



Maine Heritage

50
Years of
Leadership



CONSERVED LAND HELPS FEED A COMMUNITY

MCHT Photo

Conserved land can be harnessed for all kinds of good, and in the case of Aldermere Farm and Erickson Fields, Maine Coast Heritage Trust’s agricultural preserves in Rockport, the land is feeding the Midcoast community. Aldermere is a working cattle farm, selling and donating beef to area residents. Erickson Fields is home to community gardens and programs like Teen Ag Program, where local teens grow food for area food pantries, schools, and businesses.

Through these efforts and programs, MCHT staff have made connections with many people and organizations supporting hunger relief efforts in the Midcoast over the years. In March of 2019, Joelle Albury, Outreach and Office Manager at Aldermere Farm and Erickson Fields, was asked to be part of what would eventually become the Knox County Food Council. “The Food Council is about bringing all of these affiliated organizations together to create a sustainable local food system,

and to promote greater efficiency and effectiveness in limiting waste and getting food to those who need it,” says Joelle.

Maine already had an elevated level of hunger compared with the rest of the nation when the pandemic hit, with one in five children food insecure. As lives were upended, the problem worsened, and across the state, food pantries saw a surge in the number of people seeking food assistance. In March of 2020, Joelle went from attending Knox

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.

HUNGER RELIEF EFFORTS UNDERWAY CONTINUED FROM COVER

County Food Council meetings once a month to organizing meetings once a week as organizations did all they could to meet the growing need.

At Aldermere Farm and Erickson Fields, MCHT staff were certainly doing all they could. Heidi Baker, Aldermere Farm Manager, relaunched the Hamburger Helper program to encourage donations of Aldermere beef to local food pantries, ultimately donating 1,000 pounds of hamburger. Aaron Englander, Program Manager at Erickson Fields Preserve, began educating himself and others about how to responsibly grow, harvest, and distribute food during COVID-19, implementing new safety protocols shared across a network of organizations. The Teen Ag Crew is on track to donate nearly 25,000 pounds of vegetables to food pantries this year, despite a limited number of participants. Volunteers and partners like the Knox County Gleaners helped make this possible, along with the ongoing generosity of MCHT donors.



Olivia Caron, Erickson Fields MOFGA apprentice, holds a recently harvested green cabbage to be donated to a local food pantry.

“What I’ve seen has given me a lot of hope,” says Joelle. “I’ve been impressed by how quickly people came together to meet these growing needs, and how well organized they are. People just want to help each other out.” 🌱



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 WESKEAG, SOUTH THOMASTON

In 2018, Maine Coast Heritage Trust conserved 238 acres on the Weskeag Marsh to protect critical wildlife habitat and create a 132-acre public preserve. This partnership effort with Georges River Land Trust and the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife added to the 1,300 nearby acres already conserved, resulting in nearly complete protection of the marsh.

One visitor says of Weskeag Marsh, “Every trip, the Weskeag is different. You can see glossy ibis wading in the salt marshes, shovelers courting each other,

peregrine falcons chasing flocks of sandpipers, great egrets foraging, and sparrows nesting. It’s a birding mecca!”

Over the past couple of years, regional steward Amanda Devine has been readying this preserve for public access. Visitors today can enjoy a one-mile stroll around the Buttermilk Road hayfields to the edge of the marsh—or, in winter, strap on cross country skis or snowshoes and tour the open landscape. Bring your binoculars! 🌍



MORE INFORMATION AT [MCHT.ORG/PRESERVE/WESKEAG-SOUTH-THOMASTON](https://mcht.org/preserve/weskeag-south-thomaston)

IN BRIEF

MCHT Preserves See More Use Than Ever

People flocked to Maine's conserved lands in 2020, including MCHT preserves. The increased visitation was welcome—more people were out enjoying the coast!—and also presented an array of challenges and opportunities for stewardship staff.



© Courtney Reichert

The Making of Long Point Preserve

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.



© Bridget Besaw

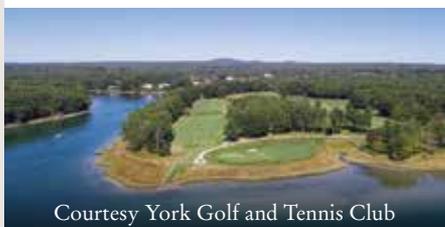
MCHT Under Option to Acquire Most of Little Whaleboat Island for Public Access



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:

Supporting Hunger Relief Efforts

Clark Island Conserved

& More!

NAME THAT PLACE

Some hints...

This preserve is home to more bird species than any marsh in the Midcoast or Penobscot Bay regions of Maine.

It's a short jog off Route One and popular with bobolinks—not to mention birders!

SEE INSIDE FOR THIS FEATURED PRESERVE

