest products can generate income that helps landowners offset the costs of land ownership. In this way, income from forest products help to protect forest bird habitat by minimizing conversion to non-forested uses. In addition, forest management activities have the potential to enhance habitats for some bird species. For example, growing and cutting firewood can improve future timber potential in a forest stand while also enhancing understory nesting habitat for black-throated blue warblers.

SLT: What do landowners need to do to have an assessment done?

Steve: All that a landowner needs to do to have an assessment completed is contact Stowe Land Trust or Audubon Vermont. In order for the program to have the greatest amount of conservation impact, priority is given to landowners with 100 acres or more. If someone does not have that amount of land, but is able to generate interest among their neighboring landowners that combined would equal 100 or more acres, this would also meet the criteria.

Attend the evening presentation on May 28th or the field workshop in Stowe Hollow on May 30th in order to find out more about having a free forest habitat assessment done on your land or contact Stowe Land Trust at 802.253.7221.

Local. It's worth preserving.

*We salute and support the Stowe Land Trust for their
part in contributing toward the very same vision.*

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