



**ANDROSCOGGIN
LAND TRUST**

Winter 2012

THE ANDROSCOGGIN GREENWAY: An Idea Whose Time has Come!

In the 1990s, the Androscoggin Land Trust and the National Park Service's River and Trails Program, in cooperation with the Cities of Lewiston and Auburn, the Androscoggin Valley Council of Governments, Androscoggin River watershed residents, landowners, businesses, and other towns and government agencies, developed an ambitious vision for the future of our river and its landscape.

ALT, as the facilitator of this project, outlined this vision in *Androscoggin Greenways: Benefits of a River Corridor*, a booklet published in 1996, stating its geographic focus as the river's course from the Twin Bridges in Turner and Leeds downstream through Lisbon and Durham. We listed our primary goals as: "Preserve open space along the Androscoggin River and its tributaries; Revitalize the urban waterfronts of Lewiston-Auburn and Lisbon; Create access to the river and its tributaries for recreation and transportation; and provide a riverfront setting for community life."

ALT and our partners have worked ever since to implement this vision through a variety of free-standing projects. These have produced expanded riverfront trails in downtown Lewiston-Auburn, a growing Lisbon trail system, creation of

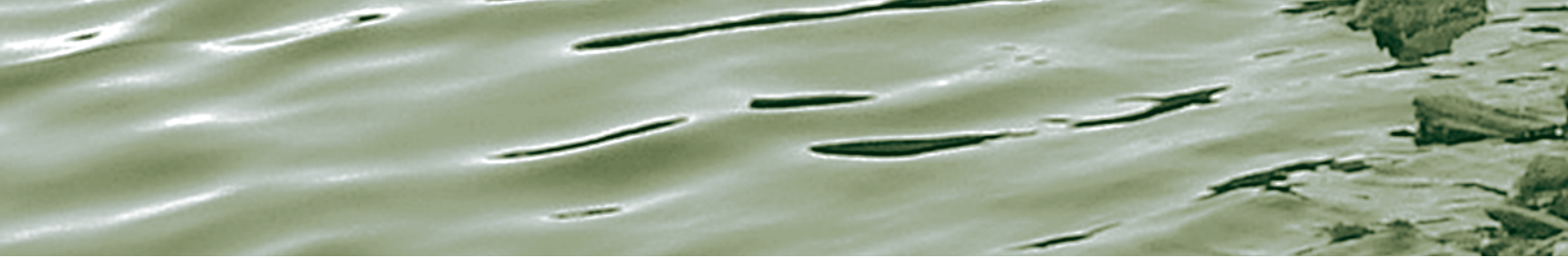
the Androscoggin Riverlands State Park (Turner and Leeds), conservation of the David Rancourt River Preserve (Lewiston) and the Hallelujah Farm and Katherine M. Breton Memorial Preserve (both in Lisbon), and, as described elsewhere in this newsletter, the recent protection of the Androscoggin Riverlands Expansion (Turner), the River Rise Farm and Forest (North Turner), and Lisbon Island (Lisbon).

Recently, we have capitalized on opportunities to move beyond our former piecemeal approach to implementing the Greenway vision. With major support from the Environmental Funders Network's Quality of Place Initiative and the Davis Conservation Foundation, ALT now leads a broad-based coalition in the cities of Lewiston and Auburn and the towns of Greene, Turner, and Leeds.

Together, we are developing a model for engaging landowners, local governments, and river corridor residents in creating actionable conservation plans focused on enhancing recreational opportunities that link downtowns to natural landscapes across municipal boundaries. This project seeks, among other things, to create a land and water trail to link Androscoggin Riverlands State Park to downtown Lewiston-Auburn.

We have undertaken another project whose full scope is still difficult to grasp: defining a wayfinding and signage system

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Androscoggin Greenway Components

River Rise Farm (North Turner)-625 acres

At the end of 2010, Maine Farmland Trust and Androscoggin Land Trust completed a collaborative effort to conserve 625 acres of working farmland and forest along the Androscoggin River on Gulf Island Pond. The land will remain privately owned, but it is permanently protected by conservation easements that allow for the property to remain as working land. As part of this project, ALT has secured rights to develop a hiking trail along the property's ridge line, to provide significant views to the river and a day use and camping area that will be accessible from the river. Plans are underway for how such a camping experience might be developed and managed in partnership with the Maine Department of Conservation.

Androscoggin Riverlands Expansion (Turner)-2,687 acres

As part of the Land for Maine's Future-funded project that protected the River Rise Farm, ALT assisted the Department of Conservation in protecting an 87-acre addition in Turner to the 2,600-acre Androscoggin Riverlands. This addition, in the center of the property on its western boundary, will provide for critical maintenance and emergency access to the center of the Riverlands. In 1989, ALT's founders played a lead role in the effort to conserve the original 2,200-acres; we worked closely with the state in 2007 to add the 325-acre Turner Cove addition to the south.

Lisbon Island (Lisbon)-3 acres

In 2010, the Lisbon Town Council voted to transfer ownership of a three-acre island in the Androscoggin River to the Androscoggin Land Trust to help fulfill our Androscoggin Greenway vision. We recently had a forest management plan drafted for the island to better understand its natural resource values and will be partnering with the Town to develop a vision for recreation that will link river conservation areas to Lisbon Falls village.

Properties Outside the Greenway

Fish Farm (Leeds)-80 acres

In memory of her parents, Arthur and Connie Fish, Lorraine Fish generously donated an agricultural conservation easement to ALT for approximately 80 acres of farmland surrounding the Fish Farm off Route 219. This easement ensures that prime agricultural soils of state-wide significance are protected for current and future agricultural productivity. The property also contains over 1,000 feet of frontage along the Dead River, a tributary of the Androscoggin.

Jones-Bonney Turner Village Park (Turner)-21.5 acres

The Bonney family generously donated roughly five acres of land along Route 4 and the Nezinscot River, an Androscoggin tributary, to ALT in 2007 for the development of a village park. In 2009, Maine's Department of Transportation transferred to us an abutting 16.5 acres of riverfront land. We will create an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)-compliant handicapped accessible trail with a day-use area on this combined conserved area, which contains over 1,000 feet of river frontage.

Captain Harris Homestead Preserve (Greene)-325 acres

In December of 2010, ALT conserved this approximately 325-acre property through a conservation easement generously donated by Alicia Furman, a descendant of the Harris family. This area, now known as the Captain Harris Homestead Preserve, has been owned by the Harris family and its descendants since the late 1700s. In addition to its historical resources, including the remnants of the early homestead foundations, the property holds significant ecological value as a wildlife corridor between Hooper Pond and Sabattus Lake. Maine's Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife has identified significant inland waterfowl and wading bird habitat along its 6,000 feet of frontage on Hooper Brook.

Great Falls Balloon Festival

Balloons, rafts, kayaks, canoes--and spectators! The Androscoggin River in the Lewiston-Auburn downtown area was actually crowded during the annual Great Falls Balloon Festival, when ALT's Great Falls Paddling Society took to the water to view the balloon launches. As balloon pilots thrilled the audience with "splash and dashes" (touching the basket to the water and coming up dripping...a guaranteed soaking for nearby boats) some paddlers ducked for cover. Other boats, including two white water rafts contributed by Adventure Bound, explored the rocks of the Great Falls, rode the swirling currents under the bridge, and delved into the mysterious arched tunnels of the old canals. The word is spreading that the river is the best vantage point for seeing the launches and for up-close contact with the balloonists and passengers, and every year sees more and more people enjoying the fun.



Photo courtesy of Judy Marden



Jersey Bog Conservation Area (Buckfield)-600 acres

Two recent conservation successes have brought to nearly 600 acres the area ALT protects in the Jersey Bog watershed. Jersey Bog is of great importance as deer wintering habitat and waterfowl breeding territory. Its Northern White Cedar swamps have been cited as rare natural communities by the Maine Natural Areas Program.

• **Everett Towle Forest (Buckfield)-185 acres**

The Nature Conservancy donated a working forest conservation easement on the 185-acre Everett Towle Forest off Purkis Road to ALT in January of 2011. The land now is owned and managed by the Small Woodland Owners Association of Maine (SWOAM).

• **Drew Brook Forest (Buckfield)-126 acres**

In 2011 ALT transferred 126-acres purchased by the Trust in 2008 with a conservation easement that permanently protects this parcel along Bear Pond Road within the Jersey Bog watershed.

Packard-Littlefield Farm – Raber Addition (Lewiston, Sabattus)-392 Acres

The partnership between Packard-Littlefield Farm and ALT continues to grow! In 2004, Bob and Ella Mae Packard worked with us to place an agricultural conservation easement on their 195-acre working farm in Lisbon, with funding from the Land for Maine’s Future Program and the USDA Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program. In 2008, the Packards donated an easement on an additional 96 acres in Lisbon and Lewiston. In 2010, we received a third donated easement from the Packards, on 101 acres they had purchased in Lewiston and Sabattus. We are delighted to now be conserving almost 400 acres on this farm for future agricultural use.

Garcelon Bog and No Name Pond-144 acres

The Garcelon Bog conservation easement protects approximately 109 acres of ecologically significant wetland in the heart of Lewiston. The No Name Pond conservation easement conserves approximately 35-acres along the pond. ALT is working with the city of Lewiston to place conservation easements on City-owned property in both of these properties as part of wetland mitigation compensation for the Gendron Business Park Phase II.

Purinton Homestead Conservation Area, Bowdoin-143 acres

We worked with the Natural Resource Conservation Service/USDA to place a conservation easement on 58-acres of this ALT property through the Wetland Reserve Program. The conservation easement allows for NRCS to restore degraded wetlands on-site which were originally converted to agriculture.

THE LIBBY REPORT

Greetings:

It has been too long since a newsletter has gone out and we are truly sorry. There are many great successes to discuss and we want you to know about a few of them. If you have picked up the paper over the past few months you have seen a few noteworthy stories. From our Chisholm Trails work in the Jay, Livermore, Livermore Falls area to the establishment of the Great Falls Paddling Society in the Twin Cities to the conservation of the Lisbon Island in the Androscoggin River - we are putting our best foot forward!

There have been some outstanding opportunities especially with our participation in the Maine Excellence Program for the Land Trust Alliance accreditation process. We had a chance to assess our organization internally and with the help of Deb Chapman, a professional in the field. We found that we have more work to do, but are making headway in meeting the standards. You may also know that we have relocated our office space to downtown Auburn. This space has given us urban trail and river access and a prominent place to publicize our great work. It also gives us great connectivity to the landscape as we prepare to continue to work towards the vision of the Androscoggin Greenways project.

A newsletter certainly cannot cover every facet of the organization over the last year and more. Please sign up for our e-newsletters and visit the website to find out about future events and don't hesitate to contact us. We appreciate your support and hope you come out to a recreation event or just even take a stroll.

Sincerely yours,

Jason



Youth Fishing Day in Downtown Lewiston-On August 11 ALT and Maine IF&W who provided the fishing equipment hosted Lewiston-based Tree Street Youth to a morning of fishing at Simard-Payne (Railroad) Park. Providing a fun outdoor experience for kids to help build pride in their community is exciting. We look forward to more of these events.

ANDROSCOGGIN GREENWAY PROJECT

Five walking audits have been completed as part of the Androscoggin Greenway project in conjunction with the engineering consulting firm Wright-Pierce. These walks were a series of walking loops that serve to connect key neighborhoods or business centers in the heart of the community to the river corridor. A total of 45 participants joined in the walks. Follow up meetings will be scheduled to keep stakeholders informed.



Our New Home!

The Androscoggin Land Trust has a new home! We are now located at 86 Main Street in downtown Auburn. We have urban trail and river access which gives us great connectivity to the landscape as we prepare to continue to work towards the vision of the Androscoggin Greenways project.



BOARD UPDATES

Doug Boyd (Lewiston, ME)

Doug's is a familiar face in the Lewiston Auburn area as Past President of the Great Falls Balloon Festival and the Auburn Rotary Club. He graduated from McGill University in Montreal with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Agriculture and worked for FMC Corporation for 16 years before becoming the owner and president of The Maine Bucket Company in Lewiston. He retired in 2011 but continues his civic duty by being on the Board of Directors of several organizations such as Central Maine Health Ventures, the Maine Wood Products Association, and Central Maine Community College. He lives with his wife in Lewiston and enjoys spending time outdoors, especially on his land along the river in Greene.

Mark Overhaug (Yarmouth, ME)

As an Enrolled Agent and Staff Accountant, Mark has worked for Austin Associates since 2007; prior to that he owned his own accounting and tax practice for approximately 20 years. He is a graduate of Southern Illinois University with a Bachelor of Science degree. His strengths include consulting and planning for service industry businesses. Mark is currently involved in the Androscoggin Chamber of Commerce and is heavily involved in Yarmouth Football. He has been a Board Member of Sebago Lake Chamber of Commerce, Chairman of Montgomery County United for You, Board Member and Treasurer of Kiwanis. Mark lives in Yarmouth with his wife and their two teenagers.

Peter Garcia (Auburn, ME)

Born in New Rochelle, New York, Peter received both his undergraduate and law degrees from Georgetown University. Currently with the firm of Skelton, Taintor & Abbott, he has more than 40 years of experience in a wide variety of legal disciplines. After serving as an assistant staff judge advocate in the U.S. Army, Peter became admitted to practice in New York and in Maine. He is a member of the Maine State Bar Association and the Androscoggin County Bar Association. He was honored in 2010 as the Auburn Business Association Citizen of the Year for his civic contributions and economic development efforts in his home city. Since 1990, Peter has devoted time and effort to spurring economic development in the Lewiston/Auburn area through his involvement with many civic organizations, and played an important role in developing the wetlands banking program.

LET'S STAY IN TOUCH! We will keep you informed of our activities in this newsletter, which will now resume a more frequent schedule. We also will continue to distribute emailed news of our accomplishments and upcoming events. Please visit our website (www.androscogginlandtrust.org) to sign up and "like" us and post comments on Facebook any time!



Greenway *Cont. from page 1*

for the Greenway, to help “brand” the Androscoggin River corridor and give Greenway visitors -- paddlers, bikers, hikers, and drivers -- consistent information on natural and cultural resources that will make their experience more enjoyable, educational, and safe. We intend for this project not only to enhance the experiences of visitors, but also to boost local economic opportunity and community identity and pride.

As if the foregoing work weren’t enough to keep us busy, we are working to expand the original scope of the Androscoggin Greenway into our “Northern Service Area,” building on the success of the dedicated Chisholm Trails group that is reconnecting people to the river in the Jay and Livermore Falls business districts and downtown neighborhoods.

In partnership with Verso Paper Corp., Otis Ventures, LLC, Maine’s Department of Conservation, and the Town of Jay, we are working to permanently conserve and guarantee public access to nearly 1,300 acres of forest, wetlands, and shore frontage in Canton and Jay, and to create 2.3 miles of multi-use recreational trails and river access in Chisholm Village and Livermore Falls. The Land for Maine’s Future Board Nominations Committee has recommended that the full LMF Board vote to award a significant grant of \$259,000 to our project, and our fingers are crossed. Watch for more on this exciting project in our next issue and our email updates!

Neighbors Gather to Improve Barker Mill Trail

On Saturday, August 27th the Androscoggin Land Trust organized a work day to improve the Barker Mill Trail in New Auburn. A dozen hard-working volunteers donated their strength and time to collect trash, move brush, trim branches and lay down wood chips on part of the trail. The United New Auburn Association provided critical logistical support including cooking a wonderful bean and hot dog lunch. The City of Auburn donated and delivered the wood chips as well as the use of tools and removal of the collected garbage. Rolly’s Diner generously donated the food for the volunteers and Nestle Waters North American donated water for the event. *Thank you neighbors and volunteers!!!*



**ANDROSCOGGIN
LAND TRUST**

Become a Member Today!

Please join the Androscoggin Land Trust’s work in protecting our important natural areas, traditional landscapes, and outdoor experience.

\$1000 Androscoggin Society

Name _____

\$500 Conservationist

Street _____

\$250 Protector

Town _____ State _____ Zip _____

\$100 Steward

Telephone _____

\$60 Supporter

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\$30 Friend

I/We wish for my gift to remain anonymous in ALT publications.

\$15 Student/Senior

Please designate my gift to the LA Trails program.

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My employer has a matching gifts program _____



A Program of
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UPCOMING EVENTS

Join us for these upcoming hikes and snowshoes. More details on our website www.androscogginlandtrust.org

- **January 28**
Mt. Apatite with Dana Little
- **February 4**
Huston Farm with Jonathan LaBonte
- **February 11**
Androscoggin Riverlands State Park: Legends of the Riverlands
- **February 18**
Sherwood Forest Conservation Area
- **February 25**
Androscoggin Riverlands State Park: Winter Greens
- **March 3**
Androscoggin Riverlands State Park Snowshoe Hike:
Winter Wildlife in the Park
- **March 10**
Snowshoe Hike along the Lewiston Riverside Greenway:
Sunnyside Park to Riverside Cemetery

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