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Help Protect our future landscape... TODAY

Please note: All JULT memberships now run on a calendar year from January 1st to December 31st.

Please sign me up for:

- Conservator** Membership \$500
 - Steward** Membership \$100
 - Sponsor** Membership \$50
 - Family** Membership \$35
 - Individual** Membership \$25
 - Student/Senior** Membership \$10
 - Lifetime** Membership \$1,000
- (Beat inflation and avoid renewal notices!)

Please contact me regarding:

- Conservation options for my land
- Making a gift of stock
- Other planned giving opportunities
- Volunteer opportunities:
 - ___ Fundraising/Events
 - ___ Office/Administration
 - ___ Trails/Land Stewardship

Other Considerations:

- My employer's matching gift is enclosed.
- Please **do not** send me a "Thank-you" gift.
- I wish to remain anonymous.

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____ E-Mail _____

Please make **checks** payable to **JULT** and mail to the address below. Or you may **pay by credit card** via our website: www.jult.org. All contributions are tax-deductible.

Membership Matters!



LAND TRUST NEWS

Preserving Open Lands In Our Towns

Winter Newsletter 2021



MOBBS FARM into the Future!

Since 1968, the Town of Jericho has owned the scenic Mobbs Farm. This 275-acre property has met the functional needs of Jericho by accommodating the Town garage and a former landfill. The capped landfill is currently being transformed into a large solar array to provide electricity. The remaining land offers miles of trails for many recreational needs year round. The Mobbs Committee manages this land and has spent a number of years improving the trail system and its access by adding bridges, boardwalks and signage. A sizable parking area was added close to the Town Garage off of Browns Trace and trailhead kiosks were installed for informational purposes. This exquisite jewel of Town owned land has become increasingly popular for recreational use. Whether on horseback, mountain bike, cross country skis or simply walking, the Mobbs Farm trails take you through expansive meadows, dense forested hillsides, craggy ledge, and fruit orchards. The startlingly beautiful Mills Brook carves its way along the southwestern side and provides a refreshing break during hot summer days. Diverse wildlife habitats are also a part of Mobbs Farm and they receive special attention. Mobbs Farm has become a favorite location for many Town residents and also pulls recreationists from other towns. This activity fosters our local economy and creates a special sense of place that is Jericho.

Mobbs Farm continued page 2...



We're on the web: www.jult.org

Remember to "Like" us on



Mobbs Farm Continued...

The Jericho Underhill Land Trust (JULT) has been working with the Mobbs Committee to permanently conserve this special land. With the exclusion of the Town garage and solar array, the remaining property would be protected from further development. The Vermont Land Trust (VLT) would hold the conservation easement and be responsible for monitoring Mobbs Farm's conserved land in perpetuity. The cost to protect this property will be \$43,000 with the bulk, \$20,000, providing a VLT stewardship endowment for future monitoring. This \$43,000 sum has been reduced to \$13,000 with \$10,000 in support from JULT, \$10,000 in support from VLT and an anticipated \$10,000 in support from Jericho's Conservation Reserve Fund. There will be an advisory vote by Australian ballot at the upcoming Town Meeting, March 2. The language has not been finalized but will be similar to this:

Should the Selectboard pursue the conveyance of a conservation easement (in perpetuity) over 234 +/- acres of the total 275 +/- acre Mobbs

Farm property to the Vermont Land Trust at an estimated expense of \$43,000 +/-, using grants, gifts and previously raised funds, for the purpose of protecting its natural resources, wildlife habitat, trails, recreational and educational opportunities, productive farmland and forestland, and scenic value?

The Mobbs Committee will be posting more material on the Town's website and will be available to answer any questions at the two Town informational hearings planned for February. JULT expects the vote to be favorable for conserving Mobbs Farm for today and into the future. Permanent protection will ensure public enjoyment of recreational trails, scenic vistas and the safeguarding of important wildlife habitats.

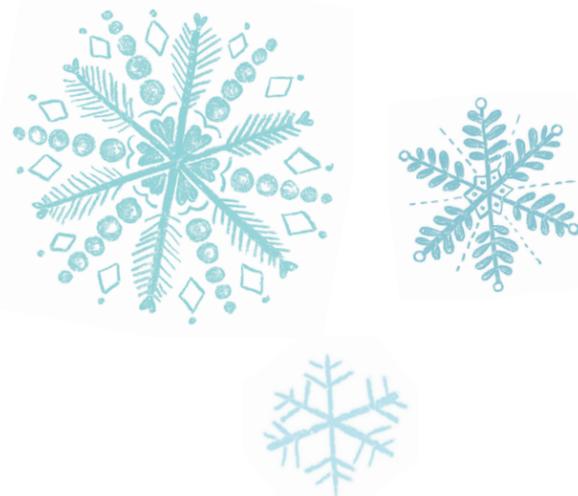
For more information about Mobbs Farm, please go to the Mobbs Farm Management Plan on the Town Website. The link is here: <https://jerichovt.org/2497/widgets/7724/documents/15580/download>

Calling All Email Addresses!

JULT is updating its email list and we want to include you, our members! Our plan is to send regular news about our land conservation progress and to keep you better informed. Quarterly newsletters are helpful but they may not be timely enough. We promise you, we will not harass with frequent emails and of course, we do not share this list. If your email address has changed, or if you are not sure whether we have it, please send us an email to JULandtrust@gmail.com so that we can include you. Thank you!

WINTER RENEWAL

We are in the midst of it...winter. This raw and unbridled season reminds us of our own human frailty. We reinforce our skin with jackets, hats, boots and mittens, preparing to step outside. Wind howls, unbuffered by the trees. Snow crystallizes our landscape and makes everything new. A fresh adventure invites us. The short days edged by darkness slowly lengthen and we put trust in this recurring rhythm of days moving from dark to light. How fortunate we are to have many community trails to explore in all seasons and especially in winter.



JULT Participates in Ash Tree Monitoring Program

By Sabina Ernst

In September 2020, JULT board members John Koier, Sabina Ernst, and volunteer Dave Aioldi met with Vermont Land Trust conservation biologist, Allaire Diamond, to begin work on an Ash Tree Monitoring Program in our conserved woods at Kikas Valley Farm. Ash Trees are under threat from an invasive insect which was introduced to North America from Asia through packing materials. The insect, Emerald Ash Borer (EAB), lays its eggs under the bark of any of our three native species of Ash trees and the larvae then develop within the layer of tissue by which the tree transports water and nutrients from the roots to the leaves. During their development, the larvae tunnel extensively through this layer and "strangle" the tree's circulation, which in most cases causes the tree to die within a few years.

The Monitoring and Managing Ash (MaMA) program, a citizen-science project of the Ecological Research Institute, is aimed at conserving ash and achieving local EAB mitigation. Vermont Land Trust leads the coordination of the project in Vermont. EAB has been found in Richmond, VT and Jericho is within the radius of the infestation zone therefore our Ash trees are in imminent danger. Sadly, most Ash trees infested with EAB will succumb, but a few may show resistance, which is why our participation in the monitoring program is relevant.

On that sunny autumn afternoon, we set out to identify 40 mature Ash trees in our woods, which would be suitable for the study. We found a small stand of White Ash (*Fraxinus americana*) that met the criteria and began the work of collecting our baseline data. For each of the 40 trees we determined the trunk diameter, gave each tree's leaf canopy a health score, marked the GPS location, and tagged them with an ID number.

And now, we wait. And watch. The trees will undergo the normal progression of their exposure and reaction to the EAB infestation. Hopefully, some of our trees will be resistant and survive and these "lingering ash" are the ones that will become critical to the future science of EAB management because they offer hope for ash conservation and restoration.

As EAB makes its way through Chittenden County and Ash trees perish, our forests will be less rich in diversity and the many other species that have symbiotic relationships with Ash will also be negatively impacted. JULT is proud to participate in this work and contribute scientific data for this project by including Ashes on land permanently conserved in Jericho. We will keep you posted in the upcoming years as to the status of our study subjects. For more information on EAB visit vtinvasives.org.

Nature Provides Refuge During Covid-19

According to new research by the University of Vermont, people are turning increasingly to nature in order to cope with Covid-19. A study led by Rachelle Gould, a UVM professor of sustainability and global equity, asked Vermonters about how the impact of Covid-19 had influenced their involvement with nature-based activities and if spending time outdoors had affected their mental health. More than 4,000 people participated in the survey. The research indicated that Vermonters have significantly increased their time outdoors since the Covid-19 pandemic. The survey also showed that improvements in mental health were important. Gould said that respondents felt that when they spent time outside and in the natural world, they were less focused on themselves and their individual problems. Respondents also reported a much greater sense of perspective and humility. Gould states that, "It's just recognizing that, especially during the pandemic, depression and anxiety are very, very common problems," she said. "And what this shows is that a lot of people are consciously recognizing that 'nature is the way I deal with my depression and anxiety.' People are very explicit and aware of that."

How fortunate we are to live in a community that offers so many opportunities to be outdoors, to recreate and to observe nature. To read this study, please go to: <https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0243697#sec001>