



# Tidings of the Turtle



*Captain Sandy's mark from the collections of the Maine Historical Society*

**Francis Small Heritage Trust Newsletter – December 2009**

## Signs of the turtle: BEHS students swarm the Highlands

October 23 dawned crisp, clear, and quiet in the Sawyer Mountain Highlands; by mid morning, not so quiet. Eighty ninth-grade students from Bonny Eagle High School were making their way to the summit — forty up the Smith Trail from Limerick and forty up the Sawyer Mountain Road from Limington.

These were students on a mission, bearing eighty 3" x 6" oak trail markers, each with a routed turtle symbol prepared by Trust director Dick Jarrett. He and MSAD #6 school board member Joe Hanley had delivered them to BEHS Environmental Science teacher Melissa MacKenzie. Her students used eyedroppers to fill the turtle routings with bright yellow paint. MacKenzie, who makes Sawyer Mountain an annual pilgrimage with her students, and her fellow Team 9D teachers, Stanley Sampson, Sue Dufresne, and Chris Nolan, had been seeking a community service project. The turtles proved a perfect fit.

Turtles? A bit of history here. In 1688 the northern edge of the Ossipee Tract,

representing the present-day towns of Parsonsfield, Cornish, Limington, Limerick, and Newfield, was traded by the native Newichewannock Chief Wesumbe to Francis Small. (Thus the Francis Small Heritage Trust!) Chief Wesumbe, also known as Captain Sandy, used a turtle symbol as his mark. With the permission of the Maine Historical Society, the Trust honored Chief Wesumbe by adopting his mark as its logo.

Back on the mountain, the students were affixing the turtle trail markers to trees along the trail on FSHT property. Trust director Hilary Wallis, Hanley, and half of the BEHS Team 9D teachers accompanied the western hikers, while Jarrett, Trust director Dan Kidd and the other teachers approached from the east with their charges. The two groups met at the summit for a lively lunch, then each proceeded down the opposite side, following the others' turtles to where a yellow school bus was waiting.

Said Hanley afterward: "The day couldn't have gone any better."



## Leading Maine environmentalist and FSHT founder dies

We are sad to report the death of Sherwood Libby, who was the driving force behind the formation of the Francis Small Heritage Trust. Sherwood was considered one of Maine's leading conservationists; he worked his entire life fighting for Maine's environment. A few of his accomplishments:

- Formation of the Saco River Corridor Commission
- Formation of the Land Use Regulation Commission
- Protection of the Allagash Wilderness Waterway
- Creation of IF&W's Little Ossipee Reserve (which originally was slated to become thousands of house lots)
- Recognition by the Legislature and Governor in 2007 for his and his wife Lorraine's lifetime contributions to the State of Maine
- One of the founders of the Limington Rescue Squad

Sherwood was not one to back down from a battle. Numerous times he and Lorraine turned to the courts to ensure that state and local laws were enforced. And not once did they lose a battle on the merits of a case.

Sherwood will be sorely missed, but his legacy will live forever in the protection of the mountains, wild lands, and rivers of Maine.



*Tyler Gamblin and Elizabeth LaFlamme next to the turtle marker they put up. Photo courtesy of Joe Hanley*

# Sawyer Mountain easement completed

An exciting accomplishment in 2009: A conservation easement to permanently protect 1,108 acres of FSHT land in the Sawyer Mountain Highlands was signed on March 30, 2009. The Holder of this easement is the Green Mountain Conservation Group (GMCG) in Effingham, NH. The Trust and GMCG both want to preserve wildlife corridors between their holdings and to protect the watersheds of the Ossipee, Saco, and Little Ossipee rivers.

We learned a lot in the process, as we needed to describe what we are protecting. We reviewed the wildlife and plants that are special to Sawyer Mountain; we listed the old foundations and family cemeteries; we documented the 16 parcels that are included – their deeds, sizes, and the types of land that had been described by foresters. And, as you will see elsewhere on this page, we blazed and painted approximately 14.5 miles of boundaries.

A conservation easement is a deed – in this case, a long one. This one needed to reflect the goals and objectives of several organizations — FSHT, GMCG, Sweet Water Trust, Land for Maine's Future, and the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife. Thus, the purposes of the easement are:

- (1) to assure public access for non-intensive pedestrian recreation;
- (2) to protect rare, threatened, and endangered species, rare or exemplary natural communities and other significant ecological and wildlife values;
- (3) to conserve water quality and quantity, wetlands and riparian values, and to maintain the fertility and quality of the soil; and
- (4) to ensure that the protected property will be retained forever wild in its essentially unroaded, unfragmented, natural condition and to allow natural ecological processes to proceed.

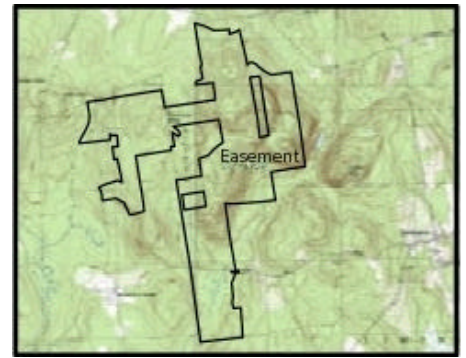
Sweet Water Trust (SWT) had pledged to match contributions from other foundations to fund costs related to this easement, including paying off a mortgage. As expenses mounted, SWT generously increased their contribution to \$60,000, well beyond the promised match. Other contributing foundations were the Clark Charitable Trust, the Davis Conservation Fund, the Fields Pond Foundation, the Morton-Kelly Charitable Trust, the John

Sage Foundation, and the William P. Wharton Trust. Also, the Trust is grateful for individual contributions from many of its members and friends and especially for the professional services donated by Butch Yarumian of Maine Boundary Consultants — among his contributions was a map incorporating all of the parcels, based on all survey information.

This easement means that you can continue to enjoy the Trust's land in the Sawyer Mountain Highlands and know that in perpetuity this land will be protected and available for non-intensive recreation, hunting, and fishing.

## New signs on Sawyer Mountain

If you have ever had trouble finding the path to the summit of Sawyer Mountain, your hike should be much easier now. Volunteers have installed eight new directional signs at key locations on Sawyer Mountain. And small turtles mark the main trail, thanks to volunteers from Bonny Eagle High School. (See the article on the front page.)



## 13 volunteers refresh easement boundary

In late January 2009, a group of volunteers gathered to graze on dinner and grapple with maps and learn and relearn the fine art of refreshing boundary markings. At the request of the Green Mountain Conservation Group, and as a condition of holding the easement on the Sawyer Mountain Highlands, the entire exterior boundary of the 1,108-acre easement property needed to be marked by the middle of March 2009.

With many thanks to our great volunteers, we finished approximately 91% of our 14.5 miles of boundary by March 20, having to leave some sections until warmer weather when the corners could be more easily found and the walking more straightforward. As you may remember, by the time January came around last year, the cold hard ground was buried under many feet of snow and we were often digging down 3 to 4 feet in places to locate the corner markers.

Our heartfelt thanks to the 13 volunteers who donated their time and got their hands, mittens, hats, backpacks, pants, and sometimes noses smeared with red paint. It's now a matter of fact that as soon as the paintbrush was in hand the itch was sure to develop on top of the nose. Those who risked red noses were Dylan Alden, Mitch Alden, Tracy Ames, Doug Bowen, Toni Carros, Dick Jarrett, Mary Jane Jarrett, Dan Kidd, Jeff Libby, Ken Putnam, Hilary Wallis, Margaret Zack, and Peter Zack. We owe a very special thanks to Butch Yarumian, licensed surveyor, for sharing his expertise with the willing and eager volunteers.





Please accept my donation of \_\_\_\_\_ to help protect the Sawyer Mountain Highlands as well as aid in other conservation activities of the Trust.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Contributions & memberships are tax-deductible under IRS code 501 (C)(3).  
Francis Small Heritage Trust, Inc. PO Box 414 Limerick, ME 04048  
(207) 637-3510 www.FSHT.org



Please send me a free hiking map.

## Maine Medical Center Lyme tick study results: Good news and bad news ...

FSHT was one of five land trusts in the state that was selected to take part in a study of ticks and the threat of Lyme disease. The study was conducted by the Maine Medical Center (MMC) under a grant from the Elmina B. Sewall Foundation. Volunteers from the Trust collected ticks over the past year along three 100-meter trail segments on Sawyer Mountain and the Jagolinzer Preserve. The live ticks were then sent to MMC for analysis.

The good news is that the threat of Lyme disease was lower on Trust properties than it was on land trusts closer to the coast. Fewer actual ticks were found inland than on the coast and the infection level was slightly lower. The bad news is that the risk to people and pets is still significant in that 37% of the deer ticks collected were found to be infected with the Lyme pathogen. And there exist two additional emerging tick-borne diseases: anaplasmosis and babesiosis. Visitors to FSHT properties and other areas where ticks may be present should take precautions to avoid tick bites. And after being in the woods, you should check yourself, your children, and your pets for attached ticks and remove them promptly.

The two-year life cycle of the deer tick is complex, and just because last year was

a mild year for ticks is not reason to relax your diligence. The eggs are laid in the spring and the larvae hatch in the summer. The larvae can become infected when they feed on mice or birds. The larvae then become inactive until the following spring when they change into nymphs. The nymphs may be as small as the head of a pin and can be very difficult to detect. They feed again on small animals or humans. In the fall, the nymphs molt into adult ticks and feed on large animals and finally lay their eggs, completing the two-year life cycle. Already this November, the deer tick population appears to be increasing. The Centers for Disease Control has a great website with more information at [www.cdc.gov/Lyme](http://www.cdc.gov/Lyme). Special thanks goes to tick volunteers Geoff Ives and Denise Oliver.



## Talk on invasive terrestrial plants

Maine is being invaded! Invasive plants are taking over our roadsides and fields, our gardens, and even our woodlands.

Joe Anderson of the York County Soil & Water Conservation District explained how to identify these plants and what you can do. In a talk FSHT sponsored at the Brick Town Hall in Limerick on May 17, Joe said we should care because invasive

plants harm the natural heritage of our wetlands, meadows, forests, lakes and rivers. They decrease our enjoyment of hunting, fishing, bird watching and other recreation.

Joe explained that not every non-native plant is invasive. The invasive ones are the very aggressive plants that push out native species and often become a monoculture, completely dominating an area. Some have been introduced in fill during work along roadsides; others are spread by birds or by the wind. Many have fast-growing root systems from which new plants grow.

Some invasive plants that have become major problems in this area are Asiatic Bittersweet, Phragmites (Common Reed), Purple Loosestrife, and Garlic Mustard. Invasive shrubs here are Japanese Knotweed (“Mexican Bamboo”), Common and Glossy Buckthorn, Russian and Autumn Olive, Burning Bush, Japanese Barberry, and Multiflora Rose.

The first step is prevention: Do not buy these plants! Secondly, when possible, eliminate the plants before they go to seed. (Purple Loosestrife produces up to 2.7 million seeds per plant per year!) Some plants can be uprooted — very carefully, to remove all the roots. In some cases, repeated mowing can control the spread of an invasive plant. For the worst invasions, careful use of pesticides is the most effective solution; some pesticides require a licensed applicator.

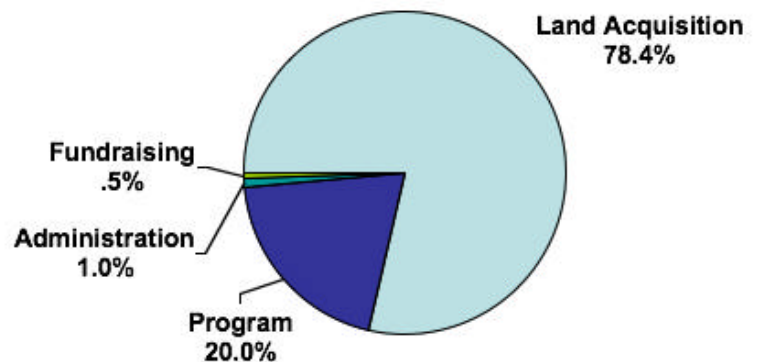
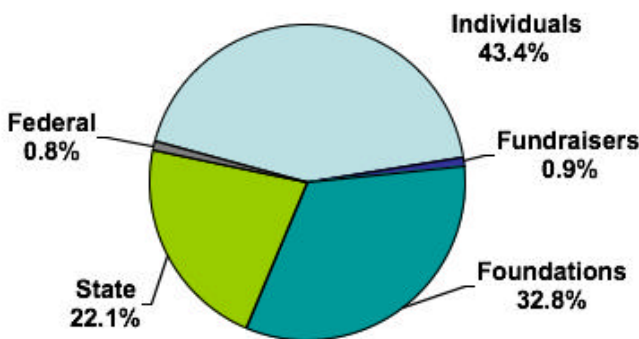
For more information on invasive terrestrial plants, go to <http://www.yorkswcd.org>. Also see “Coming Events” in this newsletter.





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## FSHT funding sources and expenditures, 1997– 2008:



### Income:

**Fundraisers** include sales of dragonflies and logo goods.  
**Individuals** includes cash and property donations.

### Expenditures:

Over 98% of expenditures directly support the land. **Program** includes property taxes, surveys, loan interest, and legal costs.

## Carter tells Annual Meeting: Save forests to cool planet

Jonathan Carter, Executive Director of the Forest Ecology Network, spoke on “Cooling the Planet by Saving the Forests” at the Annual Meeting of the Trust on October 25 in the Porter Town Hall. Carter told how, as a botanist in the 1970s, he had advocated managing logging practices to mitigate global warming. He said recent science suggests that we are past the tipping point, but he feels we still need to act — using forests to maximize carbon sequestration. He showed

how forests sequester carbon and how different forest types have different carbon densities. He described forest practices that have negative and positive effects on carbon sequestration. Carter feels that carbon credits and offsets and “cap and trade” will not work. He proposed that through local actions, the Maine woods can be managed to be a defense against global warming.

At the meeting, officers of the Trust were re-elected: Marlene Livonia, President; Dylan Alden, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President; Dan Kidd, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President; Dick Jarrett, Treasurer; and Hilary Wallis, Secretary. Other Directors are Peter Zack, who was elected to a new term; Lorraine Libby; and Jason Libby.

## Coming events . . .

**Invasive Plants Workshop** In the spring of 2010, Joe Anderson (see page 3) will conduct a workshop for FSHT in the field to show how to identify and eradicate invasive plants. Look for our notice in local newspapers in the spring. If you are a neighbor of Sawyer Mountain who has an invasive plant and would like the workshop group to visit your site, email us at Mail@FSHT.org.

**Horse logging** The Trust, a forester, and a horse-logger have discussed logging with horses to demonstrate sustainable forestry that improves the health of the forest, to be done on land that is not in the forever-wild easement.