

## PEOPLE AND THE LAND – HISTORICAL LANDSCAPES



In 1787 Samuel Hutchinson, a Revolutionary War veteran and his wife, Betsey Johnson, settled on a remote forested landscape, not far from Cobbossee Stream, in what was then Massachusetts on the Kennebec Proprietor Great Back Lot 15. A founder of what was at that time called Smithfield Plantation, Samuel served as its assessor for many years.

In 1795, Samuel and Abner True were sent by their townsmen to Boston to petition the General Court for the incorporation of a town named Great Hampton. Samuel wanted to name the town after his birthplace of Litchfield, New Hampshire, and en route he and Abner changed the name.

Samuel Hutchinson's son, Samuel, and his grandson Harvey farmed the land before it was sold to the Dingley family in the 1880's.

The Dingley family owned this land until Robert Dingley died in 1957. In 1957, Vivian Dingley, then 68 years old and having spent her childhood on this farm, wrote in a letter to her relatives: "The timber has been cut off until the place is just bushes."

The varied trails on the property have many origins: tote and hay roads and an old public way. The boundary separating the Small-Burnham and Samuel Hutchinson conservation easements is the discontinued Maxwell Road, which served as the main road to "The Plains" for much of the 19th century.

Litchfield's Plains Village was south of the Hutchinson farm, and included the former site of the town house, the cattle pound, the fairgrounds, the Plains Baptist Church, the Plains cemetery, the Brick School, a post office, as many as three stores, a carriage shop and the mills on Potter's and Spring Brooks.



*Circa 1910, Courtesy of Litchfield Historical Society*

On the west of the Maxwell Road you can see the well and foundation of the home of Harvey Hutchinson and on the east those of Samuel Hutchinson, Jr.

Near the foundations and struggling for light are found apple, plum, and lilacs that mark an earlier era on these Maine farm homesteads.

## CONSERVATION TODAY

The Nelsens first saw this land and the Samuel Hutchinson historic homestead in January, 1972. At that time, the 170-year old farmhouse with attached shed and barn was bordered by a small field surrounded by woods. Without hesitation they put down a deposit. And in the 1990's, as neighboring farmers retired, they acquired two additional parcels.

Today the 142-acre Samuel Hutchinson Homestead Conservation Area is part of a much larger undeveloped landscape in Litchfield. This permanently protected conservation land and the privately-owned woodlands and agricultural lands help define the character of central Maine, protect wildlife habitat, and support local economies based on sustainable natural resources.

As the current caretakers, the Nelsens wish to leave the land as they found it, so others may be nourished by it in ways that sustain the value of traditional uses of the land.

Their partnership with KLT will continue this stewardship into the future.



### KENNEBEC LAND TRUST

A full listing of Kennebec Land Trust properties and their recreational uses, and an interactive map with directions, can be found at our website:

[www.tklt.org](http://www.tklt.org).

**Please join us!**

**KLT~PO BOX 261; 331 Main Street;**

*Thanks to those who contributed expertise and time for this brochure:*

*Mark and Lindsay Nelsen , George and Judy Rogers, and the Litchfield Historical Society.*



## SAMUEL HUTCHINSON HOMESTEAD CONSERVATION AREA Litchfield, Maine

### PROPERTY DEDICATION

**September 28, 2014**

142-acre conservation easement

Donated to KLT ~ December, 2013

Landowners: Mark and Lindsay Nelsen



**Samuel Hutchinson Homestead**

*Circa 1880's, Courtesy of Litchfield Historical Society.*

The **Kennebec Land Trust** (KLT) works cooperatively with landowners and communities to conserve the forests, lakes, streams, wetlands, fields, and wildlife that help define central Maine.

KLT protects and stewards land permanently, offers access to conserved properties, provides opportunities for people to learn about and enjoy the natural world, and works with partners to support sustainable forestry and farming.



**WELCOME TO  
KENNEBEC LAND TRUST'S  
SAMUEL HUTCHINSON HOMESTEAD  
CONSERVATION AREA**  
*We hope you enjoy your visit!*

A conservation easement on the 142-acre Samuel Hutchinson Homestead Conservation Area was donated to KLT by Mark and Lindsay Nelsen, long-time Litchfield residents, in December, 2013. This permanently-conserved property features woodlands, fields, wetlands, and perennial and intermittent streams.



Nicole Rhodes

Contiguous with KLT's 250-acre, Small-Burnham conservation easement, this land is part of a 392-acre permanently protected wildlife habitat corridor. The property will be available for sustainable farming and forestry, low-impact outdoor recreation, and nature study.

Historical artifacts and botanical imprints – stone walls, foundations, dug wells, barbed wire, old woods roads, and even-aged pine stands – tell the story of Maine's agricultural history, forest succession patterns, and the people who have worked, and loved, this land for generations.

**WOODS, WILDFLOWERS  
AND WETLANDS**

As you hike the trails at Samuel Hutchinson you can find hardwoods browsed by deer and moose, the sound of the ovenbird (“teech-er, teech-er”), the calm stare of a barred owl, turkeys flushed out of a big pine at dusk, the sweet flute sound of the wood thrush at the end of day or early morning. Each wildflower entices in its season; the early wake robin, (*Trillium erectum*), the red berries of the jack-in-the-pulpit (*Arisaema triphyllum*), the “doll’s eyes” white berries of the baneberry (*Actaea pachypoda*).

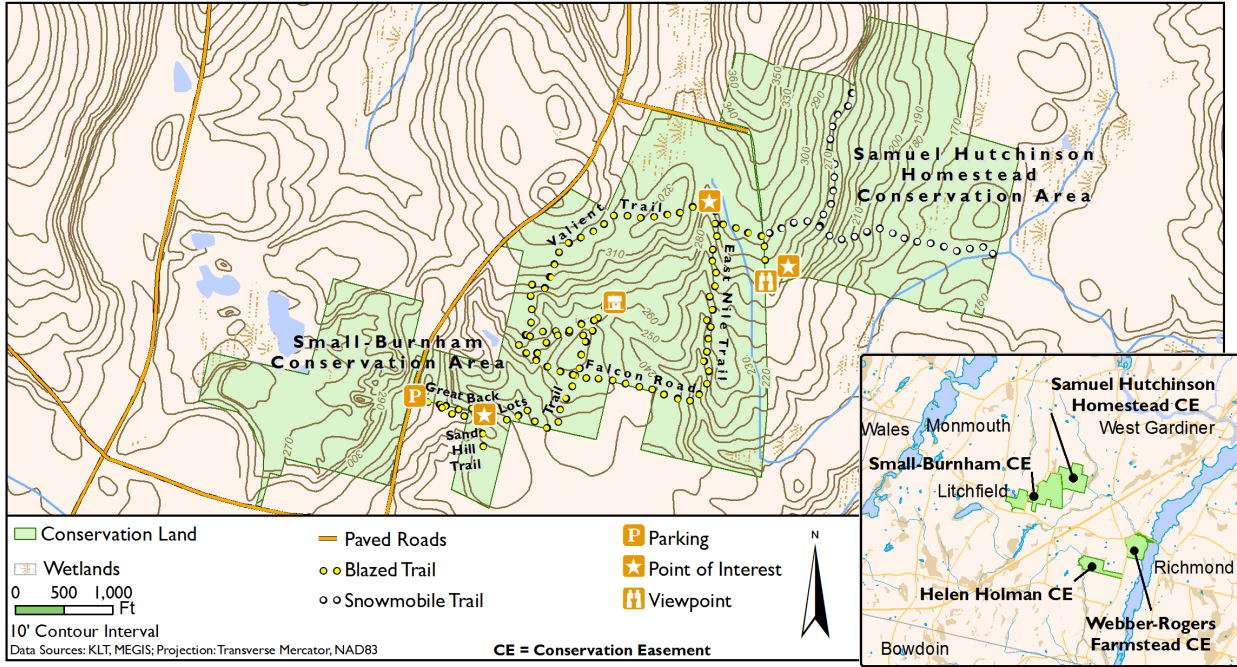
The Samuel Hutchinson woodlands feature a diversity of natural communities from deciduous hardwoods of red oak, beech, sugar maple, white ash, yellow and paper birch, to conifer stands dominated by white pine and hemlock.

In moister ravine edges east of the old farm fields, where a stream floods the bottomland, look for black ash trees, the fall flowering witch hazel (*Hamamelis virginiana*), and the less common ironwood (*Carpinus caroliniana*). This is the same stream (“The Nile”) that flows under the Stone Bridge on the Small Burnham property.



Nicole Rhodes

Small-Burnham Conservation Area and Samuel Hutchinson Homestead Conservation Area, Litchfield



**Public uses:** This KLT conservation easement is open to the public for hiking and nature observation; and cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, and snowmobiling on designated trails. **ATV's/4 wheelers are not permitted. Hunting is only by permission of the landowners. Dogs:** Out of respect for hikers and small children, dogs should be under voice command or on a leash. Please pick up after your pets.

**Parking and Access:** From the Small-Burnham Conservation Area parking lot on the Pine Tree Road.

**Trails:** Starting from the Small-Burnham parking lot, follow the Great Back Lots Trail to the Valient Trail; cross the stone bridge and continue on to the boundary with the Samuel Hutchinson Homestead Conservation Area for a total of 1.3 Miles. There is a short one way spur on the Maxwell Road to the field viewpoint. Great Back Lots Trail via the Falcon Road and the East Nile Trail: total of 1.2 Miles.

**Winter use:** Skiing, snowshoeing and snowmobiling are allowed on designated snowmobile trails.

**Directions from Monmouth:** Take South Monmouth Road to Days Corner; cross Route 126 and go over Oak Hill; cross the bridge, and turn left at the stop sign. Almost immediately take the first right onto Libby Road. At the stop sign, go straight onto Plains Road. Take Plains Road 1 mile to Pine Tree Road. Turn left on Pine Tree Road. After ~ 0.5 miles look for the KLT sign and parking area on the right.

**From Augusta:** Maine Turnpike south to Exit 103 (I-295). Just after the toll both, take Exit 51 (W. Gardiner). Turn left onto Rt. 126 East. Go 0.5 miles, then turn right onto Old Lewiston Road. Take the first right onto Pond Road. (which becomes Plains Road in Litchfield). Go 8.1 miles, passing Black Crow Bakery on the right. Go 0.4 mi. and turn right on Pine Tree Road. After ~ 0.5 miles look for the KLT sign and parking area on the right.