



ANDROSCOGGIN LAND TRUST

Autumn 2017

Photo courtesy of Sun Journal photographer Daryn Slover

The Androscoggin Land Trust is a private, non-profit 501(c)(3) membership-supported organization dedicated to protecting, through land conservation and stewardship, the important natural areas, traditional landscapes, and outdoor experience in the Androscoggin River watershed. We currently conserve approximately 5,000 acres of land including over ten miles of riverfront along the Androscoggin River.

Fish Days of Summer

Did you know that the phrase “the dog days of summer” comes from ancient Greek astrology? The star Sirius (the dog’s nose in the constellation Canis Major) rose each year during late July’s hot weather, and so the season came to be known as the “dog days of summer.” At ALT, we like to call them the “fish days of summer,” as each year we have a great time introducing local youth to fishing on the Androscoggin River and to the surprising treasures of the waterway that runs through our region.

This year, participants from Tree Street Youth Summer Program and St. Mary’s Nutrition Center’s Summer Youth Gardeners Program joined us at these events, which were made possible in large part by a generous donation of 15 Zebco fishing poles from Dag’s Bait Shop in Auburn, as well as support from our other corporate partners. Check out the next page to hear more about ALT’s busy summer of 2017.



Photos from ALT’s Learn to Fish days with Tree Street Youth Summer Program and St. Mary’s Nutrition Center’s Summer Youth Gardeners Program

ALT Annual Meeting — *Free & Open to the Public*

Tuesday, November 14, 2017

Hilton Garden Inn, Auburn

5:00pm – 6:00pm Complimentary Appetizers/Cash bar

6:00pm – 7:30pm Meeting and Guest Speaker: Julie Isbill, National Park Service Rivers Trails & Conservation Assistance



Come hear from Julie Isbill about her recent work on the Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument as well as her ongoing work providing assistance across Maine to communities working on trails, greenways, parks and outdoor recreation through the Rivers, Trails & Conservation Assistance program of the National Park Service.

2017 Award Presentations

Bonnie Lounsbury Environmental Award
Camille Parrish

Androscoggin Partner Award
Wes and Marilyn Ackley

Elliott Bates Stewardship Award
Mark Johnson

Community Business Stewardship Award
Evergreen Subaru

To RSVP, please call 207.782.2302 or email info@androscogginlandtrust.org We hope to see you there!

Summer Activities (cont.):

In addition to our Learn to Fish Days featured on the first page, ALT's summer river events included the second exciting Great Falls Boats 'n' Brews Canoe and Kayak Race, which drew 58 participants (who braved an absolute downpour just before the race started) to the 7 mile course from Lewiston/Auburn to the Durham Boat Launch. Next year we hope to add a shorter, family-oriented segment of the race, which is held the morning of the popular Baxter BrewFest. Paddle After Hours events in Jay and Lewiston/Auburn in August drew others to the river, to learn about the local areas from the perspective of the river and to socialize with other outdoor recreation enthusiasts. Nearly 50 people took to the river in boats and its banks on foot to take part in this year's annual River Clean-Up, collecting close to 1,400 pounds of trash in addition to an abundance of metal and tires!

By land, we hosted the LA Community Forest Board to lead an informative, enjoyable walk in the woods to identify trees and also led two events for participants in the Auburn Public Library Teen Summer Reading Program whose 2017 theme was "Build a Better World." ALT was the grateful beneficiary of the hard-working efforts of many local residents who took part in several volunteer trail work days—representing Edward Little High School, Bates College, Walmart, Wellness Connection of Maine, CMMC Family Medicine Residency, Maine College of Health Professions, Poland Spring, L.L. Bean Outdoor Discovery School, Wolfpack Fitness, Kiwanis Club of L/A, Greene and Auburn Boy Scout Troops, Spruce Mountain High School, United Way and JMG not to mention all the work of our volunteer land stewards, board members and other individual volunteers. Thank you to all who contributed to make it a fun and fulfilling summer! Whether fishing, paddling, hiking or enjoying more leisurely pursuits, we hope you too enjoyed the beauty and renewal of summer, and that you will join us for some of our events during the colder and exhilarating winter months ahead.



Dennis & Cathy Knudsen at Ambrose Farm

Special Thanks to the Ambrose Family

In 2001, George Franklin and Phyllis Ambrose generously donated a conservation easement on their 100-acre Turner farm to ALT. This easement will forever protect the scenic rural character, agricultural and recreational opportunities, wildlife habitat and hilly panoramic views on the farm. After George Franklin's death, Phyllis' niece Cathy Knudsen and her husband Dennis (now the farm's owners) served as farm caretakers, as well as loving caregivers for Phyllis. In early 2016, before Phyllis' death, they were able to fulfill her dream of having farm animals there again after a nearly three-decade absence. ALT recently learned that Phyllis had made a \$25,000 bequest to ALT, an incredible contribution to the Ambrose legacy in conservation that will have a lasting and significant impact on the work of ALT. Our heartfelt thanks to the Ambrose family for this generous gift!

Where we work: Garcelon Bog, Lewiston

Nestled just off busy Sabattus Street in Lewiston is a hidden jewel called Garcelon Bog, a unique ecological habitat right in the heart of the city. While the bog is formally owned by the City of Lewiston, ALT holds the bog's conservation easement and is responsible for ensuring that the bog remains protected as a unique habitat for every future generation to enjoy and appreciate.

Bogs are unique wetland consisting of layers of peat, an organically rich material that forms when plants die, fall into the water, and compress over time. At Garcelon and other bogs in North America, this process began thousands of years ago during the last major glacial retreat. As natural sponges, peat bogs serve an important ecological role, creating a natural stormwater buffer by storing and slowly releasing water, while ridding it of sediments and pollutants. From Garcelon Bog, which contains layers up peat up to 21 feet deep, water gradually flows to nearby Jepson Brook and eventually the Androscoggin River.

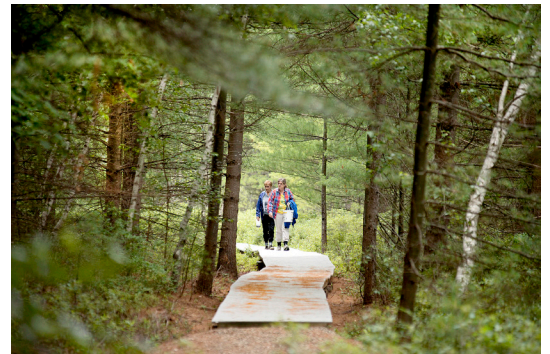
A boardwalk—rebuilt by the City of Lewiston last year—leads visitors through the bog, where trees and shrubs are specially adapted to growth in this unique habitat where nutrients are scarce and soils are acidic. These include tamarack trees, a coniferous larch that turns yellow and sheds its needles in the fall; labrador tea, a species of heath used by Native Americans as an herbal tea; and rhodora, a cousin of native rhododendrons that bloom in a beautiful purple shade in late spring.

GETTING TO GARCELON BOG:

From the intersection of Russell Street and Sabattus Street in Lewiston, follow Russell Street east/south (signs also indicate Farwell Street) and quickly turn left to continue on Russell Street. Follow Russell Street to the end, where you will see a kiosk and trail entrance.



Garcelon Bog Entrance



Visitors walk and pick blueberries along the boardwalk. Photo courtesy of Sun Journal photographer Daryn Slover

Matching Gift Opportunity! This fall, a group of committed ALT members has offered to match each contribution. Please take this opportunity to make your gift twice as effective!

Protect Local Lands with a Gift to ALT Your contributions and volunteer efforts are vital to our continuing work to protect important natural landscapes for future generations and to offer enriching outdoor experiences in these special places. You can make a donation online using a credit card at androscogginlandtrust.org/donate or mail a check (*payable to Androscoggin Land Trust*) to ALT, PO Box 3145, Auburn, ME 04210. **Thank you!**

Name _____ Phone _____ Email _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

I wish to make this gift:

- ☐ In Memory of _____ ☐ I am interested in volunteering
- ☐ In Honor of _____ ☐ I would like to discuss conserving or donating my land in _____
- ☐ Anonymously ☐ I would like information about planned giving. Inquiries are confidential.

Your gift is tax deductible to the extent provided by state and federal laws.

Riverfront Wayfinding Kiosks Installed in L/A



The cities of Lewiston and Auburn have recently installed colorful, informative kiosks on both sides of the river, complementing the wayfinding signs that have been installed along local roadways over the last several years. ALT has worked with the cities as a catalyst in this process. In 2010, ALT obtained a grant to hire a consulting firm and create a template design for the signs, with the goal of helping to draw attention to L/A's downtowns while highlighting access points to the river and local recreational opportunities. This work aligns with ALT's goal to connect people with the river and recreation throughout the wider region.

Eric Cousens, Auburn's Deputy Director of Economic and Community Development, notes that the new signs "help people appreciate the rich history and current opportunities to enjoy, whether they live, work or play here. ALT has provided substantial access and river cleanup events to improve the recreational experiences along the river at no cost to taxpayers. Along with other local non-profits, it raises the bar above what the City is able to fund to improve the recreational opportunities and experiences available to Auburn residents and visitors."

David Hediger, Lewiston's City Planner/Deputy Director Planning and Code Enforcement, also referred to ALT as a spur in the process, noting that "whenever assistance can be provided to staff by a group of citizens or an organization with the implementation of a project, there is a greater sense accomplishment and support from the community. ALT's participation and assistance often fills a void where staff may not have immediate resources, or the time needed to focus on moving a project forward."

Community Events Year Round at French Falls in Jay

French Falls hosts softball games, clean up events, hikes, music in the park events, space for special community gatherings, bird walks, trails for walking and running access to the river for fishing and much more! The photos below provide just a snapshot. ALT is endlessly grateful for the relationship with the Town of Jay and all of its community members who take such great care and make such great use of this ALT owned property.



Audubon Bird Walk



Spruce Mountain HS Envirothon Geocaching



Spruce Mountain Sled-In and Family Day Sledders



Crash Road Band for Music in the Park



Photo credit: Amanda Meader

Wildlife Spotlight: Bald Eagles

With over ten miles of waterfront along the Androscoggin River, along with many more acres of wetlands, ALT protects an extensive territory for nesting Bald Eagles. In danger of extinction in the 1950's due to unrestrained hunting, loss of suitable habitat and the pesticide DDT, these birds of prey are now thriving here and throughout Maine.

Soaring high in the air on wings that can stretch up to eight feet, bald eagles fly at speed up to nearly 40 miles per hour, diving down at nearly three times that speed to snatch fish out of the water with their sharp talons and strong grip. They live mainly on fish, but will also catch and eat birds, small mammals, turtles and snakes.

Bald eagles build their nests in wooded areas next to substantial waters, in mature stands of trees that allow them to perch high where they can see the water and watch for predators. Eagle nests are the largest tree nests of any species in the world, with the largest ever recorded measuring 10 feet wide and 20 feet deep. Over the years a ton or more of nesting material may accumulate, with larger nests sometimes overwhelming their supports and crashing to the ground.

Eagles in Maine start working on their nests in early December and finish in February. They lay and hatch their eggs by early spring. The young eagles will start to fly in mid-May, but may not be independent until late summer. Approaching an eagle nest during any of this time can lead to abandonment of the nest and death of the young, so it is wise to maintain at least a quarter-mile distance. Tree harvesting should be avoided in the area during this sensitive time.

Eagles can live in the wild up to 40 years and tend to return each year to the same nest with the same mate. Because of this loyalty, Maine considers nests located on conservation lands to be critical to a healthy eagle population. Knowing that a nesting pair needs about one mile of water

frontage backed by deep woods, ALT properties could host as many as ten different nests. As a result, we work to maintain a health habitat for these majestic birds and to ensure that future generations will continue to marvel at them soaring overhead.

Celebrating 30 Years of the Land for Maine's Future Program

Established by Maine voters in 1987, the Land for Maine's Future program celebrates its 30th anniversary this year. In three decades, LMF has conserved more than 150 special places, totaling over 600,000 acres. It has made Maine a more desirable place to live and raise a family, while strengthening some of our state's most important industries, including tourism, forest products, agriculture, and fishing.

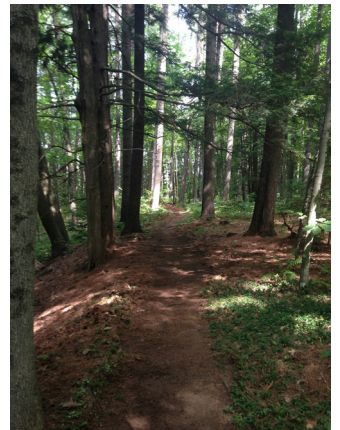
Securing guaranteed public access to the outdoors has been central to LMF's mission from the beginning. Through the addition of new public lands, the program has greatly expanded the availability of world-class outdoor recreational opportunities for citizens and visitors alike. Thanks to support from LMF over the years, ALT has been able to conserve North Turner River Conservation Area, Hooper Pond, Androscoggin Greenway Project (properties in Jay and Canton), Hallelujah Farm, Packard Littlefield Farm and David Rancourt Preserve.

LMF has a long track record of protecting land vital to the state's forest products, agriculture, tourism, and commercial fishing industries. The program has conserved 40 farms, 24 commercial waterfronts, and more than 250,000 acres of working forestland. At the same time, LMF's efforts to expand public access for outdoor activities including, hiking, hunting, birdwatching, snowmobiling, and fishing have greatly benefited the state's tourism economy.

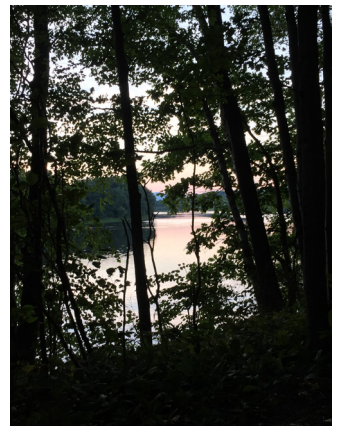
The program was established under a Republican administration and received renewed funding proposals from the Independent and Democratic governors who followed. In the legislature, LMF bond questions have

always enjoyed broad bi-partisan support. Maine people have also strongly endorsed the program at the ballot box – comfortably passing bond measures to fund the program in 1987, 1999, 2005, 2007, 2010, and 2012. This year, more than two dozen land conservation projects will compete for more than \$4.5 million during the program's first open application process in three years.

There has never been a better time to get out and enjoy the incredible work that LMF has accomplished in the last 30 years. To learn more about the more than 150 other properties protected by LMF over the past thirty years, visit: <http://www.landformainesfuture.org/>.



David Rancourt Preserve, Lewiston



French Falls, Jay



Packard Littlefield Farm, Lisbon



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Thank you to our amazing Corporate Partners!



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Ask us about our Volunteer Land Stewardship Program: Interested in becoming an ALT Land Steward, enjoying the outdoors while walking and monitoring one of our conserved properties? For info about this and other ALT volunteer opportunities, please contact us: (207) 782-2302 or info@androscogginlandtrust.org