The Mahoosuc Land Trust is 25! Milestone anniversaries can be a time to reflect on the conservation work the Mahoosuc Land Trust has accomplished for its donors. In honor of the Land Trust’s 25th Anniversary, members Larry Stifler and Mary McFadden have decided to celebrate by making a generous $25,000 Challenge gift. The challenge to current donors is to increase their giving to the Land Trust. Increased giving over 2013 levels will earn equal dollars from the $25,000 Challenge. New donors’ giving will earn challenge dollars for every dollar donated. And to seriously challenge generous gifts, gifts of $1000 or more will earn double challenge dollars from the Stifler and McFadden gift.

Please keep the Challenge in mind when you support the Mahoosuc Land Trust through membership and annual appeal. The Land Trust’s work is about conserving land for the public to use and enjoy. We look forward to working for you over the next 25 years.

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25TH ANNIVERSARY PHOTO/ART/WRITING CELEBRATION

The Land Trust is looking for those special photographs, original art works or written works that are OF, ON, FROM, or ABOUT a Mahoosuc Land Trust Property. Please share your work with the Mahoosuc Land Trust Community to celebrate our 25th Anniversary! We will be displaying all entries and having a Grand Showing on Saturday, September 27th from 11AM – 5PM at the Land Trust Office as part of the Great Maine Outdoor Weekend. There will be prizes for photographs, original art, and written works in three age categories (12 and under; 13-18 and 19+). A $10 donation entry fee for the oldest age group is encouraged.

Entry information is as follows: Photos should be matted at a minimum and may be framed. Original art should be exhibit ready. Stories should be one typed page (max) and attached to a stiff backing. Entries should be dropped off at the Mahoosuc Land Trust Office by Wednesday, September 10th. Mail entries are also accepted. Any or all submissions may be eligible for inclusion in the 25th Mahoosuc Land Trust Anniversary Book. Information and pre-orders for book will follow. Entrants are welcomed to sell photographs, original art, or stories after the exhibit. More details on www.mahoosuc.org

JOIN THE LONGFELLOWS

This is the newly coined name for those land trust members who have chosen to donate monthly to the Mahoosuc Land Trust. Our gifts, handled through Paypal or our own monthly giving arrangements, go automatically to the Land Trust every month. No thought, no fuss, no worry. With Paypal, we get a monthly email report on our giving. That’s it. And it is easy to stop this service at any time.

We are a small group right now, but imagine if 50 of our members decided to become Longfellows. Even if each one gave just $10 a month, the Land Trust would have a steady $500 each month to help keep our budget in balance. It’s a great idea, and lots of non-profit organizations are finding it helpful. It’s a win-win, as you get the pain-free ease of automatic payments and we get a more reliable income stream.

Why the Longfellows? Some of you may remember a time when the Mahoosuc section of the White Mountains was called the Longfellow Range. And the word Longfellows connotes being with us for the long haul and being a good “fellow” to boot. And, of course, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow spent much time in the State of Maine and cherished our mountains and rivers. Won’t you join us? Just go to our website www.mahoosuc.org and click on Donate.
FLINT FARM CONSERVATION EASEMENT

In December 2013, the Mahoosuc Land Trust received a conservation easement on 156 acres of undeveloped woodland off the Picnic Hill Road in Albany Township. The easement is the gift of Bob O’Brien and Michaela Casey of Albany. The purpose of the easement is to protect wildlife habitat, the shoreline of Flint Pond and the headwaters of Flint Brook. The land may not be sub-divided or developed.

Flint Brook is a tributary of the Crooked River which supplies forty percent of the water in Sebago Lake. Sebago Lake provides the drinking water for the city of Portland and eleven surrounding communities. Over 200,000 people, about fifteen percent of Maine’s population, rely on Sebago Lake for their drinking water. Because of the importance of this watershed, funding for the transaction was provided in a watershed protection grant from the Portland Water District.

A conservation easement is an agreement between a land trust and a family or individual that limits the use of the land. Conservation easements are flexible, permanent agreements that enable the donor to continue to own, live on and farm or cut timber on their land. The conditions of the easement remain on the land permanently.

GLASSFACE MOUNTAIN DONATION

The Mahoosuc Land Trust was thrilled to accept a land donation from Maureen Sheldon that includes part of Glassface Mountain in Rumford Center. The 32 acres includes spectacular views of Route 2 and the Androscoggin River as it winds around a big bend in the river. It is a 650 vertical foot climb, a moderate to difficult hike, but well worth the 180 degree view. The iconic cliff face, visible along busy Route 2, is a great piece of property to protect for our community.

Glassface was named for the mica that was mined on the cliff face many years ago. Board member Jane Chandler recalls that, as a child living at the base of Glassface, she and her family made excursions up the mountain and would play with the shiny flecks. “We didn’t have to buy fancy glitter at the stores.”

The Land Trust is currently looking into creating a hiking trail on the property that would be a recreational asset while at the same time accessing terrific views of the valley and river.

RUMFORD CENTER RIVER ACCESS

The Mahoosuc Land Trust has worked to promote public access to the Androscoggin River since the mid-1990s. Our vision was a series of public access sites spaced about six miles apart between Gilead and Rumford. The goal was to make the River accessible both to families looking for a short one to two hour paddle as well as to long distance canoeists and kayakers.

The Land Trust has options on two adjoining parcels of land in Rumford Center located between Route 2 and the river just east of the Village. Pending permits for building river access on the site, the Land Trust will close on the transactions before the end of 2014. After the land is acquired, the trust’s focus will be on building a small parking area and steps down to the river. We hope the site will be open for public use before the end of the summer of 2015.

The River Valley Growth Council and the Androscoggin River Watershed Council are partnering with Mahoosuc Land Trust to complete the project.
As Jolan prepares this newsletter, we are looking forward to attending and awaiting the results of the LMF meeting on July 10. We have two grant applications pending to assist in the purchase of two different properties. The deFrees property in Rumford is 240 acres adjacent to our existing Whitecap Preserve and has over one mile of frontage on the Ellis River. In Bethel, we are hoping to purchase the Thurston property between Route 2 and the Androscoggin River on the Newry side of the River View Resort. This property is part agricultural and part conservation and would preserve a scenic northern gateway to Bethel.

During this, our twenty-fifth anniversary year, we are challenging ourselves to increase our membership. With this in mind, I would like to welcome the following new business members and urge that you support them as they support us.

Bob Iles, President

NABOS:

NABOS, (which means "turnip," as in "You never know what will turn up!") is a shop featuring "Funky, Fun, and Functional Gifts, Toys, and More." Amanda Moran, who grew up living adjacent to the Rachel Carson Preserve, has had a lifelong interest in conservation. She also loves gardening, bike riding, skiing, foraging, hiking, crafts and so much more. The shop is located across from the Civil War Monument on Mechanic Street in a building she bought last year. Don’t miss her "Village Vegetable Garden" in the front yard as you wander into the NABOS shop to see what you can find. Welcome to Mahoosuc Land Trust, NABOS!

BETHEL BAIT, TACKLE, AND MORE:

Owners Jeremy Fredette and Sarah R. Lane bring really fresh seafood to Bethel, weekly Lobster Bakes on Saturdays, a hunting and fishing gear source, a game inspection station, custom wood burning art and more in their new shop on Mechanic St. (across from NABOS.) It’s a small shop with a lot to offer! Jeremy Fredette is also a superb roofer. He and Sarah live in Albany Township with their 5 year old son. Welcome to Mahoosuc Land Trust, BETHEL BAIT, TACKLE AND MORE.

Noteworthy

The Betterment Fund has made a grant to the Land Trust for “Making the Next Leap.” The funds will be used for expanding stewardship programs, pursuing land conservation projects, and increasing financial capacity to keep pace with future conservation work. The grant is over a three year period.

Currently, the Mahoosuc Land Trust has opportunities to carry out many significant conservation projects that will add to the quality of life for area residents and visitors to the region. The grant will enable the Land Trust to continue meaningful stewardship on conserved land while pursuing new land conservation projects. Planning for increased financial sustainability will be essential to continued land conservation work.

SUNDAY RIVER REGION CHARITABLE FUND

The Mahoosuc Land Trust was honored to receive a generous grant from the Sunday River Region Charitable Fund which helps underwrite three of our ongoing programs for the Land Trust community and also allows us to work on conservation projects. The “Join Us Outside” program continued this winter with hikes on Crow Mountain, Flint Farm and Rumford Whitecap and ended with a bird walk at the Maggie Ring Nature Park. New this winter was the 2014 Changing Nature Series which featured many local residents with topics ranging from The Changing Nature of Lakes and Ponds, Home Energy, Education, Maine Ecosystems, Farming, and Gardening. Also, new is the Conservation and Nature Book Group that meets the third Wednesday of each month to discuss the book chosen by the group. Rumford Center River Access and the Glassface property are also benefiting from this generous grant.

Jim Thomas, an intern with the Maine Veteran Community Leader Program, began work with the Mahoosuc Land Trust in April. Jim will work with the Stewardship Committee to improve management of Land Trust properties.

The Maine Veteran Community Leader Program provides leadership opportunity and conservation employment for returning veterans. This year, five Veteran Community Leaders are assigned to municipal and non-profit organizations in Maine. Jim was provided with eleven weeks of training by the Maine Conservation Corps before beginning work at the Mahoosuc Land Trust. He served in the US Marine Corps and is a native of Fairfield.

Jim is working with the Stewardship Committee to standardize the easement monitoring program, increase the Land Trust’s use of GIS technology, increase institutional knowledge about Land Trust properties and easements, and update land management plans and monitoring guides. Funding for the Land Trust’s share of the program was provided by a grant from the Davis Conservation Fund.

MAINE VETERAN COMMUNITY LEADER

Jim Thomas, Maine Veteran Community Leader

Bob Iles, Land Trust President

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2014 Summer and Fall Events

Saturday, August 9, 2014, 9:30AM
4th Annual Rumford Whitecap Gourmet Hike
Hikers are asked to bring a “gourmet edible to share at the summit.” (“Gourmet” is anything beyond PBJ or gorp.) Blueberries should be an added delicacy. Be prepared with sunscreen, insect protection, water, snacks, and your own eating utensils and plate. Meet in parking area on East Andover Road. RSVP to 207-824-3806 or mlt@mahoosuc.org so we have an idea of numbers.

Saturday, September 13, 2014, 10AM
Mt. Zircon Hike
5.4 mile round trip hike. The Mount Zircon Trail ascends gradually along a dirt road before climbing more steeply on a trail to an open summit that provides excellent views. Meet at trailhead on South Rumford Road (3.2 miles from US Route 2 in Rumford or 6.2 miles from Route 232 in Rumford). Bring water, snacks, lunch and a camera. Great views of the Land Trust’s Concord River Easement.

Wednesday, September 24, 2014
The Changing Nature of the Ancestral Androscoggin: Glacial Features of Western Maine
McLaughlin Auditorium, Gould Academy, Bethel, and field trip September 27, 2014
Bob Elliott, Naturalist and retired UMaine Extension Professor.

Saturday, September 27, 2014
25th Anniversary Photo/Art/Writing Celebration 11AM – 5PM
Great Maine Outdoor Weekend Events 9:30 – 3PM
Hike Albany Mountain, bike the gentle countryside around Bethel, caravan to see glacial features of the ancestral Androscoggin, enjoy the art show at the Land Trust office where you can also make cider and build fairy houses. An activity or two for everyone and every age as part of the Great Maine Outdoor Weekend. Pot luck noon time BBQ at the home of Jeff Newsom and Saranne Taylor. Details for specific activities on www.greatmaineoutdoorweekend.org.

Sunday, October 19, 2014, 7PM
Annual Meeting
Peter Forbes, from the Center for Whole Communities, will be the guest speaker for the Annual Meeting and will be talking on building strong connections between people, land and community. Ordway Hall at Gould Academy, Church Street, Bethel, ME.