

Using Forest Legacy to Protect Working Forests and Public Access

Protecting Forested In-holdings in Larger Protected Blocks

The Challenge

Vermont's "Northeast Kingdom" has witnessed tremendous changes in land use and values during the past decade. Divestment of large land holdings by corporate owners threatened historical forestry uses and public access, which are important to both local citizens and area visitors. While conservation efforts have resulted in the protection of nearly 200,000 acres of land in the area, including 31,000 acres through purchase of conservation easements via the Forest Legacy Program, several smaller parcels with important forestry resources and critical public access opportunities still need protection to complete the final pieces of the land protection puzzle.

The Solution

The Monadnock Mountain Forest Legacy project sought to conserve these parcels through the purchase of working forest conservation easements and fee acquisition of strategic in-holdings in State-owned land. The project naturally evolved into a unique partnership between local communities and the State's Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation. Acquisitions were facilitated by the assistance of the Trust for Public Land.

Resulting Benefits

- The fee purchase of the 1,471-acre Monadnock Mountain parcel protected a regionally popular trail to the summit's fire tower, which offers sweeping views of the Connecticut River Valley and the White Mountains in New Hampshire.
- The fee purchase of five individual in-holdings totaling 514 acres in Victory State Forest and Victory Wildlife Management Area consolidated State ownership, and simplifying land management.
- The acquisition of a conservation easement on the 935-acre Nurse Mountain parcel, with the subsequent transfer of the underlying fee property to a local logger for forest management, ensures future contributions to the forest products economy.

The Forest Legacy Program's partnerships can include local communities, often with a citizenry devoted to making the most of forest lands for recreational and productive forestry use.



About 75 volunteers from the Green Mountain Club, the North Woods Stewardship Center, and local communities restored the fire tower on the summit of Monadnock Mountain on National Trails Day. (Photo by the North Woods Stewardship Center)

Highlights of Vermont's Forest Legacy Program

- Working forest conservation easements have been placed on a total of 40,000 acres.
- The outright purchase of 9,000 acres has included important in-holdings in State forests and wildlife management areas, Green River Reservoir State Park, and properties for municipal ownership.
- The protection of 3,700 acres of critical wildlife corridors links the north and south units of the Green Mountain National Forest.

Sharing Success

The public acquisition of the Monadnock Mountain project successfully united many organizations around the common goal of managing the property for the benefit of all Vermont residents and visitors. The local chapter of the Green Mountain Club, stewards of Vermont's Long Trail, enthusiastically joined the NorthWoods Stewardship Center in an effort to restore the fire tower on the summit, which will enhance each hiker's experience. The NorthWoods Stewardship Center was awarded a State trails grant during the summer of 2005. The Stewardship Center used the grant to employ a crew of high school students through their summer "Kingdom Corps" program to complete much-needed trail work on the mountain. Work is expected to continue during the summer, providing another rewarding and educational experience for Vermont's youth.



USDA Forest Service
Northeastern Area
State and Private Forestry

For more information, contact:
Kathryn P. Maloney, Area Director
11 Campus Blvd., Suite 200
Newtown Square, PA 19073
Phone: 610-557-4103
Email: kmaloney@fs.fed.us

Deirdre Raimo, Forest Legacy
271 Mast Road
Durham, NH 03824
Phone: 603-868-7695
Email: draimo@fs.fed.us