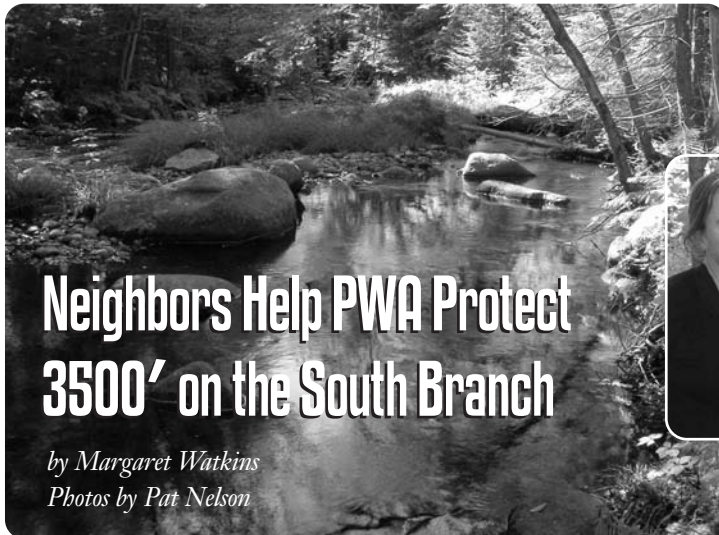


# Watershed News

## THE PISCATAQUOG WATERSHED ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER



### Neighbors Help PWA Protect 3500' on the South Branch

by Margaret Watkins  
Photos by Pat Nelson



Tiffany, Eva, and Dennis Calcutt pause along one of the trails they built to the river.

When Dennis and Tiffany Calcutt moved to Francestown five years ago, the initial attraction was finding a house they loved that was midway between their two jobs. As they began exploring their 21 forested acres on Woodward Hill Road, they soon found there was much more to love, not least of which was the Piscataquog River, which borders their property in a flood plain that can swell to impressive proportions during rainy periods.

They also were thrilled to find themselves in a town that values open space, and it was not long before Dennis became active with Francestown Land Trust. He has served on the Board for three years and is now President.

Within a year of arriving, Dennis and Tiffany hired Ron Klemarczyk to develop a forest management plan to reflect their interests in maintaining forest productivity and enjoying the land recreationally, with year-round trails for hiking and cross-country skiing. Shortly thereafter, they started thinking about ways to permanently protect it.

"We met with Barry Wicklow and Margaret Watkins," recalls Dennis, "and they talked with us about how our land played into a bigger context of land conservation in the Rand Brook area. Our land has several hundred feet of frontage on the South Branch, and a conser-

vation easement seemed like a good option for us at that time. Now, with our 2-year-old daughter Eva and another child on the way, conserving our land is even more meaningful as we look to the world our children will inherit."

At the same time, Dennis and Tiffany's neighbor Monica Derr was trying to decide what to do about a 15-acre land-locked parcel she owned on the river and which abuts the Calcutts' land. Together, the two lots provide several acres of rich floodplain forest habitat with significant wildlife habitat value. Monica's land also abuts land that Roger Hall has protected

with a PWA conservation easement. Taken together, the three ownerships protect some 3500 feet of frontage on the South Branch, 11 acres of floodplain forest, and 42 acres of contiguous upland forest. Desire and need came together in a conservation sale when PWA, with support from the Russell Foundation, acquired an easement on the property. Monica then sold her protected parcel to Dennis and Tiffany, who will manage it under terms identical to those in their easement.

"I've always wanted to see that land protected, and with this opportunity, I felt it was only right to entrust the land to the PWA and the Calcutt family," said Monica about her 15-acre tract.

"What a wonderful outcome for the watershed," says Carol Hall, former Director of the Russell Foundation. "With a relatively modest grant we were able to protect key frontage on the South Branch. I am particularly grateful to the Calcutts and Monica Derr for making this project happen."



*These projects are part of the Headwaters Project-I (HP-I), a collaborative conservation effort spearheaded by the PWA and Francestown Land Trust to protect key habitats, clean water, and quality of life in the western part of the watershed.*



## TO CONSERVE

the natural and scenic environment of the Piscataquog River Watershed communities:  
Deering ~ Dunbarton ~ Francestown ~ Goffstown ~ Greenfield ~ Henniker  
Lyndeborough ~ Manchester ~ Mont Vernon ~ New Boston ~ Weare

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**FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S DESK**

by Margaret Watkins

**This summer PWA completed five easements** – the three featured in this *Watershed News*, one featured in the last issue, and an easement on Weare's Charles and Ethel Eastman Conservation

Area. These 682 acres bring PWA's total conserved acreage to more than 3500 acres!

These 3500 acres reflect a wide diversity of habitats, water resources, and quality of life amenities. Some protect critical plant and animal habitats identified by State inventories and the Wildlife Action Plan. Some represent core wildlife habitat, essential to the continued presence of such watershed denizens as bear, bobcat, raptors, and warblers.

Many of these properties have frontage on the river or on equally important tributary streams and wetlands, which in turn contribute to high water quality, habitat for a variety of plants and animals, flood control, and connectivity among aquatic systems. Streams and the land abutting them also provide corridors for wildlife movement.

Whether upland or wetland, conservation lands are defining characteristics of our communities and way of life. PWA, local open space and conservation committees, and other nonprofit conservation organizations are creating a green future in the watershed, acre by acre.

**PWA'S 3500 ACRES OF CONSERVED LAND REFLECT A WIDE DIVERSITY OF HABITATS, WATER RESOURCES, AND QUALITY OF LIFE AMENITIES.**

## Meet Jeff Jackson, PWA's Computer Guru

by Paul Susca

A few years ago, Jeff Jackson stepped into the PWA office to drop off some samples he had collected as a volunteer water quality monitor. "I became aware of PWA's need for help with computer services right away," he remembers. "Old computers, an ad hoc network, obsolete software, an inconsistent data backup system, and inadequate security." Since then, Jeff has helped bring the PWA office into the 21st century. Referred to as the organization's "technical guru" by PWA staff, Jeff, owner of Summit Computer Services in Weare, says he can give much more to PWA in services than he could in cash.

"There are a few things I'm passionate about," Jeff says, "Family, protecting the environment, and enjoying the environment." In addition to enjoying his favorite place, nearby Ferrin Pond, Jeff is a dedicated hiking enthusiast, sometimes hiking 100 miles at a stretch. Whenever PWA acquires a new property, Jeff checks it out. As a volunteer, he takes inspiration from the individuals and families that donate land or easements to PWA.



Jeff Jackson  
Photo by  
Margaret Watkins

That inspiration goes a long way to enhancing what the PWA can do with its computer systems. Jeff's projects in the office have included rebuilding computers, data recovery, setting up a better network with a central server for data storage and backup, improving security and remote access, and developing recommendations for new equipment.

**Why does Jeff Jackson choose to donate his services to help the PWA?**

"It's local. As I drive around the area visiting my customers, I'm always crossing brooks and streams that drain into

the Piscataquog. As a small organization, PWA puts so much of their money and effort into monitoring and protecting the watershed, and into education. And that's exactly what they should be doing."

*Paul Susca is a former PWA Board member whose environmental interests are expressed both in personal ways and through his job with the Drinking Water and Groundwater Bureau at the NH Department of Environmental Services.*

**Correction:** The last issue of *Watershed News* incorrectly reported the New Boston Farmer's Market day and time. For fall crops, visit the NBFM on Saturday mornings, 9AM - Noon.





by Margaret Watkins

Photo: Pat Nelson

**Shortly after moving to Deering in 1994, Keith Robinson got involved with land conservation work at the local level.** Through the Deering Association and with help from a NH Audubon intern, Keith helped organize meetings about land protection and conservation easements for landowners. As a result, shortly thereafter, three Deering properties went into permanent conservation. Others followed.

Now, with a conservation easement on 17 acres to the PWA, Keith and his wife, Lauren, have added their land to the growing number of conserved properties in Deering.

“I hated the thought of land that’s been farmed for 250 years becoming developed,” Keith reflected recently when asked what motivated them to put their land into easement. “This was one of the oldest farms in Deering, and the fields have been here for a long time. To me it’s just the right thing to do, with all the development that’s been going on. I just didn’t want that for this land.”

Lauren agrees. “We think of our land as open space – the fields and forests, the stream and the wetland.”

Their children, Ben, 9, and Ruthie, 7, love the land as well. They have built trails and laid claim to special places on it and take an

active interest in the scat, bugs, and plants around them. A variety of habitats characterize this backyard playground, including an old gravel pit now grown up in poplar. The stream that runs along the eastern corner of the property flows to the North Branch of the Piscataquog River, and the fields are crisscrossed with animal trails.

“It really all started with Bev Yeaple,” recalls Keith. “She was just completing an easement on her land when we moved here. She has been an inspiration to us and encouraged us to move forward with an easement ourselves.”

Ed Cobbett, long-time chair of the Deering Conservation Commission, also helped, as did the prevailing attitude in Deering, that conservation is a good thing.

“The people in town are so supportive of conservation,” observes Lauren. “We know lots of people who have conserved their land. It’s so accepted in this town.”

That support has resulted in nearly 25% of the town being protected. The Conservation Commission annually updates its map of protected lands, and the number and size of green blocks that are emerging on it is an impressive testament to Bev, Ed, and the many landowners who have contributed to ensuring a green future for their community. These easement lands and lands in conservation ownership are protecting wildlife habitat, scenic vistas, community character, the North Branch of the Piscataquog and the Contoocook River, and the corridors of green that link Deering lands to conservation lands in adjoining towns.

When thinking about finalizing the easement and completing the process, Lauren’s eyes dance. “When we see our easement on the map along with all the others, it’s going to be very exciting!”

Lauren and Keith hope that their easement will in turn inspire others to think about conserving their land just as they were inspired by Bev. If just a few more key parcels are protected, it’s not hard to visualize a green corridor on the map connecting their land with Bev Yeaple’s and beyond!

## PWA MEMBERS HELP PASS KEY BILLS

State budget negotiators agreed to fund the **Land & Community Heritage Investment Program (LCHIP)** at \$12 million for the next biennium! \$6 million will come from the state’s General Fund in the first year, which began July 1, and \$6 million from a dedicated \$25 fee on documents recorded at county registries of deeds in the second year. Thanks to the citizens who lobbied ceaselessly and the legislators who worked tirelessly to pass the bill.

The **Comprehensive Shoreland Protection Act (CSPA)** was extended to include all rivers protected under the state’s Rivers Management and Protection Act. For the Piscataquog, this adds about 130 miles to the protections and new permitting requirements of the state’s CSPA, effective 4/1/2008. Special thanks to PWA member John Magee, who testified for the Piscataquog River Local Advisory Committee (PRLAC), and Rep. Jane Beaulieu of Manchester, also a member of PRLAC.



Woodcock by David Carroll

# Tax Advantages *of Gifts to PWA*

Gifts of appreciated securities, stocks, and bonds are a great way to support PWA – allowing you to increase the amount of your charitable donation while reducing your taxes.

Long-term appreciated assets (held for more than a year) are deductible at their current market value on the date they are donated.\*

Gifting the asset itself avoids the capital gains tax you would be assessed if you sold the stock and donated the proceeds.

Consider this example:

- Stock purchased for \$1000 and now worth \$5000 would yield a deduction of \$5000 for the donor and a gift of \$5000 to the PWA if the stock were gifted directly to PWA.
- If, instead, the stock were sold by the donor, the donor would be liable for \$600 in capital gains tax. If the net proceeds were then donated, the charitable deduction to the donor and gift value to PWA would be only \$4400.\*\*

\* Certain limitations apply. Always consult a tax professional for advice on your specific situation.

\*\* Based on a 35% tax bracket.

## Limited Time Opportunity:

If you are 70 1/2 or older and have an IRA, you have another great tax saving opportunity this year: If you contribute to PWA from your IRA before December 31, 2007, you can donate up to \$100,000 and not have to pay any income tax on your distribution.

For more information on special giving to PWA, please contact the PWA office.

## QUESTION:

What is 12 feet long and has 8 legs?

Two 6' folding tables!  
PWA needs some lightweight tables for fairs & other events.

## ANSWER:

## PWA ALSO NEEDS:

Mailboxes and mounting posts to place trail guides at trail heads on PWA properties.

Regular assistance with office and clerical work.

Can you help?

## PWA thanks the following members for their support!

### Welcome to Our New Members! (as of September 1<sup>st</sup>)

#### HENNIKER

Susan Flint\*\*

#### NEW BOSTON

Jennifer Donofrio & David Moore\*\*

Paul & Nancy Scopa

Mr. & Mrs. David N. Seager\*\*

#### OTHER GIFTS

Russell Piscataquog River Watershed Foundation

#### MATCHING GIFTS

Thank you to **Susan Ruggles** of Henniker who doubled her gift to the PWA through a matching gift program at Lincoln Financial Group! Many companies offer to match employee contributions to nonprofit organizations like the PWA. Does yours?

#### THANK YOU!

To **Ken Colburn** for donating a round-trip ticket to the National Land Trust Rally.

To **Don Grosso** for contributing toward Rally costs.

To **Jay & Dot Marden** for an office chair.

### Member Renewals (as of September 1<sup>st</sup>)

#### DUNBARTON

Bruce & Cindy Courtney

#### FRANCESTOWN

Brewster & Elizabeth Ames

Polly Freese

Suzanne Lamport

Paul Susca & Peg Lopata

William C. Swan

#### GOFFSTOWN

Catherine D'Agostino

Rod & Alanna Stark

Erwin & Jean Walker

#### LYNDEBOROUGH

Burton Reynolds

#### MANCHESTER

Scot Heath\*

George Naum

#### NEW BOSTON

Mike DePetrillo & Kari Lewis\*

Donald & Patricia Grosso

Albert & Carol LaChance

Lou & Mary Lanzillotti

Irving T. & Elinor M. McDowell\*\*

Kevin McLarnon & Barbara Sholl\*

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John & Kirsten Montgomery\*\*\*

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Ronald & Julia M. Tams

Steve & Jackie Tippet\*

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Bob & Cathy Arredondo

Mike & Sandy Boyko\*\*

Gordon & Paula Brown

Mike & Helen Dutton & Family\*\*\*

Forrest Esenwine

John Flanders

Ellen & Curt Goldsberry\*\*

Elizabeth Johnstone

Heleen & Neal Kurk\*\*

Verna Martin

Bessie Myhr\*

Dorothea O'Neil

#### OTHER NH TOWNS

Ray & Lucia Cote, Bow

Carol Foss, Penacook\*

Emily Hague & Jonah Erikson, Keene

Eric & Pam Lorimer & Family, Peterborough

Thomas & Patricia Pine, Exeter

#### OTHER STATES

Nancy & Tom Inui, Indianapolis, IN\*

Paul Livingston, Millbrae, CA

John E. & Norma Japp, Carlisle, MA

Judith Morse, Cambridge, MA

Michael S. Palmer, M.D., Swampscott, MA\*

Elizabeth Paynter, Weston, MA\*\*

\* Contributing Member (\$50)

\*\* Supporting Member (\$100)

\*\*\* Guardian Member (\$250+)

Help protect the places you cherish. Renew or make a gift at [www.pwa-nh.org](http://www.pwa-nh.org).



# The Wonders of Flat-Tailed Engineers

by Gordon Russell

Through these eyes that have wandered through the Piscataquog River Watershed for a stretch of decades, seeing the accomplishments of beavers has to top my list of what is truly extraordinary in the natural world. Given their size and ancestral line, these flat-tailed furbearers devise and build structures that are engineering marvels.

In all animals, instinct and life are inseparable to varying degrees. Beavers seem to step beyond the dictates of natural instinct in ways obvious to me. Before a home area is chosen, a variety of site-specific challenges must be faced and solved. Each situation demands a plan with foresight. The potential home area must be committed to memory to make sure the whole has the necessities for family life: water supply, siting of dam and lodge, quantity and quality of food supply.

Beavers must deal with water. Moving water gives even the finest human engineers fits. Beavers on the other hand manage floods and drought with remarkable success. While they are providing for their own family livelihood, their ponds create diverse habitats that serve countless others.

**Moving water gives even the finest human engineers fits. Beavers on the other hand manage floods and drought with remarkable success. While they are providing for their own family livelihood, their ponds create diverse habitats that serve countless others.**

**Dams:** Trial and error is not part of a beaver's *modus operandi*. Building a dam is too labor intensive to make a planning mistake. A site is chosen only after the acceptability of the entire area to be flooded has been determined. Depth after flooding, area to be flooded, protective site for a lodge, and quantity and quality of a food source are key components of the planning. Finally, the location of the dam must make sense from a building standpoint; i.e., the shorter the length and the lower the height to satisfy each of the requirements is best. (Note: In the Piscataquog River Watershed a dam only 26' long, 5' high creates a pond of just under 100 acres! Several dams here are known to be over 100' long. The record is a dam on a Montana river that measured 2,200'.)

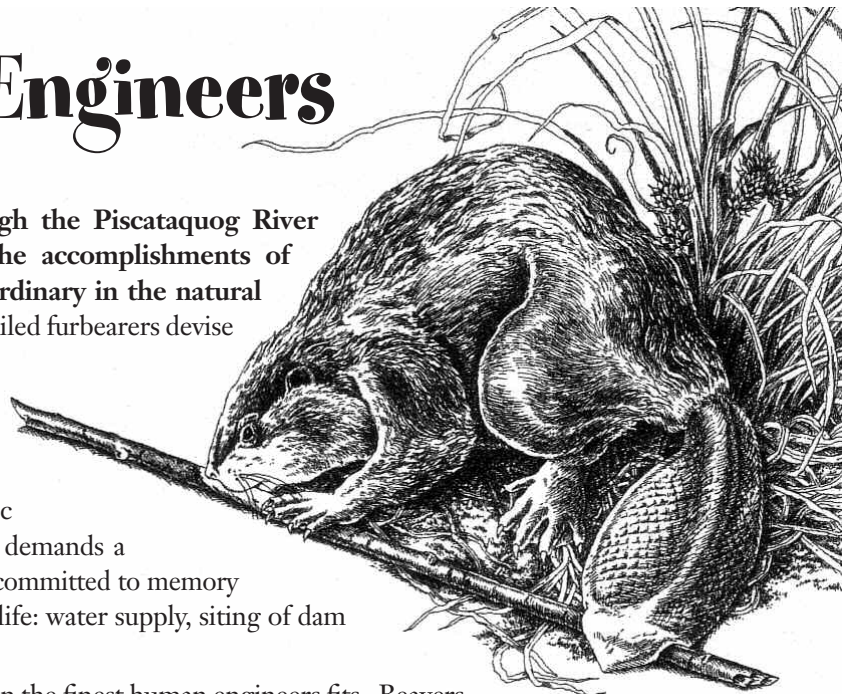
**Dam Design:** Each dam site chosen demands a certain type of construction, and beavers possess the wherewithal to meet those challenges. In my wanderings I've noticed at least five general construction designs to fit the site requirements – all made with teeth-sculptured sticks, mud, and stones, and an astonishing amount of innovation. Plans of an entirely different nature are required when repairs are needed.

**Lodges:** Beaver housing location and design take a variety of forms. The most common is the free-standing lodge. It must provide space for two adults, the year's newborn kits, and the previous year's adolescents. It must be predator proof, have two underwater entrances (deep enough not to be sealed with ice), be well insulated yet allow for air exchanges, be waterproof, and be designed with adequate living space plus a separate birthing shelf for the nursing mother and kits.

The family coexists in peace, oftentimes for five months in the dark with the lodge surrounded in ice. Talk about compatibility!

However you want to interpret the intellectual capacity of beavers to face the variables they encounter is up to you. For this wanderer, they have my deepest respect, not only for their ability to strategize, but also for the bonuses that result from their skills in altering an environment to the great benefit of so many other species, including my own.

*Gordon Russell, naturalist and conservation advocate extraordinaire, was instrumental in starting the PWA and with his wife, Barbara, established the Russell Piscataquog River Watershed Foundation to accelerate the pace of land conservation in the watershed.*



Beaver by David Carroll

Address Service Requested



# **PWA 2007 Annual Meeting**

## **SATURDAY, OCTOBER 20**

### **AT HOLY CROSS EPISCOPAL CHURCH, WEARE, NH**

## **– Register Now!**

Use the registration form that  
was sent earlier in a separate flyer.

September / October 2007 Volume 19, No.5

# *Watershed News*

THE PISCATAQUOG WATERSHED ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

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# **PWA 2007 Annual Meeting**

## **SATURDAY, OCTOBER 20**

### **AT HOLY CROSS EPISCOPAL CHURCH, WEARE, NH**



## **Featuring Special Guest, David Carroll**

*Author, artist, conservationist,  
long time friend and supporter of PWA and  
2006 winner of a MacArthur Foundation Fellowship.*

**Plus art show and auction, field trips, hike,  
and, of course, our famous spaghetti dinner  
with fabulous desserts!**