



PLANNING BEGINS JUNE 6th FOR CURTIS HOMESTEAD CONSERVATION AREA

Area Resident & Member Input Welcome

Efforts are underway to prepare a Conservation Plan for the Curtis Homestead Conservation Area in Leeds. Many thanks to volunteer Andy Bosworth for organizing the June 6th community meeting at the Leeds Elementary School. Come join us and the area community at 7:00 pm to discuss what will become another of our well-managed and well-used properties.

The Curtis Homestead Conservation Area is a 360-acre property of fields, woods, and wetlands given to the KLT by former Governor Kenneth Curtis and his sister Rebecca Merideth in order to protect the family homestead from development. The family wants the property to be available for a range of outdoor recreational and education activities. In addition, in transferring the property, the family encouraged the KLT to manage the woodlot for timber. The Board has begun to develop a forest management plan with the green-certified Two Trees Forestry consulting firm that protects the property's special values and enhances the existing timber stand.

The Board would like to see the property widely used and appreciated by the public. In order to find out ways that we can appropriately use the property, we need to hear from local residents and members. We hope to come away from the June 6th meeting with many good ideas that the stewards and the Board can use to develop a management plan.

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HELP SPRUCE UP THE CURTIS PROPERTY!

**Thursday
evenings**

6:00 - 8:00

May 10, 17, 24

&

Saturday

May 12

9:00 - 12:00

Bring loppers,
hammers, and nail
pullers to clean up the
barbed wire and the
fields

Contact:

Andy Bosworth

933-6023

Jim Connors

933-4293

For directions &
further information



THANKS TO ALL OUR ANNUAL FUND DONORS! - SEE PAGE 7

Dear Members & Friends,

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

One of my tasks as President is tending to organizational vitality and longevity. In January, Board and advisory members gathered in a retreat to consider the organizational development of the KLT. Why? As the Trust grows, the magnitude of its responsibilities also grows, putting a strain on the capacity to maintain functions and meet obligations, especially as a volunteer organization. We reviewed our past accomplishments and discussed frankly how we can continue to meet our growing new ones.

I can report that the organization is alive and well, still burning with the fervor of volunteerism, but limits remain to what we can get done. There clearly is need for more volunteers, and the question of hiring professional assistance or staff is open for discussion. The Board will continue to discuss how we grow. As always, we welcome your input.

I always enjoy reporting on land conservation activities, and this edition is no exception. John and Mary Perkins have acted to protect a visually prominent section of the shoreland of Androscoggin Lake in Wayne. Discussions between the KLT and the landowner unfolded over a period of almost ten years, culminating with the land owners generous decision to keep this land in its natural condition to maintain its scenic and open space values.

And the mother of land projects, the 6,100-acre Kennebec Highlands project, which the KLT has been supporting and assisting, is now coming together. This project is nothing short of a miracle, from the inspiration of its inception, through many tests of faith in arranging and funding multiple land purchases. We are finishing up our fundraising campaign with local businesses to help provide the private funding needed to bring this project to final reality.

The Stewardship Committee is hard at work revitalizing our stewardship procedures to insure that basic stewardship responsibilities are being carried out in a professional and organized way. This year we began the stewardship of the Curtis Homestead Conservation Area in Leeds by working with the local community on a management plan. Stewards have also been busy getting Norris Island ready for another season of camping, a new sign will be placed on the Mathews Conservation Area in Fayette, and a variety of other activities are planned for other properties.

In the area of education and outreach, on April 12th the Trust sponsored an evening program for municipal officials from the towns served by the KLT to share new research and experience on the value of conserved lands at the town level.

And as always, all of this good work does not get done without the financial help of members and supporters. We are very pleased to acknowledge in this issue the support provided by all of you who responded to the annual appeal. I always run out of space in these messages to recap all of the great things being accomplished, but I hope you can see that the common denominator in all of our activities is volunteerism. As loyal and supportive members, stay involved, there is a lot to get done.

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Robert Weston	<i>E. Winthrop</i>
Henry Whittemore	<i>Readfield</i>

In Trust,

Jim Connors



WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST MEMBERS

3

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We are growing – acre by acre and member by member.

Registration Boxes Constructed

Look for the terrific new registration boxes at our KLT properties around the region. Many thanks to Maranacook High School Industrial Arts students and faculty member Art Poole for donating their time and energy to this project. The stewardship committee will be installing the boxes this spring and summer. Each will hold property descriptions and KLT information.



THANKS!



5 More Acres Protected on Horseshoe Island

Long-time KLT supporter Robert Peck has made a very generous donation of land on Horseshoe Island on Cobbossee Lake. This shoreline property along with a donation of stewardship funds complements the Trust's existing 15 acre holding on the Island.

The Trust greatly appreciates the generosity of the Peck donation. This parcel adds to our work of protecting Cobbossee's unique islands. The Trust has protected 23 additional acres on adjacent Perry and Hodgdon Islands. We continue to work with interested landowners to preserve these special places.

THANKS!



4 **KLT's Business Partnership for Conservation Successfully Launched to Help Purchase the Kennebec Highlands**

"As Will Rogers said, 'Buy land, they aren't making any more of it.'" So began the opening line of the Kennebec Land Trust's first letter to area businesses announcing its **Business Partnership for Conservation** program.

Last summer the Trust met with a group of business leaders to explore ways to increase business participation and support for conservation. That exploratory meeting led to the Trust's first **Business Partnership for Conservation** campaign to raise money for the 6,000 acre Kennebec Highlands project. Many of you have already heard of or read about the Kennebec Highlands project. The KLT, early on, recognized the incredible conservation, wildlife, recreation and economic values associated with this project and signed on to help the Belgrade Regional Conservation Alliance reach its goal of raising \$3,000,000. The campaign recently expanded its scope through a mailing to several hundred businesses which are members of the Kennebec Valley Chamber of Commerce. Contributions from this solicitation were being received as this newsletter went to press, with over \$43,000 raised to date.

As the February 20th KJ editorial states, "Most fundraisers will admit that the most difficult part of achieving a financial goal is not the first dollar, but the last." As the Belgrade Regional Conservation Association and we near the end of this vitally important conservation project, finding those last few dollars will be difficult.

But find them we will. The opportunity that Kennebec Highlands presents is just too important to the future of our communities to let it slip away.



The view from Vienna Mountain, Kennebec Highlands

Charter Members Business Partnership for Conservation

Augusta Fuel Company, Augusta
Bonney Staffing Center, Augusta
BridgeCorp, Augusta
Central Maine Newspapers, Augusta
Dunlap Corporation, Auburn
Filter Belts, Inc., Manchester
Gardiner Savings Institution FSB,
Gardiner
Homestead Realty, Augusta
J & S. Oil Company, Manchester
Johnson & Webbert, LLP, Augusta
Kennebec Savings Bank, Augusta
Kennebec Tool & Die, Inc., Augusta
Maine Tomorrow, Hallowell
Manchester Country Riders, Manchester
MBNA, Belfast
Northern Geomantics, Hallowell
Oakhurst Dairy, Portland
Frank Pomerleau, Inc., Augusta
Rotary Garage, Augusta
S & S Technologies, Inc., Winthrop
Sam's Club, Augusta
Smart Eyecare Center, PA, Augusta
Sprague & Curtis Real Estate, Augusta
Timson & Associates, Inc., Hallowell
Union Water Power Company, Augusta
Wiederhorn Group, Hallowell

Norm Rodrique

Chair, Development Committee

Kennebec JOURNAL

Maine's Oldest Newspaper • Augusta, Maine

Founded in 1825

A BLETHEN MAINE NEWSPAPER

44 Pages

Opinion

Tuesday, February 20, 2001

B5

EDITORIAL: WHAT WE THINK

Kennebec Highlands project nears fund-raising objective

Most fund-raisers will admit that the most difficult part of achieving a financial goal is not the first dollar, but the last.

There are a number of reasons for that, not the least of which being that those already inclined to give money to a project have done so.

Yet when the end seems to be within reach, the urgency to reach the goal cannot slack.

That is one of the lessons being learned by the Belgrade Regional Conservation Alliance.

Intent on completing the work needed to form the four-town, 6,100-acre Kennebec Highlands conservation and recreation project, the alliance has been gratified, energized and humbled at the progress made in the last six months.

The group learned last week that it received formal approval to proceed from the Land for Maine's Future board and Gov. Angus S. King.

The project had already received high marks by the review committee, but until the governor signed off on the board's recommendations, the alliance remained apprehensive that something could still get in the way.

The total area sought for the Highlands is made up of 19 contiguous tracts of land in Rome, Vienna, Mount Vernon and New Sharon. It includes the highest point in Kennebec County — McGaffey Mountain, at 1,300-feet above sea level — the most significant

HIGHLANDS HIGH SIGN

THE ISSUE: The Kennebec Highlands conservation and recreation project received a big financial boost last week that leaves the initiative less than \$300,000 short of its goal.

HOW WE STAND: With momentum well established, the final push to complete the acquisition of properties in the four towns is close to reality and should be supported.

mountain range in central Maine, five undeveloped ponds, 1,800 feet along the shore of Long Pond, numerous blueberry barrens, woods, fields and bogs. About 10 miles of abandoned roads, trails and logging corridors wend through the project acreage.

As envisioned, the property, once secured, will be managed by the state's Bureau of Parks and Lands and will be open for public use for such activities as hunting, fishing, boating, hiking, bicycling and snowmobiling.

Last December, aiming to raise \$1 million to hold up its end of the financing, the group secured a short-term bank loan and a Norcross Wilderness Foundation loan to make a 2,300-acre purchase at the heart of the project.

With the government approvals in hand and increasing confidence that the dream will become a reality, the alliance received even more good news last week — contributions of more than \$100,000 from members of the Alford family, and continued assurance of support from Kennebec Savings Bank. The alliance has also been assured of financial assistance from Blethen Maine Newspapers.

The upshot of all the activity is that the project is within \$250,000 of meeting its initial objective. Now comes what everyone concedes is the hard part.

A mass mailing of 22,000 pieces is going out to former and prospective supporters, asking for additional help. Director Denny Phillips is hopeful that the response to the mailing will put the project over the top. Realistically, however, there is work left to do.

What buoys the confidence of supporters has been the near-unanimous agreement by everyone who confronts the scope of the Kennebec Highlands project that the goal is worthy. Considering the pressures already felt in the involved communities and their neighbors for residential and commercial development, the alliance believes that the Highlands will prove even more valuable over time than it is now.

The Land For Maine's Future board agrees.

So does Gov. King.

Now it remains to be seen if that last dollar can be secured.

With spring's arrival come thoughts of paddling out across Androscoggin Lake to beautiful Norris Island to enjoy the expansive beach and a walk through oak and pine stands.

The KLT Stewardship Committee is happy to announce an addition to Norris Island's resources: two new outhouses now located near the beach and the cabin. On a cool, gray day last September, a team of four, ferried the two disassembled outhouses to the island and completed the onsite reassembly. Thank you to Howard Lake, Dave Stevenson and Steve and Diana McLaughlin for this successful effort. Extra thanks are owed to Dave who transported materials in his boat and to Steve, who designed and built the outhouses.

The two beachside campsites will again be available to the public this year. If you wish to reserve a campsite you may leave a message with the Ladd Recreational Center in Wayne (685-4616) and a KLT member will contact you to finalize your reservation request. For the time being the cabin is not available for use. We hope to have it back in shape after some repairs and cleanup.

If you have not yet visited the island, plan a trip. It is great spot to visit for an hour or for an overnight. KLT is committed to providing public access to the Island so that everyone can continue to enjoy its unique black-sand beach, vegetation (look for the Tupelo when you go), and views.

We will be scheduling a "work party" later this spring to tackle some important spring clean up and maintenance activities for the cabin. If you would like to visit the island and join in KLT's stewardship efforts, we want you!

COME OUT TO NORRIS - WE CAN USE YOUR HELP!

For more information about this spring's Norris Island "Workday," you may contact Dave Stevenson, Norris Island Steward, at 685 - 4007.



Dave, Diana, and Steve at the groundbreaking ceremony.

We've grown to almost 400 members and over 1,300 acres!
Thanks to everyone for your help and support.

ANNUAL FUND 2000

Many thanks to our many generous donors



***Your support allows us to continue growing
acre by acre, and member by member***

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Rita Grabarek	David & Deborah Osborne	
Donald & Mary Hammond	Laurence & Nancy Perkins	

WE CAN USE YOUR HELP

- ✓ Do you like to plan and lead field trips?
Call Jim Connors,
President 933-4293
- ✓ Would you like to help maintain a
property?
Call Collin Therrien,
Stewardship 621-0996
- ✓ Interested in fundraising?
Call Norm Rodrigue,
Development 622-6204
- ✓ Do you like exploring and acquiring
property?
Call Glenn Hodgkins,
Lands 582-4133

We're growing ! Acre by acre & member by member

We now are almost 400 members who are
the stewards for over 1,300 acres in
Kennebec County. The more land we
protect the more members we need.

Please tell your friends and neighbors
about what we do. Take a minute and ask
a friend to join.

**Contact
Doug Scott
933-2220**

**adscott@ctel.net
for a membership packet.**



THE KENNEBEC LAND TRUST

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