

THE AUSBON SARGENT LAND PRESERVATION TRUST

Helping to Preserve the Rural Landscape of the Mt. Kearsarge/Ragged/Lake Sunapee Region

Andover, Bradford, Danbury, Goshen, Grantham, New London, Newbury, Springfield, Sunapee, Sutton, Warner & Wilmot



Chatter



Winter 2023



Planning for the **Promise of Forever**

From the **Executive Director:**



Thanks to all our generous supporters, 2022 was a busy and successful year for Ausbon Sargent as we recognized our 35th anniversary. We celebrated the permanent protection of 163 properties totaling 13,345 acres of conservation lands stewarded by the land trust. Highlights of the past year included numerous events and educational activities, adopting a Conservation Plan, launching a new donor database, expanding volunteer opportunities, and protecting properties featured in this issue of Chatter. We purchased our office building at 71 Pleasant Street which we had been renting since 2008. Ownership provides ASLPT security that we will have a home for the foreseeable future.

Looking forward to 2023 with our new Conservation Plan, the Land Protection Committee and our dedicated staff will begin to identify specific parcels within focus areas with the highest priority and develop strategies for protection. Properties will be vetted for long-term suitability and by grouping conserved lands that are adjacent and nearby. Ausbon Sargent is committed to the Land Trust Alliance's goal of 30% of each community conserved by the year 2030.

As many of you know, this is my last Chatter letter. Two years ago, I let the Board know that I intended to retire in June of 2023. I knew that it was important to give plenty of notice so that Ausbon Sargent could prepare for this change as I have held the position of Executive Director since 1988. The Board acted and appointed a Succession Committee which developed a thoughtful search process plan to find my successor. Interviews are underway and the Committee will make a recommendation to the Board in February. In order to ensure a smooth transition, there will be an overlap period between me and the new Executive Director.

I have been incredibly fortunate to have been with Ausbon Sargent for 35 years. Over the years the responsibilities of my position have changed. For the first 17 years, I served the dual role of Executive Director and Land Protection Specialist. I enjoyed helping 72 landowners permanently protect 3,500 acres, but in 2005 through the strategic planning process, the Board recognized the need for a full-time Land Protection Specialist to work in collaboration with the Executive Director to develop and execute land conservation projects. The Board also recognized that as Executive Director, I should be responsible for the successful management, administration, funding, and coordination of all the programs and activities of the Trust.

I am most grateful for all that I have learned over the years from each of you. I have truly loved my job that has protected so many special places and contributed to one's quality of life. I feel this is a good time for transition: Ausbon Sargent has a generous base of supporters, built a strong quasi-endowment fund, earned the mark of excellence and trust from the Land Trust Accreditation Commission, and is now witnessing the generosity of those who became Acorn Society members and included the land trust in their estate plans.

Over the next several months, I will work closely with the staff, board, and committee members to pave the way for Ausbon Sargent's next Executive Director.

With sincere gratitude,

Debbie Stanley



ABOUT THE COVER >

A multigenerational walk through a protected property within the Town of Bradford. We have been tasked with taking care of some very special places, forever. Preparing for the future ensures that the generations to come can enjoy the same properties that we do today.



Planning for **Success at Ausbon Sargent**



“If you fail to plan, you are planning to fail.”

—Benjamin Franklin

by Kristy Heath

An obvious component to achieving a desired outcome is a good plan. Without the proper foresight, a goal can get pushed far down the road, or may have to change due to unanticipated constraints on time and resources. I have discovered, during my time at Ausbon Sargent, that the key to our consistent growth and success is planning. The phrase “winging it” isn’t one that is thrown around among the staff, but instead “let’s make a plan.”

The land trust has a mission, as do most not-for-profit organizations. Our strategic plan, which is created to help execute that mission, is revisited every five years. The mission always remains the same, although the plan to achieve it may change slightly from time to time, which is indicative of changes in the world and our adjustments to remain current and consistent.

A plan provides a guide for action. Whether we are planning an event, fundraising for a land project, replacing a staff member, or stewarding our properties (until the end of time!), planning is at the forefront and is taken very seriously. It is a constant effort to stay ahead of our goals, both short and long-term. Achieving accreditation in 2008, 2014 and again in 2020 helped us fine-tune our planning so that we can remain an organization of excellence. Accreditation involves a meticulous review of all our policies and procedures to make sure that the practices are viable and sustainable for years to come. Achieving this distinction shows landowners, donors, and our members that the land trust employs best practices and industry “standards” for land protection, financial recordkeeping, and overall management of the organization. Accreditation helps accentuate the “Trust” in “Land Trust”!

Land projects can take years to complete, start to finish, but there is always a plan. All the players, including property owners and their families, towns, fundraising campaigns, grantors, surveyors, and lawyers, have their own plans and timelines to adhere to. Once these players have satisfied their own requirements, a project can be completed. But the planning doesn’t end there; a conservation easement property must be monitored each year and the terms of the easement upheld by the land trust. Properties owned by the land trust must be maintained (trails, forestry, etc.) as well as monitored, which takes forward thinking and planning.

Towns in New Hampshire are required to have a “Master Plan” which serves as a guideline for how they are supposed to move forward and improve over the next ten years or so. It is mandated by the State that this document exists and is revisited every five to ten years by the Planning Board. A “Land Use” chapter must be included in each Master Plan, which helps Ausbon Sargent understand the most ecologically sensitive and important parts of a town. Working together with a town and this planning document helps to give direction to both the land trust and the town on where to act in terms of land protection.

An important part of the land trust is its staff. For 35 years, Ausbon Sargent has relied upon the people it employs to work towards the mission and the future. In the past two years, two people have retired (with 22 years and 11 years of service respectively) and Executive Director, Debbie Stanley will retire in June 2023, after serving Ausbon Sargent for 35 years. A significant amount of planning went into the replacement of our Operations Manager and Bookkeeper in 2022, and even more planning and preparing has been done for the next Executive Director. It has been reassuring to the staff over the past two years that so much care and planning has gone into finding new wonderful colleagues. With a Board of Trustees that has been carefully selected, following a plan to consider which strengths and skills the board needs from year to year, the transitions have been smooth, thus far. We anticipate the same with the transition to our new Executive Director this summer.

Planning for the future of the land trust is an important task that, thankfully, has always been taken very seriously. A plan in place that takes into consideration the ideas, past experiences, and expectations of those involved which helps to reduce stress for all; the goal, and steps to achieve it, are spelled out. For an organization that has made promises of forever to over 160 property owners, it is only right that we plan for success. Benjamin Franklin would be proud!

Kristy Heath has been at the Land Trust for the past 8 years and is currently the Development and Communications Coordinator. She is a mom to three teenaged daughters and a little shih-tzu named Happy. In her free time, Kristy likes traveling and having new experiences, camping with family and friends, and enjoying both summer and winter activities in and around the region. A NH native, she currently resides in New London.

NEW TRUSTEES • Russ Moore & Chuck Bolduc



Ausbon Sargent Holds 35th Annual Meeting

On October 23rd, Ausbon Sargent held its Annual Meeting at the New London Historical Society. After two years of the meeting being held virtually, the good attendance told us that our members missed gathering in person! An overview of projects from 2022 was given, as were reports from the Treasurer, Investment Committee, and Chairman.

Retiring from the board was James Owers, who served 9 years and was Board Secretary, Chair of the Lands Committee, and Chair of the Stewardship Committee. Chair, Jeff Hollinger, stepped down as Chair of the Board and will remain on the board and active on the Finance, Investment, Executive, and Leadership committees.

New members of the board are Chuck Bolduc from the Town of Sutton, and Russ Moore from the Town of New London. Chuck is a geologist and is currently employed as a GIS Analyst. He has been a member and easement monitor for Ausbon Sargent for the past seven years. Russ has an extensive background in nonprofit leadership and has been a monitor and member of ASLPT for the past two years. Both Russ and Chuck are outdoor enthusiasts and enjoy cycling, hiking, and other outdoor activities. We welcome Chuck and Russ to the Ausbon Sargent Board of Trustees!

The officers were nominated and voted in unanimously as:

- Lisa Andrews** – Chair
- Bob Zeller** – Vice-Chair
- Susan Ellison** – Secretary
- Mike Quinn** – Treasurer



New London Historical Society

Ausbon Sargent Land Preservation Trust Awarded LCHIP and Moose Plate Grants for Bradford Project

On December 14, 2022, Ausbon Sargent accepted a grant award for \$80,000 from the Land and Community Heritage Investment Program (LCHIP) and received another \$24,000 grant commitment from the Moose Plate Grant, both from the State of New Hampshire. The funding is earmarked for the Bradford Bog Headwaters Property, which the land trust is working to protect through purchase. The 71.66-acre property is deemed valuable by the US Department of Agriculture and is within the Quabbin-to-Cardigan conservation focus area of national importance. It is abundant with wildlife, especially several varieties of bird species that are declining rapidly in our region. The property benefits the surrounding watersheds and places like the nearby Abenaki ancient healing springs site, and the Atlantic White Cedar bog and wildlife sanctuary. These newly acquired grants help fund approximately half of the necessary \$205,000 project, for which fundraising is ongoing. The land trust is also fortunate to have received funding from Ausbon Sargent members and friends from the Town of Bradford, the Quabbin-to-Cardigan Partnership, The Fields Pond Foundation, and a generous anonymous donor. Partners in this effort include the Rural Heritage Connection of Bradford, and the Bradford Conservation Commission. Visit ausbonsargent.org today to learn more about this important property.

LCHIP AWARD CEREMONY • CONCORD, NH



From left to right: NH Governor Chris Sununu, Andy Deegan (ASLPT Land Protection Specialist), and Debbie Stanley (ASLPT Executive Director)

Photo courtesy: Joe Klementovich



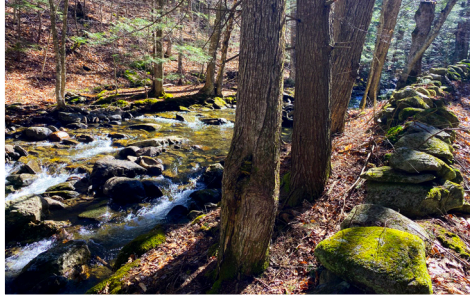
LCHIP

Investing in New Hampshire's Heritage



LAND & COMMUNITY HERITAGE INVESTMENT PROGRAM

LAND PROJECT UPDATES



A view of the Babb Brook, which borders a section of the Hermit Woods Property

Facts about the **Hermit Woods Property**

Town: Goshen

Total Acreage: 27 acres

This property:

- Borders a section of Babb Brook, which is a tributary of the South Fork of the Sugar River
- Home to abundant wildlife, including the Hermit Thrush
- Open to the public for low-impact recreation
- Was made possible by a grant from the Quabbin-to-Cardigan Partnership

On October 11, 2022, Hermit Woods was protected by the donation of a conservation easement by owners Sandy Sonnichsen and Allen Howe.

When asked why they chose to protect their acreage in Goshen, they explained:

“We are grateful to ASLPT for their recognition of the value of our relatively small property. We sought a conservation easement on our property because we wanted to know that the wildness we love will be protected after we are gone. Beloved property can be slowly destroyed by fragmentation and small decisions, each one seeming insignificant, but each a subtraction until the character of the land is gone, so diminished as to be no longer worth saving.

Babb Brook borders the property and is a cold-water refuge for brook trout during the heat of the summer. Cold-water brooks are easily compromised and difficult to protect because the trout need access to the whole length of the brook as they move in and out of the brook and upstream to fast flowing cold water. Actions in any portion of the brook will affect the whole system. Babb Brook has no man-made blockages to fish passage and little human development adjacent to much of its reach. Portions of the Babb are already protected by an extensive conservation easement; this new easement will add another piece to the puzzle.



A view of a field within the Bravo Property

Facts about the **Bravo Property**

Town: Bradford

Total Acreage: 91.9 acres

This property:

- Has good forestry and agricultural soils
- Protects a couple of brooks that flow into Lake Massasecum
- Is home to abundant wildlife
- Has been flagged as an important property for protection in the Bradford Master Plan

On December 22, 2022, the Bravo property was protected by a donation of a conservation easement by owners, Stephen and Sandra Bravo. The Bravo property represents the tenth property in Bradford that has been protected by Ausbon Sargent. Although not open to the public, this property provides a public benefit, which is the protection of the area watershed. It is primarily forested with a mix of hardwoods and softwoods. It is the highest ranked habitat in the biological region and supporting landscapes in the 2020 NH Wildlife Action Plan.

Our property is home to a whole collection of wild animals, including the usual woodland birds; deer, bear, and red salamanders: the blue spotted salamander found in the house basement, a milk snake who lives in a stone wall near the garden; a family of weasels in the woodshed; an otter who plays in the snow beside the brook; a hermit thrush who seems to play call and repeat with the owner's whistle; two barred owls and their offspring who make a tremendous ruckus at night; scores of Luna moths circling in the moonlight; a sapsucker family perhaps reluctantly sharing their sap well with hummingbirds; and the occasional cuckoo with its distant mournful call.”



Ausbon Sargent Land Preservation Trust is what it is today because Debbie always found a way to get it done... whatever it was!
—Marilyn Kidder

A Few Words About **Debbie Stanley**

For 35 years, Debbie Stanley has served as a leader to the land trust, in the field, and in the office. Those who worked alongside her as chair of the board of trustees, could identify her strengths as a leader, and appreciated her attention to detail, organization, and tenacity in all facets of her position. When asked to provide their thoughts on Debbie and what made her such a good fit for the organization, they shared the following:

It seems that Debbie Stanley was destined for the position of Executive Director of Ausbon Sargent from birth! She has a unique combination of talents and gifts that are ideally suited for that position, which she has held so effectively for the last 35 years. Debbie has the foresight of an entrepreneur; the passion for environmental issues of a dedicated activist; the savvy of a successful businessperson; the organizational skills of an engineer; the social outreach of an astute observer of this community; and the compassionate heart of a person who loves the Lake Sunapee/Kearsarge region. What Debbie has accomplished in her 35 years at the helm of Ausbon Sargent is beyond adequate words. It was my utmost pleasure to have served with her as a Trustee for six years of an important growth phase for the organization. She has earned her pending retirement many times over and is leaving Ausbon Sargent in terrific shape for the future. My fondest wishes go to you Debbie, and Peter as you begin this next chapter of your journey together.

— **Chris Cundey**

When I initially joined committees and then the Board at Ausbon Sargent and learned that the current executive director was Ausbon Sargent's ONLY executive director, with a tenure of thirty-plus years, I worried that policies were set in stone and that new ideas would be given short shrift. After seven years, I've learned that was a useless worry. Debbie has guided the organization to great success and has been a remarkable communicator, open to new ideas and approaches, unafraid of change, and constantly learning. I am happy to have had the opportunity to learn so much from her.

— **Frances Harris**

When I joined the Ausbon Sargent Board in 1989, Debbie had been at the helm for a year – serving our communities with all the poise and flair she flourishes still. In those early days she had an office over what is now Artisan's. A desk. A filing cabinet. A copier out in the hall. Debbie did it all. She pulled it all together, steered Ausbon Sargent through rough waters, brought it home to port as what it has now become. Board members come and go — all dedicated, wonderful people. But Debbie is its heart. Always has been. Always will be. What will we do without our heart. Debbie — you will be so greatly missed. We love you.

— **Bob Bowers**

When I think of Debbie, I think of legacy. If you want to see hers, just look around. Now over 13,000 protected acres in 12 towns. A lot of people were involved but Debbie was always the driving force. Like my father before me, I was energized by working with her on the Board. At the very beginning of the ASLPT story, my dad would proudly show me newly protected land, and I later did the same with my children. Last summer, my children showed their children. What Debbie has accomplished transcends a career. She has been a force for nature.

— **John Garvey**

There is a particular look Debbie has when she is piecing together the puzzle for each land conservation project. When you offer one piece of information, you sense she is cataloguing said piece and connecting it with hundreds of other pertinent facts she has gleaned over the years. Sometimes her face lights up as a missing piece of the puzzle fits into place. Sometimes her brow furrows just a bit as a new piece needs to be flipped around to find matching edges. Maybe she'll remember a piece she saw a few years back and realize it completes the picture. In a community made up of small towns, she knows who is connected to whom, the history of the land, and where to find support for a given project. The results of Debbie's strong sense of place can be measured in so many ways: years of experience, breadth of institutional knowledge, hundreds of ASLPT supporters, thousands of acres of land under easement.

Debbie's strong support for working farms is evident in the many farm projects successfully completed during her tenure: Spring Ledge Farm, Courser Farm, Webb farmland, Battles Farm, Hersey Farm, Patten property, Pleasant Lake Farm, Star Lake Farm, Messer Farm. These working farms continue to keep our rural landscapes intact and enhance our resiliency as a community. Debbie's advocacy and leadership alongside the support and hard work of many others ensured that these lands would continue to grow crops and protect that rural feel which makes living in this area so special. Thank you, Debbie, for all your hard work!

— **Greg Berger**





The Ausbon Sargent Land Preservation Trust

Gifts, Thank Yous & Land/Easement Donors



Interested in the Membership, Annual Fund, and Business Partner lists? Stay tuned for those names in the summer issue!

This list has been assembled with care and lists through 12/31/22. If you have a question or correction, please contact Jen at 603-526-6555 or info@ausbonsargent.org

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The Sutton Police Department,
from Mark Lennon
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Julie Neumann & Conner Porterfield

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(for donating a portion of their sales commissions to Ausbon Sargent)

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Barrette Family Fund
Berger Family Fund
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THANK YOU Volunteers, Land and Easement Donors:

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Nick Andrews for shredding documents
Robert Carney for being a parking
volunteer
Don Eberly for his office woodworking
LSPA for the lovely venue
The Kearsarge Shopper
for all they do for us
Lee Morrill, On Track Design
for graphic design and advertising
Alice Perry for her database work
Katie and Lyn Potter for recycling

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Our sincere appreciation to those who share their passion for natural places through land and easement donations.

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Frank H. Gordon^ &
Dorothy B. Gordon^
Dr. Lincoln Gordon^
Town of Grantham
John Graves^, Cordelia F. Graves^
Revocable Trust
Green Crow Corporation
Donna Vilsmeier and Russell,
Donald^, Raymond &
Richard Gross
Cynthia W. Hayes & John Trachy
Gerald E. Hersey
Roger Hersey^
Lisa Hess
Edwin R. Hiller
Alan Howe & Sandy Sonnichsen
Beatrice Jillette
Hazel Johnson^
Jolyon Johnson
Thaddeus C.^ &
Virginia D. Johnson
Cora Collins Kangas
Kezar Conservation Group, LLC
King Ridge, LLC, Frank Stewart
Knight's Hill Nature Park
Nelson F. Lebo III
LEJ Revocable Trust
Mark Lennon
David & Mary MacMillin
Brooks McCandlish & Janet Sillars
J. Dale McLeod Co.
Monetta Properties, Inc.
Nelson Farm
Newcomb & Ourusoff Families
"Kentlands"
New England Forestry Foundation
New London Outing Club
Town of New London
NH Audubon
Clayton Nowell
Nutting Family Trust
Judith M. Oates
Robert O'Neil Revocable Trust
Otter Pond Protective Association
Dr. Edward C. Parkhurst^
& Loren B. Sjostrom^
Dr.^ & Mrs.^ Edward C. Parkhurst
Malcolm^, Dallas^ & Mabel Patten
Thomas & Janet Paul

Pelfor Corporation
Alice Perry
Mrs. Bessie W. Phillips^
Pine Summit, LLC
Robert Poh
Timothy Poh
Gerald R. Putnam
Ring Brook
Barbara & David Roby
Rachel & Myron^ Rosenblum
Janice W. Sahler Trust
Rachel^ & Murray^ Sargent
Sharon & Duffy Sheehan
Patricia Sorento
Ralph^ & Mary Lou Spofford
Stanley Farm Association
Stanley Point Trust
Star Lake Properties, Inc.
Robert Stevens^
Linford E. & Mary Ellin Stiles
Bill & Betty Stockwell
Sugar River Savings Bank
Sandy Sonnichsen & Allen Howe
Town of Sunapee
Town of Sutton
Kit & Nancy Tatum
Libby Trayner^ Trust
V-Oz Asset Management Co., LLC,
Van O. Webb
R.H. Webb Forest Preserve, LLC,
Van O. Webb
Daniel H. Wolf Trust
Woods Without Gile
Marcia Wright
Sarah Yerkes
Marjorie Young^
Steven^ & Susan Youngs

^ denotes deceased

Layers of Planning: The Ausbon Sargent Conservation Plan Explained

by Andy Deegan

Ausbon Sargent's Conservation Plan is a document that is designed to guide our organization's future land protection efforts, providing clear priorities for which areas contain the most valuable conservation resources in our 12-town service area. Over the past year Ausbon Sargent's Conservation Plan subcommittee has worked to update our existing Conservation Plan. This effort involved working with GIS (geographic information system) map layers to determine which areas in our region have the most significant conservation values. Since we wrote the original plan in 2012, map layers that were used in the document have been updated and new layers have been created. These new individual layers were combined in a co-occurrence map that makes it easy to see areas of highest conservation value. The darker the area on the co-occurrence map, the more conservation resources present. In all, six layers were used in our Conservation Plan that represent key resources that we focus on conserving.

Conserved Lands

This layer is important because larger blocks of conservation land contain a greater diversity of habitats, and can support more species of wildlife. These larger conserved areas also enhance the protection of water resources and help keep local water systems clean. Therefore, the subcommittee concluded that adding more land to existing protected areas should be an important part of our conservation planning.

Unfragmented Lands

When there are sizeable areas of land that are not fragmented by roads or other types of development, wildlife are able to travel freely over longer distances, and species with larger territories, like bear and moose, can thrive. Larger blocks of intact forest also potentially allow for the migration of species due to a changing climate. Animals may migrate further north or to higher elevations as the planet warms, and unfragmented lands will allow for easier passage through their habitats.

Resiliency

Resilient lands can sustain their desired ecological functions, biodiversity, and critical landscape processes over time, under changing conditions, and despite multiple stressors and uncertainties including more severe weather events. In 2016, The Nature Conservancy mapped the most resilient lands in North America. To come up with this analysis they looked at distinct environments based on geology, soils, and elevation. They looked for areas with the greatest diversity of microclimates based on wetland density, topography, and elevation range, as well as areas that are highly connected by natural cover.

All the above data sets were combined to identify the places with the highest landscape diversity and local connectedness within each geophysical setting, in what amounts to an index of the land's resiliency. Connectivity allows for species to migrate with a changing climate, and diversity of habitats allows landscapes to recover quickly and more fully from disturbance, such as from extreme weather events. The subcommittee believed that, because these lands would allow for species migration and ecological recovery, this layer was an important addition to our conservation plan.

New Hampshire's Wildlife Action Plan (NH WAP)

The most recent update of the NH WAP (2020) used new data, methodologies, and public input to determine which species found in New Hampshire are in the greatest need of conservation as well as which habitats are at the greatest risk of being lost. With this information, NH Fish and Game created maps that rank wildlife habitat into three tiers: Highest Ranked Habitat in the State, Highest Ranked Habitat in the Biological Region, and Supporting Landscapes. These mapped areas help us understand where land protection efforts would have the greatest impact for protecting wildlife.

Soils

To have healthy forests and sustainable agriculture, trees and plants need suitable soils to grow in. Important soils for growing native trees, as well as agriculture soils ranging from prime soils to those of statewide and local importance were added to the co-occurrence map to help us identify conservation priorities in this realm.

Wetlands and Water Resources

Protection of the lands surrounding important aquatic resources is important to maintain clean water for wildlife, healthy ecosystems, and human use. Degradation of these aquatic systems could result in the loss of species that are not able to tolerate increased particulate matter or pollution. Water resources, which include our region's many lakes, ponds, rivers and streams, are often sources of local drinking water and are an important recreational resource that provides significant economic benefit to the region. Identification and protection of these water systems are therefore considered in our Conservation Plan.

A Conservation Plan is critical for helping Ausbon Sargent prioritize land protection efforts. When we reach out to landowners to see if they would like more information on land conservation, we want to focus on areas that have high conservation value. Thanks to these new and more detailed map layers, our newly updated Conservation Plan will help us to achieve land conservation goals for years to come!

Andy Deegan has been a Land Protection Specialist with Ausbon Sargent since 2008. He lives in New London with his wife and two children. In his free time, he enjoys birding, kayaking, hiking and generally being outside.

The Responsibility of **Conserving Land**



Volunteers from the Newbury Conservation Commission and ASLPT's Summer Stewardship Assistant, Glennie LeBarron, help install a new trailhead sign at Between the Mountains Preserve

by Anne Payeur

When Ausbon Sargent conserves a property, the commitment is forever, and planning is a necessity. Planning includes making sure adequate funds are set aside to steward and defend our conservation easements and properties we own. It also includes making plans to manage properties we own as well as connecting with landowners of easements and engage volunteers who help us monitor and steward our lands.

When Ausbon Sargent takes on the responsibility of owning a property, the staff writes a management plan within the first year of ownership, which covers the next ten years for the land. This plan identifies the property's conservation values, management goals, and identifies appropriate uses like forestry, agriculture, and/or recreation. The plan also outlines activities to achieve these goals for the ten-year timeframe. Plans are frequently reviewed and updated no more than ten years from when they were written. Goals and activities can include hiring a forester to conduct a forest inventory and write a management plan, making wildlife habitat improvements like annual mowing of fields, and trail construction or improvements working with contractors and volunteers.

Once a plan has been drafted, it's reviewed by the Stewardship Committee (experienced land management volunteers) and a summary is reviewed by the Board. Once approved, staff move forward budgeting for activities and working with partners to ensure goals are met.

The Cassey Brook Preserve is a recent example of a property where a management plan has been put into action. Since Ausbon Sargent became the landowner, the staff has written a management plan outlining the goals for the property, with one focus being recreation. Once the plan was in place, staff cleared and marked trails, trained two pairs of volunteers to help monitor the boundaries and trails, and partnered with the Wilmot Conservation Commission

to keep trails mowed in the summer. The plan also focused on wildlife and the maintenance of a patch of early successional wildlife habitat. This past summer the patch was mowed. Having cleared this area, young trees will start to grow again soon, creating a patch of new growth that wildlife will enjoy browsing upon for years to come. This mowing also served to maintain the view of Mount Kearsarge from the trail. In a few years when the new trees have grown up, it will be mowed down again to regenerate the food source for wildlife and the view for the people enjoying the trail.

Planning is an important part of stewardship and helps Ausbon Sargent reach our goals as landowners to improve forest health, encourage the maintenance of existing farmland, increase wildlife diversity, preserve quality of water resources, and keep lands open to the public for low impact pedestrian uses.

Anne Payeur has been with Ausbon Sargent for three years as the Stewardship Manager. She oversees the monitoring of conservation easement properties as well as the management of properties owned by Ausbon Sargent. She lives in Boscawen with her husband and son.

Stewardship Wish List

Each year, Ausbon Sargent is required to monitor over 160 protected properties, including land we own and land on which we hold easements. Along with monitoring we manage our own properties and trails with volunteers. Stewardship requires the use of tools and materials that either get used up each year or need replacement after years of use.

If you would like to help us with any items below, please send along a note with your donation or give us a call to let us know your intent. Gift certificates in any denomination to Rocky's Ace Hardware or Belletetes are also helpful to purchase tools and materials.

Pullerbear Grip XL to pull invasive plants out by the roots \$180

Cedar Birdhouse for habitat enhancement \$20

Trail Camera to monitor wildlife on owned properties \$375

Loppers and Rogue Hoes for volunteer trail projects \$200

Flagging and paint for volunteers to use while monitoring \$125

Please contact our

Stewardship Manager, Anne Payeur (apayeur@ausbonsargent.org) to get details on any of the above items, or other items we may need.

Thank you!

Some Protected Lands are "Sweeter" than Others

by Kristy Heath

Lots of different kinds of properties are protected by conservation easements. The Land Trust isn't just interested in lands with rural, lake or mountain views, or that help to protect a watershed. Many of Ausbon Sargent's easements protect a property's agricultural integrity. Farms, forests, and fields are protected to ensure that the soils (for fruits, vegetables, and timber) and other agricultural resources are not ruined by development. With these kinds of acres disappearing at an alarming rate, protection of them is paramount to local food availability and sustainability. Agricultural uses are permitted in an easement, which includes the production of agricultural products like fruits, vegetables, flowers, and hay. One of the sweetest of all the agricultural products harvested right here in our region is maple syrup. You may be interested to know how this production has been made possible over the years by landowners who own or work on Ausbon Sargent protected properties.



Visitors at the Cline sugarhouse, Andover

Lorraine Cline and her late husband Don, of Andover, donated a conservation easement on their 33.21 acres of land in 2010. Lorraine explained that they began sugaring together in 2005 and that Don had sugared a lot in his youth back in Ohio. She said that it had been "a family affair." In 2008, the Cline's syrup won second place in Yankee Magazine's Best Maple Syrup category, calling themselves "Wychwood Farm." Lorraine offered that a few years ago, they sold off their equipment as it grew increasingly difficult to balance the demanding, albeit short, sugaring season along with a day job.

Lorraine was happy to report that her daughter and son-in-law have recently replaced all the sap lines on the property. They plan to gather the sap on the easement property and boil it on their own property in Bow. She looks forward to helping the two of them with their production and enjoying the fruits of their labor!

In the town of Warner, Gerry Courser, whose family owns a combined 1,200 acres of protected property over seven different parcels, said maple sugar has been produced on their property for as long as he can remember.



Rhett Courser posing as "Sugar King" at the Courser sugarhouse, Warner

Gerry began making syrup in the 40's as a teenager, intrigued by his father who made it "to have something to put on his oatmeal in the morning." Gerry said he shares the tradition of sugaring with his brother, brother-in-law, and grandson who help with the 300-400 taps, and the many hours of boiling in the mid-late March timeframe when the sap is running. It is a family tradition which they share with the public in various markets in the area.

Gerry said maple weekend (or maple month, as it has expanded to in some towns) is a favorite time of year for his family. They love to welcome visitors to the sugarhouse, and answer questions about making syrup. He offered that protected land is important, and says he keeps a map of the Courser lands in the sugarhouse. The protected portions are highlighted, and he explains the map to visitors, showing them "those areas that will never be



Sugarhouse at Harding Hill Farm

developed.” Gerry added that having the maple trees on the property is good because “you may not need to use them all the time, but you know they’ll be there when you do.”

In the town of Sunapee, Harding Hill Farm is known for their maple syrup and their relatively new sugarhouse on Stagecoach Road, which sits on their conservation easement property. Tyler Webb, the third-generation farmer who manages the sugarhouse, in addition to being an arborist and helping with all facets of the family business, shared with us some background on sugaring at the farm.



Harding Hill Farm's sugarhouse on Stagecoach Road, Sunapee

Tyler noted that while the syrup production is done on the easement property, the sap is collected on other properties the family owns. This year, they will be using 7,000 taps (up from 2,500 last year) and will also be harvesting sap from a property the family owns in Wilmot. For the first time, they will also be purchasing sap from a friend in Newport. Tyler explained that sugaring began in 2020 at the new sugarhouse on Stagecoach Road but it is something he has done all his life, saying it is “in his blood.” In addition to his employees whom he is teaching to sugar, the farm welcomes groups of children from area daycares and elementary schools to come and learn how sap is transformed into syrup, aiming to get them “hooked” on the sweet stuff as quickly as possible! For anyone who has tasted maple syrup, you can agree that’s not a difficult task!

As you can see, a common thread among those who sugar is that it is something they’ve grown up doing, and oftentimes with their families. It is a skill that is usually passed down through the generations. Sugaring is a special time of year when, for a few weeks, members of the family draw together to create something unique that is loved by many. It’s a group effort and a bonding time for many. And it is the first time all winter that a sign of spring is in the air. Be sure to support your local sugarhouses this March when production is in full swing!

Pollinators: Preparing for Spring Emergence

*By Amy Highstrom,
Local Instructor for the NH Butterfly Monitoring Network*



*Gray Hairstreak,
Cassey Brook
Preserve*

The little decisions we make as landowners/gardeners to ensure food for pollinators is available, even for one mating couple, can ensure the continuation of common species we enjoy. If you are preparing for any gardening or land management adventures next season, there are a few considerations you could take in support of our species.

- Maintain early successional forest habitat “on the edges” of forests.
- Leave alone some “waste/weedy areas” you might be tempted to beautify.
- Allow an area of grassy yard to get tall and let the clovers, vetches, and forbes go to flower and seed.
- If choosing new plants, consider open flower heads easily accessible with varied heights.
- Avoid use of toxic sprays and poisons.
- Learn what butterflies you currently have as “regulars.” Why are they there? What plants are they using? Can you keep them there for a full life cycle by just adding one or two types of plants or encouraging additional growth of the plants you have?
- Consider joining the Lake Sunapee Butterfly Club to learn your local species to help you make decisions specific to your property and hear about what others are doing on their own.

Ausbon Sargent, in partnership with NH Fish and Game Nongame and Endangered Wildlife Program, welcomed volunteer butterfly monitors of the Lake Sunapee Butterfly Club, a local chapter of the newly formed New Hampshire Butterfly Monitoring Network, onto locally protected properties to collect initial baseline data of species in July of 2022. Data collection will be done annually in July. If you would like to participate, you are asked to attend the monthly adult instructional ID sessions at Tracy Memorial Library in New London beginning in January and continuing through July. For more information, contact local instructor Amy Highstrom at: amy.highstrom@gmail.com

A Family Tie to the Land Trust

by Kristy Heath

Sometimes, members of the Land Trust will enclose a little note of thanks or a bit of information with their donation that they think we might find helpful or interesting. This past fall, we received such a letter written by Ausbon Sargent's great-nephew, Robert Meader. He recounts his memories of coming to New London to visit his Uncle Ausbon as a young boy:

As a boy growing up on a farm in Westport MA, vacations as a whole family were rare since the cows don't milk themselves. So, when my father could find someone who could do the milking for a day or two, we would set off to New London. These were wonderous trips through towns with names that became familiar over time like Tyngsborough, Henniker, Contoocook, Boscawen, and Sutton. Anticipation growing with each name as I learned they all were a partial answer to the question "Are we there yet?"

Early memories involved staying at Uncle Ausbon and Aunt Katherine's cottage at Pleasant Lake. Later I believe we stayed at his house on Main Street next to the red playhouse. I remember something about his garage door opening mechanism which he had modified and bing there in the winter with lots of snow.

Our grandson now sleeps in a bed frame that Uncle Ausbon made, and I use several of his daughter Lois's hand tools in my timber frame hobby. I am a member of our town's Open Space Committee which works with Wildlands Trust, and as a result of reading in Chatter about all the actities Ausbon Sargent conducts, I am now supporting this local Trust as well.

Over the years New London has changed as the area has become more developed so your efforts to preserve some of the open areas is commendable, and I hope to continue to support Ausbon Sargent Land Preservation Trust.



Ausbon Sargent's daughter Lois



Ausbon W. Sargent
the namesake of
The Ausbon Sargent
Land Preservation Trust
Lived in this house from
1930 - 1988

Ausbon Sargent's home on Main Street, and the plaque that is affixed to it.

Calendar of UPCOMING EVENTS



Our calendar of events for 2023 is still coming together.

Visit our website for up-to-date information. Here's what we've got so far:

February 12, 1-4 pm:

Snowshoe/XC Ski Event @ Star Lake Farm, Springfield

March 1, 1-4 pm:

Snowshoe/XC Ski Event @ Courser Farm, Warner

Leaving a Legacy

by Kristy Heath

Unfortunately over the past year, Ausbon Sargent has had several of its members pass away. A couple were members of the Acorn Society, which means they had informed us of the land trust's inclusion in their wills. Some named the Land Trust as the recipient of memorial gifts in lieu of flowers, and some did both. Another individual included the land trust in their will, unbeknownst to us.

Every one of these individuals, in his/her own way, provided gifts to Ausbon Sargent that contributed to a legacy that will live on forever. Whether it was as a member of the land trust who faithfully sent a yearly donation, a conservation easement monitor, a committee or board member, or a combination of these things, each individual had their own place for Ausbon Sargent and its mission in their lives. The passion for the land and their understanding that their support, in time and/or money, made a difference, spilled over into their last wishes. We feel honored that our organization and the work we do is thought of so highly by so many. This is a testament to the value of the land trust to those in our region.

Although not required, we would love to know if you have made provisions for the land trust in your will. As is true with all donations to Ausbon Sargent, your anonymity is promised if you so wish. Any questions you may have about the Acorn Society and the many ways you can leave a lasting legacy with the land trust, can be directed to Executive Director, Debbie Stanley by calling the office or emailing: dstanley@ausbonsargent.org

Giving to Ausbon Sargent through your IRA

By Diane Robbins, Trustee

Over the past few years, there's been no shortage of ways to give to charity. And there's a special tax break for retirees who transfer funds from individual retirement accounts (IRAs). While the maneuver doesn't provide a charitable deduction, you may see other significant tax benefits, financial experts say.

For many people, you may be better off doing this as your first source of charitable giving. The primary benefit of giving through your IRA is that the transfer doesn't count as taxable income. Since fewer Americans itemize deductions, it can be difficult to claim a write-off for charitable gifts. While most people don't make charitable donations solely because of the tax breaks, this might be the right choice for you. Please check with your financial advisor about the best choice for you.

Key points:

- You must be 72 or older (70 ½ if you turned 70 ½ in 2019).
- You will not need to pay income taxes on the withdrawal that is a gift.
- Your gift can satisfy the required minimum distribution for the year.
- Be sure to notify ASLPT of your intended gift so they can be on the lookout for it and record the gift accordingly.

A Special Celebration

About every five years, the land trust hosts a gathering for individuals who have provided for Ausbon Sargent in a significant way. Those who are invited have contributed as a major donor, have donated a conservation easement, have made an outright gift of land, or are part of the Acorn Society (which means they have named ASLPT in their wills).



This year's celebration coincided with Ausbon Sargent's 35th anniversary and was held mid-July at the beautiful Dexter's Inn in Sunapee. Ledyard Bank sponsored the event, helping to pay for the delicious food and drink. The venue, as well as the staff time, was donated by the owners of Dexter's Inn. The weather was perfect, the location was beautiful, and the company was delightful! Over 130 supporters were present, and it really did seem like a good time was had by all!



If you have already named the Ausbon Sargent

Land Preservation Trust

in your estate plan and

would like to become

a member of

The Acorn Society,

please let us know.

If you would like more information,

feel free to call the

Ausbon Sargent office at

603-526-6555

or email

dstanley@ausbonsargent.org

Members who prefer

not to be recognized

can remain anonymous.



The individuals listed below have notified us that they have provided for Ausbon Sargent in their estate plans.

Mr. and Mrs. James D. Abbott[^]
 Anonymous (13)
 Rich and Heidi Anderson
 Theodore D. Bacon, Jr.[^]
 Kathy and David Bashaw
 David and Brenda Beardsley
 Ann Bemis[^]
 Seth Benowitz
 Catherine Bogardus[^]
 David and Pamela Carle
 Roland P. Carreker[^]
 Michael and Susan Chiarella
 Naia L. Conrad[^]
 Emma Crane
 Chris and Janice Cundey
 Rick Davies
 Tim and Lorraine Davis
 Joe[^] and Laurie DiClerico
 Neil Donnenfeld
 Barbara Faughnan
 John and Maggie Ford
 Cotton Cleveland and John Garvey
 Gerard and Jane Gold
 George Green
 Tom and Marilyn Hill
 Alan T. Jones[^]
 Dr. Charles Kane[^]
 David Karrick
 Doug[^] and Nancy[^] Lyon
 Andrew J. McDonald[^]
 Dave and Bev Payne
 Alan Peterson
 Rachel and Myron[^] Rosenblum
 John and Sage Scott
 John and Nancy Denny Solodar
 Virginia Anthony Soule[^]
 Peter and Debbie Stanley
 Nathaniel Stevens
 Pat Thornton[^]
 John Tilson
 Libby Trayner[^]
 Eric Unger[^]
 Betsy Denny Warner
 Mary-Seymour "Sissy" Westcoat[^]
 Ruth White[^]

[^]denotes deceased



71 Pleasant Street
P.O. Box 2040
New London
New Hampshire
03257-2040
603.526.6555

STAFF

(Front - left to right)

Susie Moore,
Bookkeeper

Deborah Stanley,
Executive Director

Anne Payeur,
Stewardship Manager

(Back - left to right)

Jen Deasy,
Operations Manager

Andy Deegan,
Land Protection Specialist

Kristy Heath,
Development &
Communications Coordinator



OFFICERS

Chair: **Lisa Andrews**
Vice-Chair: **Bob Zeller**
Secretary: **Susan Ellison**
Treasurer: **Mike Quinn**

TRUSTEES

Aimee Ayers
Chuck Bolduc
Laurie DiClerico
Ginny Gwynn
Jeff Hollinger
Deborah Lang
Russ Moore
Diane Robbins
Steve Root

Special Thanks to all of our guest authors!

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Echo Communications, Inc. prints the Chatter Newsletter on FSC certified, 100% post-consumer recycled paper that is processed chlorine free. The paper is manufactured using renewable biogas energy. The printing process uses soy offset inks in an alcohol-free press environment.

Won't you become a Member?

Won't you join us and become part of the living legacy created through land conservation?

You can find out more about us on our website at: ausbonsargent.org

Please make checks payable to: **Ausbon Sargent** and mail to: **P.O. Box 2040, New London, NH 03257-2040**

or make your secure donation on the Ausbon Sargent website or over the phone at: **603.526.6555**

- \$10,000+ Ausbon Sargent Society
- \$5,000+ Legacy Circle
- \$2,500+ Leadership Circle
- \$1,000+ Benefactor
- \$500+ Patron
- \$250+ Steward
- \$150+ Protector
- \$60+ Advocate
- Other \$ _____



Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

Donations to Ausbon Sargent are tax deductible as provided by Section 170 of the Internal Revenue Code. 02/2023

