Roots
Change and uncertainty...hallmarks of the Twenty-first Century. In a time when technology alters social order and forms of communication, our institutions struggle to respond to stark political divisions, and our environment is increasingly challenged by catastrophic weather events, how might land conservation and your land trust address any of the great questions we face?

For starters, land conservation creates certainty by permanently protecting lands used for farms that provide food and forests that provide the resources to build and heat our homes. Land conservation also provides a link from our past to our future and is a reminder of the importance of place. We can even say that land conservation transcends political divides.

But land conservation, at least in this era, also serves some greater purposes. Protecting land is a statement of values. The amount of land protected in the Squam watershed has more than tripled in the last decade, reflecting how land conservation binds community in common purpose. Conserved land creates havens for wildlife, mitigates the effect of climate change, and provides us the space for spiritual excursions that remind us of our humanity. In short, land conservation provides roots. Roots for our community, roots for our forests, and roots to build a more sustainable future.

We are ever mindful of the responsibility to help build a stronger community with every project we complete and steward. In this edition of the Squam Lookout, we celebrate the completion of two more community-minded projects: the donation of the 75-acre Richards Coolidge Conservation Area in Ashland and the purchase of the 90-acre Eastman Brook Preserve in Sandwich (see page 3 for details).

The obvious significance of these projects is how they contribute to the protection of clean water, scenic landscapes, and healthy forests. Less obvious is how they, and all our protected properties, ensure that Squam’s future will always have places for spiritual nourishment while being a resource for the entire community.

Onward…
2017 Annual Meeting

“The sun will come out by 10 AM!” That was our mantra the morning of our Annual Meeting! A week of rainy weather had us worried that our luck with outdoor meetings was about to run out. But once again the Squam Spirit was with us and the sun began to shine just as the first of our members arrived!

Many Thanks to Dorothy Smith and Family for hosting us at their amazing Shepard Hill property - the site of the former Asquam House grand hotel. Thanks also to John Moulton of Moulton Farm for the coffee, cider donuts and take-home bags of salad greens! And special thanks to Bonnie Hunt for her amazing blueberry muffins and scones.

The business meeting’s reports, elections and award presentations all ran like clockwork thanks to President Carl Metzger’s leadership. Once the formalities were done, Sid Lovett regaled the crowd with the history and his personal memories of Shepard Hill over the years. What a wonderful way for our members to connect with their surroundings.

New Board Directors

Ashley Bullard lives in Sandwich where she is a painter, farmer, ski and soccer coach, and mother of two strong and independent teenage girls. She also runs two creative businesses in the Lakes/White Mountain Regions of NH, with her husband, Phil Strother. Together, they have raised their girls in the waters of Squam, the surrounding rivers, and in the mountain ranges of Sandwich and beyond, nurturing their love and respect for the outdoors.

Bonnie Hunt lives with husband Bob Maloney in Holderness. Bonnie has 40 years of experience in the trust industry and now works from home in estate planning. She is a member of the Meredith Rotary Club, serves on Committees at SLNSC and LRG Healthcare and is a former Board member and strong supporter of The Circle Program.

David Martin and his wife, Joan moved to Holderness in 2008 when Dave retired from a 39-year career with the international accounting firm KPMG. In retirement Dave has been active in the Squam community serving on the Board at the SLNSC, the SLCS stewardship committee and an advisory committee of LRCT. Dave and Joan enjoy visits from their two sons and their families at the lake.
Richards-Coolidge Conservation Area

We are very pleased to announce that Anne Richards and John Coolidge have donated a Conservation Easement permanently protecting 75 acres of their farm on the east and west sides of Hicks Hill Road in Ashland. This critical field, forest and wetland area shares common boundary with our Whitten Woods and Pedersen Conservation Areas. It increases a total contiguous protected area to nearly 1000 acres, supports wildlife, including wide ranging species, and facilitates large-scale ecological processes!

In addition to exceptional habitat for a wide range of forest and field birds and mammals, the Richards-Coolidge easement conserves over one mile of clear-running steams with eastern brook trout, blacknose dace, and a host of aquatic macro-invertebrates. Protection of these streams is essential to the downstream health of Owl Brook, a major tributary of the Squam River.

Ann and John have long been supporters of conservation in the Squam watershed, and have turned this support into direct action by this superb gift. Thank you!

Eastman Brook Preserve

The Squam Lakes Conservation Society has purchased a key 90-acre parcel known as the Eastman Brook Preserve in Sandwich, NH. Comprised of two parcels (86 & 4 acres) with a half-mile of road frontage on scenic Route 113, this acquisition bridges two existing conservation areas, Doublehead Preserve on Thompson road with Allen Preserve on Route 113, protects the ridgeline from development, and safeguards Eastman Brook, an important tributary at the head of Squam Cove. It also serves as encouragement for the conservation of other nearby lands.

Leo Dwyer and his wife Kathryn Field, agreed to a bargain-sale of this property. Funding for this project came from the Squam Uplands Initiative, a matching grant from a major donor, contributions from the Squam Lakes Association and Rockywold Deephaven Camps, and donations from thirty-eight generous donors.
The SLCS Stewardship team has been busy this summer and fall. It’s been a wonderful mix of both fun and hardy work...the kind that makes you feel good. By now, you hopefully know that the term “Stewardship team” doesn’t mean the one SLCS staff person pulling the levers to keep the train on the right track. It means all of the volunteers that make our work possible. Without your efforts, knowledge, wisdom, and passion, we’d be in a different place.

You know the phrase “Many hands make light work.” Well, with the SLCS Stewardship team, I think it’s safe to say “Many hands make great fun.” Check out these photos, and I think you’ll agree.

If you’d like to be a part of this fun and energetic group, give SLCS a call and we’ll get you plugged in to next year’s volunteer opportunities, both work and play. And, next year will be super important as we’ll have a couple of people from the Americorps Program with us beginning in May and helping into November. There’ll be lots to do, and lots to get done.

**We kicked off the summer season** with a pot luck gathering hosted by Ken and Jenny Evans. It was a perfect evening with lots of laughter and making connections.

**The Third Annual White Oak Pond Paddle** did not disappoint. Another amazing evening spent on this gem of a pond. Thanks to the Haskell family for sharing their island for our BYO dinner and beverages. Paddling back as the light recedes and the stars rise is always a special treat.

**Invasives removal work** continued all summer on removing invasive plants at SLCS’s Mill Brook Preserve. We met on Third Thursday’s this summer to keep “pulling” away at the nasty plants to make room for native plants. We were joined by the full staff of the Laconia Area Community Land Trust (www.laclt.org) for a great day of working hard, laughing a lot, and building understanding of how land conservation and housing have so much in common. Twas good fun and we look forward to lending them a helping hand too.
About 40 people enjoyed a stunning, early fall walking tour of the Coolidge Beede Forest. Many thanks to Peter and Prudy Van Winkle, for providing guide services and hosting the bag lunch in their historic barn. Thanks also to Nat Coolidge for his wonderful long-term management of this forest resource.

A beautiful full Harvest Moon was promised for the year-end volunteer gathering at Seavey’s Vista at Doublehead Preserve. The keepers of the moon provided…if you waited long enough! This BYO dinner affair was a fabulous way to celebrate hard work and appreciate the SLCS community that makes Squam thrive. The fun meter was in the high zone all evening on this one.

2017 Davenport Award...Serving the Community

Ken Evans

My favorite part of Annual Meeting is presenting the Davenport Award to an individual or individuals for their exceptional commitment and service to the Squam community as stewards of its protected properties. This year the Stewardship Committee honored George and Susan Gurney of Center Harbor.

George and Susan are long-time easement monitors, invasive removal workers and frequent visitors to SLCS offices. They are passionate about conserving the forested backbone of High Haith where they live and much, much more. They are involved with the Science Center gardens and trails, do water quality monitoring for SLA, support the Center Harbor Library gardens and consistently borrow trash bags so that Susan can pick up roadside trash on the way to their home. And, they do all of this with a sense of humor that regularly brightens our office. When there is work to be done, they say, “This is my community and we are going to make it better!”

While Susan was not able to be at the meeting, daughter Katri accepted a Squam watershed map for her mom. The Committee gave George a Silky Big Boy 2000 pruning saw for use in his many hours of invasives removal work!
In Memory . . . Stewards of Squam land conservation for over five decades

It is with sadness we mark the passing of two long-time advocates for conservation. Rachel Armstrong and Bev Ridgely’s commitment to the protection of the Squam watershed goes back decades.

Rachel Armstrong first came to Squam as a child in 1940 to stay at Rockywold-Deephaven Camps. A native of Lancaster, PA she graduated from the Garrison Forest School in 1948 and Pine Manor college in 1950. She married Tom Armstrong, also of Lancaster, in 1951 and by 1960 the couple had settled in Falmouth, ME. Six years later they purchased Hodge House, a 1800s farmhouse in Sandwich Bay and for the next fifty years divided their time between Falmouth and Squam. Rachel focused most of her life’s work on a mixture of dedication to family and acting on her drive to help the greater Portland (Maine) and Squam Lakes, NH, communities. She served three terms on the SLCS Board of Directors from 1998 to 2007 and was elected to Honorary Director in 2008. She was one of our first volunteer property monitors and over the years she and Tom were our office’s source for the latest articles and information on conservation and the environment.

Beverly (Bev) Ridgely was one of the most loyal and longest serving volunteers in SLCS history. He was a member of the Board from 1978 to 1993 and an Honorary Director since 1995. Bev was born in Baltimore, MD, graduated from Gilman School (Baltimore) and Princeton, AB 1943, MA 1949, PhD in Romance Languages and Literatures (1953). During World War II, he was an Ensign in the U.S. Navy, serving on a destroyer escort in the Pacific Theatre and later as an instructor at the Naval Training Center in Miami. After the war, he and Barbara settled in Providence, RI where Bev was Professor of French Studies at Brown University until 1980. During this time they came to love Squam and in 1970 built a cottage called Le Marais where they were to spend many happy years. Squam proved a perfect place for Bev to pursue his lifelong interest in wildlife observation, especially birds. In 1977 he published Birds of the Squam Lakes Region, New Hampshire a work he later revised and expanded in 1988. Bev was predeceased by Barbara in April 2013, just shy of their 70th anniversary.

Make conservation a part of your holiday tradition

Share your love of Squam with your family and friends this Holiday Season by giving gift memberships to the Squam Lakes Conservation Society. Each new member will receive the Squam Outlook, information on events and updates on projects throughout the year.

A great way to encourage others to become involved in ensuring Squam’s future.
The Art of Conservation

Over the summer, Sandwich artist, Margaret (Peggy) Merritt teamed up with the Patricia Ladd Carega Gallery to support land conservation with the exhibit, Earth on the Edge. This exhibit was inspired by satellite images of global landscapes posted on NASA’s Earth Observatory.

Margaret Merritt best describes her project: “The natural world provides the inspiration for nearly all of my artwork. While the woods, meadows, and mountains surrounding my rural New Hampshire home have suggested the designs for many of my hand-pulled prints, the works in this exhibition draw their inspiration from the greater world: views of planet earth from above. Each group of prints in this collection emphasizes a specific geographic area or environment under threat by climate change or other impacts of human presence. I hope that the reimagined landscapes of these prints not only capture the viewer’s interest, but also express my views as a conservationist and global citizen: We have but one planet to honor and protect. ”

Both artist and gallery dedicated this exhibit to supporting conservation efforts in the NH Lakes region by donating a percentage of sales to The Lakes Region Conservation Trust and The Squam Lakes Conservation Society.

The Plymouth Area Renewable Energy Initiative in partnership with the NH Electric Cooperative, has rolled out a program called NH Solar Shares. NH Solar Shares will design and install solar PV arrays for the purpose of sharing solar energy with low income families, increasing the portion of clean carbon free renewable energy on the grid and building healthier communities, environmentally and economically.

These small community-scale solar PV arrays will be built one community at a time, inspired by a task force of local volunteers and funded through charitable donations, grants, the state’s solar incentive and a donated lease of land. The PV electricity will be credited directly to the electric bills of low income families living in the region of the solar PV array.

“We are very happy to have the early support of the Squam Lakes Conservation Society,” said Sandra Jones, who is coordinating the new program, “Both organizations share the important goal of improving the health of New Hampshire’s environment.”

The inaugural solar array will be built in Plymouth, NH on space donated by the Common Man Family of Restaurants next to the Frosty Scoops ice cream stand. The next goal is to build an array in the Squam Lakes Region. If interested in making a donation, to volunteer or explore hosting an array, please e-mail Sandra Jones, sandra@plymouthenergy.org or visit www.nhsolarshares.com.
Kites and Land Conservation

Kite enthusiasts of all ages joined us on November 25th for an afternoon of kite flying in celebration of land conservation in the Squam watershed. It was a lovely day to be outdoors and a perfect spot to enjoy the beauty of Squam.

Many thanks to Laurey and Jinks Millspaugh for the use of their fields.

The Society’s mission is to preserve the unique quality and character of the Squam watershed by protecting lands for present and future generations.