



Andover Village
Improvement Society
Andover's Land Trust
Founded 1894

Fall 2014

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Tennessee Gas Pipeline Planned for Andover by John Hess

Sometimes it is referred to as Kinder Morgan, sometimes as Tennessee Gas Pipeline, and sometimes as the Northeast Energy Direct (NED) pipeline. By any name, it is a high pressure natural gas pipeline (30"-36") that is proposed to traverse Massachusetts from the New York Border to Dracut, MA to bring gas from the Pennsylvania shale fields to New England. Lateral pipelines (20"-24") will go from Dracut to other towns, including through Andover. Approximately six (6) miles are proposed to go through West Andover. Kinder Morgan (KM) representatives attended a public forum in Andover this past summer. Many questions were raised about the route of the pipeline (approximately 3.5 miles are through either conservation land or the Fish Brook water supply) as well as through property owned by individual citizens. Subsequently the Town of Andover, with support and suggestions from AVIS, submitted five (5) alternative routes in an effort to move the pipeline out of these protected areas. So far the suggested alternates have not been accepted by KM.

If approved, the construction process includes a survey along the proposed route, extending up to 200 feet on each side of the route. Then during construction as much as a 100 foot wide clear cut of trees and vegetation will occur. A permanent 50 foot wide clear cut section will remain and will be owned and maintained by KM. This clear cutting will not only disrupt the land, the vegetation, and the wildlife in the area during construction but will have long term impacts on the areas that are cleared.

On September 15, 2014, Kinder Morgan submitted a pre-filing with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) that did not make any changes to the proposed route through Andover. There is an extensive public hearing and public input process. This will include an "Open House" in the next few months, hopefully in Andover. Once approved KM will essentially have eminent domain capabilities to take whatever land they need.

AVIS and the Town are working to obtain additional information and to share that information with citizens. We are planning an informational forum with the Town on 11/13/14 at 7:00 pm at Wood Hill Middle School. There will also be a hike on 11/8/14, at 10:00 am along two of the affected properties, the AVIS Deer Jump Reservation and the Town Retelle Reservation - starting on Brundrett Avenue. For more information about the route and KM, please check the Town of Andover website at www.andoverma.gov or the AVIS website at www.AVISandover.org. We will be posting additional information as it becomes available. To learn more about FERC and to submit or receive comments you can go to the federal website at <http://ferc.gov/>

I am AVIS. Yes "we" are. By Rob Ciampa

Our "I am AVIS" campaign was well-received by AVIS members, conservation professionals, and local citizens. Not only did it recognize our diverse member base, but it also highlighted the importance of our reservations to the community. As a result of the campaign, AVIS is now at record membership levels, with representation from all neighborhoods and walks of life. It's the people who make AVIS what it is and that's why "I am AVIS" was so important. This fall we'll continue the campaign by working with community partners to proudly display "I am AVIS" throughout town.

Mitzvah Day By Matt Gold

The Andover Village Improvement Society appreciates the help from thirty members of Temple Emanuel who came to the corner of Central Street and Abbot Drive recently to cut and clear invasive species from a parcel of town conservation land. The group began with brief instructions from AVIS Trustee Dave Doub on identifying wild honeysuckle, multiflora rose, oriental bittersweet and barberry. In a period of three hours, the crew removed most of these species from the section of land that borders Central Street. Their results are evident as motorists now have a clear vista upstream from Central Street when crossing the Shawsheen River.

It was wonderful to see the many families with their children participating so enthusiastically! And the youth of the Temple attending provided much support with the heavy lifting and cutting. We are fortunate to have Temple Emanuel to include A.V.I.S. each year as part of its Mitzvah Day contribution. It provides an opportunity to help the environment and teach our children and youth the importance of taking care of this planet.

Many thanks to Temple Emanuel!



Partnership with AVIS to Save West Parish Meadow

By Alix Driscoll

Although he would not admit it, George MacNaughton was a prime mover in the saving of West Parish Meadow in the early 1990s. As MacNaughton explains it, in 1988, the West Parish Church faced extensive renovations—the steeple was in danger of falling into the main sanctuary. But, given the great cost the church put that land up for sale.

AVIS was already a major abutter. There was great fear that a local developer would build a dozen houses on the church property, destroying the verdant meadow with its abundance of wildlife. Enter George MacNaughton and his wife Deborah Warren of Reservation Road. “We want to save the meadow—would AVIS be willing to help?” Thus began the start of this beautiful friendship to preserve this rare and singular meadow. Right away AVIS coordinated meetings and unearthed an energized group of neighbors. Relying on AVIS’s expertise and resources, the group prepared an \$800,000 offer to purchase the land from the church. Following George and Deborah’s lead, other meadow abutters, Diane Grieco and the Redgate family, made substantial donations to the “West Parish Meadow” fund. In short order \$400,000 was in hand.

The AVIS offer was competitive with two other offers the church had received. In the end, it was the goodwill AVIS had built over decades that carried the day. AVIS asked the church to accept the \$400,000 in hand and then to wait for 2 more years for the second half while AVIS did fund raising. The Church’s faith in AVIS was affirmed by an overwhelming vote of the congregation to accept the offer.

AVIS President Nat Smith and Vice President Peggy Keck worked their magic to raise the second \$400,000. A few months ahead of schedule, the purchase was completed.

Over the past 20+ years AVIS volunteers have built boardwalks, a wedding was celebrated, botanists have discovered flora and fauna, birders have taken delight in the variety of birds, children have explored, countless dogs have walked their owners, and many have sought solace and peace on this special piece of “saved” land.

For many years, MacNaughton has diligently mowed the Meadow, always after the birds that build nests in the grasses have fledged. At the end of August, George and Deborah moved from Reservation Road. “It was hard to leave, but it was time to go. We carry with us very fond memories of our Andover neighbors, and are especially grateful that AVIS is there for us all.”

Townspeople exploring the West Parish Meadow might want to mentally extend a “tip of the hat” to MacNaughton and to his generous neighbors, who collaborated with AVIS to permanently preserve the jewel in the crown, West Parish Meadow, for all days.



George MacNaughton and his dog, Odo. Photo by Kristin Hunt.

Landowner Incentive Grants Help AVIS Stewardship

By Amy Janovsky

This summer, AVIS won a second LIP grant from the Mass. Division of Fisheries and Wildlife to help improve wildlife habitat at the Deer Jump reservation, which has large areas of priority habitat for wildlife, but which is facing encroachment by invasive plants.

In October, I went to see the results of last year’s LIP project at the Shawsheen River and Vale reservations, where we used the LIP grant to help us hire a skilled team from Conservation Services Group to address encroachment by invasive plants: oriental bittersweet, which was killing trees, preventing successful growth of saplings, and choking out native herbaceous plants; Japanese knotweed, which was threatening areas near the entrances to both reservations; and buckthorn, which was forming stands that dominated the landscape, posing serious threats to birds and amphibians living nearby. I was stunned by the difference today. The edges of the trails in Shawsheen were filled with wildflowers and ferns—milkweed, which is so essential to our imperiled monarch butterflies; goldenrod, with its beautiful color; asters; pokeweed and dewberry with their berries—and all in an area that was dominated by invasives last year. Views of the river are now plentiful—even in areas that had been completely obscured by bittersweet tangles. And the field, which is key habitat for birds and small mammals, looked beautiful. I hope that the many volunteers who helped with this project last year have been back to enjoy it.

We won another LIP grant for habitat improvement at our Deer Jump reservation this year. The usual culprits are the focus again: primarily oriental bittersweet, buckthorn and Japanese knotweed. Access is more difficult at Deer Jump, so we’ll be using less equipment at this site. Our expert team from Polatin Ecological Services has mapped the work areas and will begin work this fall, with more treatment in the spring. LIP grants require a twenty percent match by the landowner (AVIS), comprised of volunteer hours and funds. Our plan is to get volunteers at Deer Jump to work early in the spring when the garlic mustard first blooms. Fortunately, this prolific invasive is readily controlled by hand pulling before it goes to seed. If you wait too long, the tiny mustard seeds create a “bank” that will reseed an area for several years. Please watch our website for announcements of pulling parties.

Land preservation is AVIS’s mission, but stewardship, the caring for the land, is a key element of our task, and it is becoming more complex as our climate changes. We are fortunate that these LIP grants have helped us begin a new type of active land management on our reservations.

www.avisandover.org

978-494-6089

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AVIS and Essex County Trails and Sails

by John Hess

Once again AVIS participated in the Essex National Heritage Trails & Sails event. This county-wide event allowed participants to explore Essex County's historic, cultural and natural sites during two weekends of 150+ FREE events during Trails & Sails: Two Weekends of Walks and Water, September 19-21 & September 26-28, 2014. AVIS sponsored two hikes. Mike Timko led a hike on September 20th through the Sakowich, Bakers Meadow, Indian Ridge, and West Parish Meadow Reservations. Fred Snell led a hike on September 28th along the Shawsheen River Greenway in the Shawsheen River and the Vale Reservations. The latter hike was coordinated with other events in Andover which were operated by the Andover Historical Society, the West Parish Cemetery and the Addison Gallery of American Art.



Many thanks to Susan Hunt for designing and installing a new welcome garden to the entrance of the Shawsheen River Reservation. And thanks to Roger Zambon for the excellent work on the stone wall.

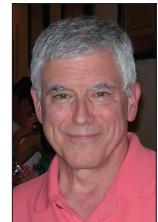
New Wardens

We have new wardens for two of our reservations:

- Norbert & Darlene Ohlenbusch are now the Wardens at Bakers Meadow.
- Peter Vachon is now Co-Warden of the Vale Reservation.

Letter from the President

By Mike Timko



This summer has been a very productive one on AVIS Reservations. As usual, our Wardens, Rangers and other volunteers have done a great job of maintaining our Reservations and, with the help of groups like the Boy Scouts, have made numerous improvements to our trails with bridges, boardwalks and wood chip trail surfaces. We can never thank our volunteers enough for the countless hours they do.

This year has been especially busy in our other capacity, as advocates on larger conservation issues affecting the town. In particular, the AVIS Board of Trustees has been active in participating in efforts to have a say in the proposed Tennessee Gas Pipeline project. The original description of the pipeline, as planned through Andover, involved creating a new 50-100 foot wide clear-cut right-of-way, mostly through AVIS and Town of Andover conservation land including Andover's water supply watershed. Many properties owned by individual residents would also be affected.

Many local communities have objected to the proposed route and questioned the need for the pipeline in the first place. We have led Andover in coordinating with these other towns and our collective voices are beginning to be heard. I would like to thank Trustees Susan Stott, Amy Janovsky, Alix Driscoll, Fred Snell and John Hess in particular for many hours of attending meetings and twisting arms to help assure that the voice for conservation lands is loud and clearly heard.

Also, in September it was learned that Phillips Academy was considering an offer from The Andover Companies to purchase the PA Boathouse and related properties along the Merrimack River. This was quite a surprise given that the Conservation Commission, AVIS and other conservation citizens obtained a yes vote from the Annual Town Meeting for additional town funds to support purchase of conservation land, with the PA Boathouse at the top of the list. The Town is now negotiating with the Academy so this may be back on track. Stay tuned.

Please check the AVIS website (AVISAndover.org) and/or the Town of Andover website (andoverma.gov) for the latest news on these topics.

Beaver Deceiver at Baker's Meadow

Photos by John Hess



Norbert Ohlenbusch, Dick Dillon, & David Dargie prepare to install a new "Beaver Deceiver" at the Bakers Meadow dam.



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You can join or renew online at www.avisandover.org/join.html or make check payable to "AVIS" and mail to :

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For information about planned giving or stock donations contact info@avisandover.org. Contributions and dues are tax deductible to the extent permitted by federal regulations.

Thank you!

Fall 2014 Calendar

Thursday, Nov. 13, 2014

Tennessee Gas Pipeline Informational Forum

Wood Hill Middle School

7:00 pm

Saturday, Nov. 8, 2014

Tennessee Gas Pipeline Hike
AVIS Deer Jump Reservation and the Town Retelle Reservation

10:00 am—starting on Brundrett Avenue.

Sunday, Jan. 25, 2015

AVIS 46th Annual Snowshoe & Cross-Country Ski Trek

Harold R. Rafton Reservation

9:45 am—meet for the 10 AM outing. Park near the leaf composting area on High Plain Rd. No registration, No pets. Hike if no snow, rain cancels. Leaders; David Dargie, 978-996-4475 david@dargie.com and Vale Reservation Warden, Ken Doran.

Sunday, Feb. 8, 2015

Family Moonlight Snowshoe & Cross-Country Ski Trek

Goldsmith Woodlands

5:45 pm—for all ages and abilities. Bring a headlamp or flashlight and enjoy cookies and hot chocolate around a campfire in the woods. Park in front of #491 S. Main St. at the Goldsmith Woodlands entrance. No registration. No pets. Hike if no snow, rain cancels. Leaders; David Dargie 978-996-4475 david@dargie.com and Vale Reservation Warden Ken Doran.

Sunday, Feb. 15, 2015

Winter Camping with Andover Trails Committee

Serio's Grove along the Shawsheen River

12:00 pm—Calling all hearty souls to join us for the annual winter campout at Serio's Grove. Gates will open at Noon. Roaring fire provided. If interested, please email Bob Decelle at rudecelle@comcast.net

Tuesday, March 10, 2015

AVIS Annual Dinner & Meeting
Andover Town House
20 Main Street in downtown Andover

6:00 pm—Social Hour
7:00 pm—Dinner. \$28
8:00 pm—Meeting & speakers are open to the public at no cost

For additional AVIS events, see avisandover.org.
For AMC walks, see amcboston.org/andover.
To check for other hikes, visit andovertails.org.

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The AVIS Update is a biannual publication of the Andover Village Improvement Society. The mission of AVIS is to acquire and preserve Andover land in its natural state. More than 1,000 acres of land are managed by AVIS and are open to all for passive recreation.

Mike Timko
Rob Ciampa
John Hess
Lindsey Timko
President
Membership
Editor
Designer

