

Downeast Coastal Conservancy 2017 Annual Meeting of Members

June 25, 2017

Roque Bluffs State Park

Approximately 35 - 40 in attendance at the meeting's start

Welcome by President Ellen Hostert at 2:30 pm: "Looking back on 30 years of conservation in Washington County"

This is the 30th anniversary of the land trust. Ellen asked us all to think about where we each were 30 years ago. She set the scene with reminders of what was happening in the world and in Maine in 1987. Ellen had asked Alan Brooks, a founding member of QRLT, and Robert Miller, a founding member of Great Auk, about the conditions present in Washington County in 1987 that encouraged establishment of the land trusts. Those conditions were large land development projects in the area and the presence of MCHT as the "Jonny Appleseed" of land trusts helping to establish regional land trusts around Maine. The first meetings of the land trusts were held around kitchen tables. Many of the first projects were easements: QRLT established an easement on Stoneman Farm, Great Auk purchased Brownie Island.

Ellen then introduced and thanked the current DCC Directors

Remarks from Rich Bard, Executive Director: "Where we are now as a land trust"

Rich began by relating how much he enjoys meeting new people at every annual meeting. At this time, DCC has conserved over 6300 acres of land including over 60 miles of lake, river, and ocean shoreline; 39 conservation easements involving over 80 landowners; and 37 preserves owned by DCC, many are small parcels that are dedicated to wildlife, 15 have specific public access. The public access parcels are one of our most important connections with the local communities.

There are three important functions of the DCC staff: land acquisition projects, stewardship of the easements and owned properties, and community engagement. For a variety of reasons including availability of suitable parcels and the funds to acquire them, land acquisition will slow down. DCC will focus on two types of land acquisition projects in the near to mid-term: community-conservation projects and projects that will help to mitigate/accommodate the effects of climate change. Acquisition of land that will allow for potential salt marsh migration will be a particular focus.

Rich announced that on August 30, DCC will host a night of discussion on the effects of climate change in Washington County and the tools that DCC has available to evaluate projects. All members and the public are encouraged to attend. Watch for details and reminders on time and place.

Rich also announced that DCC is holding a membership drive that includes raffle prizes; a painting by retiring director Robert Miller and a night at the Peacock Inn in Lubec. Prizes will be awarded by drawing to one new member and one current member responsible for recruiting a new member.

Rich closed by introducing DCC staff

The Annual Meeting was called to order by Ellen at 2:59 pm

Minutes of 2016 Members Annual Meeting

MOTION: Approve the minutes of the 2016 annual meeting. PASSED unanimously.

Board Advancement Committee Report

David Dowley explained that we are recruiting new board members. Several of our current board members are, by policy, nearing the end of their terms.

The following individuals are nominated for three-year terms:

Ellen Hostert
Roger Clapp
Leslie Page
Dick Sturgeon
Helen Waite

MOTION: Approve the nominees for election to the DCC Board of Directors.
PASSED unanimously.

Recognition of retiring Directors

Ellen asked Robert Miller to come forward. Robert was a founding member of Great Auk and served as its president for many years. He was a strong supporter of the merger between Great Auk and QRLT. The Board conveyed a resolution of thanks and election of Robert as Director emeritus for life. Robert talked briefly about the influences in his life that made land conservation so much a part of him: Rachel Carson's Silent Spring was an early influence while he was in high school, a professor in college, and Alan Brooks at the time of establishment of Great Auk. Robert conveyed that while founding a land trust is important, those who maintain a land trust are doing the most important work.

Ellen spoke briefly in recognition of Jeremy Gabrielson. Jeremy has been a director of DCC for 8 years. He is now living in southern Maine working for MCHT. We are looking forward to continued work with him in his position with MCHT.

Remembrance of Mosely Waite

DCC lost a dear friend this past year in Mo. DCC expresses our condolences to Helen and her family.

Treasurer's Report

Les Coleman, shared a snap shot of DCC's financial condition, primarily in the form of two graphs attached to the copies of the 2016 minutes. He explained the types of revenue to DCC: unrestricted and dedicated grants. He noted that the federal grant depicted on the pie chart was to reimburse DCC for the purchase of Sheep Island. DCC also gets revenue (~\$85,000 in the past year) from investment of stewardship funds. These funds are invested at the Maine Community Foundation in an investment pool. The second pie chart illustrates how DCC spends its funds.

Questions and discussion from members:

It was noted that Ellen and Rich did an exceptional job coordinating their outfits for this event. ☺

Where is the best place to find new members?

Ellen made several suggestions describing the origin of many of DCC's current members.

Are there specific pieces of information that we could have to use in recruiting new members?

Holly has a number of items at the welcome table.

Would it be possible to set aside a few acres of land trust land for green burial sites?

Rich responded that although it is not a practice that DCC currently allows, it is something the board could consider.

Other than salt marsh migration, what types of climate mitigation projects might DCC be interested in?

Rich explained that landscape scale projects will provide "room" for animals and plants to move around, and natural river floodplains that mitigate storm runoff. These are examples of the types of actions DCC can take to make our area more resilient to the effects of climate change.

Les asked the members to spread the word about DCC: 1) all of our properties are open for public access including hunting and fishing 2) DCC pays property taxes or payment in lieu of taxes (PILOT) on all of our properties at the open space rate. In this past year those payments amounted to approximately \$22,000.

Are all of our properties open for other uses during hunting season? Yes.

Does DCC have donation boxes at our preserves?

Rich responded that although it has been discussed, it's not something that DCC is doing at this time.

The meeting adjourned for a picnic at 3:24 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Sherrie Sprangers, Secretary