



Lubec, Maine - Rodgers Island Conservation Easement

DCC Collaborates with the Town of Lubec in the Creation of Rodgers Island Bird Sanctuary

On September 18, 2019, Downeast Coastal Conservancy (DCC) attended a Town meeting in which the five members of the Town of Lubec Select Board signed one of DCC's most exciting conservation easements to date. The easement, which was the result of over a year of work, is to be held by DCC. Rodgers Island, located in Johnson Bay just off the coast of North Lubec, is close to Maine Coast Heritage Trust's Treat Island Preserve, DCC's Pikelands, and Klondike Preserves among other conserved lands. At twenty-two acres and with 6,900 feet of shoreline, Rodgers Island appears at high tide as two separate islands, but is in fact one island joined by a sand bar.

In 1979, Lubec resident, June Ives Dickerson, bequeathed Rodgers Island to the Town of Lubec with the intent that it was to be conserved as a bird sanctuary enjoyed by the people of Lubec. Since that time, it was believed the intent of the Last Will and Testament gave the Island the protections it needed. With recent threats from more invasive activities, such as

the commercial rockweed harvesting, the Town came to the realization that the sensitive habitat of Rodgers Island did not qualify as permanently conserved land as originally thought. It was further realized that more was needed to be done to manage the property as a sanctuary for birds as originally intended.

Executive Director, Jon Southern, met with the Town Administrator, Renee Gray, and the Select Board to discuss how DCC could work with the town in a community conservation effort. This meeting led to an invitation to collaborate with Lubec in looking at the most effective ways to ensure the community's vision for Rodgers Island was not only fulfilled, but ultimately oversee the conservation goals of the island's previous owners were achieved. A series of town votes in August and September 2018, saw the town's approval of placing Rodgers Island into permanent conservation. DCC began the work of writing the easement, baseline documentation, and easement management plan, all of which were approved by the town's elected

officials. DCC is grateful to its Board Member, Roger Clapp, and Stewardship Director, Kyle Winslow, for their extensive effort on bringing the easement documentation to life.

The easement will see a collaboration with several partners including the Maine Island Trails Association (MITA), who will assist with the management of day use activities and a spring clean-up of the island in 2020. DCC also hopes to work with the Maine Audubon as an advisor on bird sanctuary issues and public education.

DCC is grateful to Chris Bartlett of Maine Sea Grant who has been cataloguing bird species on Rodgers Island. Sixteen species of birds have

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Harrier Hawk





Thoughts from the Executive Director

By Jon Southern

With the early arrival of winter after one of the wettest summers in years, things are certainly not slowing down for the DCC team. Through the support of DCC's members, 2019 has been a remarkable year. Several new projects have either come to a successful conclusion or are well underway with more exciting projects, including new preserves, soon to be announced in the coming months. Many of these projects have or will include a strong approach towards community conservation.

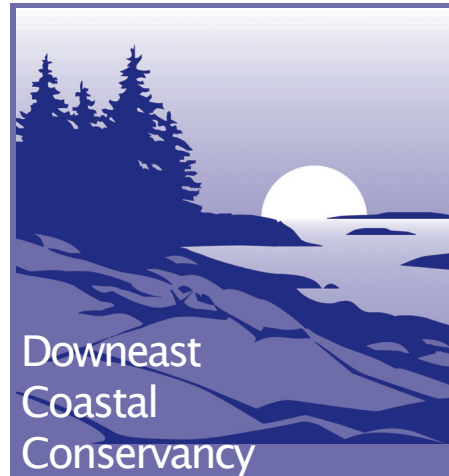
One outstanding accomplishment of 2019 is our partnership with the Town of Lubec. The Select Board and Town Administrator invited DCC to hold a Conservation Easement on a town owned property, which does not happen often in our region. This partnership highlights what can be achieved when land trusts, such as DCC, collaborate with municipalities in a true community conservation effort. As we look at future conservation projects, we hope to work more closely with our communities to help them become more involved in their own conservation efforts as they become more aware of the importance of protecting the critical natural resources of our region. 'Community conservation partnerships produce stronger and lasting conservation projects.'

As we continue to conserve these special places, it is important we never lose sight of the fact that we are doing so in perpetuity. In order to ensure this commitment is fulfilled, we must work with communities and involve them wherever possible in DCC's work. We can further develop collaboration at many levels from providing opportunities to serve on DCC's board and committees along with volunteer opportunities and through our outreach and education programs. I have been listening to many different voices in the communities and

looking closely at how DCC can best utilize our strengths to meet the needs of those community members. Our conservation work needs to become an integral part of the culture and future planning of our region. 'The importance of community conservation cannot be overstated if we are to nurture the next generation of good stewards.'

Looking ahead to 2020, as we continue to grow, protecting more areas in our remarkable region, it is important we look to future generations and how we will nurture them to become the future stewards of these properties. In an increasingly 'plugged-in' society, often allowing the stresses of technology and modern life to rule our free time, there is little doubt that strong positive physical and mental health benefits come from being able to enjoy the outdoors. As we look at future projects and acquisitions, it is important that we do not become complacent and simply assume that the lands for future generations will be conserved responsibly forever. Through quality environmental and outdoor education programming, strong partnerships, and consistent messaging, we must cultivate in our youth the true benefits of conservation and environmental awareness. We must also steward our properties in ways that foster a sense of community pride and ownership. This will involve looking at how we create a visitor-immersed experience for our preserves while ensuring protection of unique conservation values of those open spaces. 'Cultivating the next generation of stewards is an obligation and not optional if we are to ensure our work lasts in perpetuity.'

As always, I must express my gratitude to our members for your amazing support of the conservation work that I am so fortunate to be a part of at DCC. I always welcome your ideas, suggestions or calls to have a chat. Your membership is making a huge positive impact on the lives of so many.



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Stewardship Project Highlights

With the support of our members Downeast Coastal Conservancy (DCC) has been busy working to complete a number of projects with help from our volunteers, area students, and partners this past field season. Here are some highlights!

▶ A great group of students from Rose M. Gaffney School in Machias, through the Maine Sea Coast Mission's EdGE Afterschool Program, joined us for an Inland Fisheries and Wildlife hunter safety and conservation education course led by our Executive Director, Jon Southern.



▶ It was great to have the 2019 River Camp join us at Beaver Dam Stream and Estey Mountain this summer!



▶ The Klondike Mountain and Arboretum clean-up was a great effort by a group of volunteers closely tied to the arboretum that the late Alan Mead spearheaded. Thanks to the DownEast EcoSattvas for helping to organize the Pike Lands Clean up and the great group of volunteers who came out (on what was supposed to be a rather rainy day) to clean up the beach at the Pike Lands Preserve!

▶ We made some great headway with work at the Machias River Preserve on the Homestead Trail with help from some of our regular volunteers, volunteers from Machias Savings Bank, and a great group of high school students from Machias High School!!



▶ A huge thank you to the Maine Island Trail Association, Maine Coast Heritage Trust, and a truly outstanding group of volunteers for a tremendous clean-up effort on Browney Island.

Thank you so much to all of our wonderful volunteers and partners; without you, none of this is possible!

Special Highlight

This past summer, Downeast Coastal Conservancy Stewardship Director, Kyle Winslow and the Downeast Salmon Federation (DSF) worked with a group of students from the Passamaquoddy Tribe's Beatrice Rafferty School at Pleasant Point. This small but mighty group helped improve a trail at Middle River Park and, in conjunction with a salt marsh restoration project DSF is leading, helped collect data through fish seining at Schoppee Marsh in Machias. This particularly hot week in July was not so good for trail work (though the heat didn't seem to slow the students down much!) but was great for playing in a marsh. Sarah Madronal, Fisheries Biologist with DSF, led the fish seining activity. Students had the opportunity to observe several species of fish that use salt marshes like Schoppee Marsh as refuge during their vulnerable juvenile stages, learned about the important role salt marshes play in the complex intertidal ecosystem, and, most importantly, got their hands dirty! Thanks to the Be-

atrice Rafferty Environmental Summer Camp for the help this summer, and to the Downeast Salmon Federation for the collaborative effort in getting these students out in the field!



Caption

Family Life in Conservation-Craig & Barbara Snapp Nail It

By Bob Jean

When you are hiking on one of DCC's trails, are you ever curious about the people who are making our land conservation efforts happen? Have you ever wanted to participate in preserving these precious lands, so they endure for future generations to enjoy? Well, you can!

Craig and Barbara Snapp and their family's conservation efforts lead by example.

If you've ever been to DCC's Pigeon Hill Preserve on Petit Manan Point you may very well have met Craig and Barbara, their children and their grandchildren. For the Snapps, land conservation has been a family affair.

Craig and Barbara met while in college on a blind date set up by one of Barbara's roommates. They quickly found common ground in their passions about science, exploring the great outdoors, and land conservation. Both Craig and Barbara earned Cornell PhDs; Barbara in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology and Craig in Applied Physics. Craig went to work in research and development for major Silicon Valley tech companies, and Barbara taught science at the high school, college and university level while they made their home in Palo Alto, CA.

The Snapps' support for conservation in the San Francisco Bay area focused



on local issues and contributions to larger organizations like the Sierra Club and The Nature Conservancy. After retirement Craig volunteered with Friends of Foothill Park and the California Chapter of TNC where he provided technical mapping and photography support for local trail and land conservation projects.

Barbara had spent her childhood scaling DCC's Pigeon Hill Preserve since she was 7 years old with her father, about whom she says, "My dad climbed it often in his childhood and loved it. There was no way a child of my father could help but be attached to Pigeon Hill. And it has THE BEST VIEWS on the Downeast coast!"

She introduced Craig, who was brought up in western Ohio, to the Downeast Maine coast. He fell in love with it - and, he jokingly says, married Barbara because he figured it was the only way he would be able to return to that wonderful stretch of shore. While the Snapps had been involved with conservation in California, their interest in conserving undeveloped areas in southern Washington County - especially on Petit Manan Point - became their focus.

Barbara's dad became interested in trying to purchase and preserve Pigeon Hill around 1990 when the east slope came up for sale. He was unsuccessful. But like most dads of daughters, he'd certainly be proud that the daughter he

raised and his future son-in-law would help get that job done. Barbara and Craig were thrilled to assist in finishing the dream he envisioned when the Great Auk Land Trust, in partnership with the Maine Coast Heritage Trust, campaigned to purchase Pigeon Hill some 15 years later. At about the same time, Barbara and her two brothers gifted land nearby that included a critical shorebird feeding and roosting site. GALT, later merging with Quoddy Regional Land Trust to form DCC, was the beneficiary of the conservation-minded efforts of this family.

For Craig - the former Boy Scout - Pigeon Hill and its popular trail system has become a passion. Barbara is quick to acknowledge this, saying "I'll let Craig talk about Pigeon Hill, since he has put much more sweat into it than I have," adding, "and I'm so proud of him for doing that!" Craig says he is particularly proud of the triple-loop trail system with interpretive signs that he designed and organized volunteers to construct.

Craig and Barbara continue to be involved in stewarding the lands their family has helped conserve. Barbara is chief steward of the shorebird preserve and Craig serves in the same capacity for Pigeon Hill. Each has written the management plan for their respective property. Both of them monitor Pigeon Hill and the shorebird preserve each year and have enlisted others to share in these efforts.

Craig and Barbara have been very careful to instill a concern for conservation in their children and grandchildren. Their two daughters and

their husbands and three grandchildren have developed a strong interest in outdoor activities, so the camping and hiking tradition continues in their family. And they all enjoy hiking Pigeon Hill frequently during the summers. Two of the grandchildren have been taken on week-long "Adventures in Maine" by their grandparents. The Snapps have begun to hold "Donation Dinners" every Christmas holiday to stress the importance of charitable giving. Each child, spouse and grandchild choose a charity to receive a modest contribution that Craig and Barbara fund. While most family members have supported various social issues, one grandchild, in particular, has ALWAYS picked the "World Wildlife Fund". Perhaps that grandchild is one that could become a future DCC board member!

But the Snapps, similar to many of DCC's founding and long-term members, understand that to endure in a healthy way, DCC will have to add new and younger members. Barbara and Craig have put years of work into DCC and hope that younger enthusiasts will step up to serve in the decades to come.

Barbara likes to tell those who enjoy our lands and trails, and who would like to help expand these resource treasures: "If you don't conserve it now, it won't be there in the future. Since everything is interconnected, the impact will reach far beyond a single property or effort. Conservation needs to be a community effort." Barbara's experience suggests that if you contribute to DCC you will be rewarded. "What brings a sense of fulfillment is being able to contribute to something that I'm



passionate about and that will make a broad difference in the present and, in particular, into the future".

Craig has these words of wisdom if you would like to become more involved in expanding and supporting DCC's conservation efforts for future generations: "It's been said that nobody can do everything, but everyone can do something to support the things they care about in life. Work hard but not too hard. Live in reality as revealed by the scientific process. Celebrate all life and nurture the Earth. Keep exploring and looking up!"

Conservation needs people like you! Please keep that in mind as you hike and enjoy the lands that DCC's founding pioneers have provided to you. While the Snapps recognize that there is a role for everyone, Barbara points out that DCC needs people who can help with fundraising in particular. And Craig adds "Being able to interact effectively with local town governments and residents for the common good" is essential.

DCC needs your contribution to keep our work going. If you would like to become more involved you can contact

our Executive Director, Jon Southern, at Jon@DowneastCoastalConservancy.org, our Land Stewart Director, Kyle Winslow, at Kyle@DowneastCoastalConservancy.org, or me at Bob@DowneastCoastalConservancy.org. You can also email any of us to be put on a list for a 2020 Full Moon Hike At Pigeon Hill where you are likely to meet these two conservation heroes, Barbara and Craig Snapp. Everyone who attends these moon hikes will tell you: "They are a BLAST!!"





Addition to West Carrying Place Cove Preserve

By Roger Clapp, DCC Board Member

On October 24, 2019, DCC acquired 8.8 acres with 950 feet of shoreline on West Carrying Place Cove in Harrington. This parcel, known as Lot 14, has been added to DCC's adjacent 38-acre West Carrying Place Cove Preserve. DCC acquired Lot 14 to preserve its habitat.

In addition to being next to an existing DCC preserve, Lot 14 has outstanding conservation values, especially for habitat protection. West Carrying Place Cove and Lot 14 are in a rich ecological area. They are located in three of four North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA) national priority areas, in three Atlantic Coast Joint Venture bird focus areas, in a Beginning with Habitat statewide focus area and in a Maine Coast Heritage Trust (MCHT) Whole Place. Lot 14's high percentage of intertidal wetlands are important in counting NAWCA project acreage. Its extensive mud flats at low tide provide tidal wading bird and waterfowl significant habitat rated moderate or high value waterfowl and wading bird habitat by the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife under the Maine Natural Resources Protection Act. Because the Maine Department of Environmental Protection has designated the area where Lot 14 is located as having significant wildlife habitat, Lot 14 is in a Resource Protection District under the Town of Harrington's Shoreland Zoning Ordinance. (In Resource Protection Districts structures are prohibited within 250 feet from the

highwater line, a restriction which is of no consequence to DCC's objective of habitat protection.) Given Lot 14's location in such an extraordinarily rich ecological area, it should not be surprising that Lot 14 is surrounded within a three-mile radius by fourteen conservation properties, four owned by the State of Maine, three by MCHT and seven by DCC.

Although no formal trails are planned for the 47-acre West Carrying Place Cove Preserve, its open woods offer delightful walks for the public to enjoy. Starting at a pin near Ripley Neck Road, an informal trail slopes mostly downhill through beautiful woods to the shoreline. This trail leads to the most outstanding feature of the property, an ecologically productive salt marsh next to West Carrying Place Cove. Prior to DCC's acquiring Lot 14, DCC's West Carrying Place Cove Preserve only included about half of this salt marsh, the other half being on Lot 14. Now, the entire salt marsh, part of which is shown in the accompanying photo, is owned and preserved by DCC.

This project demonstrates the strong partnership ties which exist among Downeast land trusts. Based on Lot 14's extraordinary ecological values, MCHT included Lot 14 in a recent NAWCA grant application, and Pleasant River Wildlife Foundation made an interest-free loan to DCC to provide funds for the purchase price. DCC will repay the loan from the proceeds of MCHT's NAWCA grant, if awarded as expected, or from other fund raising.

There is another beneficial aspect of DCC's purchase of Lot 14. The seller of

Bad Little Trail Run

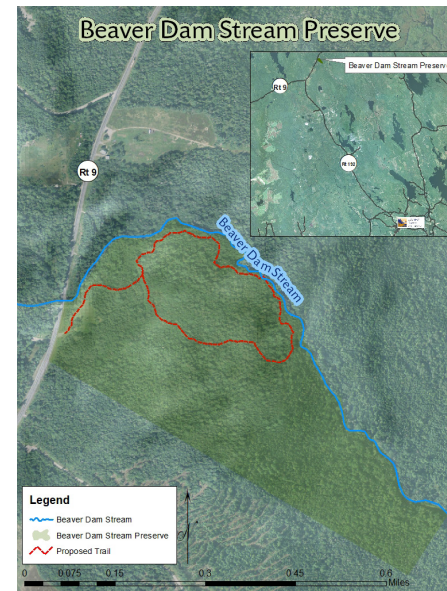
The 3rd Annual Bad Little Trail Run was a great success this year! We had over 50 runners participate from all over the state. The trail run was part of the Downeast Conservation Trail Race Series, a series of six trail runs hosted by conservation organizations in Downeast Maine. The 2.5 and 7 mile courses offer a challenging, mostly single track, off road running experience, touring the winding trails of the Machias River Preserve and a portion of the Downeast Sunrise Trail. Following the run, we enjoyed some lovely food, accompanied by hot apple cider and a fire (and, of course, s'mores)! A big thank you and congratulations to all participants! The run would not be possible without our many volunteers and we would like to thank all who helped put on the run and helped keep runners safe and on track! We would like to thank our many sponsors who supported the race: Mark Wright Construction, Leighton Jewelry & Design, Downeast Community Hospital who also supported the run with a first aid tent, Pineo's Hardware, Points East Realty, Peter Knowles Chiropractic, Helen's Restaurant, Hanscom Construction, Whitney Originals, and King Construction. We would also like to give a big thank you to the Bold Coast Runners. The group did so much to make the run possible, including timing, course setup, awards, registration and more. Thank you everyone for making this great community event possible and for supporting conservation in Downeast Maine!

2019 Eleanor Graf Senior Paddle from Middle River Park to the Route 1 Causeway.



Coming Soon – Beaver Dam Stream Trails!

The Downeast Coastal Conservancy (DCC) has been working on a project at one of our lesser known unique properties, a property that is a little further from the better known coastal properties our name is so often be associated with. Meandering along the northern boundary of DCC's region is a property with an important connection to the coastal ecosystems we put much of our conservation focus on. In the town of



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been observed on the island during Chris's visits. Furthermore, observations have highlighted the importance of Rockweed as an essential foraging habitat for several of these species. While Rodgers Island is more critical as a stopover or feeding ground for many species, Chris noted that several of the observed species might find suitable habitat to nest on the island. In fact, on a first visit to the island, DCC staff observed a nesting Bald Eagle with a juvenile Eagle that remained on the island for much of the summer. Bald Eagles, along with Northern Harriers, and White-Throated Sparrows are among three species of special concern on the island. The densely forested island pro-

vides an ideal feeding stop over for several species of birds including wading shorebirds and waterfowl. With some of the largest tidal ranges on the East Coast, Rodgers Island provides a natural buffer protecting a high quality habitat for a variety of marine life in the bay. DCC intends to work with local residents to assist in the restoration of nearby clam fisheries. While more specifically focused on ensuring a suitable habitat as a bird sanctuary, the conservation easement does accommodate low impact recreational use, installation of a bird observation blind, and small craft access to a picnic area on the island's northside. The picnic area overlooks the stunning Johnsons Bay, surrounding islands, Cobscook Bay,

the Downeast Salmon Federation, large wood additions to increase fish habitat diversity by Project SHARE, and an impressive Atlantic salmon restoration stocking effort led by DSF with help from many partners. DCC understands the importance of protecting fresh water habitat for migratory fish such as river herring, American eel, sea lamprey, and Atlantic salmon that will use the very coastal habitats we focus much of our conservation efforts on, such as coastal salt marshes, as they make their transition from life in fresh water to salt water, and vice versa. We are excited to share some of the truly impactful work we are all doing and give you an opportunity to explore this great preserve and beautiful piece of Downeast Maine - just remember your bug spray; clean water means healthy flies!

Funds for signage for this project were provided by the Ed Meadows Conservation Fund of the Maine Community Foundation in honor of his parents who instilled love of nature and commitment to community service. Ed Meadows was Maine Department of Conservation Commissioner 1988 - 1995 and Direc-

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and out towards Eastport. In the 1980's the Town of Lubec acquired a small parcel of land on the mainland overlooking the island from North Lubec Road for use as an access to Rodgers Island by canoes and kayaks. This piece of land was not included in the easement in order to allow the Town to develop future recreational access or facilities. The area has a rich tidal wading bird and waterfowl population and extensive marine life, which is a major attraction to visitors of this area.





DOWNEAST COASTAL CONSERVANCY

PO
Machias, ME 04654

Box

760

Community Partners in Conservation Spotlight Inside!

www.DowneastCoastalConservancy.org

info@DowneastCoastalConservancy.org

Telephone: (207) 255-4500

Facebook: [facebook.com/DowneastCoastalConservancy](https://www.facebook.com/DowneastCoastalConservancy)

The mission of the Downeast Coastal Conservancy is the conservation of the natural habitats and resources of the coastal watersheds, islands and communities of Washington County, Maine, for present and future generations.

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New Community Preserve Coming in 2020

