



KLT Helps Preserve Mt Pisgah

On October 25, 2001, approximately 40 area residents and public officials attended a community forum organized by Representative Linda Rogers McKee to discuss the future of Mt Pisgah. The Kennebec Land Trust related its interest in the conservation and stewardship of the mountain area, and its willingness to help with the public protection and care of the state-owned Mt Pisgah property. Community members expressed strong support for maintaining the Mt Pisgah area as a cultural landmark and open space for recreation.

In recent years the condition of the access road and tower facility have deteriorated badly to the point of being serious environmental and safety hazards. At the meeting the Maine Forest Service (MFS) acknowledged its responsibility for the property and stated their commitment to restore the site to acceptable condition. Representatives of the MFS presented a plan to fix the road and to re-establish gates to control unauthorized use. In addition, they announced that the local cable company would remove its building and equipment from the mountain, and that the MFS would arrange for the removal and clean up of the ranger cabin on the Pisgah Road. Participants expressed strong community interest in maintaining the fire tower as an observation platform. A representative of the State Bureau of Parks and Lands reported that they are willing to conduct a structural analysis of the tower to determine its suitability for conversion to an observation platform.



Lookout Tower on top of Mt. Pisgah
Photo by Jeff Janell

As of press time, the Maine Forest Service has installed a new gate to control unauthorized vehicle use of the tower road. While the new gate was left open for the winter season to allow safe passage of snowmobiles and other winter trail users, it closed on March 15th. This policy will be reviewed within the context of overall trail use and management around the mountain. Serious issues remain regarding uncontrolled access on unsuitable informal "roadways" on the backside of the mountain.

The Maine Forest Service has determined that it no longer needs the lookout tower for its own purposes. Without an alternative use, they plan to re-

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President's Message

Dear Members,

As usual there is a lot happening with the KLT. It is both pleasing and a bit daunting to reflect on the range of projects that are underway. Thankfully we have many hands on board who are continually generous with their time and energy. I want to thank all of you who volunteered for the first time or again offered to help out with stewardship on your renewal forms. We received over 40 new offers!

You will read in more detail throughout the newsletter about current happenings, but there are several projects I want to bring to your attention.

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The 6,000- acre Kennebec Highlands project in the Belgrade Lakes area is over 90% complete! Last year the KLT committed to raise funds to support this project, and we raised about \$40,000 from local businesses to help the Belgrade Regional Conservation Alliance reach its \$1 million dollar fundraising target. The Highlands will be a stunning addition to conserved lands in central Maine when the project is finally complete this year. I am proud we could help in a small way on this important undertaking.

The KLT has begun another partnership, this time with the Androscoggin Land Trust in order to combine and complement our efforts around Androscoggin Lake. Our boards met jointly on a bright winter day in February to ski around the deadwater, the Indian Carry, and Norris Island. KLT and ALT will continue discussing acquisition strategies for this biologically important area of the lake.

In late fall, the National Land Trust Alliance awarded a capacity building grant to the Kennebec Land Trust. We plan to use this matching grant to engage the services of a fundraising consultant. Our purpose is to explore how we can continue to grow in the best and most careful way. This project will help the KLT to understand our ability to raise funds and possibly hire staff in the future. It is clear that as our opportunities to conserve land increase, so do our responsibilities to care for and manage the 1,300 acres we currently own. Look for more details on this project as it develops.

I hope to see you out in the woods and on the lakes this spring and summer.

In trust,
Andrew Fisk

Thanks to all of our newsletter contributors: Jim Connors, Andrew Fisk, Deb Sewall, Diana McLaughlin, Tom Bartol, Glenn Hodgkins and Doug Scott. • Editors: Deb Sewall and Jodi Federle

WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST MEMBERS

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 Voices of Cobbossee Lake,
 Monmouth Chapter

Many Thanks to Mt. Pisgah, Cobbossee and Androscoggin Donors

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(Mt. Pisgah—Continued from page 1)

move at least the damaged cab on top of the tower and are leaning towards taking down the entire tower. Attendees at the community meeting expressed a strong desire to keep the tower in place for use as an observation platform. The opportunity to climb the tower for a panoramic view is an important part of the mountain climbing experience. In response, the Bureau of Parks and Lands in the Department of Conservation has committed to pay for an engineering evaluation of the tower to assess its suitability as a lookout platform. Several other fire towers in Maine (Old Speck, Rangeley Bald Mountain, and Kineo) have been successfully converted into observation platforms.

The Maine Forest Service has expressed a willingness to "sell" the 96-acre Mt Pisgah property to a public entity that would keep the site available for community recreational use. The Kennebec Land Trust is working with the Winthrop Town Council and state officials to facilitate appropriate long-term ownership and stewardship of the property. At its February 4, 2002 meeting, the council discussed the committee report and then voted 6 to 1 to authorize the town manager to proceed with negotiations to purchase the state land. Winthrop will work in partnership with the Kennebec Land Trust and possibly the towns of Monmouth and Wayne.

Launched by Rep McKee's efforts to discuss the future of the mountain, these decisions demonstrate broad community support for the long-term protection of Mt Pisgah as an important open space resource. Many people and groups are working together to protect a large contiguous area of undeveloped land around the mountain for present and future generations, and the KLT has played a significant role in getting to this point. Good work everyone!

KLT'S ADVISORY BOARD

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Parker Pond Property Protected

Waine and Millie Whittier have generously granted a conservation easement to the Kennebec Land Trust, protecting 300 feet of shoreline on Parker Pond in Vienna. The parcel also includes 500 feet along Lane's Brook, a beautiful tributary of the pond with bedrock shoots and pools. The Whittiers, members of the Parker Pond Association and longtime residents of Vienna, have translated their wish to preserve the natural beauty of the lake into this significant donation.

The trust has focused much of its efforts on protecting the water quality and the beauty of the lakes in the central Maine region. We greatly appreciate this generous gift which furthers our goal to protect undeveloped shoreline on lovely Parker Pond. KLT currently conserves 60 acres on the east side of the lake at Camp Bearnstow.

Special thanks to
for providing us
with our site!

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Stewardship Notes

Stewardship of KLT's properties takes many forms, ranging from monitoring a conservation easement to active involvement in the planning, maintenance and care of often-used properties. Recent acquisitions have increased the need to provide access to properties that offer outdoor recreational opportunities.

Stewardship activities this season are concentrating on the Curtis Homestead Conservation Area in Leeds, the Islands in Cobbossee Lake, and the Mt Pisgah Conservation Area. In addition, the land trust is maintaining managed use of Norris Island in Androscoggin Lake and care of properties in which the KLT has a conservation interest, such as the Jamies Pond Wildlife Management Area.

The **Curtis Homestead Conservation Area** is being managed as a community resource for education and recreational use. A small parking area (which was plowed this winter to provide full-year access) now provides safe access to the property. We are planning to clear two trail loops, using a Maine Conservation Corps crew to help with the "heavier" work of trail construction. Steward Andy Bosworth is planning Thursday evening clean-up parties, and a Saturday work day, to begin restoration of the field area in order to improve its value for grassland birds. Volunteers are also needed to conduct plant surveys and bird and other wildlife censuses in order to inform conservation decisions for the property.

On **Lake Cobbosseecontee** the Stewardship committee will be working closely with people to improve monitoring activities and to educate and inform island users about appropriate uses of protected properties.

Stewardship activities around **Mt Pisgah** are just beginning. As the conserved properties have coalesced into a fairly contiguous management area, the KLT has begun working with the town of Winthrop on the protection and care of the state parcel. Other trail users, including local snowmobile clubs and mountain bikers, will be invited to discuss trail development and maintenance issues around the mountain. Ideas include building a new access trail with better grades and a more natural setting than that of the existing tower road.

See page 7 for details about the spring clean up at **Jamies Pond** and a service week to open old trails at **Bearnstow Camp** in Mt Vernon.

The Stewardship Committee has revised the **Norris Island Overnight Use Policy**, see page 6. The new policy more clearly explains the rules for public use of the cabin on the island. Both the cabin and the campsites may be reserved through the Ladd Center in Wayne. We are planning to hold a spruce-up visit to the island this spring. Contact stewards Diana and Steve McLaughlin, 685-9540, for details.

Thank you to the many renewing members who indicated a willingness to help with stewardship efforts. We will be incorporating these volunteers into our lists for stewardship activities, including participation in work sessions. No experience is necessary, and as the old saying goes, many hands make light work. The strong support of our members is very much appreciated.

A Tale of Two Land Trusts

When the Kennebec Land Trust (KLT) and Androscoggin Land Trust (ALT) planned a joint cross-country ski trip on Androscoggin Lake for February, little did we know that there would be such a small window between the time when the lake froze and when the snow melted. Even though we skied through snow, slush and a little bit of water, the skiing was actually quite good, and the company was even better.

Board members from both land trusts and a few friends toured along the shore of the Dead River delta and floodplain on the southwestern side of the lake. The group discussed the importance of conservation in this area. There are several miles of undeveloped shoreline and islands, as well as a host of rare plants. Many plants on this part of the lake and on Norris and Lothrop Islands are at the very northern tip of their range, including White Oak, Black Tupelo, and New Jersey Tea. Eagles, muskrats, otters, ospreys, and loons call Androscoggin Lake home.

The Kennebec Land Trust already owns Norris Island and the Brackett-Longley Rare Plant Habitat on the floodplain, thanks to years of volunteer efforts, your past financial support, and donations of land. KLT and ALT have formed an alliance to protect as much of the Androscoggin Lake delta and floodplain as possible.

If you're unfamiliar with this wonderful area, put in a canoe at the Dead River Campground on Route 106, paddle east down the Dead River, portage over the Indian Carry, and canoe out to Norris Island (See article below). Take your time and admire the varied shorelines and wildlife. This trip will convince you too of the need to conserve this beautiful, undeveloped part of Androscoggin Lake.

News from Norris Island

Spring is coming! As the weather warms, KLT's jewel in Androscoggin Lake, Norris Island, will beckon to a variety of visitors who enjoy recreation on the lake. As in previous years, two primitive campsites will be available to the public for use by reservation. In addition, a cabin may be reserved for limited use. The cabin is very simple and is appointed with some basic furniture and supplies, cots and an outhouse.

To reserve a campsite or the cabin, call the Ladd Recreation Center in Wayne at 685-4616. Leave a message and a member of KLT's Stewardship Committee will contact you. There is no fee for reserving the campsites or cabin, although users of the cabin are encouraged to participate in its upkeep. We are planning a one or two day "work party" later this spring to catch up on some minor maintenance and housekeeping chores at the cabin site. Volunteers are wanted and no experience is needed! If you would like to help, please call Steve McLaughlin at 685-9540.

KLT urges all visitors of this beautiful island to respect, preserve and enjoy the fragile plants and wildlife that reside there.

ANNUAL MEETING CELEBRATES VAUGHAN WOODS

Please save **Sunday, August 18** for this year's annual meeting. We are planning several special events, including field trips, a reception for the **Vaughan Woods** photo exhibition, and dinner at **Maple Hill Farm**.

We will be sending you more information as the day gets closer.

We hope you can join us!

VOLUNTEER TRAIL WORK DAY AT JAMIES POND

Saturday, April 28th, 9:00 AM—1:00 PM

Join us in a joint effort with the Manchester Conservation Commission and the Hallowell Conservation Commission to help with trail maintenance at **Jamies Pond Wildlife Management Area**. We will spend the morning fixing up trails, putting up signs and doing other minor trail maintenance. Bring work gloves, small saws, loppers, rakes and/or other tools you may have.

Meet at the new trail head parking lot on the north side of the Collins Road in Manchester, just east of the Benton road. Directions: From 202 in Manchester, go south on Pond Rd. ~3.3 miles to Outlet Rd. Go east on Outlet Rd. about 0.9 miles and the parking lot is on the left. For more information, contact Tom Bartol at 621-0787.

SUMMER EVENTS AT CAMP BEARNSTOW

Camp Bearnstow on beautiful **Parker Pond** in **Mount Vernon** is offering a series of environmental walks on Saturday mornings at 10 AM, starting **July 6**. The public is invited to explore a different topic each week. Sample topics include: lakeside flora, measuring water quality, and runoff prevention.

From **July 1-6** there will be a service week devoted to opening trails on the property. Volunteers can participate in a variety of ways. For more information contact Sue Liebling, KLT steward, at 293-2628.

For further information, a more complete schedule of Camp Bearnstow offerings, or to sign up, visit their website: www.bearnstow.org or email Ruth Grayer at reg@bearnstow.org. After June 15, you can call the camp at (207) 293-2280.

JOIN US TO EXPLORE THE CURTIS HOMESTEAD

Jim Connors will lead a nature walk at the **Curtis Homestead Conservation Area** in Leeds on **Sunday, June 2nd at 2:00PM**. We will explore both the unique geological features and the diversity of forest, field, and wetland ecosystems found on the property. All ages are welcome on this easy stroll through fields and forest. The beautiful 360-acre property is the former homestead of the Curtis family (and the boyhood home of former governor Kenneth Curtis). It includes remnant fields, pine and hardwood forest, and part of the Monmouth Leeds Bog.

For more information, please call Jim Connors at 933-4293. Directions: The Curtis Homestead Conservation Area is located on the Bog Road in Leeds. Traveling west on Rte 202 from Winthrop toward Lewiston, turn right onto the Bog Road, and the Conservation Area is about 1.5 miles on the right.

SPEND TIME IN THE GREAT OUTDOORS WITH KLT

Wondering what to do on those nice Sunday afternoons? Interested in getting to know some of the areas being preserved as open space by the KLT? We have started to organize bimonthly field trips and encourage both members and non-members to join us.

On March 10th 29 people showed up at the Jamies Pond Wildlife Management Area to walk the partially snow-covered trails. The warmer temperatures and return of the sun made the walk especially enjoyable. The group walked a loop to Jamies Pond, then through hardwood and conifer forest on land that KLT helped to conserve.

On June 2nd we'll be hiking part of the wonderful Curtis Homestead Conservation Area in Leeds, recently donated to the KLT (see article, page 7). Watch for future trips, including a canoe/kayak trip on either Lake Androscoggin or Cobbossee this summer, and a hike up Mt. Pisgah. On August 18, we will offer guided walks in Vaughan Woods as part of our Annual Meeting festivities.

We're on the web at www.tkl.org



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ANNOUNCING A SPECIAL PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBIT FEATURING THE VAUGHAN WOODS

The Vaughan Woods is a magical place of great natural beauty and historic significance in central Maine. It encompasses more than 160 acres of forest, fields, streams, and trails in Hallowell and Farmingdale. Benjamin Vaughan settled his family in a homestead near the Vaughan Woods in the 1790s. In the nineteenth century there were many industries along Vaughan Stream. In the twentieth century the area was restored to a natural condition. In 1990, Mrs. Diana Gibson, a direct lineal descendent of Benjamin Vaughan, donated a conservation easement to the Kennebec Land Trust to protect the Vaughan Woods from development and to preserve the area for walking and similar responsible public enjoyment. Many people visit the Vaughan Woods in all seasons to hike the trails and enjoy the area's quiet splendor.

SPONSORS

In recognition of the importance of the Vaughan Woods to the community, the Capital Area Camera Club (CACC) and the Kennebec Land Trust (KLT), are sponsoring a special photography exhibit featuring the Vaughan Woods. This exhibit will be held during August, 2002, at the Harlow Art Gallery, 160 Water Street, Hallowell, Maine. You are invited to participate in this exhibit. The deadlines are below and the guidelines are on the back of this page.

CALENDAR

- | | |
|-----------|---|
| May 21 | Submit registration form (on back) to CACC |
| July 28 | Drop off photo prints at Harlow Gallery, 11AM – 3PM |
| August 2 | Exhibit opening reception at Harlow Gallery, 7PM – 9PM |
| August 18 | Winners announced at KLT annual dinner, Maple Hill Farm B&B |
| August 30 | Pick up photo prints at Harlow Gallery, 6PM – 8PM |

QUESTIONS?

Contact Jym St. Pierre, 9 Union Street, Hallowell, ME 04347, 207-626-5635, jym@restore.org.

CONDITIONS OF ENTRY

- Anyone can participate in this exhibit. Members of the Capital Area Camera Club and the Kennebec Land Trust in particular are encouraged to submit photographic prints. Prints may be color or b&w.
- Up to four photos per person may be submitted. Pictures depicting different seasons are encouraged. It is likely all photos submitted will be hung, but at least one of your prints will be exhibited. Up to two prints for sale can be put in the bin also.
- Prints must be framed and ready for hanging. Each print must be between 8" x 10" and 16" x 20" (print size).
- Submit the form on the back of this notice by May 21, 2002, to register to have photos in this exhibit.
- There are no entry fees to submit photos for this exhibit.
- Each photo must be accompanied with an entry form specifying the photographer's name, address, and phone number and the title and price (if for sale) of the photo. Entry forms will be sent in July to everyone who has registered.
- Harlow Gallery receives a commission of 30% for any photos sold if you are a member of the Kennebec Valley Art Association (\$40% commission for nonmembers of KVAA).
- Everyone exhibiting photos is expected to contribute a few hours of time sitting at the gallery during the show in August.
- There will be ribbons and prizes for the top three photos. The winning photos will be selected based on votes by visitors to the gallery.
- All possible care of your photographic prints will be taken. However, CACC and KLT assume no responsibility for any loss of or damage to any photos submitted.

REGISTRATION FORM

VAUGHAN WOODS PHOTO SHOW

Sponsored by the Capital Area Camera Club and the Kennebec Land Trust

(Please print clearly)

Name _____

Address _____ Zip _____

Email _____ Telephone _____

Number of photos you expect to submit _____

Submit this form by May 21, 2002, to Jym St. Pierre, 9 Union St, Hallowell, ME 04347

Drop off photos at Harlow Gallery, Sunday, July 28, 2002, 11AM – 3PM

Pick up photos at Harlow Gallery, Saturday, August 30, 2002, 6PM – 8PM