



## DOWNEAST COASTAL CONSERVANCY

The Downeast Coastal Conservancy (DCC) maintains and protects the Reversing Falls 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 assistance in conserving your land, please contact us.

DOWNEAST COASTAL CONSERVANCY

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# REVERSING FALLS PRESERVE



## HIKE PEMBROKE!



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COASTAL  
CONSERVANCY

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## REVERSING FALLS PRESERVE

### THE STORY OF REVERSING FALLS

Traditionally called Cobsook Falls, the reversing falls at Mahar Point are an unusual phenomenon on the Maine coast. The word Cobscook, derived from the Passamaquoddy word kapscook, means waterfalls. However, as the author Fannie Hardy Eckstorm writes in *Indian Place Names of the Maine Coast*, “these are not ordinary waterfalls; they are boiling tide over unseen rocks.”

On the incoming tide, the water filling Dennys and Whiting bays passes through the narrow channel between Mahar Point and Falls Island. In this channel, a huge ledge impedes the 9-12 knot current to create the falls, deep whirlpools and high swells. On the outgoing tide, the process occurs in the reverse direction, hence the reversing falls. A 12-foot drop between the two ends of the falls occurs at mid-tide.

The channel here provides a different experience at each stage of the tidal cycle. As the tide dramatically rises or falls (up to 24 feet every 6.4 hours), the channel transforms from peaceful, still water to a raging torrent and back again. Reversing Falls is well worth visiting at different times of the tide!



*At slack tide, the sounds of rushing waters quiet for a short time before the tide reverses. Because of the dramatic tides, Reversing Falls is well worth visiting at several tide stages.*

### NATURAL RESOURCES

Reversing Falls Preserve consists of 194 acres of conserved land, including 1.5 miles of shorefront.



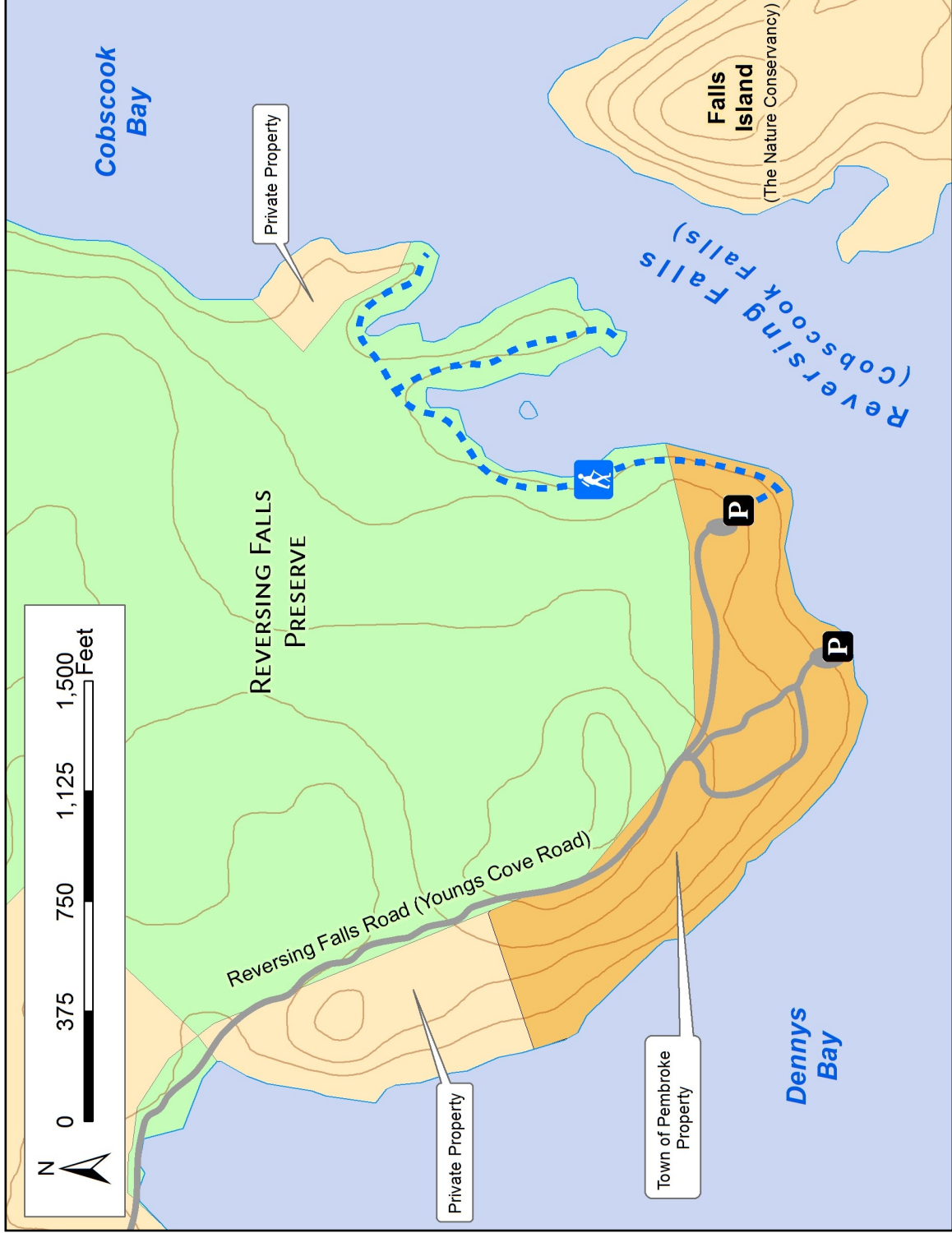
*Harbor seal resting on a rock.*

It is a perfect spot for wildlife watching. Seals can often be seen playing in the strong currents of the falls. Bald eagles and many species of waterfowl and migratory birds can be observed from the shore. Cobscook Bay is home to the highest density of nesting bald eagles in Maine. Thousands of shorebirds use Cobscook Bay as a stopover for nesting and feeding during their migration.

In winter, the strong tidal flow keeps the bay largely ice free, making it an attractive site for water fowl like black ducks and Canada geese.

Every incoming tide brings a fresh supply of nutrients from the Atlantic Ocean. These nutrients support the growth of seaweed and algae, as well as a multitude of shellfish, marine worms and other invertebrates.

Several spur trails allow hikers the opportunity to find a quiet place to watch for wildlife and enjoy the natural beauty of Reversing Falls.



TRAIL INFORMATION

The Town of Pembroke owns and maintains 32 acres including the parking area and fields. The hiking path starts from the eastern parking lot and continues along the wooded shore. Spur trails lead to rocky view points. Hikers can return via the same path or can return via an unimproved woods road to the parking lot.

PRESERVE GUIDELINES

Thank you for your stewardship and caring for the Reversing Falls 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.
- Do not feed or disturb wildlife.
- Visit only during daylight hours and at own risk.
- For safety, wear blaze orange during hunting season.
- Do not carve graffiti or initials in rocks, ledges, or trees.
- Fires, camping, ATVs, and snowmobiles are not allowed.
- Balsam fir tipping, plant collection and rockweed harvesting are not allowed.
- Please stay on walking path so as to not damage surrounding vegetation.
- Take care when walking as rocks may be slippery.



The currents at Reversing Falls change quickly. It is unsafe to wade or swim at any time. Boating should only be done with an experienced local guide. Watch young children and pets at all times.

GETTING TO REVERSING FALLS

Take Route 1 to Pembroke. Turn east onto the extension of Route 214, immediately beside the Irving gas station. Turn right at the stop sign, then take an immediate left up a small hill onto the Leighton Point Road. Continue 3.3 miles, then turn right onto Clarkside Road and continue for 1.2 miles. At the end of Clarkside Road, turn left onto a dirt road and continue for 1.5 miles to the parking area.

Thank you for helping preserve Reversing Falls for current & future generations!