



RGT

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Dear Friends,

How many of you have heard an explosive KEE-ARR overhead and looked up to see a soaring red-tailed hawk? While it's a common species in Leverett, there are only a few places in town where a red-tail can be seen at eye level, and the southern boundary of the Dan Glazier Forest is one of them.

RGT bought this rectangular, 57-acre lot just north of North Leverett Road and Moore's Corner a decade ago. It stretches across the southern edge of Diamond Match Ridge, a source of pine for Diamond brand matchsticks. The entire property is forested now, but stone walls, barbed wire remnants, a cellar hole and a derelict road hint at a former life as sheep pasture, farmland or timber source for the area coke kilns. That this steeply sloping terrain, full of stone formations and rocky ledges, was once farmed and logged reveals a slice of New England's history, when most of the region (whether conducive to it or not) was cleared for small subsistence farms.

If you walk the loop trail that guides you through the Forest today, you can enjoy a primeval landscape studded with rocky outcroppings with a scattering of elephant-sized boulders at the northeast end, relics of our glacial past. This is perfect porcupine habitat, with the rocky ledges providing wintering dens. Look for the rodent's distinctive pellet droppings near the ledges, as well as extensive bark-free patches left by gnawing. Then consider that ideal habitat for a porcupine isn't ideal for a farmer or logger, and you can understand why the land was abandoned to forest. Then came the hurricane of 1938 which devastated the area. That explains why most of the present-day trees are 70-80 years old. More change to the property occurred in the decades just before RGT bought the Forest, when clear-cutting the southern boundary opened up a spectacular view, taking in Brushy Mountain head-on, with the upper cliffs of Rattlesnake Gutter and a portion of the Mount Toby complex to the west. It is here that you may glimpse a red-tailed hawk flyby. But look soon. Black birch saplings are filling in the overlook. Primeval though it seems, the Forest is the scene of constant change.

Our town's past can be read in the landscape. RGT has spent the last three decades preserving not just Leverett's land, but its history. You are our partner in this stewardship and your help is vital. And come walk our properties and look into Leverett's past and your present.

Thank you for your support!

Julie Collier, Rocky Adriance and Sarah Todd for the Board

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