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Rooted in healthy forest management

Honoring the Tradition of the Abanaki

Mark and Heidi Van Winkle's great grandparents, Dr. Luther Halsey Gulick and Charlotte Vetter Gulick, founded Wohelo Camps in 1907. Dr. and Mrs. Gulick also co-founded the Camp Fire Girls organization.

Located on Sebago Lake in Raymond, Wohelo is one of the oldest girls' camps in the country. Wohelo (which stands for work, health and love) has remained in the Gulick/Van Winkle family through four generations.

Mark and his wife Quincy now own the camp. Heidi is the director of Little Wohelo for campers from six- to 12-years-old. Mark, Quincy and Heidi appreciate their long family connection to the camp, but acknowledge that they are only its current stewards. They state on their website: "This land has been lived on and maintained by our neighbors, the Abenaki people, for thousands of years. We honor their continued connection to the land and water that camp now resides on."

With this principle in mind, Mark Van Winkle's primary objective for managing Wohelo's 144-acre

woodlot was good stewardship. "We are committed to using the land, not ruining it," Mark said. "Don't mess it up."

The Wohelo woodlot consists of two parcels, 42 and 101 acres, abutting the camp's Sebago Lake waterfront property. The woodlot has a diverse species and age class mix with an abundance of pine and oak. It was managed for many years by Fred Huntress, renowned for his excellence in forest conservation, stewardship and sustainable forest management.

In 2012 Mark connected with Jeremy Stultz through a mutual relationship with the Loon Echo Land Trust and hired Jeremy to prepare a forest management plan. "To update the plan in 2022, I followed Jeremy to Sappi," Mark said. "I have full faith in him. Managing the forest is Jeremy's job. I don't want to stress out about it."

Jeremy recommended that the land should be selectively harvested to keep its diversity in age class and species and promote the growth of pine that was regenerating nicely following a 2012 harvest. Jacob Parent managed the harvest, conducted in late summer of 2022.



Jeremy Stultz and Mark Van Winkle

Although not his main objective, Mark appreciated that the harvest was lucrative. More than 200,000 board feet of pine was sent to the Hancock Mill in Casco. The harvest also generated high-quality hemlock and red oak logs.



One of Mark's objectives was to keep the area clean for walking and possible future trail development. This photo was taken shortly after the 2022 harvest.

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