



Director's Report
February, 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 February 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.

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 this spring! For more information on this exciting change, read our blog at: <http://orleansconservationtrust.org/a-new-home-for-the-trust/>.

Land Management

I have finished updating OCT's complete property inventory, which was last updated in 2000. Each trustee was provided with a copy, plus additional copies will be kept at the office for anyone interested in perusing. I'm also exploring formatting to upload the inventory to our website.

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 February 21, I attended the Conservation Commission meeting to request a three year extension to the Order of Conditions for Namequoit Bog, which was granted. We have been continuing restoration efforts on this 22 acre property, which experienced a massive die-off of Atlantic White Cedars a few years ago. Our active management on this property includes invasive species removal, thinning of dead trees to encourage the growth of live cedars, mowing back of briar, and careful monitoring of the water levels through a sluiceway at Paw Wah Pond. We have been heartened by stable water levels and the recent appearance of over 20 Atlantic White Cedar saplings.

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 accomodate 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 \$270,000, with OCT granted 3 months to fundraise. This property includes a veral pool, and is across a dirt lane from OCT’s 58 acre Cochran Gift.

Finance/Investment Committee

We received \$20K in Unrestricted Gifts, as we typically do get good results in January. However, this was much better even than last January. Expenses totaled \$9.1K and were all quite routine. On the Balance sheet, you will see that we received another \$1.9K or so for the Oliver’s Way fund raiser. We are now up to \$266.2K in hand and are monitoring this very closely. The finance committee reviewed OCT’s investment portfolio, and recommended to the board that we retain the current mix of fixed income to equities, and the current stock mix.

Fundraising Committee

The fundraising committee has been meeting regularly to plan next year’s fundraising events. A 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 have begun work on our spring newsletter, and expect to have it mailed out in mid-April.

Educational Meetings/ Programs

Recent Walks:

Three Ponds Walk (Meadow Bog, Sarah’s Pond, Twinings Pond): On Saturday, February 18, twenty-eight community members participated in a two hour historical walk and talk through more than 100 acres of OCT-owned land. This walk had been previously postponed due to the blizzard, but was fortunately rescheduled on a sunny day with little snow remaining. I led a discussion of the ecology of Twinings Pond, and Trustee Mon Cochran took over at Meadow Bog with a history of the land, including a story of his father driving on frozen Pleasant Bay in a volkswagon van. Participants learned that a variety of animals rely on this important wildlife cooridor in South Orleans, including river otters.



Hikers look out at Sarah’s Pond.



Mon shares family stories on Davis Road.

Recent Lectures:

Marine Mammal Entanglement: On Febrauary 2, Scott Landry from Provincetown Center for Coastal Studies presented about his organization’s response to marine animal entanglements. Sixty-three community members attended. The lecture showed how complicated these entanglements are, and why they are difficult to prevent. Included was a fascinating look at marine mammal and sea turtle behaviors. Learn more about the Center for Coastal Studies’ important work at <http://coastalstudies.org/>.

Upcoming Walks:

Mill Pond Valley Conservation Area

Tuesday, March 14 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.

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.

Coping with Ticks

Larry Dapsis, Entomologist at Cape Cod Cooperative Extension

Thursday, March 2, 2017

7:00 pm – 8:00 pm (Doors open at 6:30 pm cash bar)

Orleans Yacht Club, 39 Cove Road, Orleans