



Northfield Riverbank Views

P.O. Box 44, Northfield, MA 01360

Spring 2015 Volume 8 No. 1

Hike and Dine to Protect Northfield's Watershed

Please Join Friends and Neighbors
for a hike followed by dinner
in support of the
Greater Northfield Watershed
Association

Friday, June 12
5:30 pm - 8:00 pm
Northfield Golf Course Pavilion



Meet at the Northfield Golf Course at 5:30 PM and take a guided tour along the Mill Brook Trails, formerly the Schell Chateau and Estate. Beth Bazler, Public Program Director for the Northfield Mountain Recreation and Environmental Center, and Sue Ross, on the board of both Northfield Historical Society and GNWA will point out interesting plants, signs of wildlife and places of historic interest along the trail.

We will gather at 6:30 PM with friends under the Northfield Golf Course Pavilion for a casual dinner and lively conversation. Cash bar. Come for the whole evening or stop by to have a cookie, listen to live music, and just say "Hi." Families are welcome.

Donations to support the Greater Northfield Watershed Association. RSVP's are appreciated. Email Kate Pontius at rossiter.k@gmail.com, or find a link to the online invitation on our website at <http://www.northfieldmass.org/watershed.html>. If you would be willing to contribute to the buffet, please let Kate know.

Northeast Energy Direct Pipeline Update

At Town Meeting, Northfield citizens voted to fund \$25,000 of legal, technical, and consulting services related to the pipeline and also voted to hold a non-binding referendum on the pipeline. The next day voters overwhelmingly opposed the pipeline, giving the Selectboard a clear message on how they should proceed with FERC. The town is currently soliciting citizen concerns to be added to their comments during the scoping hearings. GNWA will file additional watershed-related concerns during scoping. You can view our first submission to FERC about the NED pipeline at www.northfieldpipeline.org/ferccomments.

Kinder Morgan's pipeline proposal is still in the pre-filing process. The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission will soon hold scoping hearings in which they will hear from towns, non-profits, landowners, and other citizens about what they ought to include in their Environmental Impact Statement regarding the project. This is basically a cost-benefit analysis, and it is important that the FERC documents the full scope of the costs.

In order for FERC to grant a "certificate of public good and convenience," Kinder Morgan must demonstrate "need," documented by firm contracts with gas distribution companies, and, for the first time, electric generating plants. Because the state's Department of Public Utilities must first approve these contracts, or precedent agreements, we are presented with the opportunity to whittle away at the "need" argument within the state. Several non-profits, including Pipeline Awareness for the Northeast (PLAN-NE) and Northeast Energy Solutions (NEES) have hired lawyers to argue the case that the companies who wish to subscribe for capacity on the NED pipeline are not meeting Massachusetts' energy goals—they should first fix leaks in their distribution lines, as well as meet peak winter demand by weatherizing and insulating. Further, the capacity that they are applying for would remove contracts that they have on other existing transmission pipelines.

GNWA is considering joining with one of these non-profits in their efforts to prove that this proposed pipeline presents environmental costs that exceed the need for a new gas infrastructure of this magnitude. Individuals, too, can comment on these hearings, or can join PLAN-NE to be a part of their comments, especially useful if you are a gas customer, or a landowner directly affected by the pipeline. These legal efforts do require significant amounts of money, and contributions are always welcome. Contributions to PLAN-NE can be made online at <http://www.massplan.org/coalition-members/>.



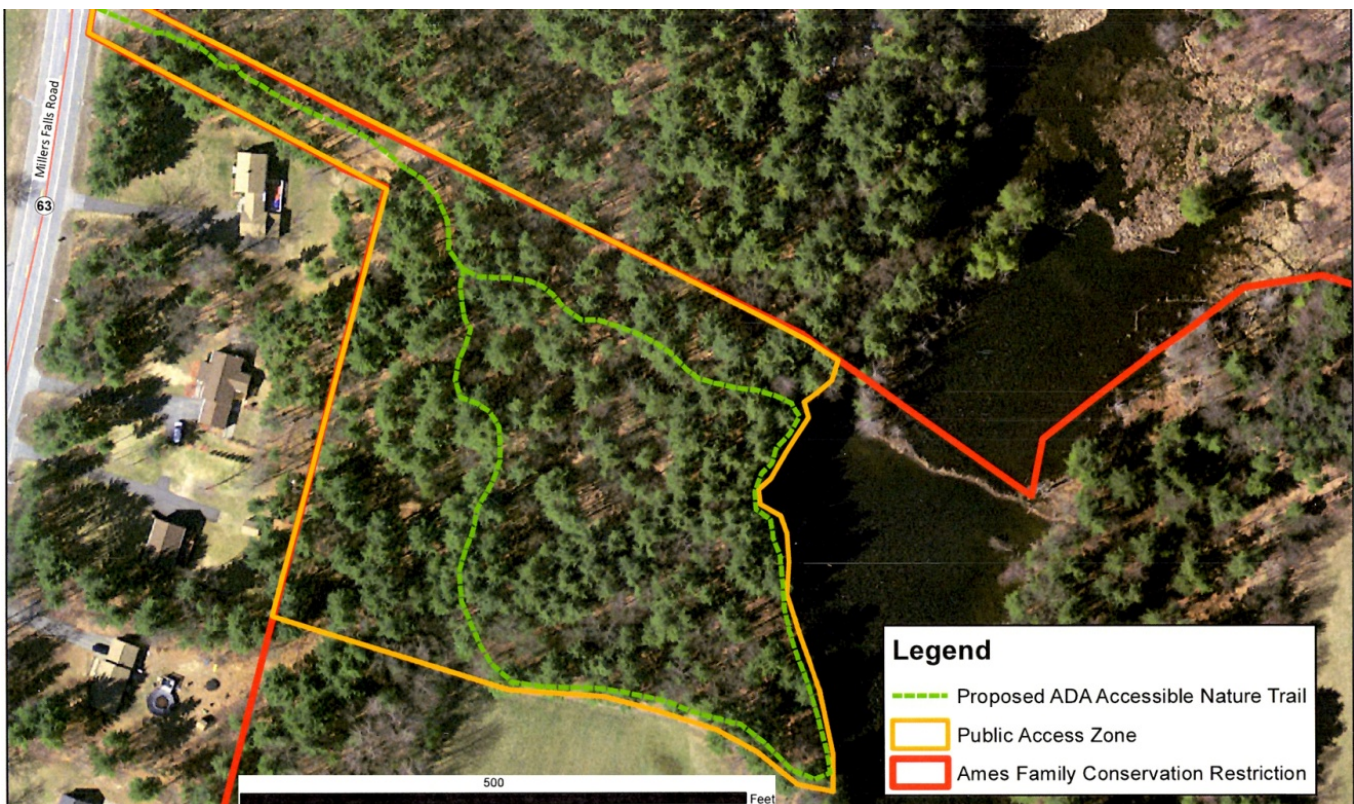
Vernal Pool, Northfield Town Forest

Alderbrook Meadow Sanctuary Update

As reported in the last newsletter, the town has received a Massachusetts LAND grant of approximately \$135,000 to help fund the purchase of a conservation restriction (CR) on 145 acres on South Mountain Road, owned by William and Nancy Ames. An important part of that application is the building of a public trail, one that is also wheelchair-accessible, along the picturesque beaver dam/pond on the property. The trail will include a suitable parking area off of route 63, an information kiosk, a viewing platform, and benches. A Recreational Trails Project (Department of Conservation and Recreation) grant application has been made to fund the building of this trail.

Since publication of the last newsletter, the town approved an additional \$55,000 at the November 24 special town meeting, to be provided by the Community Preservation Act fund. Together with the grant, this makes \$190,000 of the \$220,000 cost of the CR. Subsequently about \$28,000 has been raised by Mount Grace from various other sources. However, implementation costs (appraisal, attorney, title, etc.) of about \$16,000 means that \$18,000 remains to be raised to cover the \$236,000 complete cost of the project.

Mount Grace is planning several fundraising events over the next two months to complete the funding. These include community walks of the proposed accessible trail (May 1, 10, 13, 16), naming the kiosk after a donor, and a musical event/auction on the property. Stay tuned for additional information. GNWA members who would be interested in making donations toward this project should contact Jay Rasku with MGLCT at 978-248-2043 or email rasku@mountgrace.org.



Alderbrook Meadow Sanctuary Boundary

Thank You for Renewing Your Membership

Count me a friend of
The Greater Northfield
Watershed Association

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Email _____

All dues/donations are
entirely tax deductible.

Please write check to:

GNWA
P.O. Box 44
Northfield, MA 01360

- \$25 Family
- \$15 Individual
- \$50 Sponsor
- \$100 Patron
- \$100 Corporation
- \$50 Small Business

My interests are:

- Wildlife
- Wetlands
- Recreation
- Land-use planning

I have included an additional contribution for river sampling.

Find us on Facebook



GREATER NORTHFIELD WATERSHED ASSOCIATION

**PO Box 44
NORTHFIELD, MA 01360**