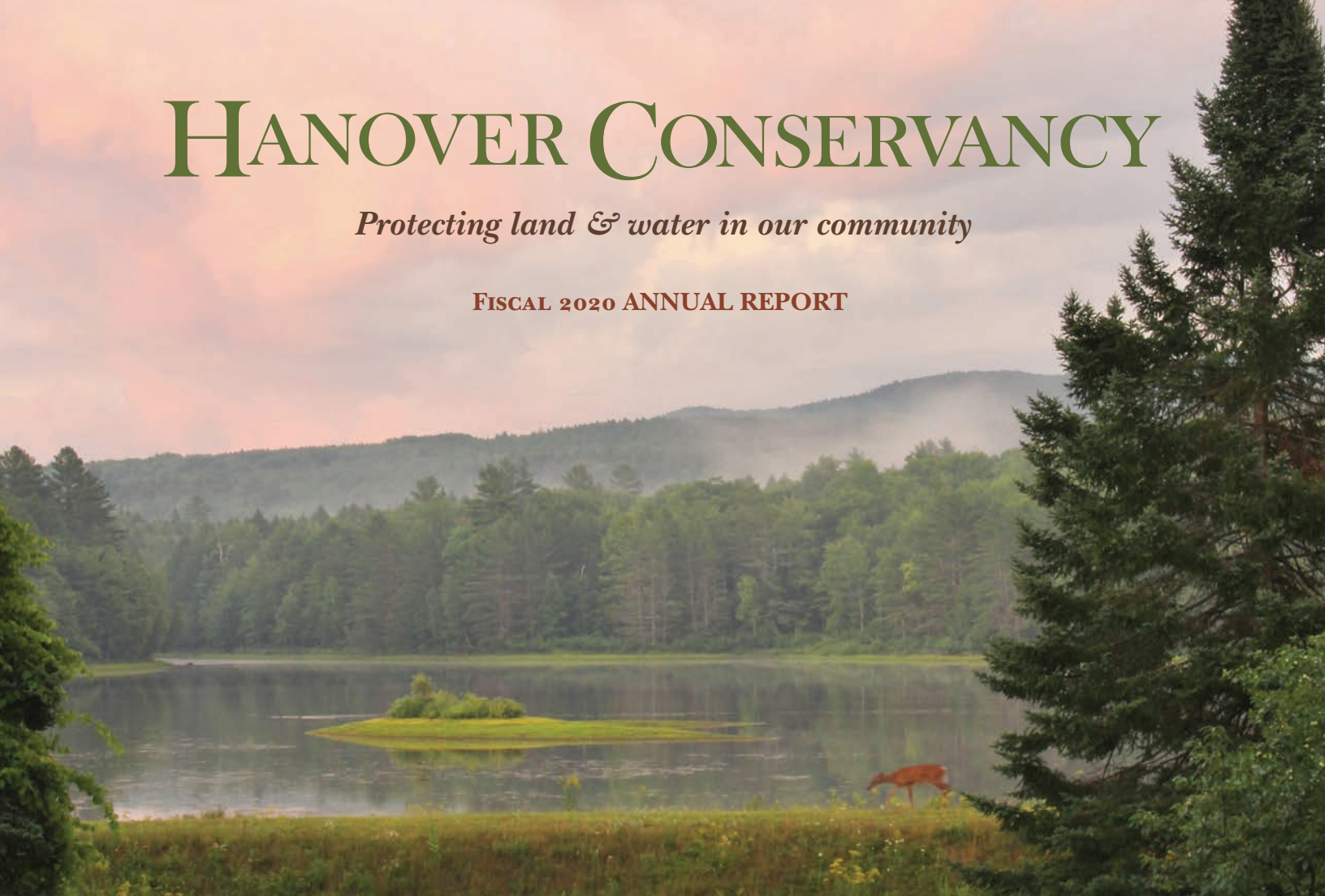


HANOVER CONSERVANCY

Protecting land & water in our community

FISCAL 2020 ANNUAL REPORT



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**HANOVER
CONSERVANCY**

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(603) 643-3433

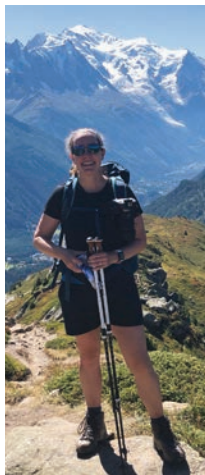
hanoverconservancy.org



Photos are
shown in order
of appearance
at left



LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear Friends,

A comment I heard repeated countless times this summer was an expression of gratitude for this beautiful part of New England we inhabit. During the pandemic many of us turned to the outdoors for respite. We go outside to burn off energy, uncover adventure, find room to breathe, and room to relax. Above all, in nature we find a return to normalcy. With everything else in flux, our natural places remain steadfast and constant, ready to welcome us for a quick outdoor break from screens, a daylong trek through the woods, or an escape from summer's heat in a local shaded stream.

When we need it most, we go outdoors for recreation, respite, and healing.

Yet, we know these natural places will not remain the same without intentional protection and stewardship. The places that received us in record numbers throughout the pandemic summer need our continued protection.

For almost 60 years, the Hanover Conservancy has protected land and water in Hanover. As we approach our 60th anniversary, we are looking strategically at addressing the challenges ahead. How can we not only protect land, but ensure the stewardship of conserved land in perpetuity? How can we use science to inform our actions to mitigate climate change? What can we learn from the pandemic about how our natural places provided a resource for our community, and how can we improve to make these places more welcoming, inclusive, and accessible to all people?

We look with enthusiasm towards addressing these challenges, and we need your help to do so. Your financial support is critical to our mission of protecting land and water in Hanover and meeting the challenges that lie ahead.

In deep gratitude for your continued support of our essential and invaluable outdoors,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Heidi Trimarco".

Heidi Trimarco, President

Cover photo: Day's end at the Hanover Center Reservoir, captured by neighbor Kari Asmus

Far right: The Paper Bag Club enjoys a picnic on Balch Hill in 1963



The Hanover Conservancy, the oldest local land trust in New Hampshire, strives to protect the land and waters of our community through land conservation and stewardship, education, and advocacy for conservation-oriented public policy.

Celebrating its **59th year**, the Conservancy is an independent private, not-for-profit, membership organization. While not affiliated with the Town of Hanover, the Conservancy partners frequently with the Town and other local and regional organizations.

MAJOR PROGRAMS & ACCOMPLISHMENTS FY 2020: July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020

Community Engagement

Diversity is key to a successful response to stress — a basic principle of ecology. So it was this year with our diverse education program, as the COVID-19 pandemic snuffed out our spring trips and we turned to other versatile ways to get people outdoors.

Our **Hanover Hikes of the Month** offer the house-bound a socially-distanced change of scene. We added seven new adventures to our collection to help people explore Hanover outdoors confidently and safely on their own. Our 35 self-guided hikes, posted on our website, offer detailed directions and insights into where you'll go and what you'll see. Our **Hanover Trails Challenge** was a welcome alternative for parents and children eager to shake up their home-based routine, pursuing special spots on local trails.

With everyone stuck at home and on-line, we were glad we'd spent much of the year building an **entirely new website**. Visit us at www.hanoverconservancy.org to explore Hanover virtually. Subscribe to our monthly **e-newsletter** and occasional versions for neighbors of our natural areas, or find us on Facebook and Instagram. We were on track to top last year's record for **outdoor trip or indoor program** participants — nearly 1,000 — when the pandemic spoiled our plans. Prior offerings included a family-oriented “unspeaky” night hike, a wildlife tracking trip to Tunis Brook, and

pop-up snowshoe tours. Ben Kilham's program on black bears at our annual meeting drew hundreds of people from miles around. Thanks to member and business support, our trips and events remain free.

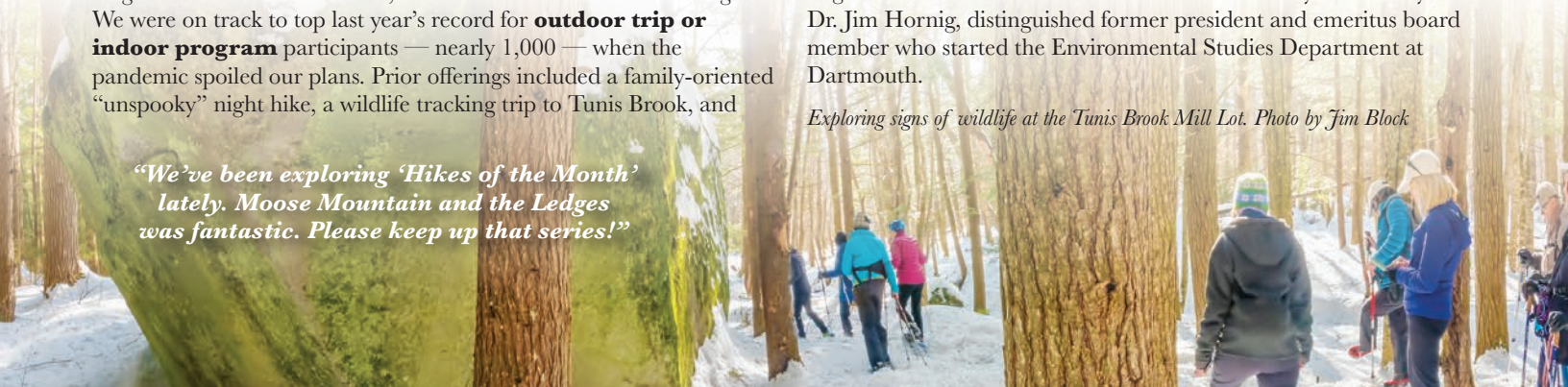
We gathered at the Mink Brook Nature Preserve for the 20th anniversary of this beloved 112-acre gem and to honor our founder Bob Norman's role in ensuring its protection. Nearly 100 people joined us at the Norman Overlook, a new rustic stone seating area dedicated to Bob, to share in tributes and accolades.

Wednesday Wanders, our experiential environmental education program for children enrolled in KAST (Kids After School Time), was in its third season until school abruptly closed in March. Students in K-5th grades joined Hanover Conservancy staff to track wildlife, explore local waters, and learn to feel at home in the outdoors.

Our **Hanover Conservancy Environmental Studies Award** again provided a scholarship to two deserving Hanover High School students. We make this award annually in memory of Dr. Jim Hornig, distinguished former president and emeritus board member who started the Environmental Studies Department at Dartmouth.

Exploring signs of wildlife at the Tunis Brook Mill Lot. Photo by Jim Block

“We’ve been exploring ‘Hikes of the Month’ lately. Moose Mountain and the Ledges was fantastic. Please keep up that series!”





Land Stewardship

The true value of our protected natural lands (to humans, anyway) revealed itself in mid-March as we were suddenly sent home to ride out the pandemic. Where could we safely go for much-needed exercise, fresh air, relief from house arrest, and the nameless but soothing mental and physical balm that comes with being in nature? Our over 1000 acres of conservation lands and miles of trails were there, quietly waiting for all of us. It wasn't long before our trails displayed evidence of many more eager feet.

Our **Mink Brook Nature Preserve**, 112 acres of beautiful forest and streams within walking distance of downtown, was a special focus of activity in the 20th year since it was saved from a future as a 32-lot subdivision. The new **Norman Overlook** added a welcome place for all ages to pause and enjoy the natural pleasures of the place. Plantings of native trees and shrubs with ornamental and wildlife value enhance the space. We worked with an Eagle Scout and Troop 45 to build bog bridges, protecting wetlands from damaging foot traffic. Until COVID called off the effort, we teamed up with Hanover High School science faculty to plan a celebration of Earth Day's 50th anniversary with a major planting of native trees by the students. We updated our map and guide to the Preserve, and planning began in earnest for replacement of the iconic but aging log crossing and the next round of vegetation restoration.

As caretakers of our natural lands, we consider both the people and the wildlife using our land. We all need to be good neighbors to wildlife, including the bears that have long occupied a home range near **Mink Brook**. This year we evaluated trails in the eastern part of town that could be

"I think the Conservancy has done an admirable job taking care of preserved land, in a lively, friendly voice. It has also done an excellent job keeping trails in good shape and harnessing the work of volunteers to do a good part of that work. Bravo!"

Board member Dudley Smith refreshes a trail blaze at the Greensboro Ridge Natural Area

MAJOR PROGRAMS & ACCOMPLISHMENTS

discontinued to avoid disturbing wildlife while still offering nearby paths for people. We planned a new trail at the **Britton Forest** to avoid a heavy bear use area and learned how to assess trails for universal accessibility to better guide future trail improvements.

We appreciate and benefit from working with our partner organizations, especially the Trescott Recreation Committee, Hanover Trails Committee, Hanover Biodiversity Committee, Upper Valley Trails Alliance, Upper Valley Land Trust, and Pine Park Association. This year we updated the kiosk maps and trail guides for the Trescott Water Supply Lands just in time for the arrival of hundreds of hikers and mountain bikers escaping the pandemic on the expanding trail system there.

A HALF CENTURY AT BALCH HILL

2020 marks fifty years since our organization purchased 10 acres at the summit of Balch Hill. Did you know that the hill was slated to become the site of nearly 50 homes? Over the last half century, the Balch Hill Natural Area has grown to 85 acres with more lands owned by the Conservancy, Town of Hanover, and Dartmouth College, managed by a volunteer neighborhood stewardship committee with support from Town and Conservancy staff. We'd hoped to celebrate at the annual Kite Day, but COVID had other ideas. Instead, we focused on trail improvements — including color-coded blazing and a sturdy new wetland crossing built by Hypertherm volunteers.

Kite Day had its start in the imagination of long-time Balch Hill neighbor Dr. Susan Harper (1958-2020), who served on the Conservancy's Board of Directors. At her family's request, memorial gifts were made to the Hanover Conservancy and in honor of her legacy, love for nature and this special place, we are dedicating gifts in her memory to the Balch Hill Stewardship Fund.

If you've gotten this far, it's clear why we need a strong Land Stewardship Fund! Thanks to thoughtful donors like you, we continue to build those funds to help care for these lands in perpetuity.

Supporting the Town in responding to deer overpopulation, we again managed a carefully limited archery hunt at Balch Hill and the south side of our Mink Brook Nature Preserve. To remind hikers of hunting season's correct costume, we provided blaze orange vests for loan at all of our trailheads and also at the Trescott Lands.

An essential annual task of land stewardship is visiting and monitoring the growing number of conservation easements we hold, fulfilling the promises we make to landowners to keep their vision alive — forever. These visits give us a chance to enjoy the special features of each protected place and to assist owners with any land management questions.



Kite Day underway at Balch Hill. Photo by Jim Block

OUR PROTECTED LANDS

Owned by the Hanover Conservancy (453.5 acres)

Jim & Evalyn Hornig Natural Area at Lower Slade Brook – 35 acres

Off River Road

Balch Hill Natural Area – 21 acres

Off Grasse & Hemlock Roads

Britton Forest – 79 acres

Off Three Mile Road

Greensboro Ridge Natural Area – 113 acres

Off Greensboro Road & Velvet Rocks Drive

Mayor-Niles Forest – 92 acres

Off Three Mile Road

Mink Brook Nature Preserve – 112 acres

Off Route 10 & Brook Road

Tunis Brook Mill Lot – 1.5 acres

Off Goose Pond Road

Protected by a Hanover Conservancy conservation easement or deed restriction (554.9 acres)

Huntington Hill/Upper Slade Brook – 31.8 acres

Off Hanover Center Road / Owner: private landowner

McKinley Tract – 125.7 acres

Off Wolfeboro & Goose Pond Roads / Owner: Town of Hanover

Mill Pond Forest & Huggins Trail Access – 18 acres

End of Moose Mountain Lodge Road / Owner: private landowners

Moister Meadow – 21.0 acres

Off Dogford Road / Owner: private landowner

Rinker-Steele Natural Area – 23.6 acres

Off Route 10 / Owner: Town of Hanover

Shumway Forest – 313 acres

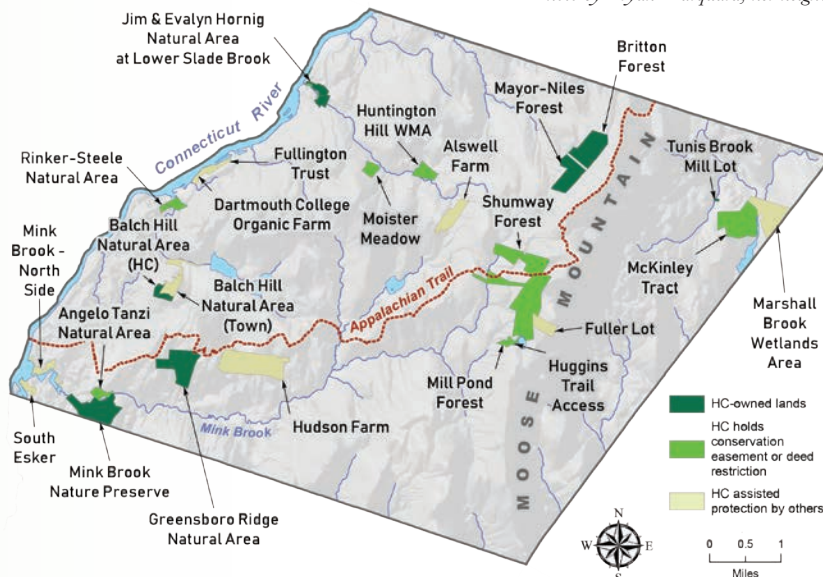
Off Three Mile Road / Owner: private landowner

Slade Brook Natural Area – 3 acres

Off Purling Brooks Drive / Owners: private landowners

Tanzi Natural Area – 15.8 acres

Adjacent to Mink Brook Nature Preserve / Owner: Town of Hanover



*Mink and her three cubs in 2017.
Photo by Bryan Marquard, her neighbor*

MAJOR PROGRAMS & ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Land Conservation

Some things are worth waiting for. A generation ago, back when we were an all-volunteer organization, a pair of our board members reached out to the owners of a beautiful field along Mink Brook to see if they might consider permanently conserving it and the surrounding forests straddling Greensboro Road. At the time, the owners had other plans, but the idea remained alive in the imaginations of those who could foresee a different future for lands with such strong ecological and scenic value, so close to town. We waited.

In the meantime, we acquired the 113-acre Greensboro Ridge Natural Area next to the Appalachian Trail in 2008 while keeping an eye on that fine upland forest just one parcel away. Hope renewed in 2011 when our community had the opportunity to work with Dartmouth College to protect the nearby Hudson Farm and add it to the AT lands. Could the Greensboro lands be folded into such a project, especially after the Trust for Public Land (TPL) agreed to assist? It was not to be. We waited and worried.

Then in September 2019, an email arrived from a Conservancy member who had noted the For Sale sign with alarm. “What are your plans for protecting the meadow on Greensboro Road?” Conferring with the Town of Hanover and TPL, we had brainstormed all the potential grant sources to purchase the land but concluded that without a major private gift, we’d come up short. Citing dismay with over-development in her former home town, this donor made a transformational gift that allowed the Hanover Conservancy/TPL/Town partnership to pursue the project with strong financial backing and new energy.

Partners and patience proved the winning combination here. Community support has been strong and substantial. The Town Meeting voted unanimously for the project and to contribute a quarter of the necessary funds. The three partners are working together to raise the rest. In late winter, TPL will purchase the 254-acre Leavitt property and turn it over to the Town of Hanover to become the **Mink Brook Community Forest**. The vast majority of the land – 250 acres – will be protected forever. The Town has plans to establish a cluster of modest cottage homes on a few acres near the road, served by town water and sewer, to address an important need in Hanover. The historic farmhouse will find a new owner. With help from experts, the Northern Forest Center, and advice from residents, the partners will develop a Community Forest Plan this Fall.

For years the land was posted — now, everyone will belong there. The wait will have been worth it.

The Hanover Conservancy’s role in this rewarding conservation project is a familiar one to us. Bring a conservation opportunity to the community’s attention and be a useful partner: find funds, spread the word and gather support, explain the ecological benefits, and help make it happen.

In the meantime, we’re working on other conservation prospects, always behind the scenes, always with climate change in mind. It could be a piece of cooler, higher elevation un-fragmented habitat...or a stream or wetland...or a wildlife corridor. Hopefully it won’t take a generation.

The Greensboro meadow. Photo by Mim Adkins for the Trust for Public Land



CLIMATE CHANGE RESILIENCE AT THE MINK BROOK COMMUNITY FOREST

Protecting these 250 acres will help our community resist all of these major effects of climate change: flooding and erosion, wildlife habitat loss and population isolation, and unnatural heating of air and water. According to a scientific assessment that discovered 10 ecologically significant areas on the property, **“this may be one of the best locales for wildlife movement from the highlands of Hanover down along Mink Brook to the Connecticut River.”**

“I have lived and worked in the Hanover area most of my 61 years.

I have seen many positive changes to the area in land conservation.

Thank you for the amazing work conserving the Greensboro corridor!”

Keeping the hillside forested instead of paved or roofed helps keep air temperatures cool.

Keeping good tree cover over streams will shade the water and keep it cool as the climate warms.

Clustering homes here will avoid dispersed development into cool forested habitat.

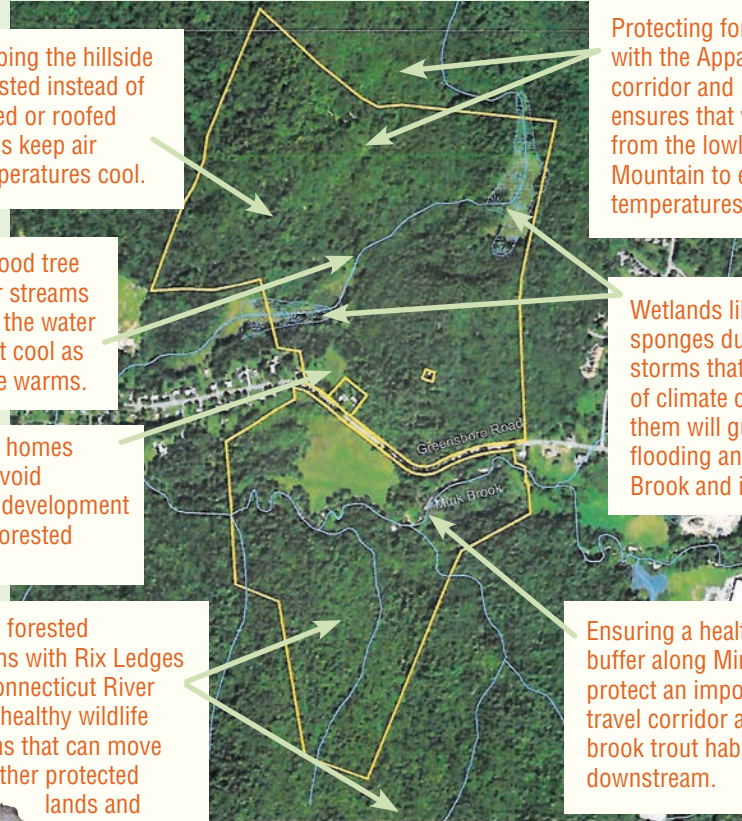
Protecting forested connections with Rix Ledges and the Connecticut River promotes healthy wildlife populations that can move easily to other protected lands and habitats.



Protecting forested connections with the Appalachian Trail corridor and Hudson Farm ensures that wildlife can move from the lowlands to Moose Mountain to escape warmer temperatures.

Wetlands like these act as sponges during the heavy storms that are a symptom of climate change. Protecting them will guard against flooding and erosion in Mink Brook and its feeder streams.

Ensuring a healthy vegetative buffer along Mink Brook will protect an important wildlife travel corridor and benefit brook trout habitat here and downstream.



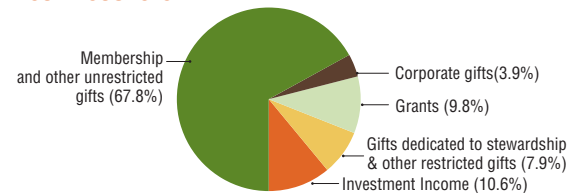
Base map courtesy of the Trust for Public Land

FINANCIAL REPORT

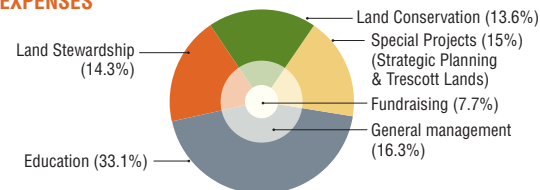
As of June 30, 2020

CURRENT ASSETS	2020	2019
Cash and cash equivalents, unrestricted	\$ 56,391	\$ 41,440
Investments	\$ 1,195,325	\$ 1,086,341
Office equipment & land improvements net of depreciation	\$ 4,114	\$ 4,408
HC Fund at NH Charitable Foundation	\$ 27,973	\$ 29,375
Land held for conservation purposes	\$ 883,296	\$ 883,296
Total assets	\$ 2,167,099	\$ 2,044,860
CURRENT LIABILITIES*	\$ 23,000	-
NET ASSETS		
Without donor restrictions	\$ 1,134,902	\$ 1,061,070
With donor restrictions	\$ 1,009,197	\$ 983,790
Total net assets	\$ 2,144,099	\$ 2,044,860
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	\$ 2,167,099	\$ 2,044,860
INCOME & SUPPORT		
Membership and other contributions	\$ 251,468	\$ 298,653
Grants	\$ 30,928	\$ 13,300
Investment income net of fees	\$ 33,478	\$ 67,363
Total income & support	\$ 315,874	\$ 379,316
EXPENSES		
Program services	\$ 164,642	\$ 136,112
Management and general	\$ 35,260	\$ 39,900
Fundraising	\$ 16,733	\$ 14,943
Total expenses	\$ 216,635	\$ 190,955
NET ASSETS, beginning of year	\$ 2,044,860	\$ 1,856,499
NET ASSETS, end of year	\$ 2,144,099	\$ 2,044,860
INCREASE IN NET ASSETS	\$ 99,239	\$ 188,361

INCOME SOURCES



EXPENSES



Chestnut-sided warbler nest and eggs. Photo by Kari Asmus

** Forgivable loans received through the CARES Act.*

The Conservancy appreciates the generous support of the Jack and Dorothy Byrne Foundation

A copy of the FY2020 financial statement, prepared by our accountants at Rust & Company CPAs, is available for review at our office.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

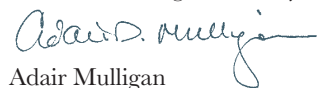
It's been an unusual year, to say the least. We're grateful for what remained steady — the dedication and wisdom of our talented board of directors, the beauty of the Hanover landscape, the shared sense of purpose with our valued partners, and above all, the strong and reassuring support of our members.

We're also grateful for what didn't stay the same — and helped us grow by challenging familiar ways. As COVID-19 closed in, we ran for the hills — and our home offices — there to examine how we might continue to deliver on our mission despite masks and mountains of caution. We have become fluent in the language of **resilience** — a term we use often when considering how to help Hanover adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change, but now a term we needed to apply even more urgently to our nearly 60-year-old organization.

Our land conservation initiatives actually sped up as we Zoomed with our trusted partners, the Town of Hanover and Trust for Public Land. Announcement of the 250-acre Mink Brook Community Forest project in late March was the glowing piece of good news for which our community was aching. Some of our community engagement initiatives fared a bit worse, but investment of time and effort in self-guided offerings paid off for the public. While our land stewardship work had to proceed solo-style, we found ways to keep up with the increased pressure on our lands and trails.

It's been another year of steady growth, we're pleased to report. Our membership multiplied yet again, this year by nearly 10%. Our valued team of corporate conservators also grew, some expanding their business support and others joining us for the first time. The Hanover Conservancy has been hard at work for nearly 60 years to protect and improve the quality of life for those who live and work here, and Upper Valley businesses appreciate it.

We remain grateful for your support and look forward to seeing you outdoors once again.



Adair Mulligan



Adair Mulligan, top,
and Courtney Dragiff

Volunteers

We value the spirit and commitment of our many volunteers, who continue a long tradition of caring for our lands, leading our trips, and helping in so many other ways.

Natural Area Stewardship Committees –

Balch Hill: Len Cadwallader, Rob Chapman, Carol Edwards, Anne Evans, Rich Greger and family, Rebecca Kohn, Ryan Johnson, Barbara McIlroy, Lois Roland; Christianna Whittington;

Greensboro Ridge: Wendy Conquest, Alan DiStasio, Meg Doucette, Doug McIlroy, Jill Kearney Niles, Dudley Smith, Jim Wooster; **Mink Brook:** Bryant and Marilyn Denk, Dave Dostal, Cal Felicetti, Brenda Knight, Jill Marquard, Johnathan Rabkin, Roger Soderberg, Dev Sodhi; **Slade Brook:**

Gail McPeck, Hugh Mellert, Cathy Beaver
Other Volunteers – Jason Berard, Jim Block, Bob Boon, Andrew Chen and Troop 45, Nancy Collier, Laura Conkey, Mark Cote, Joe Danna, Alice and Phidias Dantos, Betsy Eaton, Jed Eliades, Gault Farrell, Nicki Felicetti, Mike Hall, Susan Hanfin, Robin Kaiser, Jim Kennedy, Caroline Loescher, Bryan Marquard, Betsy McClain, Kristine McDewitt, Casey McGuire, Janine McGuire, Diana McNamara, Linde McNamara, Tom Milligan, Bill Mlacak, Chris Passage, Irina and Laurent Perreard, Alice Schori, Mary Sloat, Ross Smith, Joann Stemmermann, Joanna Whitcomb.

Trip Leaders & Program Speakers –

Bill Cioffredi, George Clark, Courtney Dragiff, Tom Jack, Ben Kilham, Gail McPeck, Hugh Mellert, David Merker, Adair Mulligan, Eric Tadlock, Justin Walker

Strategic planning committee – Mary Brown, Stan Colla, Marc Hiller, Rob Houseman, Peggy O'Neil, Heidi Trimarco

THANK YOU. Our many supporters and friends make the Hanover Conservancy's programs possible.

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BE Fit Physical Therapy

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Lou's Restaurant & Bakery

Martha E. Diebold Real Estate

New England Freejacks Rugby Team



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The following funds of the NH

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- Robert Wm. Christie, M.D. Fund

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- The Barrette Family Fund

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Children's Hospital at Dartmouth (CHaD)

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The Conservation Fund

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Howe Library

Hypertherm associates

Land Trust Alliance

NH Audubon, Mascoma Chapter

NH Dept. of Environmental

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Pine Park Association

Quabbin to Cardigan

Partnership

Ray School Parent

Teachers' Organization

Richmond Middle School

Sierra Club of the Upper Valley

Trescott Company

Trust for Public Land

Tuck Business School at Dartmouth

Upper Valley Business Alliance

Upper Valley Haven

Upper Valley Land Trust

Upper Valley Mountain Bike Association

Upper Valley Trails Alliance

Vermont Center for Ecostudies

Vermont Institute of Natural Science

Vital Communities of the Upper Valley

Winter Center for Indigenous Traditions

Youth in Action

*Catching crayfish in Camp Brook
is a favorite activity on our
Wednesday Wanderers.*





White Mountains

White Mountains Insurance Group is proud to give back to our community by sponsoring this FY2020 Annual Report and supporting the work of the Hanover Conservancy.



HANOVER CONSERVANCY

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(603) 643-3433

hanoverconservancy.org