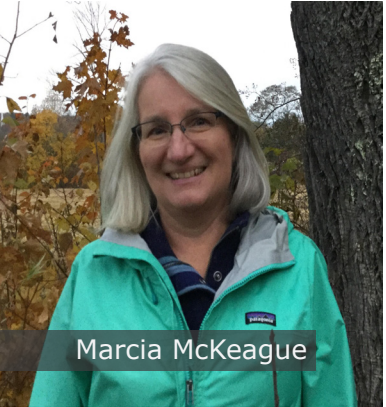


New Trustees



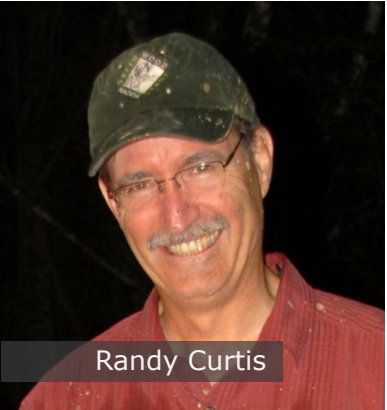
Marcia McKeague

We are welcoming two new trustees to our board in 2019, both of whom bring a love of the peninsula and national and regional perspectives on conservation work.

Until her recent retirement, Marcia A. McKeague served as Vice President of Woodland Operations for Acadian Timber and President of Katahdin Timberlands LLC & Katahdin Forest Management LLC. In these roles she was responsible for the overall operation on approximately 300,000 acres of company land and a hundred other leased properties. She is also a board member of the Forest Society of Maine, and a former trustee of the Center for Woodlands Education .

She and her husband Chris Austin own the Butler House in downtown Blue Hill – the field across from the wine shop on which BHHT holds an easement. Marcia and Chris have lived there seasonally, and are now moving full-time to Blue Hill. They both enjoy spending time in the woods skiing, hiking, and canoeing , and are avid gardeners and bird watchers.

Randy Curtis is a retired Senior Policy Advisor with The Nature Conservancy. Randy joined The Nature Conservancy in 1987 where, until 2017, he worked on conservation finance measures including debt for nature swaps, conservation trust funds, forest carbon sequestration projects, bilateral grants including from USAID and multilateral funding from the World Bank, the IDB and the GEF. He and his wife Callie bought their home in Blue Hill fifteen years ago after their last of 3 children went off to college and they were both able to work from here each summer. Now that they are in Blue Hill full-time, Randy’s latest interest is learning about the region’s phenology and how to use the iNaturalist and Nature’s Notebook apps on his i-pad.



Randy Curtis

A Special Thank You



Phyllis Taylor with her husband Will (left) and Board President Terry Moulton (right)

We are very sorry to announce that Phyllis Taylor will be stepping down from our board at the end of this year. Phyllis has been a stalwart since joining BHHT, in 2012, serving as Secretary since 2013, and we will miss her very much.

Not only has Phyllis been Board Secretary, but an active member of our Development Committee, helping the Trust advance its mission through effective and active fundraising. She has also been a frequent volunteer at BHHT events, helping staff with community outreach in numerous ways.

From all of us here at the Trust, we want to say thank you to Phyllis for all the time, energy, and heart that she put into her service here. Volunteers make all the difference in a nonprofit, and Phyllis has been one of our best. Thank you Phyllis!

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2018 FALL NEWS

NEW PROJECTS NEW PEOPLE

COMMUNITY BASED LAND CONSERVATION SINCE 1985

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Something Special at Peter’s Brook



Over the summer, some of you may have heard activity as you hiked the trail to the Peters Brook waterfall. A few may even have gone to investigate. Now we are happy to announce that the official opening of the new crossing happened in mid-November and the new trail is open for use.

For the past five months, George, Sandy, and our interns have worked with Pete Colman, Chris Muise, and Tyler Fogg, building a beautiful system of steps, platforms, and bridges. These cross delicate ecology and Peters Brook on a new trail.

The trail begins on an easement granted by Bill Byers and Corinne Sucsy, and crosses the brook to the land given by Doug and Posie Cowan, in 2016. We will now be able to access it and the west side of Albion Meadow, and together with the trails on Penny’s Preserve, this opens up hundreds of acres and miles of recreational trails, only a mile or so from downtown Blue Hill.

We had the grand opening ceremony on November 12, and Doug, Pete, Chris, and Tyler did the honors, cutting the ribbon to officially open the new path. If you were not able to join us, go check this very special place out on your own. And happy hiking!

Wetland Restoration and Industrial Recycling

In 2017, when we acquired Surry Forest, there were two wetland road crossings that were in great need of repair. The culverts were undersized, which impeded the flow of water through the wetlands, and one of them had washed out completely, spreading road material into the water downstream. A grant from the Maine Natural Resources Conservation Program had helped us purchase the land, and part of the grant agreement was our promise to fix these crossings. With an additional grant from MNRCP we completed the work in 2018. There is now continuity in both wetlands, and we are particularly proud of how we made this happen.

As some of you may know, concrete manufacturing is a major cause of greenhouse gases, and construction-grade sand is also becoming a scarce resource. Rather than use new materials, we opted for recycled panels from the old Bucksport Narrows Bridge (see cover photo).

We want to thank Paul Carter, of Sedgwick, for supplying the panels and doing such a beautiful job restoring both roads and wetlands.





Hans M. Carlson
Executive Director

As we come to the end of 2018, I want to thank all of you who have supported BHHT over the last year. You have made great things happen on the peninsula, and they will happen again 2019 with your help. The latest news is within, but I want to begin with some thoughts on one recent program and how it relates to our work here at the Trust.

Over the last couple of months, our son has been participating with other kids in a pilot program here at BHHT. We are partnering with 4H on something called the Peninsula Explorers' Club, which is an ongoing series of short, multi-week adventures around different outdoor skills, and this first one was about orienteering. Future programs will be on other outdoors skills, and all are focused on making kids more at home in the woods.

I love hiking trails, but I'm also a big believer in knowing how to find your way without one, so I have very much appreciated hearing about club members using map and compass for off-trail navigation at places like Blue Hill Mountain, Cooper Farm, and Penny's Preserve. There is a sense of self-reliance that comes with being able to move across the land

using only your own navigational skills, and that's important. I also think these kinds of activities are a key to our work here at BHHT in a broader way, too, and this is on my mind as I write this morning.

I believe that simple skills like being able to navigate with a compass, or knowing how to catch a fish, or grow a tree, or weed a garden, or identify a plant or bird are central to conservation. They are important because they are all – or at least can be – ways of caring for the land. They are ways of engaging in a dialog, and they are all important to being good long-term stewards. You cannot care for a place which you don't know and understand, any more than you can be a good community member without knowing your neighbors.

What I mean is that all these kinds of activities are ways of navigating in a more metaphorical way than simply walking across the landscape without a trail. They are the ways that we create our own personal maps of home and orient our internal compasses in relation to that terrain. They are the ways we find our way in the woods in the largest sense, when we are trying to create both ecological and community health.



Members of the BHHT - 4H Peninsula Explorers Club
learning map and compass



BHHT - 4H Peninsula Explorers at Penny's Preserve

Serving land and community health, through protection and stewardship, are the heart of conservation and our mission here at BHHT. Helping create those meaningful connections which bring people into that dialog with the land is central too. And this is the work you are helping us do.

So thank you for your donations and for the hours of volunteer time you give us. We really couldn't do it without you.

Happy Holidays,

Last summer, the Trust began a collaborative pilot project with an organization called Speaking Up For Us. SUFU is Maine's advocacy group for people living with developmental disabilities, and the program pairs individual SUFU members with volunteer projects at BHHT. We have also partnered with SUFU on efforts like the community berry picking event this July, which benefitted the Tree of Life food pantry. SUFU is working to change public perceptions and to have its members feel included in all our communities, and BHHT is proud to be supporting this effort.

We've had a great time with all of this and, in October, SUFU Program Director Monique Stairs, SUFU volunteer Chris Dupont, and BHHT's Chrissy Allen and Hans Carlson presented this project at the Land Trust Alliance national conference. The hope is to replicate this kind of program in other land trusts across the country.



Monique Stairs, Chris Dupont, and Chrissy Allen
Present at LTA Rally in Pittsburgh

Closer to home, with the help of an AARP challenge grant and a private donor, we have begun work on an age-friendly trail in downtown Blue Hill. The path will connect our South St.-Parker Point Trail with Tenney Hill, traversing the George Stevens Academy campus.

This is something new for us, and we will follow it up with an accessible trail at Cooper Farm. We want everyone to be able to get out and enjoy the woods and connect with nature.



Jason Lepper and Crew
Starting the Trail

The Next Generation of Land Stewards

This September, the Trust, SEED Barn (another nonprofit), and UMaine Cooperative Extension partnered to work with kids and adults in eradicating invasives at the Blue Hill Consolidated School. The entire student body learned about these plants: why they are a problem for local ecologies, and how to get rid of them. Students tagged all they could find on school grounds, then the whole school spent an afternoon removing them. Many community members joined the kids, and M.E. Astbury donated the use of a backhoe to pull a couple of larger bushes.

This activity kicked off a long-term restoration effort to reintroduce native plants to the BHCS grounds and to establish a branch of the growing network of living seed libraries facilitated by SEED Barn. Along with other schools around the peninsula, students will be able to cultivate native plants from seed to establish gardens at their schools. Eventually they will bring seeds from their gardens to restore lands stewarded by the Blue Hill Heritage Trust and others. They will all experience the full cycle of restoration and the benefits of good stewardship.

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Pulling Invasives at the
Consolidated School

BHHT has received a number of wonderful land gifts this past year, and we are happy to tell you about two more in Surry.

In the summer newsletter, we announced our pending purchase of Meadowbrook Forest, and now we can announce that we are being given 138 acres adjacent which will connect the forest with the Patten Stream Preserve.

The gift comes from the Lawrence Foundation as part of the community health center they are building in Blue Hill. The state requires mitigation for the forested wetland which was impacted by this development, and we were very happy to work with the foundation to identify and conserve this property which has a wide variety of wetland habitat on it.



This acquisition continues the protection of the Patten Stream watershed, and the fish and wildlife which rely on the area. It also opens a large recreational opportunity, as we intend to connect the trails in the Patten Stream Preserve with the road network in Meadowbrook Forest. This will allow miles of walking accesible from Surry Center.

On the other side of town, we are being given approximately fifty acres of woodland by Wilbur and Marjorie Saunders, who are neighbors of Surry Forest. Saunders' Meadow is north of the Toddy Pond Rd and very close to the forest's entrance. The land has been in Wilbur's family for generations, and used to be hayed annually for marsh grass. Like all the local areas called "meadows" on the peninsula it was once part of the agricultural landscape, but has not been used in this fashion for many decades.

We walked the property last winter and it is a lovely wetland meadow and part of an identified wildlife corridor. Wilbur and Marjorie are well known for being good land stewards, and we are honored that they have handed responsibility for this land to us. We will carry on that tradition of stewardship.



Wilbur and Marjorie Saunders
Donors of Saunders' Meadow