

Revitalization Efforts!

Springing ahead at Tidal Falls Preserve by Eileen Hall

We are nearing the end of March and still over a foot of snow blankets the ground at the Tidal Falls Preserve. Spring feels like a long way off, but as always, she comes in like a lion at Frenchman Bay Conservancy!

Staff are busy planning and preparing for many exciting and engaging activities for the upcoming season. We are especially excited to begin the transformation of the new Education Center at FBC's new headquarters (we've moved just up the hill from the old office).

The Center will greet visitors to the Tidal Falls Preserve and serve as a means to introduce visitors to the Conservancy. Interactive displays will illustrate the many preserves and trails—free and open to the public—FBC offers in the region. The displays and exhibits at the Center will be geared towards kids and adults alike; our goal is to make learning about FBC's work as fun and inviting as possible!

We are working with Perch Design Studio to carefully craft our displays



ILLUSTRATION SAM COPLON

A projection of Tidal Falls Preserve once we complete our capital campaign.

for Tidal Falls visitors, and to design the content and physical layout for the space. We are taking a two-year phased approach to accommodate our budget and to provide us with the time to explore the best ways to utilize the space. Phase 1 will be completed by the end of June 2018 and FBC will hold an open house on June 30—all are invited to attend! Stay tuned for further details.

In the meantime, a gallery of Gerry Monteux's beautiful photographs are featured in the Education

Center and are available for sale. If you're in the area, stop by grab a sneak peek of the space! A portion of proceeds from photo sales will go towards supporting the development of the Education Center. ❖

To learn more about the revitalization plans for the Tidal Falls Preserve or to support the campaign, contact Aaron Dority at aaron@frenchmanbay.org or call (207) 422-2328. You can learn more about Gerry's photography at monteuxgallery.com.



The Revitalize! Tidal Falls campaign continues. We have raised \$1.64 million of our \$2.25 million goal—almost 75% complete!

Once we reach our goal, we can kick-off the much anticipated site work at Tidal Falls Preserve with the demolition of the old buildings along the shoreline. Then the crumbling seawall will be removed and the shoreline restored, opening up the view tremendously! A new pavilion will be constructed, providing a wide view of the falls from inside the pavilion or on top of the pavilion's roof deck. The new parking lot will be farther from the shore than the current one, opening up more open space to be enjoyed by the thousands of visitors to Tidal Falls Preserve. Additional amenities will include a hand-carry boat ramp, potable water, and seasonal restrooms.

A bird's eye view of Tidal Falls Preserve, featuring a new pavilion and a completely restored shoreline. ILLUSTRATION SAM COPLON

President's Column

A challenge as a land trust matures is learning to keep a diffuse focus, learning to juggle many activities. There is not one land protection project or one new trail on which to focus, but many projects and many trails.

The articles in this newsletter highlight some of the many areas in which Frenchman Bay Conservancy is directing its energies. For our land conservation work, the projects are spread geographically from protecting lands in the Schoodic-to-Schoodic area in the east to the work in Ellsworth on the Jordan Homestead and the Green Plan. The projects also vary in size and audiences. In the Schoodic area we seek to protect large tracts for wildlife preservation, while in Ellsworth we seek to connect smaller green spaces for people to enjoy in a more urban area.

Along with preserving more lands we are focusing energies on ways to make the preserves we have more accessible and enjoyable for people to use. That involves making more trails and it involves creating more activities

for enjoying those trails including the trail races we hold in the fall, bird walks, guided hikes and other ideas for introducing people to the beauties of these special places.

Much of this work has been made possible by the funds we have collected from you our supporters through our capital campaign to Revitalize Tidal Falls. Thank you! A portion of those campaign funds was directed to supporting the growth of the land trust. The other part of those funds will be used to update the preserve at Tidal Falls. That work will begin when we conclude the campaign. We are very close to our goal and, with your support, we hope to reach it this summer.

In the meantime come and enjoy the music at our popular Monday Music concert series at Tidal Falls! And check out the list in this newsletter of other events to enjoy over the season.

— Lisa Heyward
President, FBC

Conserving Land for the Benefit of All by Aaron Dority

Excerpt from an article featured in the *Ellsworth American* on March 9, 2018.

Land conservation in Maine has benefited from bipartisan support for decades. As a local land conservation organization serving the public from the Union River east to the Hancock County line, Frenchman Bay Conservancy welcomes the opportunity to share the benefits that our organization provides to our communities, with the generous support from roughly 900 members. Now in our 31st year of operation, FBC has conserved 7,400 acres, and we maintain over 25 miles of trail where access is free and open to the public year-round.

Cooperating with local communities is a key part of our work at Frenchman

Bay Conservancy. In collaboration with many local partners, FBC is currently helping develop a community-driven initiative: the Ellsworth Green Plan. By engaging with groups like the Garden Club of Ellsworth, representatives from the city government, Healthy Acadia and numerous other partners, we will help Ellsworth become a healthier place to live, a safer place to walk and bike and a more beautiful, enjoyable, and sustainable community.

Back in 2010, we partnered with the city of Ellsworth to conserve nearly 450 acres around the city's drinking water supply, Branch Lake. This city-owned land is under easement to Frenchman Bay Conservancy, and it provides an excellent opportunity for hunting and outdoor recreation, just a short drive from downtown Ellsworth.

The town of Lamoine recently partnered with our organization to conserve a locally important water access point. Marlboro Beach, with extraordinarily productive mud

flats especially valuable to wormers and clammers, was purchased by the town in large part with funds raised by FBC. Now the property is publicly owned with a conservation easement held by FBC, ensuring the beach and its tidal mud flats will be open to the public forever.

In addition to providing public access to land and water, land trust conserved properties serve as community gathering places. At our Salt Pond Preserve in Hancock, schoolchildren learn about tides and trees firsthand. This past October, at the Jordan Homestead property in Ellsworth (FBC is raising funds to transform this property into a preserve), visitors learned about Ellsworth's shipbuilding history and the region's rich farming heritage. On Mondays during the summer, our flagship Tidal Falls Preserve in Hancock becomes a venue for local musicians to showcase their talents to hundreds of visitors, free of charge, and in front of the majestic reversing falls.

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Stay in touch with the latest FBC news, or post photos of your friends and family enjoying a preserve or event.

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A Community Looking Ahead

What Does Ellsworth See in Its Future? by Eileen Hall

After a year of pulling community members together to hear about and think through how to make Ellsworth a safer, healthier, more thriving place to live, the Ellsworth Green Plan steering committee is entering the spring season with renewed fortitude under the facilitation of Carole Martin. The committee hired Carole, with funds awarded by the Quimby Family Foundation, the Elmina Sewall Foundation, and Maine Community Foundation, to assist the steering committee with getting organized to produce an ambitious, yet implementable Green Plan by the spring of 2019.

Throughout this planning phase, the steering committee has remained active in completing “small steps” as well as hosting community events and forums. For example, during spring 2017, Ellsworth City Council approved a change to their lawn management protocol and are now using organic lawn care methods. Last November the committee showed the film, *Community Conservation: Finding the Balance between Nature and Culture* with a panel discussion following highlighting the ways in which Maine land trusts are working to meet needs in their local communities. On March 19, the committee held the panel and public



Whittaker Brook on the Jordan Homestead Property.

Subcommittees of the Green Plan will reach out to various sectors of the Ellsworth community to gather feedback on elements of community.

forum, Powering Change: Saving Our Environment—and Saving Money, to explore ways in which residents, businesses and government in Ellsworth and surrounding towns can move to more efficient, alternative and sustainable energy consumption.

Throughout the spring and summer of 2018, subcommittees of the Green Plan will be reaching out to various sectors of the Ellsworth

community to further assess the City’s needs and gather feedback on elements of community life, like walking paths, parks, access to the Union River waterfront, energy use, and recycling options.

Furthermore, Frenchman Bay Conservancy is continuing to make progress towards raising funds to cover the purchase of the Jordan Homestead property on the Bayside Road in Ellsworth. This unique and historical property would provide public access to the Union River, a hiking trail, a potential connection with Birdsacre trails (which would mean over 4 miles of trails extending from High Street to the Union River), and a future opportunity for community gardens. ❖

For more information on the events listed above and additional events planned for this year, visit the Ellsworth Green Plan Facebook page, or contact Aaron at aaron@frenchmanbay.org or (207) 422-2328.

We encourage you to attend! Many events and activities are planned for the coming months to provide opportunities for community members to learn more and share thoughts, ideas, and concerns. A couple events on the horizon are detailed below, with many more taking place over the coming months.

May 5, 2018 Card Brook Clean Up and Union Festival

Join us to help clean up the banks of Card Brook, a beautiful stream running through the heart of Ellsworth, in the morning, followed by fun activities and food at Harbor Park in the afternoon.

May 19, 2018 Walk and Roll and Ellsworth Garden Club’s Tulip Festival

Join us for a bicycle rodeo, story walk at Knowlton Park, discussion of safe biking and walking routes around town, and the annual Tulip Festival and Plant Sale.

We'll never give up hope that nature can even in a built environment.



The view south from Schoodic Mountain

Schoodic-to-Schoodic Update by Aaron Dority

Trails transcend generations and bring folks together from all walks of life.

For three years, Frenchman Bay Conservancy and Maine Coast Heritage Trust (MCHT) have been working together to protect the wild landscape that stretches from Schoodic Point north across Route 1, through the state-owned land surrounding Tunk Lake and Donnell Pond, and into Maine's vast north woods. This unbroken swath of forests and wetlands, interspersed with a few homes, woodlots, and blueberry fields remains largely intact as a natural landscape. That's why we still can see signs of moose in woodlands south of Lower West Bay Pond, and bear tracks in the springtime mud around Forbes Pond.

This landscape supported people over thousands of years, first native tribes then white settlers. The land has clearly changed, following repeated timber harvest, centuries of small scale farming, and quarrying sand and gravel. But, it hasn't change irreparably. The forests there today may not have exactly the same species composition that existed in colonial times, and certainly not the same age distribution. But, there are still forests there. This cannot be said for so many of the landscapes across the nation and around the world that have changed irreparably. We'll never give up hope that nature can be restored in a myriad of creative ways, even in a built environment.

But we acknowledge that the end result is simply not the same as conserving the undisturbed natural environment on a landscape scale. That's why protecting this wild place today is so important.

Many years ago, Gerry Golden and her husband Geoff Manifold purchased a small hunting cabin on West Bay Pond. They lived there because it allowed them to be in the woods—away from the noise, stress, and busyness of modern life. Geoff was a skilled carpenter and Gerry was a school teacher and gardener. Over the ensuing decades, they renovated and expanded their small cabin, and bought more of the surrounding land, preventing further development.

be restored in a myriad of creative ways,



PHOTO JEFF DIBELLA

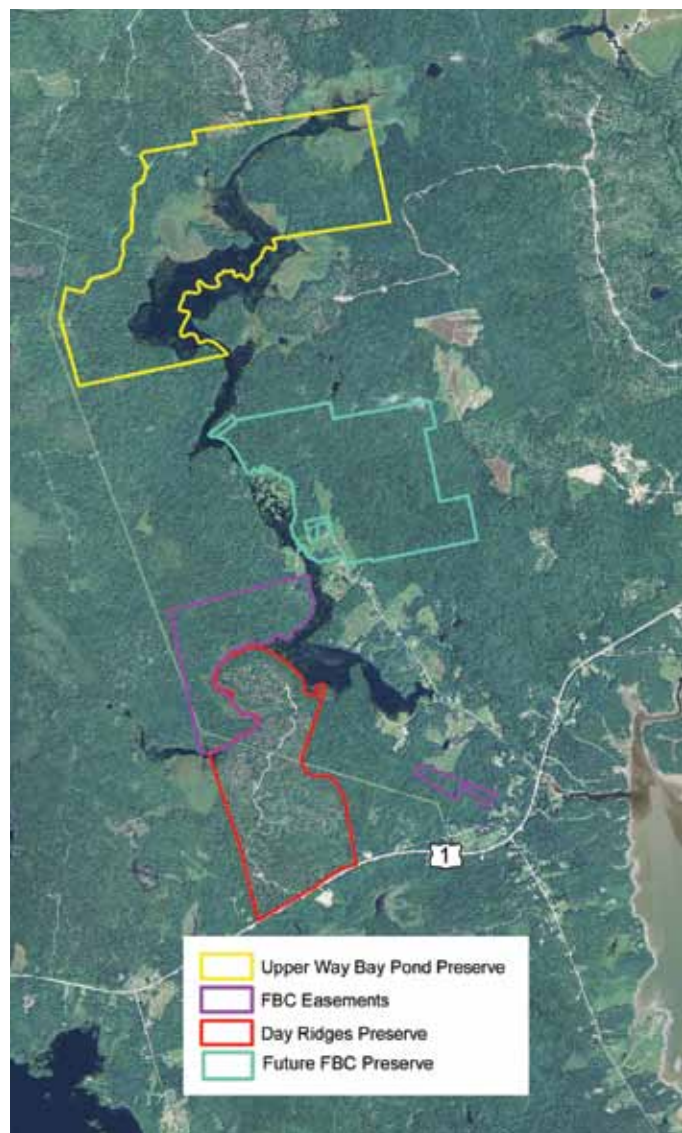
With no children to pass their land on to, they named The Nature Conservancy in their will. Years later, they heard about Frenchman Bay Conservancy, their local land trust, and they asked to meet with us and discuss conservation options.

I and Bob DeForrest, our staff partner at MCHT, first met with Gerry and Geoff in the summer of 2015. They kindly gave us tours of their property, sharing their stories of discovery, spotting wildlife, and guiding us along the paths that they made through the forest. It was clear then that their land meant so much to them. That is why they wanted to ensure that it remain wild long after they passed on.

In January of this year, we purchased the Golden property with funding from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to protect waterfowl and wading birds. The land includes a half mile of frontage on the West Bay Ponds, and 45 acres of wetlands that provide critical habitat for rare or declining bird species, including American Bittern, Black Duck, and numerous warbler species. This brings our conserved land total surrounding the West Bay ponds to approximately 1,200 acres, between Day Ridges Preserve on Route 1 and our Upper West Bay Pond Preserve farther to the north—a stone's throw from the Downeast Sunrise Trail. With our purchase of 144 acres from Gerry Golden, Geoff and Gerry will continue to enjoy the land, and so will current and future generations of visitors eager to explore this new place.

Under the current round of grant funding, which will end this year, FBC and MCHT will conserve roughly 2,200 acres of land between Bean Island and Gouldsboro Bay, from Prospect Harbor to the Sunrise Trail. We're planning to open our Day Ridges Preserve later this year—stay tuned for more information. The land that we purchased from Gerry Golden will only be accessible once we establish new trails, and we'll keep you up to date on that progress.

For more information on MCHT's land protection nearby, including their incredible conservation of land surrounding most of Forbes Pond, contact Bob DeForrest, visit their website, or join either organization on our next local hike, and we'll gladly fill you in. ❖



An overview of FBC's conserved lands near West Bay Pond, part of the Schoodic-to-Schoodic corridor. Map by Eileen Hall.

Summer Lecture Series

School will be out, but learning shouldn't be!

by Austin Schuver

Don't let your curiosity die this summer! The warmth of the summer sun may trick us into dreaming of cold drinks by the ocean, but even so, we don't have to stop enriching our minds. Luckily, Friends of Taunton Bay and Frenchman Bay Conservancy will feature a docket full of engaging speakers for this year's Friday Night Lecture Series.

At Gordon's Wharf in Sullivan, every Friday from July 6 to August 17 (excluding July 20, Lobster Dinner), we will host another top-notch researcher, author, or professor. These speakers have devoted their careers to understanding the history, wildlife, and public policy of Tuanton Bay, the state of Maine, and beyond.



PHOTO SANDY OLSON

A great blue heron shows off the lightweight GPS tracking device that biologist Danielle D'Auria used to study the bird's migrations.

The series kicks off with a special focus on Tuanton Bay. John and Marlene Daley (July 6), local educators, scuba instructors, and authors of *History of Taunton Bay*, will share their knowledge of the area, answering questions you never knew you had: How and why did this part of Downeast Maine become what it is today?

Some of our speakers—or their subjects—have traveled far afield. We'll be lucky to hear the sometime surprising results of MDIFW biologist

Danielle D'Auria's (July 13) project to equip brave blue herons with tracking devices that allowed her to map their long-distance flights as far as Central America.

With studies even more distant, College of the Atlantic professor Ken Cline (July 27) will present on groundbreaking models of river conservation from his recent travels to New Zealand—and how those conservation challenges compare to or could be applied to Maine.

Much closer to home, local nature photographer Gerry Montoux (August 3) will explore Maine's wildlife and landscapes, showing photos while asking "what and where does a photographer choose to focus on in one of the most beautiful states in the country?"

With a more regional focus, a vice president of The Conservation Fund, Tom Duffus (August 10), will share over 30 years of stories from protecting lands and waters throughout the Northeast, with a special focus on Maine and The Conservation Fund's unique approach of using collaboration to conserve land.

In the final lecture of the series, researcher Glen Mittelhauser (August 17) will detail the ambitious plans of the Maine Bird Atlas, a project of vital importance that relies on citizen scientists to help document all the breeding and wintering bird species in Maine.

You will not want to miss any of the incredible stories and insights our speakers will present! ❖

All lectures are free and begin at 7pm at Gordon's Wharf in Sullivan.

For more information, contact Austin Schuver at (207) 422-2328 or austin@frenchmanbay.org.

Conserving *continued from page 2*

Because of Maine's network of 80 land trusts, other regions of the state benefit from the community-oriented approach of land trusts as well. To provide a broader and more accurate picture for policymakers and the public, in 2017 the Maine Land Trust Network surveyed the state's land trust organizations. The survey found that the public enjoys a diverse network of outdoor recreational areas that rival those offered at state and federal parks, and, with few exceptions, use of these lands is free to all.

These land trust-protected properties are especially critical in Maine, a state that continues to lag well behind others when it comes to public lands available for outdoor recreation. In fact, Maine has the lowest percentage of public lands (6.5 percent of the state) of any state east of the Appalachian Mountains. By comparison, more than 17 percent of New Hampshire is publicly owned. And, in Florida, one in every four acres is conservation land owned by the public. ❖

To learn more, please visit us at www.frenchmanbay.org. For more information on land trusts and a report of the 2017 survey, visit www.mltn.org.

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New Staff at FBC

by Aaron Dority

Protecting valuable wildlife habitat, securing publicly accessible trails across incredible landscapes, and working with communities to conserve clean water all take a lot of staff time and dedication. I am excited to announce two new staff changes at FBC, focused on ensuring that we accomplish this vital work here in eastern Maine. With the support from all of you—our individual and business supporters—and from foundation grants, I have hired Austin Schuver as our new Community Engagement Coordinator and Thomasina DiBiase as our new Office Manager and Development Assistant.

Austin first interned with FBC last spring as a college student. His

and then traveling through the inter-mountain West, learning about management of our vast array of public lands. Following his graduation from COA last year, Austin began working for FBC in early February.

Thomasina returned to Maine in 2016 after having spent many years here as a child. She spent over 10 years helping to build a salon and spa business outside Boston. Upon returning to Maine, she worked for BBS Lobster Trap in Steuben managing the back office responsibilities of this full-service lobster buyer.

Thomasina began working for FBC in early March, and she'll be managing our database and book-keeping, tracking grants, and



PHOTO AUSTIN SCHUVER

FBC's staff, Aaron Dority, Thomasini DiBiase, Eileen Hall, and Austin Schuver at Tidal Falls.

professor at College of the Atlantic, and former FBC board member Ken Cline gave him a glowing recommendation that was too good to pass up. Last year, Austin monitored many of our conserved properties, supported the board and staff as we developed our new strategic plan, and researched special topics like the Bar Harbor cruise ship terminal proposal that has since been defeated. Last summer, he took classes that had him stationed on Great Duck Island in Frenchman Bay researching birds,

supporting just about everything that we do from easement property monitoring to land acquisition.

Eileen Hall, who has worked for FBC for three years, first as our Community Engagement Manager, and more recently as our Land Protection Manager will be leaving FBC for a position with The Nature Conservancy in Maine. While we are sad to see her go, we're grateful for all of the substantial work that she did with FBC. And, we're excited for her as she takes on the critically important work of improving fish

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Frenchman Bay Conservancy's mission is to conserve distinctive ecosystems, lands, and waters for the benefit of all, from the Union River and Frenchman Bay watersheds east to the Hancock County line.

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New Staff *continued from page 7*

passage around Maine, focusing on priority habitat for endangered Atlantic Salmon. While at FBC, Eileen expanded our outreach and trail events to engage our membership. Most recently, she joined me in protecting land through purchase, donation, and conservation easements with willing landowners.

In their new roles, Austin and Thomasina will add new energy and enthusiasm to our work. Soon, we'll hire a new Land Protection Manager to build on our successes in land acquisition and stewardship. I welcome all of you to stop by and visit us sometime in our new office at Tidal Falls Preserve. We hope to see you also at one of our events this year. ❖



Join us TODAY!

Your membership and donations help us protect and conserve the character at this very special region. We welcome donations of all levels. Members receive our bi-annual newsletter and opportunities to volunteer.

BLUE HERON SOCIETY

Please consider joining the Blue Heron Society with a gift of \$1000 or more each year for general operating support. You can also support the Conservancy through a bequest. Remember us in your will or explore other estate planning options with your lawyer. Contact Aaron Dority for more information.