



Marshland at Reynolds Marsh Overlook with Estey Mountain on the horizon

ORANGE RIVER CONSERVATION AREA

DOWNEAST COASTAL CONSERVANCY

The Downeast Coastal Conservancy (DCC) maintains and protects the Orange River Conservation Area 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, untrammled 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.

DOWNEAST COASTAL CONSERVANCY

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PADDLE AND HIKE WHITING!



DOWNEAST
COASTAL
CONSERVANCY

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HISTORY AND ACQUISITION

The Orange River Conservation Area is comprised of several separate parcels protected by Downeast Coastal Conservancy beginning in 2003. Thanks to the support of DCC's members, as of 2016 we have ensured that over 700 acres of land bordering Orange River, Little Lake and Roaring Lake will remain undeveloped forever. This includes over 9 miles of shoreline and 100 acres of important marsh, bog and swamp habitat.

Orange River Landing was formerly the site of a steam-powered sawmill in the early 1920's. Footings from the mill building can be seen in the bushes near the small boat launch at the end of Landing Road.

The Orange River dam belongs to the State of Maine's Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife. Water levels are maintained to provide optimal bird nesting habitat in the hundreds of acres of wetlands across the flowage. In a previous incarnation, the dam was used to provide electricity for the town of Lubec.

Some of the properties in the Orange River Conservation Area were purchased with funds from the Small Craft Access Trust and North American Wetlands Conservation Act Funds. Protection of all of the properties was made possible by the support of DCC members and the community.



Paddlers on the Orange River



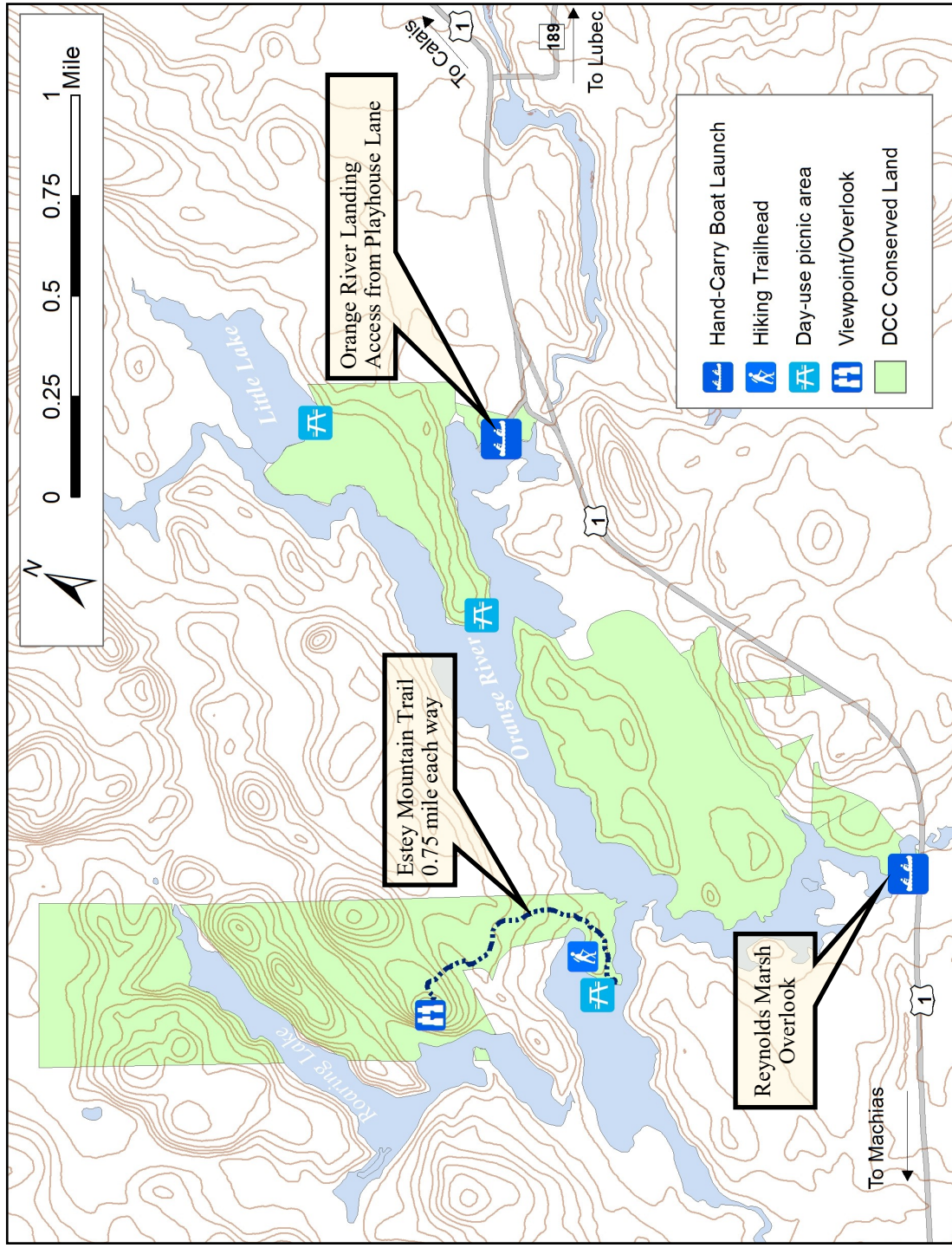
Beaver lodges dot the shores of the Orange River

NATURAL RESOURCES

The Orange River is one of the least developed coastal river systems left on the east coast. Historically, runs of alewives, brook trout and other sea-run fish enriched the ecosystem and the economy of the local region. A group of government and nonprofit organizations, including DCC, are working to restore fish passage at a series of dams in the Orange River watershed.

The marshes and wetlands that fringe the river provide excellent habitat for nesting ducks, as well as beavers, muskrat, otters, mink and many other kinds of animals. Please be respectful of birds on nests or with young if you visit in the spring or early summer. There have been sightings of Least Bittern, which are listed as an endangered species in Maine.

The uplands around the Orange River support the full range of wildlife found in this part of Maine, from mayflies to moose. DCC's most recently conserved parcel once provided critical wintering habitat for deer, but it was heavily harvested by a former owner. Under DCC's management, the dense stand of conifers will regrow to shelter deer and other wildlife from harsh winter winds and snow.



WATER TRAIL INFORMATION

Reynolds Marsh Overlook and Orange River Landing both provide water access for canoes and kayaks. The two launches are close enough to offer an easy one-way or round-trip paddle between them. Several day-use sites are ideal pullouts to stop for lunch or to watch for wildlife. Please respect private property by only landing on DCC properties, indicated in green on the map. Orange River Landing is about 2.5 miles downstream from Reynolds Marsh Overlook.

Please note that the Orange River is dammed to provide optimal habitat. Paddlers should expect higher water in the spring and early summer and lower water levels in late summer and fall. The beavers are quite active on the Orange River and their dams may span the width of the waterway at times.

The Estey Mountain hiking trail is relatively easy with a short steep pitch at the end. Access the trail by paddling to the trailhead shown on the map.

PRESERVE GUIDELINES

Our goal is to minimize human impact and protect this area's wildlife, plants and natural features while allowing low-impact public recreation. Help us protect this special place by observing the following guidelines:

- Visit only during daylight hours and at your own risk;
- Please practice “carry-in/carry-out” and “leave no trace” ethics;
- Camping, fires and ATVs are not permitted;
- Keep dogs under reliable voice control or on leash at all times;
- If you are out in early summer, please steer clear of nesting birds.

GETTING THERE

Reynolds Marsh Overlook

From the North, take US Route 1 to Whiting. Go 3 miles past the Route 189 turn-off. The parking lot will be on your right.

From the South, take Route 1 10.2 miles past the Route 191 turn-off in East Machias. Look for the parking lot on the left.

Orange River Landing

From the North, take US Route 1 to Whiting. Go 0.8 mile past the Route 189 turn-off to Lubecc. Turn right onto Playhouse Lane. Go 0.1 mile and turn right onto Landing Road. Take Landing Road past the house (where it becomes dirt) to the end where there is a small 2-car parking lot. For larger groups or vehicles with trailers, proceed past Landing Road to the end of Playhouse Lane, then turn right and unload near the dam. Please park without blocking access by other vehicles. Overflow vehicles can park on Playhouse Lane.

From the South, take US Route 1 12 miles past the Route 191 turn-off in East Machias. Look for Playhouse Lane on the left and proceed as instructed above.

Thank you for helping preserve the Orange River for current & future generations!