

Five Rivers Conservation Trust

Protecting open space in central New Hampshire

Fall 2015 Newsletter



Message from the Board Chair

By Tim Britain

Five Rivers has been invited to the accreditation pool and we are swimming. This past June the Land Trust Accreditation



Commission notified us that we “won the lottery” and had been selected to submit an application for national accreditation in 2016. This means we need to submit a comprehensive application to the Commission by April 2016, which will mark the beginning of a 10-month process ending (hopefully) in accreditation in 2017. Approval of our application would signify that Five Rivers meets the highest national standards for land trusts, a designation shared by only 19% of land trusts nationwide. Our work over the next six months, assembling data and documenting organizational policies, among other tasks, will be a challenge. We are confident that we are up to the task.

It is no secret that one key to success of any land trust is public support. Five Rivers now stewards 62 properties protecting over 3,800 acres of farms, forests, wetlands, ponds and scenic vistas within the 17 communities we serve. Our ability to monitor and manage easements on these properties and undertake new projects requires a strong membership

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Featured Conservation Property: Chase Brook Easement, Henniker

Owned by the Town of Henniker, Conservation Easement held by Five Rivers
By Barb Beers

Five Rivers' Chase Brook Easement is located south of the Henniker town center. This 61-acre wooded conservation area includes a portion of Chase Brook, which is a tributary of the Contoocook River. There is a 0.6-mile main trail that runs roughly north to south through the property and is maintained by the Henniker Trail Travelers snowmobile club. The trail ascends gradually from the access point on Flanders Road and continues off the easement onto private property.

The forest consists of a diverse mixture of coniferous and deciduous trees. Sunlight trickles through the canopy, and ferns and wildflowers cover the forest floor. When you go, keep an eye out for Jack-in-the-Pulpit flowers whose clustered green berries turn bright red in late summer and fall.

Off-trail explorations will lead you to hills and boulders to the east and Chase Brook to the west. The brook is easy and fun to explore for both adults and children. Follow the brook upstream and you will find deeper pools to sit by in quiet contemplation or just for a good foot soak! This is a wonderful place for all to enjoy! Parking is along the road near the junction of Flanders and Craney Hill Roads.

Barb Beers recently retired as a life science teacher and Science Department Chair at John Stark Regional High School in Weare. She used the Chase Brook property to teach her students about watershed ecology. Barb serves on Five Rivers' outreach committee and is training to become an easement monitor. ■



image credit: Barb Beers

FIVE RIVERS

Gatherings, Hikes



image credit: Barb Beers

Meetinghouse Pond Hike, August, 2015

Hikers at Five Rivers' Meetinghouse Pond Field Trip in Glimanton crest the hill of this conserved property's prime agricultural field after enjoying a morning exploring fields, forest and shoreline.

Participants also learned about the historical "retting" pond on the property, formerly used in processing flax plants into linen fabric.



image credit: Russ Elkins

Kayak Raffle Winner, July, 2015

Beth McGuinn of Five Rivers and Aaron Constant of Quickwater Canoe & Kayak present the Elie Kayak to Linda Elkins of Loudon, the lucky winner of a kayak donated to Five Rivers by Quickwater Canoe and Kayak of Concord.



image credit: Kathy Healy



Five Rivers Conservation Trust

Five Rivers is a nonprofit land trust with a mission to preserve and protect important open space lands for present and future generations. We work in seventeen towns¹ at the confluence of five New Hampshire rivers².

¹Five Rivers' towns are Belmont, Boscawen, Bow, Canterbury, Chichester, Concord, Dunbarton, Gilmanton, Henniker, Hillsboro, Hopkinton, Loudon, Northfield, Pembroke, Salisbury, Warner and Webster.

²The Five Rivers are the Blackwater, Contoocook, Merrimack, Soucook and Warner Rivers.

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Beth McGuinn, **Executive Director**
Kerry Sponberg, **Membership and Office Manager**

Five Rivers Conservation Trust

31 Warren Street, Concord, NH | (603) 225-7225 | www.5rct.org



Keep up-to-date with events on our Facebook page.

facebook.com/FiveRiversNH

HAPPENINGS

and Raffles



image credit: Ruth Smith

Annual Gathering, May, 2015

Over 100 members and guests visited with their Five Rivers friends to learn about Five Rivers' latest successes and hear from NH Audubon's Chris Martin about the recovery of the bald eagle in NH and in Canterbury where there is a new nest.



image credit: Kathy Healy

Geocaching Hike, April, 2015

Davis Ross and Fred Mullin led a great field trip for those eager to learn the sport of geocaching – using handheld GPS to find “treasures” – at Five Rivers-conserved Swope Park in Concord.

If you have a story to share about Five Rivers, our properties or the people who make our work possible, we'd love to hear it. Send us your story at info@5rct.org.

Executive Director's Message

By Beth McGuinn



In my first year at Five Rivers, I've worked with dedicated volunteers, read monitoring reports written by each of our easement monitors and met proud landowners and members excited about our work. Each person comes to Five Rivers with interesting stories – here are a couple I would like to share:

Our project managers are working with two recent widows who each, with their late-husbands, have long wanted to conserve their respective properties, but other priorities created delays. Now each woman seeks to conserve her well managed farm and forest land. For one, conservation is what may make the difference between keeping the historic farm intact and in the family, if Five Rivers can raise the funds to purchase a conservation easement. For the other, conservation will take the form of a donated conservation easement which will be a simpler, quicker process. Each property is an ideal candidate for conservation and Five Rivers is working to ensure each is conserved. You'll be hearing more about these women and their properties in the coming year.

I have met lots of members at our hikes and events. I met Dick Ford on our Paddle Trip down the Merrimack last year. He enjoyed the paddle so much that he joined Five Rivers as a member immediately. He knew of our work because he hikes the trails on our conserved properties. He attended our fall hike and our special Welcome Event. When we asked him to apply his accounting skills as a volunteer on our Finance Committee, he said he'd love to volunteer because he has a passion for Five Rivers' work. At his first meeting, Dick suggested that Five Rivers' mission is conserving land, but he saw that our real business is stewardship of the land that we have conserved. This is not a simple concept, but to Dick, it was obvious. We're lucky to have his skills and insights on our committee.



Volunteer, Dick Ford

Landowners who have planned for years to conserve their special properties and outdoor enthusiasts with skills to offer, make Five Rivers a successful organization. Thanks to each of you – our members and donors, our monitors and board members, our easement donors and volunteers for all that you do to make Five Rivers a success and for welcoming me in my first year at Five Rivers. ■

Membership & Annual Appeal

Each year, we give our supporters two opportunities to support Five Rivers financially – once with our membership request, and again at the end of the year with our annual appeal. Have you ever wondered about the difference between the two? Have you ever been confused by the two? If so, you're not alone!

We count on your membership to keep Five Rivers doing the same great work we've been able to accomplish in the past. Membership is the foundation that provides organizational stability. New memberships and increased membership levels help us grow. We count on our members to sustain us over time.

Each year, we also send an annual appeal request. This year-end fund helps us with special projects. Last year's Annual Fund increased the hours for our part-time Membership Manager, freeing up time for the Executive Director to work on accreditation and be more involved in Five Rivers' land protection and stewardship work.

Future annual appeals will help us reach out to more landowners and communities about their conservation options, will help us plan where we should focus our land conservation efforts, and will help us recruit and train new volunteers to reach out to potential future members.

Our annual appeal is scheduled at the end of the year for two reasons. Year-end is when our members make decisions about their tax-deductible charitable giving, AND it is when Five Rivers plans its work for the following year.

This year, we want to clarify the relationship between membership and the annual appeal. If you have suggestions that we should consider, please let us know at info@5rct.org.

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base. Consequently, in the coming year we will re-double our efforts to increase membership through events, hikes, and other programs.

Another key to success is volunteers and Five Rivers is blessed to have many talented people working for our organization. Recently, one such volunteer, inspired by the ALS "Ice-Bucket Challenge," suggested

a new fundraising program, the "Adopt-A-Tree Challenge." We are asking friends and supporters of Five Rivers to visit our conserved lands which allow public access, take a "selfie" photo with their favorite tree, adopt the tree by posting their photograph to the Five Rivers' Facebook page, and make a \$10.00 donation to Five Rivers. Check out our web page for more information. With this program we hope to raise public awareness of properties conserved by Five Rivers and raise some money for the stewardship of our conserved properties.

To this end, my daughter and I decided to celebrate my birthday by visiting a myriad of Five Rivers' properties in the Hopkinton/Concord area. Together with my dogs, we managed to visit four properties in one afternoon and adopt a tree at each one. One need not venture to the White Mountains to discover cool trails and interesting properties – they are in our own backyard. I invite you to visit our properties allowing public access and adopt a tree. You will be glad you did! ■



Accreditation Comments About Five Rivers are Welcome

Five Rivers has always done good work, and now we are ready to have a third party assess the quality of our work against national standards. Five Rivers will apply to be an accredited land trust in 2016. The Land Trust Accreditation Commission recognizes land trusts that meet national

quality standards for protecting important natural places and working lands – forever. A public comment period for Five Rivers is now open.

The Commission will conduct an extensive review of Five Rivers' policies and programs, and invites public input. Signed, written comments on Five Rivers' pending application will be accepted. Comments should relate to how Five Rivers complies with national quality standards that address the ethical and technical operation of a land trust. For a full list of standards see <http://www.landtrustaccreditation.org/tips-andtools/indicator-practices>.

You may submit a comment by mail to Land Trust Accreditation Commission, Attn: Public Comments, 36 Phila Street, Suite 2, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866 or by email to info@landtrustaccreditation.org; or by fax at 518-587-3183. Comments will be most useful if they are submitted by May 30, 2016. We encourage your participation. ■



Welcome New Trustees

Many say that Five Rivers has the most dedicated, hard working board they've ever encountered. This year we welcome four new board members and one returning member. We're very excited about the expertise they bring and the enthusiasm they've already shown for the work that we do.



Amanda Stone, Gilmanston

Amanda's expertise is in water resources, and she has an important role in conservation in her position as Land and Water Conservation Specialist with UNH Cooperative Extension. Amanda is a founder of the NH Land Trust Coalition and coordinates the annual Saving Special Places conference.

Carolyn Koegler Miller, Hopkinton

Carolyn has a passion for the outdoors, gained from the summers of her youth, spent in the Wind River Range in Wyoming. Upon returning to NH, she and husband Rob were dismayed with the development in his boyhood town in Southern NH. They are dedicated to conserving important elements of our rural landscape. Carolyn is an attorney with the NH Supreme Court.



Mary Cowan Lundquist, Hopkinton

Mary is the co-owner of Cowan and Zellers Real Estate Professionals. She has served on many boards, including the Trust for Public Lands. Her knowledge of real estate and connections in our service area will be a great help to Five Rivers. She is an avid hiker on our conserved properties, especially at Dimond Hill Farm.

Michele Roberge, Concord

Michele is trained as an engineer and brings great enthusiasm for her first board position. She and her family spend time on conserved lands hiking and skiing. She is a recent graduate of the Leadership NH class and is completing her MBA. Michele works in the Air Division of NH Department of Environmental Services (NHDES).



Sarah Pillsbury, Bow

Sarah is a former Five Rivers Trustee and Board Chair. She returns to the board to fill an incomplete term for one year, and will chair our Governance Committee. We are thrilled to welcome her back! Sarah works in the Water Division of NHDES.

Welcome Kerry



Five Rivers welcomed Kerry Sponberg as our new Membership and Office Manager in June.

She brings experience in membership management and event planning at the League of NH Craftsmen and the Sunapee Crafts Fair as well as office administration experience from her time working at Harvard University. Please introduce yourself when you call in or stop by the office. Kerry's position is an expansion of the work Julie Pifer did for us over three productive years. Julie has moved to a new job where she uses her professional background in microbiology.



image credit: Kathryn Michener

Join Us Today!

Become a member of Five Rivers Conservation Trust to help us conserve more places for local recreation, and provide new events to introduce you and your neighbors to our conserved lands. Our members receive a Five Rivers decal and notice of our successes and events.

☐ \$50 ☐ \$250 ☐ Other:
☐ \$150 ☐ \$500 \$_____

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Please clip this form and mail it with your check:

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Or join online at 5rct.org.



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Adopt a Tree Challenge



*Michele Roberge adopts a tree
at Carter Hill Orchards*

If you love trees and Five Rivers, please adopt a tree and help increase awareness of our work.

To adopt a tree, simply take a photo with your tree, share it with your friends (in person, in the mail, by e-mail or on social media) and challenge your friends to adopt a tree, too. Adopters make a \$10 donation to Five Rivers. By adopting a tree, you introduce Five Rivers and our work to people who may not know about the good work that we do. By increasing Five Rivers' name recognition, we expect we'll have more members supporting our organization,

more landowners turning to us to help conserve their land, and more opportunity to conserve the important land in your town.

Visit <http://5rct.org/adopt-a-tree-challenge/> for full instructions.

RSVP Today:

Hike Concord's Newest Trail

Saturday, November 1

Between Dimond Hill Farm and Marjory Swope Park

- 3.5 mile trail
- Views of beaver ponds and distant farms
- Traverses varied terrain, some steep sections
- Learn about ice ponds and natural history
- Details at www.5rct.org
- Space is Limited. RSVP today by email at info@5rct.org or by phone at (603) 225-7225



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