



## Boothbay Region Land Trust

### ANNUAL MEETING FOCUSES ON WATERSHED PROTECTION

*by Christine Selman, Communications & Outreach Manager*

**This year's Annual Meeting gave BRLT members the opportunity to learn more about watershed conservation** from one of Maine's most successful water conservation leaders. Paul Hunt, the Environmental Manager for Portland Water District, was the guest speaker on the afternoon of September 24th, and he shared the inspiring story behind the formation of Sebago Clean Waters, and connected this model to the new Boothbay Region Clean Drinking Water Initiative and its conservation efforts in our region.

Sebago Lake is one of the cleanest sources of public water in the country and because of its high quality, the Portland Water District is able to avoid costly and intense filtration requirements that most public water supplies must undertake. One of the primary reasons for the high-quality water in Sebago Lake is the high percentage of forested lands within its watershed, which act as a natural filter for the precipitation that eventually enters the water supply.

As Environmental Manager for the water district, Hunt knew that each acre of forested land within the watershed was, in turn, providing natural protection for the pristine drinking water drawn from Sebago Lake, while also reducing the associated cost of more

intense filtration. However, most of the 234,000-acre watershed was privately owned land that extended as far as Bethel and remained at risk from development. Only about 10% of the land in the watershed was permanently conserved. Hunt likewise recognized that local land trusts were better positioned to identify and undertake conservation projects within the widely spread communities where the watershed is located.

Under Hunt's management, Portland Water District developed a policy to provide financial support to land conservation projects that protected high-priority forest land within the Sebago Lake watershed. What surprised Hunt was how meaningful the water district's support proved beyond the actual dollars contributed. Following this policy, Portland Water District saw the greatest expansion of conservation land in the watershed in the water district's history. With the combined expertise and leverage of the land trusts and water district, they accomplished far more for water protection than any one entity could achieve individually. By working in collaboration (there are currently 10 partners that make up Sebago Clean

*(Continued on page 6)*

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**COVER: Adams Pond**  
**by Bob Kofman**

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

John H. Welsh



In 2022, Boothbay Region Land Trust realized two significant estate gifts, one of which was the largest gift ever donated to the organization. These thoughtfully planned gifts make it possible for us to build on the long-term health of the land trust by further contributing to our endowment, as well as considering more immediate lands projects and stewardship needs.

Edward D. Riley generously initiated the bequest to BRLT before his passing, while still ensuring that his wife, Michelle, was provided for during the remainder of her life. Mrs. Riley shared that, in selecting BRLT as a beneficiary of his Will, Mr. Riley wanted his money to do something for all the people of the region. Because of their careful insight and planning, their funds will do just that.

Several years ago, my wife, Becky, and I also undertook the task of estate planning, with the mind of sharing our resources. We decided on creating two Charitable Remainder Unitrusts that would yield some income to us over time, with a nonprofit being the beneficiary at the termination of the Trust. After lengthy discussions, we felt that the recipient should be local to our region and that in naming only one beneficiary, the funds would have greater impact. With our deep family ties to the land in the area, Boothbay Region Land Trust was the obvious choice.

Around this same time, BRLT entered into a campaign to acquire a new headquarters at Oak Point Farm with the goal to make the property and farmhouse accessible to everyone in the community. As Becky had just begun to have mobility issues herself, we knew what an important goal this was. Together, we thought it would be a wonderful gift to the community to create a trail that would be accessible to everyone, regardless of physical limitations. In 2020, Becky's Way, a 1,000-foot trail from the Oak Point Farm farmhouse to the public dock, was constructed, which accommodates strollers, walkers and wheelchairs.

Planned giving can be created several different ways within your estate plan. As Mitch Albom wrote in *Tuesdays with Morrie*, "giving is caring." Think about the spirit of those words when considering what your planned gift would bring to local conservation.

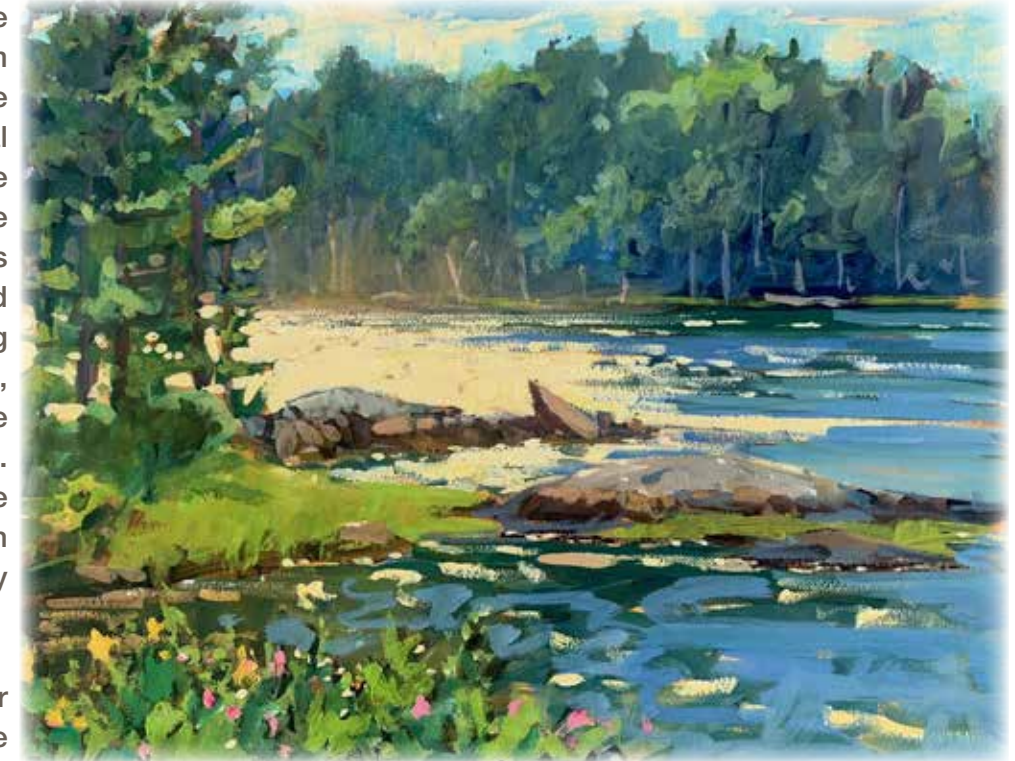


## OAK POINT FARM GALLERY ROOM FEATURING THE ART OF BRAD BETTS

by Christine Selman, *Communications & Outreach Manager*

### Boothbay Region Land Trust's visitor center and headquarters has a new attraction for public

enjoyment. Renovations to the farmhouse at Oak Point Farm included the creation of a large gallery room with wonderful natural light and views overlooking the freshwater pond and the shore of Hodgdon Cove beyond. This multi-use space enables the land trust to host events including lectures, educational programs, and fundraisers. It will also feature rotating exhibitions by local artists. BRLT is thrilled to inaugurate the new gallery room with an exhibition of paintings by the supremely talented Brad Betts.



*Sunlit Cove (9x12 oil) is one of artist Brad Bett's series of paintings on scene (en plein air) at Oak Point Farm, currently on display in the gallery room*

Brad Betts has been an artist for over 25 years and is a Signature Member of the American Society of Marine Artists. His paintings have appeared in solo and group shows throughout New England. His inspiration to paint all things nautical is an outgrowth of his youth, which he spent around the waters of the Gulf Coast. Now living in East Boothbay, Betts draws from the area's rich maritime history and active working harbors to create paintings that reflect his lifelong appreciation of the sea as well his desire to capture the stories of Maine throughout its diverse seasons. Since 2014, Betts has owned and operated Down East Gallery in Edgecomb, Maine, where over 250 of his works are exhibited in an historic farmhouse and barn, along with sculptures, tapestries, wood, and glasswares by a selection of Maine's finest artisans and makers.

"I am very proud to be the first of many artists to show in the Boothbay Region Land Trust's new farmhouse gallery," Betts notes. "BRLT played a significant role in my family's decision to buy property in the region over 22 years ago. As a family of hikers, we would commonly make trips to the area to seek out the various land trust trails. Each with its own qualities, we valued experiencing so many sides of Maine on one peninsula: ocean, islands, marshes and fields,

all with their own ecosystems and habitats. Those experiences opened our eyes to just how diverse the natural resources are in the Boothbay region."

Betts' exhibition includes a selection of paintings inspired by nature and particularly Maine's scenic shore. Several pieces in the exhibit were created on scene (en plein air) at Oak Point Farm during the first week of the exhibit. "The Oak Point Farm preserve is a gem," Betts notes. "It holds a little piece of all the preserves put together. Each day I was more inspired by the variety of subject matter I had to choose from on this 32-acre saltwater farm: a pond with lily pads, ducks and songbirds, woodland groves, an apple orchard, rolling fields with wild flowers, and of course the pine trees rambling down to the rocky saltwater coastline. I hope it inspires others to visit and spend a few hours in front of each scene."

This exhibit will remain up through the winter, and is open for public viewing Monday through Friday between 9:30am-4:30pm. Brad Betts has generously pledged to donate 20% of all sales from this show to Boothbay Region Land Trust.

# SUMMER RECAP!

*Clockwise Right:*

1. Children explore the new natural playground at Oak Point Farm during its grand opening. (photo: Peter Southwick)
2. Yoga on the Deck at Oak Point Farm proved a popular new program, offering the perfect kick-off to a summer weekend.
3. Bangor Savings Bank recognized BRLT for supporting health and wellness in the community with a \$5,000 donation.
4. Liz and Jim Duffy proudly display their Boothbay Region Land Trust sign purchased during the Celebrate! Signs of Conservation fundraiser that brought in over \$34,000 to the land trust. (photo: Bob Crink)
5. Boothbay Region High School seniors were on hand grilling hotdogs during the Field & Forest Family Fun Day. This community event brought approximately 500 people to Oak Point Farm. Proceeds from the lunch benefit Project Graduation in support of the class of 2023. (photo: Peter Southwick)



## Watershed Protection (Continued from page 1)

Waters) the group has secured nearly \$10 million in funding, inspired landowners to conserve over 14,000 acres of high-priority forestland, and received national recognition as a model for water conservation. Their work has inspired groups far and wide, including the founding partners of the Boothbay Clean Drinking Water Initiative, which, in many respects, has modeled itself after Sebago Clean Waters.

One of the underlying lessons of Sebago Clean Waters' success is recognizing the value of collaboration and cooperation in protecting watersheds. Every watershed is different, and each one offers a wide range of benefits to a diverse group of constituents. From drinking water, to recreational opportunities, to business ventures, a region's watershed is responsible for the vitality of its residents in countless ways. Following the example of Sebago Clean Waters, Boothbay Region Land Trust and Boothbay Region

Water District spearheaded efforts to develop the Boothbay Region Clean Drinking Water Initiative (BRCDWI) just over one year ago. As a collaboration of three municipalities, four nonprofits, a public utility, and a community association, the effort has already seen early success in leveraging the strength of its wide range of stakeholders and experts. On Oct. 4, Lincoln County Commissioners approved a \$195,000 grant (the full amount requested) to cover the group's administrative costs for three years. These funds will help establish greater public outreach and education regarding the role of conservation in protecting the water supply, and will build support for conservation efforts with willing landowners in the watershed.

While the initiative is still in the early stages, it is clear that public interest and momentum are already growing. If you, your business, or community group would like to learn more about the Boothbay Region Clean Drinking Water Initiative and how to support this effort, please email [cleandinkingwater@bbrlt.org](mailto:cleandinkingwater@bbrlt.org).



### DANIEL HILL JOINS BRLT AS STEWARDSHIP MANAGER

#### Boothbay Region Land Trust is pleased to introduce its newest

staff member, Daniel Hill, who joined the land trust in October as its Stewardship Manager. Daniel relocated from his home state of Indiana to New Hampshire after college, and quickly fell in love with the natural beauty and diversity of New England's landscapes. At the time Daniel was working as a software engineer, but the conserved lands where he spent his free time recreating and rejuvenating captivated his interest.

As Daniel became more aware of the threats facing natural ecosystems, from biodiversity loss to climate change, he made a bold decision to leave his career in technology and return to university to study Environmental Science. Daniel completed a second bachelor's degree and has since

worked in conservation. At Squam Lakes Association in Holderness, New Hampshire, Daniel oversaw water-quality monitoring to protect the lake habitats while also working on stewardship projects including invasive plant removal and shoreline restoration. Most recently, Daniel served as a Stewardship Field Assistant for The Nature Conservancy in Maine where he conducted easement monitoring among other responsibilities.

Daniel currently resides in Bath, and is thrilled to continue to live and work in coastal Maine. "I'm really looking forward to helping preserve the beautiful biodiversity that the Boothbay region has to offer," Daniel notes. "I look forward to getting to know BRLT staff, volunteers, and the broader Boothbay community and gaining an understanding of what the BRLT preserves mean to all of you."

Daniel's first days on the job were spent working with outgoing Lands Manager, Brad Weigel. Brad recently accepted a new director-level position closer to his home in Bristol at Coastal Rivers Conservation Trust. We wish Brad all the best in his new adventure and thank him for his service. If you see Daniel out on the trails, take a moment to introduce yourself and share what you love about BRLT's preserves.

## AN IMPACTFUL INTERNSHIP WITH BRLT

by Emma Heffner, BRLT Summer Intern

### My internship with Boothbay Region Land Trust reminded me why I am so passionate about the

environmental field and why I chose it for my career. I've always been interested in the ways communities and natural environments interact with and rely on each other. BRLT's success in both conserving the natural landscape and making it accessible to the community has inspired me. My internship went above and beyond my expectations, and I couldn't be more thankful for the time I spent here. I built upon my professional skills and made genuine connections with the environment and the Boothbay community.

My internship was well-rounded, giving me the opportunity to work on projects in almost every department within the organization. This meant I had not one, but five BRLT staff members as incredible mentors throughout the summer. I'm leaving with a broad knowledge of land trust operations, new skill sets, and a full heart. With appreciation, I'd like to recap some of my favorite experiences from the summer.

Many of the highlights of my summer occurred while working with Environmental Educator, Tracey Hall. My prior experiences in conservation hadn't focused on education, but Tracey offered me many opportunities to learn and grow this skill set. I found that I loved it! Every week I looked forward to going on Tracey's guided walks at our preserves. My biggest accomplishment in the education realm was guiding a naturalist walk at Oak Point Farm. Tracey and I split a large group in two and guided them around the trail, sharing our insights. Admittedly, I was nervous at the outset, but by the end I felt confident in my ability to lead larger groups and convey my knowledge of Maine's natural environment.

Another rewarding experience was helping to facilitate the week-long Junior Naturalist camp. During the camp, Tracey and I worked with a small group of kids, guiding them through activities that honed their naturalist skills and taught them about the local environment. I love working with kids, and this group was especially fun as they had an innate curiosity for



Emma and Junior Naturalist Campers at Oak Point Farm. Emma enjoyed working with kids and honing her skills as an Environmental Educator under the mentorship of Tracey Hall.

the natural world that made each day an adventure.

I enjoyed all of my projects with BRLT's amazing volunteers. Getting to know everyone who supports the land trust was an integral part of my internship. The community members and volunteers I worked with made me feel truly at home in my position and in the Boothbay region. Whether during events like the *Field & Forest Family Fun Day*, or out on the trails performing stewardship, BRLT's volunteers were always there, teaching me new things. It's great to see the impact your work can have on a community, and with all the support BRLT receives from its members, it was apparent that I was working for an organization that was making a difference.

I'm grateful to have had the opportunity to spend the summer with BRLT, and I am already looking forward to the next time I'll get to visit the region. Thanks to everyone who so warmly welcomed me here at the land trust for making my experience so wonderful!



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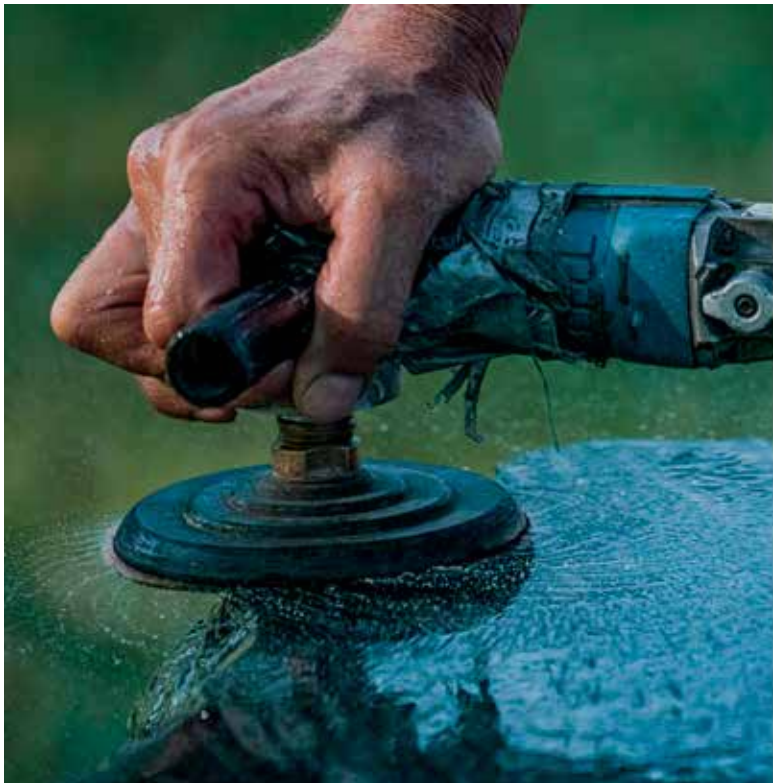
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The Boothbay Region Land Trust seeks to conserve for the public benefit the natural habitat, scenic beauty and working land of the Boothbay region.



# Save the Dates:

Be inspired as nature & art come together!

July 21 - July 30, 2023  
Stone Symposium

August 2, 2023  
Art Preview

August 4, 2023  
Art Auction

All events to be held at Oak Point Farm in partnership with the Maine Stone Workers Guild & local artists.

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