

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



BEAR-PAW PRINT

NEWS & INFORMATION ABOUT BEAR-PAW REGIONAL GREENWAYS

MEMBER TOWNS CANDIA DEERFIELD EPSOM NORTHWOOD NOTTINGHAM RAYMOND STRAFFORD

Our

MISSION

Bear-Paw Regional Greenways is a land trust established by resident volunteers who are concerned about the loss of open space lands. Bear-Paw envisions a series of greenways comprised of private and public lands that connect large conservation areas. Protection of this land network will safeguard important wildlife habitat and travel routes; surface waters, groundwater, and wetlands; scenic resources and recreational opportunities.

Bear-Paw is committed to ensuring that the region's most important natural features continue to be available for future generations and is working to accomplish this goal through landowner outreach, education, land protection, community assistance and partnerships.

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Unique Natural Features

A Waltz With Fire in Bear Brook State Park

by Eric Orff

Fish and Game biologist Ed Robinson's face and neck appeared hot and sunburned. It was not the fire of the sky but the fire of scorched earth that had transformed his boyish face into a reddened sweating orb as he danced with flames consuming the brush, grass, blueberry bushes and solitary white pines in Bear Brook State Park on an early morning in April.



PHOTO BY ERIC ORFF

Ed and other bold members of the state's "Fire Crew" actually start fires or "prescribed burns" each spring to manage important wildlife habitat in areas like Bear Brook State Park. The "burns", which take place only under certain weather conditions, are conducted to maintain important habitat for a host of wildlife species, especially those that feed, nest or use open areas in the forest. Prescribed

burning is used to achieve specific goals for habitat management at each site. In Bear Brook fire is used to maintain the few forest openings remaining in the park. It is one of many management tools that wildlife experts use to maintain the

health and wealth of habitat in the park.

Controlling a prescribed burn means literally dancing with

fire. Usually it is a steady waltz, but sometimes an unexpected breeze, picks up the tempo! A fire devil may twirl and race down the fire line, like a pair of polka dancers at a wedding. Surprising, yet inspiring, it whirls. In Bear Brook, fire is literally weaved around the small openings in the white pine forest. The sandy soil and dry conditions necessary to burn the

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Bear Brook State Park History and Highlights

by Laura Bonk and Carol Martel

Bear Brook State Park, with 9,500 acres, is the second largest state park in New Hampshire. It is comprised of the most significant contiguous tracts of conserved open space in southeastern New Hampshire and is the primary component of one of the largest undeveloped blocks of open space in the Bear-Paw region. The park acreage lies within four towns: 6,564 in Allenstown, 1,938 in Deerfield, 793 in Hooksett, and 290 in Candia.

While the park is recognized as a critical area of wildlife habitat within the Bear-Paw

Region, the park has an interesting and little known history. The first 413 acres were purchased in 1916 and named Bear Brook State Forest. Significant portions were acquired by the federal government and transferred to the state between 1916 and 1943. The remainder was acquired by the state through gifts of land, condemnations, and exchanges.

The park reflects land use history in this corner of New Hampshire. Between the trees

Where's the map?

See updated map in Fall newsletter!

Continued on page 3

A Note

FROM THE CHAIR

Happy Spring everyone!

As you get out to enjoy the warm weather and open spaces, please join us for a spring outing. You'll have the opportunity to visit local conservation lands and learn about activities that are going on in local natural communities in this season. Bear-Paw's volunteer guides have great knowledge

and enthusiasm to share.

Speaking of volunteers... would you like to volunteer with Bear-Paw?

We have a variety of opportunities for all levels of interest and could really use your help!



Cody Cramer

Last winter we completed a Strategic Plan. This effort resulted in a plan

of priority activities for the year ahead. As we get to work, we are looking to engage a variety of volunteers to successfully accomplish the plan's goals.

Volunteers can get directly involved in Bear-Paw's education and outreach projects; monitor conservation easements; help organize and run outings, educational and fun events; write articles for or edit the newsletter, contribute to the website, assist with membership, write grants, and work on land protection projects.

If you would like to get more involved in Bear-Paw, we would like to talk to you about your areas of interest and add you to our list of volunteer contacts.

Become a Bear-Paw Volunteer and make a difference by conserving land close to home!

My Best Regards,

Cody Cramer

Cody Cramer
Board Chair

Two New Conservation Easements

Bock Easement

Dina and Peter Bock contacted Bear-Paw in the summer of 2002 to explore conservation options for their historic farm and forestland on Nielson Road in Nottingham. Director, Susan Zankel and Nottingham board member, Mark West, were introduced to the property with a tour of the organic farm, forest, historic home,



Conservation easement donors Dina and Peter Bock, with Al Jaeger (right) at our Annual Meeting.

adjacent wetlands and farmland. The Bock family and Bear-Paw were motivated to conserve the land because of its rich mix of natural resources, wildlife habitat and proximity to a large block of unfragmented land within the Bear-Paw Region.

The generous donation of this 16.3 acre conservation easement protects wetlands, and prime farmland soils, as well as agricultural and forestry uses. It also saves scenic values by protecting over 380 feet of undeveloped road frontage and the summit of Cooper Hill, one of the highest hills in Nottingham.

Cramer Easement

Bear-Paw has gratefully accepted the donation of a conservation easement on an additional 12.72 acres from Cody Cramer on his property on Ham Road in Raymond. The easement protects valuable fields, forest, and wildlife habitat. The acreage under this easement expands and enhances an area of approximately 246 acres of already protected land adjacent to the property, including the 153 acres of land protected through Cramer's easement donation to Bear-Paw in 1999. This project continues to link open space and habitat by permanently protecting key lands within Bear-Paw's proposed greenway. 🐾

Vernal Pool Walk

by Eric Orff

Matt Tarr, Coop. Ext. wildlife biologist and Bear-Paw volunteer, led over 20 folks on the first annual Bear-Paw Peeper Peep and Walk to vernal pools in Deerfield and Pawtuckaway State Park. The evening offered a great opportunity for residents, families, Bear-Paw members and wildlife enthusiasts to learn about these seasonal pools and their temporary residents. Vernal pools are critical habitats where each spring many of New Hampshire's hidden frogs and salamanders mate and lay eggs.

What did we see? With Matt's keen eye and guidance, the group witnessed thousands of comma-sized tree frogs hatching

and wriggling in the gelatinous egg masses. An adult red-spotted newt was found feasting on the shivering mass



Spotted Salamander egg mass (above) and Fairy Shrimp (left).

too. Fairy shrimp, caddis flies, beetles, and a beautiful pair of wood ducks wrapped up the evening event. Just as we wandered out of the woods in the last vestiges of light, a male woodcock made his distinctive peenting call and spiraled into the sky in a mating ballet of his own. 🐾

Turtle Talk Ecologist and turtle expert, David Carroll captivates the 80+ members and wildlife enthusiasts at Bear-Paw's February 2003 Annual Meeting.



Community support for Land Protection grows across New Hampshire

At the 2003 town meetings across New Hampshire, voters approved record levels of local funding for land conservation. Voters in 25 towns agreed to bond or appropriate \$35.5 million in local funding for land protection. This represents an almost 75% increase over one year ago, when towns voted for

\$20.4 million. 106 New Hampshire communities have passed warrant articles or resolutions strongly supporting continued funding for the Land and Community Heritage Investment Program (LCHIP). These communities represent 67% of the state's population. 🐾

Bear Brook State Park continued

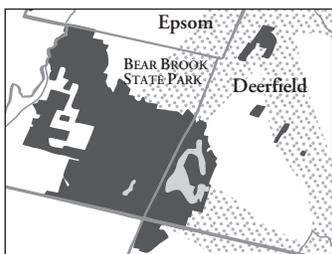
are stonewalls, cellar holes, cemeteries, old mill sites and an old quarry. Largely forested now, much of the land was once farmland. In the 1930s, the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) constructed camps at Bear Brook, Spruce Pond, and Bear Hill Pond; built the fire tower on Bear Hill (removed in 1974), an extensive trail network, and recreational facilities; and planted trees in many acres of old fields.

The Park opened to the public in 1940 with the beach at Catamount Pond.

Granite for its beautiful stone bathhouse pavilion and drinking fountains came from Bailey's Quarry in Allenstown. During World War II the military used the Park for maneuvers, recreation, and dances in the pavilion. Bear Brook Campground opened on Beaver Pond in 1949. Recreational offerings in the 1950s included horseback riding, a ski

slope and tow, and ice-skating performances.

The Bear Brook CCC camp is one of the finest remaining CCC camps in the country. In 1992, six buildings were placed on the National Register of Historic Places.



Unfragmented land within Bear-Paw's proposed greenways connect the park to other wildlife habitat in the region.

Today these buildings house the CCC Museum, Museum of Family Camping, Snowmobile Museum, the Nature Center, and park offices. The CCC camp at Spruce Pond is used by AmeriCorps volunteers and the camp at Bear Hill Pond is a children's camp operated by 4-H.

The majestic stone bathhouse remains a popular picnic area at Catamount Pond.

To learn more about historic resources in Bear Brook State Park, join the Allenstown Historical Society and Meet Me in Suncook Committee for a walking tour of the Park's historical resources this fall. Contact Laura Bonk at 485-9720 or Bonk@alum.mit.edu or Bear-Paw for more information. 🐾

Town Tracks

UPDATES FROM YOUR
NECK OF THE WOODS

Town Meeting wrap up:

Candia: Candia voted to allot 100% of the Current Use penalties to the Conservation Fund in 2002.

This year Candia budgeted money to hire a town forester.

Deerfield: The Deerfield Open Space Committee posted a map for residents to report wildlife sightings in town.

Results from this poll may help inform conservation priorities. Voters approved \$500 to support DOSC expenses for educational materials, mapping, and outreach.

Epsom: Epsom voted to allow the selectmen to spend the Conservation Fund appropriated at last year's town meeting and to add an additional \$10,000 to the fund.

Northwood: Northwood voted to increase the percent of the Current Use penalties dedicated to the Conservation Fund from 10% to 50%. Northwood also finished the designation of the town's prime wetlands.

Nottingham: Nottingham voted to allot 50% of the Current Use penalties to the Conservation Fund, with a limit of \$100,000 per year.

Raymond: Raymond voted to allot 100% of the Timber Tax this year to the Conservation Fund. 100% of the Current Use penalty was allotted in 2002.

Strafford: Strafford voted to allot 100% of its Current Use penalties with no cap to the Conservation Fund. Strafford voted to apply the Shoreland Protection Act to rivers in town.

We would like to hear from you!

Yes, I want to become a member of Bear-Paw.

Enclosed is my check in the amount of:

\$25 \$50 \$100 \$250 Other \$ _____

Yes, I want to become a Bear-Paw volunteer.

Please send me information about Bear-Paw.

NAME _____

MAILING ADDRESS _____

Please make your check payable to Bear-Paw Regional Greenways, and send to PO Box 19, Deerfield, NH 03037.

**Thank you for
your generous
support!**

A Waltz With Fire, continued from page 1

open habitat, also make the fire anxious to spread into the forest. Always staying one step ahead, a dance with fire leaves your face and exposed skin ruddy and palms sweaty. Never let fire step on your toes... you must move in to take the lead with this partner!

PHOTO BY ERIC ORFF



Fire Crew members bend and reach long rakes into the base of the spreading flames. They carry heavy backpack

sprayers to squelch the flames here while letting fire advance there. Sometimes your pant legs become unbearably hot! But you can't step back, you must hold your ground and maintain control of the fire's leading edge. Success in the dance, means that wildlife in Bear Brook and the

Bear-Paw Region can hold their ground and continue to thrive in these large blocks of critical and diverse habitat. 🐾

Calendar of Events

Conservation Roundtable

June 24 • 7-9pm • Raymond Fire Hall
Bear-Paw will host a second Regional Conservation Roundtable for representatives and residents of the seven Bear-Paw towns and surrounding communities. The series of GIS Natural Resource Inventory maps will be given to each town. Discussion will focus on map contents, interpretation and applications.

Easement Monitoring Volunteer Training

Date & time TBD

Join Bear-Paw's easement monitoring volunteer team in September and October to conduct annual monitoring of Bear-Paw's easements. Contact Bear-Paw for more information.

"Keeping Track" Wildlife Event

October 25 • 9am-Noon

Learn about animal signs, tracking and habitat. Wildlife experts will share a slideshow and present carnivore displays of track molds, hooves, pelts, claws, feet, skulls, and examples of wildlife signs. Contact Bear-Paw for more information.

Down From the Hill #3

October 11 • 8pm

Home spun music to benefit Bear-Paw at the Deerfield Town Hall.



Coffeehouse!

November 22 • 8pm

Benefit coffeehouse and Bear-Paw Quilt Raffle drawing at the Deerfield Town Hall.



Contact Bear-Paw Regional Greenways at PO Box 19, Deerfield, NH 03037. Call us at 603.463.9400, e-mail us at info@bear-paw.org, or visit www.bear-paw.org

Wildlife Habitat

Board OF DIRECTORS



Cody Cramer, Chair, Raymond
Wini Young, Vice-Chair, Northwood
Erick Berglund, Treasurer, Deerfield
Betsy Kruse, Secretary, Candia

Phil Auger, Strafford
Sam Demeritt, Nottingham
Al Jaeger, Deerfield
Judi Lindsey, Candia
Frank Mitchell, Deerfield
Eric Orff, Epsom
Al Pratt, Strafford
Mark West, Nottingham

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Susan Zankel

ILLUSTRATIONS
Al Jaeger



PHOTO BY JUDI LINDSEY

Bear-Paw members and music lovers enjoy a winter benefit with nine acts. The "Down From the Hill" concert raised spirits and funds for Bear-Paw's land protection programs and sure "made it feel like summer!" Shown here is the Taylor River Band from the Hampton Area.

Conservation Roundtable
Tuesday, June 24, 2003
Help "Keep Track"
Learn about animal tracking and habitats.
Saturday, October 25, 2003
Details Inside!

Post Office Box 19
Deerfield, NH 03037

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