

Mountain Views

Quarterly Newsletter of Stowe Land Trust

Summer 2009



Kirchner Woods

On April 30, 2009 Stowe Land Trust became the proud new owner of Kirchner Woods, 75 acres of mature sugar woods and well-managed forest off Taber Hill Road in Stowe Hollow. Thanks to an anonymous donor, the property is permanently conserved and will be available for many types of non-motorized recreation including hiking, mountain biking, skiing and snowshoeing. So now the work begins!

Our goal is to provide the Stowe community with an enjoyable network of trails to accommodate a wide variety of users. In the coming months, Stowe Land Trust will enhance the parking area to accommodate a few cars and formalize public access with an informational kiosk and signage.

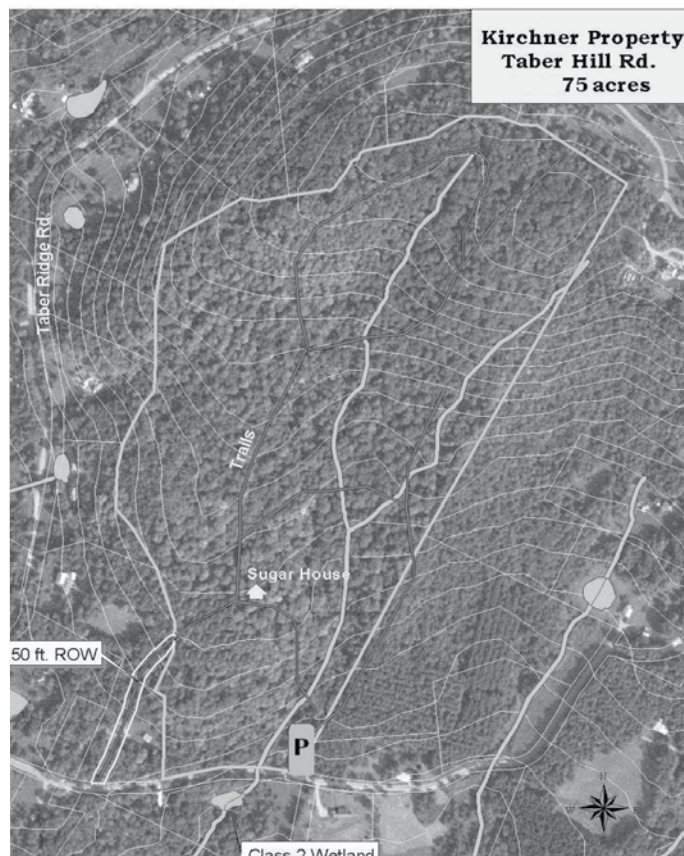
In June, a State Wetlands Biologist came out to the property and flagged the Class II Wetland located near the existing pull off on Taber Hill Road. Little River Survey Company, LLC. has agreed to donate their time to help Stowe Land Trust develop a plan for a parking area with the least amount of overall impact on the wetlands as well as one that will prove easiest to manage in the long-run.

But perhaps the most exciting project at Kirchner Woods this summer is our plan for building and enhancing trails. Stowe Land Trust has released a Request for Proposals (RFP) and plans to

select a consultant by mid-August to assist SLT with trail design and construction. We anticipate that trail work and parking area construction will begin later this summer. Stowe Land Trust will develop approximately 3 miles of trail using existing logging roads and new connector loops designed by SLT and the chosen consultant. We have had many members express interest in helping SLT manage this property and we look forward to their participation in helping to build and maintain the trails!

We included a trail building and maintenance component to the RFP so that Stowe Land Trust will be able to offer to anyone interested, an opportunity to learn some valuable trail maintenance skills from professional trail builders. Kirchner Woods is the fifth property Stowe Land Trust has acquired, and providing volunteer training is a good investment in helping SLT manage and protect these resources. If you would like to volunteer for the fall trail construction, please send an email to heather@stowelandtrust.org and we'll get your name on the growing list of volunteers.

We're excited about putting all these pieces in place, and look forward to providing enhanced public access at Kirchner Woods.



"Teaching children about the natural world should be treated as one of the most important events of their lives."

- Thomas Berry

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Stowe Land Trust is dedicated to the conservation of scenic, recreational, and productive farm and forest lands for the benefit of the greater Stowe community.

All contributions to Stowe Land Trust are tax deductible. Please become a member today.

From the Executive Director and Board Chair

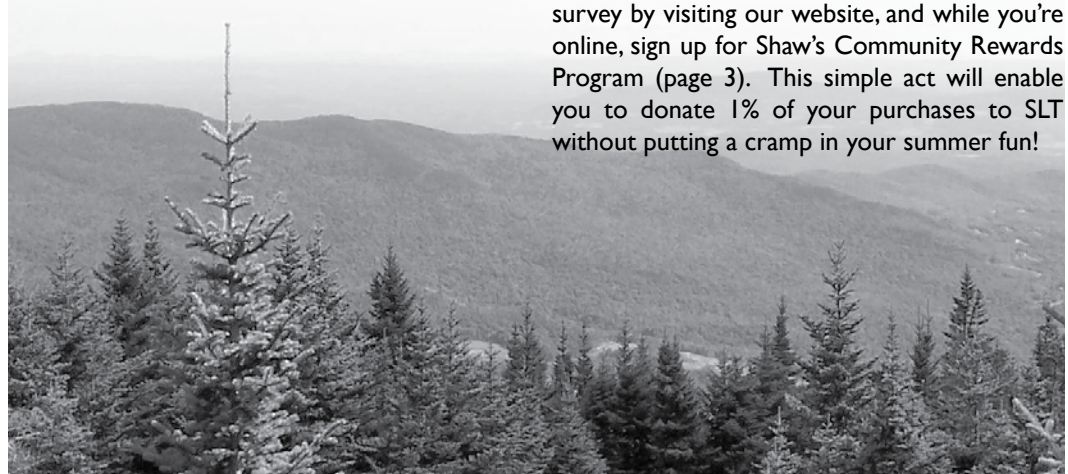


Elaine Nichols



Andrew Woods

While summer temperatures may be eluding us so far this year, the summer spirit is still alive and well at SLT. In between raindrops we have been in the field with a crew of new volunteer stewards actively managing our conserved lands. From Wiessner Woods to Kirchner Woods 'tis the season to build trails, repair our historic structures, provide enhanced public access and learn about the critters and creepers that we don't want hanging around. In this issue, check out our Community page to learn about all the great programs and activities we're offering this summer and how you can become involved.



If your summer schedule has you tied up, there are other great ways to lend a hand. Your views are very important to us and we urge you to fill out the enclosed Members Survey. Your voice is essential to helping SLT plan its future activities and offer programs that suit your needs and interests. You can find an electronic link to the survey by visiting our website, and while you're online, sign up for Shaw's Community Rewards Program (page 3). This simple act will enable you to donate 1% of your purchases to SLT without putting a cramp in your summer fun!

We Want to Hear From You! Fill Out SLT's Membership Survey

Your feedback is important to us. Member input on Stowe Land Trust's strategic direction is vitally important to making smart conservation decisions.

So, where do you find inspiration? Is there a scenic vista or a working farm that you'd like to see permanently protected? Are trails and wildlife habitat important to you?

We have embarked on a strategic planning process that will help guide our decision making over the next several years. This is your opportunity to let your voice be heard. Tell us what you think by filling out the 2009 Members Survey enclosed in this newsletter.

Thank you for your thoughts!



The 2009 Members Survey is also available online.
Visit www.stowelandtrust.org and look for the link on our home page.

Outdoors With the Next Generation of Volunteers



getting enough sleep, the Branton family make it a point to spend as much time outside as possible.

Philip and Ellen live with their two children Emily and Avery (AJ) in Washington DC with a myriad of pets including two cats, several hermit crabs and their horse, Spurt. In 2007, they purchased a condo in Stowe so that their family could spend more time in Vermont. Always up for a leisurely stroll or snowshoe, they spend a lot of time at their favorite Stowe Land Trust property, Wiessner Woods.

When asked why he enjoys being outside, AJ says that he likes "making cool discoveries like finding a lizard as I did with Heather, Angus and my dad. I also like to catch frogs in the frog pond off Weeks Hill Rd."

The Branton family supports Stowe Land Trust's mission to protect our natural and cultural resources because they see access to nature on a regular basis as an important way

to maintain balance in people's lives. Spending time outdoors stimulates each of the senses, allows for creative expression and instills confidence in youth and adults.

Phil and AJ have decided to combine their love of being outside with their commitment to land conservation by volunteering as stewards for the newly acquired SLT property, Kirchner Woods.

"Lead by example!" is what Phil recommends to other parents interested in getting their children excited about the outdoors and volunteering. After all, according to Louv, "nature needs its children: where else will its future stewards come from?" While AJ sees a pop music career in his future more so than science, he intends to use his fame to speak for the 'small people', which will undoubtedly include the frogs, snakes and spiders.



Richard Louv, in his book *Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children From Nature-Deficit Disorder*, states that "most scientists today began their careers as children chasing bugs and snakes, collecting spiders, and feeling awe in the presence of nature." Well aware of this notion that children's connection to nature is as important as eating healthy and



Stowe Land Trust would like to thank the skilled volunteers who participated in the Wiessner Woods Work Day on Saturday, June 6th. Visitors to Wiessner will see that among the many tasks completed that day - there are new bog bridges, drainage improvements, and trail markers. Delicious bag lunches were provided by Edelwiess Mountain Deli and the right tools for the job were donated by Green Mountain Club.

Thank You!

Put your Shaw's Rewards Card to Work for Stowe Land Trust!

Stowe Land Trust has partnered with Shaw's Supermarkets in their Community Rewards Program.

By using your rewards card when you shop at Shaw's on Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday - 1% of your eligible purchases will be donated to Stowe Land Trust.

If you have a Shaw's Rewards Card, simply go to www.shaws.com/communityrewards to sign up. Specify that your purchases should be credited to SLT (ID# 49001021390).

Other participating organizations in Vermont have raised over \$15,000 to date with the Community Rewards Program - help us make this program work for land conservation in our community by signing up today!



Stowe Land Trust's 10th Annual Golf Tournament and Calcutta Social

Stowe Land Trust's 10th Annual Invitational Golf Tournament is shaping up to be the best ever!

Festivities begin at the Commodores Inn the night before the tournament. Guests and golfers will enjoy complimentary hors d'oeuvres and a cash bar while getting a sneak peek at the team pairings. You have a chance to win big in the Calcutta by betting on your favorite team. Last year's winnings amounted to over \$4,500!

The Calcutta Social is \$25 per person for those not registered to play in the tournament. Attendance at the reception following the tournament is included in this fee.

On tournament day, the course will be played in an 18 hole scramble format, with four person teams selected by the SLT Golf Committee. The entry fee is \$175 per golfer.

Free cocktails, hors d'oeuvres, and a demonstration by the talented and entertaining Dave Bennett from Spruce Peak are just some of the great reasons to attend this event.



Wednesday, August 5, 2009
Calcutta Social 6:00 - 7:30 pm
Commodores Inn

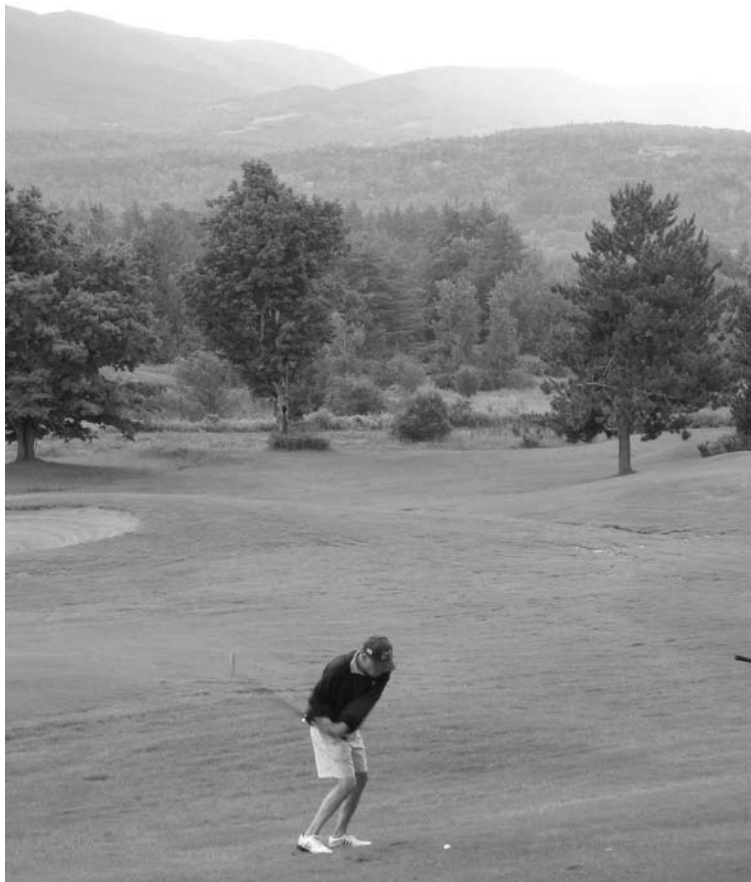
Thursday, August 6, 2009
West Hill Golf Course
Tournament Registration 11 am
Shotgun Start at Noon
Reception to follow 5:30 - 7:30 pm

Join SLT at the reception following the tournament for a toast and 10th anniversary cake from The Cakery. Be sure to participate in the raffle for your chance to win prizes from a number of local businesses and restaurants. The reception is only \$25 per person if you are not registered to play in the tournament.

For those of you who haven't participated in SLT's golf tournament, this is your opportunity to play the private West Hill Golf Course - a stunning 9 hole course with sweeping views of the Little River valley. This event helps support Stowe Land Trust's mission to conserve our community's natural beauty. We look forward to seeing you on the links!

Space in the tournament fills up fast - so call or send in your registration today!

For more information contact Stowe Land Trust at 802.253.7221 or, becca@stowelandtrust.org.



3rd Annual Benefit Bake A Satisfying Success!

For the third straight year, **Pie in the Sky's** Benefit Bake proved to be a success story for the Stowe community. Friends of Stowe Land Trust showed up in remarkable numbers to show their support for land conservation by eating pizza!

Skip and Susan Verchot, new owners of **Pie in the Sky**, have carried on the tradition of supporting local organizations by holding the Benefit Bake this year commemorating the lighting of the brick pizza oven. **By generously donating 100% of the entire day's pizza sales, this event raised over \$1,800 for Stowe Land Trust!**

"This is a great event for Stowe Land Trust because we can promote a local business who in turn makes it easy for the community to show their support for Stowe Land Trust" says Becca Washburn, SLT's Assistant Director.

Skip and Susan deserve a huge thank you, along with their hard working kitchen, wait and hosting staff. Stowe Land Trust would also like to thank everyone who came out to eat pizza and contributed to a tremendously successful day for land conservation.



What's Going On?

Summer & Fall Activities with Stowe Land Trust

The Good, Bad & Ugly: Native and Invasive Plants

Pinnacle Meadow - Saturday, July 25th 8 - 11 am

Bring your hand lens and field guide to identify the native and invasive plants at Pinnacle Meadow. Naturalist, Kim Komer, will identify different species, describe their history & adaptations for growth, and competition for surviving within the plant world.

Fee: \$10 for SLT or LCNRC members, \$15 for non-members.



SLT's 10th Annual Invitational Golf Tournament & Calcutta Social

Wednesday, August 5th & Thursday, August 6th

See article on page 4 for details. Space is limited so send in your registration today!

River Walk: A Manager's Perspective

Stowe Rec Path (Tobe Reed Park) - Saturday, August 22nd 8 - 11 am

Participants will get a basic overview of the changing nature of a river channel, the importance of river banks and buffers, and what management options are used to protect soil resources. This is a great opportunity for landowners with river frontage who are interested in learning more about how to coexist with the dynamic nature of rivers.

Fee: \$10 for SLT or LCNRC members, \$15 for non-members.

Mill Trail Work Day

Saturday, September 12th 9 am - noon

Join SLT staff and volunteers for a work day at the historic Mill Trail property where we will be doing work on the trail to Bingham Falls. Be sure to bring water and wear work clothes, sturdy shoes and gloves. Lunch will be provided so please RSVP.

Bats, Biodiesel and the Barnyard: A series of talks hosted by the VT Ski Museum, Stowe Free Library and Stowe Land Trust.

Ski Museum - Thursday, September 10th 7 - 9 pm

Sure, it's not your typical grouping of subjects but it isn't your typical partnership either. With so many interesting topics to cover and so little time, we decided to collaborate on developing this series. Rose Paul, Director of Science & Stewardship for The Nature Conservancy will kick off the series with a talk about Indiana Bats and the deadly White Nosed Syndrome that has killed thousands of bats in Vermont. Be sure to join us for the first in an engaging series of talks to be held in September. Call Stowe Land Trust or sign up for our email list at www.stowelandtrust.org for details regarding this series.



Through the generosity of talented local businesses, Stowe Land Trust has made great strides in restoring the historic cabin built by Margaruite Lichtenthaeler and Helen Day Montenari located on the Mill Trail property owned by Stowe Land Trust.

A crew from Patterson & Smith Construction worked through the winter to re-shingle the cabin's cedar roof. By working with Patterson & Smith Construction who offered to donate much of the cost of the labor, Stowe Land Trust saved over \$10,000.

After visiting the site to offer a cost estimate, local masons from Pyramid Stoneworks were intrigued by the craftsmanship that went into building the cabin and offered to repair the fieldstone chimney and the second floor fireplace at no cost to Stowe Land Trust.

Now that the immediate threat to the upper cabin has been addressed, Stowe Land Trust will be working to develop a master plan including design recommendations that combine the historic qualities of the cabin with the need for modern infrastructure.

If you would like to get involved in work to restore this magnificent property, please contact SLT or plan to attend our work day on Sat. September 12th from 9 am - noon.



Trapp Family Lodge and The Adams Camp Conserved Lands

At the time Stowe Land Trust was embarking on its fourth conservation project, the 1,000+ acre easement donation by Trapp Family Lodge was one of the largest of its kind in Vermont. Johannes von Trapp, a founding member of Stowe Land Trust, recognized this donation to SLT in 1995 as an opportunity “to give something back”. Protection of this property guaranteed the rich cultural and recreational history of Stowe would remain an important part of the landscape.

Later, in 2006, Stowe Land Trust worked with Johannes von Trapp to negotiate the purchase of a conservation easement to protect the 513 acre Adams Camp property. Located on the eastern flanks of the Green Mountains, the Adams Camp property is tucked between Trapp Family Lodge’s 1,000+ acres of conserved land and the existing Mansfield State Forest where it has long played an important role in the much larger Mt. Mansfield ecosystem. Known as a recreation haven for skiers, hikers, and hunters it is also part of the historic Ranch Valley, which was, literally, the birthplace of skiing in Stowe.

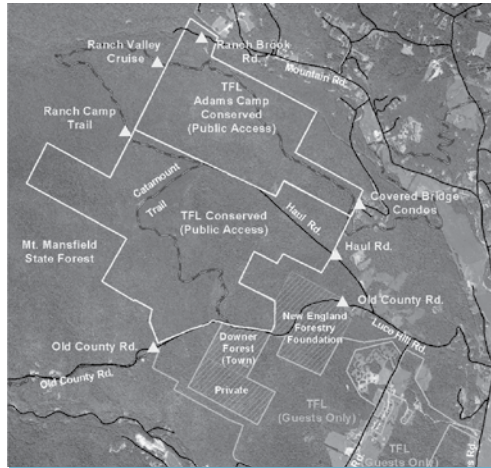
Currently, the Adams Camp parcel is at the center of planning for a mountain bike ride center that, when complete, would include a system of trails extending from Little River State Park in Waterbury to the Stowe Mountain Resort Touring Center.

Tom Jackman, Stowe’s Planning Director, sees the Vermont Mountain Bike Ride Center (VM-BRC) “as having great potential for public outdoor recreation while serving as an economic driver for the area”. A project steering committee made up of representatives from Trapp Family Lodge, the Stowe Conservation Commission, the Stowe Recreation & Planning Departments, Stowe Land Trust, and the Stowe Mountain Bike Club is working with a consultant to develop a master plan for the Stowe portion of the VMBRC.

The Town of Stowe has hired Broadleaf Planning & Design to prepare a master plan for the Adams Camp portion of the ride center. The project will result in a detailed trails plan for 5+ miles of single-track trails as well as a plan for improving access to the property and for developing appropriate signage. The master plan will be completed by mid-August with the intention that trail construction will begin either in the fall or next spring.

Traditional recreational uses of the conserved portion of Trapp Family Lodge and the Adams Camp property include hiking, hunting, snowshoeing, and cross country skiing. As part of the master planning effort for the Stowe portion of the VMBRC, Stowe Land Trust is working to enhance awareness of public access locations for both Adams Camp and the conserved portion of the Trapp Family Lodge property.

Stowe Land Trust is working with the Trapp Family Lodge on signage to be installed at the appropriate public access locations. In the meantime, SLT has developed a map, available on our website, showing the different points of access available to the public. Please stop by our office at 699 South Main Street in the Lower Village or feel free to print the map from our website.



For a map and more information about public access to the conserved Trapp Family Lodge and Adams Camp properties please visit our website: www.stowelandtrust.org



Transplants

INVADE Vermont!

They made their way to Vermont by water, air and even livestock. Some have become icons of the New England landscape while others have stealthily made their way from our backyard gardens into the wild. According to information compiled by the Vermont Invasive Exotic Plants Committee (VIEPC), approximately one third of all plant species in Vermont are not native. The Vermont state flower, red clover, was naturalized from Northern Europe and has several aesthetic and economic benefits. However, VIEPC reports that approximately 8% of these non-natives have negative environmental and economic impacts because they grow rapidly and spread widely and profusely. Once established, these invasive plants out-compete native populations eventually eliminating native or naturalized plant species.

One might find themselves wondering why invasive plants are seen as a problem. Isn't this part of a natural cycle - the expansion and contraction of populations? Since plants' adaptation to change takes many thousands of years, the transportation of plants outside their native environment introduces them to areas with few if any competitors. While this can be seen as part of a natural cycle, the rapid movement of these plants around the globe accelerates the process. Two of the most common invasive plants that have demonstrated a negative impact on our local landscape are shrubby honeysuckle, and Japanese knotweed.

Shrubby Honeysuckle

These shrubs have oval shaped opposite leaves with pale yellow or pink flowers that produce red, orange or yellow berries. Shrubby honeysuckles are found most often in fields, hedgerows, and forest and wetland edges. This shrub out competes native plants by forming a dense



understory shading out other plants. Seeds are easily spread by birds and small mammals making this plant difficult to control. Hand pulling is an effective control method for light infestations. Cutting or burning should take place in early spring or early fall to reduce seed sources. Control methods should be repeated for 3- 5 years to inhibit growth of new shoots.

Japanese Knotweed

This is an extremely fast growing herbaceous perennial that can grow up to 6 feet tall with stalks resembling bamboo and broad ovate leaves. Tiny white flowers develop in clusters during August and September. This plant is most commonly found



in recently disturbed open areas - particularly river banks. The spread of Japanese knotweed is largely by growth and transport of rhizomes (underground stems) and rhizome fragments. Populations of this plant create habitat vacuums because of the lack of food or nesting opportunities. Small patches can be controlled by smothering with black plastic. Larger populations have responded to combined mechanical and chemical control.

Taking Action

The Stowe Conservation Commission recently sought advice from The Nature Conservancy to learn how to control the spread of invasive species on Town owned lands, particularly in riparian areas. Sharon Plumb, Invasive Species Coordinator for The Nature Conservancy, has worked with several communities to develop strategies for controlling invasive species. She recommended hiring a forester certified in pesticide application to implement a combined method of mechanical and chemical control which has a proven 95% control rate for Japanese knotweed in the first year.

Work begins this summer at the Moscow Recreation Field, a 4.7 acre property conserved by Stowe Land Trust in 1998, with a significant stretch of river frontage that has been all but taken over by Japanese knotweed and shrubby honeysuckle. The Stowe Conservation Commission plans to address the invasive honeysuckle in a later phase of this project. The Recreation Department plans to mow the knotweed this month to ensure plants are at the optimum height for safe application of the herbicide in August. Herbicide applied closer to the river will be applied to the plant stalk with a dropper to further reduce chances of compromising water quality. Negative impacts to water quality were reportedly of great concern to the Stowe Conservation Commission. Danielle Fitzko, Chair of the Commission said they "discussed mechanical versus chemical control extensively and ultimately the greater control rate of the chemical method and the recommended precautions prevailed."

The Town of Stowe does not have to be alone in its fight to control harmful invasive plants. By knowing the plants in your backyard, removing invasives, and planting native species you can help too. There are many attractive native plant alternatives available at local nurseries. By attending the upcoming workshop with the Lamoille County Natural Resource Conservation District you can learn more about invasive species identification, native plant alternatives and gain a better understanding of invasive species in your area. We hope to see you there!

The Good, Bad & Ugly:

Native and Invasive Plants

Pinnacle Meadow - Sat. July 25th 8 - 11 am
Please call SLT for details or directions.

Plant illustrations are from USDA-NRCS PLANTS database / Britton, N.L., and A. Brown. 1913. An illustrated flora of the northern United States, Canada and the British Possessions. Vol. 3: 282. Plant descriptions and control methods are from the VT Invasive Exotic Plant Fact Sheet developed by VT Agency of Natural Resources and The Nature Conservancy. 1998. Revised 2003.



Stowe Land Trust Board of Directors & Staff. Front Row L-R: Heather Furman, Gerry Griffin, Cliff Johnson, Charlotte Brynn, Lainie Nichols, Barb Getty, Becca Washburn. Back Row L-R: Richard Hennessey, Tom Jackman, Kevin D'Arcy, Alan Thorndike, Emeritus Director, Trowbridge Elliman, David Hosmer, Billy Coster, Harry Hunt, Erin Bruhns. Not pictured: Michael Snyder, Elizabeth Squier, Ashley Sargent, Gaetano Vicinelli, Andrew Woods, Charlie Berry and Emeritus Directors, John Merrill, Merton Pike and John McVickar. Photo by Matt Bruhns.



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