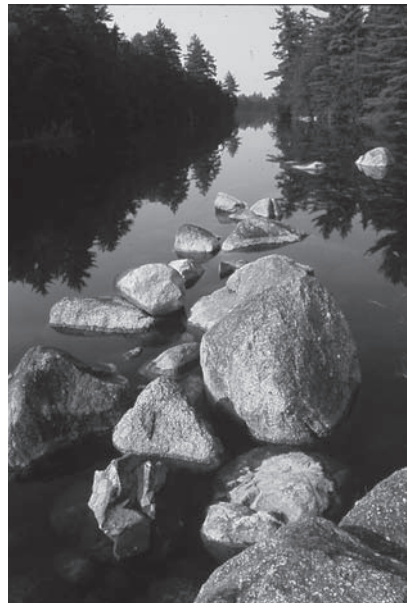
Downeast Lakes LAND TRUST *Traditions*

Downeast Lakes Land Trust Newsletter

Summer 2005 **Volume 1, Issue 3**

COMMUNITY FOREST AND EASEMENT CONSERVED



We own it! On May 25, 2005 the Downeast Lakes Land Trust and the New England Forestry Foundation closed on the remaining 15,335 acres of the Farm Cove Community Forest and the 311,684-acre Sunrise Easement owned by Typhoon LLC and managed by Wagner Forest Management. The Downeast Lakes Land Trust appreciates the opportunity offered by Wagner to purchase the Farm Cove Community Forest, which now totals over 27,000 acres. Although the Farm Cove Community Forest is the centerpiece of this project, the conservation easement makes this effort of national significance by connecting over one million acres of important wildlife habitat across an international boundary. The community forest is owned by the Downeast Lakes Land Trust, and the easement will be held and monitored by the New England Forestry Foundation.

Closing on this project required bridge financing of two loans totaling $6 million. We owe many thanks to the NEFF board who honored their commitment to the project by mortgaging one of their oldest forests in Massachusetts in order to complete the closing on time. We must now work together to raise the remaining amount plus a $1-million stewardship endowment for the DLLT holdings and a $1-million monitoring endowment for the easement lands. DLLT and NEFF along with their Leadership Committee will continue to work cooperatively to finish this project in a timely manner.

Everyone who has given to this project – foundations, government, and individuals – are part of this accomplishment, and we are grateful that many have expressed an interest in working with us on future conservation projects.

THANKS FROM THE LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE CHAIR

A few short years ago, I met with Steve Keith and several staff members of the New England Forestry Foundation. The Downeast Lakes Forestry Partnership was in the formative stages and had still not been defined. As we sat around a table and talked about the project, I remember that whenever another creative idea was discussed it seemed that cash registers rang. I walked in that morning imagining that we would have to raise between $10 and $12 million. By the time I left around 2 in the afternoon, the project had grown to $35 million. I was very thankful I did not stay until 5 o'clock.

A sane man would have disappeared at that time. However, those of us involved in land conservation are eternal optimists and usually a little delusional. My optimism ran so deep, I agreed to chair the Leadership Committee. A look back over the course of this campaign to date makes me feel extremely grateful. I realize that we still have a lot of work ahead, but I feel the need to express my gratitude.

I am grateful for having the opportunity to be involved in a conservation project that may be the most remarkable in current history. All the Grand Lake Stream residents who so heartily promoted and backed the project earned my gratitude. I am thankful for the help and support of the Maine Guides and the lodge owners of the area. My gratitude is extended to the Board and staff of DLLT. I am appreciative of the New England Forestry Foundation's staff and Board.

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT: FROM PICNIC TABLE TO BOARD ROOM

I can still remember sitting around a picnic table five years ago plotting the course of the newly formed Friends of the Downeast Lakes. In those first weeks, before we had an office, when someone requested information we had to go to the Pine Tree Store to borrow their equipment – we had no fax machine, no photocopier. We've come a long way since then. Computers, scanners, cell phones, color brochures, and lengthy reports fill our office shelves supporting the hard work of two dedicated staff, eleven elected board members, and numerous volunteers.

The significance of this project is rooted in earlier conservation discussions. In 1997, I served on former Governor Angus King's appointed Land Acquisition Priorities Advisory Committee (LAPAC), formed to analyze what publicly held lands we had and what we should have in the future. The majority on the committee determined that the large private forests were not going to change hands and wanted to buy land in southern Maine. Two members dissented, myself included, and suggested that buying in northern Maine was the way to go. Less than a year after the committee completed its work, large tracts of forest industry land started rapidly changing hands. The DLLT project, with the large-scale assumption of responsibilities by a local community, is a response to these changes.

At the day-long closing on May 25 in the elevated offices of Bernstein, Shur, Sawyer, and Nelson in Portland, we put the paperwork in place to complete a 27,000-acre community forest and a 312,000-acre conservation easement. Millions of dollars exchanged hands that day due to our successful fundraising efforts, and we became stewards of the land. Join me in celebrating our success and beginning our legacy of quality land management as we fulfill our mission of ensuring the long-term economic and environmental well-being of the Downeast Lakes region.

Tim Ingraham, NEFF President and Steve Schaefer, DLLT President, signing documents at the May 25 closing in Portland, Maine.

I particularly want to acknowledge the hard work of the board members. Each person has their special talent that has been used "to the max." Tremendous personal resources have been donated, mental and physical, to make this project a success.

As always, your ideas and suggestions are welcome. The Land Trust's office is open from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday across from the Pine Tree Store. You may reach us by phone or fax at 207-796-2100, or by email at downeastlakes@earthlink.net.

Sincerely, Stephen Schaefer, President

DOWNEAST LAKES LAND TRUST

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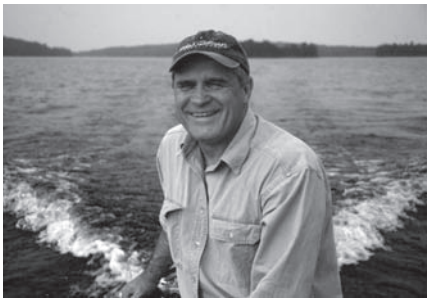
FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

When the Downeast Lakes Land Trust signed a sales option with Wagner Forest Management three years ago, little did we know that land prices Downeast would quadruple, and that we were working on perhaps the last large-scale forest conservation project in Maine that was a "good deal." In a highly competitive fundraising environment, individuals, foundations, corporations, and government have acknowledged our willingness to be responsible stewards of the land and have rewarded us with significant funding. Key to the support of these donors was the fact that we invested up-front in a forest management plan, an ecological assessment, and an economic study. Among the many, many grants we received, both large and small, we are particularly proud of two that relied heavily on these extensive studies and were specifically targeted toward purchase of the Farm Cove Community Forest. The Land for Maine's Future Program awarded us $1.5 million, its largest grant ever to a land trust, and we received $1 million from the Northern Forest Protection Fund of the Open Space Conservancy, an affiliate of the Open Space Institute and a highly competitive program. Also of note is a $6.2-million grant toward the NEFF easement from Acres for America, a partnership between the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and Wal-Mart, which gave us a big boost and national publicity in April. Acknowledgment of all gifts to the project will be made upon completion of our fundraising goals.

Our thanks go to you our supporters and the DLLT Board of Directors, Advisory Board members and Leadership committee, New England Forestry Foundation, and Woodie Wheaton Land Trust. Your persistent hard work and dedication have made this project possible. We are grateful that the forests, lakes, and wildlife are conserved for future generations, public access is assured for traditional outdoor recreation, and the Farm Cove Community Forest will be managed with pride for the benefit of local communities and visitors.

When we began the process of land conservation in November 1999, I was inspired by the work



accomplished along Grand Lake Stream in 1992. Townspeople conserved stream frontage between West Grand and Big Lakes, protecting precious landlocked salmon habitat. Standing at Little Falls always gives me a feeling of security that the stream will remain as it was when the Passamaquoddy used it as a fishing ground and canoe route. We should take a moment to feel proud of our accomplishments, the conservation of 342,000 acres of Downeast Maine. The landscape will remain in its beauty for all to enjoy.

Now we must work to raise $6 million to extinguish the bridge financing for the community forest and easement. In addition, it is crucial that the Community Forest Stewardship Endowment ($1 million) and the Sunrise Easement Monitoring Endowment ($1 million) are raised as well. The trust's priority is to work cooperatively with NEFF to accomplish this goal in the near future.

I look forward to celebrating with you at the annual meeting.

Best Regards,

Stephen Keith, Executive Director

RESOURCES PROTECTED IN THE DOWNEAST LAKES FORESTRY PROJECT AREA:

445 miles of undeveloped shoreline on over 60 lakes and ponds. Over 1,500 miles of stream and river frontage, 54,000 acres of wetlands. 10% of the loons in northern Maine. Over 187 bird species. Important habitat for white-tailed deer, moose, black bear, pine marten, bobcat. Endangered Atlantic salmon habitat. Bald eagle habitat. World-class landlocked salmon and smallmouth bass fishery.

CELEBRATE WITH US

You are invited to our third annual meeting and picnic for Board of Directors, Advisory Board members, and supporters on Saturday, July 30th from 12:00 noon to 2:00 p.m. in Grand Lake Stream on the east side of the dam. Lunch will be served from 12 to 12:45 p.m. followed by the meeting. A group photo will be taken!

☐ _____Yes, I would like to attend. _____ Number of people for lunch.

☐ _____Vegetarian option. _____ Number of vegetarian meals.

Name_____ Phone _____

Reservations required by July 20. Seating is limited! Please contact: Elisa Sousa, Office Manager, P.O. Box 75, Grand Lake Stream, ME 04637 Phone: 207-796-2100 Email: esousadllt@earthlink.net

GRAND LAKE STREAM SUMMER CALENDAR, JULY–AUGUST 2005

Tuesdays, July 5–August 9 Nature Brigade, 9:30–12 noon
DLLT sponsors weekly classes for children combining arts activities and outdoor education with Elisa Sousa, Katie Vetack, and Sue LaPlante. Residents, guests, and visitors enjoy nature-based projects together. Ages 5–12; parents welcome. Six Tuesdays, 9:30–12 a.m. Meet at the James Brite Schoolhouse.

Wednesday, July 13 Family Night, 4–6 p.m.
Outdoor cooking for parents and children. Hosted by Sue and Al LaPlante for the DLLT at the Grand Lake Stream Outdoor Center, located next to the James Brite Schoolhouse. Everything provided. Call 796-2100 to reserve your spot by Monday July 11.

Saturday, July 16 Historical Society Annual Meeting, 7:30 p.m.
Featuring Gaile Nicholson showing slides of her recent African safari.

Tuesday, July 19 Writers Series – "Local Voices," 6:30 p.m.
Pat Foley, from Alexander, author of *John and the Fiddler*, will read to children of all ages. Introduced by Laura Schaefer.

Saturday, July 30 DLLT Annual Picnic Lunch and Meeting, 12–2 p.m. Lunch will be served from 12 to 12:45 p.m. followed by the meeting. For Board Members, Advisory Board, and supporters. By reservation; call the DLLT office, 207-796-2100. On the east side of West Grand Lake dam.

Saturday, Sunday, July 30, 31 Grand Lake Stream Folk Art Festival, 10 a.m.–5 p.m.
See enclosed brochure for attractions and activities. Across from the James Brite Schoolhouse. $5 one day; $8 both days.

Tuesday, August 2 Writers Series – "Local Voices," 6:30 p.m.
Historic photos and storytelling.

Wednesday, August 10 Family Night, 4–6 p.m.
Nature-based interactive activities and cookout. Hosted by Sue and Al LaPlante for the DLLT at the Grand Lake Stream Outdoor Center, located next to the James Brite Schoolhouse. All ages welcome. Call 207-796-2100 by Monday, August 8, to reserve your spot.

Saturday, August 13 Benefit for the Land Trust: 1st Annual West Grand Lake Flat Water Paddle Race. Organized by experienced race director Laura Farrell, with J.R. Mabee and Lindsay Wheaton. $25 registration fee per person; under 16 free. For more information, see the DLLT website. Registration starts at 8:30 a.m.; races at 11 a.m. at the public boat launch on the west side of the dam. Professional race, recreational race, and kids' races. All boats welcome—they'll find a class!

All events held at the James Brite Schoolhouse unless noted.
See Post Office bulletin board for additional listings.

THANKS FROM THE LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE CHAIR

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As a unified team, everyone has been working toward this goal for the past two years. The path has made many interesting turns and twists, and I am grateful I was involved in the process. I have learned more about the area in the last two years than I did in my prior 40 years of visiting Grand Lake Stream, and I am extremely thankful for that education. In the course of this project I have met people too numerous to mention, and they have astounded me with their work ethic and dedication.

In early June, I had the opportunity for the first time in my life to stay on Munson Island alone. One evening, as the sun was setting, I stood on the shore and gazed over at the Farm Cove peninsula. The shoreline that I have marveled over since I first visited is still essentially the same. The realization that it will stay that way long after I am gone so that my children, future grandchildren, and beyond will still be able to enjoy the same scene makes me proud I was involved, happy that it is preserved, but most of all overwhelmingly grateful to every person, agency, foundation, or organization that helped in this endeavor. I know we still have work to do, but I think everyone needs to take a moment to realize what has been accomplished.

I thank everyone for the trust they placed in me, and I will be forever indebted to all that made this happen. My gratitude cannot be fully expressed in words. Thanks.

John (Jake) Lea, Leadership Committee Chair

John "Jake" Lea receiving a New England Forestry Foundation Award.

UPDATES

Jake and Syd Lea were presented with the NEFF annual award for their significant roles on the Leadership Committee for the Downeast Lakes Forestry Partnership Project.

Executive Director **Steve Keith** was one of the featured speakers at the Open Space Institute Northern Forest Conference in March and the Manomet Center for Conservation and Science's annual meeting in Portland, Maine, in May. He represented the Trust as speaker and moderator for the conference on "Community-owned Forests: Possibilities, Experiences and Lessons Learned" held in Missoula, Montana, in June. DLFP Project Manager **Frank Reed** was also a presenter at the Montana conference.

Lindsay and Chris Wheaton are the new owners of Grand Lake Lodge. Congratulations! Lindsay, Board and Leadership Committee member, is also the new DLLT volunteer staff and intern coordinator for the Trust.

Congratulations to Office Manager **Elisa Sousa and her husband Kevin** on the birth of their son Hunter, on December 2. He's a welcome addition to the office staff, in training as the next generation of conservationist.

Pete Borden, retired Professor of Economics at the Darden School of Business at the University of Virginia, DLLT Board and Leadership Committee member, devoted much of the past year to completing the Economic Assessment study in collaboration with Kevin Anderson, Quebec-Labrador Foundation–funded intern 2004. The Trust was interested in the intentional economic impact of this project, including both the Farm Cove Community Forest and the conservation easement lands.

Leadership Committee member **Bill Mackowski** made a set of five woven-ash fishing creels that he generously donated to the DLFP Project for fundraising with Orvis stores in Manchester, Vermont, and Boston, Massachusetts, in conjunction with the campaign. **John and Karol Youney** of Skowhegan, Maine, won the raffle.

"The Grand Lake Gang," chaired by DLLT Board and Leadership Committee member, **Lee Whitely**, has successfully completed their campaign for local financial support of the project. **59%** of Grand Lake Stream residents, **88%** of Registered Maine Guides in the region, and **78%** of lodges made contributions.

The **Trails Committee** received a grant from the **National Park Service Rivers and Trails Program** and is receiving technical support from Maine Project Director **Burnham Martin**. The **Quebec-Labrador Foundation** for the second year in a row has provided a summer intern. **Frederic Hyde**, a York University graduate of Environmental Studies, will be working with the Trails Committee headed by **Kurt Cressey**, chair, and **Stephen Engle** and **Martha Lyman** of QLF to design and lay out a hiking trail system in the Farm Cove Community Forest.

Special thanks to Board and Leadership Committee member **Ed McGrath** who worked closely with our legal counsel **Eliza Cope Nolan** on the extensive amount of legal documents required for the closing, and to **Leslie Hudson**, our grant-writer, who has done and is continuing to do an amazing job of raising money for the project and the Trust.

The **U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service** awarded $1.15 million to the DLFP project for loon habitat protection. **Kim Battista**, a University of Maine at Orono Biology Major and Grand Lake Stream resident, successfully completed the loon survey last summer with the help of Registered Maine Guides. This year, the fifth season of loon monitoring, the USF&W has awarded us a substantial grant. Kim will be returning, along with new intern **Marshall Crowe** of Princeton. Marshall will be entering Maine Maritime Academy this fall. They will be working with Biodiversity Research Institute loon biologist, **Wayne McCabe** to do a more comprehensive study, building on past research, including the 42 lakes that have been surveyed. This year, all five of the Machias Lakes chain will be surveyed.

Our sister organization, the **Woodie Wheaton Land Trust**, made a generous contribution to the project of $25,000 and did a mailing to their supporters which raised over $14,000. Thanks for your efforts!

Orion Timberlands LLC was awarded a contract to do timber harvesting for the Trust. They have begun selective harvesting in the Fourth Machias tract under local supervision of **Roger Milligan**, Forester and DLLT Board and Leadership Committee member.

In conjunction with the **Washington County Conservation Club**, members planted 2,500 spruce trees in the Farm Cove Community Forest in June. The trust has also started wildlife food plots. The goal is to restore white-tailed deer habitat. DLLT board and Leadership Committee member **David Tobey** and Board Member **Louis Cataldo** serve on the habitat committee of the Washington County Conservation Club.

Advisory Board members **Sue and Al LaPlante** have opened their new outdoor center in Grand Lake Stream, the **Grand Lake Stream Outdoor School**, which will offer classes in traditional outdoor skills as well as boat and canoe rentals.

News from NEFF: Linda Walbridge joined the DLFP staff in February as a fundraiser for the project. She brings significant experience to support our Leadership Committee efforts.

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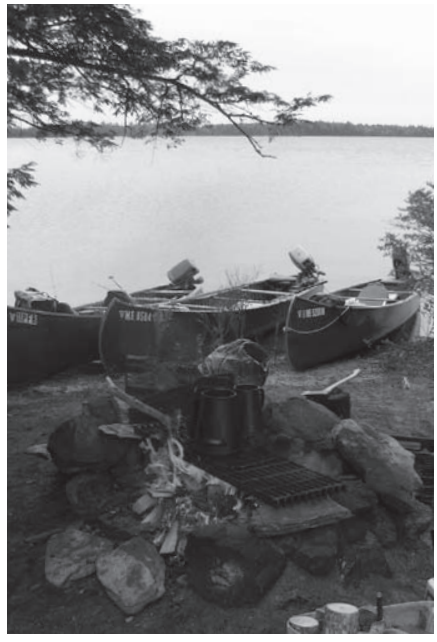

UPDATES

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Advisory Board member **Ray Sockabasin** conducted our second winter mammal survey. The Trust will conduct surveys on an annual basis to better inform our forest management decisions.

Board member, Treasurer, and Education Committee chair, **Jimmie Upham**, participated in a workshop by Coastal Enterprises, Inc. on QuickBooks along with Office Manager **Elisa Sousa** in May. Jimmie works closely with **Ed DeVenne** at NEFF on finances and accounting for the project.

Wildlife Forever, the nonprofit arm of the North American Hunting and Fishing Clubs, made two challenge grants to the DLFP project and a mass-mailing to their membership. Both efforts were successful. **Doug Grann**, CEO of Wildlife Forever, brought a group of WFS life members and Board to Grand Lake Stream for a five-day fishing trip in June. Despite a bountiful crop of voracious blackflies, they had great fishing.

BENEFIT RACE

The 1st Annual West Grand Lake Flat Water Paddle Race, organized as a benefit for the Trust by experienced race director and advisory board member Laura Farrell, with Registered Maine Guide J.R. Mabee and Board member Lindsay Wheaton, will take place on Saturday, August 13. Registration will begin at 8:30 a.m. A professional race, recreational race, and kids' race will start at 11 a.m. at the public boat launch on the west side of the dam. See the DLLT website for further information. There's still time to register! A $25 fee includes a T-shirt, snacks, and a meal with the awards ceremony at the Grand Lake Lodge after the race for participants and observers. Thanks to the organizers, and be sure to mark this date on your calendar! All boats welcome; we'll find a class.

Our Mission

The mission of the Downeast Lakes Land Trust is to ensure the long-term economic and environmental well-being of the Downeast Lakes region through the conservation and exemplary management of its undeveloped forests and waters.

We need your help!

We need to complete the DLFP project. Please send your tax-deductible contribution to the Downeast Lakes Land Trust, P.O. Box 75, Grand Lakes Stream, ME 04637.

Enclosed is my gift of $ _____ to support the Trust's conservation efforts.

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City, State, and Zip: _____

Telephone: _____

Email (optional): _____

Thank you for your support!