



Maine Heritage

COAST-WIDE EDITION
FALL '21



WHY RIVERS MATTER IN A CHANGING CLIMATE

© Ken Woisard Photography

Over the past five years, MCHT has protected 3,272 acres in the Orange River watershed, which is one of five focus rivers in our Rivers Initiative.

Land conservation is one of the most important and effective methods of reducing the negative impacts of climate change* and the work Maine Coast Heritage Trust has already accomplished over the last 50 years—protecting over 150,000 acres of land—means the Maine coast is in better shape than it might have been otherwise.

The forests and marshes we've protected are absorbing carbon from the atmosphere, cleaning our air and waters, and protecting our homes, buildings, and other infrastructure from flooding and

storm surge. Also, more protected land means more habitat for wildlife to migrate to as they adjust to the changing climate—and with 75% of Maine's species vulnerable to the negative impacts of climate change, this is critical.

Healthy, free-flowing rivers provide a ribbon of connected habitat, not only for fish, but for all wildlife species, who benefit from the cooler, moist habitat and depend on the water and food these rivers provide. Free-flowing rivers also allow sea-run fish like alewives to complete their annual migration from

the ocean up Maine rivers to inland lakes and ponds to deposit their eggs.

When alewives (sometimes called the “fish that feed us all”) are numerous, other animals have a better shot at surviving and adapting to a changing climate. Unfortunately, up and down the coast, Maine rivers are blocked by dams, culverts, and other barriers, which has led to a decline in alewives and, along with it, a decline in the habitat value of our rivers and the land along their banks.

CONTINUED INSIDE >>

WHY RIVERS MATTER IN A CHANGING CLIMATE CONTINUED FROM COVER

To reverse this trend, and make the coast and its wildlife more resilient to climate change, we launched the Rivers Initiative in 2017. Over the past five years, we've been working to protect land, remove barriers, and restore habitat and fish passage in three key Downeast river systems: the Bagaduce, the Narraguagus, and the Orange.

- In the Bagaduce River, a series of partnership projects and the installation of five nature-like fishways over five years has resulted in the first fully restored coastal watershed for fish passage in Maine.
- While we continue to work with local, state, and federal agencies to improve fish passage in the Narraguagus River, we've teamed up with partners on habitat restoration projects in and along the river, and have completed seven land protection projects in the area—including a partnership contribution to The Nature Conservancy's Spring River Narraguagus project resulting in the conservation of 13,500 acres.
- In the Orange River, we've protected 3,272 acres through six unique conservation projects to ensure high water quality in this Downeast watershed, and we continue to work with the community of Whiting to restore fish passage at three dams.



© Ken Woisard Photography

Pierce Pond is one of several historic alewife spawning areas in the Bagaduce River watershed.

Building on this success, MCHT has expanded our Initiative to include the Sheepscot River in the Midcoast and the Mousam River in Southern Maine, unique watersheds where a little investment in land protection and river restoration has the potential to go a long way. 🌱

* This is according to the report "Climate Change and Land", released by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in 2019.

LEARN MORE ABOUT THE RIVERS INITIATIVE AT [MCHT.ORG/RIVERS](https://mcht.org/rivers)



Helene Marsh Harrower and Judy Marsh

PITCHING IN TO SAVE LITTLE WHALEBOAT ISLAND

This year, Brunswick's Paul's Marina celebrated its 75th anniversary.

For those who work at Paul's or are lucky enough to have a mooring there, this place is a home away from home. For those who boat around Casco Bay, it's a kind of institution—known for the good people, sandwiches, and ice cream you'll find at Judy's General Store.

Judy Marsh's father started the marina all those years ago, and she grew up visiting the islands

of Casco Bay. Her fondness for these places inspired her and her family and the extended Paul's Marina community to support the fundraising effort to conserve Whaleboat Island (in 2002) and The Goslings (in 2014). This year, Judy, her daughter Helene Marsh Harrower, son-in-law Rob Harrower, and their team pulled out all the stops to raise money to help protect Little Whaleboat Island West and nearby Nate and Tuck islands. "Someone asked me, 'Is Little Whaleboat for sale?' and I said, 'Yes it is, and do you want someone to buy it and build a house on it?' They said 'No, what are we going to do about it?'

Before I even had all of the details, I said, 'Well, I think we're going to have a fundraiser,'" says Judy.

Did they ever. About 400 people attended their 75th anniversary gathering under twinkle lights and a full moon, with tasty food and beverages and local music. "Every person we asked to buy a raffle ticket did," says Helene. "Everyone wanted to give." In the end, hundreds of people from Casco Bay's boating community gave a total of \$50,000 through Paul's Marina's fundraising efforts—a staggering amount that helped make the effort to protect Little Whaleboat a success. 🌱

FROM THE PRESIDENT

FOREVER GRATEFUL



Tim Glidden

A handwritten signature of Tim Glidden in black ink.

“THOSE WHO CONTEMPLATE THE BEAUTY OF THE EARTH FIND RESERVES OF STRENGTH THAT WILL ENDURE AS LONG AS LIFE LASTS.” — RACHEL CARSON

When I left State service to join Maine Coast Heritage Trust in 2011, I didn't know the coast like I do now. This job drew me in and drew out of me things I didn't know I cared about. There is an intimacy in the relationship between land and sea that is incredibly powerful. We respond to it instantly. We want to share in that relationship, and we are willing to work hard to sustain and protect it.

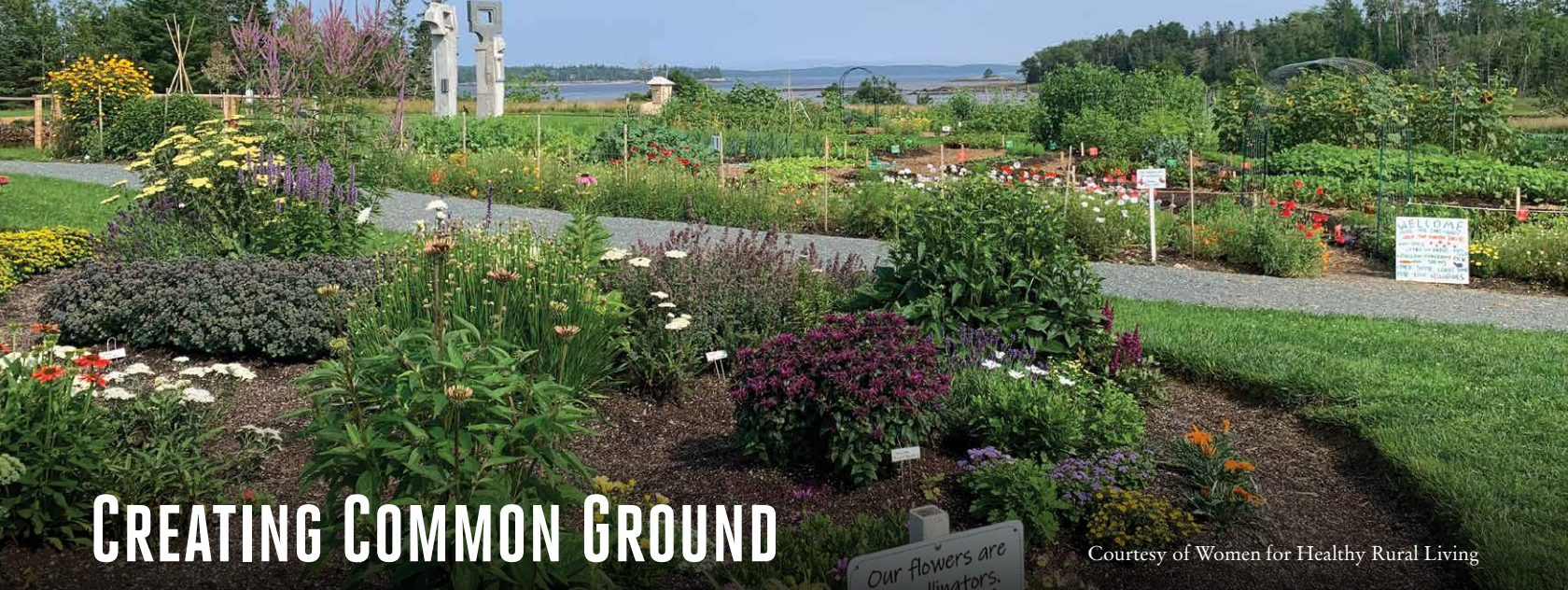
Over the ten years I've served as President of Maine Coast Heritage Trust, I've developed wonderful relationships with so many of you and, even with those I've not had the privilege to meet in person, I feel the strong connection that comes from a shared passion for the common cause of protecting Maine's incredible coast. MCHT is a place where, for more than 50 years, people have come together for the coast, to accomplish so much more than any of us could individually.

We've accomplished a great deal together over the past ten years. The mark of a truly great organization is one that can do well in the most challenging times.

Most recently, this organization powered through the Great Recession, an onslaught of anti-conservation vitriol, and a global pandemic. We had a successful Campaign to raise over \$130 million for the Maine coast and forged ahead with record levels of achievement and deep investment in community-centered conservation.

Working at MCHT has given me an appreciation for the rich range of views you all have shared on the importance of our work. I have learned with every visit and every meeting, something new and important about conservation and the land and its unique ability to inspire and nourish. Your stories enlightened me and, taken together, pointed the way to MCHT's success.

There are certain qualities that are part of MCHT's DNA, qualities that I'm confident will remain intact as this organization continues to grow and evolve—and, soon, under new leadership. At MCHT, we are patient. We learn. We take our time to get it right. Rachel Carson, who knew the Maine coast intimately, famously wrote: “Those who contemplate the beauty of the earth find reserves of strength that will endure as long as life lasts.” This job gave me that chance to stand at the edge of sea and learn the truth of which she spoke. And I will be forever grateful for that.



CREATING COMMON GROUND

Courtesy of Women for Healthy Rural Living

Milbridge Commons Wellness Park is a recent and welcome addition to downtown Milbridge.

If you're curious to know what four-and-a-half acres can do for a community, go to Milbridge, Maine. In the center of town at the water's edge there's a place called Milbridge Commons Wellness Park where, on a recent warm October day, a family picnicked, kids played, walkers enjoyed the trails, and people tended to the gardens and picked fresh, free food.

This vision for Milbridge Commons originated with Women for Healthy Rural Living (WHRL), a local nonprofit that provides a variety of services for women and families in Milbridge. Starting in 2013, WHRL created a collection of gardens around town where community members could harvest fresh, free vegetables, and after several successful years they were looking to expand. "We needed a significant piece of land to

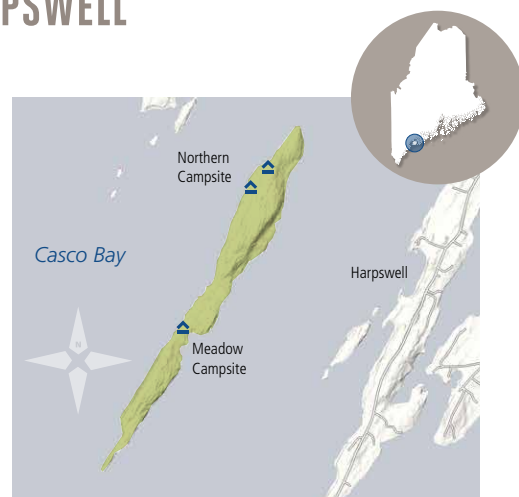
make that happen," says WHRL's Executive Director Chris Kuhni. "We certainly didn't have the resources to purchase the land or turn it into something that the community could access, so we approached Maine Coast Heritage Trust and told them about our idea."

MCHT staff and board thought it was a great one. We closed on the purchase of the 4.6-acre parcel in 2017. In the years since, MCHT's land steward Deirdre Whitehead collaborated with WHRL to turn the land into the multi-purpose greenspace it is today, with trails, gardens, and a play unit overlooking the water. "I can't say enough about it," said Milbridge resident April Norton this fall. "It's such a safe, inclusive space. People just really want to be there. It's really proving to be much more than anticipated." 🌱

FEATURED PRESERVE WHALEBOAT ISLAND, HARPSWELL

Now the largest undeveloped island in Casco Bay, Whaleboat Island was conserved by Maine Coast Heritage Trust in 2002 with generous donations from area residents and support from the state's Land for Maine's Future program. Since then, it's been managed as a public preserve. We currently offer three overnight campsites on the island, two of which are first-come, first-served and one of which is reservable online. Each spot offers its own unique experience of Casco Bay.

A grassy meadow and dense shrubland separate wind-ravaged spruce forest at either end of the island. The island's uplands are bordered by cobble beaches, fringing salt marsh, ledges, and dramatic cliffs. There are no trails on Whaleboat, but hikers can follow the rocky shoreline during low tide. By the end of this year, we hope to wrap up a fundraising effort to conserve Whaleboat's neighboring islands, Little Whaleboat West, Nate, and Tuck Islands! 🌿

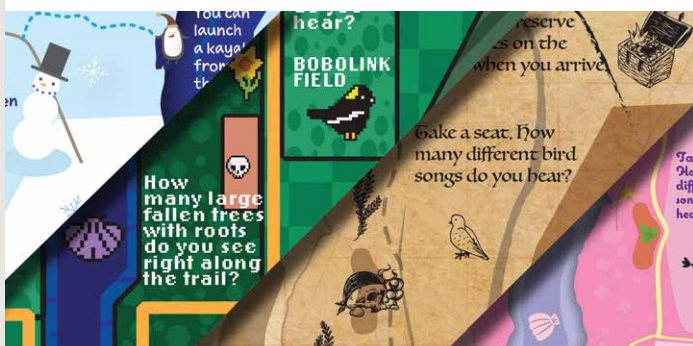


HEAD TO [MCHT.ORG/PRESERVE/WHALEBOAT-ISLAND](https://mcht.org/preserve/whaleboat-island) TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THIS PRESERVE.

IN BRIEF

Themed Maps of Woodward Point Preserve

This fall, we created special maps to make the visitor experience even better at Woodward Point Preserve. Themed maps for kids include fun activities and information about what's on the property. You can sign up for yours at mcht.org/woodward-maps.



Getting Food to Those Who Need It



Courtesy of the Knox County Gleaners

We're always looking for creative ways to get food from Erickson Fields Preserve into the hands of those who need it. Beyond food pantries, we're working with community partners to share produce in local libraries, churches, physicians' offices and other community hubs—and it's working.



Courtesy of Maine Beer Company

Maine Beer Company Announces Little Whaleboat IPA

After pledging \$50,000 to the effort to conserve Little Whaleboat Island in Casco Bay, Maine Beer Company has released a new beer inspired by the project and MCHT's mission to keep the coast healthy and open to all.

Sheep Island in Owls Head Is Conserved!

When this island went on the market, our inboxes filled with messages from locals asking if we could protect it and keep it open to the public. Now it joins nearby Monroe Island and Ash Island as an MCHT preserve!



© Ken Woisard Photography

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

MCHT.ORG/MAINEHERITAGE

IF YOU HAVEN'T MADE YOUR 2021 GIFT TO MCHT YET, THERE'S STILL TIME! GIVE BACK TO THE COAST TODAY AT 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.

Maine Coast Heritage Trust
1 Bowdoin Mill Island, Suite 201
Topsham, Maine 04086

WHAT'S INSIDE:

Restoring
Coastal Rivers

Creating Common
Ground in Milbridge

& More!

NAME THAT PLACE

Some hints...

At 122 acres, it's Casco Bay's largest undeveloped island.

On clear days, it offers views of Mt. Washington.

It's a great place to spot birds during fall and spring migration.

SEE INSIDE FOR
THIS FEATURED PRESERVE