



DOWNEAST COASTAL CONSERVANCY

The Downeast Coastal Conservancy (DCC) maintains and protects the Pigeon Hill Preserve and also works cooperatively with land owners to protect other land in coastal Washington County from Steuben to Lubec and up to Calais and Rt 9. This area is part of the last frontier on the Northeast coast of peaceful, untrammelled beauty, including forests, woodlands, wetlands, islands, salt marshes, clam flats, fishing villages and working waterfronts.

DCC is a membership organization whose mission is the conservation of natural habitats and resources of the coastal watersheds, islands and communities of Washington County, Maine, for present and future generations.

Formed in 2009 through the merger of Great Auk Land Trust and Quoddy Regional Land Trust, Downeast Coastal Conservancy brought together two successful land trusts, each with over twenty years of conservation into a single, stronger organization.

To join DCC, make a charitable contribution, or obtain advice and assistance in conserving your land, please contact us.

DOWNEAST COASTAL CONSERVANCY

PO Box 760
Machias, ME 04654

Telephone: 207-255-4500
www.DowneastCoastalConservancy.org
info@downeastcoastalconservancy.org

PIGEON HILL PRESERVE



Storm over the Greater Pleasant Bay from the Pigeon Hill Summit.



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PIGEON HILL PRESERVE

Pigeon Hill is the highest coastal property in Washington County with a summit elevation of 317 ft. For more than a century, hikers have climbed the Historic Trail through undeveloped forest to the bald granite summit to enjoy the spectacular panoramic views. Viewscapes from around the summit expand beyond the adjacent bays toward the mountains around Donnell Pond to the northwest, the mountains of Mount Desert Island to the west, Petit Manan Point and Lighthouse to the south, and the Greater Pleasant Bay archipelago to the east.

The acquisition of this stunning public preserve was made possible by generous public, private and Land for Maine's Future support of the Summit, Forest & Seacoast Campaign in 2007 and 2008. This successful campaign was a joint effort of Great Auk Land Trust (now DCC) and Maine Coast Heritage Trust to preserve Pigeon Hill in Steuben, Willard Point in Harrington and Tibbett Island in Addison.

HISTORY

Pigeon Hill played an important role in the "Eastern Oblique Arc" survey triangulation of the eastern US from New Orleans, LA to Calais, ME that began in 1833 and completed in 1898. The summit of Pigeon Hill provided an unobstructed northerly view toward the Epping Baseline. The east and west granite monuments for that baseline are still in good condition—a unique situation since none of the other baselines of the Eastern Oblique Arc still exist.

Large areas of broken rocks along the Silver Mine Trail in the eastern woods section of the Preserve are almost certainly the remains of old silver mining activities. The writings of a descendent of an early immigrant farmer indicate that silver mining started on the hill sometime after the Civil War. Barbed wire fencing, a rocky access ramp and the watering hole are still visible from the trail.



NATURAL RESOURCES

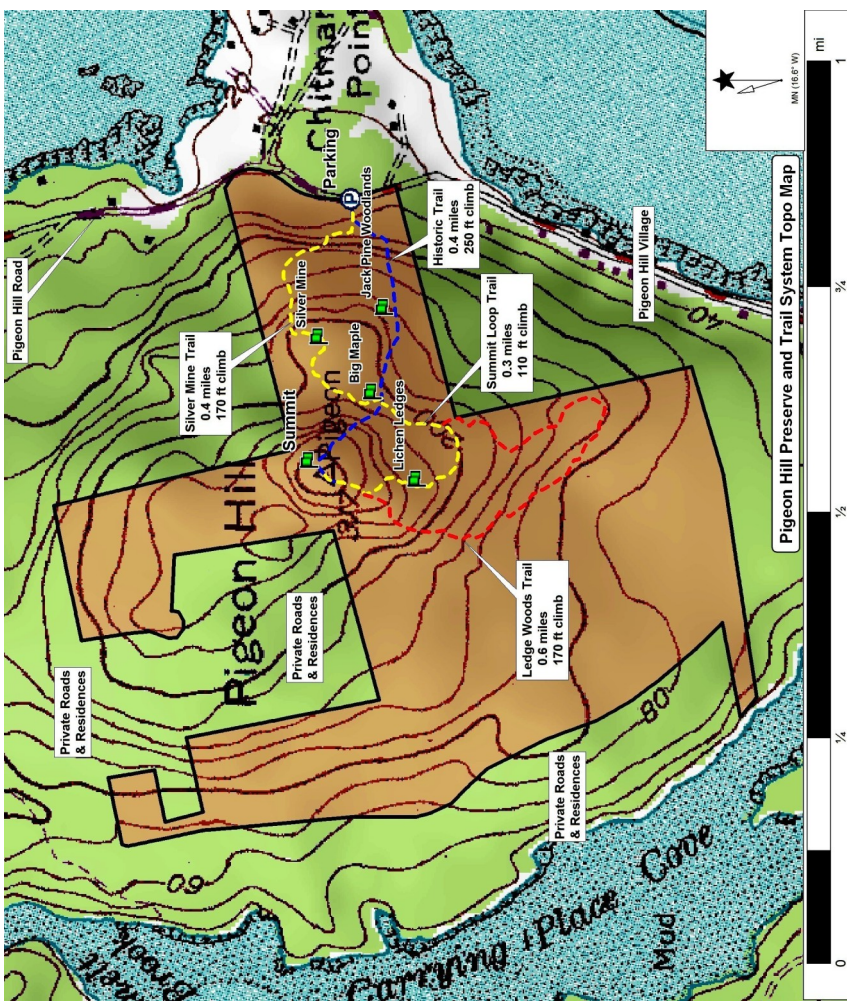
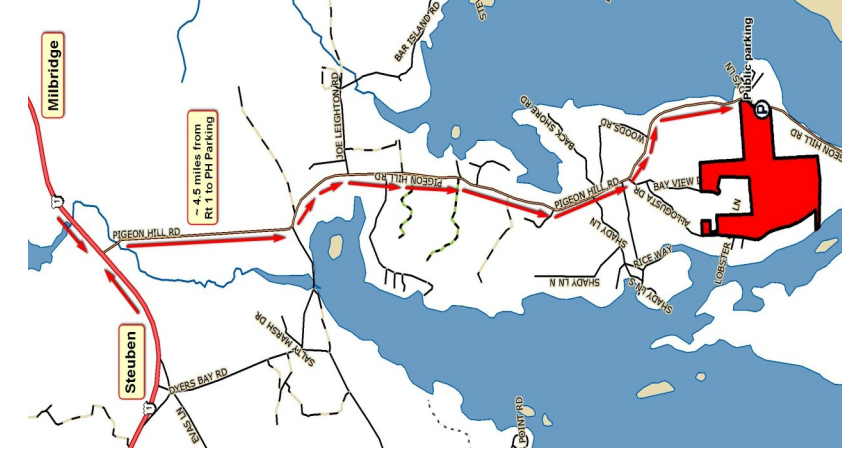
The primary plant community that weaves throughout the 170 acre preserve is Maritime Spruce-Fir Forest. Ten additional plant communities have also been identified, including the Three-toothed Cinquefoil-Blueberry Low Bald at the Summit, an uncommon Jack Pine Woodland along the Historic Trail and a Sedge-Leatherleaf Fen Lawn in the western woods with a small colony of rare and threatened Screwstem (*Bartonia paniculata*).

Large mammals such as Deer, Moose, Black Bear and Coyotes use the undeveloped preserve as a wildlife corridor to reach the Petit Manan section of the Maine Coastal Islands National Wildlife Refuge and/or the mainland. Smaller mammals such as bobcats, foxes, porcupines, red squirrels and snowshoe hares are fairly common.

Pigeon Hill is an excellent location to sight hawks during migration and common migratory birds throughout the summer. Pileated woodpeckers, spruce grouse, ruffed grouse, black-capped chickadees, red breasted nuthatches, dark-eyed juncos, American goldfinches, ravens, crows and bald eagles are year-round residents of the area.



Star Flower (*Trientalis borealis*) and Reindeer Moss (*Cladonia portentosa*)



TRAIL INFORMATION

The 1.8 mile trail system features a figure-eight loop that allows hikers to reach the summit and return to the parking area without retracing their steps. Hikers can hike up the Historic Trail to the Summit and return via the Summit Loop and Silver Mine Trails for the easiest hiking, the most viewpoints and the opportunity to view evidence of some of Pigeon Hill’s human history. The Summit Loop and the Silver Mine Trails provide the least steep route to and from the Summit. Explore the Ledge Woods Trail for a more challenging and longer hike. It offers more views to the south and open woods with large maple trees along the edge of the western woods.

PRESERVE GUIDELINES

Thank you for your stewardship and caring for the Pigeon Hill Preserve for all to enjoy. The Preserve is open from dawn to dusk. Help us protect this special place by observing the following guidelines:

- Please practice “carry-in/ carry-out” and “leave no trace” ethics.
- Please stay on or near the trail. For your safety, wear safety orange during hunting season.
- Do not carve graffiti or initials in rocks, ledges or trees.
- Avoid stepping on moss, lichen or “Reindeer Moss” which will not recover from repeated stress. Collection of lichens or other plants is not permitted.
- Keep dogs on a leash or under voice control at all times.
- Fires, camping, ATVs and snowmobiles are not permitted.
- Do not feed or disturb wildlife.
- Please respect neighboring private property and roads. Public Access is from the Pigeon Hill Road Parking Area only.

GETTING TO PIGEON HILL

From Milbridge or points east, drive south on Rt. 1 about 2.2 miles from the sharp left turn leaving Milbridge. Turn left onto Pigeon Hill Road. Drive about 4.5 miles to parking area opposite an old cemetery on the left.

From Steuben or points west, drive north on Rt. 1 about 4.3 miles from the Hancock-Washington County line. Turn right onto Pigeon Hill Road. Drive about 4.5 miles from Rt. 1-Pigeon Hill Road intersection to parking area opposite an old cemetery on the left.

Beautiful panoramic views at the top of Pigeon Hill make it a favorite spot for photographers

