

## Boothbay Region Land Trust

### AUTUMN VIEW PRESERVE COMING SOON

by Christine Selman, *Communications & Outreach Manager*

**Boothbay Region Land Trust (BRLT) has a new conservation property, Autumn View, which is primed** to transform access to nature and recreational trails in the heart of Boothbay Harbor. Working closely with friends of the Land Trust, BRLT acquired the approximately 68-acre property in December of 2023 and has plans to develop trails and parking for a new public nature preserve. The property abuts Lobster Cove Meadow and Appalachian preserves, and sits across Rt. 96 from Pine Tree Preserve, which together comprise the most significant, interconnected conservation tract in Boothbay Harbor. Autumn View will act as a linchpin to these conservation lands, extending and improving trail access to the larger conservation network, while simultaneously safeguarding critical wildlife habitats.

Autumn View draws its name from the dairy farm that historically operated on the site into the late twentieth century. The name is fitting given the beauty of the fields and meadow, especially as the grasses become golden and the leaves turn late in the season. Evidence of the land's agricultural use dates back to at least the 1830s when the beautiful old hay barn, which still stands on site, was constructed. The barn may have been built by former owners, the Leishmans, master builders known for architectural

landmarks throughout the region including the Auld-McCobb House. The barn is a spectacular example of a married-frame timber structure, and its presence adds to the unique pastoral charm of the preserve. Stone walls meander throughout the property, which includes a historic walking path that is part of a network of paths that were used for generations to connect communities in East Boothbay to Boothbay Harbor.

The conservation of Autumn View ensures that the natural spaces surrounding Meadow Brook remain unfragmented and accessible to wildlife. Autumn View, Appalachian and Lobster Cove Meadow provide a significant interconnected landscape containing streams, ponds, forests and fields. These lands support large and small mammals, as well as birds, reptiles, and amphibians. Along with Pine Tree Preserve, which lies directly across Rt. 96, the network of conserved land extends approximately 270 acres and supports a diversity of species.

Some of the most productive habitat in this network rests on the 25 acres of wetland along Meadow Brook

*(Continued on page 5)*



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Photos: Jim Newton & Nick Ullo

**LETTER FROM OF THE PRESIDENT**

**My family moved to the region more than six decades ago**, for many of the same reasons people come to our region today – the natural beauty of our area and the sense of community one gets when spending any amount of time here. I was born right here and have remained connected to the community for my entire life. I grew up in this community and was fortunate enough to raise my daughter here as well.



Today as the President of the Boothbay Region Land Trust, I am just one in a large group of wonderful staff and volunteers (past and present) that are custodians of the legacy created. We all should be immensely proud of the Boothbay Region Land Trust. By protecting these diverse landscapes, we ensure that future generations can experience the same sense of wonder and forge their own connection with this irreplaceable place.

More than just safeguarding scenic vistas, the Land Trust fosters a deep connection between people and the environment. Our initiatives, like the guided walks through the Land Trust preserves or the educational programs for local schools, nurture a sense of stewardship and inspire future generations to become advocates for conservation. Through the vision of the early leaders and the generous support by so many, either financially or through in-kind contributions, we have conserved land and working waterfront that our community members and visitors can all enjoy.

This year we are pleased to add two major preservation efforts under our stewardship: the Autumn View nature preserve and an additional one hundred acres of conserved land on the River Road. Autumn View is very appropriately named – this location, to the east of route 96, provides one of the prettiest views during the fall of each year.

By supporting the Boothbay Region Land Trust, we are investing not just in land preservation, but in the very soul of our community. Together, we can ensure that the essence of the region – its natural beauty, its vibrant spirit, and its enduring charm – continues to inspire us for generations to come.

With gratitude,  
Robert Wheeler



**BRLT HIRES CONSERVATION SPECIALIST**

by Christine Selman, *Communications & Outreach Manager*

**Boothbay Region Land Trust is growing! This spring BRLT added a member to the team – Bailey**

Charron. Bailey will be serving in the newly created role of Land Conservation Specialist. This unique, joint position will split time equally between Boothbay Region Land Trust and Boothbay Region Clean Drinking Water Initiative, enabling both organizations to expand conservation efforts in the region.

On behalf of the Land Trust, Bailey will be working to identify and oversee land acquisitions. The work will include exploring a variety of potential conservation projects, fostering relationships with land owners, drafting conservation easements, and preparing necessary documentation to move projects forward in a timely manner. In addition, Bailey will engage with BRLT’s Lands Committee to review and update the organization’s conservation criteria, focus areas, and plans. This new role will enhance the Land Trust’s ability to develop strategic projects and act swiftly and effectively when opportunities arise.

Bailey will also be furthering the mission of BRLT partner, the Boothbay Region Clean Drinking Water Initiative, with the ultimate goal of safeguarding the public water supply through conservation efforts. There she will work closely with the steering committee members to provide leadership to the Initiative, as well as to advance land protection in the Adams Pond and Knickerbocker Lake watersheds.

Bailey grew up in Maine, spending summers in Casco Bay before relocating with her mother to live year-round in Harspswell and then Topsham. Bailey’s deep connection to the natural world grew from a childhood spent exploring remote islands and waterways in the Harpswell area, particularly on Long Island. She recalls days spent creating adventures in the woods, on the shoreside, and in the waterways with friends. Along the way, she gained an appreciation for the nature around her. Following high school, Bailey spent a gap year working on organic farms in New Zealand, which confirmed her passion for environmental work.

Bailey received a B.A. in Human Ecology, focusing on Environmental Policy and History, from College of the Atlantic in 2022. Throughout her college years,



*Bailey Charron will be serving in the new role of Land Conservation Specialist*

she worked fulltime with a forestry company, helping grow the business and even traveling overseas to meet with business partners. Her senior project focused on transcribing historical letters from Malaga Island, a preserve located off Phippsburg with a rich and complex history. In her studies she recognized the importance of land conservation and access, and knew that she wanted her work to support these goals. Since graduating, Bailey worked in a law office conducting title research, as well as in education, as she considered the next steps on her journey.

“I am incredibly grateful for the opportunity to work with BRLT staff and volunteers, as well as the Boothbay region’s community members to ensure access to clean drinking water, and to preserve natural habitats and working lands,” Bailey notes.

Bailey will be working closely with Nick Ullo in the coming months as she learns the ins and outs of conservation in our region. She looks forward to meeting with BRLT members and the community, and gaining a greater awareness of conservation needs and priorities for our community.





# Cruising for Conservation



Join Boothbay Region Land Trust on Friday, August 2nd from 5:30-9:00pm as we raise funds (and the anchor) to support land protection in midcoast Maine! Thanks to a generous partnership with Cap'n Fish's Cruises, we will be Cruising for Conservation aboard *The Pink Lady II*, and treating guests to dinner, drinks, music and dancing! Best of all, this sunset cruise will allow you to enjoy Boothbay Region Land Trust nature preserves by water.

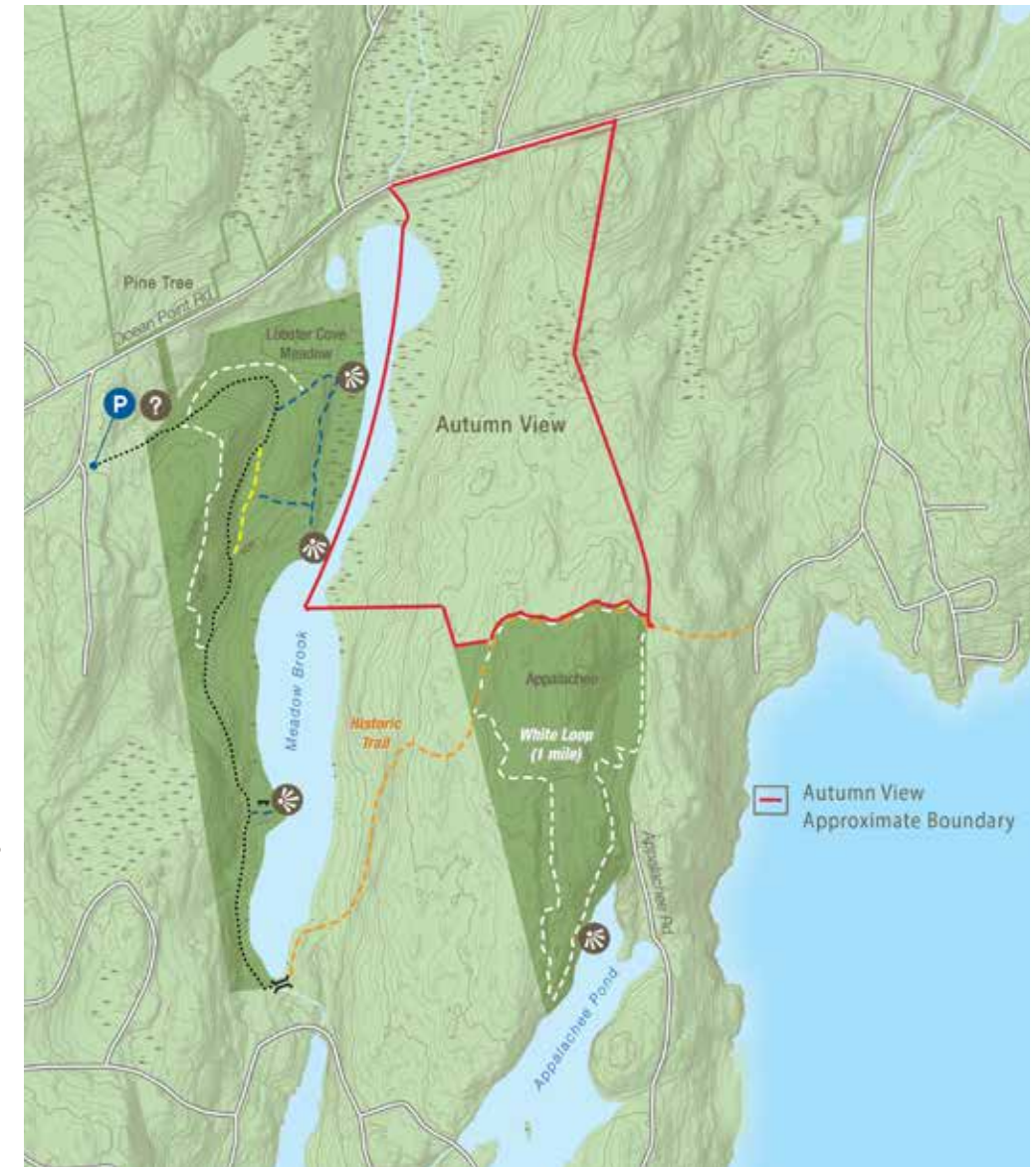
While navigating the Boothbay region waterways, *The Pink Lady II* will tour several cherished Land Trust properties including Spectacle and Indiantown Islands, Porter Preserve, Oak Point Farm, and more. In addition to the stunning scenery, an abundant variety of hors d'oeuvres, provided by executive chef and local restaurant owner Ralph Smith, of Mine Oyster & Boat House Bistro, will be available throughout the evening. Music delivered by Two 07 DJ Services and

an open bar will top off an event that you won't want to miss! Whether you spend the evening kicking up your heels on the dance floor, or just enjoying the festive atmosphere and beautiful views, this is sure to be an unforgettable Maine summer night.

Tickets to this exciting event are \$250 per person and are all-inclusive (\$100 of each ticket sale is tax deductible, and all ticket sales are final. A rain date is scheduled for Saturday, August 3rd).

Seats are limited and tickets will sell out, so book your spot today at [bbrlt.org](http://bbrlt.org), or call the office at (207) 633-4818. If you have an event-related question, or are interested in sponsoring this event, please contact Skye at [vwood@bbrlt.org](mailto:vwood@bbrlt.org). See you on the high seas!

**Autumn View (Cont. from pg 1)** that is part of Autumn View. With twelve distinct wetlands, three of which contain streams, Autumn View protects sensitive ecosystems that wildlife relies upon. In the spring, vernal pools on the property teem with salamander eggs. These wetlands have been designated a significant waterfowl and wading bird habitat by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Migratory and nesting bird species frequent these wetlands where more than 140 varieties have been identified. Conservation biologist Jeff Wells, one of the nation's leading bird experts and the VP of Boreal Conservation at National Audubon explains, "The protection of the new land adjoining the Lobster Cove Meadow Preserve is critical to ensuring that this special place continues to be an important bird migration stopover hotspot that supports a diversity and abundance of migrant birds, each spring and fall."



The conservation of Autumn View (outlined in red) extends access to recreational trails and protection to natural habitats surrounding Meadow Brook

While Lobster Cove Meadow and Appalachian preserves contain beautiful trails, they have never been very accessible to the general public. Appalachian Preserve has no public parking access at all, while Lobster Cove Meadow has only very limited public parking. In spite of being two of the most centrally located conservation properties, these limitations have restricted visitors from enjoying the preserves. The addition of Autumn View creates much needed space to significantly improve parking and access. The property also includes a small cottage that will be used for staff housing. The aforementioned restored historic barn will be utilized for both programming and equipment storage. The trail system is still in development, but it will connect into Appalachian Preserve's system, creating several miles of recreational trails for people to enjoy with easy access to both Boothbay Harbor and East Boothbay.

BRLT Executive Director, Nick Ullo remarks, "This new preserve is a keystone for conservation and natural recreation in Boothbay Harbor. Later this year, visitors will get to experience the natural serenity of this property and learn a bit more about the farming history, too."

There is much work to be done to prepare the property for safe and enjoyable public use. The Land Trust will be working throughout the summer and fall to establish the trails and parking, and to finalize work on the barn. During this time, we ask that the public refrain from visiting the property as there will be safety concerns. An official branch cutting and trail opening date will be announced in the fall and is expected before year end, hopefully in time for Autumn View(ing)!

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## BEETLES COMBAT HEMLOCK TREE INFESTATION

In collaboration with regional partners, Boothbay Region Land Trust is working to protect and preserve hemlock trees that are being threatened by a nonnative insect. BRLT has joined forces with land trusts throughout midcoast Maine to purchase a large quantity of beetles used as a biological control to help combat this pest. BRLT will focus efforts on tree stands at Ovens Mouth Preserve.

The hemlock woolly adelgid or HWA, is an insect native to East Asia. Like an aphid, it feeds by sucking sap from hemlock trees. Outside its native range, HWA is a serious pest because these introduced populations have little to no natural predators or host resistance. Without natural predators, HWA infests entire stands of hemlocks, leading to decline and mortality of the trees.

Recent efforts to address infestations are showing promise using another insect native to Japan, *Sasajiscymnus tsugae*, or *S. tsugae*, as a biological control. These control beetles are a natural predator of HWA, and by deploying colonies of *S. tsugae*, it is hoped that hemlock stands can be assisted in withstanding the HWA infestation.

“Ovens Mouth Preserve has a sizable collection of young and old hemlocks which have been afflicted by HWA. The preserve is large enough that the *S. tsugae* beetles can disperse and continue to benefit the



Above: *S. tsugae* nests attached to hemlock branches with a wet sponge and clothes pin. Each colony will feed on hemlock woolly adelgid. If they no longer find their food source, they will relocate to other nearby trees to feed.

Below: Stewardship Manager, Scott Peterson, deploys *S. tsugae* colonies on hemlocks in Ovens Mouth Preserve.



## Beetles Combat Infestation (Continued)

forest over time,” explains Stewardship Manager Scott Peterson. “If this pilot project is successful, we hope to expand the service to other BRLT properties,” he adds.

With dedicated funding to support management and mitigation of invasive species provided by a grant through the Davis Conservation Foundation, BRLT invested in twenty colonies of *S. tsugae* beetles this spring. In early June, each colony of one hundred beetles was attached to an afflicted hemlock with a simple clothes pin and a wet sponge. The hungry beetles leave the protection of the cotton wool or wood shavings in which they are shipped to find food. After preying upon the nearest available HWA, they propagate to adjacent trees.

Mitigating HWA is important for the broader ecosystem, not just hemlocks, which are considered foundational species, supporting other plants and animals in the surrounding forest. Using a natural method reduces unintended consequences of chemical pest-control

treatments. With repeated deployment each year to augment natural reproduction, the *S. tsugae* beetles will develop their own population to combat the HWA.

Because *S. tsugae* are a host-specific species, they will not themselves become a problem pest. Since introduction in North America forty years ago, *S. tsugae* have not been found to have negative environmental impacts. It is likely they will never fully eradicate the HWA, but the goal is to create some equilibrium where the beetles consume enough HWA that the trees are able to survive. If the *S. tsugae* beetles have enough food (HWA) where they are deployed, they will continue to reproduce at that site. If not, then they will move to other HWA infested trees nearby.



## MEET BRLT'S SEASONAL STAFF: AIKO, MASA, & MACKENZIE

BRLT is pleased to welcome back Aiko Pandorf for her fourth summer as caretaker on Damariscove Island. She is joined this year by her daughter, Masa Peterson. Visitors to the island will remember Aiko, who is a career nonprofit executive. Most recently she has served as interim executive director for an environmental conservation and community engagement philanthropy based on the west coast. Masa is a first-grade teacher in Richmond, California. She graduated from Williams College where she majored in neuroscience and rowed crew, earning a bronze medal at the NCAA championships in 2019. From mid-June until Labor Day, Aiko and Masa will welcome day-visitors and maintain the preserve's trails and facilities.



Mackenzie Bearor will be spending the summer with BRLT as its general intern. Mackenzie graduated from the University of Southern Maine in May, with a bachelor's degree in Environmental Science Planning and Policy. As a student, Mackenzie worked as a research assistant on a NOAA funded project looking at climate migration in and out of Maine. She was also a teaching assistant for a water quality course and interned with Friends of the Presumpscot River. Mackenzie notes, “I have grown up in Maine, and I have spent my summers for the majority of my life on Ocean Point and Linekin Bay with my family. I hold a great admiration for this region.” She will be working in a variety of capacities supporting staff at BRLT this summer.







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