

## Acadia Senior College Schoodic to Schoodic course -- PDF #3

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Wickyup Lodge at Tunk Lake (see PDF #2, page 11). 1983 photo sent by Steve Spencer, taken after would-be property developer cleared brush and small trees to make it highly visible to dismay of Bryan and Byrd families. The 1984 arson fire solved that! Says Steve in his email, "In the late '80's and '90's I had the pleasure of working extensively on what has become the Donnell Pond Unit in my capacity as Outdoor Recreation Planner for the Maine Public Lands. . . I developed the recreation component of the unit management plan and designed and supervised the building of the trails and campsites."

*Much of this PDF relates to the benefits of S2S to people, after discussion of sources of money for land conservation. Very relevant to the people theme are comments from retired Acadia National Park Superintendent Sheridan Steele after he read PDF #2. I thank Sheridan for offering us his perspective. His comments were prompted by my mentioning a couple of concerns that arose about the Schoodic Woods addition to Acadia (the paragraph in PDF #2 beginning at bottom of page 6 under photo). Wrote Sheridan, "The Modena . . . planners talked about 800 villas, a golf course, a landing strip, etc. . . Once the land was secured [bought by the anonymous conservation buyer found by Sheridan], we talked about a level of development (hike trails, bike paths, and a campground) at a scale that was considered low density. The campground with 94 sites is considerably smaller than any on MDI. . . That number of sites brings roughly 200 people per night . . . and it is full almost the entire season. Two hundred people are definitely helping local business (two merchants have told me their business is up 25% or more since the campground opened). And this number of people staying overnight added to those visiting for the day seem to be just right in terms of not overwhelming the*

*charming Winter Harbor. . . I do not believe the Schoodic Woods development violates the spirit of the General Management Plan revision done by the park in 2004-5 as I think your paper implies.”*

Sources of money for land conservation -- \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$:

Let’s look at how permanent land conservation gets funded. Of great importance in S2S have been gifts of land and of conservation easements. The gift of the addition to Acadia National Park of Schoodic Woods, complete with the brand new, beautifully done campground, is by far the largest in S2S, but there have been many other acts of great generosity by S2S landowners. Gifts of real estate interests have played major roles in land conservation all across the country, philanthropy that seems to surprise people from some other parts of the world.

Several years ago at the end of Dr. Mike Soukup’s tenure as president of Schoodic Institute at Acadia National Park he invited me to address a group of managers of parks and marine reserves in Chile and Colombia. This was a session during the resumption of the International Short Course, a program of the National Park Service to provide training in this country to people from other nations. Mike asked me to speak about Acadia’s conservation easement program. Acadia holds over two hundred conservation easements stretching from Schoodic’s Spruce Point, described in PDF #2, westward to the island of North Haven, all of which have been donated except for one. The Latin American attendees at my talk were surprised and indicated that such generosity in preserving land is not common in their culture. We are lucky to have so many landowners in the United States willing to make gifts of real estate interests for conservation.

The U.S. Tax Code does spur such gifts by making their value as determined by appraisal deductible from federal income and estate taxes. In the case of a conservation easement, its value is the difference between the land’s value before being restricted and after development restrictions are imposed. While these tax incentives have proven important, I believe that the prime motivator for gifting real estate interests has to be altruism. Rarely would the tax incentives be sufficient by themselves.

In regard to property taxes, a landowner giving away his or her ownership obviously gets out from under property taxes. In the case of conservation easements, Maine law does require tax assessors to take into account enforceable restrictions, but how assessors have chosen to recognize the impacts of conservation easements as they assess privately owned land so encumbered has varied considerably from town to town.

Towns losing property tax revenue has triggered concerns and criticisms of land conservation. To counter that and to be good citizens non-profits owning land have increasingly made payments in lieu of taxes to towns or paid at a reduced rate calculated from the Farm and Open Space Tax Law. The State makes no such payments to towns where it owns land. The National Park Service and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service have made payments for time periods after an acquisition as mandated by federal law, but there has been a big if -- at least as to amount because Congress has long failed to appropriate the full amount of necessary funds.

Despite the generosity of many landowners, purchases of land or conservation easements are often the only way to achieve conservation goals. Frequently, sellers have been generous to the degree their financial circumstances allow by selling at less than fair market value. That is called a bargain sale and the amount of discount from appraised fair market value is usually considered a tax-deductible charitable gift. But, of course, land conservation entities often have to pay full market value to obtain a property.

Where has the money come from for purchases in the S2S geography? Private individuals, year-round and seasonal, have over many years proved enormously generous in their donations of money for land projects. Over the past half century of observing raising money for land projects I have witnessed a major shift from reliance almost exclusively on individuals to being able to obtain grants from foundations, large and small. And during the same time period government funding programs have been created that have proved crucial, especially in S2S. Particularly important among various federal grant programs have been the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA) grants, the many forested wetlands, pond, and bogs in S2S appealing to that program. Says its website, the grants "increase bird populations and wetland habitat, while supporting local economies and American traditions such as hunting, fishing, bird-watching, family farming . . ."



## North American Wetlands Conservation Act

**PROTECTING, RESTORING AND ENHANCING WETLAND HABITATS FOR BIRDS**

Another major federal program, in recent years much entangled in Congressional politics and hampered by inadequate appropriations, is the Land and Water Conservation Fund. Its source of money is dedicated revenues from offshore oil and gas proceeds, although Congress still must appropriate the money before it can be used. PDF #1 mentioned the Gouldsboro Unit of Coastal Islands National Wildlife Refuge. The major part of that is the Williams Point parcel on West Bay off Gouldsboro Bay, the purchase of which I negotiated when I represented The Conservation Fund in Maine. This national non-profit has often “preacquired” properties for government agencies, moving more quickly than can a government bureaucracy to pin down a sale, using its own money for the purchase before reselling to the government agency after the agency has completed its processes and procured funding. As I recall, in the case of Williams Point the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service used monies from the Land and Water Conservation Fund to repay The Conservation Fund.

Well known to Maine voters is the Land for Maine’s Future Program (LMF). This program was established in 1987 with bipartisan support and an initial \$35 million bond issue. In subsequent years additional bond issues have passed, usually with large majorities. The program has provided grants for conservation projects of statewide, regional, and local significance and has preserved scenic vistas, wildlife habitat, archaeological sites, properties with excellent outdoor recreational potential, working farms and forests, and working waterfronts. Unfortunately, its coffers have failed to be replenished during the LePage administration and, so far, even during the current administration.

In S2S Land for Maine’s Future provided a significant grant for Schoodic Bog, as did the North American Wetlands Conservation Act program. The 500-acre parcel in Sullivan with its 150-acre bog, which was purchased by Frenchman Bay Conservancy, lies below the south slope of Schoodic Mountain. It provides habitat for many animals and a wide variety of year-round and migratory birds.

A power line crosses the Schoodic Bog property, and subsequent to the land’s purchase by Frenchman Bay Conservancy Bangor Hydro announced the need to upgrade the power line to provide better electric supply reliability downeast. There was no way to avoid all impact on the land. Following negotiations Bangor Hydro provided so-called mitigation dollars to be used for additional land conservation in the vicinity. Mitigation money, especially for damage to wetlands, has been a source of conservation dollars in many places. We will come back to Schoodic Bog in a few minutes when we discuss recreation in S2S.

Grants, especially government ones such as North American Wetlands Conservation Act and Land for Maine’s Future grants, usually require that the recipient provide matching monies, the required ratio varying with the program.



Eligible match in addition to cash from other sources can often be the appraised value of donated real estate interests. An example in S2S was the generous donation to Frenchman Bay Conservancy of Bean Island between Sorrento Point and Hancock Point. Development of the island was already limited by a conservation easement donated to Acadia National Park in the 1970s, but now, thanks to the value of the island providing a match for a North American Wetlands Conservation Act grant, Bean Island is a Frenchman Bay Conservancy preserve.

Owning and managing land or monitoring and, if necessary, enforcing conservation easements are not simple or cheap. Acquiring real estate interests means assuming on-going substantial burdens. Depending on the agency or organization, the burdens can include commissioning natural resource inventories, preparing and implementing forest management plans, supervising public use, providing and cleaning rest facilities, building and maintaining trails and parking lots, providing signage, making payments in lieu of property taxes, paying salary and benefits to stewardship staff and to the fundraising staff who help find the dollars for stewardship, and sometimes hiring lawyers. The federal and state agencies engaged in S2S always seem underfunded, depending as they do on Congressional and Maine Legislature appropriations respectively. Their land management staffs do a great deal with not enough. The nonprofits seem to do a good job of using available dollars efficiently, helped at times by volunteer labor. When nonprofits prepare a budget and fund-raising goal for preserving a particular piece of land, they include initial stewardship costs and endowment for long-term costs.



Signage such as US Fish & Wildlife Service sign in Gouldsboro is important for informing and educating.

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## S2S for people:

Still valid today are conclusions in the 2007 Governor's Council on Maine's Quality of Place report entitled *People, Place, and Prosperity*. This was published during the Baldacci administration. In its executive summary the Council stated, "In 2006, The Brookings Institution, a national research organization that has studied the economies of many states, issued a report asserting that Maine's Quality of Place is an economic asset of increasing value for Maine. Not just an asset, but Maine's *chief* economic asset. Our own research confirms this finding.

"The reason is that in the new economy, the greatest competition worldwide is for *people* . . . People with skills . . . can live anywhere. Our research shows they are most interested in living somewhere with a high Quality of Place. This is our most powerful advantage in the global marketplace for people."

Access to nature and outdoor recreation are major components of what many, many people consider high Quality of Place. Fifteen years ago the thinking about S2S focused heavily on the ecological benefits. There was even reluctance to frame it as enhancing opportunities for outdoor recreation, fearing opposition from area landowners not wanting increased public attention to all land in the S2S geography, not just that owned by conservation entities. As time passed and local landowners did not actively oppose the S2S concept, the conservation entities have made outdoor recreation a significant component of the S2S vision.

That said, nonprofits and government agencies do their best to listen to local concerns and adapt as appropriate. The large margins by which voters have passed Land for Maine's Future bonds underscore bipartisan support for land conservation, although with the onset of the Tea Party movement a decade ago there began some erosion of support from conservative politicians. Trying to maintain bipartisan support for land conservation has driven conservation programs to give far higher priority than years ago to "community engagement" – involving local people in the management decisions about land being conserved in their communities.

As we think about attitudes within our communities and within the S2S geography, the following map from a recent *Ellsworth American* supplement is interesting and perhaps thought-provoking:



Based on voter registration data from the *Ellsworth American* in 2020; towns with majorities of voters registered Republican have been colored red; green shows the majority registered as Democrats.

The opportunities for outdoor recreation in S2S probably require little elaboration -- whether those opportunities are biking, cross-country skiing, or capturing with an artist's brush the great sloping rocks at Acadia's Schoodic District; hiking the trail up Schoodic Mountain; fishing on a pond; photographing birds at a bog, deer hunting in the forests, etc., etc. Worth noting is that the

Sunrise Trail, the converted railroad bed from Ellsworth to Calais, crosses S2S and goes right through the Schoodic Bog parcel. ATV's, snowmobilers, bikers, hikers, skiers, and snowshoe-ers all can be found enjoying the Sunrise Trail.



Sunrise Trail (lower right) passing through Schoodic Bog; in distance Bean Island, Hancock Point, MDI..

### S2S and the local economy:

The italicized comments of retired Acadia Superintendent Sheridan Steele beginning on page 1 of this document mention the reported significant increase in revenues of Winter Harbor businesses following opening of the new Schoodic Woods campground. As in most of Maine, tourism and related outdoor recreation are big drivers of the local economy, and the S2S geography has the expected businesses catering to visitors. The outdoor recreational opportunities of S2S are definitely a significant draw for the communities within the S2S geography.

Eco-tourism, unfortunately, is often a two-edged sword. It can bring badly needed dollars to communities while at the same time significantly degrading the natural resources, ecosystems, and quality of life that attract the visitors. Careful management is required to gain the benefits while minimizing the downsides. The overcrowding of Acadia National Park on Mount Desert Island and the resulting traffic jams during peak tourist times underscore how huge can be the challenges. As stated in PDF #1, the basis of the S2S vision -- a protected ecological corridor



north from the Gulf of Maine to the beginning of the North Woods -- is biodiversity preservation, especially now as the climate changes, but preservation of land within S2S has increased the recreational opportunities. That puts major onus on Acadia National Park, the State of Maine, Frenchman Bay Conservancy, Maine Coast Heritage Trust, The Nature Conservancy, and local governments to give major attention to land stewardship and people management.



Jones Pond, just south of Route 1, may also illustrate the challenges of managing public access and satisfying people with widely varying tastes and values. It is a lovely wooded pond (see photo PDF #2, page 14) and home to nesting loons. The Town of Gouldsboro owns a quite developed public access site on its shore complete with boat ramp, picnic tables, rest rooms, a swim area, and playground equipment. The public is fortunate to have such access for enjoying the pond. Public access can, like eco-tourism, be a two-edged sword, however. That struck me when reading *Imagining Maine: Essays and Stories* by Allan Lockyer (Berry Cove Publishing Co. 2004). He had built a camp at Jones Pond, and he wrote, “Places change . . . The summer sounds here at camp used to be birds singing, leaves rustling, and loons calling. Now we have . . . jet skis and speedboats plying the water all day long and sometimes into the night.”

Fishing and timber harvesting have been mainstays of the economy of the S2S geography far longer than tourism, of course, and they remain important today. Fleets of fishing boats shelter in the harbors, landing primarily lobsters, which local dealers ship to markets here and abroad. Substantial acreages of privately owned, managed timberland lie within S2S, primarily north of Route 1, sequestering and absorbing carbon even as they provide wood to what markets may exist at any point in time for firewood to pulp to sawtimber to wood products and engineered wood like laminated beams. Part of the S2S vision includes hoping that owners of some of the as yet unprotected timberlands will sell or donate working forest conservation easements, allowing revenue streams from wood sales to continue even as conversion to development is forestalled.

Some of what had been privately owned timberland is now in the ownership of conservation entities such as the parcel featured in the *Northern Woodlands* article appended to PDF #1 (and photo below) and the Schoodic Woods parcels now within and next to Acadia's Schoodic District. Some of the timberland acreage going into conservation ownership will be managed, not just left, being managed for goals including growing quality timber for market, improving wildlife habitat stands, and increasing carbon absorption. Some acreage will be left to become future old growth forest with the special ecological qualities of such stands.



Substantial white pine stump where wood was harvested at Lower West Bay Pond shortly before Frenchman Bay Conservancy purchased the land. A number of timberland owners have sold land to conservation entities following major harvests.

Agriculture within the S2S geography includes commercial blueberry growing and some small-scale farming. The use of pesticides and herbicides in the blueberry business suggests the desirability of creating adequate riparian buffers along streams and around ponds. Best known of the small farms in S2S is probably the certified organic Mandala Farm in Gouldsboro, a community supported agriculture (CSA) endeavor selling shares of its seasonal produce.

(Appended to this PDF is an interesting recent article from *Maine, Boats, Homes & Harbors* magazine on other creative small businesses in Gouldsboro.)

Dwayne Shaw, executive director of Downeast Salmon Federation, has pointed out another source of jobs, albeit not large, resulting from conservation work in the area. He calls it “a restoration economy.” The jobs include the conservation staffs as well as on-the-ground labor. An example of the latter is at a small parcel in Sullivan purchased by Downeast Salmon Federation where a stream

flows into Flanders Bay. There an old dam has been removed to enable fish passage (more to be said on this in PDF #4). Also to improve fish passage conservation organizations have been replacing small culverts with larger ones, which, of course, requires construction labor. In its spring 2020 newsletter The Nature Conservancy's Maine Chapter reports that there are at least 22,895 places in Maine where roads cross streams and that 40% are likely barriers to fish passage.

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### Research and education in S2S geography:

Closely related to how the S2S conservation efforts tie to the local economy are research and education. The Navy's leaving Winter Harbor in 2002 was a major economic blow. Much of the impetus for converting the base, wholly surrounded by Acadia National Park land, into the Schoodic Education and Research Center (SERC) campus was to replace at least some of the dollar flow into the area. The Center offers housing for over 200, dining, meeting spaces, and a 125-seat auditorium, enabling the holding of conferences, classes, and other gatherings such as an annual several day visit from a Connecticut kayak club. The scale cannot replace what the Navy brought, but it helps. Money for the conversion to what is now a truly magnificent facility came from both federal and private philanthropic sources. Schoodic Institute at Acadia National Park (the full name) is the nonprofit created to manage the park-owned campus. The campus is one of 18 National Park Service research learning centers and, once having been a Navy base, is the largest.

Increasingly, S2S has become a focus for research and education, and Schoodic Institute has indeed become a center for this – but along with many partners. Partners in addition to Acadia National Park itself include College of the Atlantic, the University of Maine, EarthWatch (a program offering opportunities worldwide to engage in science and education), OceansWide (a program for middle school through college age students with a goal of teaching about what is under the sea and encouraging consideration of careers in marine science and technology), and Sumner High School in Sullivan, as well as teachers and students from a host of other elementary, middle, and high schools and colleges and universities.

Lead programs at the Institute include research and education in ornithology, forestry, and marine ecosystems, especially the intertidal zone, which is the area between high and low tides. The Institute has been a national leader in developing

citizen science, inspiring and teaching volunteers to participate in the collection of scientific data, and the organization offers programs to improve science literacy, which include bringing teachers and students to the SERC campus for multi-day sessions.



Off Acadia's Schoodic Island, U. of South Carolina students look for seabirds during OceansWide's Maine-mester program housed at Schoodic Institute. On board College of the Atlantic's boat *Osprey*.

The location of Schoodic Institute is ideal for many of its efforts. Director of Ornithology Seth Benz explains that the S2S geography lies across a major flyway. Sixteen million birds cross it, that is 1,000,000 per front mile (the distance from Schoodic Point to Schoodic Mountain being 16 miles).

In regard to forest research, PDF #2 (page 4) points out that the S2S coastal region's forests lie in a transition zone between southern deciduous and northern coniferous forests. These forests are changing along with the climate, and Schoodic Institute president Dr. Nicholas Fisichelli and Acadia National Park's science coordinator Dr. Abe Miller-Rushing, both trained in forest ecology, lead efforts to study the changes in Acadia's forests. Having the northern parcel of the former Modena lands (see PDF #2 map, page 5) not part of the park and made available for research has been an advantage because some types of forest management for research purposes are not permitted on national park lands.

Marine biologist Hannah Webber leads marine research efforts at the Institute, focusing primarily but not exclusively on the intertidal zone. Rockweed

(correctly known as *ascophyllum nodosum*) in Maine's intertidal zone is a foundation of our coastal ecosystem. It also has been the cause of years of controversy and legal battles over whether harvested rockweed is a public resource, now settled by Maine's Supreme Court in favor of abutting upland landowners holding deeds to low water mark. Long-term research on what ecological roles rockweed plays and on the implications of different harvesting strategies is critical. Schoodic is an excellent locale to be included in such research, for one of the most pristine stands of rockweed on the coast of Maine is where for decades the Navy shut off access to the shoreline near its facility.

(Speaking of seaweed, I did not list on the bibliography appended to PDF #1 a truly outstanding book by Surry resident Susan Hand Shetterly. *Seaweed Chronicles: A World at the Water's Edge* [Algonquin Books 2018] is a beautifully written dive into the ecosystems and creatures, the changing climate, the laws, the controversies, and people who research, regulate, harvest, and market. Some of the people and businesses mentioned are in the S2S geography.)

The S2S conservation effort was actually the topic for a graduate school level course in landscape conservation held at Schoodic Institute that drew students from as far as Vietnam and Latin America. Jim Levitt, owner with his wife of a beloved camp at Little Tunk Pond in Sullivan, organized this course as director of the Program on Conservation Innovation at the Harvard Forest. He and two of the graduate students coauthored a report in 2014 entitled *Landscape Scale Conservation in the Schoodic to Schoodic Region of Maine, USA*. The report provides a level of detail about particular land parcels and real estate deals way beyond what is necessary here for Acadia Senior College purposes, making it a valuable record.

A few years earlier Frenchman Bay Conservancy had interested Dr. Rob Brooks of the Penn State Cooperative Wetlands Center in the significance of S2S. That led to another report, a Masters of Science thesis by Alyssia Church. Her study was "to identify essential habitats and map species presence in established conservation areas."

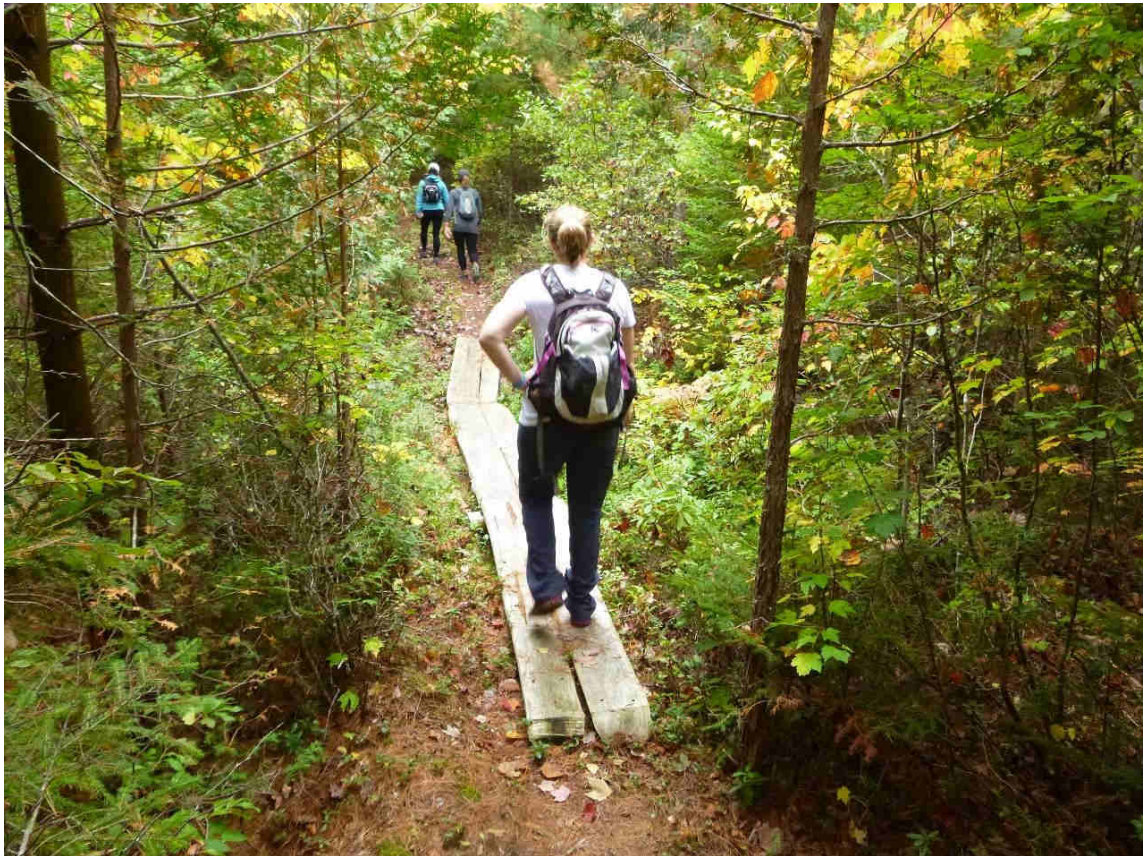
The primary points to be made are that (1) the significance of the S2S landscape has been widely recognized by experts, (2) research and education endeavors involving elementary school to graduate students to scholars to adult amateur citizen scientists are many and ongoing, and (3) all of this activity benefits knowledge creation, land conservation, and even the local economy.

There is a final point I want to make about education. I mentioned on page 6 that land conservation programs give high priority to engaging with their communities including involving local people in management decisions about land being conserved. Another aspect of engaging with communities is educating. Acadia National Park's interpretive programs and signage such as the U.S Fish and Wildlife Service sign shown on page 5 of this PDF have long exemplified some aspects of such education.



The nonprofits in recent years have greatly expanded their education efforts through leading interpretive walks, through written pieces and videos in newsletters and on websites, and, in the case of the local land trust for the S2S region, Frenchman Bay Conservancy, developing an outstanding, hi-tech education center within its office building at Tidal Falls in Hancock. Frenchman Bay Conservancy executive director Aaron Dority gave me a tour of this education center a few months ago, for I planned for it to be a stop on the Acadia Senior College field trip, which was also to include lunch at Schoodic Institute. When offices open again and people are free to travel, those of you in easy range of Hancock might enjoy stopping by and having Aaron or another of the Frenchman Bay Conservancy staff show you the education center. Efforts to educate residents -- and visitors too -- strengthen our communities by increasing people's connections with the landscape and their understanding of issues such as ecosystems, biodiversity, and climate change, which, hopefully, lead to better decisions at the voting booth and in people's own lives.

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Community residents and visitors get enjoyable exercise vital for physical and mental health, connect with nature, and learn about the landscape on Frenchman Bay Conservancy trails in S2S.

As this PDF was being finished, word arrived that Maine Coast Heritage Trust just completed acquiring more land and a conservation easement on an abutting parcel at Forbes Pond and along the major tributary stream from the north, thanks to the skilled negotiating work of MCHT's Bob DeForrest. (See PDF #2 for more on Forbes Pond, pages 13 – 14.) Even in the midst of the current global virus crisis important conservation achievements within S2S (and elsewhere) continue.

*Next week's PDF will examine a wider geography that has S2S at its core. We will look at land conservation efforts immediately to the north and northeast, and given how watersheds tie to the ocean, we will even consider some marine conservation issues seaward of Schoodic Point.*

*The first addendum to this PDF is a very brief description of the missions of conservation entities playing key roles in S2S. A friend from Winter Harbor once asked me why there are so many conservation organizations, why they don't just consolidate. She found it hard to support any because she didn't know one from another. I tried to explain that each is filling a somewhat different niche although in some places, not in S2S, there has been some consolidation. The S2S effort has underscored the importance of each and how they complement each other.*

*The second addendum to this PDF is the recent Maine Boats Homes & Harbors (another of my favorite magazines!) article on Gouldsboro by Mimi Bigelow Steadman.*

## Missions of Key S2S Conservation Agencies and Organizations

### Federal:

**Acadia National Park** – National parks have long had a dual preservation and outdoor recreation mission. Increasingly, they also play important education and research roles.

**Coastal Islands National Wildlife Refuge**, a component of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, which is a sister agency of the National Park Service within the Dept. of Interior. This refuge includes on the mainland of S2S both the Gouldsboro Unit mentioned in PDF #1 as well as property in Corea.

### State of Maine:

**Bureau of Public Reserve Lands**, Department of Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry – The Bureau manages for resource values including “recreation, cultural and historic preservation, wildlife, and timber” and is the manager of the Donnell Pond Unit.

**Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife** – As the name indicates, this department protects inland fisheries and wildlife. It also manages state-owned game and wildlife management areas. In S2S it holds important conservation easements around Tunk Lake.

### Nonprofits:

**Conservation Fund, The**, is a national organization based in Virginia that seeks conservation and economic outcomes for its projects. It especially operates as a “pre-acquirer” of land (see page 4 of this PDF #3) for government and other nonprofit conservation entities, as it did for the original part of the Gouldsboro Unit of Coastal Island National Wildlife Refuge discussed in PDF #1. It also has played a critical role in a major project just north of S2S to be discussed in PDF #4.

**Downeast Salmon Federation** conserves wild Atlantic salmon, other sea-run fish and their habitats, and protects other important river resources in eastern Maine. Mentioned on page 10 of this PDF is its ownership of a parcel in Sullivan and removal of a dam there.

**Forest Society of Maine** is the land trust for the North Woods and focuses its program on acquiring conservation easements on working forestland – to preserve the natural resource values, provide for public access, and help timberland owners maintain their ability to provide wood products to market. The Forest Society does not hold easements within S2S, although it does hold easements not far to the north, and it has been an advisor and cheerleader for S2S.

**Frenchman Bay Conservancy** is the local land trust for the Frenchman Bay *and* Union River Watersheds. It was the early leader in promoting the S2S ecological corridor concept, making S2S a strategic plan priority 15 years ago and establishing a S2S Coordinating Committee to engage the various conservation agencies and organizations working in the region.

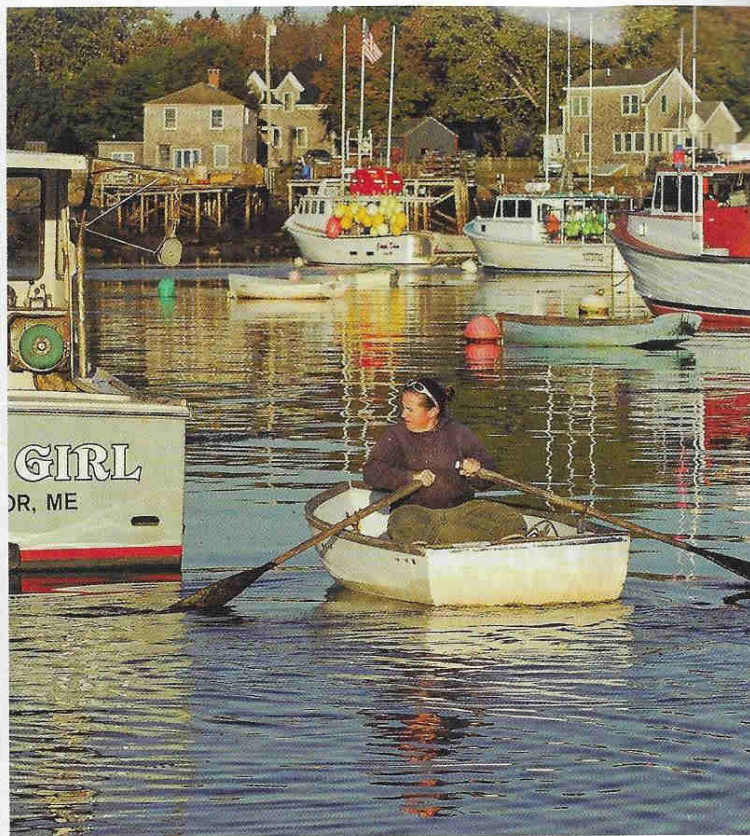
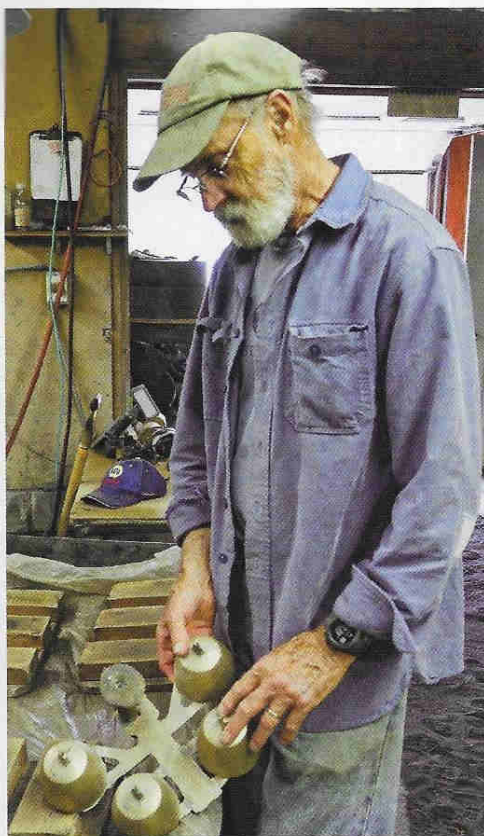
**Friends of Acadia** exists to use the power and passion of the private sector to help Acadia National Park accomplish what it may not be able to do itself. Its role in S2S has related to the Schoodic District and to the Schoodic Woods addition to it.

**Maine Coast Heritage Trust** is a coast-wide land trust that does some inland work too. It made S2S a priority later than Frenchman Bay Conservancy did, but with much depth of talent and access to financial resources it has become a vital participant. It also provides a variety of services to help local land trust partners like Frenchman Bay Conservancy.

**Nature Conservancy, The, Maine Chapter** is a component of the Virginia-based organization that is now global in scope. Its overall thrust today is climate action. Originally and still focused on land preservation, it also is active in fresh and salt water conservation efforts. Next week's PDF #4 will put it center stage as we look to S2S's immediate north.

**Schoodic Institute at Acadia National Park** – The purpose and focus of the Institute are addressed beginning on page 11 of this PDF.





U.S. Bells' Dick Fisher (left) has been sand-casting bronze wind-chime bells in Gouldsboro for five decades. His Prospect Harbor foundry is located up the road from Corea Harbor (right), which is a village in Gouldsboro.

(Left) Photo by Mimi Steadman (Right) Photo by Lattia Baldwin

## Gouldsboro: Home to Artisans and More

**W**OOLLY FOG hung low on the waters surrounding Gouldsboro's corrugated perimeter. Just across Frenchman Bay from Mt. Desert Island, this unspoiled chunk of downeast coast is graced at its lower tip by the spectacular Schoodic section of Acadia National Park. It was definitely a feel-your-way-on-the-bay day. And that meant it was a perfect day for gunkholing ashore, visiting artisans who call Gouldsboro home.

The wipers swept polka dots of drizzle from the windshield as we meandered along Route 186. Our first stop was Lee Fusion Art Glass. In a diminutive white-clapboard building that was once a post office, shelves of brightly colored bowls and plates offered a respite from the gray outside. Co-owner Sheldon Bickford explained how he makes the dishes—which bear

doily patterns or blueberries, lupines, and other Maine images—by arranging powdered, colored glass between two pieces of plate glass which he fires in a kiln.

A few miles away, the road curved around a former general store whose windows glowed with light from a collection of ceramic lamps. Home to Maine Kiln Works for more than 40 years, the building showcases the craft of Dan Weaver. I admired the rich hues of his robust bowls and slender vases, and wished I could remodel a bathroom to accommodate one of his porcelain sinks.

Near the junction of Routes 186 and 1, we ducked out of the rain into Dulse & Rugosa. Claire Weinberg's sweet-smelling shop overflowed with festively wrapped discs of soap and other skin-care products containing

botanicals she grows and seaweed she and her daughter gather on Gotts Island, off Bass Harbor.

"This area is seaweed central," Weinberg replied when we remarked on Maine's booming seaweed businesses. She mentioned nearby Springtide Seaweed Farm, and we were soon heading for the repurposed sardine cannery where Sarah Redmond operates a seaweed farm, seed nursery, and processing facility. Arriving unannounced on a Saturday morning, we only took a peek at kelp drying in a greenhouse.

A few days later, I spoke on the phone with Redmond. She told me about her nutrient-rich culinary seasonings, explaining that "People aren't familiar with what to do with seaweed, so we make it easy for them." I learned that Redmond is a bellwether in the state's seaweed farming efforts, actively



## ► If You Go to Gouldsboro

### Shopping

With numerous artisans' studios tucked along its byways, Gouldsboro is an ideal destination for shopping local. Looping around the perimeter of the peninsula, Route 186 leads to **Lee Fusion Art Glass** and **Maine Kiln Works**. **U.S. Bells' Watering Cove Studio** is just off 186, on Bay Point Road. **Dulse & Rugosa** is tucked into a small house on Route 1, just west of the junction with Route 186. **Bartlett Estate Winery** nestles in a wooded glen on Chicken Mill Pond Road, a short distance off Route 1 at the eastern edge of Gouldsboro near the Steuben town line. **Springtide Seaweed Farm** does not have a shop, but its culinary seasonings may be ordered from [springtideseaweed.com/products/seasoning-products](http://springtideseaweed.com/products/seasoning-products).

### Dining

At **Downeast Mexican Takeout**, a bright-red food shack just off Route 1 on Old Route 1, the owners enhance their authentic Michoacán dishes with ingredients they import from Mexico. **The Pickled Wrinkle** draws both locals and visitors for good pub grub and perhaps some pickled wrinkles (the large, carnivorous sea snails, or whelks, often found in lobster traps), and an order of wild dulse chips.

### On the Water

The town of Gouldsboro encompasses about a dozen small villages, including Prospect Harbor, Birch Harbor, Bunkers Harbor, Wonsqueak Harbor, and Corea. Unlike Winter Harbor, Gouldsboro's next-door neighbor, these small ports do not offer facilities or rental moorings for yachts. But, says Harbormaster Dana Rice, "If you're looking for places to just anchor and enjoy the scenery, it's great."

### Extra Fun

If you're in Gouldsboro on a Sunday afternoon in July or August, don't miss **Linwood's Jam**, on Route 1 near the Gouldsboro-Sullivan town line. Old-time rock-and-roll, blues, and country performers take the stage for lively open mic sessions, and there are free red-snapper hot dogs and popcorn (donations accepted). Look for the pick-up truck on the roof of a small building next to a Ferris wheel.

sharing her experience. "There's so much potential for us to produce seaweed here," she declared. It's a winter crop, she noted, grown when other ocean-related businesses are quiet, and yields a harvest in the first season. The varieties she grows include alaria, dulse, and sugar and skinny kelp.

At the peninsula's southeastern tip, we came to U.S. Bells and Watering Cove Studio, where Dick Fisher has created beautiful bronze bells and wind chimes since the 1970s. Fisher welcomed us into his foundry and explained the multiple steps in the sand-casting process. "I like the bells' interaction with wind and nature," he observed. "They aren't just static sculpture." Fisher's inviting shop also showcases his wife's quilts, son's fine woodworking, and daughter-in-law's wood-fired pottery.

Returning to Route 1, we turned

onto Old Route 1 and parked outside Downeast Mexican Takeout, whose owners hail from the Mexican state of Michoacán. Lucky to have scored one of three tables inside, we devoured a hearty burrito and walking taco before continuing to Bartlett Estate Winery.

Established by Bob and Kathe Bartlett in 1983, it's Maine's oldest winery. Bob explained that the region's short growing season thwarted their original attempts to cultivate grapes. "But we wanted to support Maine agriculture, so we turned to blueberries, pears, and apples."

We tasted six wines and found them flavorful and pleasingly dry. Before taking a final sip of Wild Blueberry Wine-makers Reserve, I raised my glass to the artisans of Gouldsboro. ★

*Contributing Editor Mimi Bigelow Steadman lives on the Damariscotta River in Edgecomb.*

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