

The Duxbury Land Trust Newsletter

Volume XI No. 6

Conserving Duxbury's Special Places

December 2013

Duxbury Land Trust Teams up with Crossett Brook Students for Conservation

Last May, DLT Board members, Kelley Taft and Alan Quackenbush met with Principal Tom Drake and interested teachers at CBMS to talk about Crossett Brook stream bank restoration. The banks of Crossett Brook had been impacted during 2011 flood events, including Tropical Storm Irene. It was evident that the teachers were well-informed about stream restoration, but could use assistance finding plantings. The students decided to plant sugar maples as it is the State tree and also grows in the woods by the school. DLT purchased seven sugar maples from Drinkwater's Nursery to shade the outdoor classroom and add tree cover to the Crossett Brook buffer and floodplain.



Alan Quackenbush with CBMS students

On a cold October day with snowflakes in the air, teams of three students from Melissa William's class carried their small maples to previously dug holes. (Unfortunately, the holes were too big for the small root balls and the holes had to be filled in – a challenge because of the frozen soil.) Each team was diligent about keeping their trees straight and the root balls covered.

The students were very pleased with their accomplishment and thankful for Alan's assistance and DLT's donation. They will be caring for their trees as part of a service learning project. And...they are looking forward to seeing Alan again in the spring.

Dowsville Headwaters Conservation Project

In July, The Trust for Public Land submitted a Forest Legacy application to the federal government to purchase 2085 acres in the Dowsville Headwaters section of Duxbury. If awarded, the Trust plans to transfer ownership to the state to add to Camel's Hump State Park. In addition to natural resource management and conservation, the acquisition will offer the opportunity for compatible recreational uses. The next step in the process is the ranking of all applications from across the country. Funding approval is expected to be announced in October 2014.

This project, which has broad local and statewide support, has been on DLT's radar since our organization was founded in 1994. We enthusiastically welcome the Trust for Public Land's leadership in this effort to conserve one of Duxbury's very special places.

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Duxbury's Changing Landscape ~ From Early Settlement to Present Day

The DLT participated in Duxbury's 250 Anniversary on June 7th with a display and a write up outlining some aspects of Duxbury's changing landscape over the centuries. Here is an excerpt from that write up.

Early Duxbury settlers faced an inhospitable environment. Although the town was established in 1763, the first settlement didn't occur until 1786. Duxbury only had a population of 39 people in 1790; but by 1880, the population had increased to 884. Due to its mountainous terrain, Duxbury was divided into three small communities: Duxbury Corners, North Duxbury, and South Duxbury. There was one post office in Town located in North Duxbury and South Duxbury hosted the only church.



In the mid-19th century, North Duxbury was named Ridley Station after the Ridley family that owned acres of timber land. South Duxbury had many farms and was known as a lumbering center. It was a pleasant hamlet with a covered bridge crossing Dowsville brook.

Despite its rocky soil, Duxbury residents cleared the forests extensively for farming and logging. These occupations changed the landscape dramatically by cutting down the abundant forest that the early settlers encountered. Along with the loss of forest land, wildlife was hunted to near extinction.

The 20th century brought many changes to Duxbury. Farming declined and the logging industry diminished. Modern conservation methods reintroduced or increased several wildlife species and established natural resource management. However, infrastructure improvements in the 20th century facilitated development at higher elevations and in areas previously thought undevelopable. Pressures from the creation of new roads and the fragmentation of forest resources pose another, more irreversible, threat to our natural resources than earlier times.

Duxbury's landscape will, no doubt, continue to change throughout the coming centuries. During 2013 we celebrated our Town that the forces of nature have created and its inhabitants have transformed.

2013/ 2014 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

Membership:

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