



Maine Heritage

50
Years of
Leadership



MCHT PRESERVES SEE MORE USE THAN EVER BEFORE

© Courtney Reichert

Cousins from Brunswick and Freeport play on Whaleboat Island Preserve before enjoying their first overnight camping experience on an island.

For Maine Coast Heritage Trust land stewards, a nine-to-five workday isn't a common occurrence during field season. Weather, tides, boat sharing, volunteer availability—there's lots of coordination involved, and flexibility is essential. That said, it's also not common for a land steward to fire up a boat on a Saturday evening to go check on island preserves, which is exactly what MCHT's Southern Maine Regional Land Steward found herself doing quite a bit this summer.

"I've never seen so many people out on Casco Bay and using our island preserves," says Caitlin Gerber. "Just about every available campsite was in use on any given night and particularly on the weekends." Caitlin would make the rounds on those Saturday nights, checking in on campers, ensuring fires were below the high tide mark, and explaining to some that camping is limited to designated sites.

Thankfully, the vast majority of visitors were respectful. She also encountered more problems

than ever before, including (to name just a couple) uncontrolled dogs and left-behind waste. She seized the opportunity to educate preserve users in an op-ed in the local paper. Earlier in the year, when COVID-19 hit, MCHT's Land Trust Program Director Warren Whitney gathered a group from the conservation community and state resource agencies to create clear guidelines for safe and responsible use of conserved lands, which were shared across local land trust and state websites and various media outlets.

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

FULL OF HOPE FOR THE NEXT 50 YEARS OF MCHT



Tim Glidden



This time last year, we were pulling together pieces for the fall newsletter announcing Maine Coast Heritage Trust's 50th anniversary. Perhaps you remember it? The cover of that edition was a collage of 50 images ranging from Bold Coast landscapes to portraits of smiling kids to hands unearthing root vegetables from conserved soil. It was bright and hopeful. I found it humbling and inspiring to think back on all MCHT has accomplished through decades of extraordinary generosity and hard work. Equally, I was excited to share MCHT's vision for 2020 and the years to come.

Of course, nothing could have prepared any of us for 2020. At best, this year has been trying. At worst, devastating. Personally, working for MCHT—working on behalf of this coast and the people who live, work, and play here—buoyed me. At every turn, I was reminded of our work to create value: more public access to coastal lands, stronger coastal communities, and a coast more resilient—more adaptable—to climate change.

In 2020, MCHT preserves were busier than we've ever seen them, and the need for more access to the coast was stark. I'm proud to say that as I write this, weeks before you're reading it, we have completed 26 public access projects so far this year. While the

national dialogue around climate change remains roiled, here in Maine, MCHT got to work, completing one of its most significant salt marsh protection projects to date and making headway in other efforts to protect critical salt marsh systems on the coast—an initiative that's sustaining the integrity of our coastal ecosystems and economies in this changing climate. Your MCHT has not slowed down.

Since MCHT's beginning in the year of the first Earth Day, we've been on a mission to keep the coast open, healthy, working, and beautiful. What we do hasn't changed all that much, but how we do it has certainly evolved over time, and we continue to evolve to meet the unique challenges of today and tomorrow.

Despite the trials and tribulations of this year, when I think about the next 50 years of MCHT, my outlook remains bright and hopeful. I think about all the generous people who love this place, who come together to protect and care for it again and again. If you've been with us along the way, thank you. If you've been on the sidelines, now's the time to get in the game. If last year's fall newsletter was a celebration of the past 50 years, this one is the kick-off to the next 50. Let's make them count.

PRESERVES BUSIER THAN EVER CONTINUED FROM COVER

Across the state of Maine, conserved lands of all kinds saw more use than ever in 2020—from popular state parks to lesser-known community preserves. Andy Cutko, Director of the Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands, says use of state parks was up through the summer and didn't wane in September. "Campground use was 68% higher in September 2020 compared to September 2019," he says. "Much of the increased use was by Mainers."

Of course, this increased use is largely due to the pandemic, which restricted travel and limited options for safe activities. To spend time with friends and family, fight off cabin fever, and find some much-needed social, emotional, and physical reprieve, people took to the outdoors. And what they found delighted them. "Spending time on the coast made this summer, which was otherwise challenging, an extraordinary one for my young daughters," says Courtney Reichert of Brunswick. "They spent countless hours swimming and playing on the shore."

"I hope that people who discovered land trust lands for the first time this year continue to get out and enjoy them," says Stewardship Director Jane Arbuckle. "And for our part, we will continue to look for opportunities to educate people about safe and responsible use."

MCHT has been working for years to create more public access to the coast and has come a long way thanks to generous donors. Over the past six years, MCHT has played a leadership or supporting role in 60% of the new coastal access sites added in Maine. Still, the need for more public access to the coast—and investments in stewardship to care for that land—is evident. Thankfully, through the trials and tribulations of this year, MCHT's work to conserve extraordinary coastal lands and islands for public access and keep the coast open has not slowed down. 🌊



One of MCHT's newer preserves, Lookout Rock in Brooksville, saw lots of visitors in 2020. © Ward Burns



IN MY WORDS: NOVA TOWER NEXT WAVE CO-CHAIR

I had been in Portland for less than a month when I found my way to a trail along

the water. I stood in a clearing looking out at the rocky coast and the islands of Casco Bay, and I actually said out loud to myself, "I am never leaving this place." That was eleven years ago.

Those very islands brought me to Maine Coast Heritage Trust.

When my friend Ned posted about an insane lobster bake on a sandbar between the Goslings Islands, I wanted to know what that was about. I went to my first Saltwater Shindig in 2019. Now, I'm co-chair of the Next Wave, a group of young MCHT donors.

I love hanging out with other Next Wavers at events like the Shindig, but that's not what pulls me deeper into the organization. Rather, it's the work we do at MCHT. Every meeting I attend,

I come away with more respect and admiration for the people and work of this organization.

Lately, I've been inspired to see MCHT preserves stay open to communities through the pandemic, our progress in making the coast more resilient to climate change, and our organization engaging in issues of diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice. Everyone I talk to at MCHT is so passionate—it's contagious. 🌊

CARING FOR NEWLY CONSERVED CLARK ISLAND PRESERVE

The Clark Island beach is busy on a sunny summer day.

In July of 2020, Maine Coast Heritage Trust acquired 120 acres of Clark Island for public access—creating an extraordinary new preserve in the Midcoast. If you’ve made a gift to MCHT in recent years, you helped make this happen.

Already, the island—connected to the mainland by a causeway—is seeing many visitors enjoying the fabulous beaches and trails. MCHT land steward Amanda Devine spent the summer months making improvements to the preserve, from rejuvenating walking paths to cleaning up old dump sites to improving beach access and placing picnic tables in especially scenic spots. MCHT also conducted a natural resource inventory and began management of invasive plants.

Still, there’s a great deal of stewardship work left to do, including one-off projects like additional trail building

on the west side of the island and the kind of ongoing and constant care and attention a heavily used preserve requires over time. MCHT now has \$70,000 left to raise toward stewardship of Clark Island, to be put toward trails, water quality testing, increased staff time on the preserve, signage, and major habitat restoration.

“Clark Island was heavily disturbed and almost completely deforested during quarrying operations in the nineteenth century and, as a result, invasive plants have choked out wildlife-sustaining native vegetation over several areas,” says Amanda. “To bring back functional native habitat, and to do all the other stewardship work there, it’s absolutely necessary we raise the remaining funds.” 🌍

THANKS TO ALL WHO CONTRIBUTED TO CONSERVE CLARK ISLAND!
THOSE INTERESTED IN SUPPORTING ONGOING STEWARDSHIP EFFORTS
CAN CONTACT DAVID WARREN AT [DWARREN@MCHT.ORG](mailto:dwarren@mcht.org).



FEATURED PRESERVE MALAGA ISLAND, PHIPPSBURG

At the mouth of the New Meadows

River in Phippsburg lies Malaga Island. Undeveloped today, this island was once home to a mixed-race fishing community forcibly removed by the state in 1912, in an act motivated by racism, eugenics, and a growing tourism industry. Since Maine Coast Heritage Trust conserved the island in 2001 and opened it to the public as a preserve, this awful chapter of Maine’s history has been brought to light through the dedicated work of historians, archaeologists, artists, and others.

It has been MCHT’s honor and privilege to support this awareness

effort and to work with partners in the community, including descendants of the islanders, to facilitate educational opportunities and other special events that have been held here over the years. In 2010, the Maine Governor John Baldacci issued an apology for the cruel eviction of the Malaga community. That year, the island also became part of the Maine Freedom Trail.

Beyond beautiful views and trails, visitors to the island today will find numbered posts marking the sites of the homes razed by the state in 1912. 🌍



WE ENCOURAGE ALL TO HEAD TO MCHT.ORG/PRESERVE/MALAGA-ISLAND TO READ MORE ABOUT THE HISTORY OF THIS UNIQUE PRESERVE, SEE LINKS TO MORE INFORMATION, AND PRINT OFF A SELF-GUIDED TOUR OF THE ISLAND FOR YOUR NEXT VISIT.

IN BRIEF

The Making of Long Point Preserve



© Bridget Besaw

In 2020, MCHT finished the seventh land protection project in seven years to create Long Point Preserve, a 180-acre preserve spanning most of a peninsula in Machiasport.

Through the Pandemic, Hunger Relief Efforts Ramp Up at Aldermere Farm and Erickson Fields

Aldermere Farm and Erickson Fields Preserve are on track to donate 25,000 pounds of vegetables and 1,000 pounds of hamburger to Midcoast food pantries at a time when hunger is on the rise.



MCHT photo

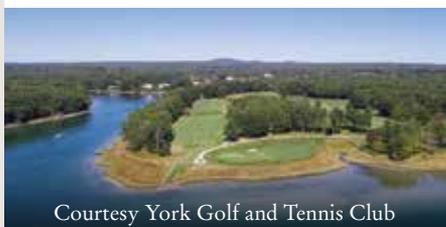
MCHT Under Option to Acquire Most of Little Whaleboat Island for Public Access



MCHT photo

MCHT has until the end of 2021 to raise the \$1.3 million needed to protect and permanently open to the public Little Whaleboat (West), Nate, and Tuck islands in Casco Bay.

175 Acres Protected Along the York River



Courtesy York Golf and Tennis Club

MCHT helped facilitate one of the most significant conservation projects in York's history through the protection of rich wildlife habitat along the York River at the York Golf and Tennis Club. Also protected: public access to a favorite local sledding hill!

Conservation Interns Share Their Experiences

Through the Richard G. Rockefeller Conservation Internship Program, MCHT placed nine Maine students with land trusts throughout the state to gain practical skills in the field of land conservation.



Courtesy Hana Palazzo

These are the highlights! To see expanded versions of all the stories, visit:

[MCHT.ORG/MAINEHERITAGE](https://mcht.org/MaineHeritage)

IF YOU HAVEN'T MADE YOUR 2020 GIFT TO MCHT YET, THERE'S STILL TIME. AND IT WILL BE MATCHED! GIVE BACK TO THE COAST TODAY AT: [GIVE.MCHT.ORG](https://give.mcht.org)



KEEP THE COAST *MAINE*

Everything you read about in this newsletter is possible thanks to the generous support of Maine Coast Heritage Trust donors.

Donors are creating more public access to the coast, strengthening coastal communities, making Maine more resilient to climate change, and so much more. Thank you to all who are a part of MCHT and the ongoing effort to keep the coast Maine.

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WHAT'S INSIDE:

Preserve Usage
is Up in 2020

Clark Island
Conserved

& More!

NAME THAT PLACE

Some hints...

This island was once home to a mixed-race fishing community forcibly removed by the state in 1912.

In 2010, this island became part of the Maine Freedom Trail.

SEE INSIDE FOR
THIS FEATURED PRESERVE

