

Oceanside Conservation Trust of Casco Bay

Volume 4 Edition 1, June 2007

PORTLAND CITY COUNCIL COMMENDS OCEANSIDE

On April 4, 2007, the Mayor of the City of Portland recognized Oceanside Conservation Trust for its efforts to preserve land in Portland, Maine, and for helping to establish Portland North Land Trust Collaborative. This collaborative model is new for Maine land trusts. Collaborative efforts by organizations save money and duplication of efforts in many ways.

In an innovative spirit, Oceanside, Falmouth Land Trust, and Cumberland Mainland Islands Land Trust are now sharing



Roger Berle receives proclamation from Mayor Marchbanks.

Proclamation

RECOGNIZING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF

Portland North LAND TRUST COLLABORATIVE

WHEREAS: The preservation of open space land within the City of Portland is essential to the quality of life of its residents; and

WHEREAS: Oceanside Conservation Trust of Casco Bay has been in the forefront of such land preservation in Portland's islands for twenty-five years; and

WHEREAS: Oceanside has been carrying out its mission since 1982 solely through the time, talent and financial resources of volunteers; and

WHEREAS: Oceanside had over time determined that it could likely operate more effectively with a paid Administrator; and

WHEREAS: Oceanside found that other small, low-budget, all-volunteer land trusts within this region had similar experience and had recently developed similar goals; and

WHEREAS: Oceanside met with Falmouth Land Trust and Cumberland Mainland and Islands Trust to discuss the possibility of collaboration; and

WHEREAS: These three Land Trusts then entered into a mutual agreement, entered amicable funding, and hired their first Administrator; and

WHEREAS: This Land Trust Collaborative opened for business on December 1, 2006 on Commercial Street; and

WHEREAS: An Open House was held in February 2007 to announce to the public the formation of the Portland North Land Trust Collaborative;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, THAT I, Nicholas M. Marchbanks, Jr., Mayor of the City of Portland, Maine, and the members of the Portland City Council do hereby commend this Land Trust Collaborative, Portland North, as the first of its kind in the State of Maine, extend sincere appreciation for its valuable accomplishments to date, and recognize Portland North's goal of addressing an increasingly challenging land conservation environment through this innovative collaboration, including the hiring of an Administrator.

Signed and sealed this 4th day of April, 2007

Nicholas M. Marchbanks, Jr., Mayor

City of Portland, Maine

staff person Jessica Burton and an office on Commercial Street. With this office up and running, the three land trusts, which have operated solely with volunteers for more than 20 years, are free to focus on the important work of protecting significant and threatened lands in their areas.

The move to collaborate among land trusts represents a national trend to streamline activities among regionally compatible conservation organizations. Each of the three land trusts in PNLTC will continue to be a separate organization.

The establishment of PNLTC was a goal for a number of Oceanside's board members including Roger Berle, Stephen Weaver, and Eliza Cope Nolan. The three land trusts applied jointly for a grant from the Davis Conservation Foundation, a national organization in Falmouth, and received \$30,000 to hire an administrator for a year. A three-member steering committee met frequently to organize the new collaboration. Roger Berle, Oceanside Conservation Trust; Rob Crawford, Cumberland Mainland & Islands Trust; and Sean Mahoney, Falmouth Land Trust will continue as the Steering Committee.



Jessica Burton

Portland North Land Trust Collaborative's first annual open house was held on February 8 from 4-6 pm at 225 Commercial Street, Suite 401. The office was decorated with photographs, flowers and maps. Literature from each of the trusts in the collaborative (Falmouth Land Trust, Oceanside Conservation Trust of Casco Bay, and Cumberland Mainland & Islands Trust) was on display.

Sean Mahoney from the Falmouth Land Trust and the PNLTC Steering Committee welcomed the group. He talked about the collaborative, gave a brief history, articulated the goals, and described the organization's broad vision. Jessica Burton, the new administrator of PNLTC, described her previous work experience, perspective, and enthusiasm for the project and the people involved.

Over sixty people attended including many present and past board members, volunteers and donors to each trust. Also attending were representatives from other organizations:

<i>Portland City Council</i>	<i>Maine Island Trail Association</i>
<i>Cumberland Town Council</i>	<i>Cape Elizabeth Land Trust</i>
<i>Falmouth Conservation Commission</i>	<i>Royal River Land Trust</i>
<i>Portland Land Bank</i>	<i>Peaks Island Land Preserve</i>
<i>Maine Coast Heritage Trust</i>	<i>Portland Trails</i>
<i>Maine Land Trust Network</i>	<i>Friends of Casco Bay</i>
	<i>Casco Bay Estuary Project</i>

Aurora Provisions donated a beautiful cheese platter to the event; Roger Berle assisted in preparing the office and gathering the food, drinks, photographs and flowers; and Cyrus Haggie helped acquire the office space.

Jessica Burton is the administrator of the new Portland North Land Trust Collaborative. Jessica's work with the Chewonki Foundation and Portland Trails provided her with experience in land conservation and non-profit management. She also worked with the Open Space Institute in New York's Hudson Valley and the Coastal Housing Partnership in Santa Barbara, California. She lives with her husband, two daughters, and dog near Ballfield Woods on Peaks Island.

Jess will create a database to manage all three of the trusts' membership and property information, reducing the overall time spent in managing this information. The database will contain individual contacts, donations, events, property descriptions, abutters, stewards, and more. It will have the ability to mail merge, email, and budget. Jess is writing a grant to the Maine Community Foundation for the software, training, and time to create the most effective and efficient program.



Another goal for Jess is to embark on conservation planning with all the three groups, regionalizing the conservation goals and strategically planning for the future of each organization. This project will be the topic of a grant application to the Maine Coast Protection Initiative. This project will help to align each organization for the accreditation process required of all land trusts.

Jess says that the first five months with PNLTC have been exciting and rewarding. While working with the multiple objectives of three land trusts, she has kept her focus on creating efficiencies in administration and balancing her time fairly among the groups. Sharing an office and a computer, and creating systems which will work for all three groups saves time, money, and improves land stewardship. Jess especially has enjoyed visiting properties of each organization and working with the "committed, inspirational, and effective volunteers of each organization." "Since I live on an island, I love working in my backyard." The members of the board of Oceanside feel very fortunate to have "one third" of Jess Burton.

On the Jewell Island side of Cliff Island near The Bluffs, lies a unique fifteen-acre property owned by Cliff Island Corporation for Athletics, Conservation, and Education (ACE) and protected by a conservation easement held by OCT. This parcel includes a natural area and a ball field. A spectacular freshwater marsh is situated between two salt water beaches. The marsh, which is divided by a nature trail, has been used in the past for winter sports such as skating and ice boating. Every spring and fall, hosts of migratory birds stop over in the marsh on their travels north and south. Cat-o-nine-tails are the predominant growth, and otters, mink, and muskrats are among the marsh's inhabitants. The multi-colored beauty of a sunny autumn day on this parcel is absolutely stunning.



Play Ball!

drove spruce poles into the ground behind home plate and draped herring seine over them as a backstop. It was a chore, but it was a labor of dedication. A few weekday practices worked out the kinks, and a Sunday afternoon extravaganza unfolded. Cliff Island competed against teams ranging from Harpswell to Portland, but the main rivals were Long, Chebague, and Peaks Islands. Boatloads of players and spectators moved from one island's field to another's from week to week. Everyone turned out. It was "big doin's."

All these events occurred on the property through the courtesy of neighbors Alma and Wendell Bickford. However, in 1977 Alma decided she'd like the opportunity for the traditional usage to be guaranteed and for the property to be preserved. The new corporation founded to assume these responsibilities has grown well beyond its original task of stewarding these acres. Cliff Island Corporation for Athletics, Conservation, and Education, a non-profit organization, finds many ways to enrich the lives of Cliff Islanders and their guests year-round.

The last "handball" game happened in August 1974. Today, ACE has a large, modern power mower and a permanent chain link backstop. Multi-age and mixed-gender softball has replaced baseball, but the traditions continue under the stewardship of ACE and according to the terms of the conservation easement held by OCT.

The ball field enjoys frequent and varied community usage. The ACE Olympics, a very popular event on Cliff Island, has been held here on the Sunday nearest the 4th of July every year since 1977. Weddings and receptions are frequent occurrences. In 1980 the ball field was the staging area for all the logistical needs of *The Whales of August*, a major motion picture starring Betty Davis, Lillian Gish, Vincent Price, Ann Southern, and Harry Carey, Jr. The ball field serves as the Cliff Island School's athletic facility and is a resource for the ACE summer

MEET DIRECTOR BRENDA BUCHANAN



A director for four years who currently serves as Oceanside's vice-president, Brenda Buchanan has a history of involvement in conservation dating back to her first job. Fresh out of journalism school at Northeastern University in Boston, Brenda moved to Maine in 1980 and worked as a staff writer at the York County Coast Star in Kennebunk, where she covered the various initiatives of the Kennebunkport Conservation Trust. After six years writing for the Star, Brenda enrolled at the University of Maine School of Law. She is now a lawyer in private practice in Portland with the firm of Warren, Currier & Buchanan, located on Exchange Street.

In 1995 Brenda settled on Peaks and began to feel like an islander, not someone who was just trying out island life. She became involved with Peaks Island Land Preserve (PILP). "Through PILP, I felt I had a role in the community and could make a contribution for the greater good." She served on PILP's board for six years.

In addition to acting as a liaison to PILP, which partners with OCT on many projects, Brenda helps OCT board members understand the legal aspects of our conservation work. "There is a very high level of commitment on the OCT board, and the range of our work is fascinating."

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Chris McDuffie

The First

In 1982, in response to a proposed residential development on Peaks Island, Bea Chapman Minott of Peaks Island created Casco Bay Island Development. She convinced the developer to meld CBIDA into his plans. Development was never an goal a CBIDA, but the tenacious and far-sighted Bea became a springboard for addressing Casco Bay-wide issues, it soon became clear to spin off its conservation interests into a 501C3 organization. This Corporation, which soon changed its name to Oceanside Conservation Trust, was born. Bea's original organization, CBIDA, remains a political force today.

The initial Board of OCT was comprised of invited representatives from Cliff, Chebeague, Great Diamond, and Little Diamond Islands. Bea was president, and the business of identifying island lands for preservation of the small land conservation organizations of that era, progress moved ahead. Ownership of some land abutting Battery Steele so that Oceanside could legally have been that property. Later Peaks Island Land Preserve (PILP) purchased Battery Steele and accomplished CBIDA and permanently protecting the majority of the former military land. OCT now holds the conservation easement

Oceanside soon became the "go-to" land trust for assisting conservation projects on several western Casco Bay. Heritage Trust (MCHT) had long since become the major umbrella conservation organization supporting all MCHT regarded OCT as an entity more capable of accepting and holding conservation easements in the Casco various opportunities to OCT. Before OCT decided to limit its scope a broad opportunities as far away as the Harpswell area.

OCT now owns or has easements on 12 properties on five Casco Bay islands. contributed our funds to other land trusts' campaigns, confronted serious trust protection partnerships, helped other local land trusts establish themselves, island-lovers of the value of conserving natural lands, and become a founding Portland North Land Trust Collaborative.

Presidents of OCEANSIDE TRUST OF CASCO BAY

*Bea Chapman Minott
John Gulliver
Diane Nolan
Roger Berle
Christine McDuffie
Stephanie Weaver*



Diane Nolan

Twenty-Five Years

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Diane Nolan, Bill Needelman, Howard Heller, Bob Laughlin, and Roger Berle



Nan Stockman, Jenny Sheau



Chris McDuffie, Hal Hackett and Norm Seagrave



Toby, Zeus, Gulliver & Owners

The focus of this year's monitoring visits has been assessing the damage caused by the Patriot's Day storm. At Oceanside, we have come to know and appreciate that nature is not a tidy thing, and for the most part that messiness and decay protect and nourish the land and its creatures. But when we have blow downs like those created by the Patriot's Day northeaster here in Caseo Bay, conservation-minded groups have a dilemma.



Blow Down at Dave's Sanctuary

When a storm event creates wholesale destruction, concern for fire safety may override our let-nature-take-its-course preferences. Particularly in our spruce-fir island forests where same-aged trees grow on shallow soils, powerful storms can leave chaotic swaths of tangled blow down, and these dense piles of drying needled limbs and branches become tinder ready to explode should a fire get started. That is a danger we take seriously.



Alden Robinson, stern with Island treasure at Wreck Cove Woods

On the one hand, we like to let nature take its course. Preserving the natural environment is what we do as a land trust. We know that standing dead trees (snags) provide nesting and feeding habitat for cavity nesting birds and woodpeckers, and we know that decomposing branches and limbs on the forest floor provide habitat for smaller species such as salamanders before that material breaks down to replenish



Priscilla Doucette and Stephanie Weaver at Dave's Sanctuary

On our recent monitoring trips, we have seen several such areas of devastated forest on our properties. Oceanside's president and board members have been in contact with foresters, local fire departments, arborists, FEMA, and island neighbors on Peaks, Long, and Cliff

the nutrients of the soil. Single, or even several, uprooted trees left to decompose will eventually create the undulating pit and mound topography so typical of our island forests. "These blow downs create vital habitat for winter wrens, hermit thrushes, and can provide burrowing embankments for belted kingfishers," according to a study done for Oceanside by the Biodiversity Research Institute. The new forest openings also provide the opportunity for new seedlings to sprout and grow in the new sunlight which also benefits the understory vegetation. So in general we tend to leave things alone, taking action only to keep paths open, and to remove "leaners" which might be dangerous to visitors or abutters.

...continued on page 7

Brenda's goals for Oceanside and conservation in Maine include: "On the state level, I hope we can find a way to support the many local land trusts to continue working in their communities, and also devise a workable system to alleviate what many land trusts see as a huge burden – doing the vital and expensive technical aspects of land trust work. Local land trusts are great at identifying what lands are important to conserve, and in making contact with the owners of that land to discuss conservation options. And they are great at raising the money to pull off amazing conservation coups. But the tedious stuff, actually drafting the conservation easements and staying on top of the various legal requirements and best practices, is something that perhaps can be more efficiently done through consortia of specially-trained people who could work regionally with the various trusts. The Portland North Collaborative is a step in that direction."

In her free time, Brenda enjoys hiking and camping. She also likes to read, write, and travel. "Last year we visited Normandy, and other parts of France, which was very powerful because my father landed on Omaha Beach on D-Day in World War II." Recently, Brenda and her partner Diane Kenty, who is a lawyer and mediator, made the decision to move off Peaks. "We need the benefits and convenience of a mainland base. But we will stay connected to Peaks and will bring with us to the mainland many happy memories of our time there."

Islands. Being good stewards of the land means we need to balance safety issues with our conservation values. We will rely on professionals to make fire safety assessments. We plan to address the fire danger. That will mean there will be some areas where downed trees will need to be removed. For example, on the Wreck Cove property on Long Island, the routes to access the blow downs are being carefully planned to do as little damage to the natural forest as possible. We hope that the new access will become a better walking route to the Cove than the old path which is nearly always deep with mud.

On the Davis Sanctuary on Peaks Island, we will remove an area of dense blow down, clear paths, and take down "leaners." On the Davis Sanctuary, like Wreck Cove, if a few of the fallen trees are not massed to create a concentration of combustible material, we will leave them to decay naturally.

*Answer to the question in last
November's newsletter:*

Joan Benoit Samuelson

25th Anniversary Celebration

Wednesday, July 18, 2007

10 AM to 1 PM

Cruise Casco Bay on "A Three Hour Tour"

Guest lecturers

Lunch, drinks, and snacks provided.

**Free to members as our thanks for
your continued support of OCT and
its mission!**

Featuring a special presentation by Scientists Mark Green and Jeanne Gulnick

"Alligators or Icebergs in Casco Bay?" - *Insights about Casco Bay in an era of climate change*

RSVP to Jess at PNLTC - 699-2989

JOINT BOARD MEETING



Sean Mahoney, Stephanie Weaver, Rob Crawford

On May 8 the first joint board meeting of the Portland North Land Trust Collaborative was held in the Falmouth Memorial Library. Roger Berle of OCT and PNLTC Steering Committee facilitated the meeting. He opened with a brief welcome and history of the Collaborative, followed by trustee introductions.

Each organization gave a brief summary of their history. Chris McDuffie presented the history of Oceanside Conservation Trust of Casco Bay. Interestingly, OCT has been a partner to both CMIT and FLT in land protection projects.

Steve Gauthier, Rick Scala, Ted Asherman and Jed Harris presented for Falmouth Conservation Trust. They focused on the 25 year history and highlighted properties such as the Blackstrap Hill Preserve and Falmouth Nature Preserve. FLT has recently had success experiences with developers to include conservation land in their projects. FLT has also been the recipient of wetlands mitigation properties. Founded in 1980, FLT protects 22 parcels totaling 714 acres in Falmouth and Falmouth Foreside.

Cumberland Mainland & Islands Trust will be called Chebeague & Cumberland Land Trust after July 7, 2007. Rob Crawford presented a brief history and then highlighted

some of their properties, notably the Curit property on Chebeague, The Rines Forest in Cumberland, and the Jessie Bullens-Crew Nature Preserve. Since 1987 CMIT has brought 15 parcels totaling 558 acres in Cumberland and on Chebeague Island under protection. CMIT has an interest in protecting agricultural land and is currently working on a farm protection project on Chebeague called Second Wind Farm.

The new administrator, Jessica Burton, presented the accomplishments and goals of PNLTC – both the tasks for the individual trusts and the efforts benefiting the Collaborative. (See article on page 2 for details.)

The goals of PNLTC include grant writing, creating regional educational opportunities, and completing the Land Trust alliance accreditation process.

Members decided to form an Advisory Committee, made up of three representatives of each board. They will meet two or three times a year and will be helpful to PNLTC in providing broad direction and perspective, and



Jed Harris & Erno Bonebakker

increasing overall board involvement and connection. The details of this committee, the members and meeting dates, will be determined soon. The Steering Committee will also continue to meet.

After the meeting, members from all three boards met informally and continued to discuss shared goals and ideas. Many board members were particularly interested in learning about hiking and birding opportunities on the various properties.

LONGARD GULF VOLUNTEER AWARD

Roger Berle recently received the Longard Gulf Volunteer Award. He was nominated by OCT, the Lands for Maine Futures Board, Waynfleet School, Portland Trails, ACE, and Portland North Land Trust Collaborative. This honor is bestowed each year in memory of Art Longard, a founding member of the Gulf of Maine Council. The award is given to an individual from one of the five states and provinces bordering the Gulf of Maine. The Longard Award recognizes individual commitment to volunteer programs dedicated to environmental protection and sustainability of natural resources within the marine, near shore, and watershed environments of the Gulf of Maine. Roger will be given the award during OCT's annual meeting July 18.

YOUR BOARD AT WORK

Oceanside board members have attended the following workshops, conferences, and meetings since last fall:

- Land Trust Alliance training – conservation planning;
- Casco Bay Regional Land Trust Network, sponsored by Maine Coast Heritage Trust – share information and network, especially on land trust collaboration;
- Meeting with representatives of Diamond Island Association – education and information sharing for conservation planning;
- Maine Coastal Protection Initiative (MCPI) – conservation planning;
- GIS Training for Land Trusts; and
- Maine Coast Heritage Trust's Land Trust Conference.

Oceanside Conservation Trust of Casco Bay

Board of Directors

2006-2007

Stephanie Weaver, President.....	761-4212	Cushing Island
Brenda Buchanan, Vice-President.....	766-4403	Peaks Island
Jane Laughlin, Secretary.....	799-9285	
	766-2570	Great Diamond Island
Roger Berle, Treasurer.....	781-5331	Cliff Island
	766-2827	
Mike Beaudoin.....	774-0522	
	766-3028	Cliff Island
Tom Bergh.....	766-2419	Peaks Island
Bob Bittenbender.....	892-3818	
Erno Bonebakker.....	874-6664	Chebeague Island
	846-5203	
Priscilla Doucette.....	772-5705	Little Diamond Island
Mark Greene.....	766-4440	Long Island
Susan Ingalls.....	734-1093	Little Diamond Island
Michael Johnson.....	232-5778	Long Island
Christine McDuffie.....	829-3231	Long Island
	766-5277	
Eliza Cope Nolan.....	772-5024	Cushing Island
John Whitman.....	766-2211	Peaks Island

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Oceanside Conservation Trust of Casco Bay is to facilitate the conservation of wild or undeveloped open space, scenic areas, and historic landmarks in the Casco Bay region and to foster low-impact and respectful access to these resources, as well as to enhance the cultural, economic, and civic well-being of residents and visitors. The Trust may acquire, hold, and transfer interests in land, including easements, in order to accomplish this mission and to assure that a diversity of ecosystems will be available to future generations. In addition, the Trust may hold charitable, cultural, and educational activities for the benefit of residents and visitors. (Adopted 10/24/96)

VISION STATEMENT

While maintaining the highest standards of stewardship and land management, Oceanside Conservation Trust of Casco Bay will become a leader in coordinating and facilitating land conservation efforts among individuals, island organizations, and land trusts in Casco Bay.



Oceanside Conservation Trust of Casco Bay



Property	Location	Manager	Date Acquired	Approximate Size
Fowler's Beach	Town of Long Island	Long Island Civic Association	5/25/1987	6.38 acres
The Bluffs	Cliff Island, Portland	Robert & Josephine Belknap, Tenants in Common	12/26/1989	18 acres
Davis Sanctuary	Peaks Island, Portland	OCT	5/14/1994	6.8 acres
College Island	Town of Long Island	OCT	9/7/1994	1 acre
Battery Steele	Peaks Island, Portland	Peaks Island Land Preserve	7/28/1995	14.3 acres
North Point	Cliff Island, Portland	Helen W. Kenefick	12/1997	9 acres
ACE Ballfield	Cliff Island, Portland	Cliff Island Corporation for Athletics & Conservation Education	1/31/2000	15.4 acres
Griffin's Cove	Cliff Island, Portland	Cliff Island Corporation for Athletics & Conservation Education	12/22/2000	.75 acres
Everett & Mildred D. Skillings Woods	Peaks Island, Portland	OCT	2001	2 acres
Wreck Cove	Town of Long Island	Town of Long Island	7/29/2004	11.3 acres
Echo Pond	Peaks Island, Portland	OCT	04/2005	.4 acres
LDI Property	Little Diamond Island	Little Diamond Island Association	09/2006	.5 acres

In addition, OCT has a cooperative role in the protection of Cow Island, Stockman's Island, and Rose's Point, Chebeague Island.



Oceanside Conservation Trust of Casco Bay

P.O. Box 10404

Portland, Maine 04104

In order to support the work of Oceanside Conservation Trust, I/we are sending this contribution.

Membership Dues \$ 20.00
Additional Gift _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Seasonal Address: _____

Membership is renewable at any time before the OCT annual meeting. Please check the two-digit number directly following your name on the address label; the number indicates the year your most recent membership dues were received if applicable. Contributions are tax deductible as allowed by law; dues are not.

Thank You!



**Oceanside Conservation Trust
of Casco Bay**
P.O. Box 10404
Portland, Maine 04104

PRSR STD U.S. POSTAGE P A I D PORTLAND, ME PERMIT No. 658

Since 1982, approximately 85 acres
on Casco Bay Islands have been
permanently protected.

Oceanside Conservation Trust of
Casco Bay
welcomes your support.



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