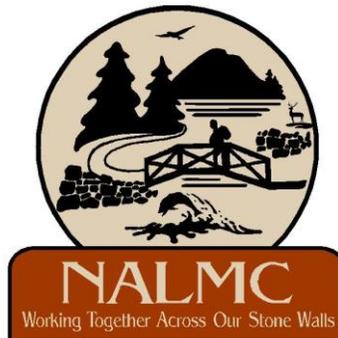


**NALMC Resource Book: Connecting People to Nature
(CPN)**

Part One: The Social Fabric of the NALMC Neighborhood

September 2006 – September 2016

Northwood Area Land Management Collaborative



Acknowledgments

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The Social Fabric of the NALMC Neighborhood

2006–2016

At the end of the day, the social capital inventory is more important than the natural resource inventory. People own the land, they make decisions about it. The future of the land will be decided by people” —Dave Kittredge, Professor and Extension Forester, Dept. of Environmental Conservation, UMass Amherst

The Story of NALMC

The Northwood Area Land Management Collaborative (NALMC) is an innovative land stewardship organization — a voluntary partnership between public and private landowners in Northwood, New Hampshire, who have successfully looked beyond their individual property boundaries since 2006 to enhance the ecological, social, recreational, and economic resources of the local landscape for present and future generations.

It is a complex weave of people, institutions, and the land. To understand and appreciate this evolving collaboration, you must listen to the individual voices of the people who have been involved, telling their own stories. So, interspersed with our text are some of the voices, reflecting on the meaning of NALMC for them and for their community. We believe that these voices give deeper meaning to the text.

There’s something intrinsic in the human spirit that is drawn to the land, to the natural creation and order of things that inspires, challenges, and draws the best from each of us. We lay down our personal differences to savor the simple joys of shared food, the making of a wood bench, or a walk in an open field to hear the peent and melodious descent of the woodcock flight. Through NALMC events, we know our neighbors better, we have ventured into nearby natural worlds we did not know existed, and we have made decisions that will influence generations that follow. Our mutual interests bring us together as a community; our differences fade away. We go back to our homes refreshed and with renewed energy to pursue our own diverse paths. —Linda Smith, Steering Committee Member, private landowner

NALMC perpetually pulls in new individuals and organizations by supporting each other's activities, which builds a foundation of trust and grows the neighborhood so that it includes the entire community.

NALMC is a group of people who have come together and mutually recognized that the land that surrounds them represents more than just the metes and bounds of their private property. They see the land as the entity that binds neighbor to neighbor, and neighborhood to community, improving both the value of their individual lives and the quality of life in the region.... NALMC is a container to put ideas into, it is a medium to provide opportunity. —Steve Roy, Steering Committee Member and Chair, Northwood Conservation Commission

One of the essential, enduring traits of NALMC is that all major decisions are accomplished by a consensus of the Steering Committee. This extremely disparate group of landholders has a wide range of ideologies, politics, and temperaments, yet everyone has an equal voice. The group cherishes and respects the values of all its members. When it moves forward by consensus, the group is confident that it is doing the right thing. NALMC is a bottom-up organization.

Our Beginnings

The NALMC story starts in the 1960s, when Ed Burttt started buying parcels of land and Carl Wallman purchased a farm in Northwood, New Hampshire. Fast forward to the early 1990s, when the Burttt family had the vision to preserve their land holdings and transfer ownership of their 662 acres to the State of New Hampshire to create Northwood Meadows State Park. Around the same time, the Peters family's 456-acre land holdings became the Forest Peters Wildlife Management Area. Together, these two major tracts of undeveloped land form the heart of the NALMC neighborhood.

In the fall of 2006, Carl Wallman met with Jim Oehler from NH Fish and Game and Matt Tarr from UNH Cooperative Extension to explore the possibility of coordinating management of Carl's 211-acre Harmony Hill Farm with NH Fish and Game's Forest Peters WMA and the Northwood Meadows State Park. All agreed that wildlife and plants travel across property boundaries, and few species can be fully supported by the habitats provided on one parcel of land alone. Jim Oehler and Matt Tarr provided the expertise and resources that were essential for the formation of NALMC.

The name NALMC (Northwood Area Land Management Collaborative) grew out of the early conversations between Wallman and Oehler as they considered collaborative land management between Harmony Hill Farm and the abutting public lands. As the organization grew, its focus shifted more toward educating the private landowners and

building a land-based community, so a more descriptive name might have been the Northwood Area Watershed Collaborative. But by then the acronym NALMC was becoming well known, and the Steering Committee decided to keep it.

In order to engage more landowners, to help them understand the value of looking at their land without lines and boundaries, we needed scientific data that would explain the ecology of the region and the significance of their parcel within the larger context. On March 28, 2007, NALMC held its first public workshop at Northwood Town Hall, featuring several natural resource professionals who introduced the concept of ecosystem land management and explained its value. Then, in 2009, NALMC hired Ellen Snyder to write the historic Ecological Assessment of the NALMC Neighborhood. That report opened the door to all that followed, including the extraordinary and extensive Natural Resource Inventory by Rick Van de Poll in Part Two of this CPN report. The Assessment was a compilation of all known information on the ecology, culture, and recreation within the NALMC region. It provided a scientific basis for potential future management actions as well as a compelling story of the area's history, beauty, and natural diversity, demonstrating that the area is worthy of long-term stewardship by interested landowners and the community at large.

Without the science of the Ecological Assessment, NALMC would not have stayed together this many years. The scientific perspective held our interest and led to the friendships that inspired us to work together across our stone walls.

Potluck suppers brought us together as neighbors and introduced us to one another's land. Food always brings people together — a potluck, even better. Neighbors bring a favorite dish to share, producing a meal as diverse and authentic as they are, but better than if any one person cooked for everyone — like NALMC. It becomes a casual atmosphere to connect with old friends and make new acquaintances. When a group of people with similar values, centered around the land, spend time together, good things can happen. And bringing wildlife professionals of all varieties together with landowners creates a great opportunity for exchanging ideas and information. —Jeff Lalish, Steering Committee Member, private landowner

The NALMC story is a reflection of a community process — a story of broadening a land ethic in the Upper Lamprey River watershed — and an evolution of relationships among neighbors and their connection with the land. The outcomes from these personal relationships have sustained NALMC for the past ten years.

One of the anomalies of modern ecology is the creation of two groups, each of which seems barely aware of the existence of the other. The one studies the

human community, almost as if it were a separate entity, and calls its findings sociology, economics and history. The other studies the plant and animal community and comfortably relegates the hodge-podge of politics to the liberal arts. The inevitable fusion of these two lines of thought will, perhaps, constitute the outstanding advance of this century. —Aldo Leopold, philosopher, forester, and environmentalist (1887–1948)

Major Milestones and the Stories They Sowed

NALMC functions as a networking organization that connects people and organizations, even those who would not normally or routinely interact. In the warm atmosphere of potluck suppers, people with different points of view sit and listen to each other without feeling intimidated. Groups that normally might not have anything in common discover that they share a love of their land and find new ways to collaborate.

The atmosphere that NALMC creates frequently gives birth to other ideas, projects, and initiatives that are unplanned and unexpected. We refer to these phenomena as the NALMC “ripple effects,” or outcomes. The stories below — just a few among many — illustrate how far and wide NALMC’s ripples extend.

The Bridge Over the Lamprey River (2010) / Ecological Assessment (2009)

One of the important themes of NALMC’s efforts is for individual landowners to understand their land within the larger context of the neighborhood and beyond. Specifically, to understand their location in relation to the watersheds, extensive forests, farmlands, diverse wildlife habitats, and unique plant communities that stretch across multiple ownerships.

Old Mountain Road (OMR) was documented in the 2009 Ecological Assessment as an area of significant erosion and degradation. This Class VI road cut through the heart of the NALMC neighborhood, going east to west, separating Northwood Meadows State Park from the Forest Peters Wildlife Management Area and directly traversing the headwaters of the Lamprey River from Betty Meadows. Prior to 2010, OMR was a favorite Class VI road for large-tired mud trucks that would speed through the road across the river, disturbing the soils on both sides, causing significant erosion problems on both banks. The erosion was so severe, with large boulders sticking up in the road, that snowmobiles had difficulty making a trail in the winter, even when it was covered with a foot of snow. In the Ecological Assessment, Ellen Snyder noted that “Old Mountain Road is also a key link in the network of recreational trails.” She suggested

that NALMC “may want to research the feasibility and desirability of reclassifying all or parts of the road as a Class A Trail, which might allow more flexibility in making improvements to the trail.”

This is when the Northwood Crankpullers took action. In 2010, they galvanized public support within the town to change a 3,400-foot section of Class VI OMR into a Class A municipal trail to protect the area from further erosion. This section of road was completely rebuilt, heavy iron gates were installed at each end, and a magnificent bridge was erected over the Lamprey River. The Crankpullers single-handedly were able to restrict wheeled motorized access to the area and protect it from continued erosion. They became the heroes of OMR and the headwaters of the Lamprey River, demonstrating the power of groups working together across stone walls.

The Northwood Crankpullers and NALMC have enjoyed a mutually advantageous relationship over the past several years. It is the goal of both groups to protect as many of our natural resources as possible and to still allow the public to enjoy those resources in their chosen manner.

Unlike many conservation groups, NALMC does not discourage the use of motorized winter recreational vehicles on their lands. Unfettered access to the NALMC lands is intrinsic to allowing the talented groomers of the Northwood Crankpullers to create many continuous miles of beautiful, groomed snowmobile trails for the general public to enjoy. These many miles of trails are also used by the public for snowshoeing and cross-country skiing. These groups of winter sport enthusiasts not only benefit from the natural beauty of the land, they also help the local economy during the otherwise sluggish winter months.

One of the most significant projects undertaken by the Northwood Crankpullers in the NALMC neighborhood was building a bridge over the headwaters of the Lamprey River to stop the erosion of soil into the water. To achieve this goal, the snowmobile club acquired a recreational trails grant from the federal government, as well as petitioning a warrant article to the voters of the town of Northwood to turn Old Mountain Road, an impassable Class VI road, into a Class A recreational trail. This also required installing gates at each end of the road to keep out wheeled vehicles that caused the erosion in the first place, as well as adding drainage ditches, culverts, and reshaping the trail.

Greg Bane, Steering Committee Member, President of the Crankpullers Snowmobile Club

A True “Watershed” Moment / Community-Inspired Conservation

The conversations NALMC has fostered among public and private landowners regarding stewardship of the land, fragility of the ecosystem, and the unique natural world encompassed by their lands have led numerous individuals and groups to protect their land for future generations. One of NALMC’s guiding principles is that conservation is not a goal of its activities. Rather, by educating people about the ecology and natural resources of their own land, people see their lives differently and make different choices.

We abuse the land because we regard it as a commodity belonging to us. When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect. —Aldo Leopold

Multiple conservation easements followed the 2009 Ecological Assessment, including those by Wah-Tut-Ca Scout Reservation, Coe-Brown Northwood Academy, Carl Wallman, Jeff and Laurie Lalish, Chris and Dotty Gallagher, and lands purchased by the Town of Northwood Conservation Commission.

At its early inception, those that started NALMC spent a lot of time knocking on neighbors' doors. One door near the physical heart of the neighborhood belonged to a retired couple and long-time residents of the town, Chris and Dotty Gallagher. The Gallaghers embody the NH dictum "Live Free or Die" through staunch individualism and valuing of private property rights above all else. Chris, being naturally called to the forest in an endless pursuit of the next two seasons of cordwood, always felt a deep affection for the natural landscape of his woods and fields. He therefore found a connection to the tone of NALMC and attended a few meetings and joined in some of the earlier outings with the group.

Following publication of the 2009 Ecological Assessment and printing and presentation of its maps at various NALMC meetings, Chris's vision of his property changed. The change was brought about by a simple yellow line on a map that meanders east to west across the center of his fields and woods, representing the boundary between the Merrimack River watershed on the north side of his lot and the Lamprey River watershed on its southern limits. Because of NALMC, that line also represented a new way of thinking for the Gallaghers, whereby they saw their property not so much as a private island, but as a beginning of something that extended beyond their own vision, and they felt a duty to embrace the responsibility of a visionary. As a result, their full entrance into the neighborhood was commemorated in 2014 by their emplacement of a

conservation easement on their property. Steve Roy, Steering Committee Member, Chair of Northwood Conservation Commission

Personally, for Laurie and me, NALMC has made a big difference in our lives. We were told about the Conservation Easement program through the Wetlands Reserve Program, which protects water resources by purchasing development rights. Our 53 acres will always be the last residence at the end of Old Mtn. Rd. on the east side of Saddleback Mtn. We are surrounded by town and privately protected land. Our land includes 6 acres of a 12-acre active beaver pond. Drainage into the pond off of the mountain is the highest altitude origin of the Lamprey River (which empties into tidewater in Newmarket, NH). After several years of paperwork, the easement was established in 2010, including a survey of the property dividing the 3-acre residential lot from the 50 acres protected.

Jeff Lalish, Steering Committee Member, private landowner

Observe, Participate, Reflect / Invasive Species Eradication Workshop (Oct. 23, 2010)

“Observe, participate, and reflect” is a framework adopted by NALMC. The most meaningful NALMC activities encourage and support these three principles.

On October 23, 2010, NALMC, the Northwood Conservation Commission, and the Friends of Northwood Meadows State Park hosted a workshop and work day on invasive plant eradication and control. The program began with Dr. Tom Lee, UNH Associate Professor of Forest Ecology, who explained why invasive plants are so troublesome by displacing native plants from the landscape. After the lecture, 20 volunteers ranging in age from 7 to 70 removed invasive Barberry, Burning Bush, and Autumn Olive from in front of the Town Hall, then crossed Route 4 to work on invasive plants in the parking area and entrance to Northwood Meadows State Park.

Bryan Comeau, forester with NH Division of Forests and Lands, led the eradication efforts, donning his protective chaps and hoisting his chainsaw, followed by a licensed herbicide applicator, who treated large Honeysuckle stumps.

The NALMC-sponsored invasive plant workshop inspired a wide range of people, from the very young to the very old. My daughter, a fourth grader at the workshop, became engaged by the idea that not all plants are nice, and the existence of some may come at the entire expense of others. So enlightened was this young participant that she decided to put a project poster together for her teacher and classmates featuring what she learned at the workshop. Taken by

the level of engagement of this student, the fourth grade teacher developed a nature-based project for all students in the grade and incorporated it into the permanent class curriculum.

Steve Roy, Steering Committee Member, Chair of Northwood Conservation Commission

Running and the Land Ethic (August 2013) / 5-Mile Trail Loop (July 2008)

NALMC's first project was the development of a 5-mile loop trail through Northwood Meadows State Park and Harmony Hill Farm, and along Old Mountain Road. This trail, which includes portions of some pre-existing trails, leads through a variety of wildlife habitats including hardwood forests, early successional habitats, grasslands, mixed forests, and near vernal pools and other wetlands. The idea for the trail emerged from the NALMC partnership of private and public landowners — in this case, Harmony Hill Farm, the New Hampshire Department of Resources and Economic Development (DRED), and the Town of Northwood. The trail is heavily used in all seasons by runners, hunters, cross-country skiers, hikers, the Coe-Brown cross-country team, and many others.

In 2012, new resident Kristina Folcik had the vision of a 5K road race using the NALMC trail. She said, “When I moved to New Hampshire, I started to miss the weekly run that I had shared with friends. I wanted to give back to the community and encourage people to spend time together as a family doing something outside, enjoying nature, and away from the television. I spoke with Chris Dunn of Acidotic Racing, and he offered to volunteer his services and time to make this happen.” Acidotic Racing established an annual series of races on NALMC’s trail loop involving hundreds of runners each summer, starting in 2013. The goal of these races is to promote a healthy community through outdoor activity by bringing the residents of Northwood and surrounding towns out in the summer on a weekly basis for a run or walk through the forest. The last race of each season brings the runners together for a tasty outdoor potluck.

After the 5K run, in the company of maybe 130 people at the cookout in the late afternoon early evening mid-August light, people sparkling with communal endorphins, I was thinking about the relationship between NALMC, dedicated to “Working Together Across Our Stone Walls,” and this run. What were we doing when we were running together along our stone walls?

We weren’t gathered to learn or teach a skill, though a lot of learning and teaching was being done. We were not on a wildflower walk around the hayfield,

we were not there to harvest the field, or to measure it, or to make drawings or paintings of it, or to write about it. We were not there to take anything from it or to leave anything in it.

Many families were running together, sharing the highs and lows, encouraging each other, experiencing the same place at the same time under the same pressure, being citizens of the same habitat for an hour, fauna of the same subspecies — Homogyno sapiens (Latin for running).

I don't know how much the real runners noticed the environment around them as they gazed and elanded over it! What I noticed, in my 30-year-old tennis shoes, doing my 17-minute mile, was how solid the ground felt. I'd run only on city and country paved roads, and somehow I had thought the edge of hayfield track would feel soft as the floor of a pine forest. Instead, each footfall was a jolt, and the surface was uneven, part grass and part dirt, with potholes and half-buried rocks in certain stretches! Someone had told me once that walking over uneven ground might help prevent early-onset dementia, and I could feel my proprioceptive I.Q. going up as I anxiously scanned the path before me and lumbered over it!

Running was a way to communicate with the earth, our running footsteps like a wordless language, saying "I am here, I am here" — and the earth, "I am right here under you, I am as always — but now you can feel it directly — holding you up. I'm your bed, your table, your floor, your road, I'm the ground of your being, the foundation of your life." Not Morse code, not drums, not dance, but meaningful and musical, the thud thud of our progress across our home was like a ritual of recognition. We were a herd strongly engaged with the land while doing it no harm, just letting our linear movement on it increase our health and alertness, we who hope to be good neighbors to each other and to the land.

Sharon Olds, poet, August 2013

Friends of Northwood Meadows State Park (2010) / Discovery Day (July 11, 2009)

NALMC Discovery Day was held at Northwood Meadows State Park in 2009. It was a celebration of NALMC's collaborations and the fact that it had been 20 years since private landowner Ed Burt sold his land to the State of New Hampshire, leading to the park's creation.

Throughout the day, nearly 300 visitors strolled the park trails, stopping by the different exhibits and demonstration booths to try fishing, learn about lumberjack operations,

identify water bugs and wildlife specimens, find out more about land protection efforts in the local area, take walks to view wildlife and their habitats, and watch the sawmill operation and fire management demonstrations.

Steve Bailey, the beloved “mayor” of Northwood, was instrumental in the creation of Friends of Northwood Meadows State Park (NMSP). The impetus for the new organization grew out of discussions among people attending Discovery Day. The Friends’ stated aim is “through collaboration and cooperation, [to] improve the health of the Northwood Meadows State Park and surrounding areas, maintain a high quality of the natural resources, and to further the opportunities for recreation, education and enjoyment of the park and open land in the surrounding area.” Since its founding in 2010, this group has grown and thrived, acting as stewards of the park. The group’s members manage the park, maintaining trails, plowing snow and mowing grass, cleaning up trash, caring for picnic tables and kiosks, and establishing picnic areas.

Years ago NALMC organized a senior hike from the kiosk at Harmony Hill Farm through Northwood Meadows State Park. This walk captured the essence of NALMC as a learning experience, with amiable conversations along the way and the chance addition of an unexpected guest. Ed Burtt was traveling through Northwood that day on his way back to his home in Canada after enjoying some warmer weather down south. He heard about the hike from George Carr, and both joined us.

Starting in 1967, Ed spent 23 years purchasing 14 tracts of land and constructing the gravel roads and the lake that would later become our state park in 1990. At 84, Ed had no problem keeping up with the rest of us, who were several decades younger. He was a “tour guide extraordinaire,” pointing out the natural features along the way and explaining why he built the roads where he did. It was a moment that happened at the south end of the lake that I will never forget. Ed was on the knoll near the water’s edge looking out over the lake, telling us about how the lake water rose for the first time — its transformation from a meadow to a lake. He warned us that if we were going to cool off in the lake, not to go in along the one bank because that is where some stumps were left because they never lowered the lake again as planned, once the water had filled in. As he gazed out across, Laurie Lalish leaned toward me and quietly said, “He’s seeing it as it was before,” not as it is now. It was evident that through his eyes, we were also seeing a glimpse into the past.

Several years later, we received word of Ed’s passing. Soon after, the dam that kept the lake intact was determined to be unsafe, and the state lowered the lake

and diverted the overflow through a temporary channel. There for the first time, along the bank, the now sponge-like remnants of the stumps that Ed had left behind so many years ago were revealed. Today, when I walk the roads and trails of the park, I enjoy its unfolding beauty, aware of how its former owner shaped the landscape and understood its unique features.

Linda Smith, Steering Committee Member, landowner

The Hunter and the Runner / It Takes a Community

On land opened to the public across NALMC trails, hunters and runners share common ground, along with snowmobilers, cross-country skiers, and hikers. During hunting season, the potential for hunter-runner conflict is always present. However, within the open community spirit fostered by NALMC, conflicts can sometimes be resolved peaceably.

Recently, I submitted a somewhat angry letter to the NALMC steering committee that outlined a disturbing happenstance that occurred on the NALMC walking trail involving myself and a jogger, while I was deer hunting. To make a long story short, the jogger deliberately harassed and attempted to provoke me while I was hunting. (He succeeded in harassment, not in provocation.) That occurrence has passed. The reason and purpose of this letter is to thank and praise two individuals for expediently responding and acting upon my complaint.

The day following my letter, I received an e-mail from NALMC chairman Carl Wallman, who expressed sincere concern for my negative experience while legally deer hunting on his property. Not only did he respond to me in writing, but he also contacted local NH Fish and Game Conservation Officer Michael Matson and forwarded my letter to him. C.O. Matson consulted with his command staff and facilitated the posting of judicious signage at appropriate locations along the NALMC walking trail, indicating that property within NALMC is utilized by hunters as well as other woodland user groups. C.O. Matson also left a message on my home answering machine. I left a return message, but we did not connect. Finally, C.O. Matson came across my truck while I was hunting today and left a hand-written greeting asking me to try again. We finally connected this evening. I have communicated with C.O. Matson and informed him of my appreciation for his response and his personal effort. He has listened to my concerns as a professional as well as a fellow outdoorsman, posted appropriate signage, and was very committed to continued vigilance of my concerns for the NALMC properties.

Landowners such as Carl Wallman give me pause and steer me back on course when I feel that all is lost in true land stewardship for the woods, waters, hills, and fields of New Hampshire. Carl Wallman and C.O. Michael Matson: two true stewards of the land who, by their actions, have restored my faith in the appreciation that they have for the role of conscientious hunters in sharing the woodlands of New Hampshire.

The member property owners of NALMC should be very proud to have two such leaders of land conservation and stewardship watching over the 2,600+ acres of NALMC. As a long-time "guest" and user of the land that is now NALMC, I certainly am!

Hunter and Northwood resident, Nov. 8, 2013

Working Together Across Stone Walls / Public-Private Partnerships

One of the most rewarding outcomes of the NALMC experience is the friendships and respect that have developed between the private landowners and the state professionals. NALMC began as a public-private partnership based on the participation of the public agencies' foresters, plant scientists, and wildlife experts. The words of our natural resource professionals illustrate why it is so important that NALMC brings public and private landowners together to collaborate, inspire one another, and achieve previously unforeseen outcomes.

At NH Fish and Game, our small team manages the Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs), properties dedicated to providing wildlife habitat to maintain the native biodiversity and opportunities for the public to enjoy wildlife on those properties. The median size of our properties is just 103 acres. Such small ownerships make it very difficult for us to have landscape-level impacts on wildlife populations. Knowing that what we do impacts habitat on neighboring lands and vice versa, and that the real decision makers impacting wildlife and their habitats are the multitudes of private landowners, I've long been interested in pursuing collaborations with neighbors of our WMAs.

The concept of neighbors working with neighbors across their stonewalls to maintain, restore, or enhance our natural resources, which pay no heed to property boundaries, is a new one for NH. Given limited funding, we cannot solely rely on buying land to conserve our natural resources. New conservation models, such as that being developed by NALMC, will need to be developed. I sincerely hope that NALMC's efforts will be contagious and will result in other NALMCs

popping up across the state. I believe that such efforts are imperative for successfully conserving our natural resources that we all depend on and enjoy.

Jim Oehler, Steering Committee Member, NH Fish and Game

UNH can capitalize on its membership in NALMC to fulfill portions of its mission in terms of education and outreach to the general public. Knowledge of surrounding properties will help UNH to make informed management decisions within its property boundaries.

Steve Eisenhaure, Steering Committee Member, UNH Office of Woodlands and Natural Resources, 2012

When I began managing the forests of Northwood Meadows State Park and Forest Peters Wildlife Management Area in 2015, it was immediately evident that the people who are most closely involved with NALMC care deeply for the work they are doing and are passionate about what they hope will serve as a model for land stewardship in other towns in the future.

The public-private partnership that NALMC represents is remarkable. By crossing the divide of public versus private interests, NALMC is able to further expand its potential influence in favor of sustainability and prudence in management across a wider area. This, to me, is what NALMC is about: a small group of both private and public landowners and managers working together to have a large impact on the health of the local landscape. Oh, and potlucks. Lots and lots of potlucks.

Sam Taylor, Steering Committee Member, NH Division of Forests and Lands

I first joined NALMC in the fall of 2007 as the forester for Northwood Meadows State Park and Forest Peters Wildlife Management Area. Although I no longer work as forester for the state in the NALMC neighborhood, I continue to be involved and engaged in NALMC 10 years later. In my opinion, nobody understands and appreciates the land more than the individuals who live and depend on it. NALMC provides a unique and exceptional blend of local landowners and natural resource professionals.

NALMC has been extremely influential in several positive outcomes regarding land stewardship and community building. I believe all landowners want to make good decisions in caring for the land, but many simply don't realize what is out

there and what their options are. NALMC is bridging that gap, and it has been making positive impacts in doing so for over 10 years now.

Bryan Comeau, Steering Committee Member, Forester, NH Division of Forests and Lands,

A New Decade / NALMC's 10th Anniversary Celebration (Sept. 10, 2016)

NALMC took a day to celebrate its first decade in 2016 with an afternoon of diverse programs that reflect our value of connecting people and nature and celebrating working together across our stone walls. The day's events included a short program featuring speakers who launched the second decade and our signature feature, a potluck lunch. Live music by Jim Oehler's wonderful band The Pullstarts filled the tent, and more than 100 people participated in children's activities, field walks, bench building, and displays by the Boy Scouts, Bear Paw, Lamprey River Advisory Committee, NH Fish and Game, and others. This marked NALMC's biggest public event since the 2009 Discover Day.

One of NALMC's proudest accomplishments over the past ten years is that larger organizations have found value and inspiration in our model, the way we build community. Rob Riley of the Northern Forest Center has been an important advisor and member of our Steering Committee. He lives outside the NALMC neighborhood, is not a local landowner, and is not connected with public lands, yet he finds the work of NALMC and its story worthwhile because it is a paradigm shift that can resonate in the larger world. We have joked that NALMC is everywhere, but in a sense, it is true.

My interest in NALMC is that it moves the conversation beyond the "transaction" focus of conservation and seeks to create deep-rooted relationships between the community and the landscape. Ultimately, these relationships will result in a more enduring land ethic that will keep forests as forests and fields as fields because they are authentic, individual, and self-directed. Ecological and economic value of the land are both important elements when thinking about community engagement and benefit and NALMC has embraced this notion.

This model highlights the role "conserved" property can play in a broader landscape. We tend to look at the boundaries of the land and look in, with our back to the neighbors and surrounding forest. Rather than being an island unto itself, conserved land can instead be the centerpiece of a broader landscape approach where systems work. Thinking across boundaries — whether at a local watershed or Northern Forest region scale — is critical to ensuring the

stewardship of our woods, fields, and waters can provide economic and ecological benefit in our communities.

I've shared the NALMC story in other states and in DC and highlight it for the innovation that must occur in rural places to ensure conservation is valued, relevant, and additive, rather than seen as a threat to one's livelihood. The story continues to evolve, and I look forward to seeing further community and economic benefits arise from this initiative. It's exciting to think that the local school and town buildings could heat with wood sustainably harvested in the community; that saw logs from this place could be used to create multistory buildings in nearby Portsmouth; that the unique and aged Northern Forest Center trees are a source of pride and draw for the community and beyond.

NALMC is just at the front end of this evolving journey, and the next chapter has great potential!

Rob Riley, Steering Committee Member, President of Northern Forest Center

A Few Closing Words

The future of NALMC is yet to be revealed, but our first ten years have built a foundation on which we can grow and continue to evolve. Our lives have been changed. We have started to look beyond our borders, at parts of Northwood outside the Lamprey watershed, and we are considering how best to spread our knowledge to our neighbors living on those lands. Because we have a wide viewpoint, we see additional possibilities. However, we recognize that the NALMC experience is a process, and it will be up to the landowners themselves to observe, participate, and reflect.

Being part of NALMC for the past ten years has been a life-changing experience. Our signature phrase, "Working Together Across our Stone Walls," and enjoying potluck meals represent a paradigm shift in our culture — in how we look at our land, how we engage our neighbors, and how we come together and consider ourselves part of a land-based community.

When we work together as a collaborative, we transcend personal ownership of our land for the common good, and that seems to make our personal land holdings more meaningful and valuable and creates a bond, a community ... a land ethic. It is deeply personal and profound ... a joyful way of life.

Carl Wallman, Steering Committee Member, private landowner