

Volunteers, Volunteers, Volunteers: This Issue is Dedicated to You!

Beavers, Bikes and Bridges: Trail Work at Dorion Property



The Fall was a productive time on the Dorion Property. The adventure began on Fall Trail Day. A new pressure treated bridge was installed. Six volunteers, including one under the age of three, brought their brawn and engineering skills into the woods to complete a new crossing over the small stream that runs in the gully between Newman and Bangor Hills. The trail crew conceded to using power tools to cut the wood and an ATV with trailer to haul the wood. For the careful observer, take note of the small incline in the bridge's center - could this be a bicycle jump?

Later in the Fall OLT joined forces with the Penobscot Valley

Ski Club to remove hundreds of the mega-roots covering the old railroad bed. Chainsaws, then hand tools, Pulaskis, and mattocks were used to chop, pry, and yank roots from their loamy home. The ruts on the old rail bed were then smoothed with rakes. The tunnel which is formed by the dense tree canopy on that section of rail bed now had a new, even floor that skiers, bikers and walkers all can enjoy.

Unvanquished, the aging rail bed still needed more improvements. The beavers, in their infinite wisdom, had left many trees downed across the rail bed and flooded the trail surface. Volunteers cut the trees, raked the rail bed surface, and dug a ditch enabling the neighboring pond to drain, and



installed a beaver deceiver. Masterfully created by one of the land trusts pioneers, Dave Thompson, this device is a long, square, wooden culvert with the underside made of steel mesh. It was set in the shallow ditch dug across the rail bed. The beavers

OLT ANNUAL MEETING
MARCH 28, 2014 KACH 6:30 P.M.
SAVE THE DATE

would never be able to clog or block the device, and the water level of the adjoining pond will remain just a few inches below the surface of the rail bed. At last, peace was found between the beavers and rail trail users. No beaver dams nor beaver houses had to be damaged and the beavers retained their wet paradise intact.

Enormous thanks go out to Dave and Pat Thompson who in their golden years continue to shine on. Special thanks to Daniel Perkins, Lauren Jacobs and all the crew at the Penobscot Valley Ski Club. Thanks also go to Ron Logan, Jim Hinds, Bucky Owen, Rob Yerxa, Belle Ryder, Jim White, the Town of Orono, Aaron Brasslett and his family, NEMBA, Erik Da Silva and his family, and of course to my saint-like family for continuing to support my obsession - the Newman Hill Bangor Hill Rail Trail recreational conservation area.

article and photos by Kris Sornberger

More on TRAIL DAY 2013

What a gorgeous, sunny, mild day on the trails. THANK YOU to all the volunteers.

Piney Knoll: Genevieve Smith, Mike Louth, Matt Scaccia, Mike Opitz worked at cleaning out the ditch along the southern end of the Penobscot River Trail and continued the invasive species control efforts around the cellar hole at the historic site of PKCA.

Dorion Land: Dave T., Jim White, Erik daSilva, Aaron Brasslett with daughter Jo Clukey and Kris Sornberger tore down an old bridge and built a new 32 foot bridge with ramps on each end. What a terrific addition to the trail!



Sklar Park: Rissa, Sue Esler, Sue Owen, Ron Logan, Glen Rampe, Mike Greenwood, Jerry Longcore, Chuck Simpson, Gail White, Bucky Owen worked on the wet areas of the trails. Mike, Jerry and Chuck chain sawed trees and remaining folks picked up that wood and corduroyed many sections of trails in Sklar Park, trail to Dirigo Pines and I-95 trail. Old culverts were removed. Steve Sader and Carter Stone with UM students were out GPSing the Sklar Park trails at this same time.

(see pg 7)



Planned PKCA Harvest

The Orono Land Trust will conduct a harvest on the Piney Knoll Conservation Area starting in late December 2013 and ending in March 2014. Cutting will start at the Peter's Field end of the lot and progress towards the Colburn Drive cul-de-sac. It will stop near the area of the "Ridge Trail" and will not include "Piney Knoll".

The primary reasons for the harvest are:

(1) To harvest the Big-Tooth Aspen component that has reached its biological maturity and is starting to decline and topple over. If these trees are not harvested at this time, more will die and fall down in the near future. The remainder of the trees harvested will be the smaller, suppressed trees, diseased or poorly formed trees, and a few large co-dominant and dominant trees. These trees will be harvested to release nearby quality trees. This will help to perpetuate those areas of the forest that contain an over story of mature trees.

(2) To provide some income to pay for the trail improvement on the "Middle Trail" that was done this summer and to finish trail improvement on the Trail Eleven (11) loop.

The Forest Management Plan for the area was done by Dave Wardrop, a Professional licensed forester, in 2012. He recommended the cut as part of the plan. The goal is to work towards an uneven-aged forest with an over story of mature trees and an understory of reproduction and sapling-sized trees of many species following the forest management principals presented in the State's Focus Species Manual.

The harvest will be managed by Carl Sanborn, a licensed consulting forester with 30 years experience. I will work with Carl to get the job started. The logging contractor is from Old Town and is highly recommended by Al Kimball and the staff at the University of Maine, School of Forestry.

It is hoped that the harvest will open up some small areas to encourage regeneration, which in turn will provide better habitat for many species of birds and mammals. The Marsh Island deer herd appears to be reduced as a result of the extended archery season that OLT has coordinated on PKCA, which should facilitate better regeneration than in the past.

Because of the harvest, recreational use of the area will be affected to some extent; however, the operation will be managed to minimize adverse effects. The immediate area being harvested will be identified with signs, which will ask people to stay out of the area for reasons of safety.

Dave Thompson, Chief Steward, with input by Jerry Longcore, Mike Opitz, Jim Hinds, and John McCarthy

Peter's Field on PKCA

Five brush piles on Peter's Field were burned on Sunday December 8th. Boy, was it hot! We had to take off some layers despite below 0 degree temperatures. Within an hour the piles were reduced to ash and some smoldering branches. It was a perfect day to do this. Thanks to Dylan and Claire for helping to keep the fires under control and to the Orono Fire Department to checking that we did it right.

Mike Opitz

BDN: 1-minute hike

Aislinn Sarnacki has done two articles in the BDN on OLT properties. December 5th featured Veazie's Buck Hill Conservation Area, and an earlier column described Piney Knoll. We are grateful to her for the publicity.

Assistant Land Stewards Needed

The OLT Board recently decided to appoint Assistant Land Stewards for each of its properties. Each individual will work directly with a Land Steward to annually evaluate the condition of the property and propose any needed remedial work. Generally, this amounts to 1-2 days' work each year. This is a wonderful opportunity to work with a "seasoned" Steward and explore an OLT property in depth. Listed below are the OLT properties and their Stewards. Please contact a Steward directly and indicate your interest; we all need to share the load!

Fee Land (Owned by OLT)

Piney Knoll Conservation Area	Mostly upland mixed forest between UM and River,	76 acres	Mike Opitz	mopitz@myfairpoint.net
Cota Property	Wooded connector next to Forest Ave.	2 acre	Gail White	gpwhite@maine.edu
Hsu Preserve	Mixed forest, spruce bog, abuts Forest Ave	31 acres	Dave Thompson	patandavet@gmail.com
Newman Hill Property	Abuts Orono Dump Rd.	88 acres	Jim Hinds / Kris Sornberger	
Penobscot Shores	Abuts Penobscot River	2 acres	Wendall Tremblay	WendallTre@aol.com
Pushaw Inlet Property				
Pushaw View Property	Lakeside, NE shore of Pushaw Lake, low land	0.3 acres	Jerry Longcore	jnlongcore@myfairpoint.net
Thibodeau Property	Narrow long lot abuts Pushaw Lake, wooded, wet	55 acres	Ron Logan	amove@yahoo.com
Wickett Property	Old growth, mixed forest, adjacent to Perch Pond	57 acres	Jerry Longcore	jnlongcore@myfairpoint.net
Dorion Property - South	Forest, ski and bike trails; next to Newman Hill	141 acres	Kris Sornberger	sornberger@gmail.com
Dorion Property - North	Part of Caribog Bog; Pine Ponds Restoration Area	98 acres	Bucky Owen	buckyandsue@gmail.com

Conservation Easements

Brent Halsey Outdoor Classroom	Demonstration forest on from Diamond O	8 acres	Dave Thompson	patandavet@gmail.com
Davis CE	Forever wild forest and a field	37 acres	Glen Koehler	glen.koehler@maine.edu
Hinds CE	Wetlands and Forest near Newman Hill	37 acres	Ron Logan	amove@yahoo.com
Hinds CE	Forested land near Newman Hill	48 acres	Ron Logan	amove@yahoo.com
Hinds-Keleti CE	Forested land just west of Taylor (dump) road	123 acres	John Alexander	John_Alexander@umit.maine.edu
Manter CE	Forested Land in Veazie	8 acres	Dave Wardrop	David@goldenforestry.com
Orono Bog (Hyland Tract) CE	UM Peatland with Boardwalk	354 acres	Bucky Owen	buckyandsue@gmail.com
Frog Pond CE	Forest surrounding Vernal Pool	3 acres	John Maddaus	John.Maddaus@maine.edu
Rampe Forest CE	Forested land S. of Forest Ave	38 acres	Lin White	white35@roadrunner.com

Trail Easements

Chapel Rd. TE	Trail from Chapel Rd to College Heights	0.3 acres	Adrienne Butler	ajbutler@myfairpoint.net
Town of Orono TE	Access to Rampe and High School property	0.1 acres	Lin White	white35@roadrunner.com
Haynes TE	Trail connector between Rampe and Colburn	0.4 acres	Lin White	white35@roadrunner.com
Manter TE	Forested Land in Veazie	0.2 acres	Dave Wardrop	David@goldenforestry.com
Campus Crest Trail 11 Easement	Access to Marsh Island Forest	0.2 acres	Mike Opitz	mopitz@myfairpoint.net
Orchard Trails TE	Trail through development	1 acre	Mike Opitz	mopitz@myfairpoint.net
Pearce TE	Access across Forest Ave	0.1 acre	Lin White	white35@roadrunner.com
Pushaw Marsh TE (Goulds Landing)	Access to Pushaw Shores	0.5 acre	Carolyn Eaton	cseslp@gmail.com

Informal Involvement/Other

Jeremiah Colburn Natural Area	Mature forest owned by Town of Orono	44 acres	Gail White	gpwhite@maine.edu
Gould's Landing	Pushaw Lake MDOT mitigation land	38 acres	Carolyn Eaton	cseslp@gmail.com
High School LandTown Land	behind HS, abuts Rampe	45 acres	Nancy Rampe	lthereza@myfairpoint.net
Penobscot River Trail	Trail between Orono and Old Town	3 acres	Mike Opitz	mopitz@myfairpoint.net
Sklar Park	Land behind Sailor Development	55 acres	Steve Sader	sasader@maine.edu
Stillwater River Trail	Along river from Main St up to OT	5 acres	Melissa. Burch	bulteel@juno.com

SEASONS OF OUR LIVES

For me the winter season seems to elicit a feeling of nostalgia and a sense of foreboding as day length retreats incrementally until reaching the solstice on December 21st. To confirm this impression I looked back at the last five Nature Clips and realized that in three of them I dwell on life (2009), our longevity and how we use it (2010), and thoughts about our founding OLT President, Sally Jacobs, and her death (2012). In the starkest of terms the start of the winter season—December—is the end, that is, the end of the year and for most plants and organisms the end of a myriad of activities. For humans, many who now live to be 100, they too enter the winter of their lives if we align seasons with years. If you let your memory take you back, spring was indeed when you were young and 1-25 years old, summer (26-50 years) was the most productive years of family and work, then fall (51-75 years) followed with still some good years, but with the leaves losing some color and loosening their grip, then winter (76-100 years) arrives and it is the last season that many of us are now enjoying. How we embrace the winter of our lives will make all the difference. The following oft-quoted words seem appropriate as we negotiate the winter of our lives:



This Too Shall Pass.

When things are bad, remember: It won't always be this way. Take one day at a time. When things are good, remember: It won't always be this way. Enjoy every great moment. (Title attributed to Muslim mystics, author unknown for verses)

Therefore, reach out to family, friends, and neighbors this winter holiday season and create some great moments to enjoy and remember throughout the changing seasons of your life.

OLT Outreach Committee seeking volunteers

The Outreach Committee aims to raise community awareness of the lands, trails, and activities of the Land Trust. Some key members have retired or moved, and we are looking for help!

The committee meets 3-6 times a year. We organize the annual meeting, outings to our trails and properties, and try to find knowledgeable guides such as a wildlife biologist or forester.

We welcome any volunteers. Specific skills we are seeking:

1. **Media outreach skills**---do you have any experience in journalism or contacts with local news outlets?
2. **Are you a parent of younger kids in Orono?** Do you want to work on activities that get kids out exploring frog ponds or looking for owl pellets?
3. **Food organizer for the Annual Meeting**— will you will be around in late March and able to organize the food/drink reception for the Annual Meeting?

Please contact Melissa Burch at 866-5478 or mburch59@gmail.com if you are interested or just have questions.

OLT Volunteers: Thank you

OLT has been run entirely by volunteers from its beginning in 1986.spearheaded by the founding president Sally Jacobs, and up to the current president Jim Hinds, volunteer officers, board of directors, committees, stewards and hundreds of Orono citizens and visitors and students. Without these volunteers no governance required for a non profit organization would be conducted, no grants would be written to acquire, protect and steward precious natural lands around Orono and neighboring towns, no newsletter would be written, no trails or bridges would be build, improved or maintained, no maps would printed.

Every year since 2010, when we started keeping records volunteering time, volunteers donated over 4000 hours of their personal “free” time and energy to OLT. Volunteers come from all walks of life and in all ages from 3 year old kids to active seniors 75 years and beyond. They may have a life-long experience to guide novice volunteers for a needed task others have none. Just a week ago, a group of 10 UM students of the alternative break program and six Orono volunteers braved 19 F temperature to help with some trail work at PKCA (see Pictures). I don’t have their names because the ink froze in the pen used for volunteer sign in. But I will mention the names of three of my hero volunteers who help on a project a few weeks ago: Jaden, Nivea and India, ages about 7 to 11. As I was working to improve a wet area of a trail entrance to Sally Jacob’s monument, they came to me asking what I was doing. “I am moving rocks from this dirt pile to that wet place.” “May we help” they asked” I would love it”, I replied. So we worked as a team of four for almost an hour carrying arms-full of rocks and had fun at the same time. Public Works came a day later bringing more rocks and finished the job. If anyone wonders how you can get involved volunteering, whether you are OLT member or not, contact a board member you know, the steward of your favorite OLT property or fill out an on line volunteer questionnaire, which enables us to contact you when we have a project that meets your volunteer preferences. You can find the contact information on our website <http://oronolandtrust.org/> .

To all Volunteers of 2013, on behalf of the Orono Land Trust, I thank you for your selfless contribution to the community of Orono.

Article and photos by OLT Volunteer Coordinator Michael Opitz



Presicion trail work in progress by DaveThomson and student volunteers



Students Lindsay and Dylan placing rocks. OLT volunteer David observing 12/8/13

Veazie: Tom and Beth Drummond, Dave Wardrop with daughter, Emma, John Manter, Kent and Jeanine Tableman cleared trails and repaired bridges in the McPhetres Forest and Manter Woods.

Piney Knoll Conservation Area: Our fun event building Fairy Houses was supervised by Holly Twining and Melissa Burch. Participants were adults Kristina Weaver, Patricia Gonser, Rose McKay and children Elena Weaver, Summer McKay and Megan Gerbi who helped build a nice fence around the fairy house village. They also built the first fairy houses for the village. Anyone is welcome to come and create nice Fairy Homes in this area.

We cannot thank volunteers enough nor tell them enough times how much they are appreciated. Orono and Veazie would not have any trails and/or the trails would not be as nice as they are without volunteers. If you see someone working on a trail, take a minute to say Thank You for their time and efforts. Lend a hand if you have time. Our open spaces depend on individuals for their care; there are no paid people in the Orono Land Trust. See accompanying request for Assistant Land Stewards.

Gail White

Tour wetland near Pushaw

---accessible only in winter - January 12, 2014, 1 p.m.

Join OLT Board members for a snowshoe trip to view newly acquired land northeast of Pushaw Lake. The Thibideau Property is an important addition to the Caribou-Bog Penjajawoc Wildlife Corridor. Last year's trip was canceled due to slushy ice. We are aiming for Sunday, January 12th this year to take advantage of more reliable cold conditions. We anticipate meeting at Pushaw Campground at 1 p.m. on the 12th to snowshoe across the lake and tour the property. Keep an eye on the OLT website for updates.

Help Build the Orono Land Trust:

Recruit a friend

The success of the Orono Land Trust in acquiring or stewarding land for conservation and recreational purposes for residents of Orono is attributable to dedicated, local members/volunteers providing labor and financial support through dues, contributions and trail work, stewardship and governance. With the addition of the Dorion property, the OLT now owns over 500 acres, holds conservation easements on about 660 acres and helps steward an additional 790 acres. Despite the incredible growth of the OLT in its 27 years, our membership has remained far too stable. We remain a volunteer organization with no paid staff, unlike most land trusts in the state and region. Thus, we are asking you, our members to reach out to just one friend or neighbor (more ok as well) sharing this newsletter, and sharing about the Land Trust and the benefits it affords Orono residents. Encourage new membership using the form at the end of the newsletter. They will get the benefit of information about Land Trust activities, the knowledge they are "giving back" in support of lands they enjoy, and the opportunity to help conserve this precious resource for this and future generations.

Sue Estler

Board of Directors

Gordon Bromley
Melissa Burch
Erik DaSilva, Secretary
Sue Estler
Jim Hinds, President
Jerry Longcore, Past President
John McCarthy, Vice President
Mike Opitz
Bucky Owen
Sue Owen, Clerk
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Chuck Simpson
Genevieve Smith
Kris Sornberger
Carter Stone
Kent Tableman
David Thompson
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Gail White



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RETURN SERVICE

Calendar

January 8, February 5, and March 5, 2014 -- Monthly Board meetings
January 12, 2014 - Thibodeau Property Tour - see page 4
March 28, 2014 - OLT Annual Meeting - see page 1

Please check for membership expiration date on your address label.

ORONO LAND TRUST MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name: _____ Email: _____

Address: _____ Telephone _____

_____ \$10 Student Membership	_____ \$100-\$999 Supporting Membership*
_____ \$25 Individual Membership	_____ \$1000 Life Membership
_____ \$50 Family Membership	

*All but \$50 of your donation will go into a long-term fund for future land acquisitions and for stewardship of existing lands.

I'd like to make an additional \$ _____ donation to help protect green space in Orono.

Please send my newsletter by: _____ Email, _____ U.S. Postal Mail

I am interested in helping on one of the following committees:

- _____ **Finance** - formulates budgets, grant writing, fund-raising events.
- _____ **Lands** - The core committee, always on the lookout for new areas, monitors land-use changes.
- _____ **Stewardship and Trails** - Backbone of OLT, monitors properties, maintains trails for public use.
- _____ **Outreach** - Handles publicity, newsletter, brochures, website, events and programs of education and entertainment.
- _____ **Membership** - Encourages participation in OLT activities. collects dues, maintains database.
- _____ **Veazie Land Association** - Oversees Veazie Lands, easements, trails, etc.
- _____ **Caribou Bog** - Penjawoc Corridor Project - Identifies properties in preservation area for acquisition or easements.
- _____ **Orono Bog Boardwalk** - Maintains Boardwalk, organizes programs, budget, fundraising.
- _____ I'd like to share these other interests and talents: