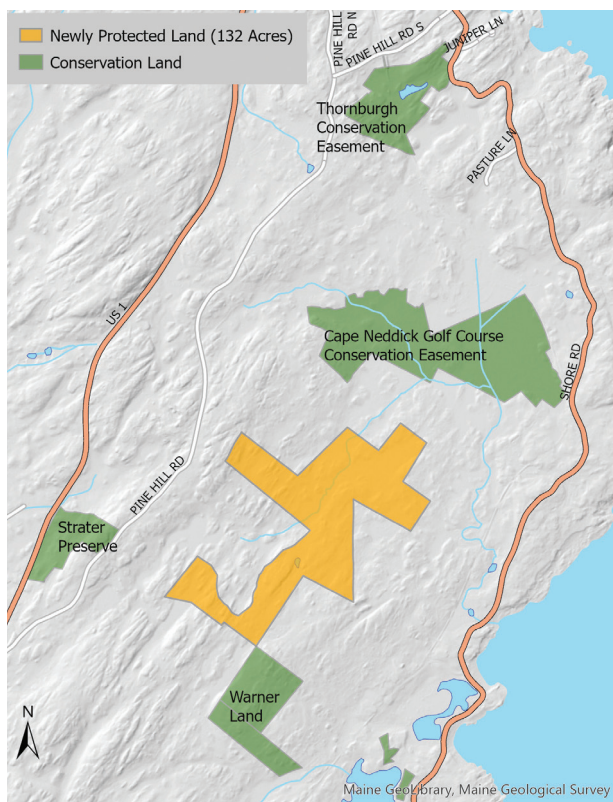


LANDMARKS

132 Acres of Forested Land Protected in Cape Neddick Focus Area



The 132 acres that we protected fall within a 1,150-acre patch of undeveloped land east of Route 1 where we have focused our conservation efforts in recent years.

The new property includes hiking trails that local community members enjoy exploring, and that we hope to add to over time.

In our ongoing efforts to conserve open space in York, we strive to reach and serve the entire expanse of our town. Recognizing that we had very few conserved lands east of Route One in Cape Neddick, we held a series of listening sessions with residents of that area to learn about the land they most cherish around their homes, the views they most appreciate, and the plants and wildlife they most care about protecting. We then strategized as an organization to see how we might accomplish protecting more lands in that region.

The result was the formulation of a Focus Area of 1,150-acres situated within a largely undeveloped block of forested land in Cape Neddick between Pine Hill Road and Shore Road. This area is in close proximity to the coast and hosts a diversity of wildlife, including wading birds and waterfowl and a handful of rare species such as Needham's Skimmer (dragonfly) and Citrine Forktail (damselfly). Wetlands in the region behave as powerful natural sponges that prevent flooding and erosion during heavy storms, while also supporting vernal pools that provide habitat for sensitive amphibian and aquatic species. A network of trails exists in the area that local residents enjoy year-round, with rocky ledges that offer views of the ocean.

- continued on page 6



The York Land Trust is a member-supported, nonprofit organization dedicated to conserving and protecting lands of ecological, historic, scenic, agricultural and cultural significance in the greater York, Maine area, for the benefit of all.

THE YORK LAND TRUST
1 LONG NECK MARSH RD.
YORK, ME 03909
Telephone: 207-363-7400
E-mail: info@yorklandtrust.org

For more information, please visit our website: www.yorklandtrust.org



The Mount Agamenticus to the Sea Conservation Initiative (MtA2C) is an effort led by a coalition of ten national, regional and local partners to protect a network of connected conservation lands and natural resources within a 48,000-acre focus area in Southern Maine for the benefit of people and wildlife.

The MtA2C Partners include: the US Fish and Wildlife Service/Rachel Carson National Wildlife Refuge, the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, the Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve, Maine Coast Heritage Trust, the Trust for Public Land, The Nature Conservancy, Great Works Regional Land Trust, Kittery Land Trust, York Land Trust and York Rivers Association.

For more information, please visit www.mta2c.org.

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Amidst all that may divide us in the world these days, land conservation offers the opportunity to unite and work together in deeply meaningful ways. It is the key to safeguarding our drinking water, food production, clean air, animal habitat, outdoor recreational pursuits and the absorption of excess carbon dioxide from the atmosphere.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

According to Andrew Bowman, President and CEO of the Land Trust Alliance, the United States loses a football field of natural lands to roads, houses, pipelines and other development every 30 seconds. Forty acres of farmland in the United States are lost to development every hour. And since 1970, North America has lost an estimated 3 billion birds — roughly a third of our avian population.

These are just some of the reasons that President Biden has issued an executive order calling for the conservation of 30% of the nation's land by the year 2030. During his inaugural address, the President acknowledged the importance of local land trusts in reaching this ambitious goal, stating that, "America's farms and forests, its rivers and coasts and its mountains and meadows are common objects of our love. Conserving these places through community-based organizations like local land trusts can unite us and help us find common ground."

The 30x30 goal may be ambitious, but it's certainly not unattainable in York. About 15% of land in York is already permanently protected; another 12% is made up of municipal and water district lands. If those lands became permanently conserved, the overall percentage of conserved lands in York would increase to 27%. So, reaching 30%

by 2030 is both a laudable and realistic goal — and one that our community should rally around and work to achieve.

What is exciting now is how much more we can accomplish with new federal and state funding initiatives, and with the support of local community groups. A draft of the York Climate Action Plan lists as a top strategy to "Sustain and improve landscape-level climate resiliency and carbon storage, and accelerate permanent land conservation." York Ready for 100% is also working toward a greener and brighter future, and is in support of land conservation as a means to this end.

Alongside this town-wide momentum, York Land Trust will continue in its mission to protect our town's forests, fields, wetlands, and rivers for the benefit of all. Working together, I know we can meet ambitious land protection goals for 2030 and beyond.

Sincerely,
Cliff O'Connor

Honoring a Dedicated Volunteer

We wish to recognize and thank Board Member, **Jared Chase** who stepped off the YLT Board of Directors this fall at the end of a nine-year term.

During his Board tenure, Jared contributed to the success of numerous fundraising campaigns for land acquisitions and was an articulate and passionate spokesperson for YLT including his appearance in York Land Trust's *No Place Like Home* video.

A seasoned leader, Jared brought with him a wealth of experience and knowledge of land conservation having served as a long-time board member and Board Chair of Mass Audubon, the largest conservation group in New England. We have benefited from his sage advice and guidance along with his encouragement and generosity. He is always ready to go the extra mile to benefit the Land Trust's Mission. For this, we are so grateful.



Always ready to go the extra mile, Jared Chase received a custom walking stick as a token of thanks from YLT Executive Director Doreen MacGillis.

New Boardwalk Installation at Hilton-Winn Preserve



YLT is making improvements to increase the longevity of the pathway and safety of visitors on the Boardwalk Trail at Hilton-Winn Preserve.

If you've passed by Hilton-Winn Preserve recently, you will have noticed trail work underway along the Boardwalk Trail, beginning at the preserve entrance. We're in the process of repairing our lengthy stretch of boardwalk that, over the past 20 years, has experienced enough wear and tear to warrant significant upgrades. With generous support from the Jane B. Cook 1992 Charitable Trust, Stewardship Director Paul Gagnon and a dedicated crew of volunteers have been working hard to replace old planks and elevate sections prone to flooding during heavy storms, in an effort to increase the longevity of the pathway and ensure that it remains safely passable for many years to come.

We plan to resume work on this project in the spring. In the meantime, we have reopened the trail for public access, but encourage you to pass at your own risk. For an alternative access to the preserve trails, you may park at Great Works Regional Land Trust's Kenyon Hill Preserve just 1.5 miles down the road.

The Boardwalk Trail offers views of a floodplain forest along the Ogunquit River where wetland reeds, grasses, and mosses grow, as well as red maples and other water-tolerant trees. Osprey and great blue herons frequent this stretch of the river.

The trail connects with a network of routes that traverse through abutting conservation land managed by Hilton-Winn Farm and Great Works Regional Land Trust. Together, this network encompasses more than 3 miles of trails across more than 400 acres of conserved land. That mileage may continue to expand in the future, thanks to the recent acquisition of a 157-acre parcel by Great Works Regional Land Trust that abuts the eastern boundary of our preserve.

We appreciate your patience as we carry out our work on the Boardwalk Trail, and look forward to completing this project so that you may more easily enjoy exploring this special property.

A way to help pay for paradise - *Ala Reid*

When I was a child, we lived in a Boston suburb with an empty lot right in the middle of the block. All the houses had neatly tended gardens, but "our" lot was about 2 acres of overgrown shrubs, huge trees and hiding places galore. There was also a cellar hole with a step-on garbage pail that still functioned, much to our delight. I never knew what had happened to the house, but its loss created a paradise for neighborhood children. We cut a hole through the wire fence at the back of our garden and slipped through after school. Others did the same. On weekends, we were out there all day.

One day, the lot was sold and a new house built. Even though I was in college, I was devastated. That was the moment I became dedicated to land conservation, even though I didn't realize it at the time.

Years later, my husband and I moved to Maine. I became a member of York Land Trust and enjoyed helping save special places for other little girls. Recently York Land Trust had an opportunity to acquire Julia Clough's big fields beside the Trust's headquarters.

I wanted to make a larger gift than usual but did not have the cash on hand. But what I did have was a highly appreciated security that I didn't want to hold any longer. By donating that security to York Land Trust, I was able to help acquire a new paradise for children of all ages that will be there forever.



YLT Welcomes New Board Members



Steve Bousquet grew up in Vermont but had the good fortune to vacation in York for many years. He and his wife, Kathy, who is a Maine native, moved to York permanently 7 years ago. Steve's interest in YLT comes from his involvement as a park commissioner for the Hubbard Park, a 150-acre wilderness park bequeathed to the City of Montpelier in the 1890s. He currently serves on YLT's Lands Committee and is honored to join the YLT Board of Directors.



Gail Gilcrest grew up on the south shore of Boston. Until four years ago she lived in Pennsylvania where she raised her family and had a 30-year career at Penn State University. Upon retirement, Gail moved to York where her daughter and family reside. Gail, a long-time supporter of conservation efforts, is a member York Land Trust's Outreach and Education Committee. She is delighted to be joining the YLT Board.



Greg Wagoner has lived full or part-time in York County for over 40 years. Passionate about aquatic environments since childhood, he majored in marine biology and did research at the Marine Biological Laboratory in Woods Hole, MA before becoming a physician. He has served on boards of hospitals, medical groups, and homeless service agencies. As a member of the Advancement Committee of YLT, he has been introduced to the important work of the organization and has a keen interest in helping to conserve our beautiful local environment.

Self-Guided Scavenger Hunt *Now Available at Smelt Brook Preserve*

We recently made our Smelt Brook Preserve Scavenger Hunt available in laminated form at the preserve trailhead, in an effort to expand your opportunities to engage with and learn about the land while out on the trails. These materials are designed for hikers of all ages and experience levels; we encourage you to take one of the three copies along with you on your hike, and return it when you are done.

We have also created a new history-themed scavenger hunt for Hilton-Winn Preserve, and plan to post it at the parking lot kiosk once we complete our scheduled maintenance there.

You can find digital PDFs of these materials at www.yorklandtrust.org/explore.

Happy sleuthing!





FULLER FOREST DEDICATION AND WALK

Saturday, October 23, 2pm - 4pm (rain date-Oct. 24, 2pm)
Fuller Forest Preserve, Bartlett Road, York

We welcome you to join us for a celebratory official opening of our Fuller Forest Preserve. Come see what makes this property unique and learn about the significant community effort that permanently protected it. After a brief program and light refreshments, explore the new trails on a guided hike led by YLT staff. This event is free but space is limited due to parking. Please register in advance to reserve your spot by emailing us at reservations@yorklandtrust.org or by calling 207-363-7400, ext. 5.

CONSERVATION CONVERSATIONS

Brandon Keim | Thursday, Oct. 21 | 6pm - 7pm
Michelle Nijhuis | Thursday, Nov. 18 | 6pm - 7pm

Join us for Conservation Conversations, a series of virtual talks with authors of conservation-themed books. Upcoming guests include **Brandon Keim**, a Maine-based journalist and author of the book *Meet the Neighbors* on animal personhood and cognition; and **Michelle Nijhuis**, an award-winning journalist and author of *Beloved Beasts*, a history of the modern animal conservation movement. Register at www.yorklandtrust.org/events.



BIRD WALK WEDNESDAYS

Monthly on 3rd Wednesdays | 9am - 10:30am
Highland Farm Preserve

Throughout the fall and winter, we will continue to offer our monthly Bird Walk Wednesdays on the third Wednesday of each month, in collaboration with White Pine Programs. We'll look and listen for birds on the trails, learn how to ID birds by sight and sound, and discuss what makes this area such great bird habitat. Beginner birders welcome; open to all ages. Register at www.yorklandtrust.org/events.

FUNGI FORAGERS WITH CENTER FOR WILDLIFE

Wednesday, October 27 | 5:30pm - 6:30pm | YLT Headquarters

A wide variety of edible fungi grow throughout our region, including on York Land Trust properties. Along with this diversity of fungi comes a variety of animals who like to eat them! In this program, you'll learn how animals identify which mushrooms are tasty and which are deadly — and the environmental conditions that allow so many mushrooms to thrive here in southern Maine. You'll meet wildlife ambassadors from the Center For Wildlife, learn about omnivore foraging techniques, and discover what it takes for animals to find food in the wild! Register at www.yorklandtrust.org/events.





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VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Interested in getting your hands dirty and helping out with trail work on our preserves? We'd love to hear from you. We have a series of projects underway that require volunteer support, particularly on the weekends throughout this fall. To learn more, contact Laura Poppick, lpoppick@yorklandtrust.org, or visit <https://yorklandtrust.org/volunteer>.

Invite your friends to connect
online: yorklandtrust.org



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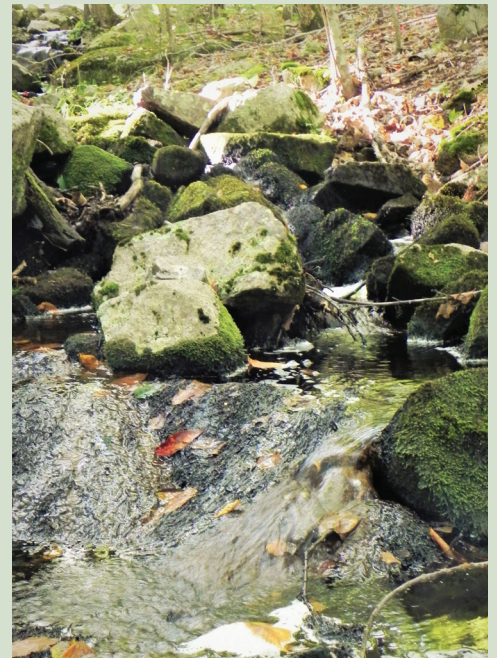
Land Protected in Cape Neddick - *continued from page 1*

We established this Focus Area, in part, out of concerns about mounting development pressures in this region and related threats to local wildlife habitat. It was this development pressure that motivated landowner David Weare to contact York Land Trust in 2018 to discuss the possibility of selling his land for conservation, so that the trove of plants and animals that live there may continue to have access to large swathes of unfragmented habitat.

We're now thrilled to report that we have purchased 132 acres of David's land located east of Pine Hill Road in the new Focus Area. "We were fortunate to secure dedicated funds to support this project and are grateful for the generosity that made it possible," says Doreen MacGillis, YLT Executive Director.

This land has been in the Weare family for hundreds of years, with their earliest presence dating back to the 1600s. Over the centuries, members of the family farmed and pastured the land. Today, David enjoys exploring the property by foot on trails around his home, and takes comfort in knowing that it will remain undeveloped for the benefit of plants and animals in perpetuity. "I'm glad to be able to continue to hear the owls hooting after sunset," David says.

There are now five parcels of land protected in our Cape Neddick Focus Area; we currently have a 6th parcel under contract that will bring our total conserved acreage in this region to 261 acres. We're delighted with this progress, and plan to continue reaching out to land owners to expand on what we have protected so far. We hope to eventually secure land with road frontage so that we may establish a parking area and public access to trails. In the meantime, we look forward to keeping you updated on our progress in protecting land in this region.



The streams and wetlands within our newly acquired 132 acres help gather water during storms and prevent flooding in surrounding neighborhoods.