

## *Conserving Duxbury's Special Places*

### Ridley Brook After Irene

Alan Quackenbush

The Duxbury Land Trust owns approximately 28 acres and more than 3200 feet of frontage along Ridley Brook. These lands are comprised of three parcels: the "Swimming Hole"; the Clapp Property; and the recently-acquired Cook property. The long-delayed easement on the State Farm property will include an easement along several hundred feet of Crossett Brook and its tributaries. These holdings are consistent with our Land Trust's focus on protection of riparian corridors. The properties are important as wildlife corridors; have recreational value for fishing, swimming and walking; and help buffer the brooks for maintenance of high water quality and fish habitat.

Spring storm events and Tropical Storm Irene had a major impact on Crossett Brook, Ridley Brook, and the Winooski River, as well as roads, bridges and houses in their flood plains. The road repairs following the storm also had a significant impact on our properties along Ridley Brook, where large excavation vehicles and trucks crossed our land, and where a large section of the Cook property was clear cut and filled to help stabilize a large "slide". The area of the slide had previously been a problem for the Camel's Hump Road, based upon culvert and erosion problems evident before the storms. This area, as well as the lower slide on Camel's Hump Road, is a "hill-side seep" where groundwater surfaces on the steep slope. During significant snowmelt and rain events, the entire slope can become unstable and give way, as was the case here and in many other areas across the state. Removing the trees and armoring the "toe-of-slope" with boulders were necessary to help dry out the soil and stabilize the bank.

Now, it is time to step back, assess the current state of our properties and determine what actions the Land Trust should take to restore the integrity of the properties and brooks consistent with the properties' conservation values. In doing this assessment, the Land Trust will work with the Duxbury Select Board, the Town Planning Commission, the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources River Management Program, which includes floodplain and fluvial erosion hazard management, and other partners. This assessment, which should include all of Duxbury's named brooks, will help the town protect existing infrastructure against future flooding and erosion events, as well as to restore the natural condition of the brooks where feasible. If you are interested in learning more about this project, please contact Alan Quackenbush at 244-7512 or [aqbogs@myfairpoint.net](mailto:aqbogs@myfairpoint.net).

#### **The Vermont State Farm and DLT**

In 2004, the Vermont Department of Buildings and General Services asked the Duxbury Land Trust (DLT) to hold the conservation easements on three segments of the former Vermont State Farm in Duxbury. The State Farm Master Plan, Duxbury Zoning Ordinance, and Town Plan require these segments to be permanently conserved. That year, DLT accepted a conservation easement on 73 acres of former State Farm land on Crossett Hill.

Currently, the 136 acre Barn/Buildings and Wetlands segments, on Route 100 and adjacent to Crossett Brook Middle School, are under sales contract and in Act 250 proceedings. One hundred acres of this segment, including wetlands and a deeryard, are slated to be conserved by the Land Trust. In general, the 100 +/- acres cannot be developed or used commercially. Agriculture, forestry, and non-commercial low-impact recreation and nature study will be allowed. After seven years, the Land Trust is looking forward to finalizing this project, which will bring the total amount of State Farm land conserved by the Land Trust to 173 acres.

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#### **Duxbury Land Trust Newsletter**

The Duxbury Land Trust  
P.O. Box 56  
Waterbury, VT 05676



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## Camel's Hump State Park

Camel's Hump State Park is not only Duxbury's most beautifully scenic area, but also its most important natural resource. The Park attracts tens of thousands of visitors each year for diverse recreational opportunities. No other Vermont mountain is so easily recognized or so often reproduced. 2011 marks the one hundredth anniversary of this most valuable resource coming under the public trust.

The idea of the Park came as a result of an original gift of 1000 acres including the summit from Colonel Joseph Battell. In 1911, care of the mountain was entrusted to the State Forester who managed with the aim to keep it in a primitive state according to Battell's wishes. The State of Vermont eventually adopted a policy of development regulation on all state forest land in order to preserve aesthetic value. In 1969, the State of Vermont incorporated the public land of the Camels' Hump area into a state park. The Park has grown to around 20,000 state owned acres. So, make sure you get out and enjoy this incredible resource that is literally our backyard.

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## Bo Haslam Memorial Bench

On May 29th, the DLT held a private ceremony at the home of Lois Haslam to dedicate a memorial garden bench in honor of her son Robert "Bo" Haslam, who passed away on June 1, 2010. Bo was a devoted conservationist and a founding member of the Land Trust. The bench and plaque were donated by DLT board members. Donations in Bo's memory helped fund the DLT's acquisition of the Cook property along Ridley Brook.

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## DLT Conserves Additional Land Along Ridley Brook ~

On June 1, 2011 with the help of a Vermont Housing and Conservation (VHCB) grant, the Duxbury Land Trust (DLT) purchased a parcel of land formerly owned by the Cooks. The Cooks generously reduced the purchase price in order to facilitate the long term conservation of the land. The project was made possible by a \$20,000.00 VHCB grant. In addition, the VHCB awarded \$6,000 to the Vermont Land Trust to fund stewardship and monitoring of the conservation easement, ensuring that the property will be conserved in perpetuity. DLT members and others donated funds in support of the project, many in memory of Robert "Bo" Haslam, a beloved member of our community and a founding board member.

The Cook property acquisition is in keeping with the Land Trust's focus on conserving riparian resources along the Winooski River and its tributaries. Purchasing this land will increase Ridley Brook conserved land to more than twenty-eight acres. The property is adjacent to DLT-owned land located at the corner of Camel's Hump and Scrabble Hill Roads. The 13 acre Cook property is bordered by approximately 1000 feet of frontage on the Ridley Brook in North Duxbury. The property features a spectacular waterfall, two balancing rocks, and a mature hemlock - hardwood northern forest. It supports a variety of wildlife and birds and provides recreational opportunities such as fishing and swimming.



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### 2011 / 2012 Board of Trustees

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The Duxbury Land Trust depends on its members for the energy and resources required for innovative and responsible land stewardship. Your membership helps make possible land acquisitions, easement negotiation and stewardship, and communication and outreach efforts. We would love to have you to join us. Send your tax deductible donation to Duxbury Land Trust, PO Box 56, Waterbury, VT 05676. For more information, call a Trustee or visit our website: [www.duxburylandtrust.org](http://www.duxburylandtrust.org)

### Membership:

Member	\$15
Family Membership	\$30
Supporting Member	\$30
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