



PHOTO CREDIT: JACOB GERRITSEN

CONSERVING THE HEAD OF THE BAY

Three additions expand the Mount Tuck Preserve in Stockton Springs & Prospect



Ryan Ordelt (center) with friends working on the Mount Tuck trail



Mount Tuck Preserve and trail map



Kiosk being built by Jackson Dargon

At the head of Penobscot Bay, where Maine's second longest river meets its largest bay, Mount Tuck steeply rises 500 feet from the west of the river. If you drive south on Route 1 over the Penobscot Narrows bridge, Mount Tuck lies directly before you. This beautiful coastal mountain, which sits amid more than 2,000 acres of undeveloped land is, in effect, a gateway to this region.

In 2019 the Land Trust began a campaign to conserve Mount Tuck, and we've made remarkable strides in the past three years. That summer we conserved an initial 99-acre parcel that included the summit and scenic viewpoints to the east and south. We have since conserved another 145 acres on the shoulders of the mountain, creating a 244-acre preserve. Critical to this work has been support from dozens of private donors, partners such as Maine Coast Heritage Trust, and grants from seven foundations. In 2021 we conserved three

new parcels and started construction on a two-mile-long Mount Tuck trail.

Two local Boy Scouts, Jackson Dargon and Ryan Ordelt, from Troop #235 in Stockton Springs have taken on leadership of the trail as an Eagle Scout project. This includes building a kiosk and clearing and establishing the hiking trail. This summer, they will work with our stewardship staff and volunteers to complete the trail with signage and parking. We look forward to hosting a trail opening in late August at the trailhead along Meadow Road in Stockton Springs — stay tuned! In the meantime, we will continue to work to conserve more open space on Mount Tuck, beginning with another parcel on the mountain that we are working to purchase later this year (see map above). Please consider supporting the Mount Tuck campaign, so we can conserve the whole mountain for wildlife and recreation, forever!

HABITAT CONSERVATION IN THE TOWN OF KNOX

Four projects protect ecologically significant wetlands



Former Agnew property

Over the last few months, Coastal Mountains Land Trust has worked with four landowners to complete our first projects in the Town of Knox.

The Land Trust recently acquired a 113-acre property from Emily Agnew off Old County Road with funding from the Maine Natural Resources Conservation Program. That property contains a beautiful pond and surrounding wetlands, mature forest, and a rare natural community. There are also vernal pools that provide habitat for, among other species, yellow and blue spotted salamanders, and the southernmost population of mink frogs in the state.

Nearby, at the corner of Kenney Road and Route 137, the Land Trust has also created the new 100-acre Marsh Meadow Preserve. The preserve contains a beaver-created pond along Marsh Stream, and surrounding wetlands and upland forest that are home to a wide array of wildlife, including beavers, otters, bobcats, and many species of migrating birds. This preserve was assembled from three different parcels. In December, we acquired a 74-acre property from Kyle Bloomstein with North American Wetland Conservation Act funding. This spring, abutting landowners donated a portion of their land to add to the preserve. Matt Wagner and Caitlin Hutt donated 20 acres of land and Allie Smith and David Wessels donated five



Salamander eggs

acres of land to expand the preserve. We are grateful for their generosity and foresight.

Stay tuned for public access improvements to both properties in the next year and let us know if you have any thoughts or questions. We are thrilled to have our first conserved land in Knox and look forward to welcoming the public to these very special places following additional ecological inventory work this summer.

REFLECTIONS

From the Vice President

Recently I have been reading *Braiding Sweetgrass* by Robin Wall Kimmerer. In her first essay, she shares the story of Skywoman Falling. This indigenous origin story tells of the arrival of a woman from the sky who, after being aided by the animals of the world, reciprocates by the spreading of fruits and seeds that become the grasses, flowers and trees from which animals can feed and thrive. This creation story is one of balance between the human and nonhuman world and this book, which explores indigenous wisdom, scientific knowledge, and the teaching of plants, caused me to think deeply about the Western European mindset of the presumed dominance of man over nature in which I was raised, and through which I became an architect. Like so many others, I am starting to see the flaws and failures of that stance.

Over fifteen years ago, I became a member and, six years ago, a board member of Coastal Mountains Land Trust. I was drawn first to the trails and, ultimately, to the organization's commitment to fostering a more reciprocal and balanced relationship between humans and the natural world. While the organization's central focus has been science-based land preservation, we remain committed to connecting many more people, beyond landowners and self-described hikers, with nature through programs that introduce young and old to new ways they can enjoy and respect the unbuilt environment. Our Learning Landscapes program (which we hope you read about in our last issue!), run by Leah Trommer, does just that. She is leading our staff and Board efforts to take our mission and values to the community rather than waiting for the community to come to us. By engaging local schools and through expanding public programs, we are learning more about the communities we serve — what the land means to different groups of people, what kind of access is needed and safe for the users and for the land itself, and what we can do to create an inclusive space for all. It's an exciting time at the Land Trust, and I am thrilled and honored to be a part of it. If you want to help or share in any of these endeavors, please feel free to reach out to me or our fabulous staff at the Land Trust.



Gianne P. Conard
Vice President

GROWING OUR TEAM

Land Trust welcomes two new Board Members

Jeff Davis, Camden



An active outdoorsman who enjoys kayaking, hiking, fishing, mountain biking, and gardening, Jeff has been a stewardship volunteer with the Land Trust for the last seven years. He and his wife Theresa retired to Camden after more than 20 years of enjoying summers

in the Midcoast. Jeff spent his career in marketing and advertising, serving as a partner and director at Sandelman & Associates for 25 years and President for 10 years. He is also a member of Ukes Rock, a ukulele group based in Rockland. He appreciates the efforts of the Land Trust and the impact projects like the Round the Mountain Trail can have on the community.

Maiara Rebordao, Belfast



Maiara Rebordao is a rising senior at Belfast Area High School and joins the Land Trust's Board of Directors as our first student representative. Maiara is passionate about conservation and protecting the environment. She currently represents her

class as a senator on student government and has a history of volunteering in the community and her home country, Portugal. She looks forward to bringing her leadership voice to the table and connecting young people to the Land Trust and the outdoors.

KEEPING AN EYE ON THE HEALTH OF OUR FOREST

A hiker's guide to three pests to watch out for

Maine has seen a decline in the frequency and severity of its famously cold winter weather over the past 50 years. The average number of “very cold nights” (below 0°F) is nearly half of what it was in 1970. This change has left the state’s natural resources exposed to exotic pests otherwise kept at bay because of our once harsh winter weather. In partnership with entomologists from the state and the local Soil and Water Conservation Service, the Land Trust is tracking a number of invasive exotic pests in our local forest.

Beech Leaf Disease



First observed in our service region by Gary Gulezian, one of our long-term stewardship volunteers, the arrival of ***Beech Leaf Disease*** was announced by Maine’s Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry in June of 2021. Unfortunately, additional diseased trees have since been observed in towns from Rockport to Prospect. Symptoms of beech leaf disease include: the formation of dark bands between the veins of leaves, leaves becoming curled, deformed, and shriveled, and trees developing a thin canopy with new buds that dry out before developing into leaves. Beech has also been impacted locally by beech bark disease since the 1930s, caused by a sap-feeding scale insect that provides access for a tree-killing fungus.

While American beech trees are not highly valued for lumber, they serve as a very important food source for wildlife and produce more food consistently than red oak. The Land Trust will continue to work with the Maine Forest Service to monitor the effects of the disease. At this time, there is no recommended treatment option, but individuals can help by communicating additional impacted areas they notice at www.maine.gov/dacf/mfs.

Hemlock Woolly Adelgid



Recently identified at the Land Trust’s Hodson and Ragged Mountain Preserves, the ***Hemlock Woolly Adelgid*** (HWA) is an exotic pest from Japan. It has been in Maine since 1999 and has been slowly establishing in the southern and coastal parts of the state. HWA attacks trees’ water resources and will defoliate and possibly kill trees in as little as three to five years. The most obvious sign of HWA is the covering of wool-like wax filaments produced as the insect matures. The woolly masses range from about 1/16-inch to 1/8-inch in diameter. They are most visible from late fall to early summer on the undersides of the outermost branch tips of hemlock trees.

Maine’s hemlocks are critical to the natural communities they grow in, providing shade for streams to maintain the cold water required for trout and other aquatic life, and preventing erosion from our steeply sloped hills. They also improve water quality; their extensive root system filters pollutants, prevents build-up of harmful bacteria, and provides quality habitat for many species. We are currently investigating methods to address these infestations and to preserve hemlocks under threat. Effective management strategies used in other states include a biological control, which is a non-invasive beetle that specifically preys on the adelgid.

Emerald Ash Borer



Although not yet observed in our service region, the ***Emerald Ash Borer*** is a concerning beetle native to Asia that was most likely introduced to North America via wooden shipping materials. The beetle lays its larvae in the cambium of the tree. They hatch, eat their way through the nutrient rich sub-bark membrane, effectively girdle the tree, and exit, leaving a D-shaped hole indicative of the pest.



The Emerald Ash Borer's characteristic bored hole

The ash tree is not only a key species for amphibians and insects (a study found that more than 40 native insect species rely on ash trees for food or breeding), but the brown ash is a tree of cultural significance to Maine’s Wabanaki communities, and a primary source for Maine’s forest products industry (tool handles, baseball bats, wood fuel, etc.) The Land Trust will continue to monitor for the presence of this beetle and learn about options for assessment and treatment should this pest arrive.



THE SHED OF TIDES

New building expands investment in Waldo County stewardship and community engagement

This spring, a new shed was acquired for our Head of Tide Preserve in Belfast. The “Shed of Tides” (as staff are calling it) was built offsite this winter by Backyard Buildings in Unity. Shelves, work benches, and tool storage were added by Stewardship and Land Protection Manager Jack Shaida and the Belfast Wednesday work crew. Electrical work was installed by Hedstrom Electric. The shed will support the Land Trust’s growing volume of stewardship and community engagement work across Waldo County, from Lincolnville to Prospect. One half of the building will be used for stewardship tools and equipment, creating a more efficient way for staff and work crew volunteers to get work done in nearby preserves. The other half will be used for community engagement, event supply storage, and a dry place to gather for meetings and education talks on unexpected rainy days. With the shed, our Waldo County trails and preserves are getting a makeover, and we plan to host more events than ever before!



JULY 30–SEPTEMBER 10

Save the date for annual community challenge to benefit local trail stewardship

1 MILE = \$1

GET READY TO EXPLORE

For the fourth year, Coastal Mountains Land Trust will be challenging the community to hike, walk, run, bike, paddle, or swim 15,000+ cumulative miles on area trails and preserves. Sponsoring local businesses will donate \$1 for every mile logged by participants.

Participation is free and prizes will be raffled off each week. All funds will go toward the stewardship and development of Land Trust trails. Get outside, explore new preserves, have fun, win prizes, and help raise money for the Land Trust! Stay tuned for more information on how and where to log your miles later this month.



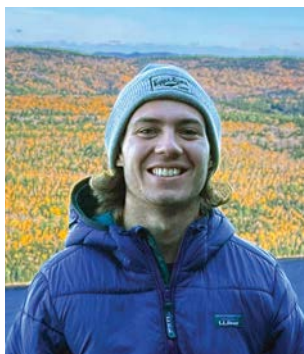
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Little Ragged, Ragged Mountain
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MEET THE SUMMER INTERNS



Ryan Nascimento
Knox County Stewardship Intern

Ryan is a rising senior at the University of Maine, Orono studying Parks, Recreation, and Tourism. Ryan is an avid fly fisherman and hunter, and jumps at any chance to go outside, whether for hiking, biking, or white-water canoeing.



Wesley Hutchins
Pendleton Stewardship Intern

Wesley is a rising junior at the University of Maine, Orono studying Wildlife Ecology. Wesley has lived and recreated in Waldo County his whole life and when he is not studying, he is exploring and birdwatching among the trails and trees of the Midcoast.

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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