



PUTNEY MOUNTAIN ASSOCIATION

A volunteer non-profit conservation organization
P.O. Box 953, Putney, VT 05346 • www.putneymountain.org

A S E M I - A N N U A L N E W S L E T T E R

S P R I N G 2 0 1 5

Return of the SHEEP!

Claire Wilson

When you hike to the summit of Putney Mountain this summer, you will again see grazing animals feasting on buckthorn, continuing our work to control this invasive plant without using herbicides. David Major of Vermont Shepherd Farm will deliver ten rams to the mountain after the buckthorn has leafed out in mid or late May, and they will remain on the summit for the entire growing season. This has been made possible through a grant from The Norcross Wildlife Foundation allowing us to purchase the needed equipment—fencing, solar powered electric fence charger, water tank, and hoses.

PMA board member Andrew Morrison, working on his masters degree focusing on invasive plant species, has volunteered to check on the sheep daily, giving them a bit of grain, making sure they have water, and feeding the guard dog.

We are grateful to David Major for his enthusiastic commitment to this exciting project which we hope will become a model for controlling invasive species in a natural way. We are utilizing what we know from the past; historically, grazing animals kept the Putney Mountain summit clear and open!

In addition to the grant, we estimate our expenses for this project for the summer will be \$1000, just one fifth of the cost of our first experimental season. With 10 rams munching for 100 days, \$1.00 can support one ram for one day!

Please take this opportunity to help PMA continue this project with your contribution:

- _ \$100 supports one ram for 100 days
- _ \$ 30 supports one ram for a month
- _ \$ 7 supports one ram for a week
- _ \$ 1 supports one ram for a day
- _ Other...we welcome any amount!

Make checks payable to Putney Mountain Association with "sheep" in the memo line. Mail to:
Claire Wilson, 27 Spring Hill Road, Putney VT 05346.

David Ritchie, PMA member who has helped us shape the grazing project, contributes this poem.

This year 2015, we honor the year of the sheep

And all their attendant values.

Celebrate the year we can further delete

INVASIVE BUCKTHORN

With rams instead of ewes!



One of last year's ewes enjoys her buckthorn lunch.

Hannum-O'Connor Trail Update

Pat Shields

As soon as the land dries sufficiently, we will begin cutting the trail on our new Hannum-O'Connor parcel. If you are interested in volunteering for the trail-building work party, please contact Dan Healey (802-387-6128, danhealey.treework@gmail.com).

The trail will meander north from Holland Hill Rd through the eastern portion of the property. A parking area will accommodate several cars. The trail will connect to an existing trail on the Silvio B. Conte NFWR, allowing one to loop back to HH Rd via our Dine Trail. A very short walk down HH Rd will bring you back to your car. We are also building a kiosk for the parking area. Stand by for announcement of a grand opening hike this summer or early fall and be sure to get your name on our email list so that you will be notified.

New Board Members

Kai George

The Board is pleased to welcome two new members: John Foster and Geordie Heller. John is a naturalist who has led a forest ecology walk on Putney Mountain and been a speaker at PMA's annual meeting. He also has participated in the hawk watch. In addition to his interest in the natural world, John is beginning a new career as a healer.



Left: Geordie Heller, Right: John Foster

Geordie is a life-long resident of Putney. He began climbing Putney Mountain as a toddler and has been hiking the trails ever since. He remembers bushwhacking along the ridge to the Pinnacle over 40 years ago on what is now a well-maintained trail. We are fortunate to have the benefit of John's and Geordie's expertise on the Board!

Update on Silvio O. Conte NFWR trail system

Emily McAdoo

It was in December of 2012 that we signed a two year memorandum of understanding with the Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge. Renewed in December of 2014, this memorandum represents a significant step for both organizations in that it would officially link our trail systems and open the refuge's Putney Mountain Unit to the public for the first time.

Our memorandum is included in a far reaching ten year comprehensive conservation plan for the entire Connecticut River region which the Silvio O. Conte NFWR has been in the process of drafting. Although our piece is not at all controversial, it will not be official until the entire plan is in place. This has been a more time consuming project that we originally thought.

The good news is that the draft is now complete. It is possible that issues will come up requiring revisions to the draft, but if all goes as planned it will be rolled out in June, July and August for a 90 day public comment period before being finalized. There will an informational meeting in the West River/Brattleboro area on June 10th. The time and place will be posted on our website and Facebook page.

In July and August there will be Public Hearings held in each state – New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts

and Connecticut at. The Putney Mountain Association will present a letter of endorsement. Comments from the public are welcome at any time, you do not need to be present at a meeting.

We will post information about the Refuge on the Parkman Wood Rd kiosk at the entry to the Refuge. Please be patient; many good things take time and are worth the wait.

**THE TRAILS ARE CALLING!
PMA needs YOU!**

Geordie Heller

If you enjoy walking the trails on Putney Mountain and you like to do light work in the woods, this opportunity may be right for you!

PMA is looking for a few people who would adopt a trail—either a short one or a piece of a longer one—and make it their job to keep that section in good shape. Briefly, that translates to keeping the treadway clear of fallen branches, clipping branches, brush, and brambles that grow into the trail, picking up trash, and monitoring for and reporting more serious issues, such as fallen trees or water damage. Chain saw use is not required; other trail volunteers can help with heavy work.

Our 9 miles of trail need attention.

If you are interested in volunteering or want more information, please contact:

Libby Mills at libbym680@comcast.net or Geordie Heller at hsquared49@yahoo.com

We'd love to hear from you!

Upcoming Events

We have some fun spring and summer events planned. Please join us; bring your friends and family! Sturdy shoes, water and a snack are recommended.

May 16: Moss Walk with Sarah Cooper-Ellis

Sarah will be leading another Moss Walk for us Saturday, May 16. Meet at the Putney Mountain parking lot at 10am to join us! If you have a magnifying glass, please bring it along. Rain Date: May 17.

May 23: Bird Walk with Bob Engel

Bob has agreed to lead us on a fabulous Bird Walk on Putney Mountain Saturday, May 23. Meet in the parking lot 8am sharp. Bring binoculars if you have them. Rain Date: May 24th.

June 6: Tree Identification with Tom Prunier

Join Tom Saturday June 6 at 10am on Putney mountain. Tom will help you learn to identify trees, not by the leaves but using the bark, shape and twig structure instead. RSVP to Tom at 802-387-5875.

June 13: Putney Mountain Hike with John Foster

Please join John Foster, new board member on an exploration of Putney Mountain, June 13, 2015 from 9am-12:00pm. Meet at the PMA parking lot. Rain Date: June 14.

Putney Mountain has marvelous examples of unique forest associations. During this hike many topics will be discussed, such as forest ecology, botany, land use interpretation and animal signs and tracking.

Please feel free to come with your favorite topic or questions. This will be a great opportunity to explore this fascinating site. Children 10 and up welcome with responsible adult.

July 18: Children's Nature Walk and Scavenger Hunt with Pat Shields

Join Pat on Saturday, July 18 at 10:30am for a leisurely walk to the summit, exploring the forest and what lives there as we go. Kids will have the opportunity to make a 'nature page' of the hike; this could be the start of a rewarding practice of recording family hikes and nature observations. Those who prefer to explore on their own can pick up a Nature Scavenger Hunt at the kiosk. Bring a picnic and enjoy some time on the summit. Putney Mountain Scout pins will be awarded to children who complete the hike or scavenger hunt. Rain Date: July 19.

August 15: Geology of Putney Mountain walk with Roger Haydock

Meet Roger Saturday, August 15, 9:00am, at the Putney Mountain parking lot and be ready for real treat! Roger is a trail designer extraordinaire; we are fortunate to have his special skill for trail design on the newly acquired Hannum O'Connor lands.

Roger will lead us on a geology walk to the summit of Putney Mountain, passing through hundreds of millions of years on our way. Rain Date: August 16.

Memberships, Donations and Items for Sale

Putney Mountain Association is an all volunteer organization. Your donations help pay property taxes and insurance, and make conservation of Putney Mountain lands possible. Thank you for contributing.

I would like to give a Putney Mountain Association lifetime membership to: \$25 ea _____

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

_____ e-mail and phone _____

I would like to give a contribution. \$ _____

Rugged, waterproof trail maps showing trails on PMA and Windmill Hill Pinnacle Lands @ \$7 _____

Adjustable Putney Mountain baseball caps @ \$15 _____

Tick Prevention Ankle Guards (per pair) @ \$10 _____

Mosquito Head Net @ \$10 _____

Postcards (4), 1 each of Pete Guenther's lovely photos of the 4 seasons on the reserve @ \$5 _____

Please include \$1 shipping for postcards and maps, and \$3 for the other items. @ \$ _____

Grand Total \$ _____

Make checks to Putney Mountain Association

Mail to: Claire Wilson, 26 Spring Hill Road, Putney, VT 05346

PUTNEY MOUNTAIN ASSOCIATION

P.O.BOX 953

PUTNEY, VT 05346

Address Service requested

Please let us know if your address changes

THE PMA NEWSLETTER IS GOING DIGITAL!

In an effort to save money and trees, as well as providing ongoing PMA news throughout the year, we will be offering future issues of the Newsletter in pdf (digital) format. You can help! Please go to www.putneymountain.org/newsletter/ to add your email address into our NEW email newsletter list. Future newsletter announcements will be sent with a link to the newsletter, and older newsletters will be archived on our website.

We will continue to urge members in future communications to help us reduce cost and volunteer work by adding your names and email addresses to the new email newsletter list directly at the web link above.

If you have trouble with the link* or wish to share comments or suggestions, please email us at newsletter@putneymountain.org. We also would appreciate your contacting us at that address if your email address changes. At any time you may opt out of receiving communication from us (whether email or US Mail), but we hope you stay with us.

Visit, "Like" and TALK to us on our FACEBOOK page at

 www.facebook.com/PutneyMountainAssociation

Please "Like" and share with your friends to keep up on the latest PMA news on Facebook.