



*Working to restore and preserve forever-wild landscapes for wildlife and people*

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*Wilderness is a place where the wild potential is fully expressed, a diversity of living  
and nonliving beings flourishing according to their own sorts of order...  
to speak of wilderness is to speak of wholeness.*

—Gary Snyder

November 2012

Dear Friend,

**Ten years. Ten thousand acres protected.** This record of success is because of *you*—the people who have contributed time, money, and energy to the Northeast Wilderness Trust since the organization's founding in 2002.

As the Wilderness Trust enters its second decade, embarking on an even more ambitious conservation agenda, I've been thinking about its role in the landscape. This week, when I stood atop Camel's Hump, a mountain protected as wilderness and beloved by Vermonters, I recalled that this entire region was under a mile-thick sheet of ice just 12,000 years ago—an eye blink in geologic time.

Compared to the lifespan of mountains, human institutions seem insubstantial, like the sedges that cling to the glacier-sculpted summit of Camel's Hump. Those sedges, however, and other plants in the arctic/alpine natural community that grace our region's highest peaks, are hardy and tenacious. They flourish in tough conditions while filling a vital niche in the biotic community.

You'll forgive me if I extend the metaphor, but that is how I think of the Northeast Wilderness Trust—as a rugged band of wilderness lovers with a big mission, succeeding under challenging conditions and filling a crucial niche in the regional conservation community. Ten years ago, when the Trust was founded, there were many local and regional land trusts and some national organizations with Northeast branches, but the overwhelming thrust of land conservation activity was toward actively manipulated landscapes—farms and timberlands. **There was no regional land trust focused exclusively on wilderness protection.** The need was great, a key niche was open, and a group of conservationists from around the region decided to fill it.

From the beginning, the Northeast Wilderness Trust has kept its focus on forever-wild lands for several reasons. First and foremost, we are passionate about wilderness and believe in the intrinsic value of wild places and creatures and in giving wildness space to thrive into the future. Second, as

an organization with few staff and modest resources, working in our core area of competence means that every dollar donated is used to maximum effect. Third, we have complemented the important work of other land trusts and partnered with them on mixed-use land protection projects, leading to productive collaboration, not competition, between groups.

At the Northeast Wilderness Trust's founding, and today, we not only help private landowners who seek forever-wild protection for their property achieve their conservation goals—which is extremely gratifying—but also step up to protect large threatened properties (Howland Research Forest, Wapack Wilderness) when no other conservation organization will. And we are advancing innovative land protection projects on a large scale, including the Split Rock Wildway in the Adirondacks and the Greater Alder Stream/Piscataquis Preserve focal area in Maine.

Of course, there is much more work to do. The Trust's current efforts include adding 2,000 acres to the Alder Stream Preserve; working with New Hampshire Audubon to ensure their Alice Bemis Thompson Wildlife Sanctuary is protected for the long term; expanding a forever-wild easement in southern Vermont; adding a key parcel—Spruce Mill Brook—to the Split Rock Wildway; conserving a lovely forestland in western Maine as the future Earthrest Preserve; working with landowners in central New Hampshire to expand a state park; and completing our first project in Connecticut.

**These initiatives will conserve wilderness across the Northeast, and will set us squarely on the path to protecting an additional 20,000 acres in the next ten years.**

I take heart that the work we do is on the side of life, on the side of beauty, keeping open evolutionary possibilities for the millennia to come. We're very grateful to everyone who has supported the Northeast Wilderness Trust in its first ten years, allowing us to permanently protect over 10,000 acres as forever wild across the region.

**Won't you please make a special contribution to the Northeast Wilderness Trust this year—our 10-year anniversary—to help launch our second decade of wildlands conservation?** We aim to save at least 20,000 acres of wilderness in the next ten years, and we need your help to do it. **Please consider doubling your gift as we work to double our success in the coming decade.** With your help, we can reclaim a part of the landscape for wilderness, and make our region “whole” again in the years to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tom", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Tom Butler  
President of the Board of Directors

P.S. Check out [www.newwildernesstrust.org](http://www.newwildernesstrust.org) to learn more about the wilderness protection projects the Trust is advancing now, with your support. You can also make a secure end-of-year gift to the Trust online. Your generous contribution is greatly appreciated.