



"Conserving the North Country's Special Places"

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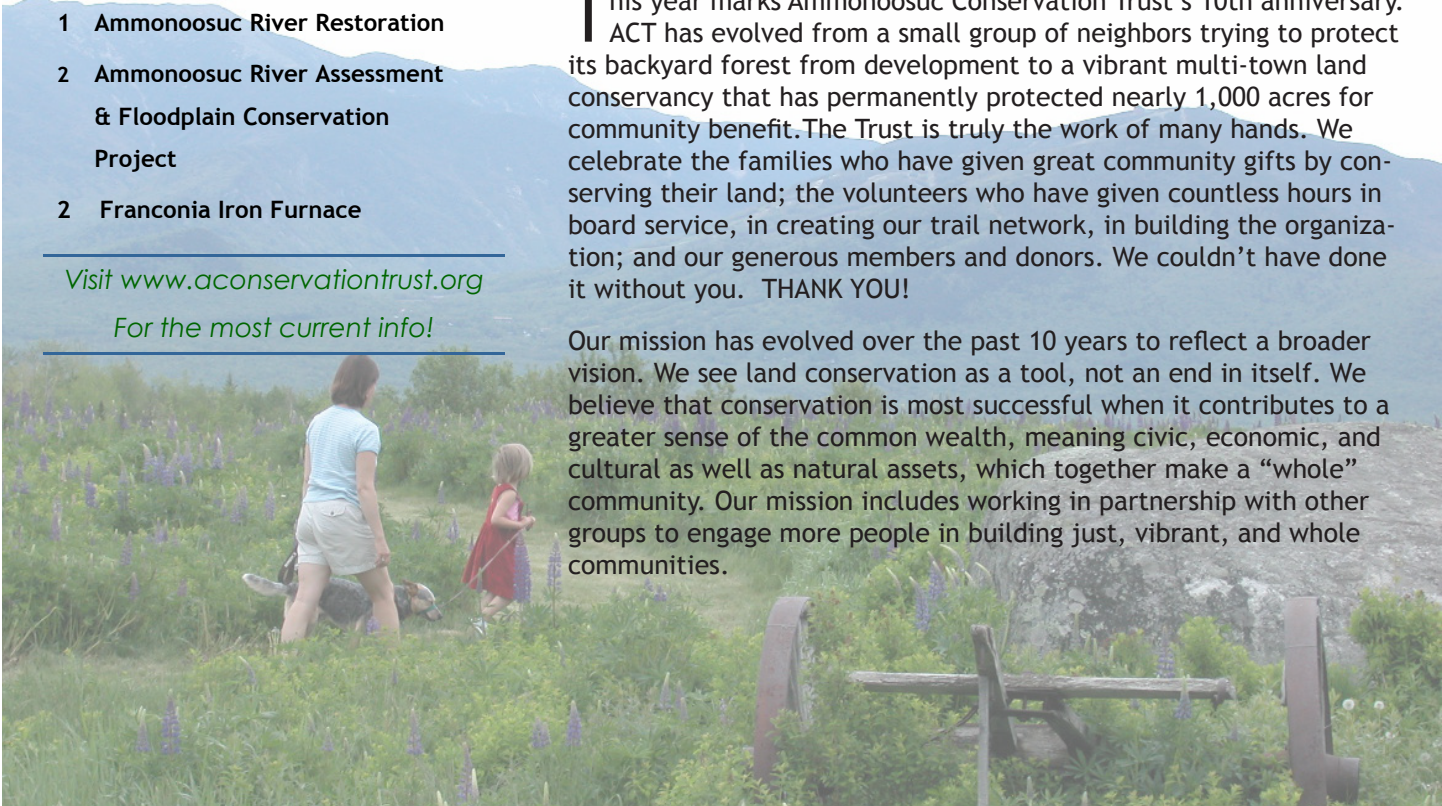
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10th Anniversary Celebration

This year marks Ammonoosuc Conservation Trust's 10th anniversary. ACT has evolved from a small group of neighbors trying to protect its backyard forest from development to a vibrant multi-town land conservancy that has permanently protected nearly 1,000 acres for community benefit. The Trust is truly the work of many hands. We celebrate the families who have given great community gifts by conserving their land; the volunteers who have given countless hours in board service, in creating our trail network, in building the organization; and our generous members and donors. We couldn't have done it without you. THANK YOU!

Our mission has evolved over the past 10 years to reflect a broader vision. We see land conservation as a tool, not an end in itself. We believe that conservation is most successful when it contributes to a greater sense of the common wealth, meaning civic, economic, and cultural as well as natural assets, which together make a "whole" community. Our mission includes working in partnership with other groups to engage more people in building just, vibrant, and whole communities.



Ammonoosuc River Restoration

We are very pleased to announce that a major part of our work in the next year will be focused on the Ammonoosuc River. We will be acquiring and starting restoration on an important stretch of land below where Route 302 crosses the river in Lisbon - an area generally called the Salmon Hole. This area saw huge ice jams and flooding during this year's January thaw, which led to severe riverbank erosion and property loss and rerouted the course of the river just downstream.

The 37-acre property is all floodplain, and is within one of the most important aquifers in the watershed. This stretch of river is very picturesque, attracts a wide variety of migratory songbirds and ducks, and is popular with anglers, as the river makes a series of turns and sweeps along ledge and rock outcroppings, gravel bars, with fast water and pools that give it structure favored by fish. A four-acre forested island contains highest ranked habitat by N.H. Fish and Game's Wildlife Action Plan. North Country Council identified this section as one of the most important areas on the river for restoration.



Ice and flooding in January, 2010, on the Ammonoosuc River from the Salmon Hole Bridge, Route 302, Lisbon.

The property was used as a source of gravel and its topsoil was removed during road and bridge construction several decades ago. Our grant, through the N.H. Department of Environmental Services Aquatic Resource Mitigation fund, includes purchase of the land, assessing best methods and beginning to implement actions for bank stabilization and erosion control, and determining a long-term strategy for restoring a floodplain forest. Wetland consultant Ray Lobdell of Landaff is heading the project. "I've been interested in this section of river for 30 years," says Ray. "It's been ravaged, first by the road construction that took the gravel and then by repeated ice jams and flooding. There's lots of attention to the river now because of development in the floodplain upstream in Littleton. People are concerned about more flooding and erosion."

"This is a very significant section of the river for restoring fish and wildlife habitat and natural flood storage capacity," says ACT Executive Director Rebecca Brown. "Our work here should teach us something about restoration methods that might work on other parts of the river as well."

Ammonoosuc River Assessment and Floodplain Conservation Project



Ice and flooding, second and third fairways, Lisbon Village Country Club, January 2010.

Our emphasis on the Ammonoosuc River continues with a related project that identified the most important areas for conservation and restoration along the entire 60-mile river from the perspective of erosion and flood control. The stretch of the river from the Salmon Hole/Route 302 Bridge to the Lisbon soccer field is the highest priority area.

This project, headed by the Connecticut River Joint Commissions, conducted a geomorphic assessment identifying riverbanks threatened by erosion, causes of channel instability, and places where floodplain conservation or riverbank restoration could lead to a healthier river. Data was collected on bank height, erosion, presence of riprap, channel migration evidence, riparian buffer condition, and invasive plants.

Erosion hazard maps for the entire river have been created and will be given to each of the seven towns through which the river flows. The highest priority areas for conservation and restoration were chosen by the Ammonoosuc River Local Advisory Committee, CRJC, and the technical advisory committee for the project. In addition to the Lisbon

stretch of river, the area around Bath Upper Village was also identified as high priority. There is severe riverbank erosion there and high water threatened residents and property during last January's ice jams and flooding.

ACT's role in this project is to work with a landowner willing to implement a conservation and restoration project in a high priority area. We are exploring a project with Phyllis and Dave Anderson, owners of the Lisbon Village Country Club. The lower section of the golf course was flooded in January and suffered significant damage and riverbank erosion. Over the next few weeks we will do survey and other work to determine if this land is suitable for riverbank restoration and if a permanent conservation agreement will meet the Andersons' needs.

New Effort Underway to Permanently Conserve Franconia Iron Furnace



The Iron Furnace in Franconia is one of our area's unique, indeed iconic structures. We are very pleased to announce that we are working with the owners, Steve and Monica Prevost, with the Franconia Heritage Council, and with the N.H. Preservation Alliance exploring acquisition and restoration options. An archeologist and a landscape architect will be on site in August to begin assessment work that will guide the project. ACT has received funding from the Preservation Alliance and from the Johanna Favrot Fund of the National Trust for Historic Preservation for this work.

The furnace has been studied in detail over the years, and its historic and cultural significance well documented. Last year the Preservation Alliance named it to their Seven to Save list as one of the most important historic resources in the state. For the first time in years, it appears that a willing landowner and a willing buyer and steward (ACT) are working together. There is much to be done before an agreement is reached, but our intent is to find a permanent conservation solution. The consultants will recommend the best stabilization and long-term maintenance and stewardship strategies for the furnace. We will report more details as they become known!

Join ACT in Conserving the North Country's Special Places, become a member today!

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