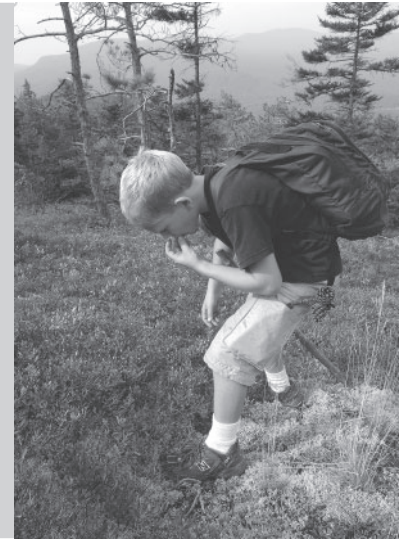




WHITECAP FUNDRAISING SUCCESSFUL

The Mahoosuc Land Trust thanks all members, volunteers, and friends who worked hard to make Rumford Whitecap Mountain capital campaign a huge success. The land trust purchased the 751-acre parcel of land in Rumford including the summit and south slope of the mountain on March 28. Whitecap is the land trust's largest fundraising campaign to date. The project budget was \$714,000. A grant for \$243,000 from the Land for Maine's Future Board launched the campaign. MLT raised the remaining \$473,000 in the last six months.

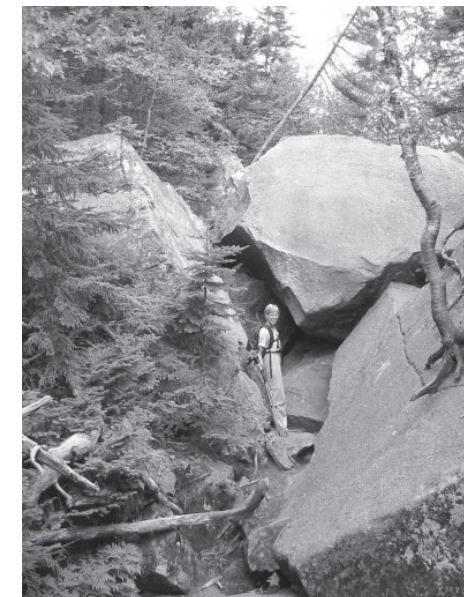
MLT will publish a special Whitecap edition of this newsletter in mid-June with detailed accounts of the Whitecap Campaign and a complete list of donors.



MAHOOSUC REGION RESOURCE REPORT

The Mahoosuc Conservation Initiative (MCI) is a collaboration of three local and three regional organizations working to develop a compatible conservation and economic development plan for the Mahoosuc Region. The Mahoosuc Land Trust (MLT) is a lead partner in the collaboration.

Last month the MCI partners completed two years work with the publication of the Mahoosuc Region Resource Report, which is posted on the MLT website: www.mahoosuc.org.



The first part of the report is an analysis of the region's demographics, land use and ecological values. The second part focuses on conservation and community development tools.

The report is the first phase of a process that will focus on land conservation projects in areas with the greatest benefits for residents and visitors, the regional economy and the natural environment. The second phase is the public roll-out of the report which will begin in mid-summer. The roll-out will engage communities and generate a detailed conservation plan for the region. The final phase is the implementation of that plan.

The report includes the results of the Participatory Geographic Information System survey completed last summer. The survey asked people to identify places with special values on a map. The data was used to create a computer-generated map identifying those places in the Mahoosuc Region considered important to residents and visitors.

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~ Upcoming Events ~

MLT Annual Garden Tour

"Garden Works in Progress"

Saturday, July 14, 2007

Noon to 4:00 PM

A unique garden tour: an excursion through dreaming, designing, creating and recreating gardens

Annual Fall Fabulous Flotilla

Canoe Trip

Saturday, October 6, 2007

9:00 AM to 3:00 PM

Meeting place will be announced

Annual Meeting and Volunteer Recognition Night

Free and open to the public

Wednesday, October 24, 2007

7:00 PM

McLaughlin Science Center, Gould Academy, Bethel

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President's Message

The past few months have been the busiest in the history of the Mahoosuc Land Trust. Elsewhere in this newsletter you will read about the challenges we have faced, the successes we have celebrated, the collaborations we have formed and the groundwork we have laid for future projects. Many not familiar with the land trust ask why we voluntarily commit time, talent and treasure to this work. Here is what I tell them:

"We are all in this global community together. Those of us fortunate enough to live or play (or both!) in OUR particular place on the globe are here because of the mix of natural resources and the mix of people who are attracted to them. Those who came before us worked out traditions of public use of the private lands surrounding

us here. Today, however, we are in a new age of land ownership when the owners have different uses for their holdings that may not include multiple uses over the long term. The GIFT of access that many took as a RIGHT may not continue."

MLT volunteers are working to see that our generation protects what we have enjoyed. I hope that you will reach out to others and ask them to volunteer their skills to join us in this work.

Thanks for all that YOU do for the effort. The land trust succeeds when we all work together.

Steve Wight, President

THE FIRST SLUG OF SPRING

Last winter during a warm spell one of my girls found a small dark slug crawling on the snow behind our house. It was at risk of freezing so we took it in, and "Franklin" the slug lived in a Tupperware container for about six months, hiding, eating leftover vegetables, and being occasionally let out for some exploring.



The meadowslug, *Deroceras laeve*, has an elongated slime-covered body that grows up to 20 millimeters. It has a head with four antennae and a muscular "foot" that runs along its underside.

Slugs are mollusks, relatives to the freshwater and marine snails, mussels, and octopi. Maine has more than 90 types of land mollusks, which include slugs and snails. While many land mollusks are slow to become active in the spring, meadowslugs seem to come out early.

A slug's tentacles are basically noses, designed to sense food and other slugs, though there are also small eyes mounted on the top pair. Its mouth is at the front edge of the foot, and has a radula that works like a tiny chainsaw to rasp bits of food. The meadowslug is herbivorous, eating mainly fresh or rotting vegetation.

Although they are land-dwellers, slugs need to stay damp, so they are covered with a thin layer of slime and restrict most of their activity to night or wet weather. That's why slugs are more likely to be seen out of hiding in the morning or evening, in cloudy weather or after a light rain.

The foot of a slug moves with rhythmic muscular contractions, gracefully propelling the animal over almost any surface. Slime secretions not only help keep a slug damp, they give the foot traction, allowing the slug to climb vertically or upside down.

Despite "his" name, Franklin was both male and female, like others of its kind. After mating both partners can lay some tiny, rubbery, whitish eggs under the leaves.

Meadowslugs are found around the world in northern climes. They are common animals of western Maine's woods and fields, but seem to like low ground best. They are undoubtedly a common food source for predatory invertebrates and small vertebrates such as shrews.

If you want to see meadowslugs, there are a good number along the Bethel Pathway between Davis Park and Mayville. They can number in the dozens per square meter in wet leaf litter beneath alders, such as along the Cambridge River east of Lake Umbagog.

Ken Hotopp

Noteworthy

Haystack Notch Trail Head Funding Included in the Proposed Federal Budget

The President's proposed 2007 budget includes funds that will be used to purchase an additional 667 acres for the White Mountain National Forest (WMNF) in Mason Township. The parcel, known as the Haystack Trail Head, is surrounded on three sides by the WMNF. The property was placed on the real estate market in 2006. The Trust for Public Land purchased the land and will re-sell it to the National Forest when the funding is finally approved.

The project is the highest United States Forest Service funding priority in the East in the Land and Water Conservation Fund budget. The acquisition enjoys exceptionally strong support from the residents of Mason. Twenty five out of the twenty six families living in Mason signed a petition supporting this addition to the National Forest.

3,688 Acres Protected in Grafton Notch

Over 3,600 acres of exceptional land bounded on three sides by Maine Public Reserve Lands and Grafton Notch State Park and adjacent to Mahoosuc Notch will soon be purchased by the Maine Department of Conservation. The parcel on the southeast slope of Old Speck Mountain has outstanding timber, habitat and recreational resources. It is a critical link in both the 42-mile Grafton Loop Trail and the interstate snowmobile route from Maine to New Hampshire which crosses the parcel.

Grafton Notch which is a project of the Trust for Public Land (TPL), a national conservation organization that assists state and local governments and private organizations to acquire public land. TPL purchased the parcel in 2006 and will hold it for resale to the state when all the funding is in place. The project will be funded by the Forest Legacy Program and the Land for Maine's Future Program.

Residents and visitors to the Mahoosuc Region will benefit from the hard work of many forward-looking citizens and federal and state officials who made this great achievement possible.

Electronic Newsletter

The Mahoosuc Land Trust has a new electronic newsletter. If you do not currently receive the E-Newsletter and would like to be added to the distribution list, send an e-mail to info@mahoosuc.org with "Subscribe E-Newsletter" in the subject line.

Land Trust Wishes

If you happen to have any of the following items that you no longer need or use, please consider donating them to the land trust: four drawer filing cabinet, paper cutter, flat bed scanner, hand-held GPS unit.

Bethel Trails Report

The land trust's trails committee continues to lead the effort to extend the Bethel Pathway in two directions. Last fall the ground work was completed for the extension of the trail from the end of the recreational bridge, under the two Androscoggin River bridges, behind Big Adventure to the North Road. The paving is expected to be done this spring or summer. Snowmobilers used the trail this winter to access trails behind the airport.



Trail Construction Photo Courtesy of the Bethel Citizen
Left to Right Patti Parsons, Kirk Siegel, Ron Savage, Scott Cole, Jeff Parsons, Brian Tibbets and Dan McGinnis

The new extension of the Bethel Pathway was made possible by a \$29,000 grant from the Maine Recreational Trails Program. Many local businesses and individuals contributed easements, materials, labor, equipment and services to the project. Donors included:

- **BIG Adventure Center**
- **Bethel Outdoor Adventures**
- **Savage Excavation** (machine and operator time and expertise)
- **D.A. Wilson** (compaction roller and operator time)
- **Don Murphy** of Main-Land Development (pro bono wetlands delineation and environmental permitting services)
- **Jim Sysko** (engineering and design services)
- **Kirk Siegel** (trail easement drafting)
- **Sunday River Ski Resort** (project coordinator services through staff members **Tim Bruce** and **John Devivo**)
- **Town of Bethel** (leadership from Town Manager **Scott Cole**)
- **Bethel Area Trails Committee of the Mahoosuc Land Trust.** (planning and administration)

This spring the trails committee is spearheading Phase I of an extension of the other end of the Bethel Pathway, from Davis Park to Telstar. The committee is working closely with the Town of Bethel and the Maine Department of Transportation. The committee hopes to put a trail on the ground in 2007 if the permits are granted and donations of materials and labor are secured. Information on the trail effort can be found at www.thebetheljournals.info/Trails/betheltrails.htm maintained by Don Bennett. The trails committee normally meets at 8:15 a.m. on the first Friday of the month at the land trust office, and meetings are open to the public.