



A rare old forest

The opportunity for protection, research, and education make the exemplary and old forest at Mount Sunapee State Park unique in southern New Hampshire.

Old forests represent valuable and endangered ecological systems and are extremely rare, representing less than one-tenth of one percent of New Hampshire's forests.

- Old forests protect species diversity, air and water quality, and wildlife habitat, and mitigate climate change through carbon sequestration.
- The location of Mount Sunapee State Park and its public hiking trails make its forests more accessible than many other old-forests in the state.
- Our old forests have an immeasurable impact on the human spirit, fostering personal exploration, health, and wellbeing.

Why is permanent protection needed?

Through the years, ski area development has cut into and diminished Mount Sunapee's old forest. And if future resort development proceeds as planned, more fragmentation and threats to the forests will result.

NOTE: The Natural Heritage Bureau evaluation (published in 1999) that studied the Mount Sunapee ski lease area recommended:

"The best conservation approach would be to protect in perpetuity the entire mosaic of forest types, including old growth to protect the assemblage of forest conditions ..."

And in 2003, the bureau after studying the East Bowl, recommended:

"... the East Bowl receive special conservation status as a Natural Area ..."

Mount Sunapee's exemplary natural community system is the only documented exemplary system of its type in New Hampshire. It is irreplaceable.

How you can help

- ▶ Volunteer to be an old-forest ambassador and advocate.
- ▶ Join FOMS Forest Action Committee or serve as an advisor.
- ▶ Help with research, outreach, or programming.
- ▶ Support our work with a donation to Friends of Mount Sunapee.

Contact us

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All photos: Mount Sunapee State Park (with lands located in Newbury and Goshen, New Hampshire)

Cover photo: Yellow birch, approximately 350 years of age, in the East Bowl, Mount Sunapee State Park

FOMS

Friends of Mount Sunapee advocates for the protection of Mount Sunapee State Park for its essential public values; conservation of Mount Sunapee's highlands and watersheds; and preservation of the mountain's unique natural heritage.

FOMS is a New Hampshire non-profit organization and federally recognized 501.c.3 charitable organization.

MOUNT SUNAPEE STATE PARK'S RARE FOREST



In Mount Sunapee State Park is an exemplary natural community system that encompasses a rare old forest.

This forest is an irreplaceable part of New Hampshire's natural and cultural heritage and deserves and requires permanent protection.

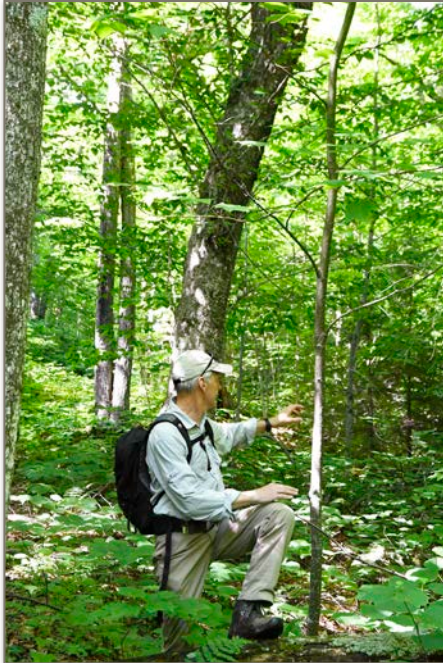
FRIENDS OF MOUNT SUNAPEE

A legacy to protect

Mount Sunapee's conservation legacy goes back to the early 20th century. At the time, the timber industry was clear cutting on the mountain. In 1909 conservationist Herbert Welsh, working with the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests, led an effort to preserve the mountain's remnant primeval forest ... "for all people to all time."

The Mount Sunapee Reservation, the Forest Society's first reservation, eventually took in 1185 acres (cut-over and remaining old forest). In formation of Mount Sunapee State Park in 1948, the Forest Society ceded the land to the state.

Published state studies since 1999 confirm: Mount Sunapee State Park hosts rare old growth within a forested exemplary natural community system.



This image is from the addendum to the 2004 report on Mt. Sunapee State Park, January 26, 2015, by the New Hampshire Natural Heritage Bureau.

The Exemplary Natural Community System and Old Forest at Mount Sunapee State Park

At Mount Sunapee State Park, the state has identified a 484-acre exemplary natural community system that includes rare old forest. Mount Sunapee has the only northern hardwood conifer forest system that is exemplary in the state of New Hampshire. Surrounding the remnant old forest is mature forest, which is integral to the natural community system. The mature forest contributes to the long-term integrity and viability of the old forest and with time will acquire old-growth characteristics if left intact.

- "Old-Growth Forests: ... known as old-growth, virgin, primeval, or ancient forests, have escaped harvesting or other significant human modification over the last 350 years, and cover less than a tenth of one percent of the state." ("The Nature of New Hampshire: Natural Communities of the Granite State")
- "RSA 217-A:3 defines exemplary natural communities as a viable occurrence of a rare natural community type or a high quality example of a more common natural community type as designated by the Natural Heritage Bureau based on community size, ecological condition, and landscape context."

"Exemplary natural communities represent the best remaining examples of New Hampshire's biological diversity (a.k.a. biodiversity). NH Natural Heritage identifies and tracks exemplary natural community occurrences to inform conservation decisions." (New Hampshire Natural Heritage Bureau)

