



Upper Hosmer Brook conserved!

▲ Photo credit Jacob Gerritsen

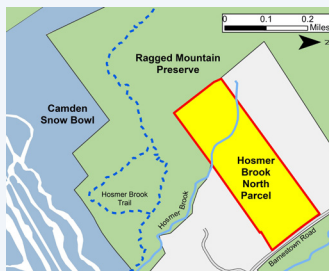
MOUNTAINSIDE FOREST ABOVE BARNESTOWN ROAD ADDED TO RAGGED MOUNTAIN PRESERVE

Just below the ridgeline, Ragged Mountain's Hosmer Brook originates amid a steep and dense spruce-fir forest that faces north towards Bald Mountain. From there this clear cobbled stream descends quickly over a series of small waterfalls and pools through a beautiful oak-hardwood forest before flowing through the Town of Camden's Snow Bowl and arriving at Hosmer Pond.

This winter, Coastal Mountains Land Trust purchased 37 beautiful acres of forest that include the uppermost reaches of this scenic stream. Historically part of a family farm that extended along Barnestown Road all the way to what is now the Camden Snow Bowl, this forested property will expand the buffer of natural land around the Town's recreational facility and protect additional high-quality wildlife habitat for a range of species known to inhabit the mountain including barred owls, white-tail deer, and black bear. Supported by funds raised as part of the larger Round the Mountain Collaboration, this acquisition will also help to maintain the water quality of Hosmer Pond and provide space for a key section of the Round the Mountain Trail, as the future multi-use trail extends north on the mountain from the Camden Snow Bowl.

"Conservation of this property means that the entirety of Hosmer Brook above the Snow Bowl is permanently conserved and now, more of this incredibly scenic mountain will remain wild for hikers, runners, mountain-bikers and

cross-country skiers to enjoy," said Ian Stewart, Executive Director of the Land Trust. "Some 15 years after we identified this property as a priority for permanent protection, Geraldine and Arthur O'Connor sold their land to the Land Trust so that it will be protected forever. We are very grateful."



The Land Trust's efforts to conserve more than 3,500 acres around Bald and Ragged Mountains in Camden, Rockport and Hope began in 2003. To date, the Land Trust has conserved 56% (1,632 acres) of these iconic coastal mountains that are so important to the region's sense of place, economy, and ecology. Beyond this important acquisition, the Land Trust remains

focused on fulfilling the larger goals of the Round the Mountain Collaboration, a community-based effort to conserve an additional 1,400 acres on Ragged Mountain and develop the Round the Mountain Trail system. Protecting 788-acres around Mirror Lake this summer, including the entire western side of Ragged Mountain, is our next step to reach that goal.



▲ Stewardship Project Managers Hale Morrell and Jackie Stratton model LL Bean backpacks

Hike the Guide Redux

We continue to look for ways to encourage our membership and the public to explore our trails and preserves along the Midcoast. Hike the Guide was introduced last year when our Trail Guide was first published. One member claimed the prize: an LL Bean Stowaway backpack by visiting all 35 preserves. This year we will have a monthly outing (third Saturday of each month – watch the eNews and website for specifics) led by volunteer preserve stewards. These hikes will introduce you to many of our special places from Rockport to Prospect. The personal challenge still stands – but we’ve made it more achievable: visit just 12 preserves to claim your prize. If you started the challenge and have explored more than 12, come on in and grab your pack! Please use the preserve hashtag to share on social media where you are and what you’ve seen. Thank you for your adventuring spirit!

Arts on the Hill ~ Five Years of Hilltop Creativity

What began in 2014 with George Mason’s art installation in Beech Nut, the historic stone hut atop Beech Hill in Rockport, has evolved into an annual series of artistic performances attracting hundreds of people. George helped to define what is so evocative about Beech Nut when he shared his first impression as an artist:

“When I walked into this great stone and sod-roof building with beautifully restored timbers and vaulted ceiling, there was a “going quiet” within me... There is simply a still and dynamic presence, and it is nourishing. While there is nothing that needs to be added to this, nonetheless, when I experienced Beech Nut and its resplendent view of Penobscot Bay, I knew I wanted to interact with this setting.”

The 2018 season will include singing bowls & gongs by Todd Glacy of Portland, Bay Chamber Jazz Improv, classical guitar by Malcolm Brooks, Just Teachers Band (a dance band of seven local educators), and VOXX: Voice of Twenty (a cappella).

The venue, the season, the community, and the performances combine to provide wonderful local opportunities for families, residents, and visitors to enjoy quality entertainment at no cost. Please be sure to join us this summer!



▲ Push Farther Project performing in Beech Nut, 2017



Another Successful Plunge into Camden Harbor

On February 3, we raised over \$6,000 as nearly 30 people braved the cold and dodged the floating ice while many spectators cheered this Camden Winterfest event!

◀ Pen Bay Sailfish swim team lead the way into the water

A Welcome Discussion

Over the past several months, land conservation, a pursuit long supported by a strong majority of Maine's citizens and fostered by members of both political parties, has fallen victim to the divided turmoil of current politics. In his State of the State address, Maine's governor directly called out the land trust community, claiming that it is responsible for depriving local municipalities of much-needed tax revenue by keeping \$18.5 billion in real estate off the tax rolls. The problem with this statement, however, is that his facts are wrong.

The governor's numbers don't add up. Based on analysis funded by the governor's office, conserved lands owned by land trusts account for only one-third of one percent of the \$18.5 billion of tax-exempt real estate in Maine. The majority of land exempt from taxes is actually owned by municipalities (29.42%), the state of Maine (12.56%), the federal government (12.63%), and other civic organizations and educational institutions.

That said, land trusts do recognize that many towns face real challenges when deciding how to afford the needs of their residents. As a volunteer member of my town's budget committee, I am quite aware of the limits of town funding. Scapegoating land trusts for these challenges, however, is not helpful. Based upon the governor's study, the estimated average annual cost of land trust exempt-land per Maine resident is \$0.74. Given the scenic, recreational, ecological, habitat, and water-quality benefits of our work, land trusts offer a terrific return on investment for the communities they serve. Rather than taking away value from towns, land trusts partner with local governments to help towns

fulfill many priorities outlined in their comprehensive plans. Our own projects have focused on the town-shared goals of protecting local scenic character, sustaining wildlife, and protecting the quality of the water. Lastly, many land trusts, including ours, choose to make contributions in lieu of taxes in order to recognize the valuable partnership we maintain with town governments.

Beyond this basic clarification of facts, however, we welcome any opportunity to talk about the "value" of the work we do for local communities. We are always interested in making sure that our work is meaningful to the communities we serve. Our conservation efforts benefit the local economy by helping to preserve the unique quality of place that is so important to Maine's brand and image. Time and time again, we hear that people are drawn to our area because of the work we do. In addition to land protection, we also regularly host free educational and cultural programs, involve schools, and provide access to sustainably-produced food. We regularly provide free organic blueberries and firewood to those in need and have supported several affordable housing projects as part of our work.

Talking about community needs and the value of what nonprofits contribute is a worthy discussion, but one that relies upon civility and a reasonable handling of the facts. We look forward to continuing a strong partnership with local and state governments. Surely, the state's consistent support of our projects over the last 30 years is an endorsement of the value of our work.



Ian Stewart

Annual Meeting & Volunteer Celebration Rockport Boat Club

Tuesday, June 26, 6:00pm – 8:00pm

**Special presentation:
Land Trust Shorts Film Festival**

Join us at the head of Rockport Harbor as we recognize volunteers while celebrating a tremendous year of success and achievement. We are only able to do this with your support and encouragement. As a member and a volunteer to be feted, this is your evening. Our Board and staff will provide all the food for dinner, we encourage you to BYOB. Please RSVP by June 22 to info@coastalmountains.org.

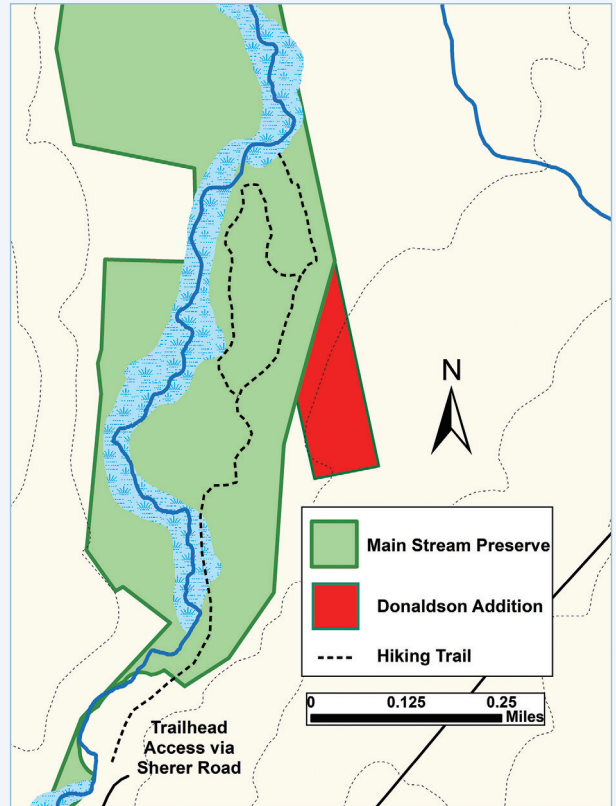
Old roots, new connections

In December 2017, Tom and Babette Donaldson generously donated seven acres of land adjacent to the Land Trust's Main Stream Preserve in Stockton Springs. For Tom, this donation was about practicality – he thought the Land Trust would be a good steward of the property and would protect something that he is passionate about – human history. Tom has deep family roots in Stockton Springs.

"I owned all this land for about 40 years, after inheriting it from my father," Tom explained. The history of his family's continuous ownership extends back over 100 years. His great-great-grandfather Sylvanus Irish Roberts had a saw mill and/or shake mill on the preserve land. Remnants of the old mill are visible, along with old cellar holes and apple trees that likely belonged to Roberts and his family.

Tom wasn't aware of the Land Trust until he learned that land he had previously sold to Central Maine Power was subsequently transferred to Coastal Mountains Land Trust in 2010 as part of a wetland mitigation project. Established as the 250-acre Main Stream Preserve, that property protects a one-mile stretch of stream corridor, has high-quality wildlife habitat, and supports a two-mile loop trail. The additional seven-acre parcel donated by Tom is adjacent to the preserve.

For Tom, who now lives in Arizona, this land is now helping to keep the history and the local stories alive in a place meaningful to him.



▲ Main Stream Preserve in Stockton Springs expands

Getting outdoors is good business

Support from our business community is vital. Many give financially, others provide in-kind services, and all are essential for the Land Trust to maintain stewardship of our preserves. We offer the Adopt-a-Trail Program, which is an opportunity for businesses to have a marketing presence at trailheads, on our website, and in the Trail Guide. Our newest business partner, The First, has adopted a trail at the Fernalds Neck Preserve.



Many of our members are small business owners who appreciate the value of conserved land for their customers and staff. Camden National Bank is our oldest business member – they began their support in 1988 and continue as Adopt-a-Trail sponsors at the Harkness Preserve in Rockport.

If you are interested in adopting a trail, please contact Kathy Young at 236-7091.



Adopt-a-Trail

This trail has been sponsored by:



Adopt-a-Trail sign at the trail head of Harkness Preserve ▲

Teamwork in the Woods

Invaluable volunteer field crews

Week in, week out, all year long volunteers play an essential role in the stewardship of Land Trust conserved lands. Each Monday, Stewardship Project Managers send emails to their combined list of 40+ volunteers who are part of work crews based in either Camden or Belfast.

The email indicates the proposed project, including the location and type of work to be completed and a list of suggested tools to bring along. Then, on Wednesday morning, anywhere from 4 to 12 vehicles convene at 9:00 am near various trailhead parking lots or on the side of the road. Together, the crews look over maps on a tailgate, sort out what tools are available, and make assignments before setting out into the woods.

The weekly projects include building and maintaining trails, installing signs and kiosks, marking and clearing boundaries, building and fixing bridges, and mowing trailheads.

Volunteer crew members describe their involvement as an opportunity to give back to an organization while also providing a chance to see past the trails and explore preserves and properties not otherwise accessible. One volunteer said, "The leadership of the crew and the consensus of all when we need to 'get it done' feels like everyone is in charge and we are all followers at the same time." Many say that they appreciate the opportunity to absorb the knowledge of the land and

▼ Work crew installing trail signs



region that other crew members are willing to share. One of the best memories shared by one crew member was building the 30-foot Hodson Preserve Bridge in 2011 with Skip Pendleton who climbed nearby trees to set up rigging to move the stringers, which were cut on-site; "the collaborative ingenuity of the group was impressive."

No matter what the task, we commend our crews for taking on any challenge with a knack for creative problem solving, a good work ethic, and a sense of humor.

No experience or tools are necessary, just a motivation to work hard with a group of friendly people who love the outdoors. All ages are welcome.

If you would like to consider joining a volunteer work crew, check out the volunteer link on our website at:

coastalmountains.org

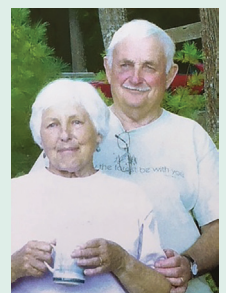
Protecting a Legacy ~ Pendleton Stewardship Fund

This spring, the Land Trust launched a campaign in honor of Skip and Jo Pendleton to establish a fund supporting the long-term stewardship of the lands and trails beloved by Skip and Jo.

The Pendleton Stewardship Fund will sustain an annual intern in Waldo County who will continue the preserve and trail work that Skip Pendleton was dedicated to providing so generously as a volunteer.

Coastal Mountains Land Trust is grateful for Skip and Jo's dedicated service for nearly 20 years. Beyond his commitment to the Land Trust, he served as an

Appalachian Trail steward, was a driving force behind the Hills to Sea Trail, and was a dedicated member of the Belfast Bay Watershed Coalition. Jo served as a preserve steward for the Land Trust, along with other community service.



Please help ensure that their commitment to this work lives on. Donations to the fund can be made at our website: coastalmountains.org or mailed to our office in Camden. The first \$5,000 will be matched.

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Camden, ME 04843
207-236-7091
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Trailhead at Head of Tide in Belfast – photo credit Heather Pusey

UPCOMING EVENTS

WEDNESDAY, MAY 9, 4:30 PM – 6:00 PM
Local Trails Walk & Talk, Hale Morrell,
Carver Memorial Library, Searsport

TUESDAY, MAY 15, 7:00 PM – 8:00 PM
Climate Change, Esperanza Stancioff and Ivan Fernandez,
Camden Public Library

SATURDAY, MAY 19, 7:00 AM – 10:00 AM
Hike the Guide meets Arts on the Hill: Bird walk with Brian Willson
& classical guitar with Malcolm Brooks (in Beech Nut – coffee &
muffins), Beech Hill Preserve, Rockville Street trailhead, Rockport

SATURDAY, MAY 19, 9:00 AM – 12:00 NOON
'Hands on the Mountain' Stewardship Work Party, Ragged Mountain
Preserve, with a BBQ lunch, Camden Snow Bowl

MONDAY, MAY 21, 7:00 AM
Bird walk with Brian Willson and Hale Morrell, Beech Hill Preserve,
Rockville Street Trailhead, Rockport

WEDNESDAY, MAY 23, 7:00 AM
Bird walk with Brian Willson and Kristen Lindquist, Beech Hill Preserve,
Rockville Street Trailhead, Rockport

SATURDAY, MAY 26, 10:00 AM – 12:00 NOON
Coastal Mountains Nature Program: Edible (and Poisonous) Plants,
Head of Tide Preserve, Belfast

SATURDAY, JUNE 2, 9:00 – 11:00 AM
Belfast Rail Trail 5K + 5 Mile Run/Walk

SATURDAY, JUNE 16, 9:00 – 11:00 AM
Hike the Guide, McLellan-Poor Preserve, Northport

SATURDAY, JUNE 30, 10:00 AM – 12:00 NOON
Coastal Mountains Nature Program: Wildflowers & Other Plants,
Ragged Mountain Preserve, Camden

Serving the communities of

Rockport, Camden, Hope, Lincolnville,
Northport, Belfast, Belmont, Morrill, Waldo,
Swanville, Brooks, Knox, Searsport,
Stockton Springs, and Prospect

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