



Tidings of the Turtle



Captain Sandy's mark from the collections of the Maine Historical Society

Francis Small Heritage Trust Newsletter – December 2011



“Sense of Place” project launched

A jar of dried moose droppings passed among the eager hands of second graders. “We call it moose ‘scat’, not ‘poop’,” said the visitor at the front of the classroom, amidst giggles from the children.

The visitor was Barbara Bald, a former public school teacher and trained tracker. She has been engaged by the Trust to spearhead its new outdoor program, *Developing a Sense of Place: Introducing Second Graders to Protected Lands in Their Communities*. This initiative is using animal tracking and habitat study to encourage young children in three Southern Maine school districts to explore “special places,” a vital first step to their becoming the land stewards of tomorrow.

In early fall Trust board member Peter Zack visited the second-grade classrooms of Hollis Elementary in SAD 6 (teachers: Bev Dunton, Chelsea Knight, and Kate Fusselman); Line School in RSU 57 (teachers: Denise Masalsky and Mark Kellis); and South Hiram Elementary in SAD 55 (teachers: Victoria Perry, Laurie Richmond, and Teresa Dyer). After hearing a brief explanation of the Trust’s work to preserve significant local environments, the children shared experiences of their own special outdoor places. An ac-

tivity took the children back to the late 17th century, when a Newichewannock chief, Wesumbe (“Captain Sandy” to the settlers), traded to Francis Small the Ossipee lands (the current towns of Cornish, Parsonsfield, Limington, Limerick and Newfield). The children learned that Wesumbe used the sign of the turtle (the symbol the Trust uses) instead of signing his name. Finally, Zack read to each class a picture book ... about moose.

In October, Bald accompanied the groups to three separate Trust holdings: Line School explored the Poulin Preserve, near the Little Ossipee River in Limerick; Hollis Elementary rambled up the Smith Trail on Sawyer Mountain; and South Hiram Elementary circuted the Jagolinzer Preserve along the Saco River near the Cornish-Limington line. Bald told the children to “be aware” when searching for animal signs. She taught them to bend their ears forward – coyote style – to enhance their hearing. Wetting their noses would make their sense of smell more acute, and practicing “owl eyes” would increase their peripheral vision.

How well did the nature sleuths do? Following a scavenger-hunt outline, the

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Lorraine Libby is mourned

The Board of Directors and members of the Trust were immensely saddened to learn of the death of Lorraine Libby on November 6. Lorraine and her beloved husband, Sherwood, worked as a team to protect Maine’s environment, beginning in the 1960s. After Sherwood’s death on October 14, 2009, Lorraine had honored his legacy by providing the Trust with her wisdom, stories, and lore about the woods and wildlife of Maine and the history of efforts to protect them.

Their love of the land, of hunting and fishing, canoeing, and appreciating wildlife and wilderness lands led Lorraine and Sherwood to advocate for the creation of the Allagash Wilderness Waterway. She helped him work toward the creation of both the Land Use Regulation Commission and the Saco River Corridor Commission. They were founding Directors of FSHT and remained on the Board until their deaths. Lorraine also served on the Limington Planning Board. And both of them loved Sawyer Mountain and knew it as well as anyone could.

Throughout her days, Lorraine’s musical talents were a thread in the life of her family. She was a pianist and a piano teacher to her children, a singer with choral groups and a leader of family caroling. She will be greatly missed.



Partners to protect working forests

You don't need to go to the North Woods to find an impressive expanse of forestland in Maine worth protecting from fragmentation. Picture the aerial view of inland York County – from the Ossipee and Saco watersheds to the Piscataqua-Salmon Falls watershed.

To protect working forests in interior York County, FSHT is partnering with the Three Rivers Land Trust and others. The York County Working Forest Protection Project (YCWFPF), will focus on ten towns, Acton, Alfred, Cornish, Lebanon, Limerick, Limington, Newfield, Parsonsfield, Sanford, and Shapleigh, covering an area of 360 square miles. The YCWFPF has funding from the US Forest Service and the Maine-based Sewall Foundation. It has professional support from other conservation organizations partnering in the project. There are three primary goals:

- To conserve and manage working forest landscapes for multiple uses. With a goal of establishing conservation easements on working forests, the YCWFPF will provide educational assistance to landowners and towns to inform them about conservation easements and enhancing community forest resources. We will continue to support a stable Tree Growth Program for current-use valuation of managed forestlands.
- To protect forests from harm. This involves encouraging wise land-use planning to reduce forest fragmentation, and assistance to towns and individuals to manage forests to mitigate and adapt to climate change. The protection and maintenance of water resources in the context of the working forest is part of this goal.
- To enhance public benefits derived from trees and forests. This will be achieved primarily through an educational program to promote to individuals and communi-

ties the economic, recreational, and aesthetic values of the forest.

The YCWFPF involves Marcel Polak (Maine Association of Conservation Commissions), Donald Mansius (Maine Forest Service), Steve Walker (Maine Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife – Beginning with Habitat), Joe Anderson (York County Soil & Water Conservation District), Bill Hutchins and Fred Frodyma (Shapleigh and Alfred Conservation Commissions), Keith Fletcher (Maine Coast Heritage Trust), Everett Towle (Small Woodland Owners Association of Maine), Jean Noon (Three Rivers Land Trust), Hilary Wallis (Francis Small Heritage Trust), and others. Using Beginning with Habitat and other resources, priority focus areas with high conservation values will be identified and mapped.

The federal grant funds several consultant positions. The Outreach Consultant, Lee Burnett, will work with the land trusts and other project partners to

- Publicize the project through outreach to community organizations and media;
- Organize educational materials and workshops to assist individuals and towns in the use of Best Management Practices and Sustainable Forest practices;
- Identify private forestland owners;
- Connect landowners to resources (legal, financial, wildlife, forestry);
- Share information about the advantages of selling or donating conservation easements to conserve forestlands;
- Work with project partners to educate municipal officials regarding the importance of maintaining working forestlands and community forests;
- Develop a credit course for realtors on conservation options for forestland owners, including conservation easements.
- Write grant proposals seeking funds to purchase easements when necessary.

The Membership Consultant, Mike Gaito, will work primarily with Three Rivers Land Trust but also with FSHT. Deb Chapman, Circuit Rider for the Maine Land Trust Network of the Maine Coast Heritage Trust, will work with FSHT to build capacity.

(The Three Rivers Land Trust granted permission to base much of this article on "Conserving Forestland in York County" in the Summer 2011 Horizons.)



The Sissons sign conservation easement

Another lovely piece of land is protected. As we reported a year ago, Tom and Edie Sisson have generously donated a conservation easement on a large part of their land straddling the Cornish-Limerick town line off Route 5. But there were a lot of steps to be taken before it became a reality. We are grateful to the Davis Conservation Foundation, Fields Pond Foundation, Inc., and William P. Wharton Trust for their grants that made it possible. Maine Boundary Consultants completed a survey, with details about the history of the names associated with the land, and the news that the easement covers 188.05 acres. With the Sissons, we discussed many details of the easement to best protect the land while allowing for public access that would enable a wide range of people to enjoy it. We completed a baseline documentation that describes the condition and features of the land, from rare plants to old foundations, from the beaver dam and bog (The Heath) to the wooded uplands.

In the coming year or so, FSHT volunteers will be working on a trail that will make a loop around The Heath. As his Eagle Scout project, Sean Turner hopes to build a bog bridge to connect the loop. In another area, a neighbor has granted permission for the trail to cross his land.

The Sissons and the Trust signed the Conservation Easement deed on September 2. We are very grateful to them for this significant contribution to protection of land in the region.



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children discovered (among many other things), the stump of a tree felled by a beaver, several salamanders, deer and coyote scat, a hole in a tree made by a pileated woodpecker, and – Bald confirmed it – a strand of hair from a bear.

Bald will return in winter, when the children will revisit their places on snowshoes. Who knows – perhaps they'll even find moose tracks!


The Trust is grateful to the Narragansett Number One Foundation and the Giovanella Family Trust of the Maine Community Foundation for funding (including the cost of bussing), and appreciates the excellent efforts of teachers, parent and trust volunteers, and bus drivers.

Eagle Scout candidates offer projects

Two candidates for the prestigious Eagle Scout award have approached the Trust with project ideas. Parker Estes, a Sacopee Valley High School student from Hiram, is a member of Baldwin Boy Scout Troop #367 (Scoutmaster: Bill Jackson). His goal is to rejuvenate the Estes-Noble-McKenney cemetery on Sawyer Mountain. Parker proposes to clear brush from the Sawyer Mountain Road to the cemetery, replace the pipe fence, fix or replace the granite pillars, straighten the grave stones, level the sunken places, and put a sign by the trail saying who is buried there and giving the dates.

Sean Turner of Buxton is a member of Lyman Troop #399 (Scoutmaster: Gary Mayhew). Sean attends Bonny Eagle High School. Sean is hoping to build a bog bridge as part of a loop trail on the Sisson Conservation Easement on the Cornish-Limerick line. (See the article on page 2.) Sean's project is in an early planning stage, pending approvals.

The Trust is grateful for its ongoing collaboration with the Scouts. The Jagolinzer Preserve in Limington sports a gem of a loop trail, including a bridge over a wet area, compliments of an earlier Eagle Scout project by Eric Matthews.

 Please accept my donation of _____ to aid in the educational and conservation activities of the Trust.
 Please send me a free hiking map.

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Contributions & memberships are tax-deductible under IRS code 501 (C)(3).
Francis Small Heritage Trust, Inc., PO Box 414, Limerick, ME 04048
(207) 221-0853 (Please note the new number) www.FSHT.org

A Green Event in June

Excerpt from participants Gil Harris and Marsha Michler's blog in June: <http://theexistentialgardener.blogspot.com>

Imagine a totally green event. The Francis Small Heritage Trust is a local land trust actively working to preserve areas from development and allowing public access to wilderness. Last week the organization held a fundraiser consisting of dinner, concert, and silent auction. Singer and acoustic guitarist Mitch Alden, of Now Is Now, provided the entertainment with great songs and some virtuoso finger picking.

The food for the event was provided by members. An emphasis had been placed on using local ingredients. . . .

We ate from compostable plates and bowls, and after eating dropped them and leftover food scraps into a barrel labeled "compostables." A large selection of totally unmatched mugs were brought by members for coffee and water. A member contributed a stack of cloth napkins. Tables were attractively covered with contributed fabrics. Marsha made a floral arrangement for each table consisting of flowers, ferns, and other interesting flora gathered from woods to garden. The glass containers for these we had gotten from the "Take-It Shoppe" at the town dump. The guests were encouraged to take an arrangement home with them.

A silent auction featured products and services contributed by local businesses. . . . The auction seemed like a great way to involve the community in a cause.

We have become involved with this group because we totally agree with the philosophy of preserving land. The idea of placing an easement on a piece of land appeals to us. There are many land trusts in Maine, and we have done some research to learn about easements.

An easement is a legal means of insuring that property keeps the use that the owner wants. Rather than having a piece of property covered with buildings and pavement, and thereby taken out of nature, it can be protected to prevent development. An easement can be subject to certain criteria from "forever wild" to simply "not build-able." Some are farm easements that keep land in farming. Land protected by easements is not taken out of the real estate market. These lands can still be bought and sold. But unlike deeded restrictions, the easement stays with the land.

We love this idea. And the dinner and concert was a wonderful time. It truly amazed us that an organization can put on a fun evening with great food, excellent music, and local products to bid on, all at little cost to the very environment it works to preserve. We were impressed. Very, very impressed. -G.H.



Mitch Alden provided entertainment.



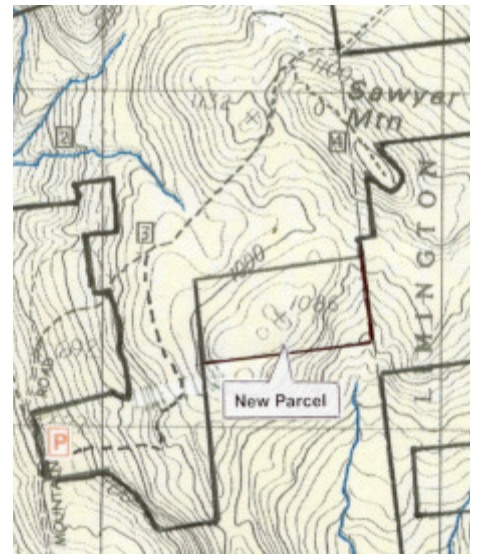
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A surprise acquisition

The Sawyer Mountain Highlands has been pieced together over the years from eleven separate parcels. We are always interested when neighbors approach us about either protecting their land or selling it to the Trust. Generally, we prefer at least a year's lead time in order to line up grants for the purchase, surveying, and the legal expenses that every new purchase entails. This summer a landowner approached the Trust and asked if we wanted to purchase 30 acres near the summit of Sawyer Mountain. We saw no way that we could purchase it on the short notice that the seller wanted. While we scrambled to find an "angel" who might purchase it and hold it while we raised the

necessary funds, the Sweet Water Trust became a real angel and funded the purchase price outright! And then generous donors paid for the surveying and legal costs, so in about a month's time, the Highlands expanded. The Green Mountain Conservation Group completed the deal by expanding the easement that they hold on 1,100 acres of the Highlands.

To reach the new parcel, start at the Limerick trailhead and hike just beyond the two arrow signs marking a sharp turn. At the stone wall, hike east off of the trail to the top of the ridge where you will be rewarded with nice views. The center of the parcel is the peak with elevation 1086 feet on our existing map.



No vacancy in the wood duck boxes?



These eggs were laid last year in a box built by Limington Scout Troop #315.

Annual meeting: Allagash

At the November 6 Annual Meeting of the Trust, Tim Caverly gave a lively multimedia presentation about the history and lore of the Allagash and his times as the Supervisor of the Allagash Wilderness Waterway.

At this meeting we learned of the passing that day of our beloved Board member, Lorraine Libby (see a remembrance of her in this issue). Lorraine and Sherwood Libby were advocates of the preservation of the Allagash Wilderness Waterway, and Tim included a photo of their

son John when he was a small boy, shown with Senator George Mitchell.

In the business meeting preceding the presentation, Trust members elected three new Directors, Gil Harris, Marsha Michler, and Linda Padula, and re-elected Marlene Livonia, all to three-year terms. They re-elected the following officers: Marlene Livonia, President; Dylan Alden, 1st Vice President; Dan Kidd, 2nd Vice President; Richard Jarrett, Treasurer; Hilary Wallis, Secretary.

