

Conserving our Northern Forest for strong communities and future generations



FY07 Strategic Conservation Opportunities

THE NORTHERN FOREST ALLIANCE

is a coalition of conservation, recreation and forestry organizations united in their commitment to protect the Northern Forest of Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont and New York.

A publication of the Northern Forest Alliance 32 Park Street, Stowe, VT 05672 Telephone: 802-253-8227 X13 www.northernforestalliance.org

Cover photo:

Inset photo: Hornbeck canoe and dawn over a wild pond in the North Hudson area. Photo by Carl Heilman Background photo: View of Grafton Notch. Photo by Jerry Monkman Right: Worcester Range.

Vision:

To achieve a sustainable future for the 26 million-acre Northern Forest, in which its Wildlands are permanently protected, its forests are sustainably managed, and its local economies and communities are strong and vibrant.

Mission:

To work together to protect and enhance the ecological and economic sustainability of natural and human communities in the Northern Forest.

Goals:

The Alliance's priorities are threefold:

- To conserve Wildlands in the Northern Forest to help protect the forest's ecological integrity, its recreational opportunities and its timber production;
- To encourage well managed private forests to support the forest-based economy, including high-value timber products, recreation tourism, and the jobs these industries support;
- To build strong, diverse, local economies that support vibrant communities throughout the Northern Forest.



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The Northern Forest

Making Giant Steps for Conservation and Communities

A Vast Forest in a Shrinking World

In the face of a rapidly crowding and developing world, the Northern Forest remains a distinctive place where forests and mountains overwhelm the senses, rural communities thrive through rugged independence, and intimate ties remain among neighbors. Even in the era of the Internet and cell phone, the Northern Forest remains solidly rooted in its heritage and traditions as people draw strength and often their livelihoods from the land.

Giant Steps in 2005

Over the course of 2005, the Northern Forest Alliance and local partners worked with state and federal officials to significantly advance land conservation and community well-being in the Northern Forest. One important highlight was \$10.25 million in FY06 Forest Legacy funding that was awarded to the Northern Forest states, including \$4.5 million to help actualize the Appalachian Mountain Club's landmark Maine Woods Initiative. The Maine Woods Initiative embodies the goals of the Forest Legacy Program by blending land conservation, sustainable forestry, and appropriate recreation-based development to benefit local communities while helping more Americans to enjoy Maine's 100-Mile Wilderness.

Working for a Bright Future

The Alliance remains steadfast in its commitment to continue advancing the interests of the Northern Forest, both through advocacy for exciting projects like the Maine Woods Initiative and by helping to develop new funding opportunities. Immediate legislative opportunities for new funding include the 2007 Farm Bill, the proposed Suburban and Community Forestry Program, and the proposed Northeast Regional Development Commission. We urge you to join the effort!





Northern Forest Natural Assets

Water: Headwaters of the Northeast

The Northern Forest contains the headwaters of every major northeastern river, including the Hudson, Connecticut, and Androscoggin, connecting the fate of the region with more urbanized areas far away. Millions of Americans rely on this region to protect their water supplies.

Wildlife: North America's Bird Factory

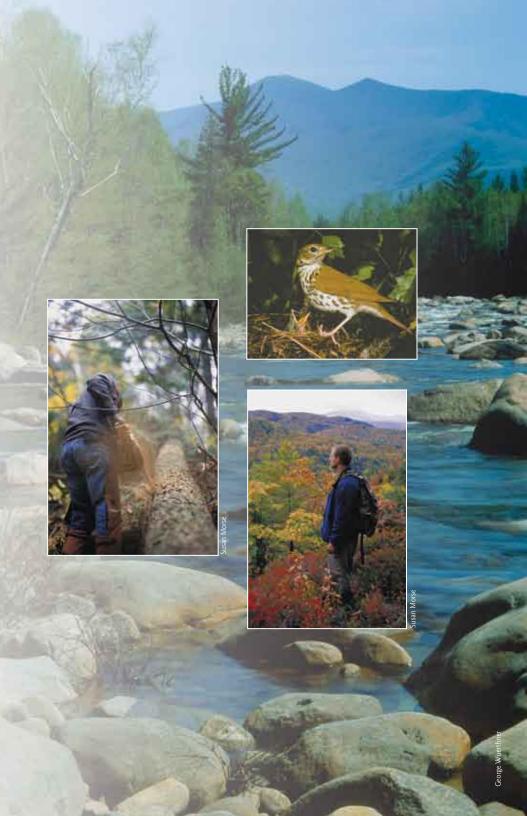
The Northern Forest is the part of the foremost bird breeding area in North America – "BCR14" – an internationally significant habitat that produces more than a third of some beloved species like the black-throated blue warbler. These vast forests also hold outstanding populations of game and non-game wildlife from ruffed grouse to moose to pine marten.

Timber: High Quality Hardwoods

The Northern Forest is one of America's original fiber baskets, and remains an important source of wood products from pulp and paper to saw timber. The region is perhaps most noted for its high quality hardwoods and superior value-added manufacturing that help power a strong forest products industry.

Outdoor Recreation: Limitless Possibilities for Adventure

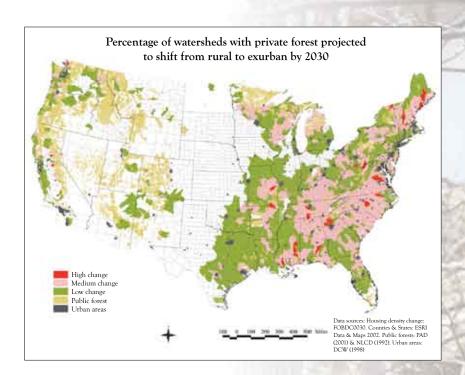
The Northern Forest boasts a remarkable array of outdoor recreation activities, from wilderness canoeing and hiking to snowmobiling and hunting. These recreational activities put billions into the regional and national economies, and have been enhanced by innovations like the newly created Northern Forest Canoe Trail, Grafton Loop Trail, and multi-use Kingdom Trails system in Vermont.



Forests on the Edge:

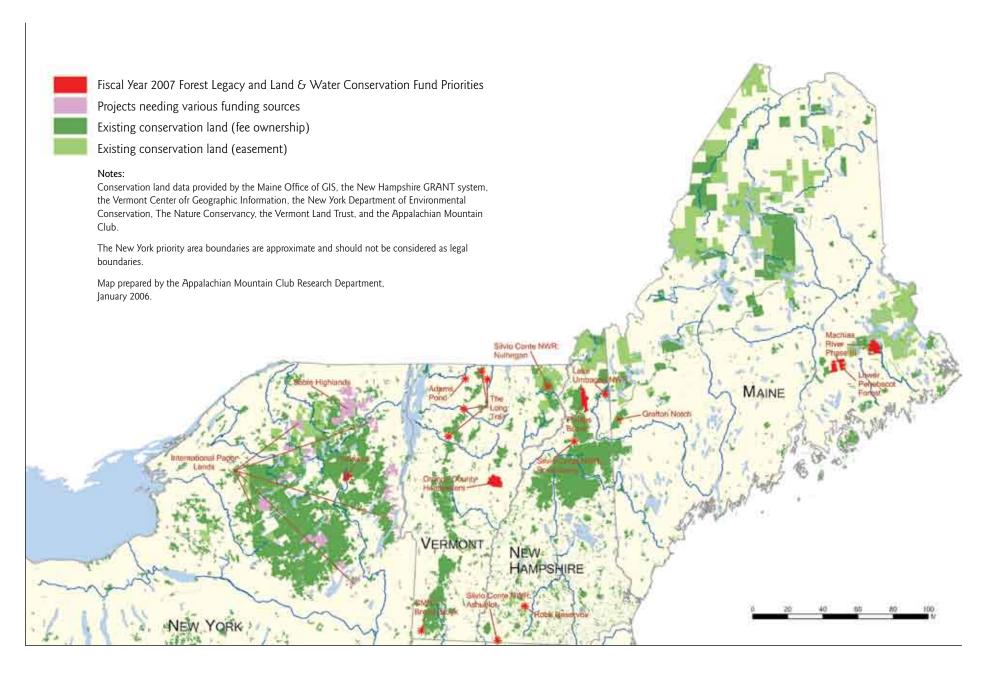
U.S. Forest Service Projects
Significant Future Development across Northern Forest

hile the Northern Forest still feels remote and rugged, it is increasingly accessible and attractive for new residential and second home development thanks to a variety of societal trends and technological innovations. The U.S. Forest Service recently released its groundbreaking *Forests on the Edge* report in the summer of 2005 to show the troubling projected advance of new subdivision and development that could touch even remote corners of the Northern Forest. Maine alone was found to have three of the top fifteen watersheds in the nation for projected future development. It is imperative that we continue to make significant public and private investments in forest conservation to manage and control the wave of new development that could compromise the Northern Forest.





FY07 Northern Forest Priorities





Forest Legacy: Mahoosuc Region

The Grafton Notch (ME) and Phillips Brook (NH) Forest Legacy projects will protect more than 27,000 acres in the Mahoosuc region, a critical linking landscape between NH and ME. The Grafton Notch project will buffer the Appalachian Trail and Grafton Loop Trail, while the Phillips Brook project will conserve an elongated parcel that strategically links previous Forest Legacy projects. Both projects also feature continued opportunities for forestry.



Forest Legacy: Tahawus

The 10,056 acre Tahawus project will provide a missing puzzle piece to conservation of the famed High Peaks region in New York's Adirondack Park. Wrapped around the headwaters of the Hudson River, the Tahawus project will increase watershed protection, economic development through tourism, and public access for recreation along the southern approach to the High Peaks Wilderness.



Forest Legacy: Orange County Headwaters

The 3,043 acre Orange County Headwaters project is part of a 30,000 acre conservation initiative in the Upper Valley of the Connecticut River. High among pristine forested highlands and headwater streams, the Orange County project will sustain top quality forestry and sugaring among some of the richest sugar maple stands in New England and assure public access to popular trails.



LWCF: Conte, Umbagog, and the GMNF

There are important opportunities to acquire lands from willing sellers for addition to the Conte and Umbagog National Wildlife Refuges, including land adjacent to the new visitor center in the Conte's Nulhegan Unit (VT). Completing acquisition of the Broad Brook property would add 3,921 acres to Vermont's Green Mountain National Forest, buffering the Long Trail and public water supplies.

FY07 Forest Legacy Program: Mahoosuc Region

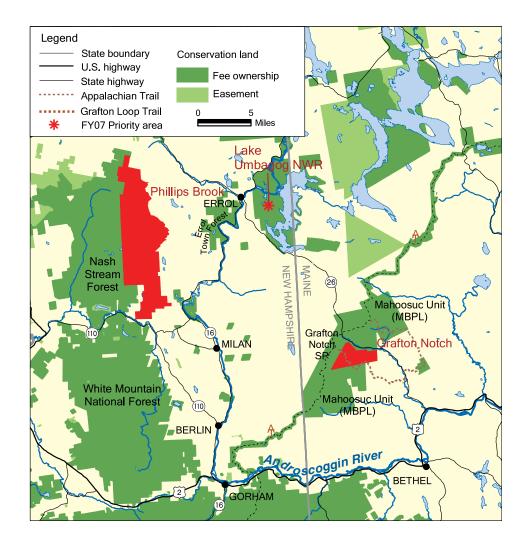
Mahoosuc Region:

Linking Landscape for Wildlife and Recreation

he incomparable natural areas around and along the Mahoosuc Mountains of New Hampshire and Maine have been a top conservation priority for the Northern Forest Alliance since its inception. The Mahoosuc region is rich in rare natural communities, features the most rugged section of the entire Appalachian Trail, and is a source of economic vitality for local communities through forestry and tourism. Close proximity to major population centers like Portland, Concord, and Boston has made the Mahoosuc region a magnet for new development that is climbing scenic ridgelines, threatening popular trails, and compromising timber harvest areas critical to the region's future. In FY07, there are two superb Forest Legacy projects that would greatly advance permanent conservation of the region's natural, recreational, and economic assets.



View from Old Speck



Grafton Notch, Maine

The Grafton Notch project – top ranked in the nation for FY07 – will facilitate state acquisition of 3,688 acres on the slopes of 4180-foot Old Speck, one of Maine's highest peaks. This critical parcel adjoins rugged Mahoosuc Notch, the most challenging and famed section of the Appalachian Trail, and will protect 9 miles of the newly created Grafton Loop Trail. The project has clear

national significance for its recreational value.

Mahoosuc Notch hiker

The Grafton Notch parcel is also an area of great ecological value and economic benefit to local communities. It contains a number of rare natural communities and shelters headwater streams that feed the Bear River and Sunday River. Grafton Notch is also a valuable timber resource area, and will remain open for timber harvest once it becomes part of Maine's multiple-use Bureau of Public Lands holdings.

PROJECT DETAILS:

Size: 3,688 acres
Type: Fee acquisition

FY07 Forest Legacy Request: \$2 Million

Total Project Cost: \$2.85 Million
Project Sponsor: Trust for Public Land

Phillips Brook, New Hampshire

Phillips Brook Forest is a 23,781 acre keystone in a 180,000 acre forest block—third largest in the state. The surrounding area includes past Forest Legacy projects such as the Nash Stream Forest, Bunnell Tract, and Connecticut Lakes Headwaters projects. It is also very near the White Mountain National Forest and Lake Umbagog National Wildlife Refuge. This elongated parcel has incredible strategic conservation value and will link together and leverage past federal investments.

The project would place a conservation easement over 78% of the ecologically rich watershed of Phillips Brook, protecting important habitat for key wildlife species including bear, moose, fisher, and marten. The project area also contains 38 miles of streams with

potential for designation under the NH Wild Trout program. The property will remain in active timber management, supplying much needed pulp and timber to existing mills in the region. Public access to this popular area for hiking, hunting, fishing, and snowmobling will be assured.



Base of Phillips Pond

PROJECT DETAILS:

Size: 23, 781 acres

Type: Conservation easement Forest Legacy Request: \$3.5 Million Total Project Cost: \$4.7 Million

Project Sponsor: Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests

FY07 Forest Legacy Program: Tahawus

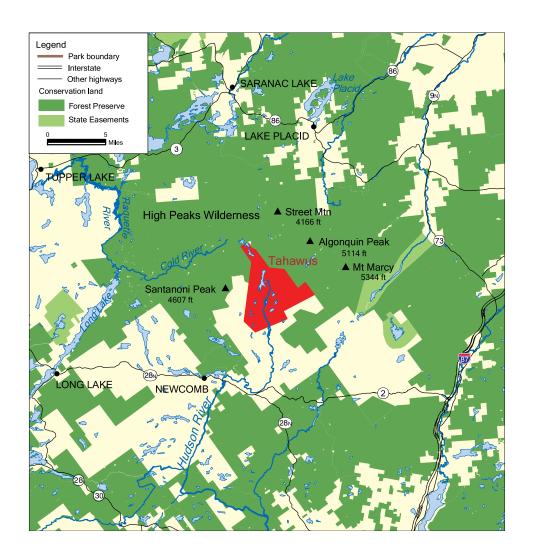
Adirondack High Peaks:

Priceless Wilderness for Sale

he High Peaks region of New York's Adirondack State Park is perhaps the most rugged and wild landscape in the entire Northern Forest. The 225,000 acre High Peaks Wilderness, boasting many mountains over 4000 feet, is a recreational icon further surrounded by open forests, waters, and wetlands that provide outstanding wildlife habitat and timber. However, this nationally renowned landscape is threatened by a new wave of second home development across Adirondack Park that has hit even in popular but remote recreation areas like the High Peaks. Working with willing sellers to conserve remaining private inholdings that border the High Peaks region will be essential to maintain the integrity of Adirondack Park into the future.



High Peaks view of Street and Nye from Mount Jo



Tahawus, New York

The mountainous Tahawus tract in Newcomb includes more than 10,000 critically situated acres in the heart of Adirondack Park and the famous High Peaks, where it shelters the headwaters of the Hudson River. In addition to conserving nationally significant natural resources, this model Forest Legacy project area provides opportunities for sustainable forest management, historic preservation, outdoor recreation, and related economic development.

Tahawus lies on the southern approaches to the 225,000 acre High Peaks Wilderness and has accordingly been made a priority in New York's Open Space Conservation Plan. To conserve these wild values, more than 6,800 acres of the project area will be added to the State Forest Preserve. Other parts of the property will be used to leverage conservation for sustainable economic development purposes, including historic preservation and tourism, making available public hunting and fishing opportunities on currently closed private land, and continued timber production. The historic nature of the property makes it uniquely appropriate for heritage tourism: it was here that then-Vice President Teddy Roosevelt learned that President McKinley had been shot and began his famous "Midnight Ride."

PROJECT DETAILS

Size: 10,056 acres

Type: Fee Purchase/Conservation Easement **FY07 Forest Legacy Request:** \$5 Million

Total Cost: \$8.5 Million

Project Sponsor: Open Space Conservancy



FY07 Forest Legacy Program: Orange County Headwaters

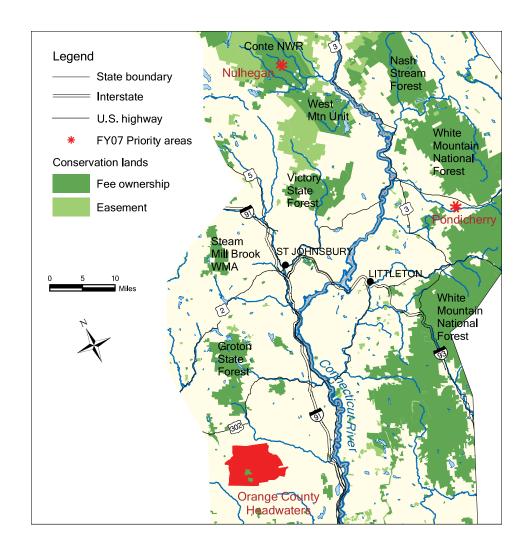
Upper Valley of the Connecticut River:

Historic Watershed at Risk

he Upper Valley of Vermont's majestic Connecticut River is a sweeping landscape that features long, high ridges of exceptionally productive forestland and pristine headwater streams that feed the outstanding quality of this historic river. However, the U.S. Forest Service's new *Forests on the Edge* report (page 3) recently revealed that this growing area is one of the top twenty watersheds in the nation for projected development. The close-knit communities of the Upper Valley have grown increasingly concerned about forest parcelization and are pulling together to permanently conserve the open forestland that sustains their way of life and the region's natural resources.



Fishing in the Upper Valley



Orange County Headwaters, Vermont

In keeping with Vermont's strong tradition of community-led conservation, private landowners in the towns of Washington and Corinth are joining together to conserve 3,043 acres of critical watershed land in the Upper Valley through the Orange County Headwaters Forest Legacy project. The project will contribute a central piece to a highly successful 30,000 acre landscape conservation initiative in the Orange County Headwaters that has been helping small parcel and agricultural landowners to collaboratively donate their development rights to the Vermont Land Trust or the Upper Valley Land Trust.

The Forest Legacy project will conserve important watershed forestlands within the Orange County Headwaters, including headwaters for two tributaries of the Connecticut River and also tributaries of the Winooski River. The area is highlighted in the strategic plan for the Silvio Conte National Wildlife Refuge in recognition of these outstanding watershed values and its importance for connecting valuable wildlife habitat. Additionally, the project will conserve one of the richest sugar maple forests in Vermont, helping to support continued sustainable forest management for timber and maple sugar production. The Forest Legacy easement will assure continued public access to established trails with stunning views of the Green and White Mountains and an extensive system of wooded roads for hiking, biking, snowmobiling, hunting, fishing, and cross-country skiing.

PROJECT DETAILS

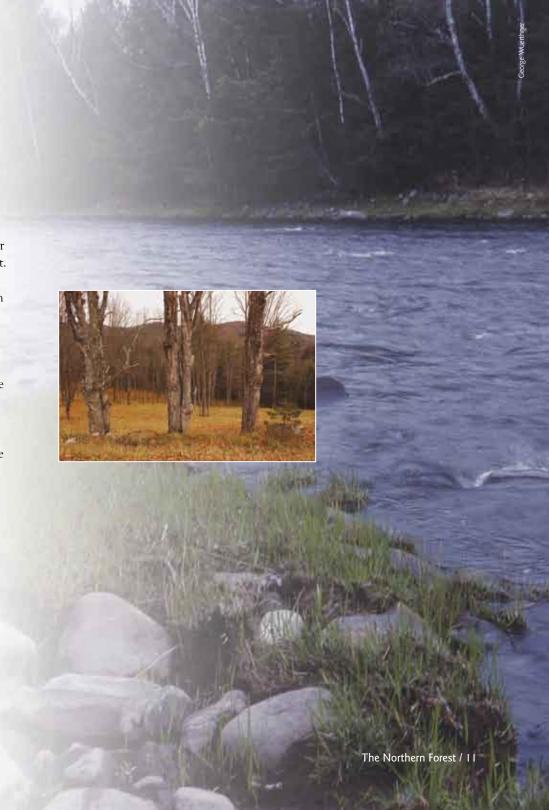
Size: 3,043 acres

Type: Conservation Easement

FY07 Forest Legacy Request: \$1.542 Million

Total Cost: \$2.017 Million

Project Sponsor: The Conservation Fund



Land and Water Conservation Fund

Conte, Umbagog, and Green Mountains: Building Our Public Land Heritage

hile the Northern Forest is predominantly in private hands, it is blessed with a few strategically important federal public land units that provide world-class recreation and wildlife habitat — open to all. However, these valued federal lands are compromised by many private inholdings that can undermine their conservation value and create management challenges. Acquisition of private inholdings from willing sellers remains necessary to build a stable and sound base of public lands for the future.

All of these projects are seeking FY07 funding from the Land and Water Conservation Fund:



→ Silvio Conte National Wildlife Refuge: The Conte NWR is seeking \$4 million for acquisition of strategically important inholdings in all four states (VT, NH, MA, and CT). Opportunities in Vermont include acquisition of land adjacent to the new Nulhegan Unit visitor center, while opportunities in New Hampshire include lands in the Pondicherry, Ashuelot River, and Mohawk River Units.



Lake Umbagog National Wildlife Refuge: The Lake Umbagog NWR is seeking \$1 millon to acquire inholdings from a number of willing sellers that will greatly enhance wildlife habitat and recreation opportunities. The refuge lies within the Northern Forest Alliance's Mahoosuc region focus area, so any additions to the refuge will also leverage proposed FY07 Forest Legacy investments in the Mahoosucs (page 7).



Green Mountain National Forest:

An additional \$1.1 million is needed to complete the acquisition of Broad Brook, a 3,921 acre parcel in Pownal, for addition to the Green Mountain NF. This strategically located parcel adjoins the Long Trail/Appalachian Trail corridor, contains headwater streams that feed public water supplies, and lies in the shadow of fast-growing Bennington. Phase I acquisition of 2,450 acres of the property using prior LWCF funding is already underway; FY07 funding of \$1.1 million for Phase II acquisition of the remaining 970 acres is essential.

Additional Opportunities: FY07 Forest Legacy Program

► Lower Penboscot Forest (ME)

The Lower Penobscot Forest project, sponsored by The Nature Conservancy, is seeking \$5.5 million to help conserve over 31,000 acres of forest in the most threatened watershed in the nation (page 3) through a mix of state acquisition (5,270 acres) and conservation easement (25,945 acres). The project will be leveraged by an 11,000 acre private acquisition by The Nature Conservancy and past Forest Legacy investments.

► Machias River, Phase III (ME)

The Machias River, Phase III project, sponsored by The Nature Conservancy, is seeking \$2 million to purchase a 27,200-acre working forest easement that will connect conservation land along the shorelines of Third, Fourth, and Fifth Machias Lakes. The project will be leveraged by 416,301 acres of existing conservation land in Downeast Maine, including two previous Forest Legacy projects along the Machias River.

► Willard Pond/Robb Reservoir (NH)

The Willard Pond/Robb Reservoir project, sponsored by New Hampshire Audubon and the Trust for Public Land, is seeking \$3 million to conserve 2,031 acres that are among the most ecologically diverse in northern New England, including documented habitat for 117 species of birds. The project is the state's top-ranked and will leverage Forest Legacy funding awarded to the project in FY06.

Adams Pond (VT)

The Adams Pond project is seeking \$1.167 million to place conservation easements over 961 acres in seven parcels that lie adjacent to the Enosburg Town Forest. This project will create a block of 1781 acres of conserved land, maintain valuable sugar maple stands, protect the watershed of Adams Pond, and help advance the goals of the Northern Forest Alliance's Vermont Town Forest Project (page 14).



Community Forests:

Empowering Communities for Locally-led Conservation

cross the Northern Forest there has been an explosion of interest in community forests — municipally-owned land that is open to every citizen and often used for a wide range of activities, from forestry to recreation. The driving forces behind this new interest are as varied as the communities in the Northern Forest. Many communities are eager to support conservation, but want more local control than might come with purchase of land by state or federal government, or a non-profit organization. Others are hungry for the strengthened community ties that can spring up around a new town forest.





The Northern Forest Alliance has taken a leadership role across the region in helping foster and support community forests:

► Forest Legacy for Community Forests

Northern Forest Alliance member group the Trust for Public Land (TPL) has been a particular leader in the community forest movement, helping towns in Vermont and New Hampshire to acquire land with help from the Forest Legacy Program. These municipally-owned forestlands have become greatly valued community assets for everything from timber to recreational access. Success stories include TPL town forest projects in Randolph, Freedom, and Errol, New Hampshire, as well as Lemington, Vermont — more projects are under development.

► Vermont Town Forest Project

The Northern Forest Alliance and a wide-ranging team of twenty public and private partners that includes the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks, and Recreation and the University of Vermont have launched the Vermont Town Forest Project. This multi-faceted effort is helping towns create new town forests, expand town forest educational and cultural programs, and improve stewardship of town forests. This landmark effort has sparked pilot projects across the state and is strengthening community ties among neighbors and to the land. Please visit the Vermont Town Forest Project page on our website — www.northernforestalliance.org — for more information on this exciting effort.

► Legislative Opportunity for Community Forests:

Suburban and Community Forestry Program

Senator Susan Collins of Maine and Representative Michael Fitzpatrick of Pennsylvania have introduced new legislation to create the Suburban and Community Forestry and Open Space Program, a state matching grant funding program that would provide as much as \$50 million annually for creation of new community forests. While Forest Legacy has been used to fund a limited number of town forest projects, these smaller community-oriented projects often fail to gain needed and deserved support. Creating a separate program finely tailored to community forests will allow these projects to be assessed based on criteria appropriately oriented toward their unique community values and increase the likelihood that deserving projects get the support they need.

Funding Northern Forest Conservation and Stewardship:

The 2007 Farm and Forests Bill

ver the course of 2006, Congress will begin to formulate the 2007 Farm Bill, a measure that will set a five to ten year spending plan providing billions in annual funding for agriculture and forestry. The Northern Forest Alliance and the Appalachian Mountain Club have teamed to organize representatives from the forest products industry, private landowner groups, hunting and angling organizations, and conservation interests to push for measures in the next Farm Bill that will provide strong support for forest stewardship, wildlife habitat improvements, and land conservation. We intend to make the next Farm Bill into the Farm and Forests Bill.

While our regional collaboration is still ongoing, we have already identified some clear points of consensus for all the organizations participating:

- Support state forest stewardship programs: The Farm Bill should continue to provide strong support for private forest landowners through our state forestry agencies, including the Forest Stewardship Program, Urban and Community Forestry Program, and cooperative extension forestry programs.
- 2. Fund cost-share and incentive programs: The Farm Bill should continue to help private landowners and municipalities manage their lands to high standards by funding the Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program, Forest Land Enhancement Program, and others. There should also be exploration of market-based incentives to private landowners to provide ecosystem services, such as watershed protection.
- Support forest conservation: The Farm Bill should support forest conservation, including
 continued strong funding for the Forest Legacy Program and efforts to create and conserve
 community forests.
- 4. Support our forest-based economy: The Farm Bill should support local economic development programs that help communities and businesses maximize forest-based economic opportunities, such as the Rural Community Assistance Program and Forest Products Conservation and Recycling Program.

In December we sent a joint letter containing these core principles to the Northern Forest congressional delegation. The letter was signed by a strong and diverse mix of forty-two public and private organizations, including state forestry and wildlife agencies, timber industry groups, timberland owners associations, state universities, wildlife organizations, and conservation groups.

To view a copy of the letter or for more information on the Northern Forest Alliance's work on the 2007 Farm Bill and how you can help, please visit our Farm Bill page at www.northernforestalliance.org.



Conserving the Northern Forest: A Call to Action

► A Place and Time of Hope

The Northern Forest remains a place brimming with positive energy and momentum, from its strong and diversifying forest-based economy to the proliferation of community-led conservation and economic initiatives that are building a foundation for the region's future. We must continue to make investments in the region and its communities to maintain this positive direction.

► Challenging Times for Federal Funding

Our nation faces a time of unique challenges that are straining the capacity of state and federal government to respond. Despite the increasing and unpredictable competition for federal dollars, there should be adequate funding available to make the investments we are requesting in the land and people of the Northern Forest — investments that have consistently paid off. Conservation land has increased by more than fifty percent across the Northern Forest over the last decade, thanks in significant part to Forest Legacy Program funding that has leveraged equal dollars from state, local, and private sources. The federal government should continue to be a catalyst for investment from these sectors.

► Finding Your Voice for the Northern Forest

Interested citizens should become educated about the projects and legislation profiled in this publication and add their voices to the conversation. Congress will be deliberating its conservation spending plan for FY07 over the spring and summer of 2006, and discussions on the 2007 Farm Bill, Suburban and Community Forestry Program legislation, and Northeast Regional Development Commission legislation will also resume over the coming months. Additional information about how to become more involved is available at the Northern Forest Alliance website – www.northernforestalliance.org – or from any of the member groups listed on the back of this publication. We encourage you to get involved!



Summary: FY07 Northern Forest Requests

Forest Legacy — FY07 Priorities

Project:	Acreage:	FY07 Request:
Maine		
Grafton Notch	3,688	\$2 Million
Lower Penobscot Forest	31,215	\$5.5 Million
Machias River, phase III	27,200	\$2 Million
New York		
Tahawus	10,068	\$5 Million
Vermont		
Orange County Headwaters	3,043	\$1.542 Million
Adams Pond	961	\$1.167 Million
New Hampshire		
Phillips Brook	23,781	\$3.5 Million
Willard Pond/Robb Res.	2,031	\$3 Million



Land and Water Conservation Fund — FY07 Priorities

Federal Unit:	FУ07 Request:
NH/VT/MA/CT Silvio Conte National Wildlife Refuge	\$4 Million
New Hampshire Lake Umbagog National Wildlife Refuge	\$1 Million
Vermont Green Mountain National Forest (Broad Brook, Phase II)	\$1.1 Million
Long Trail	State LWCF, Amount TBD

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Northern Forest Alliance

Conserving our Northern Forests for strong communities and future generations

Adirondack Council

Adirondack Mountain Club

American Hiking Society

Appalachian Mountain Club

Appalachian Trail Conference

Association for the Protection of the Adirondacks

Audubon New York

Audubon Vermont

Catamount Trail Association

Citizens Campaign for the Environment

Conservation Law Foundation

Defenders of Wildlife

Environmental Advocates

Forest Watch

Garden Club of America

Gorham Trails, Inc.

Green Mountain Club

Greensboro Land Trust

Jay Ericson Photography

John McKeith EarthImagery Gallery

Maine Appalachian Trail Land Trust

Maine Audubon

Massachusetts Audubon Society

MetaFore

National Parks Conservation Association

National Wildlife Federation

Natural Resources Council of Maine

Natural Resources Defense Council

New England Forestry Foundation

New York League of Conservation Voters

New York Rivers United

New Hampshire Public Interest Research Group

New Hampshire Rivers Council

North Woods Stewardship Center

North Woods Wilderness Trust

Residents' Committee to Protect the Adirondacks

Rural Vermont

Student Environmental Action Coalition

The Wilderness Society

Trout Unlimited – Basil Woods Jr. Chapter

Trout Unlimited – National

Trust for Public Land

Vermont Alliance of Conservation Voters

Vermont Businesses for Social Responsibility

Vermont Land Trust

Vermont Natural Resources Council

Vermont Public Interest Research Group

Vermont Woodnet

World Wildlife Fund

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