



Greensboro Land Trust Newsletter



No. 26

Visit our website at www.greensborolandtrust.org

May, 2021

GLT Annual Meeting, Monday, August 2

As this newsletter is prepared, we can't be sure of holding any kind of public gathering this summer, but if conditions permit, the GLT's annual meeting will take place at **7:30 on Monday, August 2, in Fellowship Hall, Greensboro.** The featured speaker will be Audubon Vermont's executive director, David Mears. He will talk about Audubon's efforts to protect habitat on working lands, along rivers, wetlands and deltas and their programs for bird-friendly communities and maple-friendly forests.

Green Mountain Monastery Conserves 133 Acres

On December 11 the Green Mountain Monastery (GMM), located on Hillcrest Road in North Greensboro, conserved 133 of its 153 acres with the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board (VHCB), The Nature Conservancy (TNC), and the GLT. Ninety-five percent of the land is forest. It is bounded on two sides by tributaries of the Lamoille River, Sawmill and Paine Brooks.

Sisters Gail Worcelo and Bernadette Bostwick, who founded



Green Mountain Monastery

the monastery in 2004, have renamed themselves Sisters of the Earth Community. They have been joined subsequently by Amelia Hendani and Kris Prasetyo from Indonesia.

As its first conservation easement in Greensboro, the VHCB contributed two thirds of the easement's \$100,000 cost. TNC, after discovering a rare northern cedar forest near the monastery's southeastern border, donated the stewardship fee and agreed to co-hold the easement as part of its biodiversity mission. This represents TNC's third project in Greensboro, complementing the Barr Hill and Long Pond Natural Areas.

Also contributing to the easement were the Green Mountain Fund of the Vermont Community Foundation, and the GLT's donor-advised Mary Downing Witherbee Fund. Finally, our Selectboard contributed \$2,000 from the Greensboro Conservation Fund.

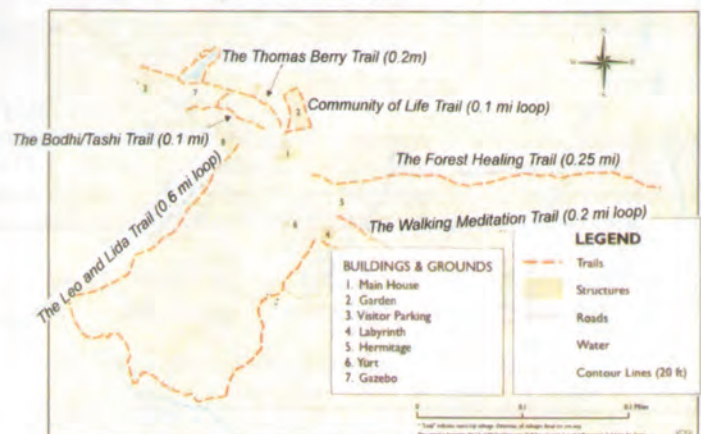


Closing on 12/11/20: Sister Amie Hendani; Jon Binhammer, TNC; Attorney Kristina Michelsen (behind window); Sister Gail Worcelo; Attorney Zarina Suarez O'Hagin (standing); Clive Gray, chair, GLT



Green Mountain Monastery Trails Map

Welcome to the Green Mountain Monastery! We hope you enjoy your time here. The monastery offers a number of short, peaceful trails for visitors to enjoy. Please stay on the trails, take only pictures, and leave only footprints. Thank you for visiting!

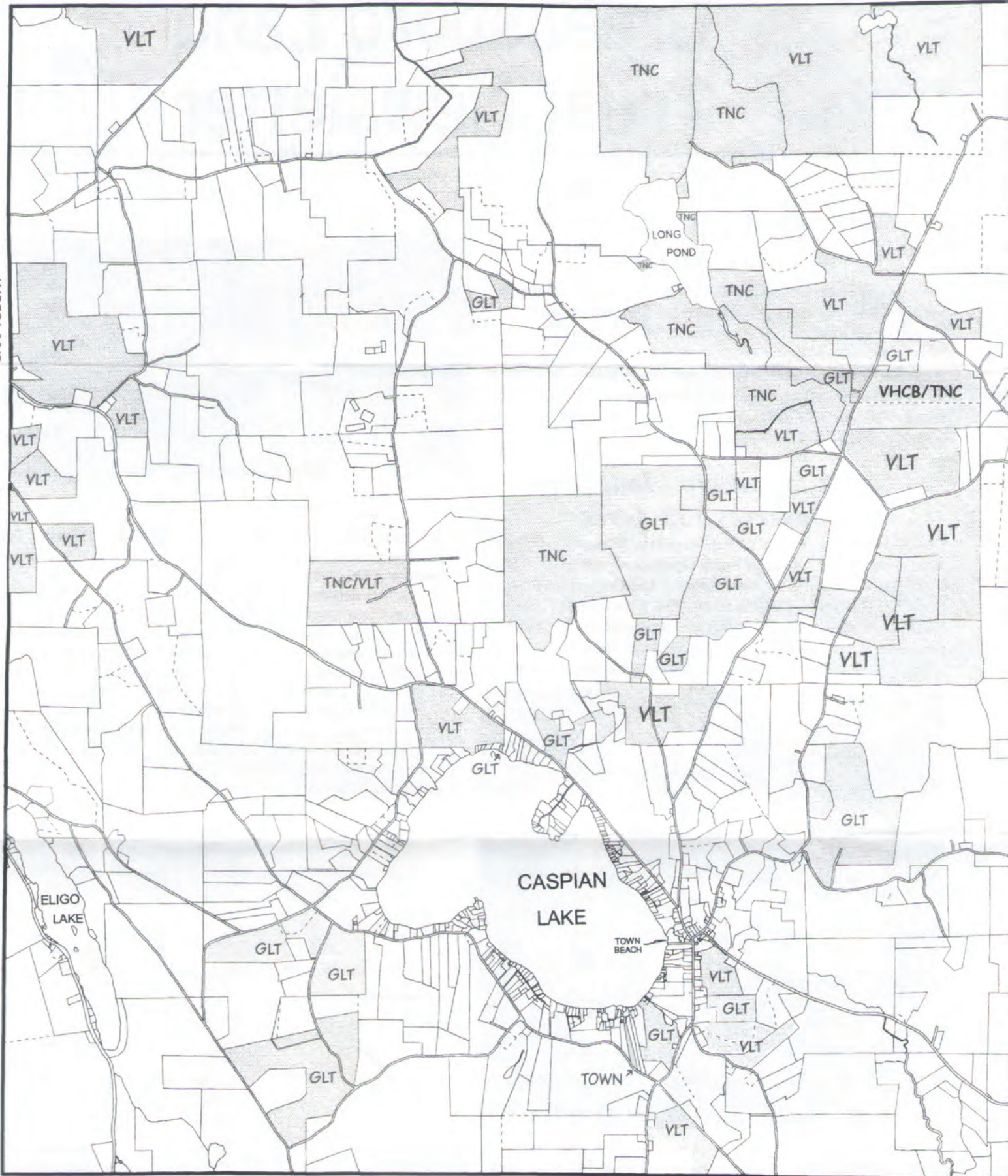


Visitors are welcome to the 1.3 miles of trails on the GMM

GLOVER

CRAFTSBURY

WOLCOTT



HARDWICK

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 • Palma Bickford, Treasurer
• John Cannon, vice-chair • Bob Fairbanks
Clive Gray, chair • Kyle Gray • Nancy Hill
Erika Karp, secretary • Jennifer Lucas
Mike Metcalf • Nancy Sullivan
Lee Wright • Rick Yeiser

GLT Advisory Committee

Devin Burgess • Alison Gardner
Larry Lumsden • John Mackin
Naomi Ranz-Schleifer • Willie Smith
Anne Stevens • Jim Sutton • Mary White

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, giving peace of mind that it is protected in perpetuity. The landowner decides whether to allow public access.

Easement donations qualify as charitable contributions for federal income and estate tax purposes, but ordinarily do not affect liability for real estate taxes.

In 2020, 80 households donated \$14,480 for the GLT's operations.

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% and five years for other charitable contributions.

We are volunteers and work with landowners who love their land and want to see it conserved. The GLT buys development rights or accepts them as gifts. We have shared eleven 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.

We 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 (GLT), The Nature Conservancy (TNC), the Vermont Land Trust (VLT), the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board (VHCB), and the Town of Greensboro.

Map key

Conserved areas, shaded, comprise the 47 parcels listed below. Total conserved area amounts to 8.4 square miles (= 5,350 acres), or 23% of total town area of 36.7 mi².

1. GLT's 19 conservation easements, totaling 1,250 acres: Buckley, Circus Smirkus, Cleveland, Dean, Downing, Edsall (2 easements), Shaun & Darren Hill, Warren Hill, Kehler, Knox, Mann, McGrath (2 easements), Paterson-Brown, Perham, St. Louis, and Porter Brook Nature Trail. Subsequent to the original easements, Cleveland, Dean, Mann, Kehlers, Warren Hill, Paterson-Brown and Perhams 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); Green Mountain Monastery (133 acres), easement co-held by TNC and VHCB.

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. Eleven 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); Highland Lodge (76 acres); Michaud (ex-Lumsden--81 acres); and Wilson Farm (ex-Hazendale) co-held with VHCB--41 acres.

5. Nine other VLT easements: Shatney farm (313 acres); Shatney hayfield in Greensboro Bend (34 acres); Circosta homestead (85 acres); Kehler lot on Garvin Hill Rd. (37 acres); and five parcels on Craftsbury town line, totaling 323 acres.

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

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.



[shaded] Conserved land

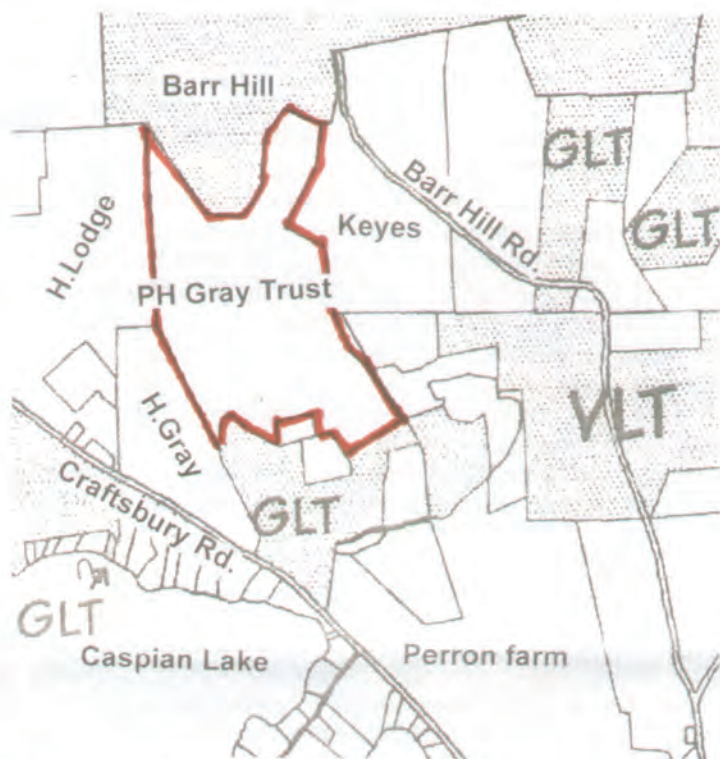




GLT Considering Easement on Baker Hill

In 1930 Philip H. Gray, Senior (PHG), then a PhD candidate at Yale, married Margaret ('Peg') Day, daughter of Clive Day, who brought his family to Greensboro in 1910 and nearly every summer thereafter until his death in 1951. PHG fell in love with the town and acquired land on Baker and Barr Hills. In 1971 he donated 254 acres on Barr Hill to The Nature Conservancy (TNC).

Before his death in 1978 Gray distributed most of the remaining land to his six children. However two years before his death he established a revocable trust, to which he bequeathed 79 acres on Baker Hill (see map).



Acronyms VLT and GLT refer to easement holders, not owners

There he and Peg had built a residence, which they called the Gray Eyrie, with a broad view of Caspian Lake. Peg died in 1965; in 1976 PHG asked his two trustees and their siblings to conserve the land.

TNC was then the only land trust active in Vermont—the Vermont Land Trust was established in 1977 and the Greensboro Land Trust in 1991/92. In January 2021 the current trustees, Phil Gray, Jr. and Clive Gray, with the agreement of their extended family, offered the GLT a conservation easement on the 79 acres, excluding 6 acres with structures.

The GLT board took the offer under advisement and established a project committee to view the land. The committee will report to the board, whose decision should be forthcoming this summer.

Second Renewal of GLT's Accreditation Approved

In 2007 the umbrella organization for U.S. land trusts, the Land Trust Alliance (LTA), with roughly a thousand member organizations, established an independent Accreditation Commission (AC). The AC reviews the performance of member land trusts according to LTA Standards and Policies. In 2009 the GLT was the second land trust in Vermont, after the Lake Champlain Land Trust, to become accredited.

An accredited term lasts five years, after which a land trust must apply for renewal. The GLT was accorded its first renewal in 2014; our second renewal was approved in 2019.

Northern Forest Recreation Project Grant

During her tour as manager of Highland Lodge, Heidi Lauren Duke noticed a lack of signage showing visitors how to hike from the Lodge to Barr Hill. She identified a Federal program entitled *Northern Forest Destination Development Initiative* that contained funding for projects enhancing recreation in the northern forest. On Heidi Lauren's initiative, the GLT applied to this program for a grant to serve four main objectives:

1. Install signs along an old horse trail leading from Highland Lodge to the 'Mossy Trail' at the southern tip of the Barr Hill Nature Preserve;
2. Replace an old bridge on the Lodge's Porter Brook Nature Trail (PBNT);
3. Install signs illustrating natural phenomena on the PBNT; and
4. Replace three panoramas on the Barr Hill Nature Trail, identifying mountains visible from three points along the trail.

The funder accepted GLT's application, awarding us \$12,000 on condition of local funding for 20 percent of expenditures. The Association of Vermont Conservation Commissions granted GLT \$600 toward local sources.

The project, supervised by the Northeast Vermont Development Association, is en route to completion by July 2021.

Northern Rivers Land Trust Conserves Land in Woolcott

In August, the Bertocci siblings of East Hill Road in Woolcott conserved 170 acres with the GLT's sister land trust, NRLT. Mainly forest, the parcel is bisected by East Hill Road. The Bertocci's then sold 79 acres to neighbor Ronnie Leroux, creating a second conservation easement (CE). NRLT now holds 15 CEs.