

A land trust conserving ribbons of green in southeastern New Hampshire.



BEAR-PAW PRINT

ALLENSTOWN · BARNSTEAD · CANDIA · DEERFIELD · EPSOM · HOOKSETT · NORTHWOOD · NOTTINGHAM · PITTSFIELD · RAYMOND · STRAFFORD

About Us

For over 25 years, Bear-Paw has been cultivating a resilient network of wild and working lands to sustain connections across communities of people, plants, and wildlife.

Bear-Paw works to conserve unfragmented open space through partnerships with private landowners, towns, and local, state, and federal organizations. We do this primarily through holding conservation easements, which allow for agriculture, forest management, and recreation while limiting subdivision and development.

We envision a region in which our communities and lands are diverse and thriving, people are nourished by their connection to the outdoors and each other, and we are collectively stewarding the wild and working lands for future generations.

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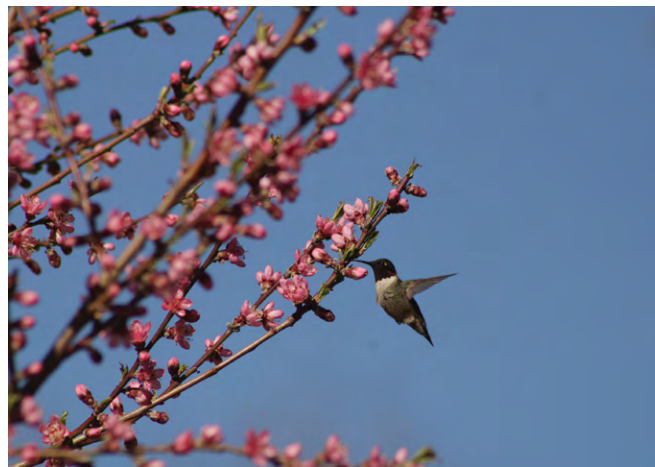
Seasonal Notes

“Textbook dead” is the best way to describe our peach buds this year. There is absolutely no ambiguity between what the state extension services identify as a non-viable fruit bud and those that are on our trees (we dissected a few). Our backyard orchard is not unique; farmers across the northeast are reporting likely losses due to a combination of fluctuating temperatures and the low temperatures that exceeded the cold hardiness of many varieties. In Alabama the winter weather has had a similar effect on future harvest but this time due to lack of cold, as fruit trees require a certain number of winter

“chilling hours” and their regional temperatures often didn’t get low enough.

As any gardener knows, plants are complicated. It’s not just the weather and conditions during the growing season that have an effect but also dormancy patterns, timing of pruning, first and last frost dates, and everything in between. And just like humans, plants acclimate.

The temperatures preceding an extreme



Peach blossoms from last season. K. AMARAL

cold snap can have just as much effect on survivability as the actual cold temperature itself (*Penn State Extension Tree Fruit Cold Hardiness – Pruning Effects*).

So if you’ve been feeling like you never got acclimated to this past winter with its fluctuating temperatures, unpredictable storms, and shocking cold snaps, you are not alone. Plants and animals feel it too. As we move into the next seasonal shift, welcoming migratory birds, more sunlight, and new blooms, it brings up the question of: how do we find rhythm in a changing world?

The answer, according to science, is to spend time outside and find support in community.

At Bear-Paw we work to provide opportunities for both, conserving wild and working lands for you to explore and supporting our community of outdoor-loving folks. We’re also adapting, as an organization entering its 28th year, to ensure that we remain successful for decades to come.

Hopefully, there are some beneficial side-effects to the cold snap. Invasive pests like hemlock woolly adelgid cannot survive sustained below-zero temperatures. The spotted lanternfly, which has been making news reports in mid-Atlantic states and is the next problem invasive for our fruit crops and trees, can’t survive below 10 degrees.

Note from the Chair

Change can be unsettling, but it can also be glorious. A gray spring day can turn into a dazzle of sun sparking off a rumbling brook when clouds blow off.

I see many signs that the transitions at Bear-Paw will turn out like a bright spring day.

Last November the Bear-Paw board of directors held a strategic planning meeting. An important outcome was the crafting of new mission, vision and values statements (see page 5). I'm excited about the focus on community, sustainability and connections, because it's the strong relationships Bear-Paw has nurtured with our members, donors and the land itself that will help us thrive through changes.

Katrina has done a stellar job in managing the growth of Bear-Paw to a three person organization. It's always difficult to lose a respected and valued Executive Director, but the board is engaged in a thorough search and hiring process that will bring another leader to Bear-Paw who will be as effective and engaging as Katrina.

Rue Teel's departure for graduate school created an opportunity for Katrina to rethink how best to use staff positions to get the work of Bear-Paw done. The new Operations Coordinator Leslie Randall will strengthen administrative skills among the staff team.

The spring also brings a transition in board members and board officers. While we have to say good-bye to outgoing board members Jeff Kantorowski, Hal Kreider and Mimi Jost, they'll continue to contribute to Bear-Paw's work through committees.

After two years as Chairperson, I'll move out of that role in April. But I'm confident the incoming officers are all fully capable of leading the board and keeping us on track to continue our mission-driven work. And now that I won't be facilitating board meetings, I'll be able to knit. That's a change that will make me happy.

Best regards,

Grace Mattern, Board Chair

Welcome our New Board Members!

Kelly Dwyer • Hooksett

As a naturalist and educator, I love to connect people of all ages with our natural world, to experience the joys and benefits for our physical and emotional wellbeing. I believe what we come to understand and value, we are motivated to preserve and protect.

For me, Bear-Paw embraces this philosophy and works to ensure we have a variety of habitats protected for wildlife and all of us.



Phil Auger • Strafford

This is my second "tour of duty" and I'm really pleased to be on the board of directors again. There have been a lot of changes in the organization, land trust work and the region that Bear-Paw works in but our mission has stayed the course of time and has never been more on target. I look forward to dealing with the challenges ahead and only see great promise in our future.

Chris Doyle • Nottingham

Chris always came away from Bear-Paw events with a renewed appreciation for the natural beauty of our area, and admiration for Bear-Paw staff and volunteers. She has also served as an easement monitor for a number of years.

Since retirement, Chris has had more time to roam the woods, try to identify birds and wildlife, and generally enjoy our beautiful state with husband Steve and Sadie the wild German Shepherd. She is thrilled and honored to be part of the Bear-Paw Board and assist with the important work of conserving wild and working lands in southeastern NH.



Join Bear-Paw for our Spring & Summer Events!

Please pre-register for all events at www.bear-paw.org/events.html, or by calling the office at (603) 463-9400.

Farm & Forest Expo

Friday, May 5 & Saturday, May 6 •
Deerfield Fairgrounds, Deerfield

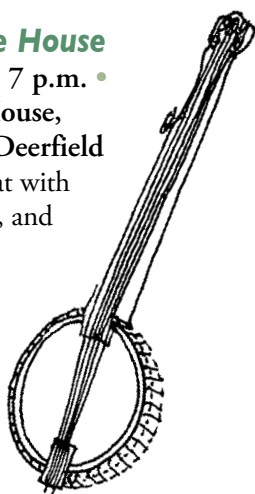
Visit Bear-Paw's booth at the NH Farm & Forest Expo – now hosted in May at the Deerfield Fairgrounds!

nhfarmandforestexpo.org

Deerfield Coffee House

Saturday, May 27 • 7 p.m. •
Deerfield Coffee House,
10 Church Street, Deerfield

A local favorite – chat with friends, enjoy snacks, and listen to wonderful music all while benefiting land conservation!



NH Gives

June 6 & 7 • Online at nhgives.org

An online initiative of the NH Charitable Foundation, NH Gives is a statewide 24-hour online fundraising event that is designed to build community, connect donors to local nonprofits and generate excitement about the nonprofit sector.

Follow Bear-Paw's monthly e-newsletter for up-to-date event announcements!

For nature-based
kid's activities and
outdoor educational
resources, visit our website!
We have compiled a list
of resources for kids
of all ages.

Forest Bathing

You probably spend a lot of time in the woods. And for a lot of folks, simply spending time outside is therapeutic. But forest bathing, a deliberately mindful practice that has its roots in the Japanese custom of shinrin-yoku, is meant to engage all of your senses and create a meditative experience. Bear-Paw is fortunate to collaborate with a number of forest bathing practitioners who are qualified to guide you in forest immersion. Keep an eye out for events this summer to get you aligned with the woods and your thoughts.



Woods conference. J. LINDSEY

Magical.

That's the most common adjective used to describe Al Jaeger's 170-acre property in Deerfield.

Accessed by a narrow, winding driveway, you spend your time trying not to drive off the packed dirt as you pass by a wildflower meadow, rock walls that resemble art installations, carefully planted native shrubs, and beautifully managed forest. The driveway is just the beginning of a property that has been cared for and cultivated by Al for decades. Hand-lettered wooden signs direct you to parking areas, The Overlook, Piano Point, and other notable features. The trail network has been developed mostly on old skid roads from past and recent logging. Timber harvests on this property are the result of thoughtful, frequent conversations between Al and Jake Bronnenberg, a logger and licensed forester who has completed the most recent timber harvests.

As you walk the trails and gardens, you stumble across pottery that Al has tucked into stone nooks or perched on

rocks, including miniature clay houses so entrenched in the landscape that they are growing lichen. (The land hosts a community kiln maintained and used by the NH Potters' Guild.) The gardens are spectacular thanks to a distinct green thumb and Al's determination to win the battle against the local porcupines.

But even beyond the beauty and artistry that you see, Al's property feels like an invitation to be yourself and to spend time outside. It's what draws so many people to the land and *Bear-Paw is extraordinarily grateful that Al intends to bequest his property to Bear-Paw as a future headquarters location.*

It is the perfect space to call home while creating a region in which our communities and lands are diverse and thriving, people are nourished by their connection to the outdoors and each other, and we are collectively stewarding the wild and working lands for future generations.

Story continued on page 5.



An aerial view of Al's property.

The Board and staff crafted this new vision statement during a strategic planning session in fall 2022 under the guidance of Susan Arnold and Frank Mitchell. We also updated our mission statement to reflect what we've learned over the last 28 years as an organization.

Al's vision for the property – from timber harvests to his commitment to gifting the land to Bear-Paw – is one that includes change. He has said that he doesn't want his property to be a shrine to him, where future stewards are afraid to make changes. So we may make changes but we promise to maintain the sense of community and joy that this property gifts to everyone who visits.

A note from Al:

About 50 years ago I pushed some flat stones into a ledge to make a bench. This is the place where I come to think, to "ponder".

At that time, Great Brook dried up every summer. Then beavers came to our part of NH and dammed 20 acres upstream. The dam leaks of course, so now this vigorous brook at my feet passes through a dramatic gorge just before here then meanders into a 50 acre marsh [Bear-Paw's Burbank Woods Preserve]. Because of the beavers there are fish, mosses, ferns, pond lilies, moose, fisher cats, raptors, Blanding's turtles, and all the marvelous interrelationships and connections which make this a small paradise.

The human connections are also here.

Starting at the beaver pond at the top, the brook flows over five privately owned parcels, a Deerfield Town forest, and a Bear-Paw Preserve. They are all in conservation easement. A path, open to the public (that is, YOU) traverses the whole four miles.

It took a few years of snowshoes and hot chocolate to put it all together in the neighborhood. It also took the Deerfield Conservation Commission, the state LCIP and LCHIP programs, and Bear-Paw to negotiate grants, surveys, deeds, and stewardship funds. I left the Bear-Paw Board of Directors in 2021 – to make space for new leaders – but you can still find me at the stone bench. Sit for a while and ponder connectivity with me.



The vigorous brook.

Bear-Paw's Mission

To cultivate a resilient network of wild and working lands to sustain connections across communities of people, plants, and wildlife.

Bear-Paw's Values

- We intentionally build community. We value relationships among all Bear-Paw members, board and staff. We encourage a deep and loving relationship with the land.
- We work together in a spirit of friendship and inclusion. We recognize the importance of joy and creativity in our collective commitment to our mission and appreciate the unique gifts that each member of our community brings to our work.
- We maintain flexibility in our work. We rely on informed knowledge, from Indigenous principles to scientific studies to promote resilience of natural and human communities.




Connect with Bear-Paw


Did you know? You can connect with Bear-Paw throughout the year! We use e-newsletters and social media to keep our members updated in a world that changes more rapidly than the schedule of this bi-annual print newsletter.

- Website: www.bear-paw.org

- Monthly e-newsletters: sign up on our website

- Follow us on social media

 Facebook: Bear-Paw Regional Greenways

 Instagram: @bearpawregionalgreenways



Board OF DIRECTORS

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Hooksett	Kelly Dwyer
Northwood	Dana Hochgraf, Secretary
	Grace Mattern
	Susan Romano, Treasurer
Nottingham	Chris Doyle
Raymond	Dennis Garnham
Strafford	Phil Auger
	Paul Eaton, Vice Chair
	Mimi Jost

STAFF

Katrina Amaral, Executive Director
Kaitlin Deyo, Land Protection Project Manager
Leslie Randall, Operations Coordinator

ILLUSTRATIONS

Al Jaeger

Conservation Success!

Geraldine Mathews and Julius Rossé Conservation Easement

In 1974, Geraldine's friend and neighbor, Madeline Lindsay, donated land to the town for the purposes of conservation and recreation. Now a ballfield and Town Forest, these properties have benefited the community – they also inspired Geraldine to conserve her own land. Geraldine's 20-acre farm abuts the Lindsay-Flanders Town Forest, sharing the Nichol's Brook and contributing to wildlife connectivity and water quality in the Lamprey River watershed. The easement is named after Geraldine and her father, who she requested be recognized. Many thanks to the Town of Deerfield Conservation Fund for supporting this project. The easement prioritizes agricultural uses, honoring the farmland soils and recent history of the property.

Bloomfield Conservation Easement

Every conservation project has at least one unexpected obstacle but encountering part of a property that was mistakenly acquired by the town, returned, but not updated on the tax maps was out of the ordinary, even for an easement project. We are happy to report that, thanks to Eric and Krista Bloomfield's patience, these 104 acres in Epsom were recently conserved. The property abuts a Harkness Easement, conserved by Bear-Paw in 2009. The entire area contains a large wetland complex enjoyed by moose and other wildlife and is identified as a region of high climate resilience. It also likely acts as a primary corridor between Bear Brook State Park and the large block of contiguous forest surrounding Fort Mountain. Many thanks to the landowners, Merrimack Conservation Partnership, and the Madison Fund via the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation for supporting this project.



Winter beaver meadow. K. AMARAL

Staff Transitions

by Debbie Liskow

We had a few staff changes announced in a short amount of time this past winter and it's a testament to our current staff and your support that Bear-Paw is in such a good place to handle these transitions. We have done a lot of work to ensure that staff changes and Board turnover is more of a seasonal shift than an extreme weather event:

Katrina Amaral is stepping down as Executive Director of Bear-Paw Regional Greenways in May. As much as Katrina loves Bear-Paw – its mission and everyone she has worked with – she's ready to take on new challenges and create a work life that includes more time outdoors and taps into her passions for sustainable forestry and community-based rural economies.

Katrina has been an exceptional leader for Bear-Paw, and while the Board is sorry to lose her, we're thoroughly grateful for all she made possible in her three and a half years as Executive Director. Her accomplishments include:

- Overseeing 536 acres protected through conservation easements.
- Acquisition of another 681 acres through gifts and partnership collaborations.
- Creating a talented and dedicated staff team to achieve Bear-Paw's mission.
- Building databases and internal systems to streamline the operations of Bear-Paw.
- Working with the Board to expand our membership and fundraising capacity.
- Establishing new partnerships and advancing diversity, equity and inclusion work.
- Exceptional leadership through the turmoil of the pandemic, managing to keep Bear-Paw operating and connected to members through uncertain times.

The Board is also grateful for Katrina's six-month notice, which gave us the opportunity to do a thorough and thoughtful search for our next Executive Director – we had many exceptional candidates apply and are looking forward to introducing the next leader of this wonderful organization.

Rue Teel, Bear-Paw's Stewardship Coordinator, was accepted to the UNH Forestry Master's program. While she had always been planning to pursue a master's degree, however, the opportunity to start this January was thoroughly unexpected. We are very excited for her and grateful that she is willing to continue contracting with Bear-Paw for a few months in order to wrap up some stewardship projects.



Katrina and Rue.

During her time at Bear-Paw, Rue has streamlined the easement monitoring volunteer program, created stewardship plans and management protocols, coordinated volunteer trail work efforts, and updated miles of boundary lines. She has also been instrumental in engaging with our communities throughout the pandemic, compiling nature education materials for kids and establishing the now annual Haunted Hunt event.

In order to improve administrative consistency, project support, and build on Rue's work with volunteers, Bear-Paw hired an Operations Coordinator. Leslie Randall started in March and she is already proving to be an invaluable member of the team.

Introducing Leslie:

Leslie Randall was looking for a job that aligned with her passion for land conservation when she saw the notice for Bear-Paw's Operations Coordinator.

Originally from Ohio, Leslie fell in love with working the land while studying abroad in New Zealand. After graduation, she took internships on farms in Vancouver, Canada, Pennsylvania, and Virginia, even meeting her future husband on a flower farm where they both were employed.

Previous to their move to New Hampshire, Leslie and her husband were living in Shepherdstown, West Virginia, owning and running Green Gate Farm, a family farm serving CSAs and Farmers' Markets. In the eight years of this work, they saw row houses and developments creeping onto nearby fields. Making matters worse, a factory that produces housing insulation (likely to endanger the area's waters) was built five miles from their farm. When her husband was offered a job working with draft horses at Sanborn Mills Farm in Loudon, they jumped at the chance.

For the past two years Leslie has had a full-time job as mother to her three-year old son and seven month old daughter. In coming to Bear-Paw, she is ready to use her management skills honed in running the family farm business. As much as she likes working outside on a farm, her strong suit is handling details and people to make programs and events run smoothly. She likes being on the back-end and seeing a successful follow-through.

When asked about relocating from West Virginia to New Hampshire, Leslie said, "There is a different mindset here. People care about clean water in lakes. They are not careless toward the environment. People want to take care of their space." And so we welcome Leslie Randall to Bear-Paw.



Timber Harvest Update – Great Marsh

As of March 31st, the timber harvest at Bear-Paw's Great Marsh Preserve had wrapped up and we are excited to watch how the forest responds to this restoration thinning. The goals of the operation were to benefit a previously over-harvested forest; thinning overcrowded trees and allowing more light to the forest floor while maintaining the unique Appalachian dry oak ecosystem. The loggers left slash on their skid roads, which is perfect for recycling nutrients back into the soil and for deterring ATVs. The harvest was conducted over the winter – a season of dormancy and (usually) frozen ground conditions – in order to mitigate soil and wildlife impacts.

If you are exploring the Chester Turnpike in Hooksett, there is also a timber harvest happening on lands adjacent to Bear-Paw properties. This work is not affiliated with Bear-Paw's forestry operations.

Partnerships

Conservation doesn't happen without community! As part of our efforts to cultivate a network of wild and working lands across the region, Bear-Paw staff members participate in regional and national efforts to support the conservation community.

Land Trust Alliance Accreditation:

Bear-Paw has been an accredited member of the LTA, the national organization that helps advance change and increase the impact of land conservation, since 2018. We are currently in the process of being re-accredited, continuing our commitment to national quality standards as an organization.



Great Bay 2030: A collaborative partnership to promote clean water, accessible lands, habitat, climate resiliency, and engaged communities within the Great Bay watershed. Half of Bear-Paw's region falls within the Great Bay watershed and our staff participate in focus groups and initiatives to develop strategy for land protection efforts.

Community Outreach: from local Rotary Club presentations to UNH Alumni roundtables, Bear-Paw staff enjoy engaging with our communities to spread the word about Bear-Paw and the work we are doing!

NH Land Trust Coalition: The NHLTC works to strengthen the voice of land trusts in the legislature and public agencies on issues of direct interest to land conservation. Bear-Paw's Executive Director has been serving on the NHLTC's Board of Directors and Policy committee.



NEW HAMPSHIRE
LAND TRUST
COALITION



Thinking About Your Legacy?

Consider including Bear-Paw in your estate planning and join the other members of our *Leaving Tracks* society who want to make a difference for tomorrow.

Isobel Parke's bequest, which we received in 2020, continues to make a positive impact on Bear-Paw's mission. Her generosity allowed us the financial breathing room to propel the organization forward, including hiring Kaitlin Deyo as a dedicated Land Protection Project Manager and investing in improved kiosks and signage.

Bear-Paw invites anyone who has made similar plans to speak with Executive Director Katrina Amaral.

Bear-Paw Supporters 2022

Bear-Paw thanks all of its donors, partners, and volunteers for their incredible support. Our success in land conservation is a true community effort.

\$5,000+

ANNE YOUNG AND STETSON AMES
BOB COTE
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Did you know?

**Black flies
are a sign of clean,
healthy stream
ecosystems!**

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continued...

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ALNOBA



Magical. – page 4

Conservation Success! – page 6

See our Events on page 3!

Projects in Progress

Bear-Paw is actively working on 326 acres of conservation projects, including many that will preserve farms and farmland in our region. These working lands are an important part of our food systems and rural economies, creating thriving spaces for people and the wildlife that rely on non-forested habitats (like bobolink).




Coveland Farm, Strafford.

Wildlife Habitat *Land Protection* UPDATE

Land under Bear-Paw
easements **8,421 acres**
Bear-Paw Preserves
(owned land) **2,519 acres**
Total land protected **10,940 acres**

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