

NORTHEAST



WILDERNESS
TRUST

*Lyme Conservation
Commission
June 8, 2026*

Woodbury Mountain Wilderness Preserve, VT | Jerry Monkman

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Organizational Overview

NEWT At a Glance

- Founded 2002
- Service area: New England & New York
 - Still waiting for that project in Rhode Island . . .
- Headquartered in Montpelier, VT
 - aka “The Mother Tree”
- Full-time staff of 23 (MA, NY, NH, ME, + VT)
- Board of Directors of 15

Our North Star: More Wilderness Areas



PILLAR →

Protect

Accelerate and expand wilderness protection—both land conservation and stewardship—guided by the principles that humans are but one species of many and wild places are home to our wild kin.

As we move through the second half of the decade, it has become more evident than ever that conserving wilderness is among the most effective tools for reversing biodiversity decline, helping mitigate climate change, and supporting human health and well-being.* We know that wilderness works and that wild Nature offers a hopeful path towards a resilient and bright future. However, we must act now.

Northeast Wilderness Trust will dramatically expand the pace of rewilding across the Northeast by partnering with Nature and protecting far more land as wilderness. This is our organizational North Star.

By 2030 . . .

Northeast Wilderness Trust will protect and safeguard 160,000 forever-wild acres—doubling the protected area under our care.

* See e.g.: Di Marco, M., Ferrer, S., Harwood, T.D., Hoskins, A.J., Watson, J.E.M. Wilderness areas halve the extinction risk of terrestrial biodiversity. *Nature* 575, 582–585 (2019); Fagan, Edward K., et al. Adaptation and mitigation capacity of wild forest in the northeastern United States. *Forest Ecology and Management* 544 (2023); and Edmunds, Zsolt, Corral, J. Niemi, Asian communities of managed and wilderness temperate forests. *Forest Ecology and Management* 328 (2014).

- Four Pillars > All serving more wilderness.
- Primary strategic goal: By 2030 = 160,000 wilderness acres.

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The Wilderness Idea

Rewilding

“Rewilding, in essence,
is giving the land back
to wildlife and wildlife
back to the land.”

-John Davis



What *is* Wilderness?



WILL-OF-THE-LAND: Wilderness Among Primal Indo-Europeans*

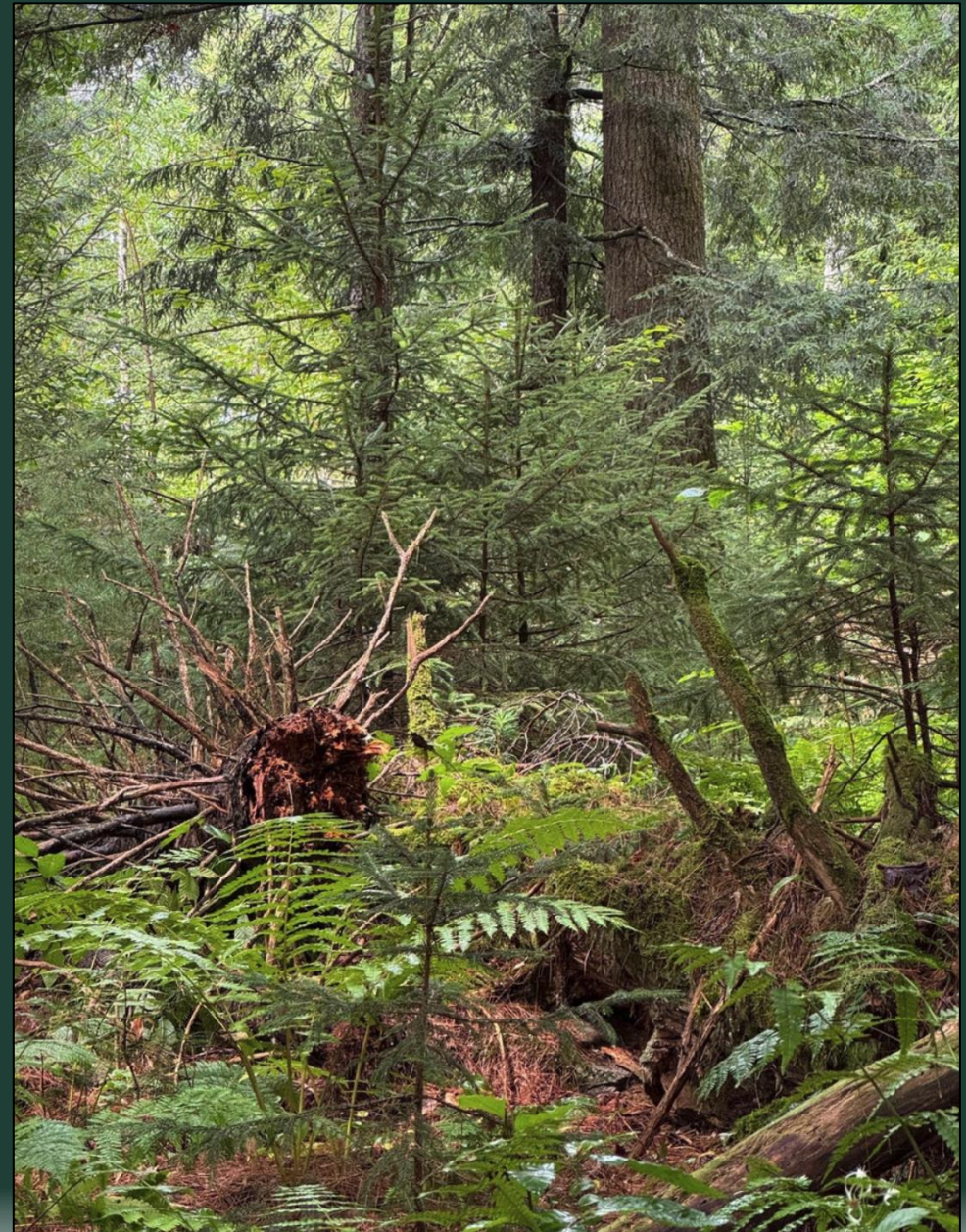
Jay Hansford C. Vest

Nature's object in making animals and plants might possibly be first of all the happiness of each one of them, not the creation of all for the happiness of one. Why ought man to value himself as more than an infinitely small composing unit of the one great unit of creation? . . . The universe would be incomplete without man; but it would also be incomplete without the smallest transmicroscopic creature that dwells beyond our conceitful eyes and knowledge.

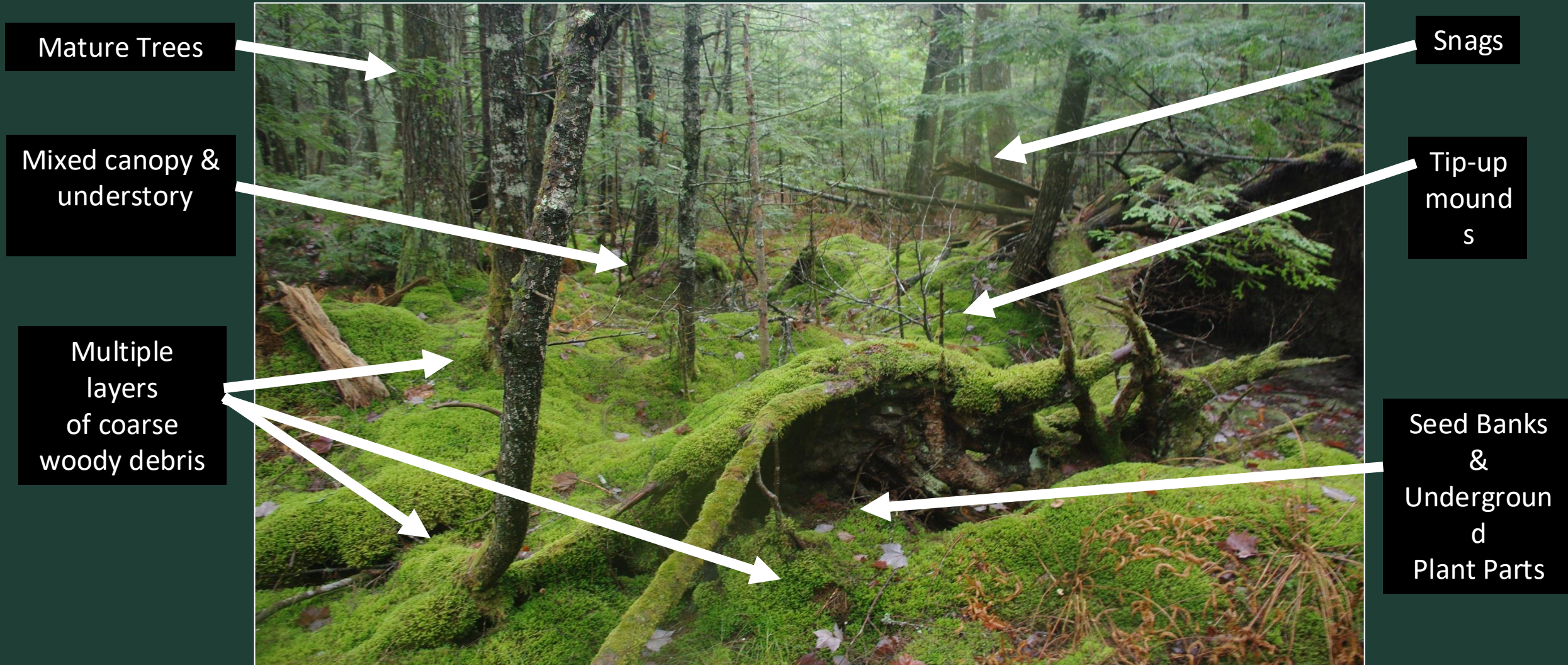
John Muir 1916¹

When the Scottish born John Muir embraced the wilderness movement in America he was answering the call of his cultural tradition. Muir and the Scottish peoples are members of the Celtic division of the Indo-European linguistic group. The ancient Celts worshipped Nature. Theirs was a spiritual tradition born of "Nature Awe."² For them Nature was alive with the same creative life force that humans share. Nature spirits animated springs, rivers, forests, and mountains. The Celtic conception of *will power* was extended wholly to nature, both animate and inanimate, which was recognized to have a compelling *will-force* "akin to that which impelled man . . . Even stationary nature — the everlasting hills and the

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Howland Research Forest, ME



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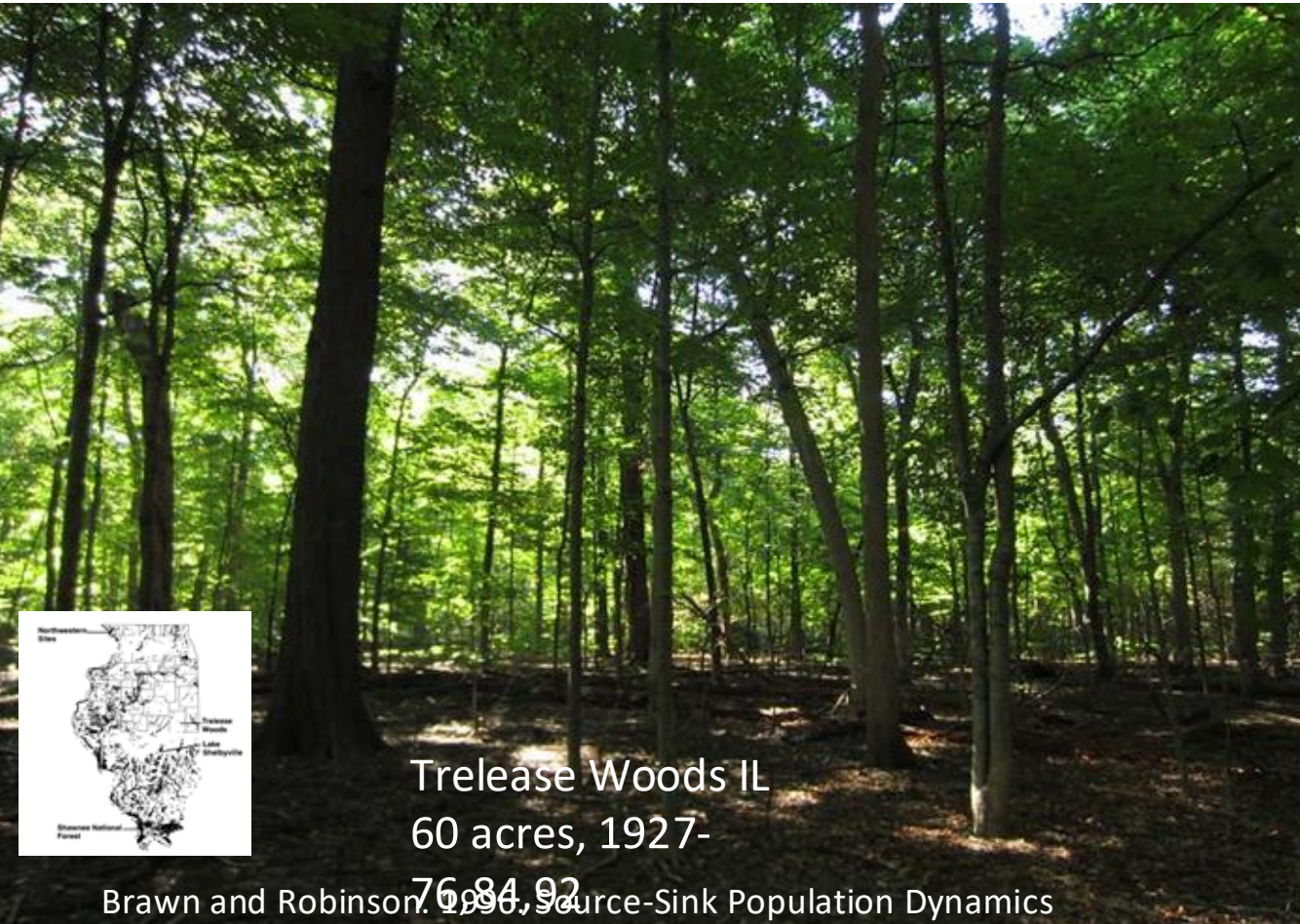
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Rewilding & Biodiversity

Thriving Families

Source Areas: Key Needs

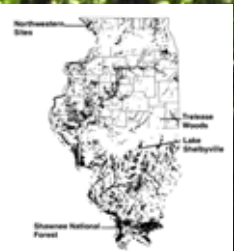
- Find mates
- Find resources to raise a family
- Shelter & Safety & Privacy & Food & Clean Water



Trelease Woods IL
60 acres, 1927-

76,84,92

Brawn and Robinson. 1996, Source-Sink Population Dynamics



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How We Do it

Forever-Wild Conservation Easement 101

- Prohibits logging, including salvage logging
- Promotes the development of old forest characteristics
- Allows for invasive species management and hunting, with limitations
- Allows non-motorized, non-mechanized recreation (hiking, snowshoeing, cross country ski, etc.)
- Is permanent



News

NEW HAMPSHIRE, COMMUNITY CONSERVATION, FEATURED NEWS, REWILDING

Wilderness within reach: Town of Jaffrey protects 142 acres within walking distance of town

"Each town should have a park, or rather a primitive forest of five hundred or a thousand acres, where a



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