



NEW ENGLAND FORESTS



New England Forestry Foundation

Conserving New England's Forests Since 1944

Sabbathday Lake Shaker Village Receives National Preservation Honor Award

On October 4th NEFF was honored to be among the recipients of a prestigious National Preservation Honor Award from the National Trust for Historic Preservation for the protection and conservation of Sabbathday Lake Shaker Village, Forest, and Farm in New Gloucester, Maine. This was the culmination of a five-year collaborative effort with the Trust for Public Land, Maine Preservation, the Royal River Conservation Trust, Friends of the Shakers, the State of Maine and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service.

In early 2003, NEFF first learned of the opportunity to purchase and hold a conservation easement on the Shaker Village forest and agricultural land. The country's last four practicing Shakers live on the property, using its fields and working forest for sustenance and income. Following a series of meetings, the Shakers chose NEFF as their preferred conservation easement holder and the Trust for Public Land as the entity to manage the project.

The Sabbathday Lake Shaker Village, a National Historic Landmark consists of approximately 1,700 acres and includes over

5,000 feet of undeveloped frontage on Sabbathday Lake. The fields and forests surround 17 historic structures and landscape



features, which are now the subject of an historical preservation easement held by Maine Preservation. And thanks to over 200 years of stewardship, the land encompasses diverse wildlife habitat, walking and cross-country skiing trails, fertile agricultural soils, and productive woodlands. Located on well-traveled route 26, the village receives thousands of visitors every year.

The property is in the headwaters of the Royal River, which enters Casco Bay in Yarmouth. The woodland contains forest types and stands typical of southern Maine, ranging from mixed hardwoods to nearly pure white pine. Professional foresters have advised the Shakers for several decades.

Under the terms of the completed easements, the Shakers have sold their rights to develop the property, and the proceeds will help them make needed upgrades and repairs on the property and buildings. The easements allow for sustainable farming, forestry, and low impact recreation, while prohibiting development and inappropriate uses. The historic buildings, including the only active Shaker Meeting House, along with culturally important landscape features will never be significantly altered.

More than \$3 million was raised for this project, including over \$1 million to establish three endowments for restoration and ongoing maintenance of the site.

"The preservation of the Sabbathday Lake Shaker Village ensures that the great legacy of this community will endure for generations to come. Its protection, achieved largely by private action, is a true feat. It offers a much-needed model for future collaborations between local, state, and federal agencies seeking creative solutions for the safety of both the built and natural environment."

*Richard Moe, President
National Trust for Historic Preservation*

Message from the Executive Director

These past several weeks again have evidenced significant accomplishments, which are possible because of your support and the work of our talented staff. I want to take this opportunity to share with you some of the exciting news of late in addition to the award by the National Trust for Historic Preservation featured on the cover of this newsletter.

NEFF has made great strides in obtaining interest and support from grant making foundations. Within the last few weeks we have received grants from the following foundations: 3M Foundation, The EnTrust Fund, French Foundation, and John Sage Foundation. Their generosity plays a large role in sustaining our program efforts and we are most grateful for their support.

Talking about foundations, our Downeast Lakes project is featured in the Summer 2007 edition of *The Pew Charitable Trusts'* magazine. The article is titled, "Preserving These Other Edens", and can be read by accessing their website at www.pewtrusts.org. Additionally, we received word from the Yawkey Foundation that they would like to feature NEFF in their upcoming annual report.

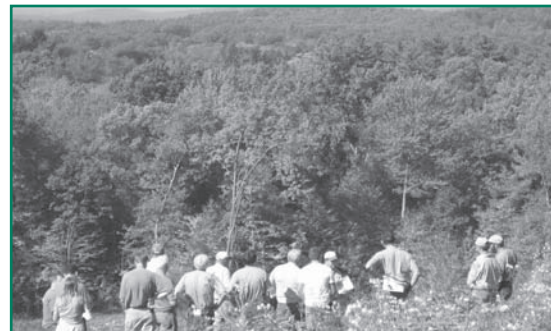
Meanwhile, the New England Patriots are producing a signature film about New England to be shown at the Hall at Patriot Place. The film will include footage taken at our Bliss Woods and Arnold

Family Forest in South Freeport, Maine.

In October, more than 65 foresters, resource managers, landowners and land trust representatives joined us for two hands-on workshops in invasive plant control. The workshops were supported by grants from the USDA Forest Service Invasive Demonstration Project at Prouty Woods and an EPA Targeted Watershed Project in partnership



3M Staff Present \$10,000 Grant Award



Invasive Plant Control Workshop Participants

with the Nashua River Watershed Association, Beaver Brook Association, and Trust for Public Land.

Prouty Woods continues to be an educational resource for the community. Two schools recently visited our headquarters. Littleton High School's Advanced



Lynn W. Lyford

Placement Biology and Environmental Science classes used Prouty Woods as an outdoor classroom to study forest management, data collection, and tree identification. Students from the Oak Meadow Montessori School in Littleton visited to study the hemlock wooly adelgid, an introduced pest that has damaged hemlocks throughout the Northeast.

Our last Board of Directors meeting was held in Woodstock, Vermont at the Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historic Park. As with all Board meetings around the region, we hosted a late afternoon reception for friends and supporters. The reception featured a talk by Christina Marts, the Park's Resource Manager, on the history of the park – the only national park that promotes and practices sustainable forest management.

These accomplishments would not be possible without the financial support of our loyal members and friends. I hope you will continue to invest in our work in forestland conservation and education.

Forest Steward Profile

Art Lazarus Prouty Woods Littleton, Massachusetts

When it comes to stewardship of conservation areas, Littleton Massachusetts looks to Art Lazarus to get the job done. By caring for properties, rallying volunteers, writing articles, leading tours, and serving as a knowledgeable and kind resource, Art cultivates connections between members of his community and their local conservation areas.

Art wears many hats in Littleton. Not only is he a NEFF Forest Steward, but he is also a Trustee and Director of Land Stewardship for the Littleton Conservation Trust and Associate Member of the Conservation Commission. He manages stewardship activities for 20 parcels, totaling over 1,150 acres in Littleton—organizing workgroups and making weekly rounds to remove invasives, clear trails, clean up debris, monitor properties, and much more.

Having completed his “first career” as an engineering and environmental geologist, Art has now expanded his skills in natural history and tree folklore. Ask any participant of his school field trips and community outings at Prouty Woods, and you learn how Art “makes the trees come alive” with tales of how early Americans used native trees for different food, teas, dyes, and building materials. A local favorite is the black birch tree, whose wintergreen-scented sap is traditionally used for making birch beer. “It smells just like root beer!” Or the white pine, whose inner bark can be used as an emergency food source. But Art warns, “The way this tastes, it really should be a last resort.”

Art became active in conservation while living in Raynham, MA when a neighboring farmer was dumping raw

sewage on his fields adjacent to the town water supply. After mobilizing his neighbors in 1971 to stop this practice, he was appointed to the Conservation Commission and served as Chairman for half of the 25 years he lived there.

Last summer, Art enhanced his conservation leadership by becoming a Keystone Cooperator through the University of Massachusetts. The three-day training program enhanced his ability to promote forest conservation and stewardship, and serve as a resource for his community.

NEFF is fortunate to have volunteers like Art Lazarus, who help us reach out to Littleton and make Prouty Woods a true “Community Forest.”



A Walk in the Woods

Arnold Family Forest South Freeport, Maine

In 2002, Barbara H. Arnold and her family donated this critical piece of open space in South Freeport, Maine to NEFF. The land had been in the Arnold family for three generations, and according to Ms. Arnold, the gift was “A family thing.” She explains, “For generations we have managed the land as part of the American Tree Farm Program and we wanted it always to be a vital part of the working landscape of Maine.” This special property includes part of a tidal estuary. With over 2,000 feet of frontage along the Redding Creek and associated wetlands, Arnold Forest hosts valuable habitat for wading birds and other waterfowl.

Several organizations and generous individuals partnered to conserve this special area. The local Freeport Conservation Trust holds a conservation easement on the property. Mr. Leo F. Blair of Harvard, Massachusetts generously donated an abutting 28 acres with additional frontage on Redding Creek in 2003, expanding the size of the protected parcel to over 94 acres. For several years, the Yarmouth Wild Bird Center has teamed up with NEFF to co-host

Community Forest Discovery Day birding excursions at the forest, introducing local bird enthusiasts to this working woodland habitat.

Arnold Family Forest includes two major forest types: an oak and pine forest, which is prevalent along the southern Maine coast, and a red pine plantation. The plantation was established in the mid 1960’s to fill in an airstrip runway which Duncan Arnold had built ten years prior.

This summer, Debora Levensailor joined NEFF’s volunteer Forest Steward team to look after the Arnold and Blair Forests. She is a welcome and enthusiastic new addition to our Maine group of volunteers, and we look forward to working with Deb to care for this important protected area in Freeport.





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Restoring The American Chestnut Tree

Under the guidance of our board member, Jim Coull, NEFF is pleased to be part of a nationwide effort to restore the American chestnut tree to its once abundant presence in the forest. A chestnut orchard of approximately 200 trees was established in 2005 at our Prouty Woods forest.

The natural beauty of New England is something in which we all take pride. Yet less than a hundred years ago, the forests of this area looked quite different. The American chestnut was the towering giant that formed the highest tier of the forest canopy. It provided a plentiful and stable food source for wildlife. Its wood was close-grained and straight, highly rot resistant, and was widely used for furniture, paneling, and fencing. It was considered one of the most important timber and nut-producing trees in the eastern forest from Maine to Alabama.

Beginning in the early 1900's, an accidentally imported fungus devastated billions of acres of defenseless American chestnut trees. Chestnut blight caused a "pandemic", which altered the landscape of New England. Within a few decades, the chestnut blight had completely eliminated the American chestnut from its dominant position in our forests.

The good news is—the tree is not extinct. The American chestnut survives as a scraggly understory tree that re-sprouts from tenacious root systems. Only a few of these stems may live long enough to produce nuts before the blight overwhelms and kills them.

Even better news is—The American Chestnut Foundation (TACF) is



actively solving the problem of the chestnut blight. For more than eighteen years, TACF has been engaged in a breeding program that will transfer the blight resistance of the Chinese chestnut tree to its American cousin. The goal is to breed genetically diverse blight-resistant American chestnut trees through age-old breeding techniques combined with insights from recent advances in plant pathology and molecular biology.

TACF is making excellent progress, the first blight-resistant nuts are expected within approximately five years. The hope is these trees will breed true to American chestnut characteristics and the reforestation of this magnificent tree will begin in the next decade.

The orchard at Prouty Woods is part of a program established by the Massachusetts Chapter of TACF that consists of over 5,500 trees across the state, the oldest of which are just starting to produce 2nd and 3rd backcross nuts. All of these trees will be infected with the blight and those that survive will become the mother trees for the next generation of blight-resistant American chestnuts. For more information on the efforts to restore this tree visit www.acf.org.



The Charity Navigator, the largest independent charity evaluator in America has given New England Forestry Foundation a 4-Star rating for "successfully managing the finances of your organization in an efficient and effective manner." It is the highest charity rating available for a non-profit organization.