



People on the Land An Alternative Measure of Success

Arts on the Hill – Beech Hill Preserve – Mojo Jazz – Monday Night Jazz Orchestra

Listening to an 18-piece orchestra play big band jazz on top of the Beech Hill Preserve in July, releasing monarch butterflies at the Head of Tide Preserve in August, riding mountain bikes through the woods of Ragged Mountain, and studying the “Diminutive World of Mosses and Lichens” at the Hodson Preserve with a local naturalist – all terrific examples of one of the Land Trust’s best measures of success in 2019 – getting people out on the land.

Since the founding of the Land Trust movement, many organizations like ours have tracked the number of acres conserved as an indication of accomplishment. While permanent land protection is and will remain our primary focus, conservation will only continue to thrive if people feel connected to the special protected places. As such, in 2019, Coastal Mountains Land Trust did more to invite people to visit our preserves, enjoy our trails, and take part in the arts, science and athletics on the land than ever before.

Between our annual New Year’s Beech Hill open house and a September field trip to study symbiotic relationships with the entire Camden-Rockport seventh

grade, Land Trust staff and volunteers hosted eight Arts on the Hill performances, ranging from funk to Shakespeare, ten Coastal Mountains Nature program walks and talks, ten school field trips, eight family events including the Kites & Ice Cream, over fifty Beech Nut Open Houses, and the first Coastal Mountains Trails Challenge. In total, before attempting to tally individuals and families who explored our preserves on their own, we estimate more than 5,000 visits to Land Trust properties this year. We are grateful to all of our partners and specifically the Onion Foundation for their support of our community programming.

Coastal Mountain Land Trust’s current strategic plan includes a future vision where well-cared-for conserved lands are valued as an essential part of the infrastructure of our community and are well-connected by trails to area downtowns, schools, and community centers. In 2020 and beyond, we look forward to continuing to invite people to get outside, relax and connect with nature and to expand the ways in which our preserves are an important part of the community. We hope to see you out there.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

When the Land Trust published its *Trail Guide*,

a booklet illustrated with maps and photos of the hiking trails on 26 of our preserves, its popularity confirmed what we already knew: people love to be outside in the woods and along the shores.

But what's on my mind these days – these glorious New England autumn days – are not guides manufactured of paper, useful though they are. I'm thinking of natural guides, those we see and hear and smell when we're outside on those trails. I'm thinking of:

The rush of the Ducktrap River underneath our rustic wooden bridge; the loons diving in the ocean off Harkness; the butterflies of Head of Tide; the trickle of the brook on Hodson, the friendly smiles of everybody on the Belfast Rail Trail, the blueberries of Beech Hill, the stately pines of Fernald's Neck, the asters of the Murray Preserve, the ravines of McLellan-Poor, the hawks soaring over Bald Mountain, the wild flowers of Long Cove Headwaters, and yes, even the swarms of mosquitoes on very humid days at the Newman Preserve.

These are the guides that lead us through the hours of the commute, the office, the shop. These are the beauties that escort our imaginations, that inspire us to be better people, and teach us how to love all creatures of the land.

Walk on, everyone.

Jim



Jim Krosschell (left) just completed his third term and ninth year as a board member, as well as seventh year as Board President with Coastal Mountains Land Trust. His leadership and calm demeanor will be greatly missed from the head of our table. We thank him for his countless hours of service and dedication to the mission of this organization. Judy Wallingford (right) took over as Board President at the September Board Meeting.

Pendleton Internship Vision Accomplished

With a small grant from Skip's former crew at Central Maine Power, the Pendleton Campaign was successfully finished! Nearly 200 individuals, the Belfast Coop, a coin trail at Captain Stevens Elementary School, and two movie nights at the Colonial Theatre ensured our success to create a permanent internship to steward Waldo County trails and conserved lands in memory of Skip and Jo Pendleton.



Olivia LaRoche (left), a 2nd year student at Wellesley College, from Searsmont, was our inaugural Pendleton Intern. During her seven weeks, she worked at our Waldo County properties doing regular trail maintenance, trail improvements, and invasive species management. She helped with the Coin Trail at Captain Stevens Elementary School, the RunBelfast race series, and the Coastal Mountains Trails Challenge. She also supported Waldo County Trails Coalition, Waldo County Soil and Water District, and Friends of Sears Island on their projects and programs. This internship will be an annual opportunity for a student interested in being outside in Waldo County. Thank you to all those who supported this important internship.

Making the Trail a Reality

Construction of First Three Miles Underway

This June, construction of the first 5.5 miles of the Round the Mountain Trail began on Ragged Mountain. Jed Talbot, principal of OBP Trailworks, has been machine building this 6–8 foot wide trail. They began by creating an ADA-accessible trail from the new parking lot on Hope Street to Thorndike Brook. The Round the Mountain Trail is actually about a mile beyond the bridge, but this is a connector trail for the new trail head with an enlarged parking area and will have the recognition garden and picnic area, honoring those who have supported the creation of this trail and the protection of Ragged Mountain. Of the \$5 million needed for the entire Round the Mountain Collaboration Campaign, the Land

Trust has raised over \$4.5 million – leaving just \$475,000 left to complete this historic campaign. All remaining funds raised will be put towards the construction of the Round the Mountain Trail and the stewardship fund intended to care for it in the years to come. Our goal is to have the first section of trail completed by late summer 2020. Please respect our trail builders by staying off the trail until then. If you are interested in arranging a time to see the project in process please feel free to give us a call. Please consider helping us finish this tremendous campaign with a gift by the end of 2019!



HUNTING ON LAND TRUST PROPERTY

is allowed on most preserves!

No hunting is allowed at Fernald's Neck, Hodson, Harkness, McPheters and Beauchamp Point Preserves.

Hunting Season Reminder: Deer hunting season (firearms) is from November 2nd through November 30th.

Be safe in the woods by wearing blaze orange and keep dogs on leash. Sunday is the safest time to hike the trails, as hunting is prohibited on this day. For more information about additional hunting seasons, visit maine.gov/ifw/hunting-trapping.

Respect for the Trails in All Seasons

Our trails are dynamic in mid-coast Maine, changing with the seasons and weather conditions. During most of the summer, the mineral soils that make a good, hard trail are fairly stable. Spring and fall, just after and before the ground freezes and when we get the most rain, are sensitive times. The added water and freeze-thaw cycles make some trails vulnerable to erosion. We know how frost affects our gardens, but what does it do to trails? Frost is a collection of ice crystals that form on the surface of the ground and cause the soil to move and shift. Even the most hardened trails lose surface density as frost pushes and prods the soils. Trails are easily damaged during this time with added foot or wheel traffic. As the frost thaws and releases the water, the dirt resettles into a muddy mix. This mud eventually re-hardens and makes for a great path once dry, but it's critical to let this process happen on its own without added disturbance.

If we hike or ride on trails during this process, trail damage could be permanent. The mineral soils will be churned up, and rain and gravity will wash these soils away, leaving a mess of exposed roots and rocks. If the trail is really soft, wheels leave sunken tracks which could channel into ruts and carry the soils away.



If we hike, our heels and boots will dig deep into the trails and help push the soils downhill. Either way, the trail loses.

Lots of work goes into maintaining a great trail network. As users, we need to respect that work and know when a trail is okay for use and when we should stay off. We are lucky enough to have active Land Trust volunteers who help maintain our trails and other dedicated groups host multiple trail stewardship days to maintain other trails in our service region. Just because you “can” ride or hike, doesn’t mean that you “should.” Sometimes, if you really love getting out on the trails, consider staying off them if it’s especially wet or frosty. Be patient and please respect our trails.

Mapping Our Future

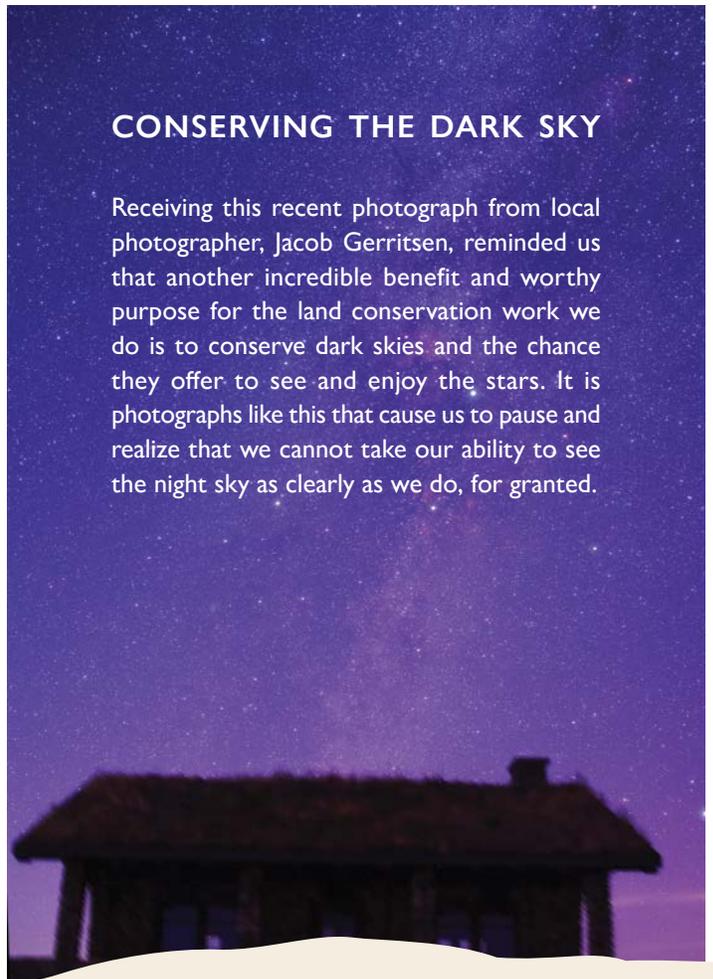
Developing a Conservation Plan

Since 2003, we have been working to protect Bald and Ragged Mountains, an identified focus area that will soon be at 89% protected. With that accomplishment, the Board decided it is time to reflect on our service area and begin thinking what might next qualify as focus areas for conservation. When time and resources are limited, a plan encourages staff to target their efforts as we did previously with the Ducktrap River focus area. Having a focus does not mean we don’t respond to opportunities elsewhere but that when given a chance to act within an identified focus area, the Board has pre-approved our response and we can react quicker.

To establish this new conservation plan, which we expect will direct us for another ten years, we will be conducting a community survey this fall. We will reach out to community leaders and residents of the 15 towns we serve, asking them to reflect on the important places in their town and what the Land Trust could do to further benefit their community. We are looking for members to help with this process, particularly those living in Waldo County. If you would like to be involved, by helping with the survey or just answering a few basic questions about your town, please email Jack Shaida, Land Protection Specialist, at jacks@coastalmountains.org.

CONSERVING THE DARK SKY

Receiving this recent photograph from local photographer, Jacob Gerritsen, reminded us that another incredible benefit and worthy purpose for the land conservation work we do is to conserve dark skies and the chance they offer to see and enjoy the stars. It is photographs like this that cause us to pause and realize that we cannot take our ability to see the night sky as clearly as we do, for granted.



Join Us in the Summit Circle

Supporting Conservation Through Planned Giving



Tom and Angela, avid hikers and travelers, shown here together at Machu Picchu in 2017.

“I have always sought the peace of the outdoors and enjoyed hiking and bicycling wherever I lived or traveled,” explained Angela Maniak. “That desire for time in nature is what led me to Maine from Chicago and Gary, Indiana. A work assignment in Boston gave me an introduction to Maine and I was determined to get back. In 2000, I followed my dream of buying a home in Maine and quickly discovered local hiking trails and the phenomenal work my local land trust was doing to protect and allow access to the many rich and varied natural resources. Having made a will when I was in my 30s, because I am a world traveler and like to plan ahead, I had previously named national conservancy organizations as my primary beneficiaries,” said Angela when answering the question, why did you put Coastal Mountains Land Trust in your estate plans?

In 2001, on a hiking excursion to Gulf Hags in Northern Maine, Angela met Tom, a Maine native who grew up on a dead-end road in the Northwoods that provided a childhood of roaming and hunting every day. It was with Tom, once they married and began exploring the state in all weather and seasons, that they began narrowing their focus on which organization to fully support.

“We appreciated Coastal Mountains Land Trust first through its local trail system and, as members, enjoying some of their outdoor activities. After meeting the staff and Board and learning more about its priorities, leadership, and financial management,



Doe with two fawns captured by game camera.

we felt this Land Trust would be a reliable steward of whatever resources we could contribute,” said Angela. The estate they will be gifting to us includes land bordering an active wildlife corridor. Since making their decision, they are encouraged that their neighbors are also considering conservation which may further protect the wetlands and wildlife habitat in their ‘backyard’ where they have set up a game camera, capturing evidence of the many species who also enjoy their land, including moose, deer,

bobcat, fisher cat, and fox.

Both Angela and Tom are proud members of the Summit Circle – a group of members who have decided to support the organization through their will. They challenge others to plan ahead as they have done. They hike over 100 miles on trails in Maine every year and both have family members who are in their 90s, so the Land Trust (thankfully!) won’t be beneficiaries anytime soon. We deeply appreciate their consideration of us, and more importantly, the land. Within their gift is flexibility for conservation, stewardship or acquisition of land, since none of us can know the priority of the future. They also indicated that we set aside a matching gift pool so that others are encouraged to contribute for a special project or priority at the time. For now, they are grateful they can rest easy knowing that others, as well as wildlife, will be able to enjoy the trails and lands that they so dearly love now, and in the future.



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Hope Street Trailhead for Round the Mountain Trail

Coastal Mountains Land Trust's 2019 Maine Wild Blueberry Queen



Shannon Christy Hopkins

Shannon Christy Hopkins is this year's 2019 Maine Wild Blueberry Queen as well as 2019 Miss Congeniality.

Shannon will spend the year representing Beech Hill Blueberries of Coastal Mountains Land Trust, The Union Fair, and The Maine Wild Blueberry industry. Shannon was raised by grandparents Alice and Allan Hopkins of Camden. A 2015 graduate of Camden Hills Regional High School and a 2018 graduate from Southern Maine Community College, her school activities included band, cooking at the Midcoast School of Technology, assisting with special education, basketball, and lacrosse. Her college activities included business club and the hospitality committee. She attends the University of Maine at Augusta where she is studying Dental Hygiene and works at Quarry Hill Retirement Community leading activities with the Alzheimers/dementia unit. Her interests include hiking, swimming, berry picking, and spending time with family and friends.

TRACY SHEPPARD

EVENTS CALENDAR

NOV 14	7:00pm	Coastal Mountains Nature Program at the Camden Public Library: "Interactions Among Plants and Insects – the Complex Webs They Weave;" by Roger Rittmaster
DEC 12	7:00pm	Coastal Mountains Nature Program at the Camden Public Library
JAN 1	11:00–1:00	New Year's Day – Beech Nut Open House
JAN 9	7:00pm	Coastal Mountains Nature Program at the Camden Public Library

Serving the communities of
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Northport, Belfast, Belmont, Morrill, Waldo,
Swanville, Brooks, Knox, Searsport,
Stockton Springs, and Prospect

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