

A Great Egret with a long, sharp yellow beak and a yellow eye stands on a dark, textured rock. The bird's feathers are a mix of grey, white, and brown. The background is a blurred forest with green and brown tones.

A WATERSHED MOMENT FOR FRENCHMAN BAY

# *From the Forest to the Sea*

Photo by Gerry Monteux



# Downeast Maine





# e is Under Threat

Today, we are fortunate to be able to walk a forested trail to a bald summit overlooking Frenchman Bay, or wander wild rocky shores and vast tidal flats. We can see glittering waters, hike through emerald forests, and spend time in coastal communities that celebrate place-based, local businesses and traditional livelihoods. But times are changing.

Our vast forests – vital to absorbing greenhouse gases and sustaining clean water supplies – are in danger of being over-harvested and lost to sprawling development.

Climate change is disrupting natural and human communities, catalyzing rising seas, warmer waters, and fiercer, more frequent storms that cause flash floods, topple trees, and erode coastlines.

Growing development in our small coastal communities is eliminating critical public access to the shore, endangering the livelihoods of local harvesters, while forcing wildlife to contend with busier, more dangerous roads.

A Norwegian company's plan to build one of the largest fish farms in and around Frenchman Bay has sent a stern warning: our region is now attracting industrial-scale development and the often – damaging pollution and infrastructure it brings.

Collectively, these changes threaten to fundamentally alter our region's character. But that outcome isn't inevitable.

There are still valuable stretches of undeveloped land and unspoiled shoreline that we can protect – landscapes that will return the favor by removing planet-warming carbon from the air, maintaining clean water, safeguarding our fisheries, and defending us against the impacts of floods and storms.

By keeping a vigilant watch on development plans, we can work with our local communities to stand up against projects that threaten to pollute our ecosystems and compromise traditional livelihoods.

And by partnering with local schools, we can foster a connection to Maine's natural treasures – and emphasize the importance of protecting them.

***The time to act, however, is narrowing.***

***This is our watershed moment.***

Join us in enabling specific, meaningful actions that will allow future generations to experience the same vast, unbroken forests, clean water, clean air, and access to the open space that we all enjoy – and rely on – today.

# Our Plan

## Protect Land, Sea, and Livelihoods

*Frenchman Bay Conservancy is launching a \$10 million, 3-year comprehensive campaign to seize urgent opportunities to protect land and water in the Union River and Frenchman Bay watersheds east to the Hancock County line.*

*Local harvester, Joe Porada, digging for clams.*





# We have three goals:



Permanently protect 10,000 new acres of land in critical areas and prevent damaging development of Frenchman Bay.



Enhance long-term stewardship of our preserves and trails to improve safety, access, and enjoyment.



Expand outdoor education in our schools and outdoor opportunities for all.

*To achieve these goals, we intend to direct campaign funds to immediate, urgent needs – especially protecting threatened lands and shores – as well as longer-term objectives.*





*Trail stewardship is a balancing act of conservation, accessibility, funding, and safety. Our volunteer trail crew puts in hundreds of hours of dedicated, hard work each year to keep our preserves open to the public.*



# Campaign Budget

**Our campaign budget is designed to build our capacity to meet the urgent need for land conservation in Downeast Maine.**

Our long-term goals include building and retaining the skilled staff needed to execute complex land protection, stewardship, and community engagement programs. We will strengthen our future financial stability by growing endowments dedicated to land stewardship and operations. Frenchman Bay Conservancy will spend campaign revenue in accordance with the Comprehensive Campaign 3 Year budget as shown below.

## *Comprehensive Campaign 3 Year Budget*

### **Land Protection**

**68%**

### **Stewardship**

**14%**

### **Education & Outreach**

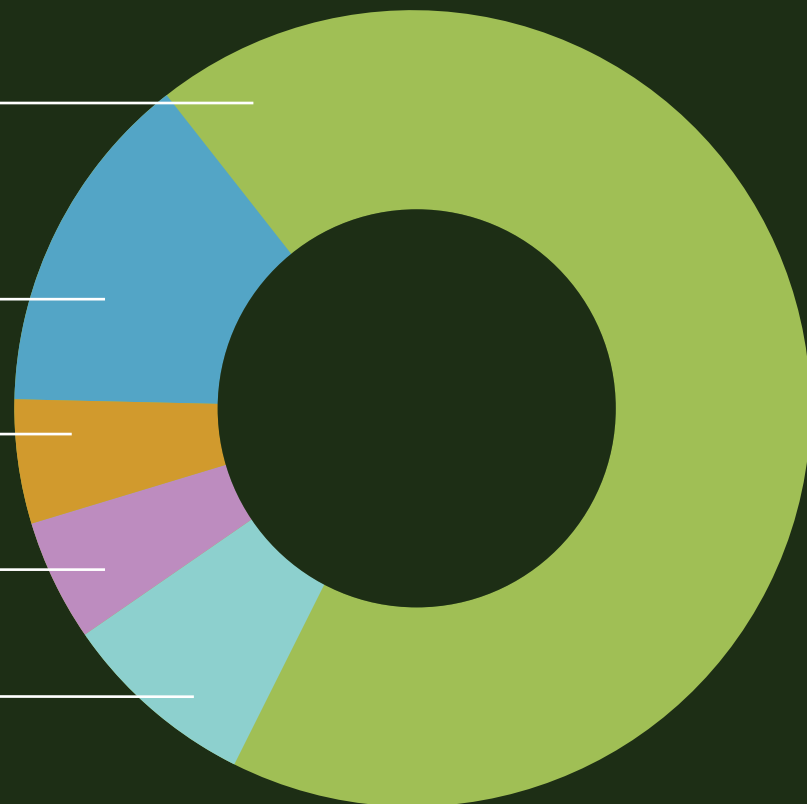
**5%**

### **Endowment**

**5%**

### **Supporting Services**

**8%**



Frenchman Bay Conservancy reserves the right to allocate surplus funds where most needed in accordance with our mission.

*Let's dive in deeper to our three goals ►*

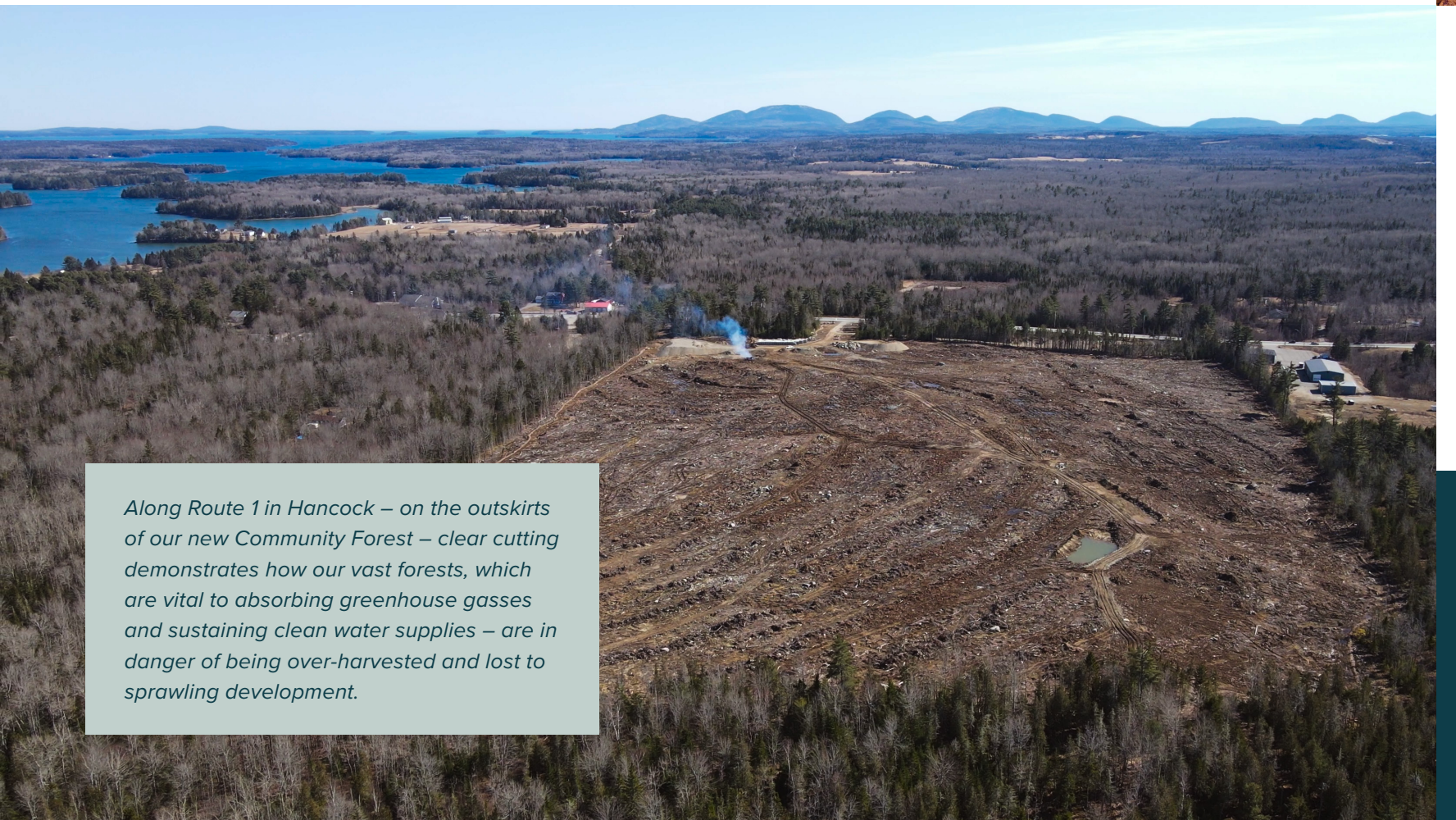


# Permanently protect 10,000 new acres of land and prevent damaging development of Frenchman Bay.

Defending Frenchman Bay requires protecting both its surrounding land and its marine environment. Like salmon and alewives that need both salt and fresh water to survive, the sea and the shore can only truly thrive together. We will work with municipalities, Tribes, and others to achieve comprehensive protection. Our work will not end at the low tide line.


On land, we will double our portfolio of protected land by adding 10,000 new acres – an area four times greater than the Schoodic District of Acadia National Park.

The time is ripe, because large tracts of undeveloped land still exist in our region that can aid us in our fight against climate change, provide wildlife with safe corridors, and protect local livelihoods. But these interrupted parcels are increasingly under threat.



*Along Route 1 in Hancock – on the outskirts of our new Community Forest – clear cutting demonstrates how our vast forests, which are vital to absorbing greenhouse gasses and sustaining clean water supplies – are in danger of being over-harvested and lost to sprawling development.*





*“FBC needs your help to compete in an increasingly fast-paced real estate market, and to boost our ability to secure protection of ecologically important large tracts of land.”*

– KAT DEELY, FBC DIRECTOR OF CONSERVATION

Recently, for example, a developer purchased and cleared an expansive swathe of forest within a mile of the Frenchman Bay Community Forest in Hancock – the perfect illustration of sprawl development. Rather than building new homes in an area with established residential development, this new clear-cut parcel will have residences that are car-dependent and isolated from community resources. By removing all habitat from the land, the development now isolates wildlife populations across the surrounding landscape, threatening their ability to adapt to the changing climate.

FBC is supportive of affordable, year-round housing – but this must be balanced with land conservation to avoid the recurring theme of community growth leading to environmental degradation.

FBC needs your help to compete in an increasingly fast-paced real estate market, and to boost our ability to secure critical large tracts of land that, currently, can be beyond our financial reach.

The housing market has created situations where FBC is often outbid, and we’ve lost out on opportunities to protect wildlife habitat and vulnerable ecosystems. This recently happened in Sullivan, where we lost the opportunity to protect a 100-acre tract near the Schoodic Bog Preserve, a key natural area, due to a competing offer. Now, instead of being a permanent conservation link in our efforts to establish a wildlife corridor in the Schoodic region, the property has an undetermined future. As our region continues to grow in popularity, it is urgent that we have the capacity to seize opportunities to protect critical landscapes as they arise.

**Our land protection effort will focus on areas that are essential to maintaining the ecological, social, and economic health of our region from the Union River and Frenchman Bay watersheds east to the Hancock County line.**





*Future Jordan River Preserve, Trenton, ME*



## We have already identified a number of target parcels. Our priorities include:

- **Protecting undeveloped shorelines.** Rocky coasts, sandy beaches, and marshes provide critical habitat for wildlife and fisheries and help protect us against rising seas and destructive storms. But unspoiled shores are becoming a rarity.
- **Preserving access to the marine shore for local harvesters who depend on it for their livelihoods.** Our shorelines are being privatized, making it difficult for clambers and wormers to safely reach their traditional harvesting grounds. We will expand existing efforts, such as in the town of Gouldsboro, to secure safe access easements so that harvesters can continue to support their families, our economy, and a way of life.
- **Conserving large, undeveloped landscapes along the Upper Union River and its major tributaries, and connecting public green spaces along the Lower Union River.** Time is growing short to protect the extensive, unfragmented forests of the Upper Union River watershed, which deliver numerous critical benefits: they help store carbon, filter and clean our water, mitigate flooding, prevent erosion, and shelter wildlife. Along the rapidly-developing Lower Union River, we have a once-in-a-generation opportunity to create unbroken greenways, which will expand opportunities for people, of all abilities, to get outdoors.
- **Increasing connected lands within the Schoodic wildlife corridor so that wildlife can move and migrate freely.** This critical pathway provides wide-ranging species – including moose, lynx, bobcat, and songbirds – with safe passage. It also provides a critical buffer for the Schoodic district of Acadia National Park. But the corridor needs additional parcels to reach its full potential.



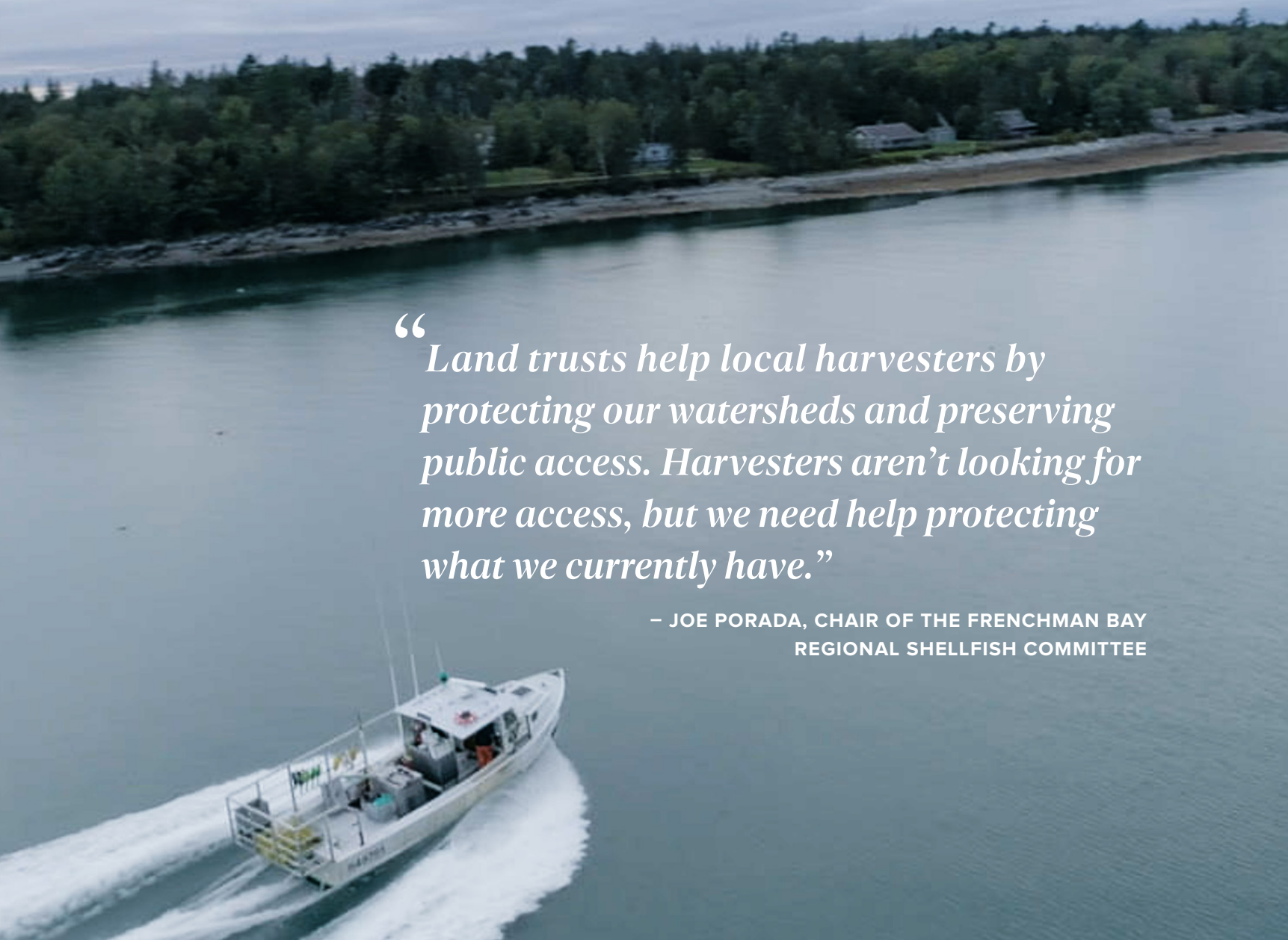
**In Frenchman Bay and surrounding waters,** we will work to prevent damaging projects by keeping a watchful eye on development plans and providing an early warning of problematic projects to our many local and regional partners. When necessary, we will rally our partners to respond with a single, powerful voice.

Over the past 35 years, Frenchman Bay Conservancy has built strong alliances with our members, local businesses, towns, community groups, and the countless visitors to our preserves. As a result, we are well-positioned to sound the alarm about damaging projects by providing trusted information to others – and also to help lead an effective, unified response. When American Aquafarms, a Norwegian firm,

proposed an industrial-scale fish farm in Frenchman Bay, we organized a diverse alliance of 20 environmental and small business organizations through an opposition letter to Governor Janet Mills and other elected officials.

That ill-conceived project is now on hold, but constant vigilance is required: American Aquafarms and others are still eyeing our marine waters for industrial development.

***Your support will ensure that, even as we work to preserve the land that defines Frenchman Bay, we will also keep a close watch on the sea.***



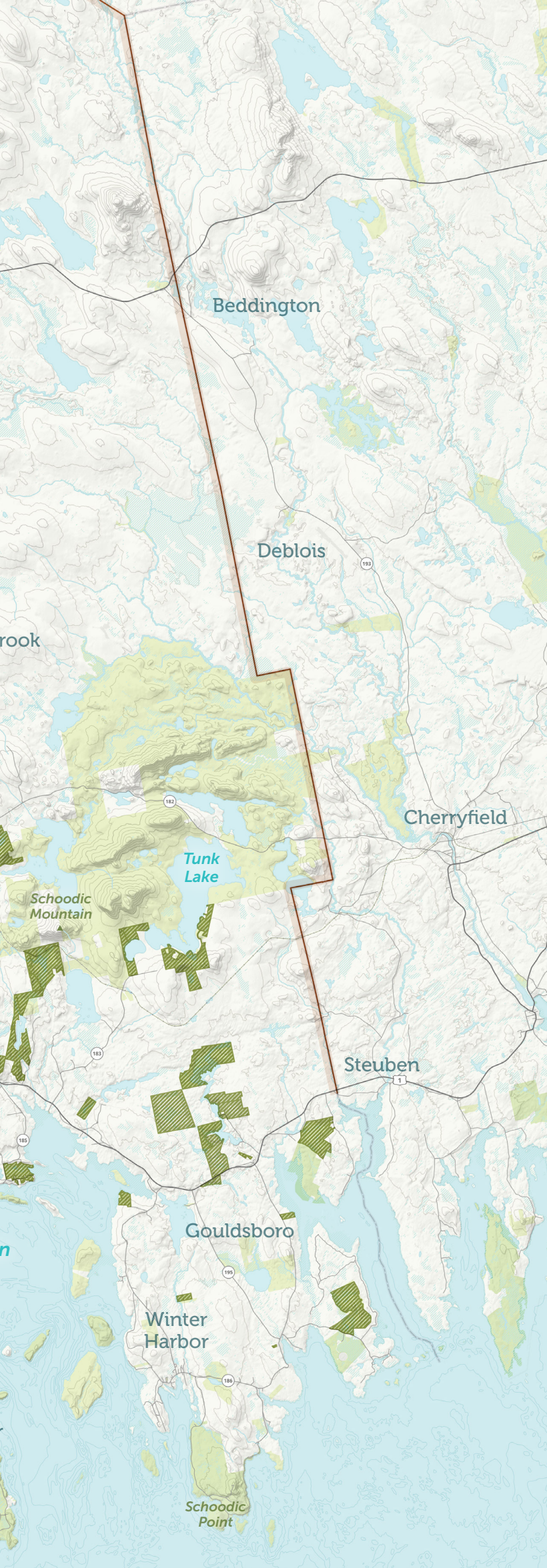
***“Land trusts help local harvesters by protecting our watersheds and preserving public access. Harvesters aren’t looking for more access, but we need help protecting what we currently have.”***

**– JOE PORADA, CHAIR OF THE FRENCHMAN BAY  
REGIONAL SHELLFISH COMMITTEE**









## FBC Conserved Lands

Since 1987, FBC has conserved over 10,000 acres of land. Our land protection efforts focus on areas that are essential to maintaining the ecological, social, and economic health of our region, from the Union River and Frenchman Bay watersheds east to the Hancock County line.

With your support, we plan to permanently protect 10,000 new acres of land within the following focus areas: Upper Union River Watershed, Lower Union River Watershed, Frenchman Bay Watershed, and the Schoodic to Schoodic Corridor. This rapid pace is in response to the growing threat of climate change and development in our region, and focuses on areas that protect vulnerable habitat, enhance landscape connectivity, and preserve public access for our local communities.



FBC CONSERVED LANDS & CONSERVATION EASEMENTS



FBC FOCUS AREA



OTHER CONSERVED LANDS



# Enhance stewardship of our preserves to maximize benefits to nature and people.

Our duty as a nationally-accredited land trust is not just to protect land, but also to care for and steward it forever so that it remains an asset to conservation and our community. This campaign will enable our stewardship program to grow in concert with our expanding portfolio of conserved land, and to build the depth and expertise of our stewardship staff.

Stewardship can mean many things. In some cases, it means maximizing a property's ability to save an endangered species or to store carbon by limiting disturbance in sensitive areas. In others, it means managing a landscape to provide multiple benefits – including jobs, educational opportunities, and outdoor recreation – while avoiding harm to the natural environment.

Successful land stewardship poses a multi-faceted challenge. It requires staff and advisors who have the skills and experience to develop complex, long-term financial plans for supporting maintenance and improvements. But it also demands staff who can train volunteers and seasonal trail crews in how to safely trim trees, and be in the field installing sustainable trails.



2022 Maine Conservation Corps





*Baker Hill Preserve*



## Your support will enable Frenchman Bay Conservancy to:

- **Hire and retain skilled land stewards.** Land Stewards play a critical role in maintaining and keeping watch over our preserves. A stronger financial foundation will enable FBC to attract the skilled staff necessary to grow our stewardship program. In turn, these staff members will multiply our reach by helping train and lead our stewardship volunteers and seasonal trail crews.
- **Care for and improve our preserves.** Stewardship means directing human access to places that can handle foot traffic. It means enabling visitors to enjoy our lands in a sustainable way, such as by installing and maintaining safe, environmentally-sensitive trails and facilities, boat launch sites, and informative signs.
- **Restore degraded landscapes.** Some of our lands have been degraded by poor land use practices in the past or are threatened by invasive species. We work to recover healthy landscapes by restoring wetlands and forests, managing harmful species and reintroducing native plants. For example we enable alewives and other fish to once again move freely between fresh and salt water to spawn by removing stream barriers and enlarging culverts.
- **Increase access for all community members.** By creating more trails, walkways, and facilities that meet standards set by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) we can increase accessibility to green spaces. In Ellsworth, for example, we rebuilt the Riverwalk to ADA standards, starting from the Ellsworth Public Library up to a viewing platform that makes the Union River more accessible to all.



# Expand outdoor education in our local schools and outdoor opportunities for all.

An appreciation of the outdoors gained at a young age can shape a lifetime, and as the local land trust in eastern Hancock County, we believe it is our responsibility to provide opportunities for future generations to connect with, and learn from, the land that we help protect. One of the most powerful ways for FBC to provide that experience, and to meet the needs of area youth and their schools, is through nature-based education.

Through an established partnership with the Maine Outdoor School, FBC provides the opportunity for students to participate in field trips and weekly lessons where our conserved lands, such as the Day Ridges Preserve, can become the classroom. Students are connected to the places where they live and the environment around them – fostering a connection to Maine’s natural treasures all while meeting state-mandated education standards.

As schools continue to deal with staffing shortages, budget restrictions, and the on-going consequences of COVID-19, FBC is proud to be a part of bringing critical programming to our area schools. Without our financial support and partnership, the program would not exist.



*Maine Outdoor School Class*





## Your support will enable Frenchman Bay Conservancy to:

- **Expand our partnerships with local public schools through the Maine Outdoor School (MOS).** MOS's experienced teachers engage students in outdoor learning that meets state-mandated education standards -- and doesn't place additional burdens on already overworked teachers and administrators. MOS also provides materials that encourage teachers and schools to continue outdoor education on their own; that helps outdoor education become a sustainable, ongoing part of the curriculum. Your support will enable us to expand from two to 10 public schools in eastern Hancock County and increase instructional hours tenfold, reaching hundreds of kids over the school year.
- **Continue providing outdoor events and activities outside of the classroom that provide opportunities for people of all ages to learn, build community, and connect to Maine's natural environment.** Beyond our partnership with the Maine Outdoor School, we will also continue to offer ways for people to engage with nature -- building awareness of FBC and inspiring support for protecting our region's remarkable natural resources. By enabling people to learn about and directly experience the landscapes of our region, it becomes more likely that they will value and act to protect them.

***“MOS serves as a platform to foster curiosity for the outdoors - for teachers and students alike. I believe with all of my heart that it is this curiosity that will lead to a generation of people who enjoy, appreciate, and protect the environment”***

— TIARA WOODS, LAMOINE CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL



# *Why Support Frenchman*

We have a 35-year record of success. Since our founding in 1987, we have protected over 10,000 acres of land. These forests, wetlands, and shorelines are critical to preserving clean water, clean air, wildlife, and fisheries and livelihoods that are a backbone of our region's economy.

We have local expertise – combined with a regional and national reach. The Frenchman Bay region is our home, so we are uniquely placed to learn about and respond quickly to emerging land protection opportunities, as well as threats. We are also well connected to like-minded groups at the state, regional, and national levels, enabling us to forge powerful alliances. Our deep local connections and broad partnerships have enabled us to identify, design, and execute some of our region's largest, boldest, and most complex land protection deals.





# Man Bay Conservancy?

Our staff is skilled and dedicated to the mission. People are our greatest strength. It takes a wide range of skills to complete complicated land deals, ensure long-term stewardship, and build alliances with people from all walks of life. Fortunately, we have built a dedicated corps of passionate staff, board members and volunteers who are able to develop and implement effective strategies.

We are fiscally prudent, enabling us to leverage your donations for even broader support. Over the past decade, we have grown our membership, deployed funding effectively, and efficiently managed two long-term investment funds that produce income for land stewardship and operations. Because of this record – and generous donors like you – we have secured funding from private foundations as well as more than \$1.8 million from state and federal agencies.



*Our deep local connections and broad partnerships have enabled us to identify, design, and execute some of our region's largest, boldest, and most complex land protection deals.*



# This is our watershed moment, from the forest to the sea.

Together we can protect and care for vulnerable ecosystems across eastern Hancock County – landscapes that help store planet-warming carbon, safeguard our fisheries, and defend us against the impacts of floods and storms.

Together, we can make sure that we're inspiring the next generation of land stewards by providing nature-based outdoor education to our public elementary schools.

Join us in enabling specific, meaningful land protection and community investment that will allow future generations to experience the same vast, unbroken forests, clean water, clean air, and access to open space that we all enjoy – and rely on – today.

*Your support for Frenchman Bay Conservancy's campaign will allow us to seize immediate opportunities to conserve land, water, and open space today.*

*Your support will enable us to build on our successful record and create a stronger organization that has the financial and staff capacity to meet the challenges that we'll face in the future.*

For more info, contact Aaron Dority, Executive Director of FBC, or visit

***[FrenchmanBay.org/WatershedMoment](https://FrenchmanBay.org/WatershedMoment)***