



2007 Annual Report

The year 2007 saw continued growth in Bear-Paw activities. We have been as busy as ever working with landowners and towns to permanently conserve a network of lands that protects our region's water, wildlife habitat, forests, and farmland. We have also been hosting a variety of events and publishing information to "get the word out." Fortunately, it looks good for the continuation of the IRS tax incentive for donations of land/easements, so this should keep us busy well into the future.

Bear-Paw continues to increase its impact on land conservation throughout the region. In 2007, we completed three projects that conserved more than 115 acres in Candia, Deerfield, and Epsom. Much of the year was also spent working on more than eight other projects which we expect to complete in 2008. This will result in the permanent protection of more than 1,200 additional acres in Candia, Deerfield, Strafford and even Hooksett. These projects will double the amount of acres on which Bear-Paw holds easements to over 2,400 acres.

Two of the 2008 projects have already received LCHIP grants – \$100,000 in 2006 to help protect 175 acres in the headwaters of the Lamprey River watershed in Deerfield and \$300,000 in 2007 to help protect 275 acres in the headwaters of Clay Pond in Hooksett and Candia. We hope to complete both by the end of this year. We also expect to permanently protect the 82-acre Deerfield Road Town Forest in Candia and over 800 acres with the Isinglass River Conservation Corridor project in Strafford.

Our outreach activities attracted over 400 participants and included conservation options workshops in Candia, Epsom and Deerfield, booths staffed at various town-wide events, a Roundtable presenting the NH Wildlife Action Plan for the Bear-Paw Region, and a financial planning workshop. Last year's annual meeting was a highlight event – we brought back Tom Wessels. He talked about his latest book, *The Myth of Progress*, and led us on an informative tour on the site of one of our 2008 projects, the Isinglass River Conservation Corridor in Strafford.

We also hosted outdoor events including a new member event and property tour, a spring migration bird walk, a turtle walk, the Biothon, a hawk watch and another walk along the Suncook River. We usually hold at least one event in each town every year and we try to have an event every month. We also try to vary our offerings to appeal to many interests. Keep an eye out for upcoming events in your town in 2008!



In addition to our educational activities, we distributed two editions of our newsletter the *Bear-Paw Print* last year to over 1,300 households and we updated our “annual report” *Tracking Bear-Paw*. We are working to develop a team of volunteers to maintain a supply of these types of literature in at least 2 sites in each member town. You may also have noticed articles submitted by Bear-Paw to your local paper before and after each event.

The Membership Development Committee has been diligently working to increase our base. Thanks to their efforts, Bear-Paw added 85 new donors in 2007 and we now have almost 300 current members and other contributors. Excluding a large bequest we received in 2006, donations in 2007 increased by 15% to \$45 thousand. We completed town-wide membership appeals to six of our seven member towns and plan to continue a campaign to build our membership to 500 by 2012. Aside from the regular membership appeals, we are also cultivating business memberships and have instituted a Bequest Society.

The Executive Director, volunteer board and committee members of Bear-Paw spend many hours every month involved with the basic functioning of the organization. We are always building our volunteer corps and we would welcome anyone with a little extra time to help with some of the necessary tasks of running Bear-Paw.

Once again we thank all our members for their continued support. We are growing fast and could not continue to address the demands for our work without you.