

Favorite Trails

People come to land conservation in many different ways. My own story begins with childhood family hikes. These were Sunday outings in nearby woods, with a little plant or bird identification and a lot of exertion. Living in Concord, I am able to indulge my fondness for nature walks on the town's extensive trail system. I like to tell new residents that one can take a daily walk in Concord for a month—literally 30 days running!—without repeating a trail and, of course, many of these trails are on land owned by the Land Trust.

Of the many reasons to conserve land—for wildlife habitat, for farming, for water resource protection—the one that often resonates the most is that conserving land creates the opportunity to experience the peace and quiet found in nature. We asked a few of our members what their favorite Land Trust trail is and why.

- Joan Ferguson, Chair

My husband and I love to walk in the Wright Woods. One of our favorite parts is the trail along the Sudbury River because the terrain is so varied.

- Ginger Lang

Update: Campaign for October Farm Riverfront

As many of you know, Town Meeting voters approved \$2 million towards the acquisition of the October Farm Riverfront—80 acres around Ball's Hill on the Concord River. Since then, CLCT has undertaken a campaign to raise the remainder needed to purchase the property. In this, the first phase of the campaign, we are obtaining pledges of leadership gifts to insure that the project can successfully move forward.

As we go to press, we are cautiously optimistic that—with your support—we will be in a position to acquire this remarkable property. You will certainly hear from us again, asking for your participation and inviting you to visit this unique property so you can see for yourself why we think its conservation is so important.

My favorite Concord Land Trust trail is at Chamberlain Woods on Lowell Road. Always a space to park, then down the trail and options to go left toward Curly Pate Hill and Carlisle, or right toward the lime quarries and Mink Pond. The perfect gateway to Estabrook Country!

- Jeff Adams

Wright Woods circle. I appreciate the historical significance of walking where Henry David Thoreau walked and listening to the descendants of the birds that he cherished - the hermit thrush, wood thrush and scarlet tanagers, whose songs ring throughout the woods.

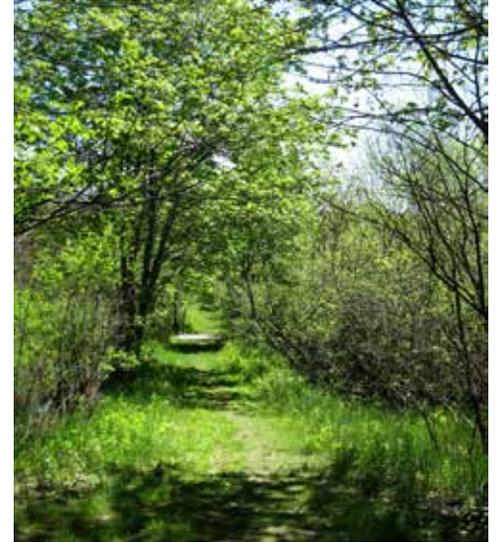
- Peter Alden

I love the quiet trail that skirts the edge of Gowing Swamp -- a very special little kettle hole bog that is shady, damp and rich in almost every season.

- Sally Schnitzer

At any time of year, the varied topography and habitats of the Wright Woods, including the Sudbury River, Grape Cliff and the Andromeda Ponds, have always provided me a special hiking experience.

- Gary Clayton



The causeway to Newbury Field

My husband and I love morning walks in and along CLCT's Nashawtuc conservation lands. The early morning mist on French's Meadow as we pass is magical. The soft grass, sunshine and singing birds in the Brengle-Ham Field lift the spirit. And then the shade of the Simon Willard Woods allows us to feel we've traveled far from civilization.

- Carmin Reiss

I am grateful for recently discovering the Brooks-Hudson meadow and its mowed path leading to the river. As I wandered through this ethereal landscape, I felt the presence of Thoreau who wrote that the wildflowers in a meadow are there to feed a man's spirit and soul.

- Bruce Fountain-Stalker

I love the Nashawtuc Hill Old Rail Trail that ends at the Sudbury River overlooking the Old Calf Pasture. Sometimes the water is so low you can walk on the field and other times so high that you can see carp splashing. And it is so wide that you can walk and chat without paying attention to where you are going (says one who on occasion does find it easy to get lost on trails).

- Anne Irza-Leggat



From a kayak on the Sudbury River, a view of Ball's Hill sloping down towards Holden Meadow

Estabrook Woods: An Unusual Story

By Sally Schnitzer and Polly Reeve

The Estabrook Woods is one of Concord's largest intact natural areas, with more than 1,400 acres of contiguous protected land. But many people who visit the Woods don't realize that most of the land is privately owned and protected from development as a result of a 60-year collaboration to support a biological reserve for research and education.

How this came about is an unusual story.

At the heart of Estabrook Woods is a 672-acre woodland preserve that is owned by Harvard University. It is administered as part of a research facility based in Bedford known as The Concord Field Station and was established in the 1960s as a result of the vision of Harvard professors Ernst Mayr and Charles Lyman, for teaching and research in the environmental sciences, zoology, ecology and animal behavior. Their efforts were aided by generous Concord residents, property owners, The Nature Conservancy and a grant from the Ford Foundation. In support of the field station the towns of Concord and Carlisle, the land trusts of Concord and Carlisle, private owners, the Trustees of Reservations

and thoughtful visitors have worked together since the 1960s to protect and steward additional areas around Harvard's land preserve within Estabrook Woods.

The town of Concord owns and manages the 100-acre Punkatasset Conservation Land. The Concord Land Conservation Trust owns and cares for 90 acres. The rest of the land in the woods in Concord—nearly 400 acres—is privately held by many separate landowners who have agreed to forgo or limit development and to protect particular conservation values through deed restrictions or conservation restrictions.

On this private land the granting of public access varies. Some private landowners have given general or limited and specific permission for access across their property. From the beginning, Harvard has generously permitted public access on its land for compatible recreation, so long as use remains modest and quiet and does not interfere with research and conservation efforts such as reintroduction of Blanding's turtles. Punkatasset and the Land Trust properties are open to the public with use regulations.

What does this all mean? When you or I enter the Estabrook Woods, we might think we are in "public conservation land," but the fact is that our hike might well be passing through land held by several different owners.

Recent conflicts over parking, dogs, and visitor impacts—particularly at the end of Estabrook Road in Concord—led to the creation of the Estabrook Woods Access Study Committee. We will make recommendations this fall about how best to provide adequate and safe parking at access points and how to address other impacts from visitor use. We welcome your perspective. We are especially interested in solutions that:

- continue to welcome visitors to the woods.
- respect the rights and generosity of landowners.
- support stewardship of the woods and its purpose for conservation, research and education.

You can contact us at estabrookcommittee@concordma.gov. All emails will be part of the public record.

- Sally Schnitzer and Polly Reeve are co-chairs on the Estabrook Woods Access Study Committee.

Views from CLCT's Spring Walk



Bloodroot



Pausing to look down on the oxbows of the Spencer Brook from the trails above.



A morel

A Hot Topic: Dogs and Conservation Land

Given recent discussions in Concord and surrounding communities regarding dogs on public land, it seemed like a good time to answer common questions about dogs on Land Trust land.

Are dogs allowed on Land Trust property? Yes, but they need to be on a leash or under voice control at all times. To you they are friendly and lovable, but please respect others enjoying conservation land who might not feel the same way.

How do dogs impact the land itself? When dogs run off trail they may dig up plants, damage



nests, and disturb wildlife. Keep your dog in sight in order to minimize this. **Why do I have to pick up after my dog? If it's off the path it's fine right? It's biodegradable.** It's biodegradable but not benign. Dog waste can carry diseases and bacteria harmful to humans, dogs and wildlife. When left to decompose, the bacteria is drawn down into our ground water supply.

How should I pick it up? Bring plastic bags with you on your walk (the ones newspapers are delivered in are great for this). Put the bag on your hand like a glove, pick up the waste, turn the bag inside out and tie a knot. Then bring it out with you and dispose of it in the trash.

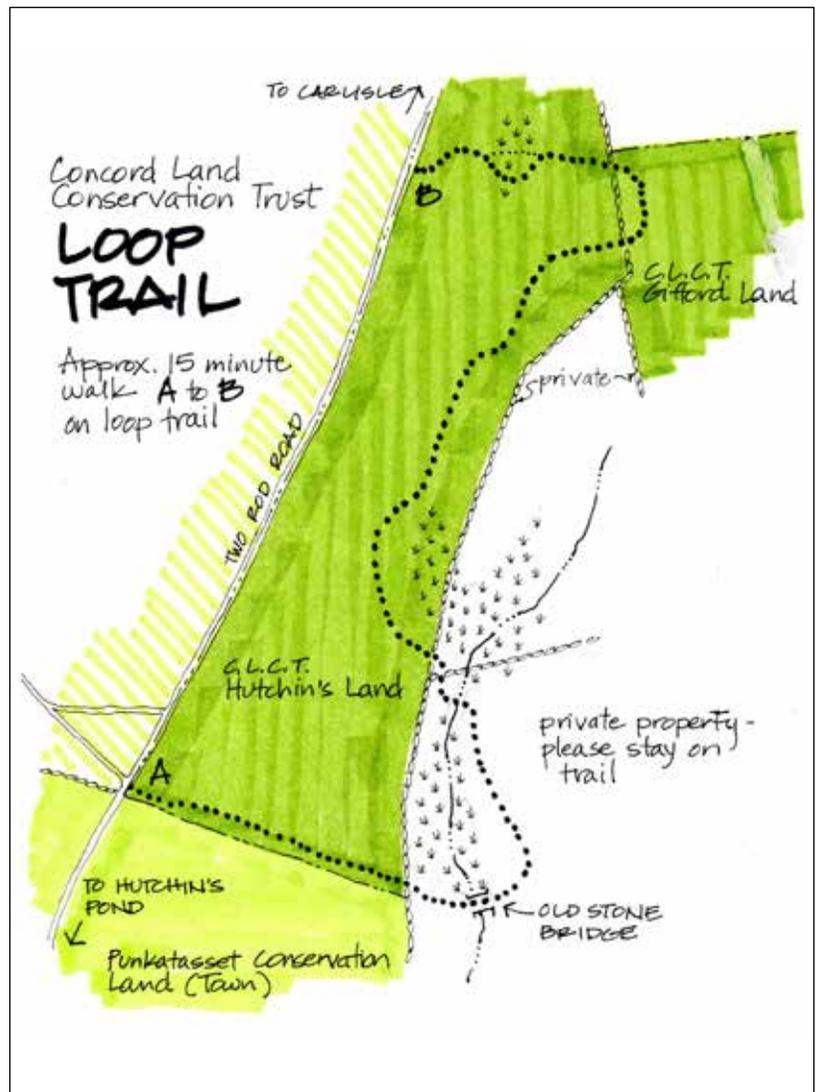
Try Our New Hutchins Loop Trail

This spring volunteers created a new trail off Two Rod Road in the Estabrook Woods. This small loop begins on the CLCT's Hutchins land which borders Two Rod Road just north of Punkatasset. The trail runs down to and then along a stream; this segment is located on private property on which CLCT holds a conservation restriction. The trail carries on through woods and then returns to Two Rod Road. Next time you're at Punkatasset, extend your walk and let us know how you enjoyed the new trail.



AMC Volunteers Help Out

In June, AMC volunteers (one of whom is pictured above) created a new trail across the Assabet Woodlot in the Nashawtuc Hill area. The trail takes walkers through a sea of ferns in summer and past widely-spaced and stately oaks—a reminder that the woods were once managed to produce fire wood. Our thanks to the AMC crew for a job well done!





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Fred Mulligan Joins the Board

The Concord Open Land Foundation welcomes Fred Mulligan as its newest board member. Fred is the Chairman of Cutler Associates, a design and construction firm out of Worcester. He has degrees in civil engineering and management.

Fred and his wife Victoria moved to Concord in 2011 after many years in the Worcester County area. They have two children, both married, and just this year added a granddaughter to their family. All are (or soon will be!) nature lovers and have spent countless hours walking in the woods, hiking mountains, and sailing on the water. The variations of conservation properties in Concord are one of the many reasons Fred and Victoria chose to live here.

Fred and Victoria have been involved in several conservation organizations and asked why they make this commitment Fred says, "As Emersonian/Thoreauvians we believe in nature, which makes joining others in protecting it a 'natural'! I am

hoping that my background as an avid naturalist, Eagle Scout and Civil Engineer will allow me to make a meaningful contribution to the land trust efforts. The impact is forever. I can imagine members of my family in the years to come paddling down the Concord River past the unspoiled October Farm Riverfront. It makes all our efforts worthwhile."



Fred, an avid outdoorsman, holding his catch of the day.

Volunteers?

We are looking for help to plan for the restoration of the Bay House site—a different type of volunteer project and one that we hope will appeal to our members with experience in planning, design, natural plantings or land management or who simply have an interest in helping to realize the opportunities of this lovely site. If you would like to participate please call Nancy Cowan at 978.369.6526 or email info@concordland.org by September 30th.

Our land manager will hold two volunteer days this fall. The first is additional trail work on the new Hutchins Loop on Wednesday, September 14 from 3:30-5:30. The second involves cleanup along the edges of the Corey-Bourquin Field on Saturday, October 15 from 10-12. Visit www.concordland.org/events for information about where to meet and what to bring.