

Mountain Views

Quarterly Newsletter of Stowe Land Trust

Winter 2013



SLT Acquires Second River Corridor Easement

Stowe Land Trust completed its second River Corridor Easement on Thursday, December 21, 2012. The property, owned by Creative Ventures, LLC, consists of 12.5 acres of agricultural fields and river corridor in Stowe's Lower Village. The agricultural land is farmed by the Pike family. The protected property also includes an important section of VAST snowmobile trail, and protects 750 feet of river frontage and riparian area on both sides of the Little River.

This conservation project was funded by the VT Department of Environmental Conservation's (DEC) Ecosystem Restoration Program. Administered by the Agency of Natural Resources River Management Division, the program is intended to provide funding for the purchase of river channel management rights within the corridors of sensitive and erosive streams. The purpose of the program is to reduce conflict with land uses adjacent to unstable streams and maximize

the public benefits associated with stable streams and floodplains.



Historic development patterns did not consider the effects of buildings and infrastructure within a river's floodplain. Several major flooding events in our history have proven that rivers need to be allowed to meander and have access to their floodplain. Mike Kline, DEC's River Management Specialist explains that "a river's energy stays within the channel and becomes more powerful if

it doesn't have access to its traditional floodplain, and this can lead to more devastating floods, wiping out roads and scouring away prime agricultural soils." There are some locations however, where no conflicting land uses exist and the river can have access to its floodplain. These locations were identified by DEC as critical to helping the river reach a state of equilibrium. "We identified the parcels just south of the River Rd. bridge in Stowe as a prime location for the Little River to dissipate some of its energy," said Mike Kline.

This conservation easement represents the second river corridor easement completed by SLT. The first, completed in 2008, was also the first stand alone river corridor easement to be completed in Vermont. That property, consisting of 10 acres and owned by four different landowners is located to the north of this most recent conservation project.



A Message from SLT's New Board Chair

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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.



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Join our email list by visiting
www.stowelandtrust.org

Dear Stowe Land Trust Friends,

I am honored to serve as the new Chair of Stowe Land Trust. I am also humbled when I look back at the accomplishments of SLT during the past 25 years. It is a land conservation legacy that we will protect for generations to come.

Stowe is blessed with spectacular natural scenery and unspoiled landscapes. The vistas from Pinnacle Meadow, the trails at Wiessner Woods, and the cascades at Bingham Falls are right out our back doors. Stowe Land Trust has been the vehicle for preserving these special places, along with the 26 other conservation projects in our portfolio.

Cady Hill Forest is the epitome of the "right out our back door" concept. Its 258 acres of forest and wildlife habitat and 11 miles of trails are in the heart of Stowe Village. The trailhead, with ample parking on the Mountain Road, provides ready access for all who enjoy a walk in the woods. Thanks to generous community

wide support, SLT was able to purchase the property in May, 2012. A conservation easement will preserve the property in perpetuity.

We have several proposals in the works for 2013 and beyond. Keep an eye out for restoration activities at the Mill Trail Cabin. If you have not been there, go and behold what many consider to be the jewel in the crown of SLT projects. These historic cabins are just a brief walk or snowshoe from the parking area off Notch Brook Road.

There will be more to report in upcoming Mountain Views as the year unfolds.

I look forward to it with great enthusiasm and appreciation for the good work that many have accomplished before me.

Thank you,

Alan Thorndike, Chair



Alan Thorndike, center, represented SLT during the acquisition of the 258 acre Cady Hill Forest property.



Cross Country Ski at Wiessner Woods

Saturday, January 19
9:00 - 11:00 am
All are welcome.

Mill Trail Snowshoe

Saturday, February 16
9:00 - 11:00 am
All are welcome.

St Paddy's Backcountry Ski in Ranch Valley

Saturday, March 16
9:00 am - 2:00 pm
This outing is for experienced skiers and riders.

Please bring your own equipment for all outings. For more information call SLT at 802.253.7221 or visit www.stowelandtrust.org. Notice of cancellation is available the day of the outing by calling 802.253.7221. SLT is looking for volunteers interested in leading a couple of outings a year on conserved land. If you have a favorite hike or property that you would like to share, please email: becca@stowelandtrust.org.



New Partnership Unveiled

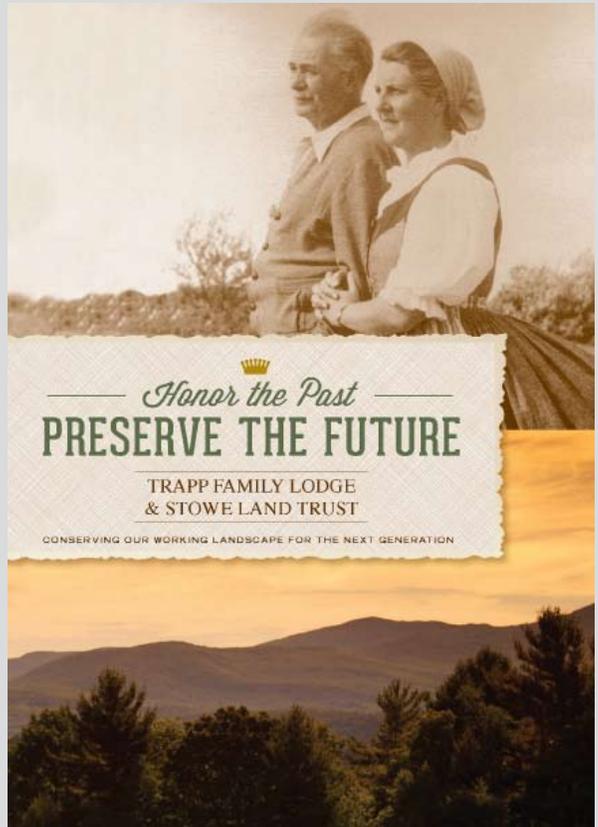
Stowe Land Trust announced the launch of a new chapter in the long-standing relationship between SLT and Trapp Family Lodge at the 25th Annual Meeting celebration held in November.

Trapp Family Lodge has joined with SLT to establish a legacy that protects the future of the working landscape in the Stowe region. A one-dollar nightly donation to SLT will help ensure that Stowe's essential beauty is preserved for the future. Contributions from this partnership will enable SLT to continue its important work of conserving and stewarding Stowe's farmland, trails, waterfalls and scenic vistas.

"The legacy created by this partnership is a natural extension of the von Trapp family's commitment to conservation and protection of the working landscape," said Furman after thanking Johannes von Trapp for his opening remarks and for hosting this special annual meeting.

Three generations of von Trapps have set their roots in Stowe, owning and managing Trapp Family Lodge, continuing the tradition of active farming and forestry, and providing unparalleled opportunities for visitors to get out and enjoy the mountains and valleys. Continuing the family's true pioneering spirit, Johannes von Trapp helped establish Stowe Land Trust 25 years ago, and through this commitment, the family has permanently conserved over 1,500 acres.

Furman summarized the practical simplicity of the relationship when she said, "the partnership highlights our dual commitment to the working landscape, the recreational opportunities we both cherish and the need to support each other in making our conservation goals viable."



The Dirt on conserved land

A walk in the woods, a kick n' glide or trail ride, or a run with the dog are such simple, enjoyable activities - especially in Stowe. The quality and quantity of recreational resources make Stowe unique and demonstrate the value our community places on access to great trails. Conserved land plays an important role in connecting the public and private recreational opportunities that exist between main street and the mountains. Many of these conserved lands offer public access to trails from short strolls to summit views. SLT's recently updated website allows visitors to find out more about public access to conserved lands, visit www.stowelandtrust.org to learn more.

As easy as it is to find a place to recreate in Town, it's just as easy to forget what it takes to keep the trails in great shape. From Cady Hill Forest and Wiessner Woods to Sunset Rock there is a lot happening on conserved land to make sure your next visit is fun and enjoyable. SLT, the Town, the State of Vermont, and private landowners invest a lot in maintaining the complex network of trails that rival our local transportation system in miles and sometimes in engineering.

Since conserving **Cady Hill Forest** last May, the Town has been busy working to make this "your forest". The parking area and amenities on the Mountain Road were in progress before the ink had dried on the deed. Since then, trail signs and way-finding stations (pictured here) have sprung up like summer wildflowers in the forest. At the same time,

the Town has been working with Sustainable Trailworks to gather public input and develop a master plan for the trail network in Cady Hill Forest. The purpose of this plan is to develop a signage plan, identify areas where new trails should be constructed, prioritize restoration or closure of select existing trails and develop strategies to address safety and user conflict. Pictured here is a draft proposed redesign of the trail system. A copy of this map and the draft plan are available for



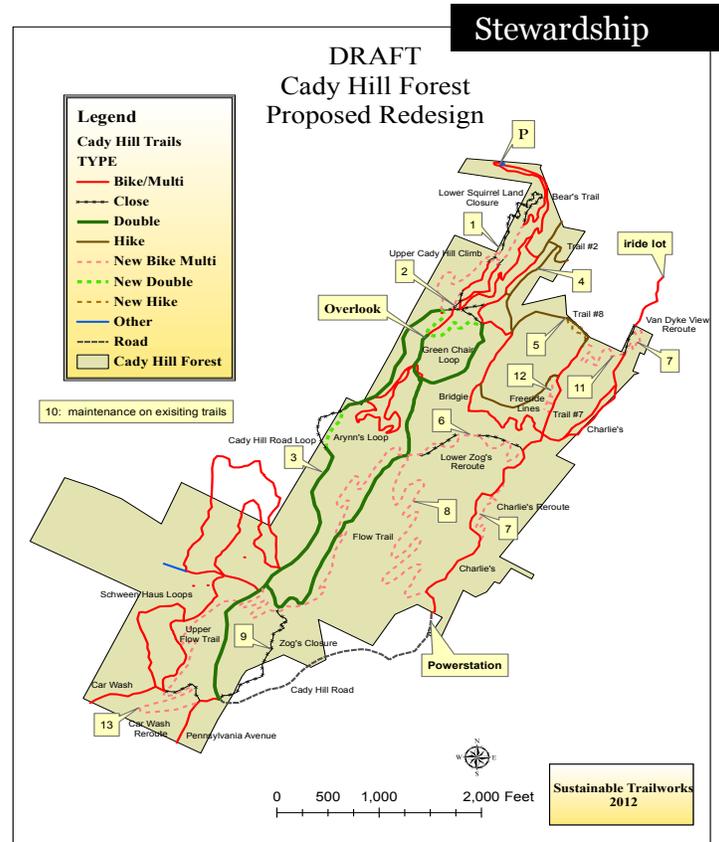
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review online at www.townofstowevt.org.

In other areas of town, SLT worked with UVM's Mapping and Measuring class and graduate students in the Field Naturalist program to collect data at **Wiessner Woods, Page Forest, DuMont, Mill Trail and Kirchner Woods**. Everything from a trail infrastructure assessment and natural resource mapping, to complete ecological assessments will be used to develop comprehensive management plans for these lands. "The partnership we have with UVM has been really valuable. They provide a useful service and we contribute to service learning opportunities that teach students about land conservation and natural resource management", said Assistant Director, Becca Washburn.

Recent repairs to the Hardwood Ridge Trail bridge at **Wiessner Woods** have stabilized the bridge so it will remain open this winter. Plans are to replace that bridge in conjunction with some needed TLC this spring. After receiving a grant from the State, SLT is also working with the owner of the **Burnham Farm** to develop public access signage for Raven Hill Forest.

Anyone headed up to the notch last year probably noticed the **Bingham Falls** kiosk with nothing on it. Well, thanks to the hard work of the Smugglers' Notch Advisory Committee that will soon change. The Bingham Falls kiosk has been incorporated in an interpretive signage project for the Smugglers' Notch Byway. As a result, interpretive panels are being developed for Bingham Falls that will include a map of recreational resources in the area, an explanation of Bingham Falls' natural history and a summary of the conservation effort in 2001 that led to its permanent protection. Keep an eye out for these and other interpretive panels to begin showing up in 2013.



Sunset Rock, owned by the Town and accessed from the end of Sunset Street or on Taber Hill Road, received some much needed trail work last summer. Staircases, waterbars and signage were installed on the trail network. The Stowe Conservation Commission, who is responsible for managing the property, plans to update the trail map and brochure this year as a follow up to the trail work.

The Stowe Conservation Commission is also continuing to work on updates to the **Mayo Farm** Management Plan. The Conservation Commission received a number of comments and suggested changes to consider. Final recommendations will be submitted to SLT to review for compliance with the conservation easement and the Selectboard's review will take place in February.

This is just a small snapshot of recent accomplishments and work planned for 2013. Your support of SLT helps us continue to conserve important land, steward the lands we own and provide technical support and resources to private landowners. Plan an outing to any one of these properties this year and you will see all of the great work that goes into making Stowe such a special place. Better yet, join SLT on one of its monthly outings to learn about a property you never knew about or just to have fun with friends. You can find a schedule of outings on page 3 and at www.stowelandtrust.org.



The Pinnacle Society was created to acknowledge and appreciate the people who help Stowe Land Trust conserve our spectacular natural landscapes for future generations. It recognizes donors of \$1,000 or greater during Stowe Land Trust's membership year (November 1 - October 31). Pinnacle Society membership contributes 50% of the funds needed to support the ongoing mission of Stowe Land Trust on an annual basis.

SLT hosts outings for Pinnacle Society members that feature interesting speakers and natural resource professionals. Pinnacle Society members also receive periodic reports from SLT's Executive Director, Heather Furman. These letters include information about upcoming projects, details about our strategic direction and an invitation to provide your feedback about our mission to conserve important land in our community.

If you are interested in learning more about the Pinnacle Society or becoming a member, contact Executive Director, Heather Furman by emailing heather@stowelandtrust.org or call 802.253.7221.

Stowe Land Trust wishes to recognize and thank the following 2013 members of the Pinnacle Society.

- Phil Branton and Ellen Lazarus
- Rick and Ann Bresnahan
- Julie and Kevin Buchanan
- Kitty and Allan Coppock
- Denise Burt Cushwa
- Deborah and William Davis
- Eric and Vivian Denardo
- Peter and Bari Dreissigacker
- Trowbridge and Claudia Elliman
- Gerry and Terry Griffin
- Richard and Susan Hart
- Christopher Hill and Susan Flicop
- Cliff Johnson
- Christy Patt and Bob Juzek
- John and Diane Kemp
- Blair, Chantal, Tanisha & Landyn McIntosh
- John and Millie Merrill
- Bunny and Peter Merrill
- Melissa and David Norton
- Dan and Cookie Owen
- Jack and Caroline Patten

- Michael and Deborah Pucillo
- James and Ruth Santos
- David and Barbara Siegel
- Nicholas A. Skinner
- Oliver and Gay Slesar
- Lee and Alice Spencer
- Neil and Carla Stempel
- Marc and Kim Stern
- TAG Philanthropic Foundation
- Mr. and Mrs. Robert E. Taylor, Jr.
- Alan and Ellen Thorndike
- Topnotch Resort and Spa
- Union Bank
- Gaetano and Susan Vicinelli
- Jorge and Gretchen Vivoni
- Richard Wagner
- Richard and Sally Watts
- Roger M. and Jill J. Witten

We are grateful for your support!

Pinnacle Society members joining after December 21st will be recognized in the spring issue of Mountain Views.

Investing in Stowe's Natural Legacy

Since 1987, Stowe Land Trust has been dedicated to the conservation of scenic, recreational, and productive farm and forest land for the benefit of the greater Stowe community, strengthening connections between people and the land. Our goal is to ensure that the Stowe area will be a strong and vibrant community, where the natural landscape plays a central role in the economy, where development respects historic traditions and natural resources, and where there are accessible open spaces and abundant, healthy natural lands and wildlife habitats.

If you share this vision, you can make the conservation of Stowe's exceptionally scenic landscape and rich ecological resources a vital part of your own legacy by making a planned gift to Stowe Land Trust.

Whether it is remembering Stowe Land Trust in your Will, setting up a Charitable Gift Annuity, or other type of planned gift, this is a great way to ensure that future generations will continue to enjoy the unique character of Stowe. It is also an important way for you to maximize the financial rewards of your philanthropy. These gifts are structured to help you realize the full range of the tax and income incentives provided by law to encourage your charitable giving.

For more information, contact Stowe Land Trust Executive Director, Heather Furman at heather@stowelandtrust.org or 802.253.7221, or contact your financial advisor.



Alden Pellet

SLT Thanks Outgoing Chair, Cliff Johnson

SLT would like to thank Cliff Johnson, who among his many volunteer obligations, has served as our Board chair for the past two years. Cliff lives a life of tireless service to others and his dedication and commitment to SLT has been a shining example of that.

Cliff's term as chair began with the reconstruction of the Adams Camp bridge, restoring public access to 513 acres of conserved land in Ranch Valley. He helped lead the organization through a comprehensive strategic planning process that put SLT on track to celebrate its 25th anniversary with solid goals for the future. The campaign to protect Cady Hill Forest required a lot of SLT and Cliff's leadership ensured the success of this important project.

Cliff's willingness to take on any task, and his determination to make every minute of every day productive, is a standard that few of us can follow. Cliff has been a fantastic leader for the land trust, and we are stronger because of his commitment to the community and to land conservation.



Cliff Johnson on the summit of Stowe Pinnacle during a Pinnacle Society outing.

Welcome New Board Members

Three new board members were elected by Stowe Land Trust's (SLT) membership at the 25th Annual Meeting celebration held on Sunday, November 4th. Chess Brownell, Biddle Duke and Walter Frame will join eighteen existing board members responsible for governing the community conservation organization. Each year SLT has a limited number of openings available in its all volunteer board. New members are recruited based on an identified need within the organization. The diversity of the Board is meant to represent the broad perspectives of our community and strengthen SLT's position as a community asset.

Chess Brownell, a long-time community member has been involved with a variety of local non-profit organizations. Currently she works in freelance marketing and writing, and also owns a letterpress printing business. Her most rewarding role is that of parent to daughter Josie, now a freshman at Colorado College. Chess happily



spends her free time locally running, hiking, biking and skiing the trails of Stowe in an effort to match the energy and stamina of her two labradors. Chess has greatly enjoyed the results of SLT's conservation efforts in every season, and looks forward to ensuring the future success of the organization. Chess has assisted with land conservation campaigns in the past and SLT will benefit from incorporating her marketing knowledge and creativity into our outreach.

As a young man seeking a life in public service, **Biddle Duke** went in to journalism, and never left. He met his wife, artist Idoline Scheerer (now Duke), on a beach in Long Island. The two then began a good, long adventure traveling and working in North and South America. Daughter Ellie was born in 1993 in Santa Fe, N.M. and their son Angie was born in 1995 in Buenos Aires. In 1998, Biddle took over the Stowe Report-



er. The company now operates five regional websites, The Stowe Guide and Magazine, the weekly Waterbury Record and other, smaller publications. Biddle will be instrumental in strengthening SLT's communication with the community, its various partners and owners of conserved land.



Walter Frame is the Executive Vice President of Trapp Family Lodge and Resort working with the von Trapp's to coordinate all business activities for the resort and the 2,500

acre estate. Walter is married to Kristina von Trapp and they live in Stowe with their two daughters, Annie and Stella. Walter spearheaded the creation of the Spruce Peak Arts Center Foundation, a non-profit performing arts center and currently serves as its President. Walter will bring leadership experience to the governance of SLT's board and valuable financial experience as SLT plans for the long term sustainability of the organization.

Wiessner Gnome Renews SLT Membership

I found Wiessner Woods many years ago on my way through Stowe on a trip to the Northeast Kingdom. You see, I follow trails through the forest to get where I am going because I am a garden gnome. It was on this trip that I discovered the most amazing tree. A great hollowed out Maple tree trunk, with green moss and round button mushrooms adorning the outside. Amazed that no one was already living there, I wasted no time making this my new home and even added a small "Gnome Home" sign to welcome visitors.

My new home is perfectly situated at the intersection of the Catamount Trail and the Hardwood Ridge Trail in Wiessner Woods. This is a popular route for garden gnomes and visitors headed to the Sugarhouse for dog biscuits or further afield to the Candy Tree. Over the years I have had lots of garden gnome visitors, my friend Timmy once stayed for an entire summer! By far the best thing about living here though is the daily visits I receive from children, dogs and other friends who walk the trails in Wiessner Woods.

Stowe Land Trust has owned the property for 20 years since it was donated to them by Moo Moo Wiessner. They maintain the trails, repair bridges and put up signs to make sure the trails are fun and enjoyable for everyone including me and others who make Wiessner Woods their home. Stowe Land Trust does not ask us to pay rent; in fact, it is free for me and my friends to live here. Just the same, I make sure to send an annual membership contribution this time of year to show my appreciation for their upkeep of my home and to help with the cost of trail maintenance. You can help too by mailing in your membership or by visiting their website www.stowelandtrust.org to make a secure online donation.

Here at the Gnome Home I am busy getting ready for winter but I always have time for a visit from friends. Be sure to stop in the next time you are walking in Wiessner Woods. Until then, I will wish you a happy holiday season and offer my thanks to all of you who have already sent in your Stowe Land Trust contribution!



Celebrate 25 years of local land conservation with a piece of SLT merchandise!



A must-have for any SLT enthusiast, this 100% cotton twill cap has an adjustable fabric closure with brass buckle and hideaway grommet. Available in Khaki, featuring our 25th anniversary logo. **Only 15 left! \$18**

Who doesn't have a bunch of stuff to tote around? This organic cotton tote featuring our 25th anniversary logo is the perfect solution. Natural with black straps. 21" w x 16 1/4" h x 7" d. **Only 8 left! \$20**



The perfect companion for any outdoor adventure, this 27 oz. Klean Kanteen with SLT "Conserving land for our community" logo will ensure your thirst is quenched. Loop cap available only. **Only 4 left! \$20**



Anyone else's head cold these days? Our 25th anniversary logo-ed Nordic SKIDA hat will keep you warm! Available in Tropical Fruit pattern, one size fits most. **Only 15 left! \$25**

To purchase a piece of limited edition merchandise, contact us: 802.253.7221 or info@stowelandtrust.org, or stop by our office at 699 S. Main Street, Stowe



Help Protect the Places You Love: Become a 2013 Member!

Many thanks to those of you
who have already sent in your donation.

VISIT STOWE LAND TRUST ONLINE FOR PROJECT UPDATES, AN EVENTS CALENDAR, OR TO MAKE A DONATION

www.stowelandtrust.org

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