



Director's Report: April 30, 2014
Kris Ramsay

Administrative

MA Land Trust Conference: On Saturday, March 22nd, 2014 I attended the MA Land Trust Conference in Worcester. This was the fifth time I attended the conference, which is the largest State-wide land trust conference in the country. During the day-long conference I attended the following seminars:

- Attracting Gifts of Real Estate for Endowment and Stewardship,
- New Resources for Improving Invasive Plant Management, and
- How to Communicate Effectively to Build Support for Conservation.

For a list of all the seminars, as well as handouts and presentation slides go to:

http://www.massland.org/2014MLCC_Materials

AmeriCorps 2014-2015 Application: On March 17th, 2014 I finalized and submitted an application for a 2014-2015 AmeriCorps Individual Position (IP). I suspect we will hear about the application results by June.

Oral History Endeavor: Over the last month I have worked with OCT volunteer Stephanie Gaskill to develop an Oral History program. We have met with the Orleans Historical Society to review their oral history program, developed a list of baseline questions, finalized a release form, reviewed equipment needed, designed a timeline, and put together a list of potential individuals to interview (Life Members, land donors, etc.). On Tuesday, April 1, 2014 Stephanie and I conducted our first interview with Bruce MacKenzie. taped the interview using my camera, a tablet, and a tape recorder to see what works best. Stephanie is working to transcribe the meeting notes into written form. On May 1, 2014, Stephanie will be interviewing Bobbie Thomsen, ironically on Charlie's (her late husband's) birthday, to Bobbie's delight!

OCT Trail Guides: In November of 2013 I submitted a Town Community Preservation Act grant application for \$15,000, with the hopes of using these funds to design and print a Town-wide trail guide. To date the Community Preservation Committee and Board of Selectmen have supported this proposal. Now we need a vote of support from the community at the Town meeting in May. I have been asked to attend the meeting in case questions arise relating to the CPA article.

Land Acquisition

Ted Trump Land Gift: Since closing on the land gift on March 17, 2014 have put together the final acknowledgment letters, notified the State's Tax Credit program of the closing, and notified the Town Assessor of the change in ownership. After the Trumps claim their tax credit in the spring of 2015, The Compact will transfer title to the land to OCT and we will subsequently transfer the CR to The Compact.

Land Preservation Seminar: In the coming month I would like to work with the Land Acquisition Committee and The Compact to potentially identify a date to host a land preservation seminar in Orleans. During this seminar OCT and the Compact's staff would discuss land already preserved in Orleans, land preservation options/opportunities, and potential tax benefits associated with preserving private land. Land Trusts from neighboring Towns would be informed of the seminar date, giving them the opportunity to reach out to their own prospective land donors.

Land Management

Namequoit Bog: This past month I finalized and submitted the Notice of Intent and Management Plan for the State and Conservation Commission. On April 14th, 2014 I presented the Plan to the Town's Conservation Commission. After providing some feedback and asking some questions, the Town approved the land management proposal with the understanding that we would submit a yearly land management activity report, the Conservation Commission would conduct a yearly site visit and we would verify that the existing water control structure (sluice) replicates what was submitted as part of the proposal. The State has since issued a DEP number, which is required before we can conduct any activities on site. The final step is to record the NOI and Town Order of Conditions at the Barnstable County Registry of Deeds. A group of 12 AmeriCorps Cape Cod members are scheduled to work on site on May 31, 2014.

Brush Burns: This past month I conducted brush burns at White's Lane and the Moerschener Gift. The burn season is over on May 1, 2014, so I don't expect to conduct anymore burns.



Blue Bird Box Installation & Monitoring: In early April I installed 2 additional blue bird nest boxes at White's Lane (to add to the 8 currently on site), 6 boxes on the Mauch Gift, 4 boxes at the Young/Flint Gift, and 2 boxes at the Moerschener Gift. These boxes are being monitored on a weekly basis by a small group of volunteers, who send their weekly report to me for recording purposes.



Twinnings Pond Duck Box: In the first week of April Allyson Stein and I installed a Wood Duck Box within the western portion of Twinings Pond. This box is being monitored by a small group volunteers that reside in South Orleans. Wood ducks will use this box for nesting, brood rearing, and roosting. Nationally, as more and more natural wetlands are drained and converted to be used for agricultural, industrial, and residential purposes, wood duck habitat has decreased, making these boxes increasingly important to install.



White's Lane Terrapin Garden Maintenance and Training: Bob Prescott and I have scheduled a terrapin monitoring training program for June 4, 2014 at 1:00pm. In the past we have done the training at Snow Library, however, this year we thought it would be beneficial to conduct the training on-site so volunteers know where the gardens are located. At that same time we are planning the prep the gardens for the nesting season.

Osprey Pole Installation: On April 24, 2014 I will be partnering with MA Audubon and AmeriCorps to install an osprey pole within Little Namskaket Marsh, which is owned by the Town and under the jurisdiction of the Conservation Commission.

Fundraising Committee

Cape Cod 5 Educational Program Grant Proposal: In January of this year I submitted a grant to the Cape Cod 5 Foundation, requesting \$3,500 to help offset costs associated with our 2014 educational lectures. The grant period ended on February 14th, 2014 and I expect we will hear about the results of the grant by the end of this month.

Member Thank You Letters: In the first week of April I ran a list of all gifts over \$300 from this past year and all new donors over \$100. The total list added up to just over 100 donors. Before the membership appeal is sent out we will want to make sure that notes have been sent to the remaining donors.

Membership Mailing: The Fundraising Committee has finalized the spring Membership mailing letter. Similar to last year, we will send a letter tailored more specifically to our existing donors and also send another appeal Town-wide. This letter would be sent out 1-2 weeks after the newsletter is mailed out. During the second week of April I reviewed each donor's past giving levels and assigned a specific amount to ask for. During the review process I realized 250+ donors had not given for more than 5 years. Depending on their current residency and giving history, I determined whether or not it was still worth mailing to those individuals and adjusted the database accordingly.

Marketing Committee

Spring 2014 Newsletter: I worked with the Marketing Committee to finalize the spring 2014 newsletter. The newsletter has been sent to the printer and should be mailed out and received by the first week in May.

Nominating Committee

Committee Meetings: Since early March the Nominating Committee has met three times. Since the first meeting the Committee has followed up with each nominee to verify their interest in serving on the Board and finalized and sent out the Nomination Questionnaire to those who have been nominated. In the coming weeks the Committee will review the Questionnaire and arrange interviews with the nominees as needed.

Educational Meetings/ Programs

Up-coming Walk: On Saturday, May 3rd, 2014 from 9:00-11:00am Bob Prescott will lead a walk through the Three Ponds Conservation Area (Twinings Pond, Meadow Bog, and Sarah's Pond). For more than thirty years, one of the primary land protection focus areas for the Trust has been the southeastern corner of Town between Twinings Pond and Pleasant Bay. OCT's involvement in this part of town began in 1974 with the donation of almost sixty acres of land for conservation purposes, still the single largest gift of land to OCT. We have since maintained an active and productive relationship with the area's landowners and their families, which has resulted in more land being preserved in the vicinity.

Up-coming Talk: On Monday, May 5th we will be hosting an educational lecture entitled, "Close Encounters of the Ocean Kind" at 7:00pm at the Orleans Yacht Club. John King, explorer, photographer, author and Chatham conservationist will share insights into his personal voyage of re-discovery of the coastal and ocean wildlife that spend time each year in the waters off Cape Cod. During the talk attendees will hear John's stories and see photographs of unique encounters with birds, sharks and whales, among other life forms.

Recent Lecture: On Monday, April 7, 2014 at 7:00pm, we hosted the fourth of five presentations associated with our *2014 Winter & Spring Lecture Series* at the Orleans Yacht Club. Dr. Richard (Skee) Houghton, III, Acting President and Senior Scientist at the Woods Hole Research Center gave his presentation entitled "Climate Change, the Global Carbon Cycle & the Management of Carbon on Land." Roughly 50 community members attended the talk.

Recent Walks: On Saturday, April 5th, 2014 I led an educational walk at the Town's Putnam Farm Conservation Area. On April 19th, 2014 Bob Prescott led a walk at the White's Lane Conservation Area. Roughly 20 community members attended each of those walks.

