

# SQUAM LOOKOUT

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE SQUAM LAKES CONSERVATION SOCIETY

VOL. XXI, No. 1

*"Squam's Land Trust"*

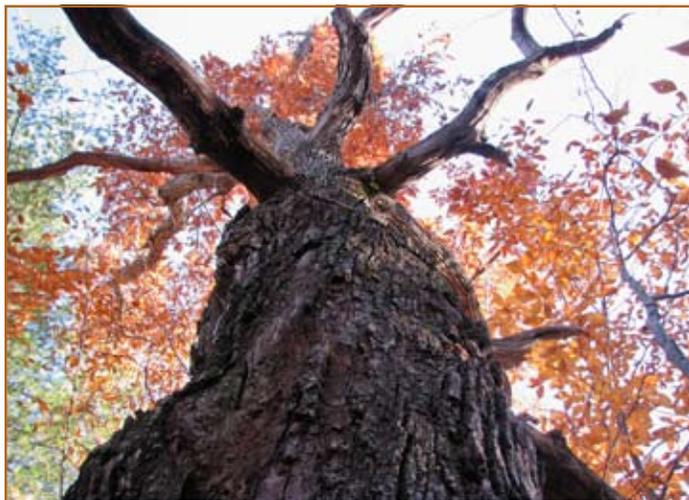
SPRING 2012

## Audacious

Not long ago, the goal of conserving a third of the Squam watershed was considered audacious. Today, as recently completed projects catapult Squam to an unprecedented one-quarter of the land in protective status, it seems less of a stretch.

The founders of the Squam Lakes Conservation Society would no doubt be pleased with the effect and magnitude of conserved land. Harold J. Coolidge wrote "the problems to be faced are common ones for all who wish to save the character and beauty of the Lake," describing the effort to organize in 1960, creating one of the first small land trusts in NH and the nation.

The Articles of Agreement stated our purpose would be for the conservation, protection and preservation of Squam's natural beauty; conservation of wild fauna and flora; encouragement of civic planning and zoning; and working in cooperation with existing organizations. All of which still applies today, but it's taken years to fully appreciate its meaning.



*photo by Rick Van de Poll*

While SLCS has matured into a leading land conservation organization through the protection of over one hundred properties, in many respects our central task is really just coming into focus. Success can no longer simply

be measured by the quantity of protected acres and parcels, but also the quality of stewardship. Drafting and recording a conservation easement is easy compared to the commitment to protect land forever.



*Bennett Cove postcard provided by Peter Francesco*

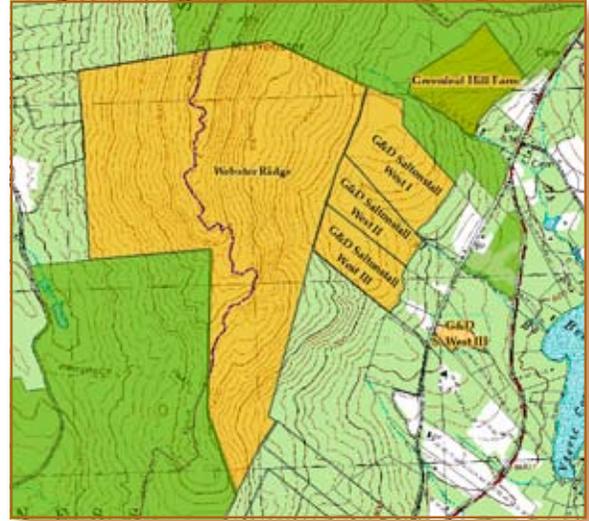
Is SLCS making that commitment? I can say with confidence that we are on our way. For example, we've signed a long-term office lease with the SLA. Our Stewardship endowment has finally reached a million dollars, about one quarter of what we'll eventually need. We have forty-three members in a planned giving program called the Heron Society. Should we need to challenge a violation, we've established the Barnes Legal Defense Fund and enrolled in a legal defense insurance program. We've adopted the industry's best practices through our bid to become an accredited land trust through the Land Trust Alliance. We have a great Board and staff, and truly dedicated members. And we are clearly in the midst of shifting from being driven by land acquisition to sustaining perpetual stewardship.

Planning for a long time is a tall task; ask any young family. Planning for forever is nothing short of audacious. Thank you for helping to make SLCS possible, for your broad and meaningful support and volunteerism, and for your commitment to fulfill our daunting and perpetual obligations.

*Roge*

# All in the family...George & Dorothy Saltonstall West I, II & III

On December 30, 2011, SLCS recorded three donated easements by members of the West Family in honor of George and Dorothy Saltonstall West, stewards of the John F. True Farm since 1917. True Farm is one of the few remaining original settlement farms, having been built circa 1772. Together, they conserve 129 contiguous acres containing productive forests, vernal pools, West Brook, fields, and scenic landscapes on the Squam Range. Each of these easements is significant for contributing to the protection of the largest source of water quality, animal habitat and forested landscape in the Squam watershed.



## Webster Ridge



**G&D S. West I** Donated by filmmaker and friend George Butler and Caroline Alexander, this conservation easement protects 55 acres of well-managed pine and hardwood forest sloping up the hillside behind the iconic True Farm residences as seen from Route 113. The knoll near the top offers a unique vantage point in the fore of the more dominant Squam Range.



Without doubt, the conservation of the Squam Range has been, and continues to be, the highest conservation priority in the Squam watershed. It comprises over 60% of its land mass, is the source of most of the surface water running into the lake, and contains the highest-ranked wildlife habitat to be found in NH. Furthermore, the Squam Range is part of one of the largest unfragmented blocks of land in central NH. It lies uniquely at the intersection of three eco-regions, supports all manner of wildlife habitat including bobcat and the threatened pine martin, and contains frequently used hiking trails.



**G&D S. West II** Richard and Florence Butler have served as conservation leaders in the effort to protect True Farm and the Squam Range. Their donated conservation easement protects 31 acres of impeccably managed forest rising up the Squam Range slope, including the headwaters of West Brook feeding into Squam Lake.

**G&D S. West III** Donated by Jennifer, Emily and Gifford West, children of Richard and Ruth West, with the support of their respective families, this most westerly of the conserved lands includes 37 acres of moderately sloped forest and 6 acres of pasture along True Farm Road.



The completion of this 490 acre conservation easement in January, 2012 is a huge leap forward for conserving the Squam watershed. We are grateful to Webster Land Corporation, Squam's largest land owner, for working with us and making this a top priority. Webster Ridge is not only the largest conservation easement SLCS holds in primary, but it bridges the 2,471 acre Burleigh Land Limited Partnership conserved lands, creating a 4,004 acre block of conserved land, by far the largest in the watershed. The Crawford-Ridgepole trail bisects the conserved land. This property contains diverse habitat, well-managed forests, and pockets of old-growth forest. Again, we applaud Peter Harris and all the shareholders of Webster Land Corporation for their leadership and dedication to conservation.





## Little Jungle

Dr. Crawford Campbell, with the support of his aunt Ernestine Hartshorn, generously donated a conservation easement protecting 1,500' of shoreline and 8 acres located on the east side of High Haith. This mostly wooded property offers wildlife habitat for a diversity of animal and plants and protection of one of Squam's steepest shoreline slopes. The original camp, called the Little Jungle after the Kipling books, was built by Stewart Hartshorn, inventor of the roll-up shade, around 1910. We are grateful to Dr. Campbell and wife Robyn for their commitment to conservation.

## Stewardship Challenges

What is SLCS's most significant stewardship challenge? Is it the conservation easements on Red Hill, the Squam Range or the lakeside? Actually, being the owner of 551 acres dispersed over 20 parcels is our greatest stewardship responsibility. It's a bit like having 20 children, all with different natural features, needs, and relationships with neighbors. Being Squam's third largest landowner requires that we have a set of tools and protocols to manage these lands.

Over the past 3 years the stewardship committee and staff have developed a Land Management Policy that reflects the collective knowledge of land managers,



scientists and laypeople from throughout the watershed and region. Using this policy as a foundation, we created individualized management plans to guide us through the process of preserving and enhancing the unique qualities of each property while at the same time determining responsible and inviting ways to share these qualities with the public. It is a dynamic process that changes with the landscape, the needs of the land and the people that enjoy it. It is a journey that lasts into perpetuity.

## Please Welcome...



We are delighted to welcome Caleb King to SLCS as our new intern. He will work one day a week assisting SLCS in all aspects of our daily operations both in the office and in the field.

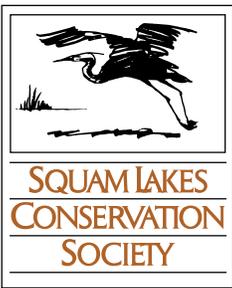
Caleb holds a B.A. in Anthropology and a M.S. in Environmental Science and Policy from Plymouth State University. He has worked for 12 years with his father at Natt King Stoneworks and is owner of Waterfront Solutions LLC in Meredith, a consulting company specializing in assisting homeowners with the State environmental permitting process. While at SLCS he looks forward to enhancing his GIS skills and his knowledge of land conservation.

Caleb and his wife Kim, live in Meredith.

## In the News...

SLCS is proud to be a charter member of the NH Land Trust Coalition (NHLTC), whose mission is to advance land conservation in NH through professional development, policy advocacy, and education. The Coalition promotes best practices, and gives conservation a collective voice in Concord and beyond. Please talk with Roger for more information about NHLTC.

In December 2011, the Board of Directors passed the following resolution: "As a NH land trust serving communities impacted by the proposed Northern Pass project, the Squam Lakes Conservation Society supports the efforts of the Society for the Protection of NH Forests in opposing the Northern Pass as proposed."



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P.O. Box 696  
Holderness, NH 03245  
Phone: 603-968-7900  
Fax: 603-968-7903  
Website: [www.squamlakes.com](http://www.squamlakes.com)

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*Stewardship*

## SAVE THE DATE

### VOICES FOR SQUAM

To Benefit Squam Lakes Conservation Society  
Monday, July 16, 2012 7:00 pm  
Flying Monkey, Plymouth, NH 603-536-2551

Performance by *Peking and the Mystics*  
An eclectic *a cappella* group singing original arrangements,  
classic swing, jazz, doo-wop, and pop music of every decade since the 1890s.  
Children \$10; Adults \$20; Table for 2—\$50; Table for 4—\$100.



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### SLCS ANNUAL MEETING

Saturday, August 18, 2012 8:30 a.m.

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### SLCS & SLNSC

## Spring Bird ID Series

Fridays, May 4, 11, 18, 25 • June 1, 8, 15, 22  
7:00–10:00 a.m., Age 14+

Join Iain MacLeod (on 5/18, 5/25, 6/1), Bob Ridgely (6/8), Rick Van de Poll (6/15), or Tony Vazzano (6/22) for this series of beginning birding programs to learn identification by sight and sound. Meet at the Squam Lakes Natural Science Center to travel by van to each site.

Cost: \$12/SLNSC or SLCS member; \$15/non-member per date  
Call the Squam Lakes Natural Science Center to sign-up.  
**603-968-7194**

