Pocumcus Lake Trail Completed

The **Pocumcus Lake Trail** provides options for short or moderate loop hikes to the undeveloped shoreline of beautiful Pocumcus Lake. The shorter loop is a hike of 1.3 miles round trip, while those who hike the entire trail will cover 3.6 miles. This trail is intended for foot traffic and day-use only.

The trail traverses a wide range of forest habitats including early-successional hardwoods, beech, and older hemlock and white pine. Hikers can expect to hear vireos, thrushes, and a variety of warblers, and may hear loons as they approach the lake. Watch for signs of bear, moose and other wildlife. The terrain is moderately rolling, but hikers should expect a rough footpath.

The trailhead for the Pocumcus Lake Trail, with off-road parking, is on the Fourth Lake Road, approximately 7.5 miles west of Grand Lake Stream. A Maine Conservation Corps crew built the trail, supervised by Morgan Cottle of Houlton, a University of Maine School of Forestry graduate who interned with DLLT from the Quebec-Labrador Foundation.

The Pocumcus Lake Trail offers hikers a more isolated experience than the DLLT's first hiking trail, completed last year. The Little Mayberry Cove Trail begins at the village of Grand Lake Stream and runs two and a half miles along the western shore of West Grand Lake. Maps of both trails are available at the DLLT office or on our website at www.downeastlakes.org.

Enjoy your hike, and let us know what you think!

Expanding our Water Trail

The first five campsites on the Downeast Lakes Water Trail were opened at the start of the summer in 2007, and three more sites are being developed. This fall we've cleared and built fire rings and built new cedar picnic tables. In the spring we'll move the tables out. Eight sites on West Grand, Pocumcus, and Fourth Machias Lakes will provide great options for paddlers planning multi-day trips on the Downeast Lakes.

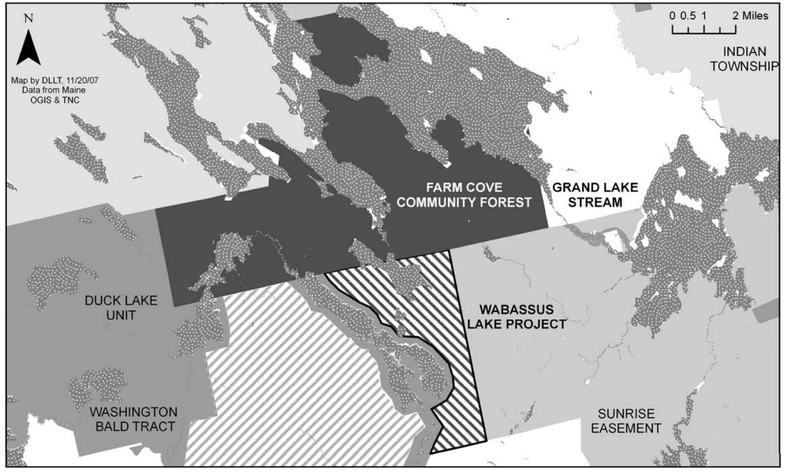
Volunteer Opportunity: Trail and Campsite Stewards

We now have two hiking trails and eight water trail campsites on the Community Forest, and we'd like your help keeping an eye on them! Stewards can adopt either of the trails, or one or more of the campsites, and can work alone or in pairs or small groups. Volunteer stewards will hike the trails – or visit the campsites –a few times each year and let us know, using a simple form, if they need attention. Stewards may also help with basic maintenance, like picking up fallen brush. When heavy work is needed, we'll plan volunteer events to get the job done.

If you think you might be interested in volunteering as a trail or campsite steward, please give us a call.

Shared Photos On the Web

Curious about what others are seeing in the woods or on the lakes? Reminiscing about your last trip Downeast? Have some pictures you'd like to share? We always have a view good pictures on www.downeastlakes.org, but now anyone can view and share pictures from our region at: www.flickr.com/groups/downeastlakes/



Downeast Lakes
LAND TRUST

Our Mission

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

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Downeast Lakes LAND TRUST
Traditions
Downeast Lakes Land Trust Newsletter
December 2007 Volume 1, Issue 5

DLLT Earns Forest Stewardship Council Certification

Achieving a major milestone, Downeast Lakes Land Trust has earned Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) Forest Management certification from the Rainforest Alliance's SmartWood program. "DLLT is the first land trust in Maine to earn FSC certification," said Dave Bubser, US regional manager of the Rainforest Alliance's SmartWood program. The Rainforest Alliance, an international nonprofit conservation organization, is the world's leading certifier of forestlands to the FSC standards.

This certification means that we have met a set of environmental, social and economic criteria and can sell the wood harvested from our lands as "FSC-certified". "We are committed to protecting the full range of resources in our Farm Cove Community Forest, from soils, wildlife habitat, water quality, and biological diversity to recreational opportunities and a sustainable timber supply that provides jobs for local loggers and fiber and wood for eastern Maine mills and craftspeople. FSC certification provides a rigorous examination of our performance" said Executive Director Mark Berry. Our "Forest Management Certification Assessment Report" is available to the public on our web site, www.downeastlakes.org, and questions or comment are always welcome.

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RAINFOREST ALLIANCE CERTIFIED

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A.C. SW-FM/COC-002682
The mark of responsible forestry

The Forest Stewardship Council is the global standard-setter in responsible forest management. Certification is granted to forestry operations that meet the FSC standards according to a third party audit by an accredited certifier. Consumers can look for the FSC logo on wood products to know they are supporting forest management that protects biodiversity and supports local communities.

Wabassus Lake Project Gathers Momentum

DLLT is moving forward with plans to purchase the 6,644-acre Wabassus Tract pursuant to an option contract with the owners. We will add it to the Farm Cove Community Forest, transfer a conservation easement on it to the State of Maine, manage it according to Forest Stewardship Council standards, and keep it open to the public forever.

Treasurer Jay Petri is leading DLLT Directors, staff, and friends on the Wabassus Lake Committee, which will conduct a $3.2 million capital campaign to cover the purchase of the land; transaction, administrative and fund raising costs; road repair to restore safe access and prevent erosion and sedimentation of waterways; and endowments to ensure perpetual stewardship of the land.

The Department of Conservation has selected our joint "Machias River Phase III" proposal with The Nature Conservancy as Maine's highest priority for federal Forest Legacy Program funding for Fiscal Year 2009. We will apply for Land for Maine's Future Program funding this winter, and over the course of the campaign we will invite the entire DLLT family to help us reach our goal!

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I have been reflecting on the many important changes and accomplishments of the Downeast Lakes Land Trust, and I must tell you that I have concluded that our young land trust is maturing!

We are nearing the completion of the Downeast Lakes Forestry Partnership, working with our partners to close our successful $31 million campaign that brought DLLT the Farm Cove Community Forest and protected a vast expanse of land under a conservation easement. DLLT has already begun a new project to protect 6,644 acres of land around Wabassus Lake. In addition, our first two years as owner and operator of the Community Forest have taught us a lot about the challenges of large-scale forest management, and they have brought significant recognition in recent months.

Our receipt of Forest Stewardship Council certification reflects our strong dedication to responsible forestry. Our selection as a Landowner of the Year by the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife demonstrates appreciation of our commitment to providing public access to the Community Forest. We are very proud of this honor, particularly because members of our own community – the Grand Lake Snowmobile Club – nominated us.

The Board of Directors has recently seen some changes. Two founding members stepped down this fall at the completion of their most recent three-year terms. Steve Keith, who handed over the reins as Executive Director this spring, completed his transition from official DLLT service having accomplished his goal of bringing us to the completion of the Downeast Lakes Forestry Partnership. Long-time Treasurer Jimmie Upham produced her final DLLT spreadsheet and is currently dedicating more of her time to the Grand Lake Stream Historical Society.

New Directors Ernest Carle and Jay Petri, who I mentioned in our summer *Traditions* issue, are playing strong roles in DLLT's governance, forest management, and finance. I am delighted to note that we have re-elected former Director Roger Milligan to the Board, reinforcing our institutional memory and adding to our forestry expertise.

We have posted brief biographical sketches of our Board of Directors on our web site. I hope that you will take a few minutes to get to know them a little better. Thank you for all your interest and support. Our Board and staff send you our best wishes for the holidays!

Maine Landowner of the Year Award

Thanks to a very thoughtful and appreciative nomination from the Grand Lake Snowmobile Club, Downeast Lakes Land Trust received a Maine Landowner of the Year Award from the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife. An award ceremony was held October 16, 2007at the Augusta Civic Center. Bob Meyers from the Maine Snowmobile Association and Dan Mitchell from Maine ATV joined MDIFW Commissioner Roland "Danny" Martin and staff to present the awards. Mark Berry and Bill Bayreuther received the award for the land trust, and Ken and Karen Sprague represented the Grand Lake Snowmobile Club.

The focus of this award is to provide awareness and recognize landowners who provide public access to private land for all outdoor recreation. This includes snowmobiling, riding all terrain vehicles, fishing, hunting, trapping, camping, hiking, skiing and general outdoor use and access to the state's natural resources.

"These individuals and nominating associations are a model of the strong landowner-user relationships needed to ensure public access to private land," said Maine Warden Service Captain Joel Wilkinson. "These partnerships benefit all of us who engage in these outdoor activities and care about the future of our recreation."

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MISSION

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

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Neil H. (Pete) Borden
Ernest L. Carle
Louie Cataldo, Vice President
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Roger L. Milligan
James P. (Jay) Petri, Treasurer
Stephen Schaefer, Secretary
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Lindsay P. Wheaton, President
Lee Whitely

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
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OFFICE MANAGER
Laura Hunt
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FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: Managing a Community Forest

As Downeast Lakes Land Trust is approaching completion of its seventh year, and I approach the end of my second year with the organization, I am excited about the work we are doing and the opportunities ahead.

We are stewards of the Farm Cove Community Forest, 27,080 remarkable acres of woods and wetlands on the shores of spectacular lakes. Our Board and Forestry Resources Committee work hard to develop policies and practices that will ensure future generations are able to enjoy the benefits of productive forests and healthy wildlife habitats. We're proud of our recent FSC certification (see page 1), and are making great progress on our Focus Species Forestry project with Maine Audubon and Orion Timberlands. This planning effort will help us integrate wildlife habitat and timber management.

Our 2007 harvest is very nearly complete, and we're carefully developing a winter harvest plan for 2008. Davis Forestry Products of Danforth conducted our summer timber harvest, and we have been impressed with the attention and care his employees give to their work. The timber we harvest supports the local economy through employment with contractors, truck drivers, the Domtar mill in Woodland, other mills, and a new firewood business in Grand Lake Stream.

We also are continuing traditions of community use of forest resources, through a system of permits for local, low-volume firewood harvests, balsam fir tips for wreath-building, and wood for craftsmen building canoes and traditional log furniture.

Bill Bayreuther, our new Development Director, is strengthening our organization with his skills and experience, while starting to become a familiar face on the stream and in the woods. We continue to rely on the skills and energy of our Office Manager, Laura Hunt. We are a small efficient staff and rely heavily upon our active and dedicated board of directors and other able volunteers. We all look forward to meeting members of our community. We've updated our website this fall, in an ongoing effort to make more information about our work easily accessible. Take a look at www.downeastlakes.org.

We are undeniably fortunate that much of the region remains free of the rampant development overtaking waterfront throughout the state. Our Wabassus Lake Project is a chance to protect and guarantee recreational access to another spectacular set of lakes and forests, and we are carefully evaluating additional conservation opportunities in the Downeast Lakes region.

Please don't hesitate to call or stop in for more information, to introduce yourself, or just to say hi if we haven't seen you for a while. I appreciate your support of DLLT and look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

Mark Berry

EDUCATION PROGRAMS WELL RECEIVED

We delivered our sixth-annual "Nature Brigade: Explorations and Adventures" outdoor education series in seven weekly installments this summer, featuring the history of Grand Lake Stream, walks on our two hiking trails, a Wabassus Lake canoe trip, a map/compass/GPS navigational session coupled with nature poetry, kayaking on Big Lake, and two kid-friendly fishing excursions. The participants in the programs ranged in age from four to eighty, including 29 children and 24 adults: they, and we, extend our thanks to program coordinator Sue LaPlante and her 15 volunteer partners.

Our summer "History and Heritage" series included an historic local film screening in conjunction with the Grand Lake Stream Historical Society and lectures on the bedrock geology of the Downeast Lakes region and Passamaquoddy legends and local place names. We have two exciting events lined up for the winter (see the calendar on p. 4), and are planning ahead for summer 2008. Our education goal is to build knowledge, appreciation, and respect for the natural environment, local cultural heritage, and natural resources and their traditional uses.

LOONS AND FUTURE GUIDES

This was DLLT's 7th year of monitoring common loon reproduction on the Downeast Lakes. For the second year in a row, we hired an intern from Washington County Community College's Adventure Recreation and Tourism program. Jessie Tompkins is a great example of the potential of their program– she is a motivated local student interested in one day running her own business guiding, perhaps leading horseback tours. Through our internship, she learned about loons and spent the summer working with Grand Lake Stream Guides. The WCCC program is helping students learn how to successfully create and launch businesses based on the area's appeal to visitors – perhaps including some of the next generation of local guides or lodge owners.

Our loon monitoring program is funded by the US Fish and Wildlife Service, and conducted in partnership with the Biodiversity Research Institute. The long-term monitoring project is demonstrating that loon reproductive success can vary dramatically between years– dependent upon factors from weather and water level fluctuations to food supply or predation. In 2007, one of our monitored lakes that had not appeared productive in past years fledged 4 loon chicks– out of only 11 in the whole project area. Loons are long-lived birds, and potentially capable of sustaining their populations in the face of such fluctuations.

DOWNEAST LAKES CALENDAR

Winter Events

History & Heritage Series

Snowshoe Craftsmanship
Thursday, February 28th, 6 pm

Bill Mackowski will give a presentation on traditional snowshoe building, drawing on Native American traditions and including demonstrations of steps in the process. Bill will also bring examples of historic snowshoe designs.

Additional Winter Events May Be Scheduled

2008 Summer Events

Tuesdays, July – August (schedule for 2008 pending) Nature Brigade Explorations and Adventures, 9:30-12 noon. DLLT sponsors weekly educational activities for children ages 6-12, with all ages welcome to participate. Rain or Shine, dress appropriately for the activity and the weather, bring water bottle, sun screen and bug spray. Snacks will be provided.

Friday, July 4 Grand Lake Stream 4th of July Festivities: For more information call Dave at 796-2286 or email dmccull1@maine.rr.com

Friday & Saturday, July 25-26 Grand Lake Stream Guides Association Dinners, purchase tickets in advance, East side of the dam

Saturday-Sunday, July 26-27 Grand Lake Stream Folk Art Festival. 10 am – 5 pm. Across from the James Brite Schoolhouse. See www.thecclc.org/glsfaf .

Sunday, July 27 DLLT 6th Annual Meeting and Picnic, 12-2 pm. Lunch will be served from 12-12:45. By reservation, see the RSVP form in our summer newsletter or call DLLT at 207-796-2100.

Sunday, August 3 4th Annual West Grand Lake Race. Registration 9:00 – 10:30 AM;

For more information on DLLT events, including additional events to be scheduled, check our website at www.downeastlakes.org

***All events held at the James Brite Schoolhouse on Water Street in Grand Lake Stream unless noted ***

Annual Picnic Enjoyed by over 100 Supporters

Over 100 of you joined us for our Fifth Annual Meeting and Picnic on July 29, 2007 in Grand Lake Stream. We reported on the organization's educational, research, and forest management activities over the last year. Guest speakers Tom Curren of The Pew Charitable Trusts and DLLT Advisory Board member Sydney Lea congratulated the organization on its successful fund raising for land conservation and its vision for the future. Executive Director Mark Berry read a letter from Governor John Baldacci celebrating the occasion and expressing continued support. The DLLT honored former Executive Director Steve Keith for his years of service and his pivotal role in fund raising. Winning bidders in a benefit auction took home a birchbark pack basket and yellow birch chair made and donated by Bill Mackowski, a watercolor of a brown trout painted and donated by Susan Fritz, note cards featuring the painting, and knitting project kits donated by Maranacook Yarns.

Thank you to all who attended or donated items! We hope to see even more of you attend in 2008: Mark your calendars for July 27.

We have a winner!

The most widely anticipated part of the Annual Meeting program was the drawing for the Ken Wheaton Grand Lake canoe donated in honor of its late owner William M. Phillips by his son, Peter L. Phillips of South Burlington, Vermont, with a motor contributed by DLLT Director Steve Schaefer. The much envied winner was Bob MacKinney from New Jersey, a long-time Grand Lake Stream summer visitor who bought his ticket while in town for Fourth of July festivities.