



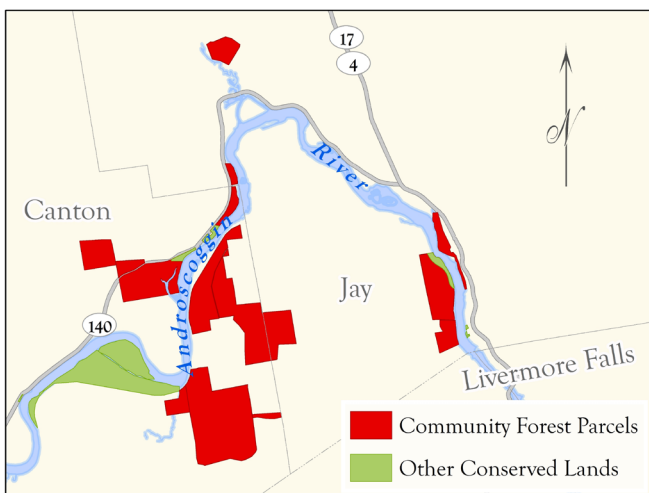
ANDROSCOGGIN LAND TRUST

Fall 2014

Androscoggin Land Trust announces acquisition of conservation land

Nearly 1250 acres of forested land along the Androscoggin River in Canton and Jay are now permanently conserved for public benefit! After working on the project for more than three years, ALT recently purchased the land from Verso Paper Corp. thanks to the generous funding from Land for Maine's Future, Maine Natural Resource Conservation Program and numerous private foundations.

ALT envisions these diverse lands to be a community forest that will not only conserve local landscapes for wildlife habitat, but will also ensure public access and maintain the land as a working forest. Public access to recreational trails and the Androscoggin River will be increased and the hope is to incorporate more than two miles of new multi-use recreational trail corridors in Chisholm Village and downtown Livermore Falls.



In the past Verso and ALT have partnered on various community-spirited events, such as, the annual Source to Sea Trek, National Trail Days, and also area ATV club trail clean-up efforts. Marc Connor, the Androscoggin Mill's Manager noted that, "This partnership, over time, has shown us first-hand the incredible work ALT has done toward increasing recreation around our mill and in our community. This project will allow lands that were formerly owned by Verso, but not actively used by our business or the public, to be opened up for community enjoyment."

ALT commends Verso for its vision and commitment to the long-term conservation of this land and looks forward to continued work with the local communities and making collaborative efforts to manage these properties as community forests forever.

Androscoggin Land Trust Annual Meeting

November 18, 2014 at the Hilton Garden Inn

5:30 PM Reception - 6:00 PM Meeting

This Year's Keynote Speaker: Lucas St. Clair

A New National Park and Recreation Area for Maine



Lucas St. Clair is one of Maine's newest visionaries and the leader of Elliottsville Plantation, Inc., an organization that owns 125,000 acres of timberland in northern and central Maine originally secured by his mother, Roxanne Quimby. For several years St. Clair has been managing these lands and he will share his vision which includes creating a national park and recreation area for Maine.

Androscoggin Land Trust earns national recognition

The Androscoggin Land Trust has achieved land trust accreditation from the Land Trust Accreditation Commission, an independent program of the Land Trust Alliance.

Jim Pross, Vice President of ALT's Board of Directors said, "ALT is honored to have attained accreditation through the national Land Trust Alliance. Our community can be assured that ALT's practices conform to the highest standards in land conservation." As ALT's Accreditation Lead, Pross worked with ALT's staff and Board to marshal ALT through the application process. He added, "We worked extremely hard to get to this point. The organizational strength that we have gained by going through the process of becoming accredited will help to ensure that ALT's good work carries-on in perpetuity."

Androscoggin Land Trust was awarded accreditation this August and is one of only 280 land trusts from across

the country to do so since the fall of 2008. Accredited land trusts are authorized to display a seal indicating to the public that they meet national standards for excellence, uphold the public trust and ensure that conservation efforts are permanent. The seal is a mark of distinction in land conservation.

Each accredited land trust submitted extensive documentation and underwent rigorous review. "Through accreditation land trusts conduct important planning and make their operations more efficient and strategic," said Tammara Van Ryn, Commission Executive Director.

Michael Auger, ALT's Executive Director adds, "We are extremely proud to display the accreditation seal as it demonstrates our deep commitment to permanent land conservation and its benefits to the communities which we serve."



Michael Auger appointed ALT's new executive director

In August, Michael Auger, former director of land protection and stewardship for ALT, was named executive director. Mike has played a pivotal role with ALT for nearly 15 years, first as a volunteer and then as a full-time staff member, and as ALT Board President Judy Marden remarks, "No one could be better suited for the position at this time. Mike knows ALT inside out... truly he represents the very best of the organization."

Mike's appreciation for the natural world and special outdoor places goes back to his early years, when as a child growing up in Auburn, he "always liked being outside," he recalls. He credits his father's love of the wilderness as inspiring his own. With his dad and a group of friends, Mike spent several weeks in northern Maine each year, fishing, taking photographs, and simply taking pleasure in the remote setting and shared companionship. Mike first accompanied these "Allagash Travelers" trips as a teenager, and continued to do so when possible well into his adult years. Mike's father himself relished the camaraderie and relaxation of these wilderness trips well into his eighth decade.

After beginning studies at Northland College in Wisconsin (where he first met his wife Christina Epperson, a fellow ecologist who now works for Maine



Coast Heritage Trust), Mike earned a bachelor's of science in natural resources, with a concentration in ecology and natural history, from the University of Maine. Early in his career, Mike worked as an ecologist and field biologist for the Nature Conservancy and the Maine Natural Areas

Michael Auger (cont.)...

Program. These roles drew Mike to many unique places, habitats, and communities throughout the state of Maine. “While I loved working in a diversity of settings,” Mike recalls, “I gradually realized I wanted to focus my attention on a smaller geographic area, to get to know it more intimately and take some responsibility for it over time.”

As it turned out, he would find these lands close to home. Mike’s first real contact with ALT came in 2000, when he and Christina “began hearing that the Androscoggin Land Trust had some involvement in a park taking shape on the land behind us (in Turner),” Mike remembers. That park was in fact the current 2675 acre expanse along the Androscoggin that is now the Androscoggin Riverlands State Park, the preservation of which had been a major impetus for the creation of ALT a decade before.

“Mike and Christina became quintessential volunteers in these formative years of the organization,” says Marden. “They led field trips, took on administrative tasks, wrote grants, and pretty much kept ALT going in years when we had no paid staff.” During Mike’s years on the board of directors, from 2000 to 2005, he also served as the chair of the Lands and Stewardship Committee, the volunteer group responsible for monitoring conserved lands under ALT’s oversight.

As the size and diversity of ALT’s holdings and conservation easements grew (now totaling more than 5000 acres), Mike was hired in 2006 to serve as ALT’s full-time director of Land Protection and Stewardship. This role brought a wide range of responsibilities, as

each conservation easement has different needs and priorities that range from forest management or wetland preservation, to the promotion of farming or recreational activities compatible with the land.

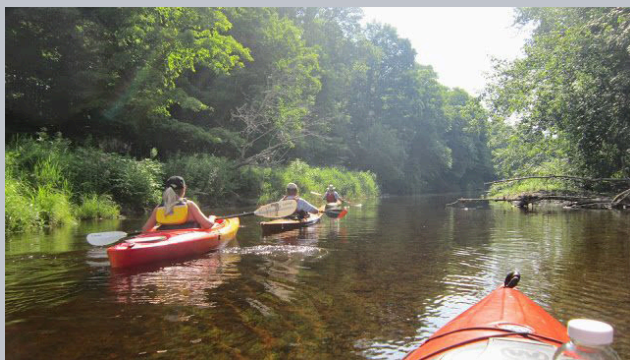
In recent years, Mike has worked hard to build a strong cadre of volunteer stewards to assist with the sizable effort of monitoring ALT-held easements, and supports and acknowledges their efforts through monthly meetings for education and connection. Mike’s long-term interest, knowledge, and experience in land stewardship will continue to be of significant value in his new role as executive director, for stewardship of conserved lands will always be central to ALT’s mission as an organization.

Mike sees the evolution of his roles and responsibilities at ALT as a natural one. “Land needs to have a friend: to protect, preserve, and take care of it. That’s an important life value for

me,” he says. “I was excited to take on this new leadership role, because of my commitment, both personal and professional, to this organization over time. We’ve done important work for 25 years and I want to continue to help ensure that it continues.”

“We were fortunate to be able to hire Mike as director of stewardship in 2006, and are even more fortunate to hire him as executive director now,” adds Marden. “He has grown through the ranks to this position, and has a deep understanding of land conservation. Mike has great relationships with our landowners, partners, members, and volunteers, and we are delighted that he will put his experience to work in this new capacity.

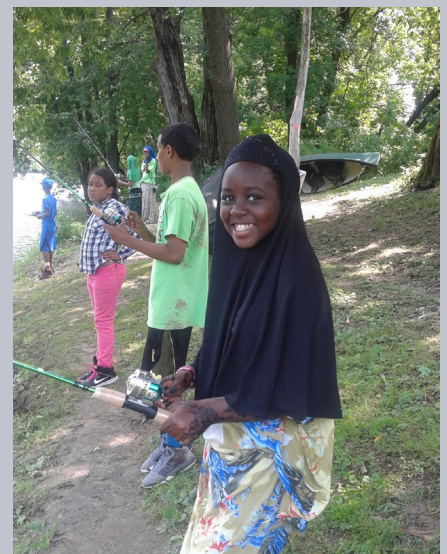
“Land needs to have a friend: to protect, preserve, and take care of it. That’s an important life value for me,” says Auger



This summer, ALT hosted a series of successful Paddle After Hours events and worked with Tree Street Youth, Boys and Girls Club, LA Canoe and Kayak Rental and ME IFW to host Learn to Fish and Learn to Paddle events along the Androscoggin River. ***Great fun was had by all!***



**ANDROSCOGGIN
LAND TRUST**



The Packard-Littlefield farm celebrates 10 years of conservation

As you ascend Littlefield Road in Lisbon, a gleaming white farmstead beckons in the distance. Its cape dwelling, barns and outbuildings are a picture-perfect example of traditional New England architecture. In the fields across the street, two women harvest vegetables, while others move through nearby greenhouses, industriously tending to late-season tasks.

This is the welcoming scene at the Packard-Littlefield Farm, a landmark of the Lisbon countryside. This year, as ALT celebrates its 25th anniversary, also celebrated is the 10th anniversary of the conservation of this historic farm, thanks to the foresight and generosity of Bob and Ella Mae Packard. The Packards and ALT established a succession of conservation easements that will forever protect the land from development and will foster its continued use as working farmland in the years to come.

The origins of the Packard-Littlefield Farm date back more than 150 years, to 1853, when Ella Mae's ancestor, Seth Bickford purchased a homestead and 80 surrounding acres from the land's original settler. Over the years, the farm was passed down through four generations of Ella Mae's family beginning with her great-grandmother Fannie Bickford and then to her grandmother, known as "Ella," who earned her livelihood making butter that her husband delivered to customers in the Lewiston area.

Ella Mae's father, Ralph Littlefield, continued to raise dairy cows on the farm, and was also a skilled mechanic and owner of a gravel business. Ella Mae has many vivid memories of her childhood on the farm, of helping her parents and grandparents with milking the cows, and haying and gardening. In addition to this rich Littlefield family history, the farm is also of wider historic interest in Lisbon, as the Dingley School, one of the earliest schools in Lisbon, and the Town Farm were once located on the property.

Ella Mae's career as a teacher drew her to other parts of New England, that eventually resulted in a marriage to Bob, a Connecticut native who would go on to have a distinguished career as a foreign language teacher. While raising their two daughters in Connecticut, the Packards regularly returned home to the farm for frequent visits to Ella Mae's family. Bob "fell in love with the farm," he says, and when Ella Mae's parents' health began to fail in the late 1980s, Ella Mae and Bob purchased it.

Over the next decades, the Packards carefully renovated the early 1800s farmhouse, modernizing it as needed while carefully maintaining the original pegged construction, fireplaces, and other historic features. After upgrading the

farming equipment, they grew vegetables and flowers which they sold at a farm stand on the property and local farmers' markets, and over time, the Packards transitioned to raising hay for other local farms, and they continue to do so today.

Collaboration and persistence, which are two important watchwords in conservation, proved vital for the Packards. With ALT as a key participant as the conservation easement holder, a lengthy process came to fruition in 2004, when the Land for Maine's Future program and the NRCS Farmland Ranch Protection Program—with assistance from the Maine and U.S. Departments of Agriculture—funded the purchase of an agricultural conservation easement on the farm's 195 acres. In 2007 and 2010, the Packards purchased and generously donated two additional agricultural easements

to ALT, doubling the total conserved acreage of the property to approximately 400 acres that straddles Lisbon, Sabattus and Lewiston.

Today, the farm remains privately owned and operated by the Packard-Littlefield family, while the easements ensure that the land will remain undeveloped and ideally will always remain a working farm. ALT holds these easements, and an ALT steward visits the property annually to

ensure that the terms are respected by abutting landowners and others. "If opportunities arise in the future, we would love to conserve additional acres," Bob says, adding that with grandchildren who love the farm, he hopes it will remain in the family in future generations.

Bob and Ella Mae regularly open their home and farm to various school and community groups. The property offers numerous learning opportunities, as it is a wonderfully diverse landscape that includes open fields, wetlands, and woodlands with a five-acre stand of old growth trees dating nearly 200 years. Bordered in part by the Sabattus River and No Name Brook, the farm is home to a beaver pond and also protects a major local aquifer. Deer and wild turkeys are frequent inhabitants, while kestrel boxes erected in recent years offer nesting sites for a species that relies on ever-diminishing open space.

Most significantly, the Packards' commitment to the best use of the farm and to the future of farming in Maine has led to a nine-year, highly successful collaboration with the industrious farmers of NASAP, the New American Sustainable Agriculture Project run by Cultivating Community. (see separate article)

Rooted in the past but welcoming fruitful changes in the future, is the dynamic story of the Packard-Littlefield Farm, a story that will continue to unfold for generations to come.



New American farmers till the soil at Packard-Littlefield farm

A decade ago, as Bob and Ella Mae began anticipating their gradual retirement from the demands of farming, Stephanie Gilbert of the Maine Department of Agriculture approached them about opening a portion of their farmland to refugee and immigrant farmers through the New American Sustainable Agriculture Project (NASAP). The project is run by Cultivating Community, a Portland-based organization that works through various channels to expand access to local, healthy food.

While this request was a natural fit for both the Packards, Bob in particular has had a longstanding interest in, and commitment to, international relations. In conjunction with his career as a foreign

language teacher, he directed the World Citizen Forum Project for schools in Connecticut and was instrumental in early efforts that eventually led to the Camp David Accords between Israel and Egypt. Bob has been honored by Rotary International, Hamline University, and others for his many cross-cultural endeavors.

The Packards' response was enthusiastic and in 2006, a dozen refugee and immigrant farmers began growing vegetables at Packard-Littlefield Farm under the auspices of NASAP. As of last year the number of immigrant farmers had more than tripled, and currently includes farmers from Somalia, Sudan, El Salvador, Congo, Mexico, and Guatemala, each operating with their own unique traditions. Additionally, the acreage utilized by these farmers totals more than 30 acres, making it the largest incubator farming training program in Maine.

Many of the NASAP farmers are women, some of which are assisted periodically by other family members. Using organic farming practices, the farmers grow vegetables on their own plots, whose size depends on the number of years in the program and production and marketing capacities. Some farmers grow solely for traditional American markets, often times growing crops that are new to them, such as broccoli, beets, and brussel sprouts; others add crops that are less familiar in Maine, such as leaf amaranth and African types of eggplant.

The process of finding supporting markets is an ongoing challenge as are the language and cultural differences that compound the characteristic challenges faced by every small business owner. The farmers market their produce under the name Fresh Start Farms and supply vegetables to Cultivating Community's CSA (community-supported agriculture)

customers, local farmers markets, wholesale accounts, and they also feed their own families with the produce they grow. During the quieter winter months many of the farmers attend literacy and small business classes, order seeds and equipment, and plan for the next growing season.

Last year, Cultivating Communities published "Beyond the Vegetable", a collection of stories,

recipes, and photographs of NASAP farmers working the soil on the Packard-Littlefield Farm. The book includes personal accounts of both the difficulties of farming in Maine, with its shorter growing season and thin soils, and its rewards, including the value of passing along traditions to their children.

Habiba Noor, from Somalia, whose journey took her from a refugee camp in Kenya to Dallas and eventually to Maine in 2007, writes this: "Farming in Maine is just different from farming in Somalia. Here there are a lot of weeds. You are never done weeding. In Somalia it is very hot, so you can weed only two times and the weeds are all dead for the season.... We don't do any succession planting in Somalia. All the crops are harvested at one time in Somalia. Here it is complicated. You have to plant every week, harvest every week, and constantly be planting new things."

Committed to hosting new Maine farmers at the Packard-Littlefield Farm, Bob and Ella Mae Packard have supported the farmers not only by providing land for them, but also by sharing their knowledge of farming, and by offering their gracious participation in harvest festivals and other events. As long-time educators, they continue to inspire and teach others about the essential and vital role that local farms play in nourishing life and community.



Many thanks to our summer interns!

This past summer, two hard-working college interns contributed significant time, skill, and energy to advance the work of Androscoggin Land Trust. Many thanks to both of them!



Bates student **Jessica Vocaturo** played an instrumental role in the annual Chief Worumbo River race in mid-July, contributed to ALT's "Learn to Paddle" and "Learn to Fish" programs for local youth, and capably spread the word about various ALT events through social media. Jess also spent a day each week assisting Lewiston/Auburn Canoe and Kayak Rentals, an ALT partner business located just behind the office on the Androscoggin River.

Zain Padamsee, a student at the University of Maine-Farmington, served as a community forest intern, working to help create a management plan for the 1200 acres of forest along the Androscoggin River in Jay and Canton that was acquired last month from Verso Paper (see front page article). Zain interviewed numerous individuals and organizations with interest in the forest—including local municipalities, business and economic development groups, non-profit organizations, and recreational users—to gather ideas and recommendations for managing the land. Zain's report summarizing the findings will be available to the public in the near future.



Volunteer steward program a success!

Androscoggin Land Trust would like to sincerely thank its amazing team of over 65 individual and corporate volunteer stewards for their hard work throughout the year! Volunteer stewards help ALT protect over 5,000 acres of natural areas, wildlife habitat, farms, working forest land, trails and recreation areas and we couldn't do it without them!

If interested in helping with the ALT's volunteer stewardship program, please contact Michael Auger, Executive Director at 207-782-2302 or via email at mauger@androscogginlandtrust.org.



We love our corporate sponsors!

Androscoggin Land Trust's supporters went all out during this very special 25th anniversary year! Many made generous contributions and others offered a hand with the many events that ALT offered the community over the course of the year.

Many thanks to our corporate partners

Androscoggin Greenway Partners



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Become a member today!

ALT has many friends, champions, advocates, volunteers and supporters. Income from membership and corporate partners is the primary source of funding. We simply cannot do our work without your membership, partnership, and investment. Every single member makes a difference. Please join the ALT's work in protecting our important natural areas, traditional landscapes, and outdoor experience.

Join ALT today and claim your koozie!

Every year is a good year to either become a new member or to renew a membership, with ALT, but what could be better than the year of our 25th anniversary! In recognition of this landmark year, our great friends at Baxter Brewing Company in Lewiston helped us create a membership thank-you gift, a special life vest “koozie” to keep your favorite beverage cold or hot. Become a member and claim your koozie, and when you take it over to Baxter Brewing, they will generously give you a free beer...topping off the satisfaction of knowing that your ALT membership will help conserve significant local lands!

Another way to contribute is through planned giving...

“Leave a forever legacy! Your commitment to conservation can carry on, long after you're gone. A bequest to the ALT supports the conservation of precious places in perpetuity, protecting special lands for generations to come. You can name ALT as a beneficiary of your will, life insurance policy, or other financial accounts, and find comfort in knowing that your gift will make a lasting difference!



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