



2016

**Company/Organization:** Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests

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**Challenge or Opportunity:**

The Merrimack River watershed: In 2010, it was identified as **the most** threatened watershed in the nation; threatened - in terms of expected private forest land lost over the next 20 years due to development in Southern New Hampshire and Northeastern Mass. As you know, fish and wildlife depend on the river and surrounding land ----**And**---The Merrimack River is the source of drinking water for more than half a million people, so this presented a real challenge.

**Approach or Solution:**

The Forest Society has a multi-pronged approach to dealing with the water quality issue; leading the Merrimack Conservation Partnership is one of them. Along with New Hampshire's Department of Environmental Services - and over 30 other public and private agencies in New Hampshire and Massachusetts - the group works to conserve the watershed's most ecologically significant land, particularly forests. Why? Because forests are nature's water filters.

**Impact:**

In the fall of 2015, The Partnership awarded its first grants to nine projects that conserved more than 1,000 acres of land in the Merrimack River watershed. And we just closed our second grant round, with \_\_\_\_\_ more acres to be conserved. (Round 2 # available to be included in Sept)

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**For video if selected as one of finalists:** Ending:,an employee of the Forest Society and one of DES lifts up a glass of water, states: "From all of us at the Forest Society and New Hampshire's Department of Environmental Services - Cheers to a future of clean water and partnerships!"

**Or:** an image of a glass of water and the text: Cheers from the Forest Society and New Hampshire's Department of Environmental Services - to a future of clean water and partnerships!