



President's Note



Photo by Mena Schmid

As the weather cools and the leaves change, many people will be heading out for a hike on the Wapack. The Friends would like all who use the trails we maintain to enjoy their time and be able to plan a trip and know what to expect while on the trail. A few people responded to my last column about declining map and guide sales. They encouraged the continued availability of our paper guide and map. We will continue to do that as long as it is financially viable. As we continue to see reduced demand, I'm thinking of other ways to accommodate a variety of users. Going to "print on demand" seems a possibility for the guide. The map is more challenging, but there does seem to be more demand for it. So the financial considerations are different. When it gets to be time to reprint, other means of communication will also need to be considered. Some will likely involve cell phones, since most hikers have one. We continue to consider how best to make this information available to the public - paper? Web? app?

Some of the activities officers and board have worked on include outreach to landowners on the trail, and legal protection efforts. Progress is being made, but there is no news to share at this time. Another is preparing a slate of new officers, some new, to be presented at the Annual Meeting. This Annual Meeting gives us the opportunity to learn about a new trail neighbor, The Piscataquog Land Conservancy. See the full article on page 3. At our September board meeting we heard a presentation by "Running for a Cause", regarding their race on the Wapack, September 19th. Their cooperation with the Friends and landowners and what they are doing for the running community is appreciated.

- **Bruce Myrick, President**

US 250th anniversary Display on Pratt Mountain



George Carmichael let us know about the 250th anniversary flag on Pratt Mountain.

2026 Friends of the Wapack Trail Maintenance Report

Saturday, May 2. Wapack Trail Workday on Kidder Mountain

On May 2nd we had our first workday of 2026. A crew of five showed up at the trailhead across from Windblown. We hiked up to the power lines and up the Kidder Mountain trail. We trimmed brush and cleared water bars all the way to the summit of Kidder Mountain where we had lunch. On the way down there was one light sprinkle. Thanks to all who showed up.

Saturday, September 26. Wapack Trail Workday on Temple Mountain's Holt Peak

This workday was cancelled for this year due to rainstorms.

Watch for trail workdays and other events on our website Wapack.org. You can also sign up to receive email notifications on our website. For further details on trail workdays, contact Mike Przybyla: mikep218@comcast.net. If you are interested in trail adoption, contact Rick Blanchette: rick@wapack.org.

Thanks to our Section Captains!

In addition to our scheduled trail workdays, we have 22 Section Captains who do the bulk of our annual trail maintenance and monitoring. They have been out on their adopted sections painting blazes, cleaning out trenches and water bars, clearing fallen trees and limbs, culling back brush and limbs and submitting trail work and conditions reports. Thank you all!

If you are interested in trail adoption, contact Rick Blanchette: rick@wapack.org.

-Mike Przybyla, Trail Master & Rick Blanchette, Trails Committee Chair

In Memoriam – Mitch Call

The Friends of the Wapack mourn the loss of Mitch Call, who passed away earlier this year. Mitch served on the FOW board for 24 years, 13 of those years as president, serving two terms with an intervening term as vice president. Mitch's impact on the trails and on this organization was great, and the benefits of his work will be felt well into the future.

Mitch's accomplishments were many. Mitch worked with the AMC to obtain the Wapack Trail funds which were given to the AMC by Tom Cabot for maintenance and protection of the Wapack Trail. This enabled us to contribute to the creation of Northeast Wilderness Trusts' Wapack Wilderness conservation easement on Pratt and New Ipswich Mountains, and to contribute to the creation of the Temple Mt. State Reservation, while ensuring that the Wapack Trail is protected on these lands and the Friends of the Wapack are listed as maintainers of the trail in the easements and agreements. It also increased our finances to support future trail protection opportunities. He enabled the upgrade of the trailhead parking area on Temple Road in Sharon, which he named in honor of Homer Belletete who donated the land to the state for that purpose. He strengthened our association with regional conservation organizations, such as the Monadnock Conservancy, NEFF, and Northeast Wilderness Trust. As Vice President, in the 1990's he worked on the effort to protect a long portion of the Wapack Trail on the Temple Mountain ridge. Mitch was also involved with our sales of trail guides, maps and other merchandise, arranging an agreement with Monadnock Work Source to handle distribution, increasing our efficiency and saving the board many hours of work. And he did so much to keep the organization going during his very active years at the helm. To honor his long service, on his retirement as president the FOW board gratefully awarded Mitch the title of President Emeritus.



Mitch Call (l) awards annual meeting door prize to Herb Gramm.

Mitch was also very active in his town of Sharon NH. He served on many town boards including Conservation, Planning, Zoning, worked on setting up the town archives and much more. This newsletter includes an article describing the trails in Sharon's Town Forest and a trail map. Mitch cared deeply about protecting these lands and helped move the trail mapping project forward. To honor Mitch, we suggest hiking these trails in Sharon while remembering Mitch and his role in protecting land and trails in the Town of Sharon and along the Wapack Range. Enjoying the trails and lands that Mitch helped to protect is a fitting tribute to our long-time president of the Friends of the Wapack, a tribute that he would greatly appreciate.

-Rick Blanchette, Vice President



The Friends of the Wapack Annual Meeting

Saturday, October 17, 2026
Sharon Meeting House, Rte. 123, Sharon, NH



**Guest Speaker: Dan Ewald,
Stewardship Program Manager at the Piscataquog Land
Conservancy & President of the Board of Directors for
the Ashby Land Trust**

**“Across Scales and State Lines: Conservation Land
Stewardship Perspectives from MA and NH”**

The presentation will focus on the fundamental stewardship philosophies and practices of the Piscataquog Land Conservancy and the Ashby Land Trust- two different land conservation organizations from different states and operating at different scales. Opportunities for collaboration between these organizations and the Friends of the Wapack will also be discussed.

Dan Ewald is the current Stewardship Program Manager at the Piscataquog Land Conservancy (PLC) in New Boston, NH. In this role, Dan is responsible for running the organization’s Stewardship Department, including overseeing and conducting annual property monitoring; managing stewardship staff members, interns, and volunteers; coordinating and carrying out land management projects on properties owned by PLC including trail construction and maintenance, habitat management, and invasive species control; and working with the owners of PLC’s conservation easement properties to solve challenges or issues on their land as they arise.

Dan is also the current President of the Board of Directors for the Ashby Land Trust (ALT) in Ashby, MA. In this role, Dan works with the Board to facilitate and carry out ALT’s work in land protection, conservation land stewardship, and community education and engagement.

Dan is a graduate of Clark University’s Environmental Science and Policy MS Program, and has held various other positions in the land conservation field including with The Trustees, East Quabbin Land Trust, and currently as an independent conservation contractor.

Please Note: We request that you register for this event soon at our website Wapack.org. We will monitor the number of registrations to help us plan for the event and to speed up check-in. Car pooling is encouraged.

Agenda

- **9:00 AM Hike (optional)** Join us on a morning loop hike on the Beebe and Wapack Trails at Temple Mt. State Reservation. Meet at 9:00 AM at the parking lot at Temple Mt. State Reservation, Route 101 in Peterborough. For details contact Mike Przybyla 603-878-3350 or email Mike at mikep218@comcast.net
- **12:00 Noon (optional)** Informal “bring-your-own” lunch at Sharon Meeting House.
- **12:30 PM** Gathering and sign-in.
- **1:00 PM** Friends of the Wapack Annual Meeting and presentation by Dan Ewald

An Interview with Lee Baker, founding member of FOW

Interview with Lee Baker at Peterborough NH Library on February 2, 2026, for the Friends of the Wapack by George Kocur, Friends of the Wapack Historian. It has been lightly edited for clarity. This is part 2; part 1 was in the Spring/Summer 2026 issue.



Lee Baker

FOW: Did any of the trail crew days have anything that that was unusual?

LB: I was saying that I led the hikes without any injury. I do remember that this was more a trail work day. One of the fellows didn't have a pair of clippers. He had a bushwhacking tool --gosh I wish I could remember the name of it. It wasn't a scythe, but it had a pole with a big blade at the end of it and he would sort of swing it back and forth. This poor fellow got it stuck on a tree branch or something, and it ended up coming full swing and hitting him in the lower leg, so we had some blood there. He did manage to get out with that, with a bunch of bandages. That's interesting. I had forgotten that.

FOW: Did you know Al Jenks?

LB: Yes, I have fond memories of going there to cross country ski. He's got a lot of ups and downs and hills there that are a little scary for me, but back in the day I was able to manage that. A lot of going out on snowy, snowy days and also warm, rainy days skiing. I took a group several times to one of the small buildings that he had with a wood stove. We got the wood stove going and had our hot chocolate.

I remember seeing Al more recently, just a few years ago. "Hi, how are you?" Al says, "I'm doing ok. I've just had open heart surgery, but that was a few weeks ago. I did many miles skiing today." It hadn't slowed him down much.

FOW: You adopted the Raymond Trail a long time ago.

LB: Yes, a long, long time ago. I was actually on the Conservation Commission here in Peterborough and one of the other Commission members had said that we really needed

a trail off that side of the mountain. It was someone by the name of Fairfield Raymond, who I had worked for a number of years, and he asked me if I would work with the Boy Scouts laying this trail out. I did go initially with a forester-surveyor up there to look at a good location for the trail, and then worked with Boy Scout troop 8 here in Peterborough to build the trail. It was quite an event at this time, a job well done.

FOW: How long did it take?

LB: Oh gosh, it took a number of weeks working Saturdays up there to get that done. I don't think it went into another year but, you know, all in the summer. There were pictures in the archives of that happening of the Conservation Commission and Board of Selectman and myself at the trailhead on Mountain Road. Later, since that trail opened, they made another connection onto Mountain Road. It gives you a better parking lot. It's always interesting to me that people always seem to head towards that original parking lot with many cars there. They should move down the road, but I'm not the one telling people to park.

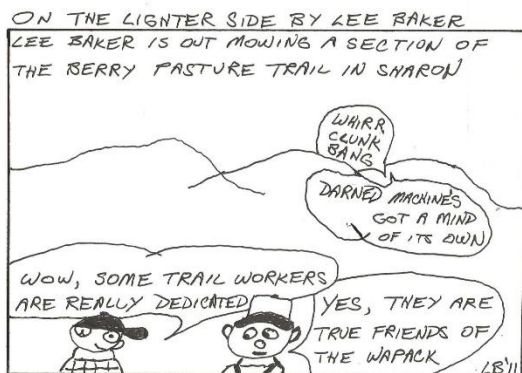
FOW: You were on the trail crew and I think you worked on the Berry Pasture Trail as well.

LB: Yes, that was really quite an amazing revelation, really, of opening up that berry pasture, because they went in there with a big piece of equipment. I think it was like 25 acres or something that they mowed with a big piece of machinery. You've got this amazing view of Monadnock from there. It's all kind of grown up now. At one time when Lee was younger, I used to take one

of my big walk-behind mowers up through there to go from the base up to the top of the fields. That was a long time ago. It may be hard on the machinery because there is a lot of rock up through there. So that was the type of thing where it was a multi-day event for me to walk this big machine uphill on the hiking trail and kind of hide it in the woods, and then another day come back and actually do the mowing, and maybe leave it in the woods again, and come back later to get the machine. It was a real work of love. Now, I don't think it's like that. I think they just go and cut brush.

FOW: Were you able to drive in on Mountain Road, or did you have to get the mower all the way in from the gate?

LB: All the way in from the gate. You know, we could drive down Mountain Road, but there was a parking lot there so, yes, go to that point.



It was a real job trying to just get the mower there. Much less to do the work.

FOW: You've done a huge amount for the trail. Are there other things or other people that you'd like to mention?

LB: Well, how important Ollie Mutch was doing all this work. He had insight into getting all the workers to the trail. One of the unsung heroes would be John Flanders, who would spend time leading the Friends of the Wapack as well as writing the first guidebook. I haven't really seen or heard from him in years but he is still with us, I believe. He is a quiet presence from a long time ago. Jon Thunberg was another one of the amazing persons in the early history. He was treasurer and president. We met at his house in Milford for committee meetings.

FOW: It's not related to the Wapack, but I believe you and Jeannette bicycled across the country twice.

LB: We did, yes. In 1983 and 1989 we went across the country. They say it was a really good test of a marriage to spend 90 days sleeping in a tent. It was quite an experience.

FOW: Where did you start and where did you end?

LB: The first time we went with a group called Bike Centennial. In 1976 they did a Centennial trail across the middle part of the country. So in 1983 we joined one of their groups. We had a leader and many, many maps and that sort of thing. We started in Yorktown VA, to dip your rear wheel in the Atlantic, and then went all the way to Portland OR, and dipped our wheels there. On the second trip in 1989 we went from Bar Harbor ME to Seattle WA, and actually continued to the San Juan islands. They were really amazing, wonderful experiences.

LB: When you're in a blowing rainstorm, you don't hit the railroad tracks at the wrong angle... then you go flying. I don't know just where that was, somewhere here in the Northeast. It happened right in front of a car dealership with these salesmen standing in the window watching. Well, I picked myself up and swept myself off and probably wrung out my clothes and hat, for now it was pouring rain. I hit the tracks at just the wrong angle. I got on the bike and kept on going. 1989 was a really rainy, rainy year. We went for close to three weeks of rain, and we would meet other people biking the same route, and they'd say "Oh, we can't, we just can't do this any longer", and they would leave. In 1989 we had borrowed maps and we're doing this on our own without a leader, so it was quite an amazing trip. In a place called Sweden Maine they have steep, steep hills. In the West it takes you miles to get up to a high elevation, but in Maine the mountains go straight up and straight down. I remember, boy, that was some of the steepest hills we had in Maine.

LB: Maybe sort of a darker time was being in a city park. After you go through Ohio, you kind of run out of campgrounds, so we would go to a police station in a little town that we would be passing through, and ask if there was someplace that we could camp. They would direct us usually to a city park. It was amazing how friendly people were. They would say "Oh, on the way to the city park, you'll pass the high school, and we just made sure the doors are unlocked. You can go in there and take a shower." So we would get to a city park, and it wasn't a park like we know here. It was all sand. It was somewhere in Wyoming, or maybe in the Dakotas. It was the middle of the night, and there were a bunch of, I would say wild kids, making silhouettes against our tent and dancing around the outside of our tent. It was a little scary. We just held tight, and one of them eventually said "You know, I think we better leave these people alone", so they got in their car and drove away.

FOW: Those sound like two wonderful adventures.

LB: I could also go on about those 50 years of leading hikes with the Harris Center. Really, where my heart is the conservation. I can't really lead the hikes anymore or go on the hikes. I'm really a pretty slow hiker now, but I'm still quite involved in land conservation and trying to protect what little is left of the natural landscape.

FOW: Where do you usually take the hikes?

LB: Oh, I would say all over. Nowadays, it would be flatter areas to go on, one of the rail beds or something like that, where I didn't have to go steep up hills.

FOW: Other adventures from the outdoors?

LB: I spent a little bit of time at other places making trails. You probably heard of the hotel and sort of business center in Jaffrey, the Woodbound Inn, right on the side of Contoocook Lake. They had cross country ski trails that connected to some of the trails that Cathedral of the Pines had, so they asked me to go in and lay out some trails. This was back in the day when I would go out in the woods by myself with a chainsaw to work on things. I wouldn't dare do that today, but back in the day I would go out there and cut those big trees down. I remember one time getting my chainsaw stuck, and having to walk way back to my truck to get another saw to get it out. It was a hand saw; it took me a while.

FOW: You were a carpenter in your day job.

LB: Yes, a nail banger. I spent a lot of time hauling shingles up onto roofs, carrying loads of lumber from one place to another, and that sort of thing. A lot of stories. One day I was told to move a large pile of barn timbers from one place to another. Take someone else with you and move all of these things, and stack them up in a pile. And I did that. And I get back to the base of operations and I'm told "You moved them to the wrong place." So the next day you go back and load everything onto a trailer and move it to another place.

LB: I worked for a number of different contractors in the area. Some of them are no longer living. A lot of stories there.

FOW: You worked at Temple Mountain in the winter.

LB: Yes, sometimes, and then when I was sort of at the end of working construction, I went on to being an estate caretaker. For these people, the Raymonds that I mentioned with the Raymond trail, I spent time mowing lawns and clearing their hiking trails, as well as another local family, the Clement family, on route 123 near the house where I grew up in on 123. They also had trails and acres and acres of lawn to mow, and that sort of thing. I did all sorts of things in this caretaking job, from taking people to the airport to polishing the brass on the fireplace to walking the dog.

FOW: Other things?

LB: A large part of this is credit to my wife, who keeps me working all these years. I appreciate that. She's quite a motivating force. I wish I could keep up. I couldn't keep up then and I can't seem to keep up with her now, so it is what it is.

FOW: Thank you for spending these hours with us. It was wonderful to hear about all of the past times and events.

Sharon Town Trails Update

This information and map of the town of Sharon conservation land trails is presented in memory of Mitch Call. Thanks to Anne Fischer, Sharon Conservation Commission co-chair, for providing this information.

In 2020 the Sharon Conservation Commission completed the trail network with the addition of the Meadow Brook Trail. A trail map was created and trail markers painted. Trails are maintained by a volunteer trail crew coordinated by Sharon's Conservation Commission.

As of August 2026, the Sullivan Loop trail and Milt Street Trail have been cleared of fallen trees and trail markers repainted. The first half of the Matthews Trail has been cleared and mowed but the bridge is in disrepair and will be rebuilt by the end of the month. The Meadow Brook and Big Tree Trail are in need of trail maintenance.

Contact concom.sharonnh@gmail.com if you're interested in helping with trail work or to alert the Conservation Commission of downed trees or other issues on the Sharon trails.

Trails in the Robert P. Bass Memorial Town Forest, Sharon NH

Sullivan Loop Trail, 2.2 miles (white)

Parking for Sullivan Loop is on McCoy Road (east end, just off rt. 123). Enter through the gate, follow a logging road .15 mile to a clearing. Cross the clearing and find the sign that marks the beginning of the Loop. This relatively flat trail goes through a meadow, crosses streams and wet areas and passes through thick forest. All trails in the Sharon Town Forest merge onto the Sullivan Loop Trail.

Meadow Brook Trail, 2 miles (red)

This trail begins to the south of the former Sharon Arts Center on Rt. 123. Park in front of the gate and follow the unmarked Clark Road for .33 miles at which point the trail leaves Clark Road and takes a sharp right. The trail follows Meadow Brook, crossing it four times. Note that the crossing involves stepping from rock to rock, which can be treacherous, especially in winter or in high water.

The Big Tree Trail, .9 mile (yellow)

This trail begins on Jarmany Hill Road, across the road and just south of the Jarmany Hill Road cemetery. It begins with a steady descent, winds through woods, over streams and passes what is considered the largest tree in Sharon—a white pine that stands 120 feet and is 13.4 feet around. The trail continues past the tree and connects with the Meadow Brook Trail.

Milt Street Trail, 1.33 miles (orange)

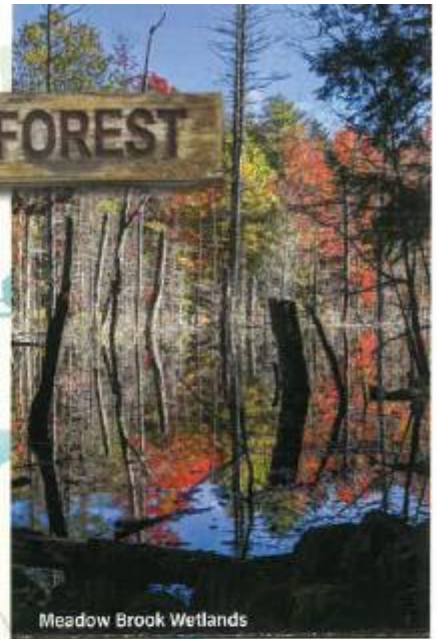
The Milt Street Trail begins off of Street Street, which is accessed by a short dirt road that is a half mile (north) from the intersection of Spring Hill Road/Jarmany Hill Road or .3 of a mile (west) from the intersection of Mill Road/Jarmany Hill Road. Park in front of the gate on Street Street. The trail enters the woods off a clearing, marked with a wooden sign. The trail meanders through the forest and then makes a steep (and sometimes slippery) descent to the Sullivan Loop Trail.

Matthews Trail, .9 mile (blue)

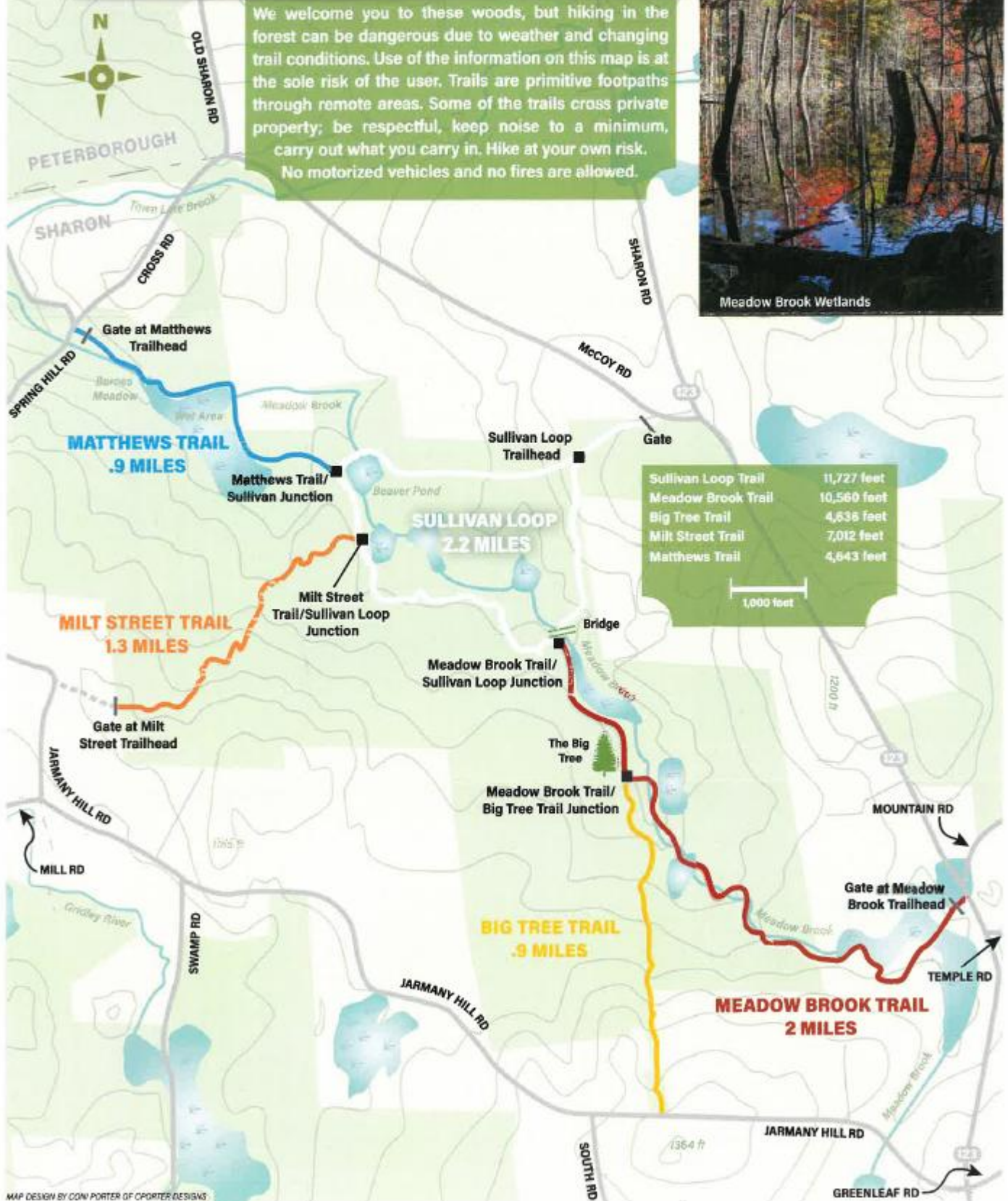
The Matthews Trail begins just north of the Spring Hill Road bridge. The trail starts as an old logging road, follows Meadow Brook, passes Barnes Meadow, then takes a sharp right and slightly downhill to a bridge across the brook. Beyond the bridge the trail takes a right turn, goes through a wet area, then another right turn, following along the right side of a stone wall. It soon passes through an opening in the stonewall and continues as a flat, wide path until it connects with the Sullivan Loop Trail.

ROBERT P. BASS MEMORIAL TOWN FOREST

We welcome you to these woods, but hiking in the forest can be dangerous due to weather and changing trail conditions. Use of the information on this map is at the sole risk of the user. Trails are primitive footpaths through remote areas. Some of the trails cross private property; be respectful, keep noise to a minimum, carry out what you carry in. Hike at your own risk. No motorized vehicles and no fires are allowed.



Meadow Brook Wetlands



MAP DESIGN BY CONI PORTER OF CPORTER DESIGNS



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**Annual Meeting Details
Enclosed**

Founded in 1980, the Friends of the Wapack are an all-volunteer nonprofit organization dedicated to the maintenance and permanent projection of the Wapack Trail and certain side trails. The Friends of the Wapack, Inc. is recognized as a charitable corporation under section 501(c)(3) of the US IRS code.

The Wapack Trail is a 21 mile hiking trail that traverses the Wapack Range from Mt. Watatic in Ashburnham MA to North Pack in Greenfield NH. Completed in 1923, it is the oldest interstate hiking trail in the Northeast.

The Voice of the Wapack print edition is published twice a year by the Friends of the Wapack, Inc.
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*Mitch Call (l) accepts a gift from the Friends of the Wapack board in appreciation for his 13 years of service as Friends of the Wapack president, presented by incoming president Rick Blanchette in 2013.
Mitch passed away this year.*

