



Greensboro Land Trust Newsletter



No. 23

Visit our website at www.greensborolandtrust.org

2018

GLT Annual Meeting, Monday, July 30

All are welcome at our annual meeting, scheduled for **Monday, July 30 at 7:30 p.m.** in Fellowship Hall. Following a short GLT business meeting, three Greensboro residents operating on conserved land will form a panel discussing how land conservation fits into the town's future. The three are **Sister Gail Worcelo**, founder of the Green Mountain Monastery; **Todd Hardie**, owner of Thornhill Farm; and **Andy Kehler**, owner with his brother Mateo of the Cheese Cellars at Jasper Hill.

Please join us after the meeting for light refreshments.

Lumsden Farm to Be Conserved with VLT

The dairy operated since 1969 by Larry and Sherral Lumsden, on the road to Barr Hill, is one of Greensboro's last and most iconic farms. Larry's parents bought the farm in 1945, pasturing their cattle over Baker Hill down to Craftsbury Road. Buying the farm from his father, Larry operates on a reduced area but milks several times as many registered Holsteins—at last count, sixty.

As Larry neared retirement he spoke with the Vermont Land Trust about selling it a conservation easement to keep the farm in operation. Fortunately the Freeman Foundation was willing to add the farm to many it has helped conserve in Greensboro. The GLT added a modest contribution.

The VLT helped recruit a young farmer, Andrew Whitney (right, below), who has started working with Larry (left) and plans to take over the farm this fall.

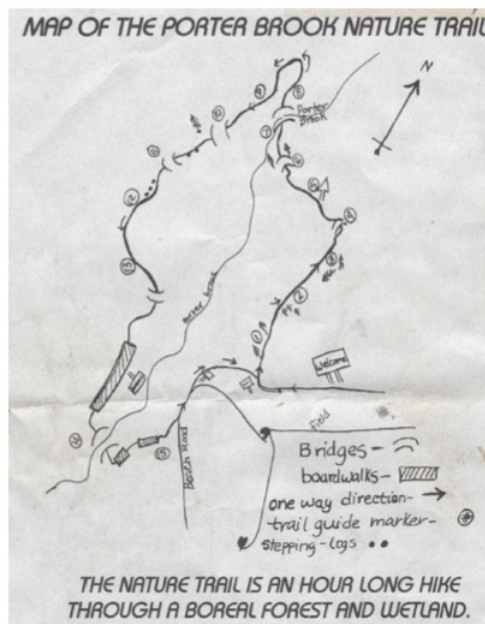


GLT Funds Restoration of Porter Brook Nature Trail

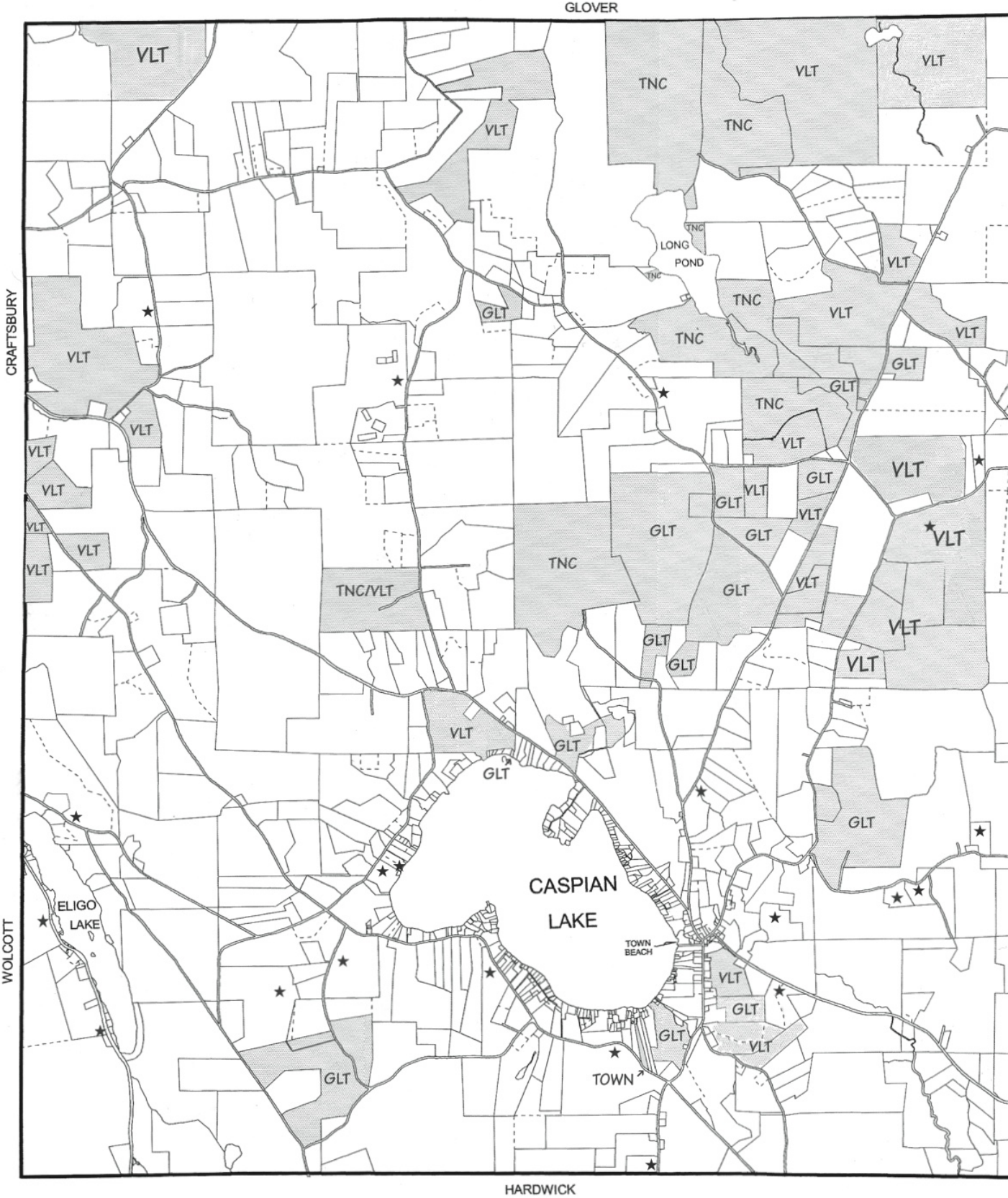
Porter Brook feeds Caspian Lake next to the Highland Lodge beach. In 1996 naturalist Cheryl Ecklund developed a self-guided nature trail along a cross-country ski trail established by David and Willie Smith in 1972/73. The trail was equipped with bridges and boardwalks and featured 15 directional posts along with an explanatory booklet.

For the next 15 years the trail hosted many visitors in both winter and summer. Apart from Greensboro residents these included Lodge guests, environmental groups and children's camps. However the bridges and boardwalks have served their economic lives, and safety considerations have forced the Lodge to close the trail pending its rehabilitation.

In April 2018 the Lodge's new owners obtained estimates of the work to be done, including preparation of a new map by a scientific illustrator. The GLT has agreed to raise \$20,775 in exchange for an easement ensuring public access to the trail in perpetuity. The work will be performed by a crew from the North Woods Stewardship Center in Charleston. It is hoped to reopen the trail by August 2018.



Cheryl Ecklund's original map



About GLT

The GLT is a partnership of Greensboro-area people working together to ensure that, as Vermont steadily changes, important land in Greensboro is not lost to development forever. We help farm families conserve productive agricultural land for future generations, preserving not only our heritage but also our economic future. We protect forestland that supports a healthy wood products industry and sustains habitat critical for moose, black bear, songbirds, deer and other wildlife. We help to permanently protect irreplaceable fields, woods and shoreline in Greensboro essential for recreation and scenic enjoyment.

All this is done while recognizing the need for town planning that allocates portions of the landscape to residential and commercial uses.

GLT Board

Lise Armstrong • Bob Fairbanks, vice-chair
Clive Gray, chair • Nancy Hill • David Kelley
Erika Karp • Hugh Knox • Mary Landon
Jennifer Lucas • Mike Metcalf
David Miltenberger, treasurer
Naomi Ranz-Schleifer
Nat Smith, secretary • Lee Wright • Rick Yeiser

GLT Advisory Committee

John Cannon • Sara Cavin • Kyle Gray
Lucy Keefe • Anna Kehler • Jon Ramsa
McAllister Smith • Jim Sowles
Jim Sutton

Conserving Your Land

Using legal tools called "conservation easements" or "grants of development rights," we help landowners to voluntarily limit development while keeping the land open for forestry, farming, and recreation. The property remains in private ownership with the peace of mind that it is protected now and in perpetuity. The landowner decides whether to allow public access.

Easement donations qualify as charitable contributions for federal income and estate tax purposes, but do not necessarily reduce property taxes. In 2015 Congress made permanent a concession whereby easement donations can be deducted from adjusted gross income (AGI) at a rate up to 50% of AGI per annum, and spread over 15 years, as opposed to 30 percent and five years for other charitable contributions.

We work with landowners who love their land and want to see it conserved. The GLT buys and accepts gifts of development rights. We have shared nine projects with the Vermont Land Trust (VLT), which receives funding from The Vermont Housing and Conservation Board, the Freeman Foundation, and private donors. But mainly we rely on funds raised from residents and friends of Greensboro. In 2017, households donated \$35,340.

We talk regularly with potential conservators, and incur expenses for appraisals, surveys, purchase of easements, and monitoring. You can help by sending your tax-deductible contribution to **GLT, PO Box 135, Greensboro, VT 05841**.

Call any trustee or Advisory Committee member with questions. Our website, www.greensborolandtrust.org, provides details and photos of conserved land.

Town of Greensboro, Vermont

Our map of Greensboro illustrates the lands conserved by the Greensboro Land Trust, The Nature Conservancy, the Vermont Land Trust, and the Town of Greensboro. It shows all residences constructed in the past ten years. No residences were constructed in 2017.

Map key

Conserved areas, shaded, comprise the 44 parcels listed below. Total conserved area amounts to 7.4 square miles (= 4,710 acres), or 20% of total town area of 36.7 mi².

1. GLT's 17 conservation easements, totaling 1,122 acres: Buckley, Circus Smirkus, Cleveland, Dean, Downing, Edsall (2 easements), Shaun & Darren Hill, Warren Hill, Kehler, Knox, Mann, McGrath (2 easements), Paterson-Brown, Perham, and St. Louis. Subsequent to the original easements, Cleveland, Dean, Mann, Kehler, Warren Hill, Paterson-Brown and Perham have acquired parcels conserved by previous owners (Sullivan, Clive Gray family, Buckley, Lewis & Nancy Hill, Pinkney and von Hessert.)

2. Long Pond (767 acres) & Barr Hill (254 acres) Natural Areas, owned by The Nature Conservancy (TNC).

3. 30-acre "Greensboro Green," 362-acre ex-Murdock property on Glover town line, and 30-acre ex-Brassknocker parcel on Craftsbury Road, owned by Vermont Land Trust (VLT).

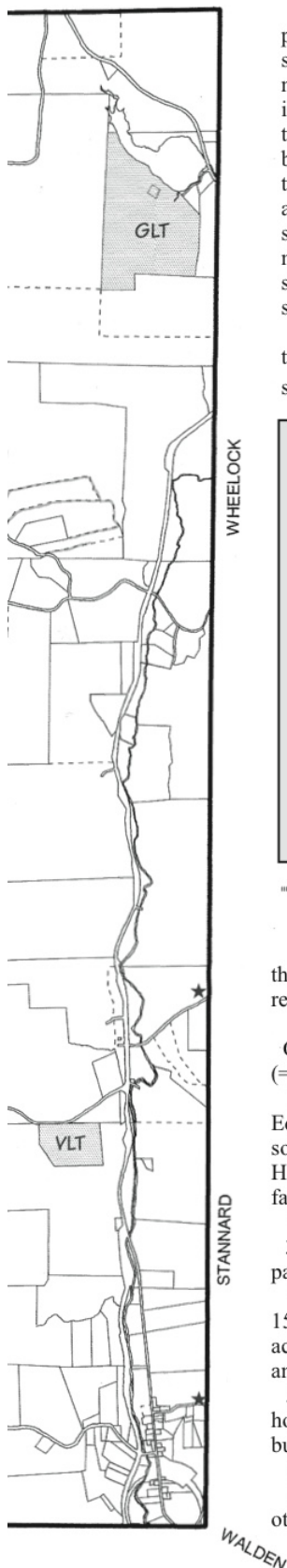
4. Nine VLT easements to which GLT has contributed: two Todd Hardie farms (ex-York & ex-Fontaine--260 & 157 acres); two Shaun & Darren Hill farms (73 & 207 acres); Kehler farm (51 acres); Murdock homestead (150 acres); Lowell Urie farm (of which 145 acres in Greensboro); Black Hills tract (of which 189 acres in Greensboro); and Highland Lodge (76 acres).

5. Nine other VLT easements: Shatney farm (313 acres); Shatney hayfield in Greensboro Bend (34 acres); ex-York homestead, now owned by Circostas (85 acres); Kehler lot on Garvin Hill Rd. (37 acres); & five parcels on Craftsbury town line, totaling 323 acres.

6. Former Barton Homestead Trust on Gebbie Road (now owned by John Downing--121 acres); and

7. Two 3.5-acre strips owned by the Town of Greensboro, one on Lake Shore Road donated by Currier & Dill, the other next to the town beach, purchased by the town with federal assistance.

■ Conserved land ★ Residence constructed in past 10 years





Green Mountain Monastery (GMM) Conserving 148 Acres

On behalf of the GMM's five sisters, Gail Worcelo, Bernadette Bostwick, Amie Hendani, Kris Prasetyo and Bing Carranza, the GLT has applied to the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board (VHCB) to fund two-thirds of the value of a conservation easement on most of the GMM's 157 acres, located on Hillcrest Road in North Greensboro. VHCB is the source of state funds for conservation. Support for the GMM easement will be VHCB's first conservation grant in Greensboro (in 2011 it approved a contribution to the Greensboro Historical Society).



Green Mountain Monastery seen from FNEP drone; labyrinth in foreground, hermitage on the right, main buildings in background

GMM, GLT & UVM Collaborate on Naturalist Study

Last summer a team of five M.A. students from the Univ. of Vermont's Field Naturalist & Ecological Planning Program (FNEP), guided by Senior Lecturer/Vermont Land Trust chair Walter Poleman, conducted a study of the Green Mountain Monastery. Their report covers the natural communities, hydrology, soils, wildlife and historical land use of the former farmland on Hillcrest Road, now 95% forest, which the GMM acquired in 2004.

The FNEP project was the subject of two page-one articles in the *Hardwick Gazette*. The UVM team presented their report at a public meeting in the monastery on September 16



GLT members and GMM sisters (in front) gather in monastery Great Room before hike to Paine Brook

Events Marking GLT's 25th Anniversary year, 2017

GLT Canoeists Hear Song Birds on Horse Pond

On June 17, birder John Schweizer (see photo below), who spoke about Greensboro's song birds at the GLT's 2016 annual meeting, led four canoes around Horse Pond on Route 16, observing and hearing nearly 20 species, including tree and barn swallows, ducks, gulls, phoebes, flycatchers, cedar waxwings, yellow warblers, redwing blackbirds, & kingfishers.



John Schweizer (in bow) guides GLT visitors over Horse Pond

GLT hikers tour Todd Hardie's Thornhill Farm, N. Greensboro



Todd Hardie (7th from right) shows GLT members his 18-acre barley field on Garvin Hill Road

Turning his attention to agriculture, Todd Hardie, founder of Caledonia Spirits in Hardwick, now runs Thornhill Farm on 416 acres in North Greensboro. The holding, comprising two former dairy farms, was conserved by the Vermont Land Trust in 2002 and 2016, with support from the Freeman Foundation, the Town of Greensboro and the GLT. Todd is growing elderberries, winter rye and barley, which he supplies to the Caledonia distillery.