

Mt. Cresson Conservation Area, previously known as the Carpenter-French property, is a wooded hillside of roughly 140 acres situated off the Matthews Rd. It appears as Mt. Cresson on a 1858 map of Swanzy. The hill was most likely named in the 17th or 18th century, in honor of one of Swanzy's earliest settlers, Thomas Cresson, or his son, also Thomas Cresson, who had a residence on Sawyers Crossing Rd during the 1700's-early 1800's. In the mid-20th century some local residents referred to it as "Mt. Adams", in reference to a nearby farm.

In 1991, the land was acquired by the town through the *LCIP (Land Conservation Investment Program), designated as conservation land, and a Forest Management Plan was created. In 1992 the town voted in favor to establish the Carpenter- French parcel as the Town Forest and designated the Swanzy Conservation Commission as managers of the property.

The SCC has been working for several years to complete a new trail and install signs to encourage public recreational use of the property. Hikers are encouraged to use the small entrance road/turnaround area on the northeast side of the property, marked with a sign, off the Matthews Rd. (before the power lines to the north). A small parking area is available so that users will not have to park along the road. A sign indicates the trail-head of "The Loop Trail", blazed in blue, which follows the northwestern side of the property to the FAA beacon at the summit, and then loops back to the parking area.

An older trail, called the "Matthews Rd Trail" (or Beacon Trail), starts from the Matthews Rd. further south from the driveway, and goes directly to the summit. As there is no adjacent parking for that trail, and hikers are encouraged to use the Loop Trail, which leads to the summit as well.

The property abuts the Yale Forest on two sides, and contributes to a significant area of contiguous

forested wildlife corridor, with the Ashuelot River not far from the eastern border.

Features of the property include a diverse forest of mixed hardwoods and evergreens, glacial erratics, and stone walls --and off-trail there is obscure evidence of unmarked old wells and foundations. In the 1960's the summit view to the west revealed the Dillant-Hopkins Airport, but trees obscure the view today. The land was heavily harvested for timber and used for livestock grazing in previous centuries, and there was a "certain spring and reservoir right" conveyed in a 1957 deed agreement to a former farmer on the Matthews Rd.

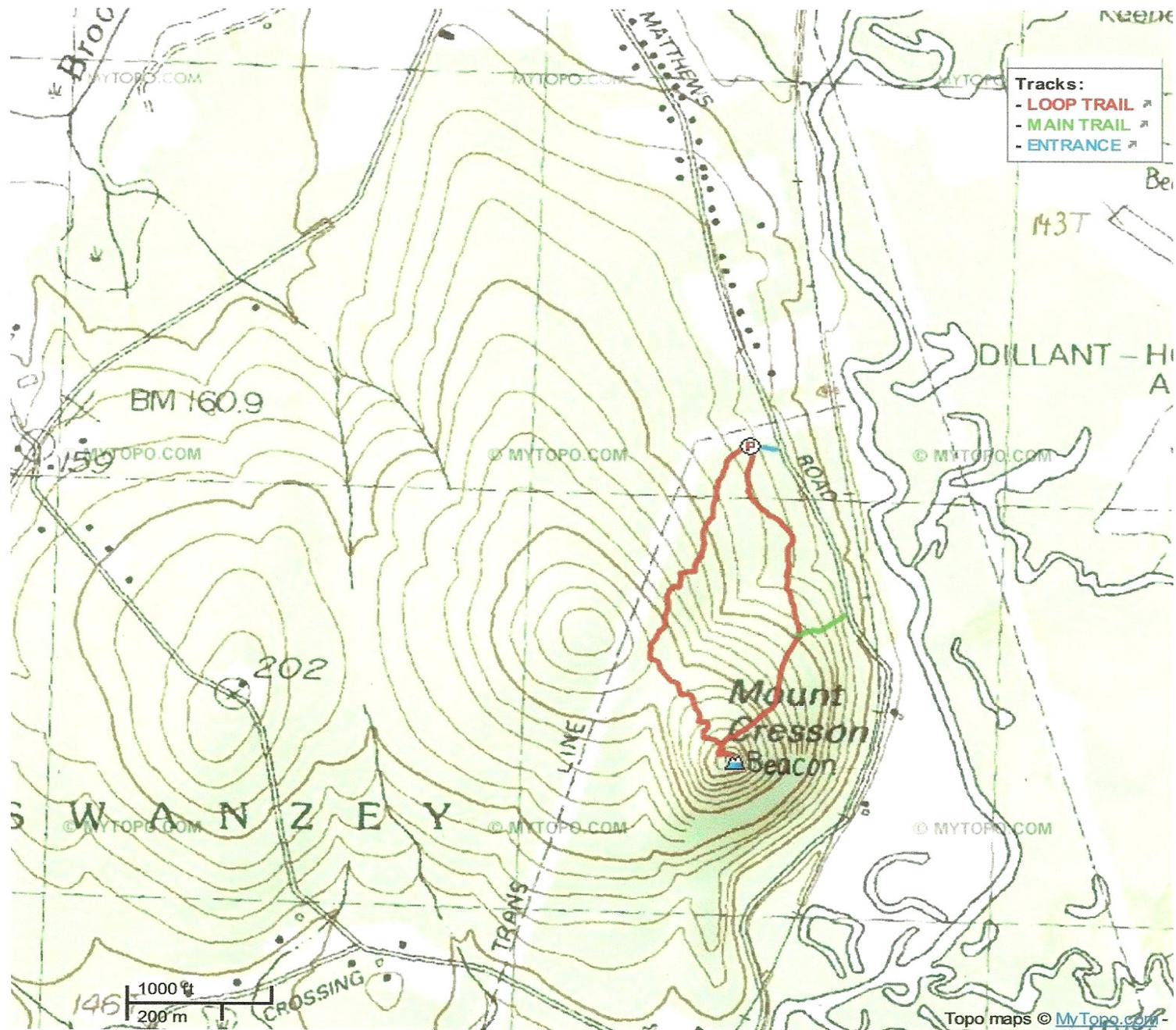
The Swanzy Conservation Commission and The Swanzy Open Space Committee welcome the public to enjoy this easy hike through this forested oasis in our town.

*In 1988, the State of New Hampshire developed the Land Conservation Investment Program (LCIP). Mt. Cresson's owners, Evelyn Carpenter and Virginia French of New York, cooperated with town efforts to place strategic areas such as this property (and Honey Hill, also LCIP land) in perpetual preservation. Mt. Cresson is town-owned land, is managed by the town conservation commission, and monitored by the State of NH Conservation Land Stewardship Program, Office of Energy and Planning.



Mt. Cresson Trail Guide





Mt. Cresson Trail Map