



Director's Report
March, 2017
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Administrative

Orleans Water Quality Advisory Panel: For all the meeting materials, go to <http://www.town.orleans.ma.us/water-quality-advisory-panel/pages/workshop-materials>.

I attended the Freshwater Ponds Working Group on March 14, which has been charged with prioritizing freshwater ponds for remediation efforts as part of the water quality initiative. OCT plans to continue working closely with this group, particularly as Uncle Harvey's Pond has been selected as the top priority, and OCT owns a large parcel on this pond's waterfront.

On March 16, I attended the Compact board meeting. This meeting included a presentation by Harwich Conservation Trust about the Cold Brook Eco-Restoration project in collaboration with the Department of Environmental Protection. AmeriCorps Cape Cod program staff also presented about the future direction of the program, with an increasing focus on developing volunteer programs for towns and nonprofits.

On March 25, I attended the Mass Land Conservation Conference. This annual meeting of local land trusts includes workshops on a variety of topics relevant to land trust professionals. This year's plenary speaker was E.O. Wilson, a renowned expert and author in ecology. At the conference I also had the opportunity to join the newly formed Young Land Trust Professionals organization.

OCT is in the process of hiring a Land Manager! This is a split position with Eastham Conservation Foundation. We expect this staff members to assist with conservation restriction monitoring, regular land maintenance including clearing trails and removing invasives, creating/implementing land management plans, and helping to build our volunteer land steward program. The anticipated start date is late April or early May.

New Headquarters

We're continuing to work on setting up our new office space, including meeting ADA and fire code compliance. Our sign was installed at the beginning of January. We plan to hold an open house memorial day weekend! For more information on this exciting change, read our blog at: <http://orleansconservationtrust.org/a-new-home-for-the-trust/>.

Land Management

The land management committee has been working hard to prioritize property for land management in 2017. AmeriCorps placement Derek has been busy monitoring properties, keeping up with hazardous tree removal, and completing land management plans for our largest properties.

On March 9, the AmeriCorps Cape Cod FireCorps conducted pile burning at Namequoit Bog. The groups burned though 8 piles of dead, woody material before having to stop due to increasing winds. We hope to have the group return soon to complete the burning of these piles!



Land Acquisition

OCT has raised enough funds to purchase two developable parcels on Nauset Heights Road and Olivers Way in East Orleans, with the anticipated \$75,000 state conservation tax credit in 2018! These parcels will connect to existing OCT conservation land donated by the Cullen family, including Mill Pond waterfront. We have been given an extension to January 2018 for this purchase, to accomade the tax credit. We will continue to accept contributions designated towards the closing costs of this transaction, and ongoing land management of the parcels. For more information view the blog posting at <http://orleansconservationtrust.org/land-acquisition-opportunity-in-east-orleans/>.

The board has approved pursuing a fundraising campaign for a 1.40 acre lot on Tom's Hollow Lane. A purchase agreement has been signed for \$250,000, with OCT granted 3 months to fundraise. This property includes a vernal pool, and is across a dirt lane from OCT's 58 acre Cochran Gift.

OCT is also exploring the possibility of purchasing parcels to connect to White's Lane Conservation Area.

Finance/Investment Committee

Our donations this month were slightly lower YTD than reported last month. As a Board, we will be talking about our need to accelerate the donations. Expenses of \$11K were really just our normal monthly costs of salaries and building costs, nothing unusual at all. Year to date, we are essentially breaking even.

Fundraising Committee

The fundraising committee has been meeting regularly to plan next year's fundraising events. A June donor appreciation cocktail party and large fall fundraising event are being planned. The committee is also exploring an art silent auction in collaboration with local artists.

The committee is looking to recruit additional members from the community who have prior experience with fundraising or event planning.

Communications/Marketing

The Communications Committee is currently recruiting members interested in assisting with our newsletters and other materials sent out to the community. We are finishing work on our spring newsletter, and expect to have it mailed out in mid-April.

Educational Meetings/ Programs

Recent Walks:

Our Mill Pond Valley Conservation Area walk had to be postponed to the inclement weather. This walk will be held on April 4.

Recent Lectures:

Our *Coping With Ticks* lecture scheduled for March 2 had to be postponed. This has been rescheduled for the fall lecture series, on September 12.

Upcoming Walks:

Mill Pond Valley Conservation Area

Tuesday, April 4 from 10:00-11:30 am

Meet at 13 Champlain Road, Orleans

The preserve is made up of 13 acres with a 1-mile trail stretching from Champlain Road to the shores of Mill Pond. The site includes historic stone walls, a vernal pool, and a coastal plain pond that is a hot spot for observing migrating water fowl, including Wood Ducks.

Twinings Pond Conservation Area Bird Walk

Friday, April 21 from 10:00-11:30 am

Meet at 135 Quanset Road, South Orleans

A 1.75 mile bird walk through over 30 acres of pristine woodlands in South Orleans, led by Bob Prescott, Director of MassAudubon Wellfleet Bay Sanctuary.

Upcoming Winter/Spring Lectures: Our fall lecture series is held at the Orleans Yacht Club from 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm on the first Thursday of the month, in January-May.

Restoring River Herring

Barbara Brennessel, Friends of Herring River board and author of The Alewives' Tale
Thursday, April 6, 2017
7:00 pm – 8:00 pm (Doors open at 6:30 pm cash bar)
Orleans Yacht Club, 39 Cove Road, Orleans