



Volunteer Handbook

*Thanks for your
support & commitment!*

Updated February 1, 2012



Coastal Mountains Land Trust
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Table of Contents

Organizational Background

Mission	2
Where We Work	3
History	4
Where the Land Trust Works	5
What the Land Protects	5
How the Land Trust Protects Land	5
Funding	7
Coastal Mountains Land Trust Office / Contact Information	7
Contact Information	7
Staff / Board of Directors	7

Volunteer Program Overview

What You Can Expect From Coastal Mountains Land Trust	8
What Coastal Mountains Land Trust Expects From You	8
Volunteer Guidelines & Procedures	9

Volunteer Job Descriptions

Outreach	12
Stewardship	13



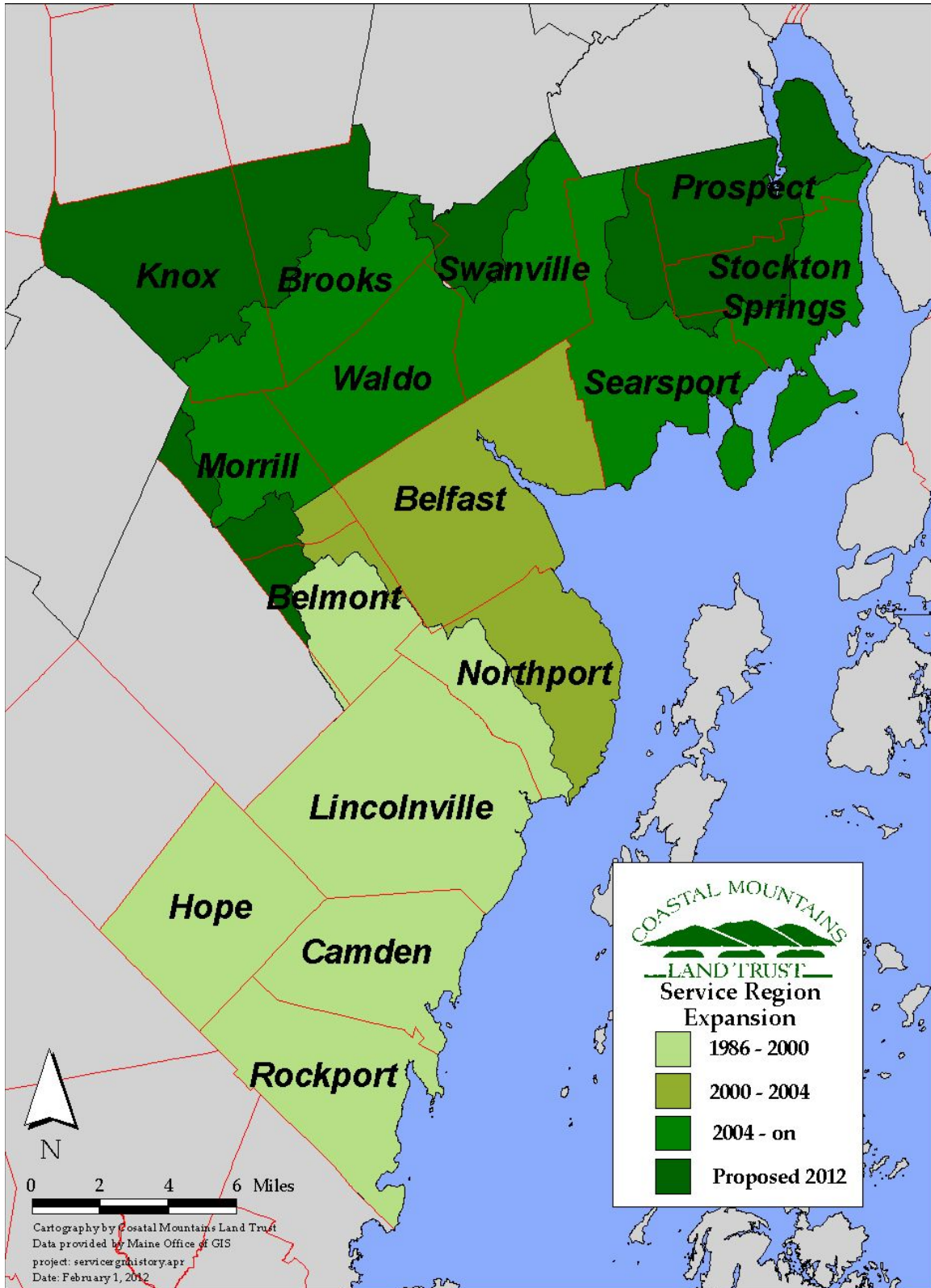
Mission

We permanently conserve land to benefit the natural and human communities of western Penobscot Bay.

We accomplish our mission by:

- ◆ Working proactively and cooperatively with land owners to establish a system of conservation lands that feature:
 - habitat supporting biological diversity;
 - water resources, including rivers, lakes, wetlands, aquifers, and the bay;
 - farms and forests managed for sustained productivity; and
 - scenic landscapes essential to our sense of place.
- ◆ Sustaining the natural and historic values of our conservation lands through a strong stewardship program based on monitoring, management, restoration, and enforcement.
- ◆ Providing opportunities for the public to access and explore natural places.
- ◆ Promoting public awareness of and support for land conservation through a broad outreach effort.
- ◆ Collaborating with towns, agencies, and other organizations to protect resources that meet exceptional needs in the communities we serve.
- ◆ Engaging volunteers to help implement our conservation work.

Where We Work



History

Coastal Mountains Land Trust was founded as the Camden Rockport Land Trust in 1986 by a small group of citizens intent upon preservation of Beech Hill in Rockport, a 572-acre property featuring critical scenic and ecological values--rolling blueberry barrens, forests, a historic stone house, and the most scenically unique summit of the Camden Hills. With the assistance of Maine Coast Heritage Trust a limited development conservation easement was designed to protect this important landmark of the western Penobscot Bay landscape, a very prominent launch for our land conservation program.

- 1987: Conservation easement on Beech Hill completed.
- 1988: Second project completed, Thurlow Conservation Easement on Fernalds Neck.
- 1990: Board of Directors launch proactive effort to plan, prioritize, and protect the most important conservation areas of the region.
- 1991: Office rented in Rockport Village and Administrative Director hired, the first Land Trust staff person.
- 1994: 105 acres on the summit and slopes of Mount Battie conserved by the Land Trust and added to Camden Hills State Park.
- 1995: Land Trust helps found and leads the Ducktrap Coalition to conserve the Ducktrap River Watershed.
- 1996: Completed conservation projects total 1,000 acres.
- 1998: Land Trust hires first Executive Director.
- 1999: Completed conservation projects total 2,000 acres.
- 2000: Service region expands to include Belfast Bay watersheds through merger with former Belfast-Northport-Lincolnville Land Trust. Coastal Mountains Land Trust becomes the organizations new name.
- 2001: Beech Hill Preserve acquired by collaboration of Land Trust and Maine Coast Heritage Trust; summit opened to the public.
- 2001: Land Trust constructs and moves into its new office building in Camden.
- 2001: Board adopts Conservation Plan for new Focal Areas--Bald and Ragged Mountains, Passagassawakeag Greenway.
- 2001: Completed conservation projects total 3,000 acres.
- 2002: Land Trust co-publishes with Aperture *To Save a River*, a book of photos and essays telling the conservation story of the Ducktrap Coalition, where 83% of the land along the river has been permanently conserved.
- 2003: Campaign for Passagassawakeag Greenway launched in Belfast area.
- 2003: Land Trust receives **Land Heritage Award** from Maine Coast Heritage Trust.
- 2003: Campaign for Bald and Ragged Mountains launched.

2003: Completed conservation projects total 4,000 acres.
2004: 45% of the Passagassawakeag Greenway completed.
2005: Completed conservation projects total more than 5,000 acres.
2006: 37% of the Bald and Ragged Mountains in conservation.
2007: Beech Hill Campaign launched for the rehabilitation of Beech Nut.
2007: The rehabilitation of Beech Nut is completed.
2008: Completed conservation projects total more than 6,000 acres.
2008: Land Trust becomes one of the first in the country to receive national accreditation.
2009: Completed conservation projects total more than 8,000
2012: Completed conservation projects total more than 9,000

Where the Land Trust Works

Coastal Mountains Land Trust serves the communities of the western Penobscot Bay. Our service region consists of 15 towns: Rockport, Camden, Hope, Lincolnville, Northport, Belmont, Waldo, Knox, Morrill, Swanville, Brooks, Belfast, Searsport, Stockton Springs, and Prospect.

What the Land Trust Protects

Coastal Mountains Land Trust is dedicated to conserving lands that significantly benefit the public by protecting the ecological and scenic assets which make life in the western Penobscot Bay region of Maine so special.

Specifically, we are interested in conserving lands that protect:

- ◆ Biological Diversity
- ◆ Water Resources
- ◆ Productive Farms and Forests
- ◆ Scenic Landscapes

How the Land Trust Protects Land

◆ Conservation Easements

A conservation easement is a type of deed that keeps land in private ownership with specific covenants that describe how the land can be used. The easement is donated to the Land Trust, which accepts the responsibility of assuring that the conservation values of the property are permanently conserved. Easements are customized for each property. For example, some easements keep all or part of the property "forever wild", while others allow forest management or agriculture.

◆ **Donated Land**

Our preserves are properties to which the Land Trust owns full title. Many preserves were donated to us by generous landowners who wished to leave a legacy for future generations by conserving their property while providing the community an opportunity to appreciate its natural and scenic values. When a landowner offers to donate land to the Land Trust, we evaluate it thoroughly to determine that it has substantial conservation value and public benefits that merit the effort and expense of our permanent stewardship. Once land is accepted for conservation as a preserve, we are committed to protecting it perpetually.

◆ **Purchased Land**

Because real estate is quite expensive and we must raise funds for land purchases, purchasing land is not our general practice. However, in some instances, the Land Trust will purchase properties with exceptional conservation values. When we purchase land, we negotiate on a voluntary basis with the landowner for either a "fair market" price or a "bargain sale" price.

A fair market price is what the land would bring if it was sold on the open real estate market, as established by an appraisal of the property by an independent real estate appraiser. Some landowners can benefit from a bargain sale of their property—that is, a sale far below the appraised value. The difference between the appraised value and the purchase price is considered a charitable gift. A bargain sale is a demonstration of the landowner's generosity and commitment to conserving their property, with mutual financial benefits for both landowner and Land Trust.

◆ **Donated Reserved Life Estates**

By donating a reserved life estate, you can donate ownership of your land to the Land Trust today, but reserve the right to use the property during your lifetime, or the lifetime of designated family members. In this way, you can be assured that your property is permanently conserved but still use the property as you have - farming the fields, managing the forest, or managing public access. In addition to maintaining use of the property, by donating a reserved life estate, you can also realize the tax benefits of the donation today.

Funding

Individual members and businesses contribute about 85% of the Land Trust's operating budget, while grants, campaign allocations, contracts, and sales account for the remaining portion. The Land Trust is proud to report that 98% of our expenses were directed to delivering our conservation program services, with only 1.3% on fundraising and 0.7% on administrative costs for the 2007-2008 fiscal year.

Coastal Mountains Land Trust Office / Contact Information

The Land Trust's office is located at 101 Mt. Battie Street in Camden. Visits and calls are always welcome. Please feel free to visit during office hours (Monday through Friday from 8:30am to 5:00pm) or contact us with the information provided below.

Mailing address: 101 Mt. Battie Street, Camden, Maine, 04843.

Telephone: 207-236-7091 **Fax:** 236-0612 (please call first)

General email: info@coastalmountains.org

Primary Volunteer Contact address: volunteers@coastalmountains.org

Staff / Board of Directors

Staff:

Scott Dickerson, *Executive Director*

scottd@coastalmountains.org

Kristen Lindquist, *Development Director*

kristenl@coastalmountains.org

Ellen Skoczenski, *Membership Coordinator*

ellens@coastalmountains.org

Ian Stewart, *Stewardship Director*

ians@coastalmountains.org

Joseph Zipparo, *Stewardship Project Manager*

joez@coastalmountains.org

Key Volunteers:

Amy Faunce, *Volunteer Coordinator*

volunteers@coastalmountains.org

Board of Directors:

(As of February 2012)

Galen Todd, President

John Doncaster

Jim Kroschell, Vice President

Dave Jackson

Ingrid Warren, Secretary

Gray Payne

Jay Freedman, Treasurer

Volunteer Program Overview

Volunteers are essential to our success. Each year volunteers contributed thousands of hours to our program. Our program consists of short-term work parties and longer-term positions.

What you can expect from Coastal Mountains Land Trust

All Land Trust volunteers will be provided with:

- ◆ a clear job description.
- ◆ an orientation with training and appropriate background.
- ◆ a reliable schedule with notice of cancellation – calendar of events.
- ◆ relevant periodic training opportunities.
- ◆ appropriate assignments according to individual skills and interest.
- ◆ opportunities to work with fellow community members.
- ◆ opportunities to learn.
- ◆ appropriate equipment – volunteers may bring their own equipment if it is approved by staff
- ◆ volunteer-only walks and events.
- ◆ an annual newsletter, *The Steward*, outlining the program for the year.

What the Land Trust expects from you

The Land Trust requires:

- ◆ reliability.
- ◆ a 2-4 hour commitment for each work party.
- ◆ clear conveyance of ability and limitations.
- ◆ responsible and safe behavior within the parameters of the task assigned.
- ◆ proper preparedness for work parties with water, appropriate footwear and clothing, and safety gear and tools.
- ◆ enthusiasm and kindness.

Volunteer Guidelines & Procedures

Record keeping procedures (For stewardship positions only)- Due to the independent nature of many of our volunteer stewardship work, we are counting on you to help us **keep track of your hours**. Tracking volunteer hours and contributions helps us show the community what great work you are doing, and helps us bring in more funds that enable us to continue our conservation efforts.

If you are working as a volunteer independent of a staff member, please provide us with an email summary of the hours you have contributed each month. These reports can be emailed to Volunteer Coordinator, Amy Faunce, at volunteers@coastalmountains.org

For questions about tracking hours call the office at 236-7091.

Evaluation – In order to continue adapting and improving our volunteer program, volunteers will be provided each year with an opportunity to evaluate the volunteer program and their contributions to the Land Trust’s mission. The evaluations allow for each volunteer to suggest improvement and changes to the program.

Volunteers Under the Age of 18 – All volunteers under the age of 18 must have a form signed by their parent or guardian permitting them to volunteer.

Relations with the Public – When dealing with the public, especially site visitors and neighbors, remember that you are a representative of the Coastal Mountains Land Trust and have an important role to play in enhancing the public’s perception of our conservation efforts. You have the opportunity to encourage responsible visitor behavior and reinforce public support of natural open space preservation.

It is not your responsibility to resolve boundary or other property conflicts with neighbors. If a neighbor or visitor confronts you with an issue, take the person’s information and tell them that you will have your supervisor contact them to address the situation. Do not approach anyone you feel may be threatening or dangerous. Move to a safe distance and call the police or your supervisor.

Safety – Your safety is of utmost concern to us. We ask that all volunteers follow common sense safety guidelines when working with the Land Trust. Consider the following tips at all times:

1. Be prepared – including proper clothing, food, and water.
2. Understand the objectives of your assigned project
3. Stay hydrated and well fed
4. Use proper safety equipment for the task at hand (i.e. gloves, helmet, etc.)
5. Ensure that all equipment is in good working condition.

6. Avoid working alone.
7. Let someone know where you are going and when you will return.
8. Avoid placing yourself in hazardous situations.
9. Don't attempt a job you are not qualified for.
10. Bring a cell phone, FOR ANY EMERGENCY, CALL 911.

While out on volunteer assignment, if you encounter or witness and urgent problems or threatening situations, (i.e. confrontational behaviour, fire, or open firearms) immediately remove yourself to a safe distance and contact the authorities and your supervisor.

Insurance Coverage

Coastal Mountains Land Trust provides secondary insurance coverage to supplement your own health insurance in the event of injury. If you would like more information about our policy, please ask a staff member for more information.

Powertools

All volunteer interested in using power tools in association with the Land Trust need to be approved in advance by a Land Trust staff member and comply with the organization's power tool use practices.

Confidentiality - Volunteers are expected to maintain the confidentiality of Land Trust information pertaining to the work they do as a volunteer. Volunteers specifically assigned to assist with data management that works with records containing personal or financial information or who serve on a Land Trust committee will be asked to sign a confidentiality agreement with the organization. Additionally, volunteers may learn information that has not been released to the public or is not intended for the public. Volunteers are expected to maintain the confidentiality of that information.

Resigning as a Volunteer – If find that you are unable to complete your volunteer service, it is your responsibility to let your supervisor know as soon as possible, so that the work can be reassigned.

Volunteer Positions

Short-Term Volunteer Positions: Many volunteers help the Land Trust by joining scheduled field or office work parties or doing a one-time task. Work party schedules are posted on the Coastal Mountains Land Trust website, www.coastalmountains.org, as well as in local newspapers. Please contact the office for more information about these volunteer opportunities.

On-Going Volunteer Positions: The following two pages include descriptions of our long-term volunteer positions, which fall into two categories: **Outreach** and **Stewardship**.

On-Going Volunteer Position Descriptions – Outreach

If you're looking to become more involved with our Outreach program, there are several opportunities to expand your role. In addition to expectations at the beginning of this section, the Land Trust also expects the long-term outreach volunteer to:

- ◆ be reliable.
- ◆ have a pleasant attitude.
- ◆ have respect for office atmosphere.
- ◆ have interest and familiarity with the Land Trust mission and programs.
- ◆ be willing to take a leadership role with other volunteers.
- ◆ make an appropriate time commitment.

Office Docent

We can always use an extra pair of hands at our busy office. Join the hubbub by assisting staff with office maintenance, staffing the front desk, forwarding phone calls, greeting visitors to the office, and helping with miscellaneous projects. 4 hours/week or month.

New Property Buyers Researcher

If you're looking for an easy way to help a lot, this job is for you! The primary duties of this position are to visit town offices and review their recent transfer tax documents, recording appropriate information and passing your notes along to the Land Trust via postal mail, email, or drop-off. 20 minutes per office plus travel time in January, April, July, and October.

Short-Term/On-Call Volunteer Position Descriptions – Outreach

Office Project Helper

This position is for those that would like to help us with big office projects. The bulk of this position will helping to stuff envelopes or folder newsletters as part of a big mailing or something similar. and leading monthly informal hikes on our preserves. As time permits, you may also be involved in outreach planning, formal outreach events, and exhibition displays. 2-4 hours at a time.

Event Helper

If you would like to help us host an event or party, the Land Trust is always looking for people to help facilitate parking, serve as bartenders, or just generally be helpful getting ready for any number of special events we host each year. The primary duty of this position is to respond when called upon for a 3-4 hour shift helping with an event.

On-Going Volunteer Position Descriptions – Stewardship

These volunteer positions carry more responsibility. In addition to expectations at the beginning of this section, the Land Trust also expects the long-term stewardship volunteer to:

- ◆ be reliable.
- ◆ have a positive attitude.
- ◆ have interest and familiarity with the Land Trust mission.
- ◆ be willing to take a leadership role with other volunteers, including ensuring safe practices are followed.
- ◆ make a commitment to a particular time frame in the position.

Land Steward

- ◆ Preserve Steward – Annual monitoring of preserve boundaries and interior.
- ◆ Easement Steward – Annual monitoring of easement boundaries and interior.
- ◆ Trail Monitor – Monitoring of preserve trails

Invasive Species Control Team Member

This position coordinates the control of specific infestations of invasive species on our preserves. Duties include scheduling workdays, contacting volunteers and training and supervising other volunteers. The position also includes making recommendations for continued control of the invasive sites. 4-8 hours/month.

Fernald's Neck Preserve Docent

Have you always wanted to engage the public in a natural setting? The position will provide scheduled coverage of the preserve during high use times during the summer. Assistance on maintenance projects may also be needed. 4-8 hours/month.

Beech Hill Volunteers (various positions)

Beech Hill Farm Hand

This position includes using power and non-power hand tools to maintain fields, do trail work, and maintain the Beech Nut Historic District. 4 hours/month.

Beech Nut Docent

The position includes opening Beech Nut and providing information to the public on cultural and natural history and current uses of Beech Hill Preserve. 2 hours/month.

Beech Hill Docent/Monitor

The position includes walking Beech Hill, providing information to the public on history and appropriate uses of the Beech Hill Preserve. 2 hours/month.

Beech Hill Farm Stand/Free Pick Volunteer

The position includes facilitating the sales of organic blueberries from a farm stand at Beech Hill during July and August. Volunteers also help with the annual free pick. 3-4 hours/week during July and August