

New Hampshire Ecological Reserve System Project News
("The Ecoreserve Project")

Establishing and supporting a well-coordinated, comprehensive system of public and private lands voluntarily dedicated to protecting the full spectrum of biological diversity in New Hampshire.

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NH Audubon's Biodiversity Conservation Project

Last year the Audubon Society of New Hampshire embarked on a major biodiversity conservation project with the support of a grant from the Surdna Foundation. Audubon is moving forward on several fronts:

Biodiversity Day on June 9th! – a search for and celebration of New Hampshire's biological diversity. Activities are occurring at Audubon Nature Centers throughout the state. Call their headquarters at 603-224-9909 for more details. Here's a taste of what's happening at Prescott Farm in Laconia:

Prescott Farm (603-366-5695)

8a.m. - 5p.m. The Big Count

Join biology experts and ASNH staff at the Prescott Farm Audubon Center for the BIG COUNT, as we try to find 1,000 plant and animal species within our 160 acres of forest and fields in a single day. Come for an hour or stay for the whole day.

Noon. Biodiversity Project Slideshow and video

Learn about how biodiversity affects our lives and our future, and learn how you can be involved in the statewide Biodiversity Project. Presented by project coordinator Pam Hunt and ASNH President Richard Moore.

1 p.m. Life Under Foot

Join our naturalists as we discover the diversity of life found under our fields. Investigate the many different life forms found in a square foot of soil.

2:30 - 3 p.m. Big Count Tally

Find out the results of our Big Count from our expert teams and scavenger hunts. Get some of the highlights of each team experience.

3 - 5 p.m. Coffee House for the Birds

Finish off the Big Count with a celebration as we transform our barn into a coffeehouse featuring Green Mountain coffee, tasty treats, and music by Wilson's Crossing.

Urban Bird Project – a pilot project to assess bird biodiversity in urban and suburban areas to help guide community land use decisions in rapidly growing regions. The project assesses bird diversity in urban and suburban neighborhoods across a gradient of tree-cover densities and in urban woodland patches across a range of sizes. Biologists and trained volunteers are mapping bird territories and conducting point counts in Concord, Hopkinton, Warner, Bow, Pembroke, Allenstown, Nashua, Amherst, Milford, and Greenville

Volunteer Core – building a volunteer core to help inventory biodiversity on Audubon's sanctuaries and in the future other conservation lands.

NH Ecological Reserve System Project – NH Audubon is a Core member of the Ecoreserve Project, contributing staff, resources, and expertise to the effort.

For more information on Audubon's biodiversity conservation initiative, contact Pam Hunt, Biodiversity Coordinator at Audubon (603) 224-9909 (x328).

LCHIP Makes First Grant Awards!

News from LCHIP -- June 4, 2001

Concord – At an all day meeting on Friday, June 1, 2001, the NH Land and Community Heritage Investment Program Authority (LCHIP) Board of Directors made initial grant awards totaling nearly \$ 3.2 million. This amount represents the \$ 3 million appropriation provided to LCHIP during the 2000 legislative session plus the interest that has accrued to that amount.

The LCHIP received 100 applications from communities and non-profit organizations in this, its first grant round. Proposed projects were from 83 communities across all ten counties in NH. With funding limited, the LCHIP Authority board made grant awards on 19 historic/cultural projects and 10 natural resource projects in twenty-nine communities.

Until applicants accept the awards offered, the LCHIP Authority will withhold the specific information about projects funded. This process is expected to take approximately 2 weeks.

“Despite the funding limitations, we believe we were able to fund a wide range of top-quality projects, all of which will help to protect the quality of life in New Hampshire for the long term,” said Thomas Burack, LCHIP Authority Board Co-Chair.

“Our decisions were difficult ones because we had many more high-quality projects than we had funds. Had we had more funding, more projects would have been funded,” remarked Charles Levesque, LCHIP Authority Board Co-Chair.

Rachel Rouillard, LCHIP Executive Director, reminds all that another grant application round will open up this fall for those projects that were not successful in the first grant round and for other applicants.

The legislature is currently debating additional funding for LCHIP.

LCHIP Authority Board of Directors

Charles Bridges, Department of Fish & Game
Philip Bryce, DRED
Thomas S. Burack, Cultural/Historic
Rep. Martha Fuller Clark
Alice L. DeSouza, Cultural/Historic
Jameson French, Business
Elizabeth Durfee Hengen, Municipal
Sen. Sylvia B. Larsen
Charles A. Levesque, Natural Resources
Van McLeod Commissioner, Dept of Cultural Resources
Timothy Murphy, Regional Planning Commissions
Rep. H. Charles Royce
Sen. Carl Johnson
Stephen Taylor, Dept. of Agriculture, Foods and Markets
Jeffrey Taylor, Office of State Planning
Robert W. Varney, Dept. of Environmental Services
A. Bradford Wyman, Local Planning
Seat open - Recreation

New Center for Land Conservation Assistance (CLCA)

CLCA is a new program designed to provide capacity building and technical assistance to NH land conservation organizations. Services will include transaction assistance, easement stewardship guidance, educational programs and more. Digit Taylor has just been hired as the first Center Director. The program is hosted by the Society for the Protection of NH Forests in Concord and the Director will work under the guidance of a Steering Committee made up of members of the NH Land Conservation Coalition. Digit doesn't have a phone yet but she can be reached for now through SPNHF's number – 603-224-9945.

Forest Legacy Program

The Forest Legacy Program protects important private forestlands that are threatened by conversion to nonforest uses. The Federal government, along with states and local partners, buys the right to restrict development of the land, or purchases the land from willing sellers outright, to keep it in its natural state. State or local partners provide at least 25 percent of the funds. Protected forests may protect water quality, provide key wildlife habitat, offer outstanding recreation opportunities or scenic views, contain historical sites, and/or provide opportunities to continue traditional forest uses such as timber harvesting.

Private lands protected through Forest Legacy in New Hampshire include:

Jahoda/Johnson family lands in Pittsburg/Clarksville (1996) -- easement on 400+ acres. The land was identified as an important forest because of critical wildlife habitat and the commitment to education and recreation by the owners

Piermont Mountain near Lake Tarleton (1997) -- easement on 1,650 acres; part of a much larger conservation project around Lake Tarleton

Smarts Mountain in Lyme (1997) – easement on 2,310 acres and outright purchase on 1,690 acres

13-Mile Woods along the Androscoggin River (1997) – easement on 2,754 acres

The Dartmouth Tract near Smarts Mountain (1998) – outright purchase of 556 acres

This year federal funds have been appropriated through Forest Legacy for the following New Hampshire projects:

Bunnell Mountain – 18,608 acre parcel in northern NH

Pond of Safety – 9,900+ acres in Randolph and Jefferson

Chocorua Forestland – 4,800 acres in the Ossipee Mountains

For more information about the Forest Legacy program in New Hampshire contact Jim Carter at the NH Division of Forests and Lands (603-271-2214).

New Publications

Natural Resources Inventories: A Guide for New Hampshire Communities and Conservation Groups. 2001. Newly revised and updated by Amanda Stone for UNH Cooperative Extension, this guide is written to help community groups prepare, evaluate, and use the results of a natural resources inventory. New Hampshire. Conservation Commissions and Planning Boards will be receiving a letter on how to get a copy of the guide. Others can contact UNH Cooperative Extension Publications Office at (603) 862-2346 to purchase a copy.

Web Site for NH Ecoreserve Project

The NH Ecological Reserve System Project will soon be on the Web. The Project is housed at UNH Cooperative Extension. Keep an eye to the Forestry and Wildlife Program web page (ceinfo.unh.edu/forest.htm) in the next month to view the Project.

Web Links:

Ausbon Sargent Land Preservation Trust www.ausbonsargent.org

BearPaw Regional Greenways www.bear-paw.org

Land and Community Heritage Investment Program www.lchip.org

Maine Natural Areas Program www.state.me.us/doc/nrimc/mnap/home.htm

Minimum Impact Development Project www.thejordaninstitute.org

New Hampshire Natural Heritage Inventory www.dred.state.nh.us/forlands/formgt/nhiweb

Vermont Biodiversity Project www.snr.uvm.edu/www/pc/sal/vbp/index.html