



New Hartford Land Trust December 2020 – Recent Activities and Accomplishments

NHLT has been really busy! Over the past two years, we have preserved some of the most significant natural places in New Hartford for public access hiking trails, habitat and to protect water quality. We hope you are walking on or viewing these very special places. Our volunteers work hard to maintain NHLT's owned properties with public access. There are more conservation projects in the works and they all meet the highest criteria for preservation-worthy lands. Below are NHLT's 2019-2020 top highlights.



NHLT Preserves Jones Mountain Parcel to Secure Future of Trail System

NHLT Saves Essential Piece of Jones Mountain Trail System

On December 31, 2019, NHLT acquired the final 6.19 acres of the Jones Mountain trail system that was not yet preserved. A key element of the walking route to the carriage road, the Jones Family had graciously allowed hikers to cross this 'Sawmill' parcel for more than ten years since the Town of New Hartford acquired and opened the Jones Mountain Open Space Preserve with critical financial and volunteer help from NHLT. The Jones' decided to sell this last piece of their 'Mountain' property and offered it to NHLT at a discount. Although a huge commitment, our Board decided to seize the chance to permanently protect the lovely 'Sawmill' parcel so that the trail system will remain intact. That was pre-COVID-19. Since March, this popular hiking spot has seen a huge rise in visitors looking for safe places to get off the house, enjoy nature and get some fresh air and exercise. NHLT thanks the Jones sisters and the Farmington River Coordinating Committee (FRCC) for their support of this acquisition. NHLT spent down significant reserves to make this happen due to Jones Mountain's importance to the town.

NHLT Protects 28 Acres on Sabolcik Road to Expand Open Space Area and Extend Walking Trails

Thanks to a discounted sale and a year's grace to pay much of it, NHLT was thrilled to acquire land at the corner of East Cotton Hill and Sabolcik Roads eight weeks ago. About 40 neighbors toured the parcel before the purchase and were very enthusiastic.

The property has a dramatic ridgeline and stream along with an open meadow, wetlands and historic millpond. It abuts NHLT's Alfred Sabolcik Preserve. Volunteers are exploring the best trail route to connect this new property with Alfred's. After we figure out the best place for a few parking spots, NHLT will open a loop path around the meadow for walkers, snowshoers and cross-country skiers. We hope to open the connector trail in early summer.



NHLT's newest 28-acre property at East Cotton Hill and Sabolcik Roads meets all of our top criteria for preservation: it has varied and significant habitat for wildlife and plants, it adjoins already conserved land and will expand public access to hiking trails.

(Over)

NHLT's Alfred Sabolcik Preserve opened to the public for hiking in September 2018. If you haven't visited this property, it's a great place for snowshoeing this winter!



NHLT Volunteers work on trail and land management nearly every week at various properties. Above, 'pitching in' at the Alfred Sabolcik Preserve on Sabolcik Road.



Visit the volunteer-created/maintained Pollinator Garden in the spring to see native, flowering plants that bees, moths and butterflies love. They are great candidates for a home garden.

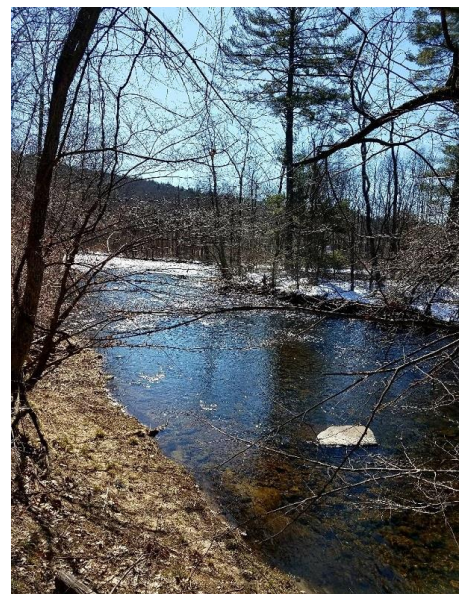


More than 90 people gathered to dedicate our Alfred Sabolcik Preserve in June 2019. Patricia Sabolcik, Skip Rogers and others shared memories of Alfred after unveiling the memorial. About 60 took guided tours.

NHLT Funding and Outreach Crucial to the Town of New Hartford's Successful Preservation of Butler Farm and the Riverfront Trail Parcel

If you enjoy walking the Helen Butler Riverfront Trail, you should know that NHLT was pivotal in making that possible! On December 9, 2019 the many hundreds of hours of NHLT volunteer time spent raising money from our generous donors, doing outreach and education, and working with the town and others culminated in accepting a conservation easement from the Town for its 8.1-acre Butler riverfront parcel.

NHLT's investment of nearly \$50,000 toward the overall project made it possible for the Town to advance it when it was stalled and preserve much of the lower peninsula between the East and West Branches of the Farmington River that will now never be developed. The 85.5-acre Butler Farm will remain agricultural in private ownership through the State's Community Farms Preservation Program and 8.1 riverfront acres acquired by the Town is conserved with hiking access to the one-mile long trail and fishing at select points along it.



**These exceptional projects have strained NHLT's resources even with grants and gifts from many. We need your support now more than ever if you are able to give! Please mail your check to:
New Hartford Land Trust, P.O. Box 272, New Hartford, CT 06057**