

September 2008, Issue 21

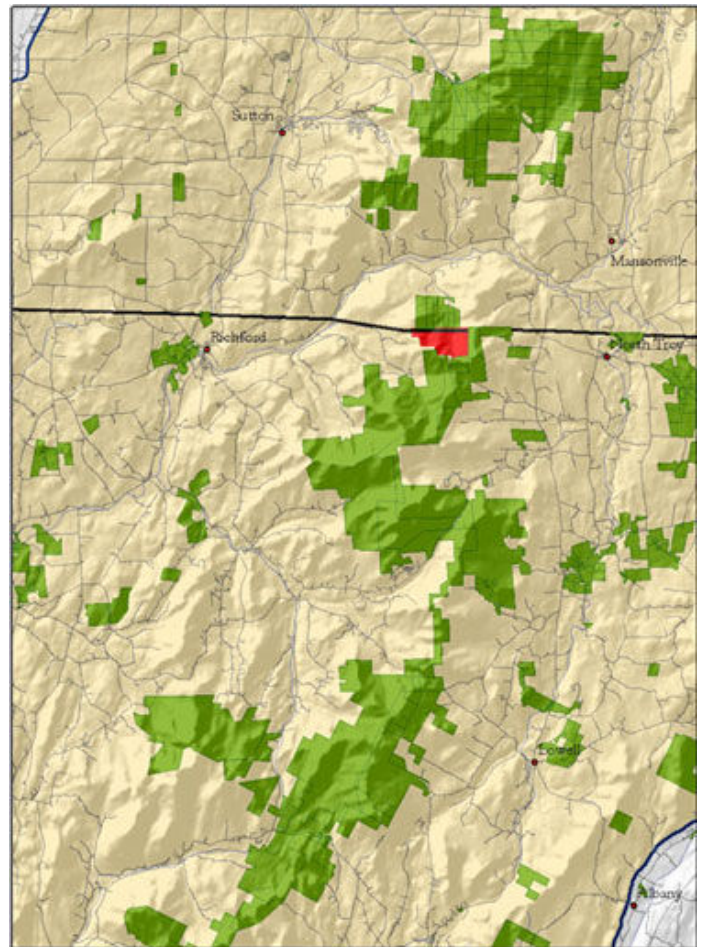
LightHawk's monthly update, WayPoint, was created to share some of the good news we on staff learn about daily. These success stories illustrate the critical role we play in conservation efforts throughout North and Central America through the unique perspective of flight. We hope you enjoy WayPoint and will share with others our success stories from above.

Restoring a Northern Forest Jewel

Looking upward while standing amid the Northern Temperate Forest of the northeastern United States and in nearby provinces of Canada, you may see a LightHawk flight in support of partners working strategically to sustain this valuable forest ecoregion.

As autumn takes hold in a blaze of red, orange and yellow, a chain of biologically rich forestland stretches from Mt. Sutton in southern Quebec through northern Vermont. Over 13,000 acres large, it comprises many small parcels of varying size – links in this chain of jewels. Thanks to the work of many over time, each has been preserved in perpetuity from development, road building, timbering and fragmentation. While each link in the chain has its ecological value, the linkage they provide is more valuable still. Together, they create a support network for the ecological health of the greater northern forest. But one link in the Sutton-Green mountains chain is missing: Canada View, a 1300-acre parcel along the CAN-US border in Vermont. A vast landscape of peaks, slopes, forests and waterways, it is critical habitat for federally protected Canada lynx, Northern Goshawk, American marten, and Bicknell's Thrush. Canada View is now up for sale, slated for a combination of timbering, subdivision, and development.

As the for-sale sign was staked on Canada View, LightHawk answered the call from a new partner, the Northeast Wilderness Trust (NWT) of Massachusetts, a regional land trust working to preserve and restore landscapes for wildlife and people. NWT requested a flight over Canada View to gather images for their campaign to purchase



Jewels in a chain: land secured from development forever spanning the Vermont/Quebec border is shown in green. If LightHawk partner, Northeast Wilderness Trust successfully purchases the Canada View parcel shown in red, it will create one of the few contiguous trans-border wilderness linkages in North America. *Map courtesy of NWT*

this land. Eastern Region Program Manager, Kelley Tucker, tapped her roster of volunteer pilots and Bob Keller came on board to fly the mission. After intensive pre-flight planning to ensure the most efficient and effective flying route, NWT staff and

New York photographer J. Henry Fair, a passionate defender of ecological integrity in the face of industrial challenge, took to the skies.

As a result of the flight, NWT has a stunning set of images of Canada View and the broader Sutton-Green mountains linkage of which it is a part. NWT hopes to raise \$2 million by April of 2009 to acquire the property and help create one of the few contiguous trans-border wilderness linkages in North America. The aerial photos will be used to inform people about the potential for this land and the ecological connections it will provide, if protected from development.

Ecological linkages are critical components of regional, landscape-scale efforts to preserve the rich northern Appalachian-Acadian ecosystem as a haven for forests, wildlife, and people. Linkages provide safe passages that allow the flow of wildlife and a physical connection for trees, plants, invertebrates and microorganisms – all necessary for healthy ecosystems – between large preserved areas like national forests or state parks. Together, linkages, parks, buffer lands, and carefully managed working lands can contribute to keeping remaining forest habitats genetically diverse. Core protected areas cannot exist as oases; they need to be connected in order to grow, repopulate, pollinate, evolve, and remain healthy.



The threat made real: Mt. Sutton in Quebec, looking south to the Green Mountains of Vermont and the Canada View parcel shown in red. An example of the development that threatens to fragment the remaining wildlands of the northern Appalachians. *J. Henry Fair flown by LightHawk*

While this effort in Vermont is important in itself, it is also being replicated across the Northern Temperate Forest by LightHawk partners and others. It is not by accident that these many different organizations are working toward common goals. NWT is a member of Two Countries One Forest (2C1Forest), an organization of scientists and landscape ecologists dedicated to a collaborative, cross-border approach rooted in and supporting the work of local and regional conservation organizations. Together with existing LightHawk partners The Adirondack Council; Association for the Protection of the Adirondacks; The Nature Conservancy, Maine; Natural Resources Council of Maine; The Nature Conservancy New Hampshire; Open Space Institute; and The Wilderness Society – all 2C1Forest members – LightHawk will continue to fly over the region helping further the goal of sustaining the emerald forests of the US and Canada.

"Pictures tell conservation stories better than words/maps can. Because we are trying to preserve landscapes—broad swaths of wilderness in order to protect biodiversity, mitigate climate change, and provide linkages for wide-ranging mammals, only an aerial shot can capture/convey the beauty and unfragmented nature of the areas we seek to protect."

- James Nordgren, Executive Director, Northeast Wilderness Trust



Volunteer Pilot, Bob Keller (Booneville, NY) captured by photographer J. Henry Fair pre-flight.

About LightHawk

Founded in 1979, LightHawk is a nonprofit, volunteer pilot-based organization that flies environmental missions in collaboration with a large network of pilots and hundreds of partner organizations throughout Central and North America. LightHawk flights provide a powerful and effective platform for research, groundtruthing, environmental awareness, and education.

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