



**Belknap Range  
Conservation Coalition**

**2021 Annual Report (October  
2020 to October 2021)**

The Belknap Range Conservation Coalition (BRCC) is a non-profit organization whose mission is to promote the conservation of open space, responsible stewardship, and low impact public enjoyment of scenic, natural, recreational and historical resources of the Belknap Mountain Range. Participating members include individuals/conservation commission members from the project area towns of Alton, Belmont, Gilford and Gilmanton as well as dedicated individuals who share an avid interest in the many resources that the Belknap Range provides. Conservation organizations with participating members include: UNH Cooperative Extension; Society for the Protection of NH Forests (SPNHF); Lakes Region Conservation Trust; Belknap County Sportsmen’s Association; Belknap Range Trail Tenders (BRATTS); Gilmanton Land Trust (LRCT); New England Forestry Foundation and the Belknap County Conservation District. The town of Barnstead has also supported BRCC with a membership.

Along with working to protect the largely unfragmented natural landscape that makes up the Belknap Mountain Range, BRCC also educates the public about the significance of the resources of the Belknap Mountain Range; develops, promotes, and implements methods and strategies for ensuring the long-term protection and responsible stewardship of these resources; and promotes opportunities for low impact public enjoyment and recreation. BRCC strives to facilitate cooperation and communication among conservation organizations, municipalities, other governmental entities and area landowners. BRCC helps coalition members secure funding, technical assistance and other resources for carrying out programs in support of this mission.

In January, we lost Tom Howe in a tragic accident. Tom was a founding member of BRCC representing the Forest Society and the Gilmanton Land Trust. Tom was directly involved in conservation of over 2200 acres in the Belknaps and was working on several thousand more. Tom was a great friend and colleague and is sorely missed. BRCC is committed to continue Tom’s conservation work. Brian Hotz of the Forest Society has joined us to help us in this effort.



**Tom Howe leading a visit to Piper Mountain**

At the annual meeting on October 21, 2021, the current officers: Russ Wilder, Chairperson; Bruce Jacobs, Vice Chairperson; Lisa Morin, Secretary; and Nanci Mitchell, Treasurer, were reappointed. Gene Young, Alton Conservation Commission Chairman, was appointed as a Director.

During the year, the Directors met quarterly during the COVID 19 Pandemic via Zoom conference. The meetings offer important opportunities for members to share information about parcels within the focus area. At these meetings we focused on sharing information on parcels of land that may be available for conservation in the Belknaps. We are monitoring several such parcels and are supporting contacts with landowners who might be willing to participate in a land conservation project.

Due to the COVID 19 Pandemic, all in-person events were cancelled this year. During 2021, trail work was begun on the 65-acre Weeks project in Gilford. Russ Wilder and Gene Young (Alton CC Chair) assisted the Forest Society in constructing the new pavilion in the Mount Major parking lot. Derek Colquhoun served as Trail Steward for the Forest Society and Russ Wilder worked with the Gilford Conservation Commission laying out trails and space for a parking lot on the recently acquired Weeks Parcel. Hiker use of trails in the Belknaps has remained heavy this year. The trailhead on Jesus Valley Road remains closed by the landowner. Russ Wilder assisted with SPNHF's Mount Major Outdoor Classroom (MMOC) for elementary and middle school students.

BRCC continues to monitor management activities on acquired parcels and we continue to pursue additional conservation possibilities in the Belknap Range. BRCC, in conjunction with the Forest Society and LRCT, is helping to implement a management plan that will improve the outdoor experience and to address impacts to the trail system.

For more information on the BRCC, please visit our website at [www.belknaprange.org](http://www.belknaprange.org) or contact the Belknap Range Conservation Coalition at PO Box 151, Gilmanston IW, NH 03837 or email us at [info@belknaprange.org](mailto:info@belknaprange.org).

Respectfully submitted,



Russell J. Wilder, Chair