



Director's Report
December 16, 2014
Kris Ramsay

Administrative

2015 Budget: In mid-November and again in early December I met with the Executive Committee to review and revise the draft 2015 budget. This budget is now ready to be reviewed by the Trustees at the December 2014 board meeting.

Declaration of Trust: The Governance Committee met on October 21 and November 20, with another meeting scheduled for December 15. At each meeting the committee reviewed the feedback from members and revised language to best suit the expected needs of the Trust moving ahead.

Member Postcard: Like all organizations concerned with preserving natural resources and saving money, the Trust is moving rapidly toward e-communications with our members and supporters. While we'll still produce a beautiful print newsletter, we'd like to keep in regular touch with our members via e-mail or through the Trust website. With this in mind Diana Landau (Trustee) drafted narrative that was sent in postcard form to the approximately 40 percent of our members with whom we are not yet in e-mail contact. That postcard was finalized at the end of November and mailed out the first week of December. The hope is that members receiving the postcard will send the Trust their e-mail addresses to use in the future—for example, to send the members update we are about to finalize.

Orleans Water Quality Advisory Panel: I continue to attend the advisory panel meetings every other week. For all the meeting materials, go to <http://www.town.orleans.ma.us/water-quality-advisory-panel/pages/workshop-materials>. If nothing else, I strongly encourage the Board and the community at large to read the meeting summaries.

Green Week/AmeriCorps Week: As reported in November, in just the first few weeks since Frank DeLeo joined the Trust as our AmeriCorps Individual Placement, we have laid the groundwork for Green Week 2015. Its focus continues to be directly related to the Town's Boland Pond restoration project and finding ways to work with the students from the middle and elementary schools. Since last month Frank and Matt (Town IP) have laid out and electronically digitized a potential trail system that traverses the land south of Boland Pond on Town property. They also identified possible outdoor classroom locations along the shore of the pond and areas of dumping that need to be cleaned up in the coming year. Currently we are focused on gaining the necessary permits to install the trail this coming spring. Once this is complete we will look into a forest restoration plan.

Town-wide Trail Guide: In May of this year the Trust was awarded a \$15,000 Community Preservation Act grant to help fund the design and printing of a Town-wide walking trail guide. This past month the initial design of the maps were finalized and I was able to complete a draft of the narrative associated with each trail system. The Town Conservation Agent has reviewed and approved the narrative, and I have asked The Compact of Cape Cod Conservation Trusts, Inc. to give the narrative a final review. Once this is complete we will be able to provide the information to MapWorks, who is designing the guide. I expect the guide to be completed and printed early in 2015.

Land Acquisition

Braddock Potential Gift: As reported last month, on October 21 the Planning Board amended a covenant placed over the land, enabling the land to be transferred to the Compact without the need to widen the road to the property any further. The Planning Board signed the covenant on November 18 and it has since been recorded at the Barnstable County Registry of Deeds. Now we are in a position to go ahead and record the plan of lands, deed, and conservation restriction. These documents must be recorded by the end of the year in order for the Braddocks to take advantage of the state tax credit.

Rest of discussion was in Executive Session

Land Management

Mauch Gift Restoration: On November 21 I worked with 12 AmeriCorps members, the Town of Orleans Tree Department, and a number of OCT volunteers to cut back vegetation along the stone walls of the Ted Mauch Gift. While on site we also exposed a very old brick walkway, removed invasive plant species, and reduced dead or downed vegetation from the interior of the woodland to lessen fire danger.



Upcoming AmeriCorps Project: On December 12 I will be working with 10-12 AmeriCorps members at the White's Lane and Young/Flint Conservation Areas. On both sites we are working to remove invasive plant species, which will enhance biological diversity and wildlife habitat.

Land Management Plans: This past month Frank has started to design land management plans for both the Miner Purchase (Boland Pond Park) and the Young/Flint Gift. This plan will include how the land came to be acquired by the Trust, how the land was historically used, recent land management initiatives, and future management opportunities.

Communications

Newsletter: The Fall 2014 newsletter was finalized and mailed out during the second week of November. I have received nothing but positive feedback relating to the publication.

The recent postcard mailing to members, to solicit e-mail addresses, is described above. We are planning to e-mail periodic news updates to members, one of which is due to go out soon.

Fundraising

Year-end Appeal: The year-end appeal mailing was finalizing and mailed out during the first week of December. The mailing was broken into four categories, those being:

- In House (specifically targeting larger donors)
- Over \$100
- Under \$100
- Non-contributors (including Town-wide mailing to prospective members)

In the coming month I will compare the response rate this year to prior year response rates.

Educational Meetings/ Programs

Recent Walks:

- **Kent's Point Conservation Area** – On November 15 I led a walk through the Kent's Point Conservation Area. Among other things the 15 attendees learned in detail about how the land came to be preserved, recent land management efforts, and local animal species commonly found on site.
- **Pochet Island** – On Saturday, November 29, Bob Prescott, Tim Payson, and I co-led a lengthy, 4+ hour walk from the Nauset Beach parking lot to Pochet Island. Despite the round-trip distance of approximately 5 miles, more than 20 community members joined the hike. While on the island Tim informed the group about how the property came to be owned by the Parra/Payson family, when the houses were built, recent land management efforts, and much more.



Upcoming Walks: Due to inclement weather the walk through the Twinings Pond Conservation Area on December 9 was postponed to Friday, December 19, from 9:00 – 10:15 am. Parking for the walk will be at 135 Quanset Road, South Orleans.

- **Background Information:** In 1993 and 1994, Peter and Ruth Fleck generously gifted 21 acres north of Twinings Pond to the Orleans Conservation Trust. When Peter and Ruth passed away, the three Fleck daughters (Ann, Andrea, and Marjorie) inherited the remaining family land south of Twinings Pond. Realizing that they never wanted to see this land developed, between 2009 and 2012 the sisters sold the last remaining, highly developable lots on Twinings Pond to OCT for well below fair market value. These purchases were made possible thanks to generous community support, Town Community Preservation Act funds, and a State Conservation Partnership grant.
- **Walk Details:** This 1.5-mile walk will wind through 30+ acres of conservation land owned by both OCT and the Town. On the trail, hikers will walk through a thickly wooded environment with a dense canopy of pitch pines and black and white oak trees overspreading an open understory dominated by bunch grasses and lichens. Small shrubs are interspersed, including lowbush blueberry and bayberry. Hairgrass and little bluestem dominate among the grasses.

Upcoming Lecture: On Monday, January 5, at 6:30 pm at the Orleans Yacht Club (39 Cove Road), OCT will host a lecture entitled *Snowy Owl Project*. Norman Smith, director of Mass Audubon's Blue Hills Trailside Museum, will discuss how, since 1978, he has attached bands and transmitters to snowy owls at Logan Airport and then tracked their travels. While the presentation is free, those who plan to attend should pre-register either by calling the Trust (508-255-0183) or through the Trust website at www.orleansconserationtrust.org.