

Boothbay Region Land Trust

BRLT MARKS 45 YEARS OF PROTECTING NATURE

by Christine Selman, *Communications & Outreach Manager*

Forty-five years ago, the founders of Boothbay Region Land Trust were part of a growing movement focused on protecting natural spaces in local communities. On the heels of the modern environmental movement which exposed the impacts of pollution, loss of natural resources and habitat destruction, the land trust movement offered a community-focused strategy for safeguarding nature through direct action—namely, land conservation. BRLT mobilized early in this movement as one of the first twelve land trusts to form in the state (today there are over eighty). In Maine, where only 6% of land is publicly owned, early advocates saw land trusts as a new approach to fill this gap. Land trusts could work locally to secure the natural places and resources that the community depended upon before they were lost. BRLT formed under this principle to protect open space for people and wildlife across the region.

In September of 1980, Boothbay Region Land Trust incorporated, officially becoming a nonprofit

organization. The purpose of the land trust according to the articles of incorporation were as follows: “(a) To engage in and promote the preservation of the natural resources of the Boothbay Region; (b) to engage in and promote the scientific study of and to inform the public regarding local natural resources; (c) to acquire, by gift, purchase or otherwise, interests in real estate and personal property, and (d) to use all such property for conservational, educational, recreational or scientific purposes only.”

BRLT’s founders were a small group of dedicated residents with a vision of preserving “the very special character of the region,” in the words of founder, Lois Barge. Within the first year, the land trust had already received its first property (Little River Dam, a scenic neighborhood landmark in East Boothbay) as well as its first conservation easement protecting a forested

Continued on page 7

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Robert Wheeler

President

Richard M. Elder

Vice President

Cindy Bailey

Treasurer

Penelope Pollard

Secretary

Tom Abello

Alan Bellows

Kimberley Byrd

Erika Eurkus

Gray Ferris

Adam Harkins

Bruce Harris

Melissa Holmes

Erika Huber

Stan Wakefield

BOARD OF ADVISORS

Louise Bowditch

Nanette Davison

Carl R. Griffin, III

Mike Harrison

Dawn E. Kidd

Mary Miller

Chip Newell

Bruce B. Tindal

Jeffrey V. Wells

STAFF

Nicholas J. Ullo

Executive Director

Cindy Casey

Administrative Assistant

Bailey Charron

Conservation Specialist

Tracey Hall

Education Manager

Scott Peterson

Stewardship Manager

Christine Selman

*Communications &
Outreach Manager*

V. Skye Wood

Development Director

COVER: Porter Preserve by

Peter Southwick

Inside: Peter Southwick

LETTER FROM PRESIDENT ROBERT WHEELER

As we mark 45 years of the Boothbay Region Land

Trust, it is worth pausing to appreciate the foresight and dedication of those who came together decades ago to protect the land we love. Their vision was not just about conserving space, but about preserving the character of our region, the beauty of our natural surroundings, and the sense of community rooted in the land itself. Thanks to their efforts, and the continued support of many over the years, our corner of the world still has places that feel natural, peaceful, and deeply meaningful.



So many of us carry memories of time spent outdoors—walking wooded trails, watching the seasons shift across open fields, or simply finding a quiet moment by the water’s edge. While those memories may differ in detail, they are bound by a shared connection to place. Sadly, many of the landscapes that once shaped those moments have disappeared, lost to the steady advance of development.

That is why I am so excited and grateful that Autumn View Preserve, which connects to Appalachian and Lobster Cove Meadow—two of my personal favorite places, will now be permanently conserved. These places reflect the very spirit of what the land trust was founded to protect, land that is open, beautiful, and alive with abundant wildlife. Knowing that this land will remain undeveloped for generations to come is truly heartening.

Land conservation is about more than scenery; it is about ensuring that future generations have the same chance to experience the natural world as we did. It is about protecting the spaces that help define who we are as a community.

Boothbay Region Land Trust’s most recent project, the conservation of Autumn View, is a powerful reminder of what can be accomplished through vision, persistence, and shared values. Let us continue to honor that original spirit by working to protect what remains—before it becomes only a memory.



WATER QUALITY MONITORING ENTERS 11TH SEASON WITH NEW EQUIPMENT

by Tracey Hall, Education Manager

Warmer days are here, and so is another season of citizen science on the water! Boothbay Region

Land Trust is proud to enter the 11th season of the *Edwin J. Green Coastal Water Monitoring Program*. Thanks to our dedicated volunteers—many of whom return to their original sampling sites year after year—we’ve built an invaluable long-term dataset: over 1,440 samples collected across a decade.

This year brings exciting updates. Working with the Maine Department of Environmental Protection, we have updated our Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP), which ensures our data remains accurate, reliable, and usable by research and regulatory partners. We have also upgraded our field equipment with a new digital meter that simultaneously records temperature, salinity, and dissolved oxygen—simplifying sampling and boosting precision. Funding for new meters was made possible in part through a generous \$15,000 grant from Davis Conservation Foundation.

Since 2015, our monitoring efforts have filled a vital data gap along the Boothbay region coastline. Prior to the program’s launch, no consistent coastal water quality monitoring existed in our area. Our team of trained volunteers has been measuring pH, temperature, dissolved oxygen, salinity, and clarity at 12 sites across the Boothbay region. These metrics help us track trends that can impact the health of marine ecosystems and coastal communities.

Early findings revealed some cause for concern: low pH and dissolved oxygen levels. Ongoing data shows similar trends seen in other areas of the ocean, with warming water, decreasing oxygen levels, and increasing acidity. These changes can affect marine life, local fisheries, and public health, underscoring the importance of continued monitoring.

Our results are shared in a yearly report submitted to Maine Coastal Observing

Alliance, Bigelow Laboratory for Ocean Sciences, the University of Maine, the Maine DEP, and the general public on our website, ensuring our local data supports regional and statewide understanding of coastal change.

Carl Wilson, Commissioner of the Maine Department of Marine Resources, recently expressed his thanks to BRLT for its on-going efforts. “The information is very clear and the report is organized very well,” Wilson noted. “Sometimes it is hard to keep timeseries like these going, but the payoff is seeing trends after all the years,” he explains.

As we begin our 11th season, we are reminded that this work is only possible thanks to the dedication of our volunteers and the support of our community. Here’s to another year of science in service to the sea!



Volunteer and program coordinator, Robert Jordan, and Tracey Hall calibrating BRLT’s new water monitoring meters.



IT'S TIME TO CELEBRATE LIKE ITS 1980!

by V. Skye Wood, *Development Director*

Get ready to fluff your shoulder pads and press those linen suits as we prepare for the most important (and elegantly 80s) fundraiser of the summer—the Boothbay Region Land Trust Birthday Bash! For forty-five years, Boothbay Region Land Trust has been protecting and providing access to the cherished natural areas of the Boothbay peninsula. Join us on Friday, July 11 from 5:00-9:30pm as we celebrate this special birthday year, raise funds for another forty-five more, and go back to when it all began—1980!

The Birthday Bash will be a party like no other, as guests will enjoy an evening of great food and cocktails by Seacoast Catering & Lobster Bakes; pumped up 80s jams and special requests delivered by Two 07 DJ Services; a silent auction of unique experiences and beautiful artistry; and a whole lot of flash dancing in your finest 80s threads! As if this unforgettable night couldn't get better, it all takes place at a neighboring private residence to Oak Point Farm, offering stunning gardens and gorgeous water views of Hodgdon Cove in Boothbay Harbor.

If you need another reason to buy your tickets now, a couple of the unique experiences offered in the silent auction include a four-day stay in the beautifully rustic cottage on Damariscove Island; the use of the Oak Point Farm Nature Center for up to fifty people; and a sunset paddle with cocktails on Spectacle Island led

by BRLT Executive Director and Maine Guide, Nick Ullo. These never before offered experiences are only available to guests of the Birthday Bash, so get your tickets and be ready to place your bids!

Tickets are \$250/person to enjoy this high-spirited evening of music, food, dancing, bidding, and natural beauty—all in support of land protection and public access! Don't miss out on some chic 80s flashback fun at a stunning private residence, all for a good cause! For more information and to get your tickets today, please visit BBRLT.org or scan the QR code.



Festivities will be held throughout the stunning gardens and historic barn of a neighboring Oak Point Farm private residence, Heron Landing.

FAMILY FUN DAY RETURNS THIS SUMMER

by V. Skye Wood, Development Director

Back by popular demand, Boothbay Region Land Trust will be hosting Field & Forest Family

Fun Day! Join us at Oak Point Farm on Saturday, August 16 from 11am-3pm for a variety of activities that are fun for all ages. Explore the beauty and everyday opportunities available at BRLT's preserve headquarters, along with additional fun offerings including a bounce house, dunk tank, music, food, and much more at this free community event!

This four-hour fun-filled day will offer activity stations that can be enjoyed at your leisure. Drop-in stations will include pond exploration, scavenger hunt, sun prints, as well as 'build a bug hotel' and other crafts. Other special activities available all day include a dunk tank, bounce house, sprinkler station/water games and face painting. There will also be several scheduled activities including a lobster demo, nature hike and yoga. Please visit bbrlt.org for updates on the day's schedule of activities.

In addition, all of the wonderful activities that are offered at Oak Point Farm every day will be available during this event. Families can enjoy the Story Trail featuring a children's book posted along a gentle trail, or the Leland Family Natural Playground that offers children a safe space to dig, climb and get dirty. For the young, and the young-at-heart, Becky's Way Universal Access Trail offers hikers of any mobility level a safe walk or ride full of water views, butterfly-filled fields, and forest wonder.



The Anna Marie & John Thron Nature Center will be open to guests. View local art in the gallery room, explore a large collection of natural objects in the nature center, and enjoy a climate controlled resting area in the library. Public restrooms and drinking water stations are also available.

No need to leave on an empty stomach! Snack and lunch items will be available for purchase, or bring your own picnic. We hope to see you at this community event! A special thanks to Cap'n Fish's Cruises for their generous support, making this event possible.

BOOTHBAY REGION LAND TRUST

Birthday BASH

Celebrating 45 Years!

MORE INFO & TICKETS
BBRLT.org



SPONSORS

Roller Rink Royalty
Leigh & Robert Garry
Tindal & Callahan Real Estate

Arcade Allstars
J. Edward Knight Insurance

Cassette Classics
Country Coach Charters

Hairspray Heroes
(Silent Auction)

Crow Point Yoga Aekeir Brewing
Doug Goldhirsch Sea Glass Spa

SUMMER STAFF UPDATE!

by Christine Selman, *Communications & Outreach Manager*

BRLT is pleased to have two interns joining our team this summer. Each will have a slightly off- set start and end date that will overlap for the month of July, enabling the land trust to maintain help throughout the busy summer with extra support at the height of the season. Both interns will have the opportunity to hone skills in a variety of roles including environmental education, land stewardship, communications and fundraising. In addition, interns will also be staffing the visitor center at Oak Point Farm on Saturdays.

Sydney Snell will join us beginning in June. Sydney is a student at the University of Rochester where she recently completed her freshman year with coursework focused on Biology and English. Sydney has a passion for science and the environment and is an avid hiker and outdoor enthusiast. She is a life-long bird watcher and spent three weeks last summer backpacking in the Swiss Alps. Sydney notes, “I’ve spent all of my summers sailing and hiking in Boothbay, and I’m so excited for the opportunity to work with BRLT to help protect the natural beauty of Maine!” Besides Sydney’s knowledge of BRLT trail systems gained from a childhood summering in the region, she also spent the past two summers as a camp counselor at the YMCA’s Camp Knickerbocker. This background makes her especially well-suited for supporting BRLT’s outdoor educational programming, though she’s eager to engage in all aspects of land trust work. Mason Davenport will be joining BRLT in July and will

continue through the end of August. Mason completed his Junior year at University of Maine this past spring where he is studying Earth and Climate Science. Mason grew up in the midcoast region, where he enjoyed the trails of local land trusts including BRLT. He shares, “As a kid, my parents used to take me and my siblings out to the trails in Boothbay, and we’d wander for hours, finding the best swimming spots, playing tag, and just being kids. No adventure was out of reach for us, and the sky was the limit while we were on the trails.” Mason has worked in construction where he learned how to operate heavy machinery and developed skills in building. He has supported course instructors as a lab assistant and has knowledge of mapping and GIS. At the University of Maine he also participated and served as an officer for the Geological Society. Mason is looking forward to joining the BRLT team this summer. He notes, “To me, conservation is not just about protecting nature, but building a community around it, which is exactly what BRLT strives to do.”

In addition to interns, mother and daughter team Aiko Pandorf and Masa Peterson and will again be joining BRLT as caretakers on Damariscove Island this summer. Masa is in her second year as caretaker, while Aiko returns for her fifth season. Welcome to all!



Sydney Snell (left) and Mason Davenport (right) are joining Boothbay Region Land Trust as interns this summer. They will each be working in a variety of capacities to experience the full range of land trust work.

BRLT Mark 45 Years

(Continued from page 1)

property on the Damariscotta River. Upon the completion of that first fiscal year in December of 1981, the organization's published financial report indicated the cash on hand was only \$2.66. Fortunately, there was plenty of momentum and BRLT was just getting started.

Barge, who became BRLT's second president, encouraged community members to join the cause, noting that support of "any amount is welcome since there is neither a minimum nor a maximum [required for membership]." Today, Boothbay Region Land Trust carries the same message. A donation of any amount makes one a voting member, enabling everyone to support the organization and have a voice in its growth. BRLT's member community quickly grew and has been the source of all of the Land Trust's success over the years.

While establishing an inclusive membership, BRLT also provided free community access to its conserved lands, ensuring that the public who supported it benefited directly from its efforts. By 1983, BRLT had secured its first true nature preserve, Porter Preserve, where trails were established and public use encouraged. At a time when the coast was becoming increasingly developed and privatized, Porter Preserve protected access for all. Subsequent preserves have extended this legacy. Today BRLT maintains 26 public nature preserves across all four regional towns on the peninsula, offering over 35 miles of recreational trails.

While the public has enjoyed the recreational and scenic value of these lands, BRLT's efforts have conserved more than 2,000 acres of forests, shorelines, fields, and wetlands as well as several islands, creating extensive protected habitats that sustain a diverse range of wildlife and safeguard essential natural resources. BRLT continues to pursue thoughtful and strategic conservation projects that enhance our community and preserve our ecosystems.



An early picture of the Boothbay Region Land Trust Board of Directors

As it grew, BRLT transformed from a small, volunteer run nonprofit, to a professionally-run organization. Ten years in, the land trust hired its first employee, Executive Director Dawn Kidd, marking a new era of progress. With an experienced and growing staff, the Land Trust was able to work more strategically in its acquisitions while also improving its long-term management and stewardship of the lands and trails under its protection. This growth has continued, and BRLT now employs seven permanent year-round staff who bring a wealth of knowledge and expertise to the organization. While the staff has expanded, it is still the community that drives the Land Trust's priorities.

BRLT has always worked hand-in-hand with its community. From securing working waterfront for traditional fisheries, to building accessible trails for people of all mobilities, and providing programming that reaches across ages, our member supporters and volunteer board has directed our efforts, ensuring that BRLT remains relevant and responsive to local needs. As we look to the future, conservation continues to be critically important. Development pressures persist, and the impacts of climate change mean that natural spaces will hold increasing importance in preserving and sustaining our community. Thanks to you, Boothbay Region Land Trust is ready to face these challenges so that the very special character of this region remains for generations to come.



PO Box 183 / 60 Samoset Road
Boothbay Harbor ME 04538

Tel: 207.633.4818 | Web: BBRLT.org
Email: brlt@bbrlt.org

Nonprofit Org.
US Postage
PAID
Permit #3
Boothbay Harbor
ME 04538

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

FOLLOW US:   

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



UPCOMING EVENTS

Visit BBRLT.org for full Events Calendar



| | | | |
|--|---|--|---|
| JULY 11 5PM-9:30PM | BRLT Birthday Bash A Special Fundraiser with an 80s Flair Tickets Required: \$250/person | AUGUST 16 11AM-3PM | Field & Forest Family Fun Day Fun Activities for the Whole Family Free to All! |
| JULY 15 10AM-2PM | Autumn View Open House Check out our Newest Nature Preserve Free to All! | SEPTEMBER 6 8AM-3PM | Damariscove Island Boat Trip Explore this Historic Island Preserve Tickets Required: \$50/person |
| | | SEPTEMBER 25 5PM-7PM | Annual Membership Meeting Celebrate 45 Years of Conservation Free to All Members! |

2025 Annual Conservation Partners:

