

Newbury Conservation Connections

Newbury Conservation Commission News & Events

Summer 2020

Headwaters of the Warner River

The Newbury Conservation Commission (NCC) and Ausbon Sargent Land Preservation Trust (ASLPT) have joined forces to create a new land easement on Mountain Road in Newbury. The 86-acre parcel is located at the headwaters of the Warner River. The water source, streams that meet to create the Warner River, originate from Mount Sunapee.

NCC Vice Chair Eric Unger has been collecting stream data in the area along with NH Fish and Game MS certified Fisheries President and Northeaster Division of the American Fisheries Society Fish Habitat Biologist John Magee.

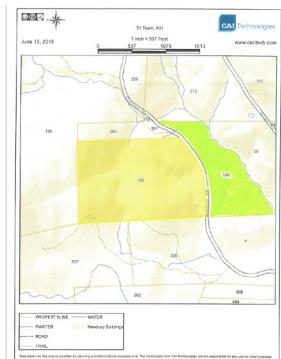
"NH Fish and Game and its partners have conducted about 5,500 fish surveys throughout the state. Our surveys have documented a very robust wild brook trout population in this specific watershed, both along the subject parcel and upstream and downstream of it. Wild brook trout restoration and protection is a very high priority for NH Fish and Game and its partners as documented in the NH Wildlife Action Plan. As such, the conservation of the subject parcel works to achieve our high priority conservation goals. Additionally, thousands of acres up-stream and near the property are already conserved, and this property's conservation would augment this area that is important for fish and wildlife and people," said Magee.

Andy Deegan from the ASPT said, "The main conservation benefit of this property is the frontage on a perennial brook that is the entire eastern boundary of the property. This brook provides habitat for brook trout and flows into the Warner River. The property is also adjacent to over 26,000 acres of conserved land including Mount Sunapee State Park. The property is listed on the 2015 Wildlife Action Plan as Highest Ranked Habitat in the Biological Region and Supporting Landscapes. The property has good forestry soils and can be managed in the future for forestry. There is an opportunity to place trails on the property for public recreation and there is a small parking area near the southern boundary."

The Trout Unlimited Group (George Embley, Paul Doscher and Benjamin Nugent) has also instrumental in getting this project off the ground.

The Newbury Conservation commission is looking for support from the local community and beyond. Residents can join the mission to preserve this unique parcel of land and water. In June, NCC held a public hearing to appropriate \$120,000.00 to be used toward the purchase of this property and it was approved with an unanimous vote. ASLPT will be sending a fundraiser letter to their members in Newbury. Deegan, ASLPT and Protection Specialist has applied for an Aquatic Resource Mitigation (ARM) grant to help fund the purchase. The deed will be held by ASLPT and they will have oversight of the property, while the town of Newbury will hold the easement. NCC's goal is to protect this parcel and contribute to its safe keeping. Contributions in any amount would be greatly appreciated. Thank you in advance for your support.

Please send your contribution to: Ausbon Sargent Land Preservation Trust (ASLPT), P.O. Box 2040, New London, NH 03257.



Preserving Newbury's Special Forest

The Town of Newbury is fortunate to have a documented forest of statewide significance on Mt. Sunapee. The importance of this forest has been chosen by the Old Growth Forest Network as a forest to be included in a nationwide network of exceptional forests requiring permanent protection. The Old Growth Forest Network is a national organization working specifically to preserve ancient forests for present and future generations.

The 484-acre forest lies completely within Mt. Sunapee State Park of which approximately 1/3 of the 2,962 acre park is leased by Vail Corp. The forest overlaps into the leased area of the park and is vulnerable to future ski area development. The formal protection of this unique forested area will not impact skiing as it currently exists at Mount Sunapee.

As part of the 1998 Public Policy and Oversight agreement the Lessee is required to submit an Annual Operating Plan (AOP). The most recent plan was unveiled at a June 9, 2020 teleconference meeting. There was no mention of Mt. Sunapee's unique forest nor the previously approved plans that would directly impact it.

A letter has been sent to the Commissioner and members of the Mount Sunapee Advisory Committee on behalf of the Newbury Conservation Commission. The letter pointed out that the central natural heritage feature of Mt. Sunapee State Park is the state documented 484-acre Exemplary Forested System. It has the distinction of being the only forested system of its type in the State that is designated Exemplary. Within this AOP there were previously approved projects which would directly negatively impact the system which contains a high percentage of old growth forest. As a system all parts are important and impacts in any part affect the whole system. The Exemplary Forest System needs to be delineated physically so that the public can be made aware of it. All of the major hiking trails in the park pass through this special forested area and the public would be well served to know they are in a special forested area of the park.

Some reasons old forest are so important are because:

- The older a forest is the better it cleans the air of pollutants.
- The older a forest is the more storm water it can capture and purify.
- The older a forest is the more different species will be found there, from birds to snails to ferns.
- The older a forest is the more it will sequester carbon (large trees in older forests actively sequester the most carbon (compared to younger forests), helping to mitigate climate change.
- The older a forest is the more attractive it is for ecotourism.

Take A Hike!

Enjoy your summer and take a hike around Newbury. NCC's hiking map will inspire you to get out in nature. You can purchase a map (\$2.00) at the town office, from Administrative Assistant Pam Byrk (funds go to NCC). There have been record numbers of hikers on the Andrew Brook trail but there are many more trails to explore. During these times of Covid-19, being in nature will be healing and good for your well being.

SUMMER LIGHT AND BEAUTY

“Amid all that is happening right now, find light and beauty wherever you can. Cling to it as if your life depended on it because it does. Subtle touches of beauty are what enable most people to survive.”
~John O'Donohue~

Managing Your Waterfront Property

Consider planting native plants and trees which protect your shoreline and ensure quality water. Check how your stormwater flows on your property. You do not want stormwater to go directly into the water. We recommend a filtration system such as a rain garden or catch basin. The Department of Environmental Services (DES) has Managing Stormwater suggestions for native plants and trees on their website: www.des.nh.gov.

If you are near a stream or on Lake Sunapee, Lake Todd or Chalk Pond, keep healthy vegetation within 50ft of the water to help with run off. The vegetation will soak up potential pollution that would otherwise go into the water, encouraging algae and invasive to thrive. Let us be water wise.

