



A Falmouth Land Trust newsletter to the community **Fall 2021**

GRAND OPENING OF THE UNDERWOOD SPRINGS FOREST PRESERVE

The Falmouth Land Trust purchased the Underwood Springs Forest Preserve in November of 2020 after completing its most ambitious fundraising effort to date. The project was supported by the Maine Natural Resource Conservation Program, The Davis Conservation Foundation, the Casco Bay Estuary Program, and over 300 private donors. Thanks to the efforts of so many community members, this 52-acre property is now protected in perpetuity.

To celebrate the success of the Underwood Springs Forest project, the Falmouth Land Trust held two ribbon cutting ceremonies this June. The ceremonies opened with formal remarks from FLT staff, Board members, and Town Council members and ended with guided nature walks of the new trail system. After over a year of fundraising, it was truly special to be able to gather and celebrate the completed project with our community. Thank you to everyone who supported this project and came out to help us celebrate!



DOWN ON THE FARM: NEWS FROM HURRICANE VALLEY

2021 has been an exciting year for Cultivating Community at FLT's Hurricane Valley Farm. Programming serves new American farmers and gardeners at the farm. The spring started with the successful drilling of a new well that has proven to deliver more than enough water to irrigate 5 acres of land for vegetable production and also provide water to begin raising goats and sheep. The Falmouth Land Trust raised funds to make some of the needed building repairs on the Farm. However, more funds will be needed to repair the barn roof.



This growing season saw 32 community garden plots for families growing food for themselves and their neighbors. In addition, two farmers, Christine Pompeo and John Yanga, are growing veggies to sell at the Portland farmers' market. If you'd like to support them, you can find them at Deering Oaks Park Farmers' Market on Wednesdays and Saturdays from 7am-1 pm. Cultivating Community is also wrapping up a second season raising meat birds and is going into a fourth winter with 6 thriving beehives. Everyone is grateful for the relatively good weather this season and, as the fall settles in, looks forward to an even better year in 2022!

BOARD OF TRUSTEES 2021

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- Alexandra Perry
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- Mila Plavsic
Executive Director

Note From The FLT Board President

It has been an extraordinary year for the Falmouth Land Trust in the most literal sense of the word. The successful completion of our acquisition of Underwood Springs Forest was a wonderful sign of our ability to accomplish great things with the help of all of you in our community. At the same time it marked a major transition for the Trust as Jennifer Grimm stepped down as our Executive Director and we began the search for a new ED to guide the organization. And now we're delighted to welcome Mila Plavsic as our new Executive Director to help carry the organization forward. While the Trust is about to embark on a celebration of its 40th year of operation, for most of that time it has been run as an all-volunteer organization, supported by the work of its Board. It wasn't until the last decade that FLT hired its first Executive Director, Analiese Larson, a former Board member. Following that, Jenny's tenure with the Trust was one of significant organizational growth and we thank her for all of her efforts.

Like Jenny, Mila has a strong academic and professional background in environmental and conservation science. Mila also served in the past as a Board member for many years. As Mila rejoins our organization, and with your support, we are poised for the next stage of growth as we build the Falmouth Land Trust into a truly self-sustaining organization; one that continues its mission of preserving open space, and supports a robust set of programming that connects each and every one of us to the surrounding land. This work is even more vital as we look ahead to meeting challenges such as climate change and development pressures. Please join me in welcoming Mila to the Trust, offering her and our organization your support for our vital and critical mission of conserving land from now until forever. We can't do it without you. - MICHAEL VANCE, PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES.

Upcoming Events!

Join a Maine Master Naturalist for a hike

Saturday Oct 23rd at 10:00

Mindfulness walk at Morrill-Stillings Farm for Mental Health Awareness Month.

Friday, Nov. 26th at 1:00

Guided walk at McCrann/McLaughlin Preserves for Green Friday.

Saturday, Dec. 18th at 1:00

Guided walk at Suckfish Brook off Upland Way

To sign up email
aperry@falmouthlandtrust.org

Ways of Giving to Falmouth Land Trust

Annual Gifts - Please consider a yearly gift by donating online at www.falmouthlandtrust.org or by mailing your check to Falmouth Land Trust, Attn: Development, P.O. Box 6172, Falmouth, Maine 04105.

Monthly Giving - Please consider making a monthly gift, which allows for the convenience of being a monthly donor while providing ongoing support and stability for the work of FLT. Your gift will automatically be charged monthly to your credit card. You are able to adjust your giving level or cancel your commitment at any time.

Gifts of Securities - You may wish to consider the benefits of making a gift of securities. Some donors find that a gift of this type can provide significant advantages.

Matching-Gifts - Many local corporations sponsor matching-gift programs by which an employee's charitable donation is matched with a contribution by the corporation. In this way, donors can easily leverage the value of their contribution; in some cases, the matching contribution is as high as three to one.

YES! I/we wish to support land preservation in Falmouth and would like to give a tax deductible gift of:

Supporter: \$25.00 \$50.00 \$100 \$250 \$500 Other \$ _____

Name(s) _____ Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____

Email _____

Credit Card Payment (Please circle one) Visa / MasterCard

Card-holder's name: _____

Card# _____ CW# _____ Exp. Date _____

My check, payable to Falmouth Land Trust, is enclosed.

I wish to provide a recurring gift to the Falmouth Land Trust.

Please charge my credit card in the following amount with the following frequency:

\$ _____ Amount of recurring charge (please provide credit card info above)

Monthly Quarterly Semiannually Annually

You may also contribute online at www.falmouthlandtrust.org



Greetings From The New Executive Director

"Those who dwell among the beauties and mysteries of the earth are never alone or weary of life." Rachel Carson's observation in *The Sense of Wonder* still holds true today. It comes as no surprise that Carson spent as much time as she could in Maine, where nature is easy to find and hard to ignore. I am pleased to be re-joining the Falmouth Land Trust at a time when so many of us have been reminded of how fortunate we are to be able to easily access green space and trails. During the pandemic, trail use has doubled in many parts of the country; FLT properties have certainly seen increased use, remaining open to the public throughout.

At the same time, people have been flocking to southern Maine from all over the country. We know that we can not take it for granted that our favorite trail connector over private land, or a much loved meadow view, will always be there. There is still much to be done to conserve additional land in Falmouth, connect more trails, and properly manage green space in perpetuity. The Falmouth Land Trust is a non-partisan, non-profit organization that is dedicated to protecting and adding to the 1500+ acres under its stewardship. As you can see from this newsletter, FLT has been busy. Jenny has left the Trust well-positioned for continued growth and professionalization and for that I thank her. In addition, the local community is at the core of everything we do, so I thank you for your continued support as this new chapter begins. I hope to see you at an upcoming guided trail hike, or simply out in the woods, enjoying "the beauties and mysteries of the earth." - MILA PLAVSIC, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Underwood Springs Forest Trails: Turning Vision Into Reality

After the campaign to purchase and forever protect Underwood Springs Forest was successfully concluded, FLT turned to carefully planning and implementing a trail system for the property. Alex Perry, FLT's stewardship coordinator, spearheaded efforts to improve access to USF. Many volunteers helped along the way so that the forest could be safely opened to the public. For Rick Scala, FLT trustee and longtime volunteer trail builder, this was a project that was close to his heart and his neighborhood. He kindly agreed to answer a few questions about his experience helping to build the new USF trail system.

How did you first get involved in the land trust? Over 20 years ago, I asked a trustee from the Falmouth Conservation Trust, as it was called then, how to get involved. I joined the board soon thereafter and have been a FLT trustee ever since.

What motivated you to want to help put trails in at USF? I had been walking in the woods there since we moved to Falmouth in 1985 and always dreamed that the area could be protected. It's a beautiful mixed forest, cold water brook ecosystem, and there are very few large acre parcels left in that part of town. I am happy that what I have enjoyed for so long can now be shared with the wider community.

What's involved in putting trails into a newly conserved property? The area wasn't heavily used, but there was a faint trail on part of the property where neighbors occasionally walked dogs. Other parts of the property had no trails, so it was a blank slate. With the help of many volunteers we cut new trails, hardened them, bridged them when necessary, blazed them, built a trailhead and kiosk, and welcomed people to the new property.

What were the biggest challenges? When The Falmouth Land Trust decided to pursue the purchase of Underwood Springs Forest, we knew that it would be a formidable task. At first we were quite optimistic and were on track to meet our goal of \$830,000. When the pandemic hit, a major contributor unexpectedly dropped out and we were about \$250,000 short with a looming deadline. The Trust had to decide whether to continue fundraising or to thank our supporters and return their donations. Fortunately we made the correct choice.

What was most memorable about your experience? I was touched and gratified by how the neighborhood and the whole town came together to save the project.

What ongoing needs do you predict USF will have going forward? We will need to monitor the trails and perhaps put in more bridging and other improvements as issues come up. We hope to add a new trail to the system and create a new trailhead in the near future. Stay tuned.

What do you like about volunteering with the Falmouth Land Trust? I walk someplace every day, and I appreciate that when I hike at other local land trust properties, they are safe, well marked, and well kept. It's only fair to keep the FLT trails in good condition when residents and visitors use our trails.

Note: If Rick has inspired you to help us build trails, please know that no special training is required! We only ask that volunteers don't initiate trail building efforts without approval from the land trust. To add your name to our list of trail volunteers, simply email aperry@falmouthlandtrust.org.



GIRL SCOUTS TAKE ACTION

This spring, Girl Scout Troop 2331 designed signs to encourage trail users to pick up after their dogs. The signs inform visitors of the environmental impacts of dog waste and ask them to think of the local ecosystems. The troop teamed up with the Falmouth Land Trust and the Town of Falmouth to install signs throughout town.



Be on the lookout as signs are installed on land trust and town properties throughout Falmouth!

Falmouth Land Trust is grateful to local businesses for lending their support to keep Falmouth **green and healthy!**

Conservationist Sponsors:



Stewardship Sponsors:



Please join us for upcoming guided hikes:
falmouthlandtrust.org/events

The mission of the Falmouth Land Trust is to preserve and care for natural and agricultural lands in perpetuity, to enhance habitat for plants and wildlife, to advance the quality of life for all in our community, and to educate the public on the history and stewardship of protected lands.

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CONSERVING LAND IN OUR COMMUNITY
 FROM 1981 TIL FOREVER



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