



ALLAGASH BREWING

Tiger Hill and the Northwest River

## Tiger Hill Community Forest Expanded

WE RECENTLY CONSERVED 22 ACRES OF LAND NEXT TO TIGER Hill Community Forest! This conservation acquisition protects critical wetlands and important upland forest associated with the Northwest River, Sebago Lake's second largest tributary. Additionally, the land supports rare natural communities like a leatherleaf fen, and habitat for critically threatened species like the northern long-eared bat and small-whorled pogonia, a member of the orchid family.

The land belonged to the family of John Douglass for over 100 years. John Douglass' granddaughters, Gloria Eldridge, Linda Deering and her husband, George, and Laurel Smith, didn't want to see the land developed, and decided to sell it to the Trust.

The Douglass family long allowed public access on the land, including an informal hand-carry boat launch. The family wanted others to have access to the river so they can enjoy the unique and beautiful waterway for years to come.

Dana Deering, John Douglass' great grandson, worked with LELET for over a year to see his family's land conserved. "I am thrilled to know that the land we always called the Winn Meadow and which my grandmother gave to me, is now conserved," he said. "I have wanted to make sure that significant wetland would be preserved and protected and now I know that it is in good hands going forward."

As soon as conditions allow we will get to work constructing a small parking area off of Folly Road that will serve as the primary access point for the Community Forest. We will also formalize a hand-carry boat launch on the newly conserved property to provide better access for kayakers and canoeists to the Northwest River. We will *finally* get to celebrate the conservation of the whole Community Forest this summer with some paddles on the Northwest River, volunteer trail work opportunities, and walks to explore the cultural history of the area.

Funding for the expansion of Tiger Hill Community Forest was provided by the Maine Natural Resources Conservation Program, Casco Bay Estuary Partnership, Portland Water District, the Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund, Sebago Clean Waters, The Robert and Dorothy Goldberg Charitable Foundation and many other generous families and individuals.



LOON ECHO  
LAND TRUST









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## NOTES FROM THE TRAIL

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A YEAR AGO WE WERE SAILING ALONG INTO SPRING WITH all systems go. By the end of March, we had entered stormy seas and uncharted waters. Under very difficult circumstances in April, we were asked to close back country access to protect first responders. As the days grew longer the numbers of visitors grew to October levels and the tender spring trails were wondering what had hit them. Each following month had something from the “never seen before” category—both good and bad.

As a staff unable to meet in person, daily meetings by other means were taking place to react to problems or try to get ahead of challenges we saw coming. We certainly struggled to juggle everything that was happening in real time. We did our best to greet the thousands of visitors seeking time outside on LELT trails to clear and detailed information, and encouraged them to be part of the solution.

Despite the many challenges, the summer of 2020 brought construction of new trails at Peabody-Fitch Woods. Our first opportunity to build an accessible walking trail exceeded expectations and the new hiking trail to the granite quarries makes for a first-rate excursion. The end result is a new standard for LELT and we are anxious to officially welcome visitors at our grand opening in August 2021.

As summer turned to fall, we turned our attention to the recently conserved Tiger Hill Community Forest and wrapping our brain around the scale of the property. It is perhaps our wildest place, yet there is cultural evidence to remind us of the community that thrived there 150 years ago. It will be a great story to unpack with you this summer.

The biggest impact of 2020 was not to trails or structures or staff, but to our communities. When LELT was formed in 1987 to protect land for current and future generations, we were confident of the many public benefits. But we never could have anticipated the past year. In 2020, Loon Echo lands became a place to escape to... to heal. It was incredible to hear laughter, to see big families out picking berries or going for a paddle. We heard from so many folks that our conservation work “saved their summers.”

Thank you to all that sustain LELT, because it truly is community sustaining work.

Happy Trails,



Jon Evans, LELT Stewardship Manager



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## MEMORIAL

ANDREW NORKIN

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THE TRAILS LOST ONE OF THEIR GREATEST CHAMPIONS EARLIER this year when Andrew Norkin of Denmark passed away. Andrew worked as the Director of Trails at the Appalachian Mountain Club, and was our main contact at there for two decades. He was a great friend and mentor to Jon (LELT Stewardship Manager) and to countless stewards of trails everywhere.

Andrew was a longtime supporter of LELT, participating in the Trek many times, and conserving his land with a conservation easement held by LELT. He knew how special and ecologically important his family’s land on the west side of Pleasant Mountain is. Andrew’s final project for LELT was to lay out the route for the new Quarry trail loop at Peabody-Fitch Woods in the Summer of 2020.

Andrew’s legacy lives on in all the trails he planned & built, in all the stewards he taught & mentored, and in the forever protection of his own family’s land. He is sorely missed. May we all be so lucky as to leave a legacy like his.



Over \$10,000 raised to support LELT trails!

2020 LOON ECHO LAND TRUST

TREK FOR THE TRAILS

PRESENTED BY Norway Savings Bank

Thank You Trekkers!





JERRY MONKMAN / ECOPHOTOGRAPHY.COM

*The Crooked River as it runs through Otisfield and Harrison.*

## USDA GRANT AWARDED TO SEBAGO CLEAN WATERS A MILESTONE IN LAKE REGION CONSERVATION AND PROTECTION EFFORTS

LAST SUMMER, SEBAGO CLEAN WATERS (SCW)—A NINE-member coalition that includes LETT—applied for an \$8-million grant from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). In September 2020, we received the great news that SCW was awarded the grant!

The grant, which was the second largest of ten grants awarded nation-wide through the USDA NRCS Regional Conservation Partnership Program, will allow partners to leverage an additional \$10.5 million from public and private sources. This substantial influx of funds will increase the pace of conservation and facilitate other important water quality improvements in the Sebago Lake watershed.

The bulk of the funding, which will be distributed over five years, will go toward obtaining conservation easements on high-priority lands that drain to Sebago Lake, with the goal of conserving 10,000 acres of critical forestland. This work will be done by LETT and Western Foothills Land Trust in close collaboration with the grant's lead partner, Portland Water District, and other SCW partner organizations. In addition, thanks to the grant, SCW partner Lakes Environmental Association will be able to expand their efforts to control invasive milfoil in Sebago Lake and upgrade stream crossings to reduce flooding, minimize erosion, and improve fish passage.

Sebago Lake is known for its extremely clear and clean water. One of the reasons it is so clean is because the Sebago Lake watershed is 84% forested and forests filter water naturally. The watershed, which is all the land that drains to Sebago Lake, includes more than a dozen towns



and spans 234,000 acres. This land is largely privately owned and therefore at risk of development, which can contribute to water quality decline. This is why we're thrilled that, in conjunction with our SCW partners, we can now make greater strides toward keeping the watershed healthy.

The conservation work LETT can accomplish as a result of this grant is a win for landowners and residents in the Lake Region, visitors to the area, and the 200,000 water users in Greater Portland who rely on this pristine natural resource. If you would like to find out more about land conservation opportunities in the Sebago Lake watershed, please contact Matt Markot at [execdir@lelt.org](mailto:execdir@lelt.org). Learn more about the work of SCW and sign up for their e-news at [sebagocleanwaters.org](http://sebagocleanwaters.org).



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## Environmental Education Grants Awarded



EVERY YEAR, SCHOOLS AND LIBRARIES IN LOON ECHO'S service area of Denmark, Bridgton, Harrison, Naples, Casco, Raymond and Sebago are invited to submit grant applications to Loon Echo for environmental programs. These awards help youth in the Lake Region learn about the environment and the importance of protecting our region's land and natural resources.

The 2021 LELT environmental education grants were awarded to:

- Raymond Village Library - To host a program an art & science program about Maine wildlife;
- Sebago Elementary School - To purchase a game camera to enhance student discovery and learning about local wildlife and their behavior;
- Casco Public Library - To create Story Walks at Mayberry Hill Preserve and Hacker's Hill.

LELT's Environmental Educational Grants are made possible thanks to a generous bequest by Helen Allen. Helen owned a beautiful hilltop farm on Quaker Ridge in Casco looking out to the western foothills and Mt. Washington. She was one of the first individuals to grant Loon Echo a conservation easement on her 60-acre property so that it would be protected in perpetuity. After her death at the age of 94, Helen Allen's bequest to Loon Echo allowed LELT to create an endowed environmental education fund to support environmental programs & initiatives in local schools and libraries. If you would like to support LELT's education endowment, please contact Matt at [execdir@lelt.org](mailto:execdir@lelt.org) or call 207-647-4352.

LOON ECHO LAND TRUST (LELT) IS A DONOR SUPPORTED, non-profit organization that works to protect the natural resources and character of the northern Sebago lake region for current and future generations. An accredited Land Trust, Loon Echo protects over 8,500 acres of land and manages over 32 miles of trails in the towns of Bridgton, Casco, Denmark, Harrison, Naples, Raymond and Sebago. These important open spaces protect the region's water resources and wildlife habitat, support the local economy, maintain the rural character of our region and provide public access to outdoor recreation.

### Stay connected with Loon Echo!

- Like Loon Echo Land Trust on Facebook
- Follow @loonecholandtrust on Instagram
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- Sign up for our monthly E-News on our website, [www.lelt.org](http://www.lelt.org)



### STAY UP-TO DATE WITH ALL THINGS LOON ECHO



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- Project updates
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- Information on LELT lands & trails
- Photos and videos
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