

Highstead

To inspire curiosity and build knowledge

about plants and wooded landscapes

in order to enhance life, preserve nature

and advance sound stewardship practices

Highstead is a non-profit organization dedicated to the conservation, understanding, and enjoyment of the natural landscapes of New England.

Program Overview

Regional Conservation

For the first time in 150 years, our ecologically and economically valuable forest cover is declining in every New England state due to development pressure. In response to this threat, a group of scientists from the Harvard Forest and across the region came together in 2010 to write Wildlands and Woodlands: A Vision for the New England Landscape, calling for permanent conservation of 70 percent of the region as forest, with 90 percent as managed woodlands and 10 percent as protected wildlands.

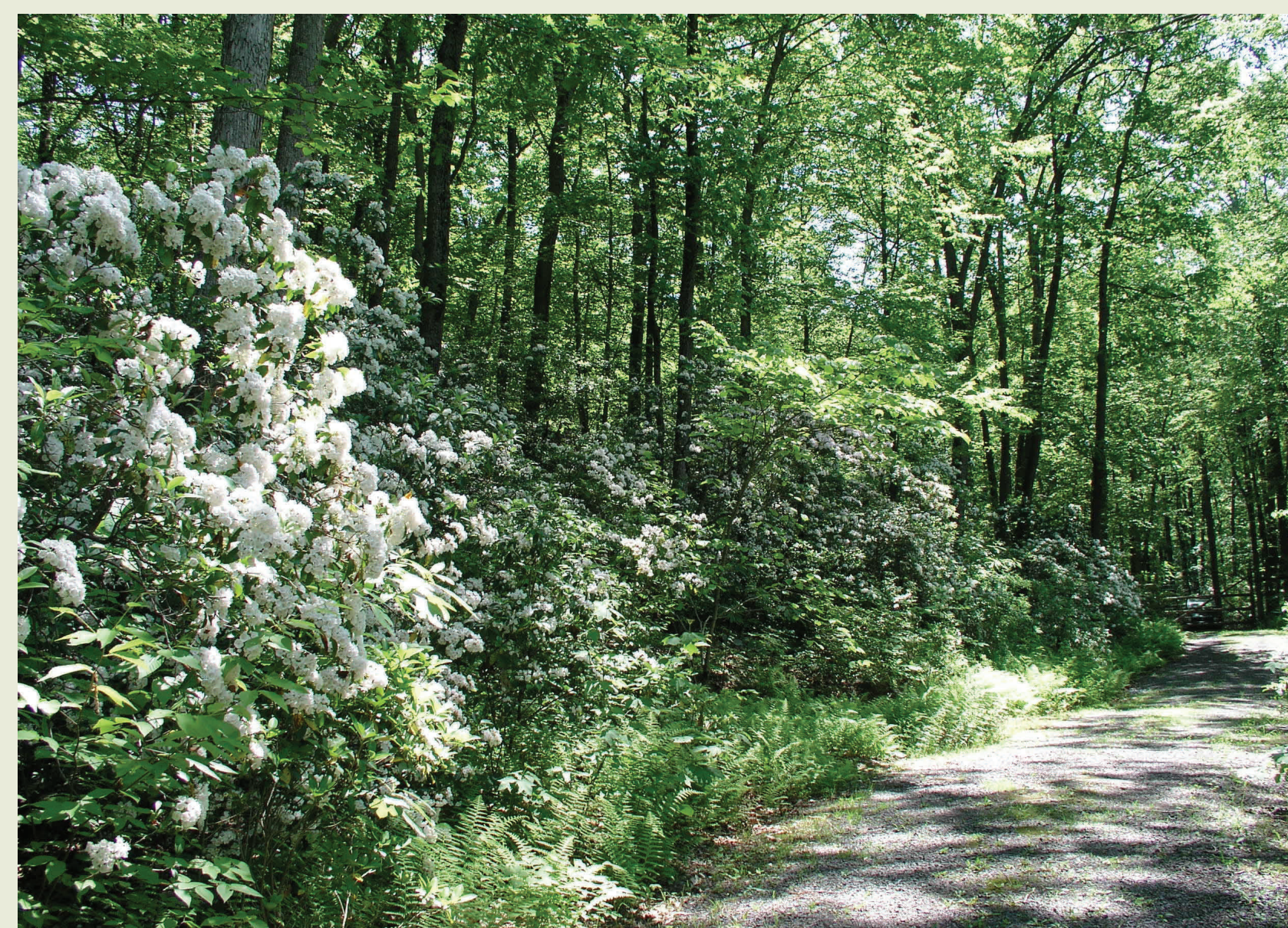
Highstead plays a leadership role in the W&W Initiative, a growing collaboration of groups and individuals across the region working to make the W&W vision a reality. For example, Highstead convenes W&W partners on a yearly basis, provides regular W&W updates, leads a major network of conservation practitioners working in “regional conservation partnerships,” and convenes a Forest Policy Group that advocates for improved forest policies and conservation funding at the federal level.



Land Stewardship

Highstead manages its property as a microcosm of the broader W&W vision, with about 90 percent of the property in managed woodlands, wetland, meadow and pond, and 10 percent maintained as wildland reserve.

Highstead has more than two miles of trails that traverse about 150 acres of diverse habitats, native plant collections and naturalistic landscapes. Guided tours and self-guided walks provide opportunities for visitors to learn about our natural history, land management activities, and ecological research projects.



Ecology and Stewardship Science

Highstead’s ecology program performs forest research, promotes long-term forest monitoring, and synthesizes complex topics to inform land management and raise the public’s awareness of the role of science in decision-making.

For example, Highstead studies the ways deer and moose influence forests at different spatial scales so that society can make informed decisions about how to manage these populations. Highstead and the Harvard Forest have also developed the W&W Stewardship Science Initiative, a forest monitoring program available to landowners of all types and expertise to help advance forest management education and insights.



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