PUBLIC NOTICE

US Army Corps
of Engineers ®
New England District
696 Virginia Road
Concord, MA 01742-2751

Comment Period Begins: September 29, 2015
Comment Period Ends: October 29, 2015
File Number: NAE-2005-1143
In Reply Refer To: Ruth M. Ladd
Phone: (978) 318-8818
E-mail: ruth.m.ladd@usace.army.mil

30 DAY NOTICE

The District Engineer is soliciting comments on the 19 projects which have applied for 2015 funding through Maine's In Lieu Fee ("ILF") program, the Maine Natural Resources Conservation Program ("MNRCP"). The sponsor for the program is the Maine Department of Environmental Protection. The program serves as an alternative form of compensation for impacts to aquatic resources authorized by the New England District Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) and/or the State of Maine Department of Environmental Protection. These projects were submitted in response to a Request for Proposals ("RFP") issued in June 2015.

The RFP includes the criteria used to evaluate projects, the information required for a proposal, and other related information. The RFP and additional information can be found at the MNRCP website: http://mnrcp.org/

Any of the projects which involve restoration, enhancement, and/or creation and will require Corps, state, or local permits will be applying individually, not through this public notice.

Attached are the following:

- Summary sheet of projects and the bioregion in which they are located;
- Funds available and the aquatic resource types which have been authorized to be impacted; and
- Project descriptions and locus maps for the projects.

The decision whether to approve funding for projects will be based on an evaluation of each proposed activity and how and where it will compensate for aquatic resources lost through authorizations issued under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act and/or Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act. The decision will reflect the national concern for no net loss of aquatic resources. The benefit which may reasonably accrue from each proposal must be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments and/or its appropriateness considering the ecological needs of the bioregion in which it is located.

The Corps of Engineers is soliciting comments from the public; Federal, state, and local agencies and officials; Indian Tribes; and other interested parties in order to determine the most appropriate projects to receive funding from the MNRCP. Any comments received will be considered by the Interagency Review Committee, including the Corps of Engineers, and will be considered in the evaluation of the projects and the determination of which will receive funding. To make this decision, comments are used to assess impacts on endangered species, historic properties, water quality, general environmental effects, and the other public interest factors. Comments are used in the preparation of an Environmental Assessment and/or an Environmental Impact Statement pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act. Comments are also used to determine the need for a public hearing and to determine the overall public interest of the proposed activity.

ESSENTIAL FISH HABITAT

The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, as amended by the Sustainable Fisheries Act of 1996 (Public Law 104-267), requires all federal agencies to consult with the National Marine Fisheries Service on all actions, or proposed actions, permitted, funded, or undertaken by the agency, that may adversely affect Essential Fish Habitat ("EFH").

The District Engineer has made a preliminary determination that the site-specific adverse effect will not be substantial. Further consultation with the National Marine Fisheries Service regarding EFH conservation recommendations is being conducted and will be concluded prior to the final decision.

SECTION 106 COORDINATION

Based on his initial review, the District Engineer has determined that the proposed projects may affect properties in, or eligible for listing in, the National Register of Historic Places. Additional review and consultation to fulfil requirements under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, will be ongoing as part of the proposal review process.

ENDANGERED SPECIES CONSULTATION

The New England District, Army Corps of Engineers, has reviewed the list of species protected under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended, which might occur at the project sites. It is our preliminary determination that the proposed activity for which funding is being sought is designed, situated or will be operated/used in such a manner that it is not likely to adversely affect any federally listed endangered or threatened species or their designated critical habitat. By this Public Notice, we are requesting that the appropriate federal Agency concur with our determination.

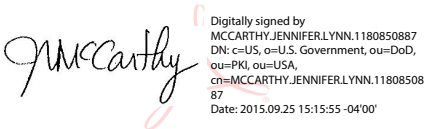
The State of Maine has an approved **Coastal Zone Management Program**. Although Coastal Zone Management consistency will be required for some of the individual proposals, by this public notice we are requesting the state provide any applicable comments at this time.

In order to properly evaluate the proposal, we are seeking public comment. Anyone wishing to comment is encouraged to do so. **Comments should be submitted in writing by the above date.** If you have any questions, please contact Ruth M. Ladd at (978) 318-8818, (800) 343-4789 or (800) 362-4367, if calling from within Massachusetts, or at the email address noted above.

Any person may request, in writing, within the comment period specified in this notice, that a public hearing be held to consider the application. Requests for a public hearing shall specifically state the reasons for holding a public hearing. The Corps holds public hearings for the purpose of obtaining public comments when that is the best means for understanding a wide variety of concerns from a diverse segment of the public.

The initial determinations made herein will be reviewed in light of facts submitted in response to this notice. All comments will be considered a matter of public record.

THIS NOTICE IS NOT AN AUTHORIZATION TO DO ANY WORK.



Jennifer L. McCarthy
Chief, Regulatory Division

If you would prefer not to continue receiving Public Notices, please contact Ms. Tina Chaisson at (978) 318-8058 or e-mail her at bettina.m.chaisson@usace.army.mil. You may also check here ( ) and return this portion of the Public Notice to: Bettina Chaisson, Regulatory Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, 696 Virginia Road, Concord, MA 01742-2751.

NAME: _____
ADDRESS: _____

MNRCP Service Area (Region)	Project Sponsor	Project Name	Town	Acres/ Linear Feet	Compensation Type	MNRCP Funds Requested
Central Interior & Midcoast	Maine Coast Heritage Trust	Atkins Bay Wetlands Protection	Phippsburg	20 acres	Preservation	$154,900
Central Interior & Midcoast	Sebasticook Regional Land Trust	Barrow's Point	Newport	22 acres	Preservation (easement)	$102,500
Central Interior & Midcoast	The Nature Conservancy	Basin Preserve Wetland Restoration	Phippsburg	7 acres	Restoration and rehabilitation	$17,950
Central Interior & Midcoast	Sebasticook Regional Land Trust	Bog Brook	Unity	150 acres	Restoration, rehabilitation, and preservation	$145,000
Central Interior & Midcoast	Boothbay Region Water District	Boothbay Region Source Water Protection	Boothbay	68 acres	Rehabilitation and preservation	$85,630
Central Interior & Midcoast	Maine Coast Heritage Trust	Branch Bog Wetlands Protection	Waldoboro	80 acres	Preservation	$57,850
Central Interior & Midcoast	Orono Land Trust	Caribou Bog - Birmingham	Old Town	189 acres	Preservation	$185,000
Central Interior & Midcoast	Kennebec Estuary Land Trust	Little River Habitat Restoration	Georgetown	2,000 linear feet/13.2 acres	Restoration/ rehabilitation	$65,500
Central Interior & Midcoast	Maine Coast Heritage Trust	Meadow Brook Wetlands Protection	Saint George	23 acres	Preservation	$146,500
Central Interior & Midcoast	Sebasticook Regional Land Trust	Outlet Stream Restoration/Masse Dam	East Vassalboro	2165 linear feet/6 acres	Restoration/ rehabilitation	$148,300
Central Interior & Midcoast	Sheepscot Wellspring Land Alliance	Sheepscot Headwaters Habitat Project	Liberty	290 acres	Preservation	$250,000
Southern Maine	Kittery Land Trust	Brave Boat Headwaters - Gavin	Kittery	12 acres	Restoration, rehabilitation, and preservation	$90,000
Southern Maine	Western Foothills Land Trust	Crooked River Watershed - Green	Otisfield	260 acres	Rehabilitation and preservation	$190,000
Southern Maine	York Land Trust	Driscoll Wetlands Project	York	52 acres	Preservation	$82,750

Southern Maine	Saco Valley Land Trust	Little River Conservation Bridge - Chretien	Biddeford	50 acres	Preservation	$92,700
Southern Maine	Great Works Regional Land Trust	Ogunquit Headwaters Wetlands	South Berwick	52 acres	Preservation	$128,400
Southern Maine	Saco Valley Land Trust	Smithfield Meadows - Gelardi	Biddeford	33 acres	Restoration, rehabilitation, and preservation	$317,700
Southern Maine	Great Works Regional Land Trust	Tatnic Turtle Crossing	Wells	17 acres	Restoration and preservation	$164,045
Southern Maine	Three Rivers Land Trust	Walnut Hill-Sousa B Wetland Restoration	Alfred	1.75 acres	Rehabilitation	$26,347

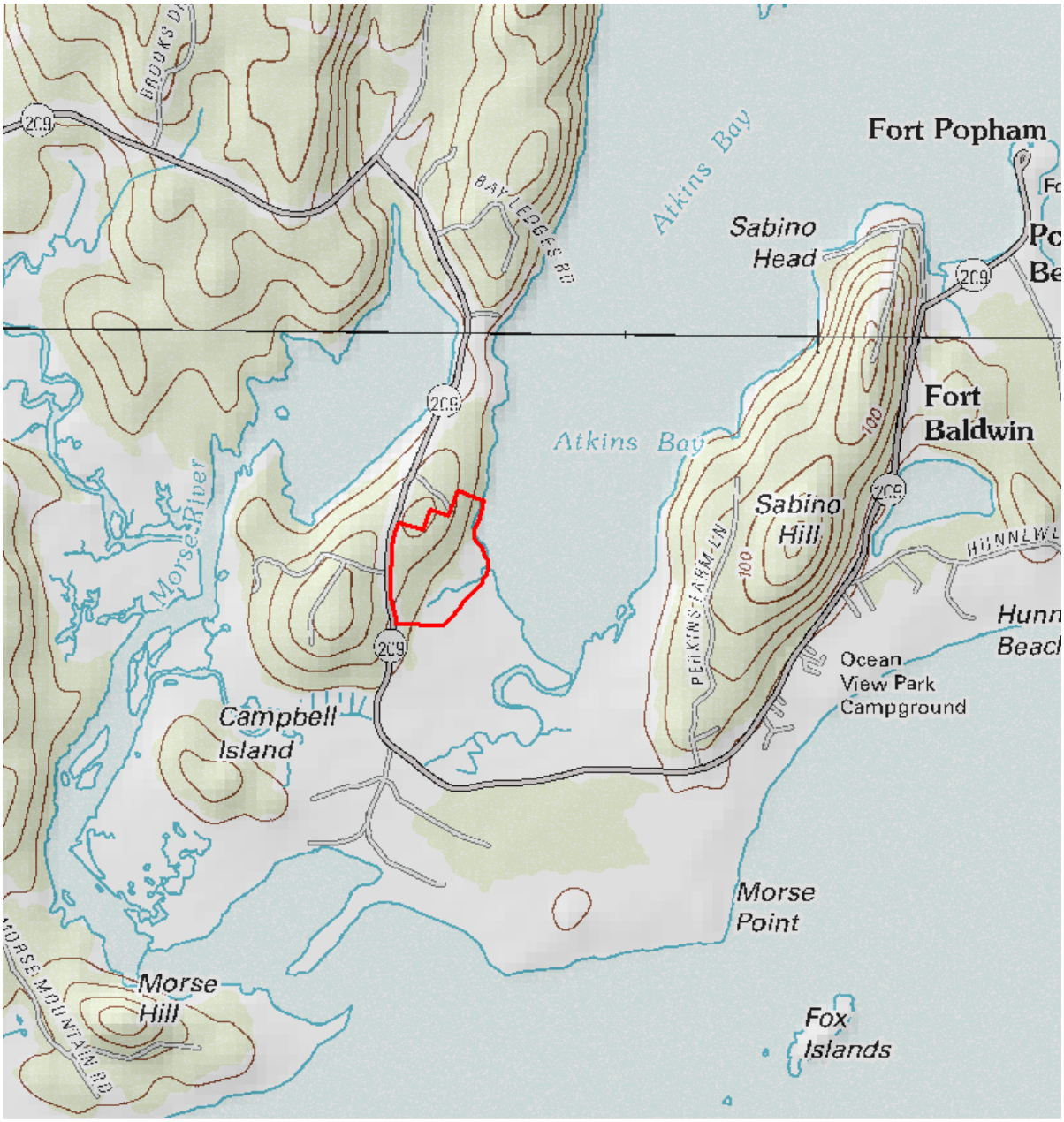
Maine Natural Resource Conservation Program
Funds Available

The table below lists the funds available for each MNRCP biophysical region as of September 18, 2015. Available funds may differ at the time of the awards. Also shown are the natural resources that have been prioritized for restoration, enhancement, preservation, and/or creation within each region.

MNRCP Region	**Amount**	**Priority Resource Type**
Aroostook Hills & Lowlands	$153,727	Freshwater wetland Forested; Freshwater wetland Scrub-Shrub; Freshwater wetland Unconsolidated Bottom
Central & Eastern Lowlands	$404,941	Freshwater wetland Emergent; Vernal pool critical terrestrial habitat
Central & Western Mountains	$727,218	Freshwater wetland Emergent; Freshwater wetland Forested; Inland waterfowl & wading bird habitat; River/Stream; Vernal pool critical terrestrial habitat
Central Interior & Midcoast	$844,544	Coastal wetland Estuarine subtidal; Coastal wetland Marine subtidal; Freshwater wetland Emergent; River/Stream; Vernal pool; Vernal pool critical terrestrial habitat
Downeast Maine	$210,191	Coastal wetland Estuarine intertidal; Coastal wetland Marine intertidal; Coastal wetland Marine subtidal; Vernal pool critical terrestrial habitat
Northwest Maine	$0	
Southern Maine	$1,345,775	Coastal wetland Estuarine intertidal; Freshwater wetland Emergent; Freshwater wetland Unconsolidated Bottom; Lake, Littoral; River/Stream
Total Amount Available:	$3,686,396	

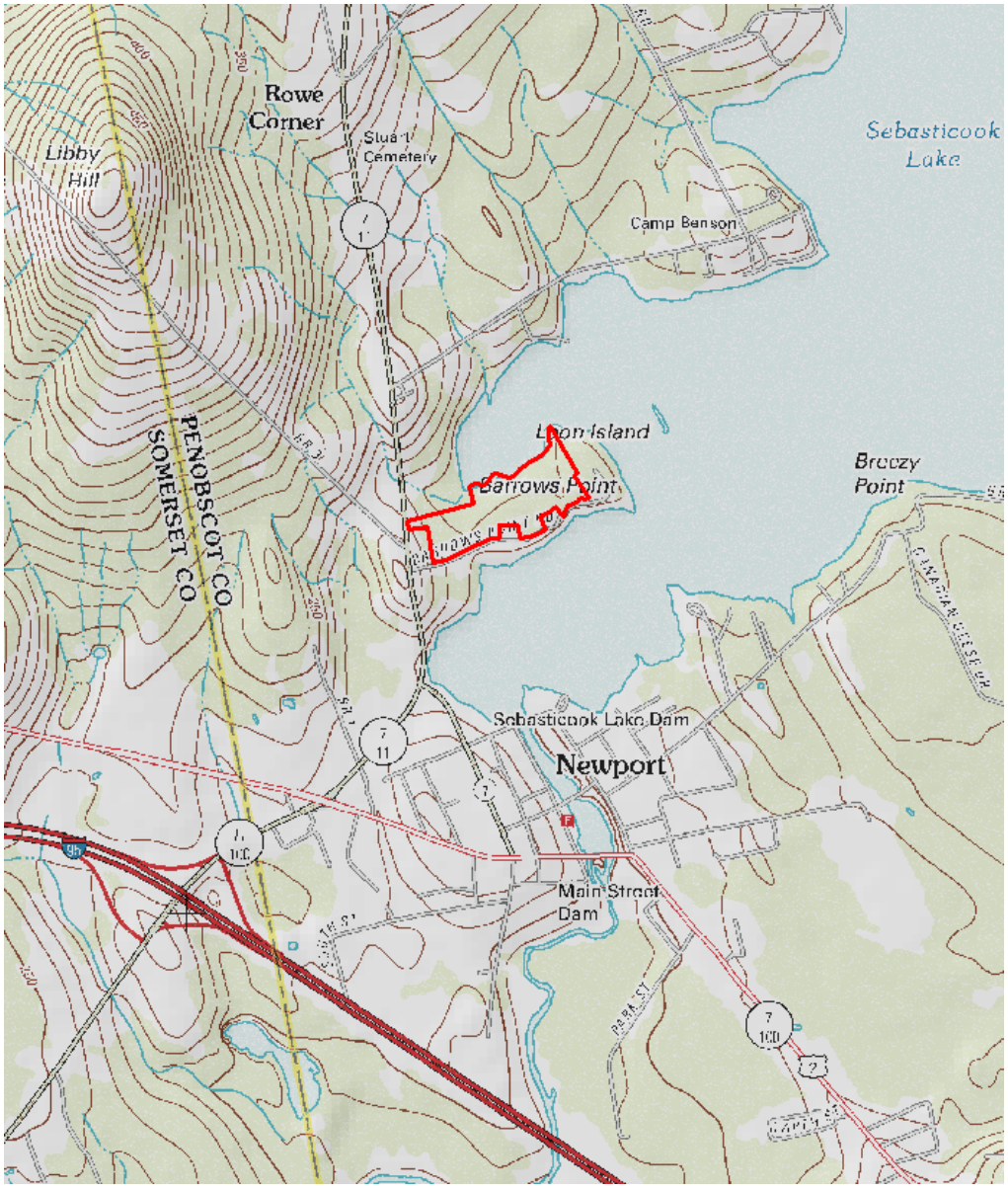
Atkins Bay Wetlands Protection
Phippsburg
Service Area: Central Interior & Midcoast

This project consists of a 20 acre fee purchase of the remaining forested uplands, freshwater wetland, and saltmarsh not already protected on Atkins Bay as part of Popham Beach State Park Bureau of Parks and Lands holdings. This project completes the conservation of the saltmarsh and adjacent uplands at the southern end of Atkins Bay across from the Popham Beach State Park entrance. The parcel to be acquired (Percy parcel) is within the Kennebec Estuary Focus Area of Statewide Ecological Significance, and Popham Beach Important Bird Area as designated by the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife and Maine Audubon. Acquisition of the Percy parcel will result in the fee protection of approximately 20 acres of estuarine, and palustrine wetland types and buffering upland forest. Specific resources to be permanently protected include salt-hay saltmarsh, a large vernal pool complex, and forested wetlands. This project directly addresses several of the MNRCP Priority Resource Types identified for the Central Interior and Midcoast Biophysical Region.



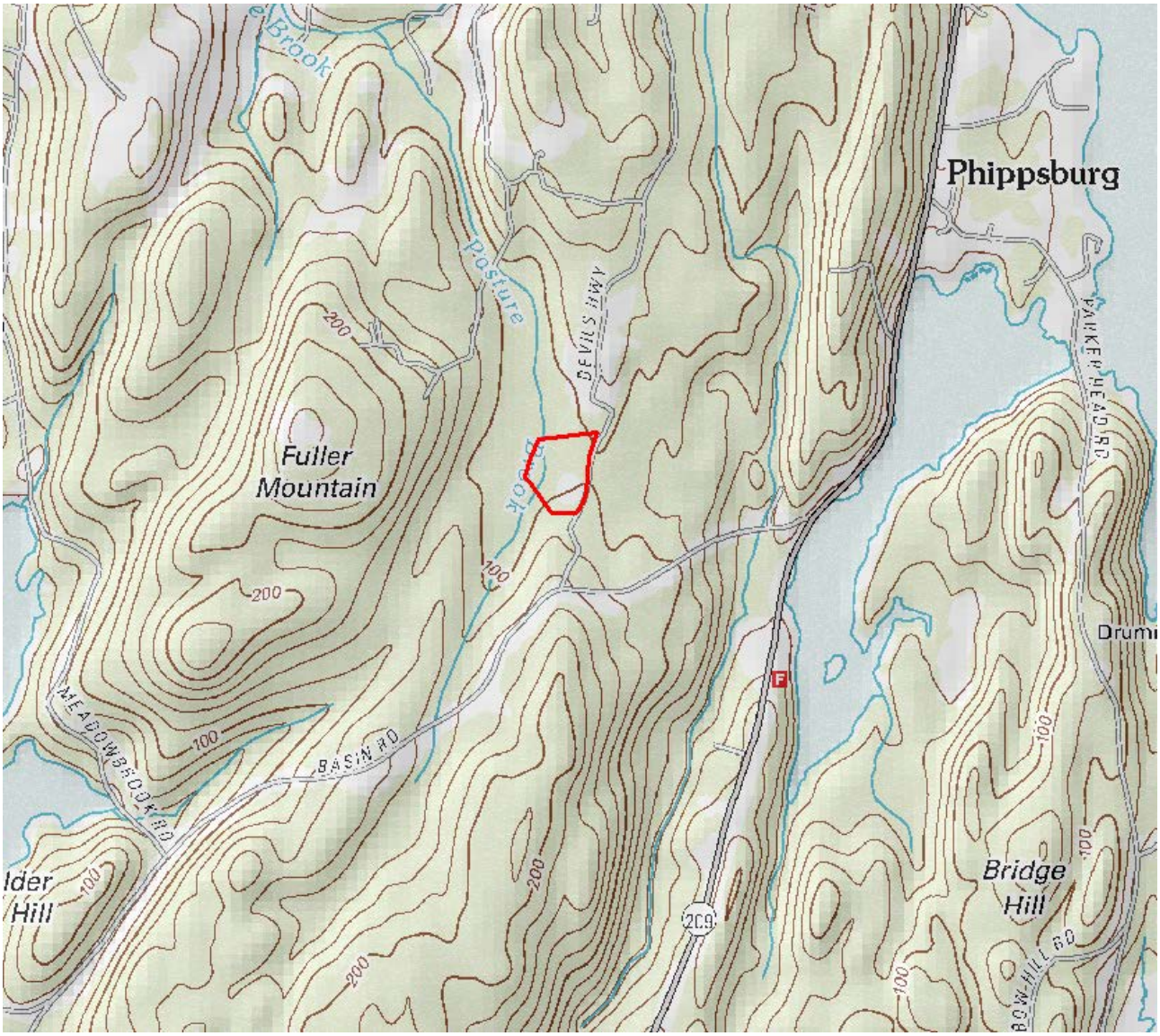
Barrow's Point
Newport
Service Area: Central Interior & Midcoast

This project involves the acquisition of a conservation easement over 22 acres on Barrow's Point on Sebasticook Lake. The easement will prevent subdivision of the land and improve an existing trail to reduce the impacts of vehicular and foot passage on the surrounding wetland acreage. The parcel contains approximately 1,000 feet of shore frontage and 2,000 feet of frontage on town and state roads. Along the subject property's lake frontage there is approximately 1.2 acres of emergent wetland and approximately one acre of forested wetland. Historically this lake has had high levels of phosphorus, significantly degrading the water quality and ecosystem. Today, local and state interests are working to reduce the phosphorus levels through annual lake level draw downs and enforcing lakeside restrictions. Currently the landowner has a subdivision plan to divide the property and construct housing, taking away from the water quality, ecosystem and scenery benefits provided by this property.



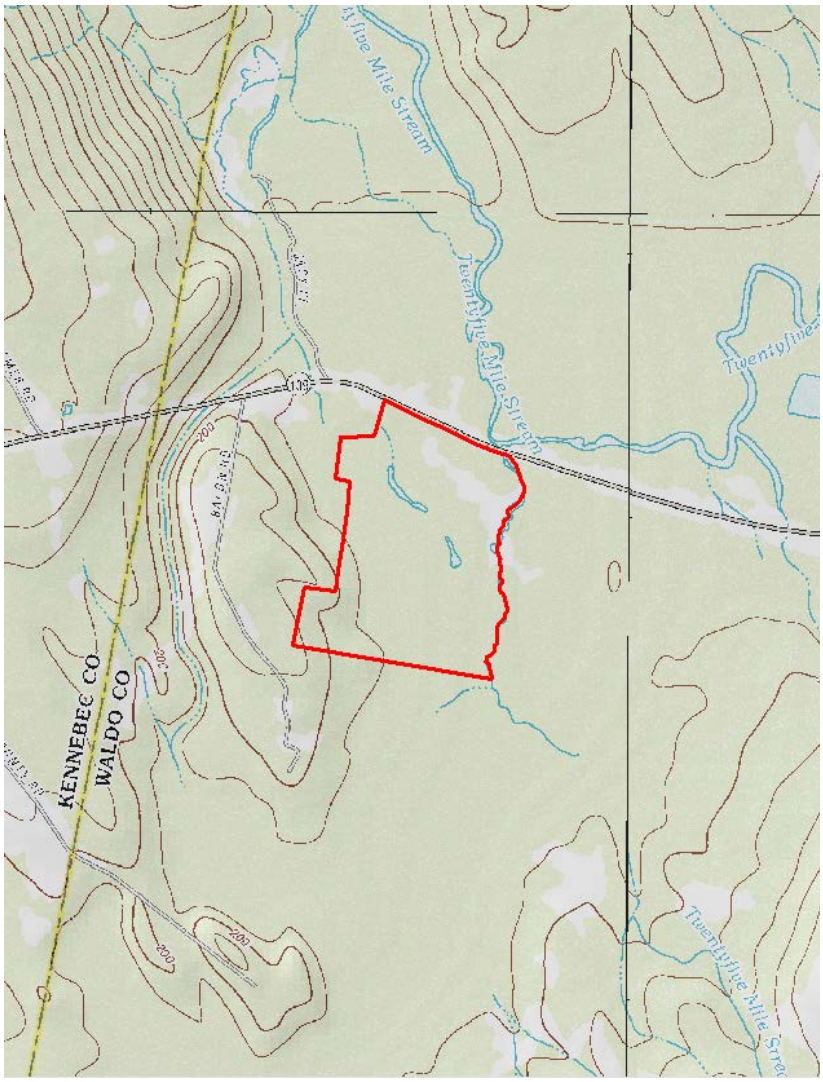
Basin Preserve Wetland Restoration
Phippsburg
Service Area: Central Interior & Midcoast

This project involves the restoration of an abandoned gravel pit excavated on property now owned by The Nature Conservancy. Gravel extraction below groundwater level resulted in four year-round pools; no attempts were made to restore the pit at the time of abandonment by the prior owner. The pit consists of barren soil around old roads, four ponds totaling approximately 1.1 acres, primarily old field vegetation, and stockpiled overburden of sand and gravel with limited organic matter. The pit is currently accessible to motorized vehicles, resulting in soil erosion and damage to the limited natural vegetation. The area will be restored by regrading and redistributing the stockpiled overburden to better match the existing topography and enhance the aquatic resources, revegetating the site to improve both habitat and water quality within the existing ponds, and using boulders available on-site to block access to motorized vehicles. One small stand of Japanese knotweed will also be eradicated.



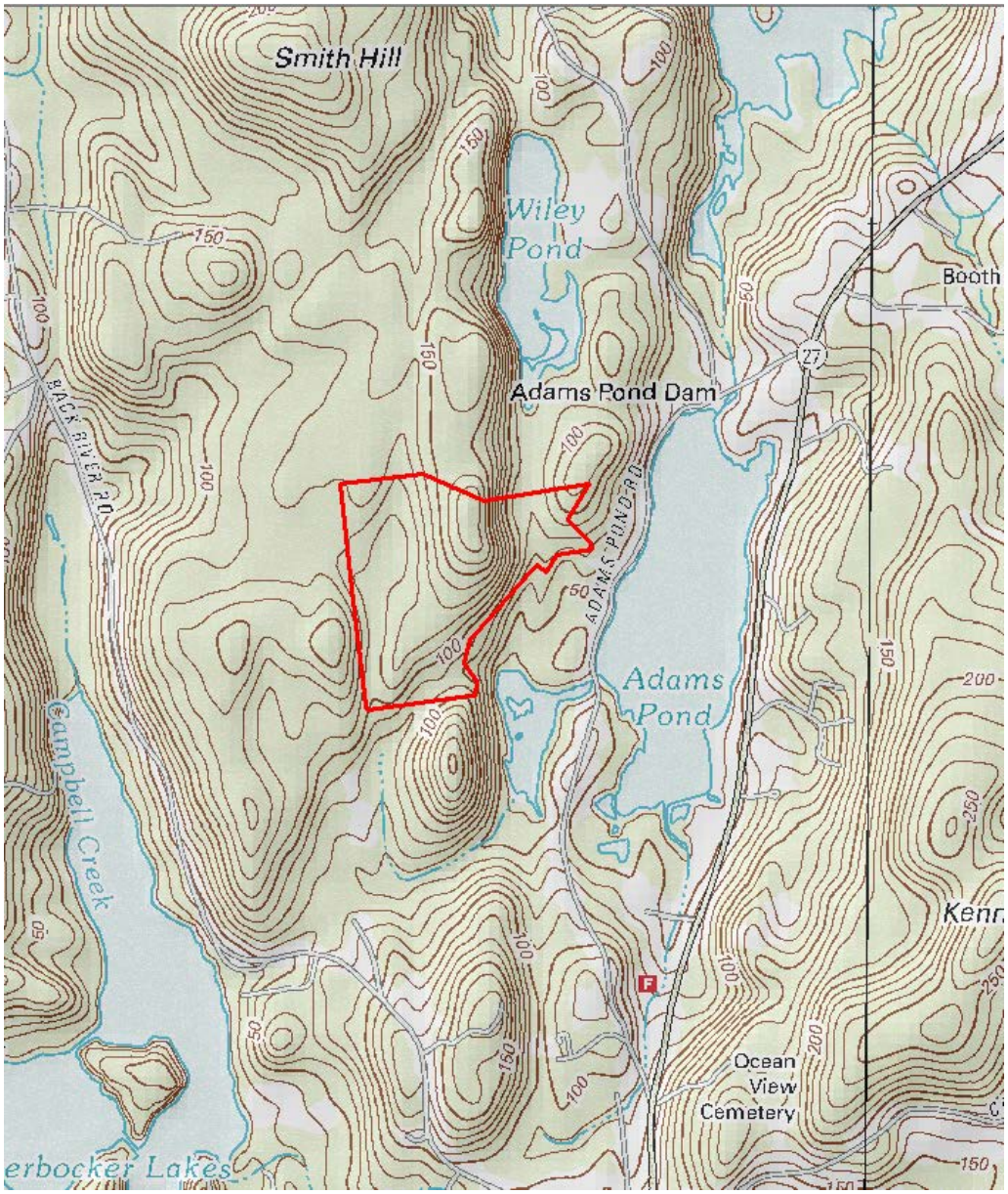
Bog Brook
Unity
Service Area: Central Interior & Midcoast

This project involves the purchase of 150 acres at Bog Brook, removal of an area of fill within a wetland, and the replanting of native wetland species. The property is bordered by Bog Brook to the east, Route 139 and the SRLT's Moulton's Mill Preserve to the north, and unfragmented wetlands and the SRLT's Fowler Bog Preserve to the south and west. It contains the northern portion of an extensive wetland system, Fowler Bog, which is a complex mapped by the Maine Natural Areas Program as an exemplary Unpatterned Fen Ecosystem. The area is within a large unfragmented block of approximately 2,250 acres and in the heart of the Unity Wetlands Beginning with Habitat Focus Area. The wetland that comprises the bulk of the property is intact with a high degree of ecological integrity. The main portion of the wetland system (located primarily east of the esker and woods road) is a mixture of native bog and fen wetland vegetation. The wetlands to the west of the esker are less acidic. These wetlands exhibit a high degree of micro-topographic diversity including seasonally ponded areas, ample dead and-down wood, snags and upland islands. Much of the property is moderate value inland wading waterfowl habitat. In addition, there is an area of old, stable fill that is roughly 10,000 SF in area and is approx. 8 feet deep at the center. The SRLT proposes to remove the fill down to a functional wetland elevation that will be seasonally but not perennially ponded and accommodate native forested wetland plantings.



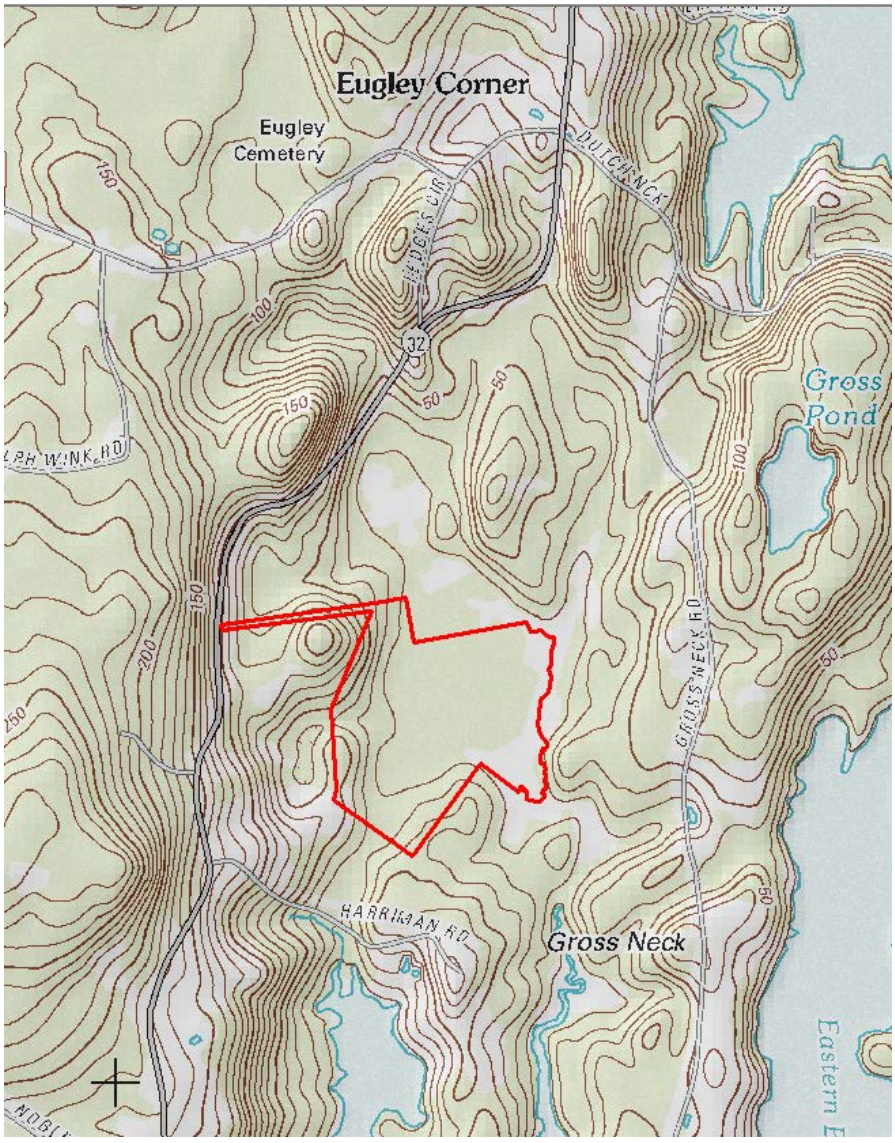
Boothbay Region Source Water Protection
Boothbay
Service Area: Central Interior & Midcoast

The Boothbay Region Water District (BRWD) will purchase and preserve 68 acres of forested land, wetland and stream corridor and to restore about 600 linear feet of perennial stream that has been impacted by logging operations/roads. Runoff/erosion problems beyond the stream corridor will also be addressed using best management practices. The property is adjacent to Adams Pond, the Boothbay Region's primary public water supply, lands held by BRWD for source water protection, and state recognized high value habitats. BRWD owns about 100 acres within the Adams Pond watershed and most of its shoreline, the vast majority of which is held for SWP. The project property is a high priority for SWP acquisition. Less than 3 acres of the property are protected by local watershed ordinances. BRWD funds would be used to support property purchase, stream restoration and for future monitoring/management of the land for SWP, wildlife habitat, scientific and educational purposes, and limited public recreation.



Branch Bog Wetlands Protection
Waldoboro
Service Area: Central Interior & Midcoast

This project consists of an 80-acre fee purchase that includes forested upland buffer and significant mixed wetland acreage associated with the Branch Bog, a mapped Inland Waterfowl and Wading Bird Habitat. Other priority wetland resources on the site include vernal pool habitat, associated critical terrestrial habitat, and first order tributary streams that drain to the bog. Branch Bog is located at the head of the Western Branch of the Medomak River north of Broad Cove in Waldoboro. This important headwater wetland ecosystem has been a conservation focus of both Medomak Valley Land Trust and Maine Coast Heritage Trust given its relatively intact condition and importance for regional water quality. The proposed project will protect a key parcel that protects approximately half of the wetland complex and developable upland buffers. The diverse assortment of wetlands to be protected include: Tall Sedge Fen, Black Spruce Bog, Red Maple Swamp, Alder Shrub Thicket, and vernal pool habitat. Additionally, multiple perennial streams meander through the property, each contributing to wetland hydrology and downstream water quality. Some limited wetland enhancement is possible in the project area including removal of small stands of invasive species before these become more established.

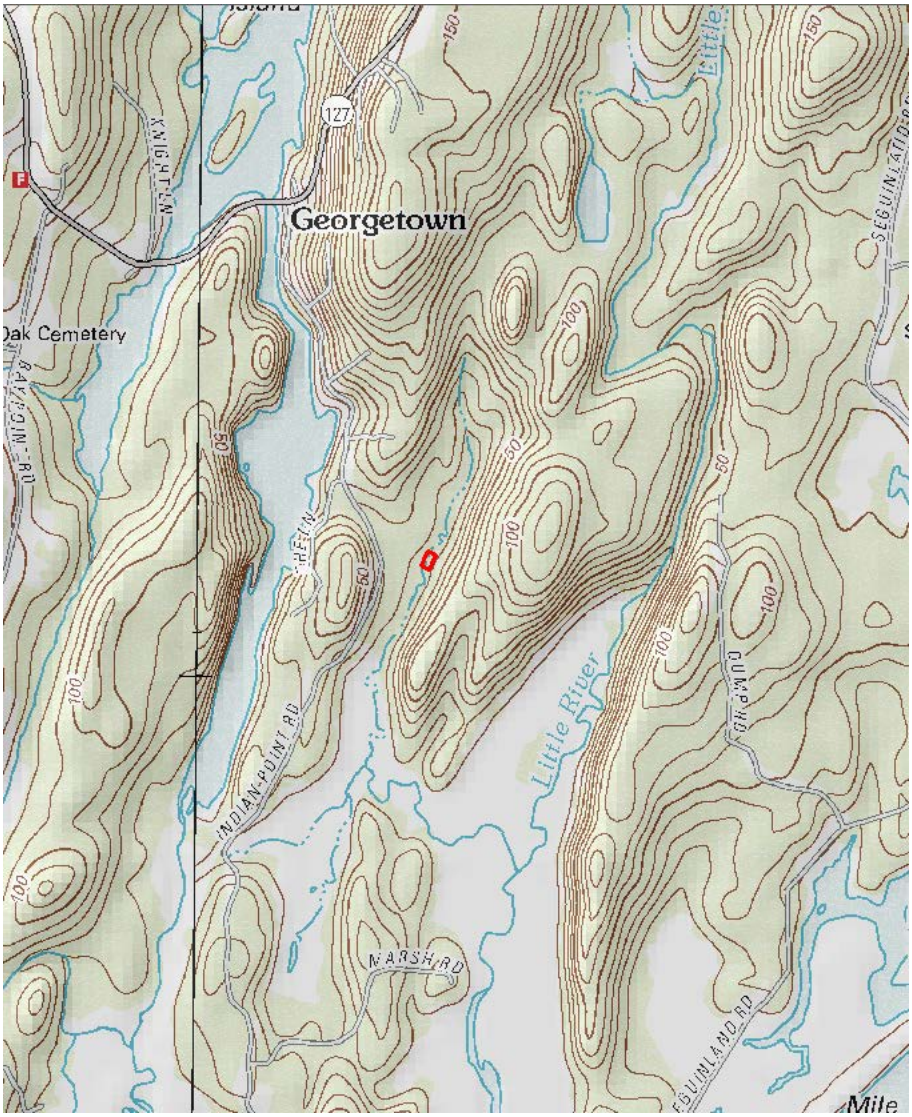


Caribou Bog - Birmingham Land Acquisition
Old Town
Service Area: Central Interior & Midcoast

This project will conserve 189 acres of wetland and buffering upland that drain into and form part of the Caribou Bog Wetland Complex, a state-significant wetland containing rare plants and dragonflies and an exemplary natural community. The property contains the largest remaining unprotected wetland habitat of the domed bog portion of Caribou Bog (37.3 acres), 28.3 acres of forested wetlands, and 143.4 acres of buffering upland. Included in this acreage are two state-significant vernal pools. The property is located within the Caribou Bog Focus Area of Statewide Ecological Significance and within the Caribou Bog-Penjajawoc Lands Project Focus Area, a regional conservation effort. It is adjacent to 3,355 acres of existing conservation land, including MDIFW's Caribou Bog State Wildlife Management Area (WMA) and has deeded access from Kirkland Road.

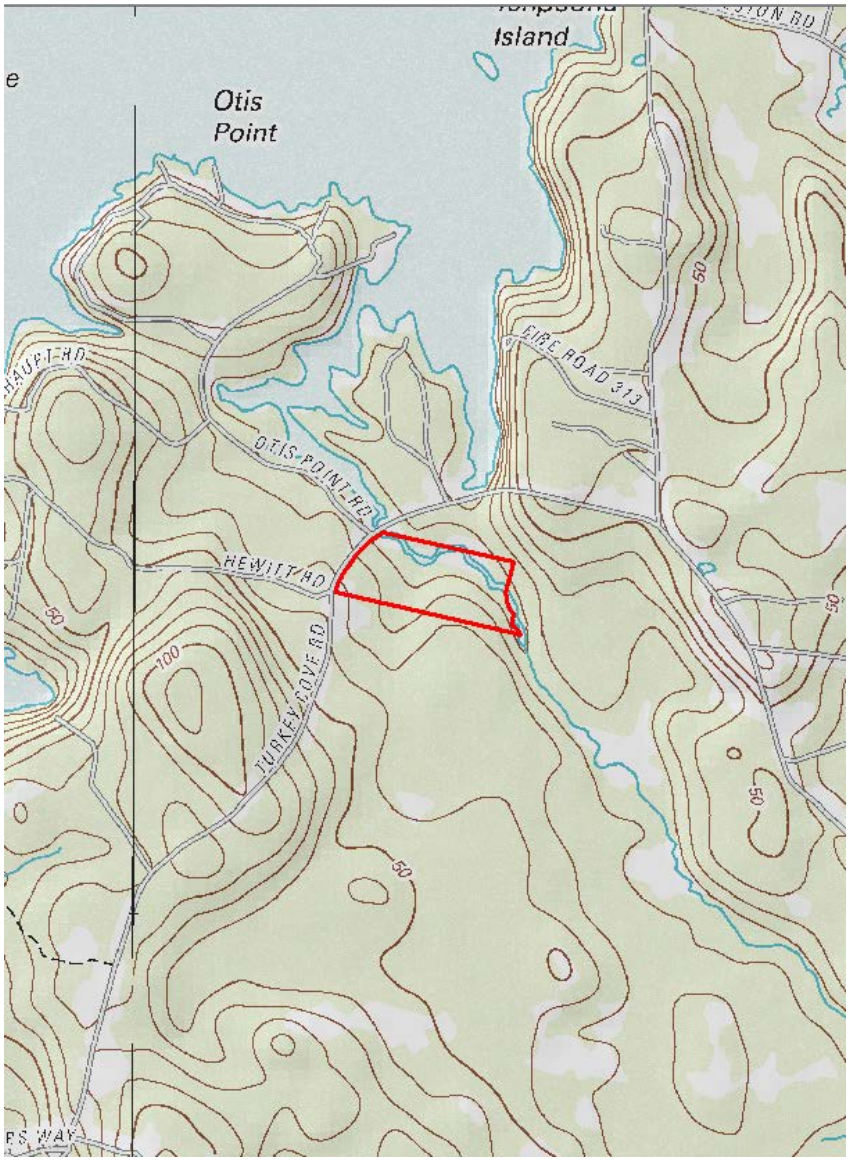
Little River Habitat Restoration
Georgetown
Service Area: Central Interior & Midcoast

The Little River Habitat Restoration Project will restore tidal flow to the upper Little River salt marsh. Flow is currently restricted by a derelict causeway found on the project property, over which the Kennebec Estuary Land Trust (KELT) holds a conservation easement. In 2011, the landowner, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, The Nature Conservancy, and the Kennebec Estuary Land Trust partnered to study the impact of this restriction and accomplish its removal. The project will remove the tidal restriction, re-connecting approximately 2,000 feet of tidal channel and restoring hydrologic function to 13.2 acres of estuarine wetland. The introduction of greater tidal flow to this area will increase salinity, reduce or eliminate the invasive common reed *Phragmites australis*, and restore natural ecological function of the upper salt marsh. KELT has longstanding interest in this 1,883 acre focus area and has classified it as a Conservation Focus Area of High Priority. This project continues KELT's commitment to the ecological health of the estuarine wetlands in this unique area. Currently, there is very little public use of the property. It is the landowners' intent, as written in the conservation easement, to protect the scenic views of and from the property and protect the unique natural salt marsh habitat.



Meadow Brook Wetlands Protection
Saint George
Service Area: Central Interior & Midcoast

The Meadow Brook Wetlands Protection Project consists of the fee acquisition of approximately 23 acres of estuarine, palustrine, and riverine wetland types as well as buffering upland forest. Specific resources to be permanently protected include mixed graminoid-forb saltmarsh; brackish tidal marsh, including a significant portion of the tidal wetlands associated with lower Meadow Brook in Saint George; forested wetlands; and freshwater streams. This undeveloped stream corridor is one of the largest in Saint George and has been the focus of the Town of Saint George, Georges River Land Trust, and the Tenants Harbor Water District protection efforts over several years. Completion of this project would result in protection of most of the stream corridor and a significant portion of the forested watershed. This project represents a milestone in local efforts to conserve lands along Meadow Brook in Saint George extending from the headwaters near Tenants Harbor to the outlet at Otis Cove. Acquisition of this project will link lands extending from Tenants Harbor to public road access in the western portion of town. Meadow Brook is included as part of the Lower Saint George River Focus Area of Statewide Ecological Significance.

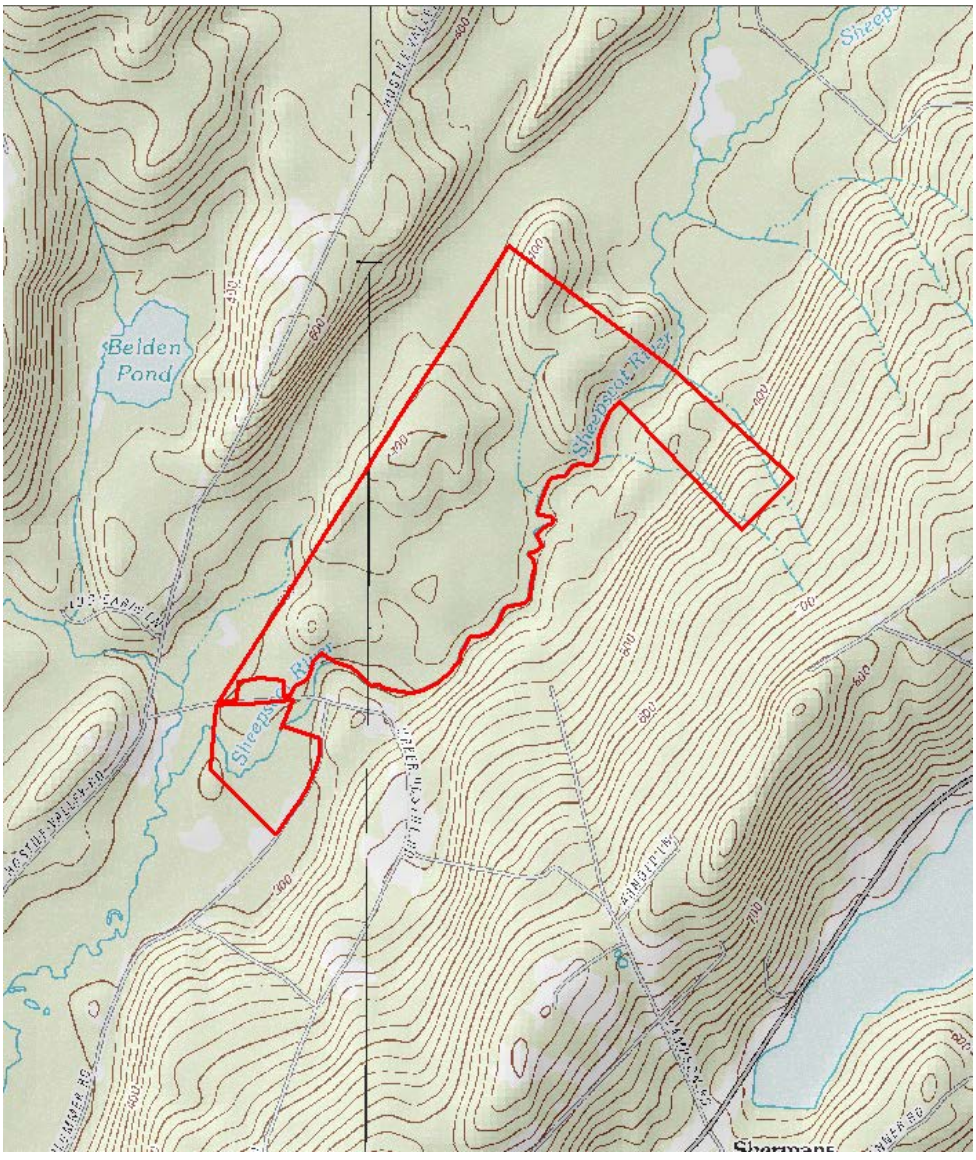


Outlet Stream Restoration
East Vassalboro
Service Area: Central Interior & Midcoast

The Outlet Stream Restoration Project at Masse Dam will remove a relic dam and restore a 6-acre impoundment to 0.41 miles of riverine conditions. Masse Dam is the first of six dams to be addressed on Outlet Stream, which connects China Lake to the Sebasticook River in the Kennebec River Watershed. Outlet Stream originates in China Lake in Vassalboro, which has a surface area of 3,939 acres. The stream is approximately 7.8 miles long and drains into the mouth of the Sebasticook River, which empties into the Kennebec River in Winslow. Through history, Outlet Stream has been re-directed and dammed to power at least 13 dams; six relic, non-generating dams remain. The Sebasticook River Land Trust has joined with a broad coalition of partners including Maine Department of Marine Resources, Maine Rivers, US Fish & Wildlife Service, USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service and China Region Lakes Alliance to restore riverine function and fisheries in the Outlet Stream ecosystem. The coalition will purchase and remove the Masse Dam. While this will be the first stream segment restored, plans are in place to complete restoration activity on all of Outlet Stream by 2020. The ecological benefits of restoring this reach to fluvial habitat include lowering water temperatures, increased dissolved oxygen concentrations, restored sediment and woody debris transport, and enhanced fish and wildlife habitat. Restored riverine conditions will increase riffle and run habitats, which can support highly productive benthic communities that provide forage for fish and are an integral component of the riverine food web, and spawning and nursery opportunities for native riffle/run obligate species such as Atlantic salmon, blueback herring, sea lamprey, brook trout and fallfish.

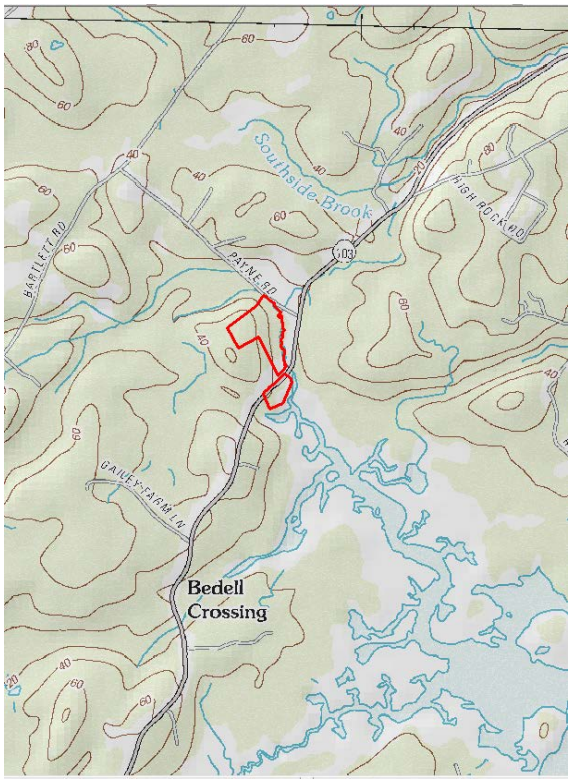
Sheepscot Headwaters Habitat Project
Liberty
Service Area: Central Interior & Midcoast

This project involves the acquisition and conservation of 290 acres within the Sheepscot River headwaters in Waldo County. The property's habitat is primarily upland forest with alternating patches of moderate value grassland/shrub. In total there are 50 acres of wetlands. The property is located in the second largest habitat block in the watershed. This block is also one of the largest in the midcoast region. The property is contiguous with Lake St. George State Park, town land and a number of conservation properties. It is part of two conservation plans, including the 12 Rivers Conservation Initiative, and it is a key parcel in an effort to establish a contiguous conserved area of 1,100 acres that includes Lake St. George State Park. The long-term goal is to connect this area with 1,400 acres of nearby conserved land and with the 5,240-acre Frye Mountain Wildlife Management Area. It is one of the largest properties in single ownership on the river, with 2.25 miles of river frontage and Atlantic salmon habitat.



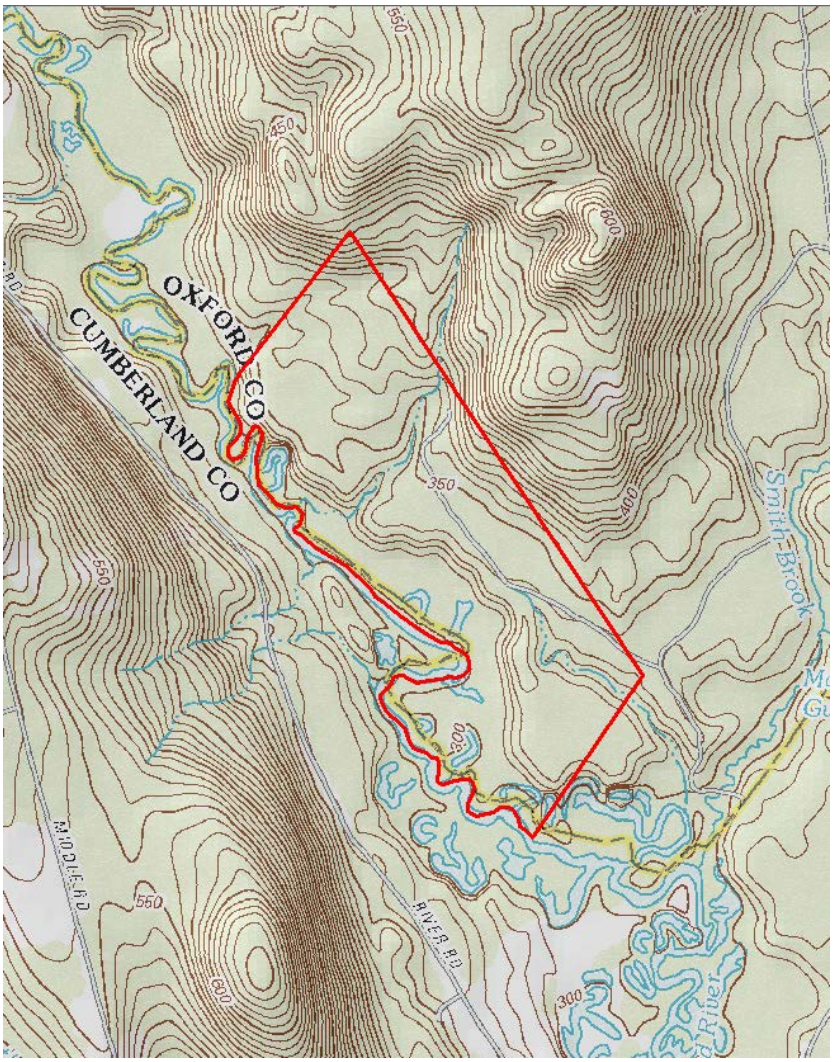
Brave Boat Headwaters-Gavin
Kittery
Service Area: Southern Maine

This project involves the preservation, restoration and enhancement of 1.38 acres of high value saltmarsh and approximately 9 upland acres on Brave Boat Harbor through fee simple interest with a bargain sale. Restoration/enhancement will consist of four major components: (1) Modification of the road slope and Improvement of the runoff collection at the road edge. As part of planned road improvements, the Town of Kittery is planning on re-grading and resurfacing approximately 1.8 miles of Brave Boat Harbor Road including the road area that divides the Gavin Parcel. After site surveys, Kittery Land Trust met with the Kittery DPW director, Norman Albert, about improving the degraded road edge and stormwater runoff area adjacent to the road. He agreed to supply the labor and the majority of materials to assist in this effort. These modifications will make the storm flow more diffuse and should significantly decrease erosion in this area. (2) After the road has been re-paved, two bioretention areas will be installed between the road and the salt marsh. Presently road runoff funnels into two areas before entering the creek. The bioretention areas will be installed in these existing low spots using native plant materials and a deep bed of invasive-free soil. This will further slow runoff and pre-treat it before it enters the salt marsh and creek area. (3) Expansion of a vegetated buffer to the southern saltmarsh. The mowing regime will be altered to allow for an expansion of the vegetated buffer between upland and saltmarsh in areas where it is currently less than 50' wide. Low growing native plants will be planted in the new buffer areas. (4) Installation of a native plant buffer to reduce salt marsh erosion near the southern property boundary. An area approximately 30 feet long and 5 feet wide is proposed near the boundary of the southern parcel in the vicinity of the salt marsh seep and headcut. Invasive plants will be removed in this area as part of an invasive control project. After invasives removal, an area of low native shrubs and herbs will be installed to slow runoff from the parcel which may be accelerating erosion of the headcut area. Invasives removal will be planned for the spring before substantial vegetative growth or in early fall to allow for more effective removal and re-vegetation.



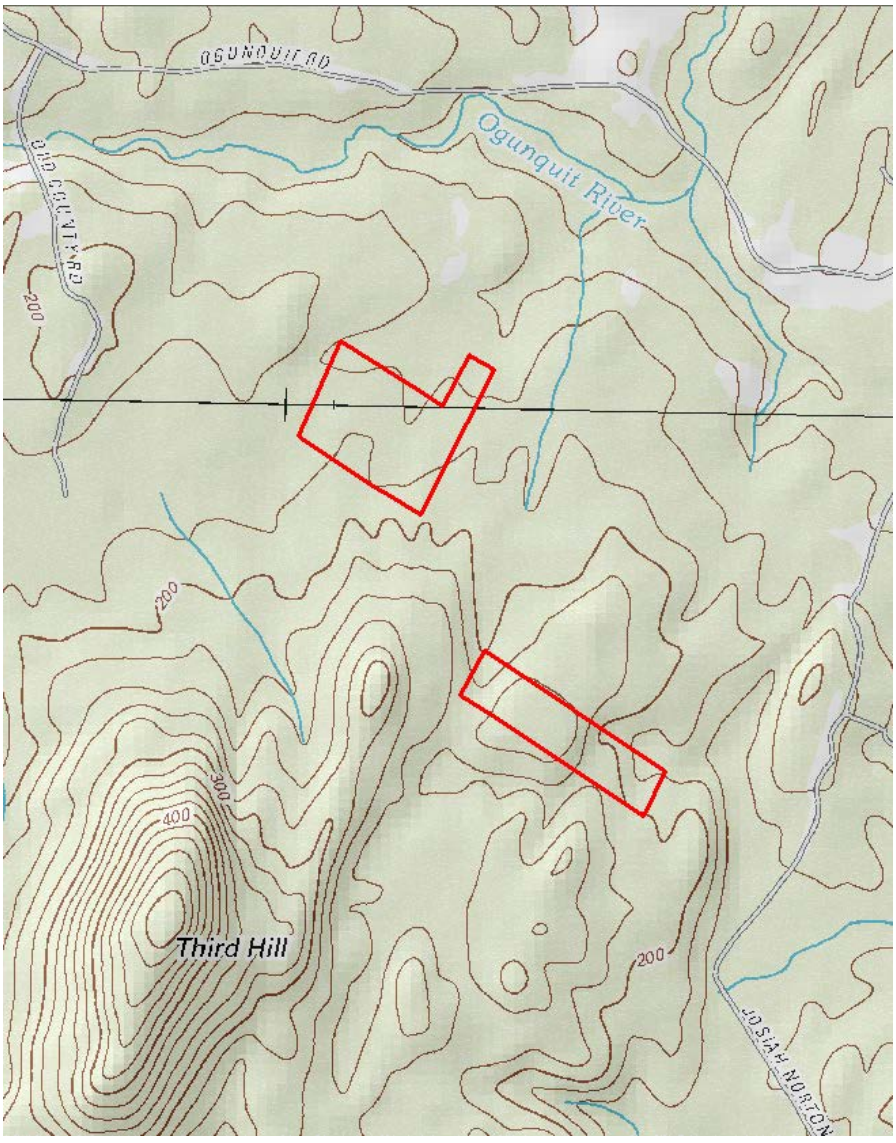
Crooked River Watershed – Green
Otisfield
Service Area: Southern Maine

This project will protect by fee purchase a 260-acre family-owned working forest in Beginning with Habitat's Jugtown Plain Focus Area. The Green parcel includes 2.9 miles of river shoreline, 73.8 acres of high value wetlands, 11 vernal pools, 4,824 feet of stream habitat, and supports a rare natural community and a rare plant species. The topography grades gradually down from the eastern part of the property towards the western third of the property where the wetlands and floodplain of the river are concentrated. A rare natural community, Silver Maple Floodplain Forest (S3), as well as a rare plant, *Elymus macgregorii* (S2), were documented within the forested wetlands. The property is located within a large undeveloped block of 6,841 acres and is adjacent to the 3,200-acre Jugtown Plains conservation easement (also along the Crooked River). The project will enhance the natural functions of the site by removing an old woods road ford blocking one of the parcel's tributary streams, and installing an arched concrete culvert instead. The project will also establish an enlarged resource protection buffer for the wetlands and streams. In addition, invasive Japanese barberry on site will be removed. The project is part of a larger effort with multiple partners to protect a forested and highly functioning Crooked River Watershed which is the major surface water source (39%) for Sebago Lake which is the reservoir for 200,000 customers served by the Portland Water District.



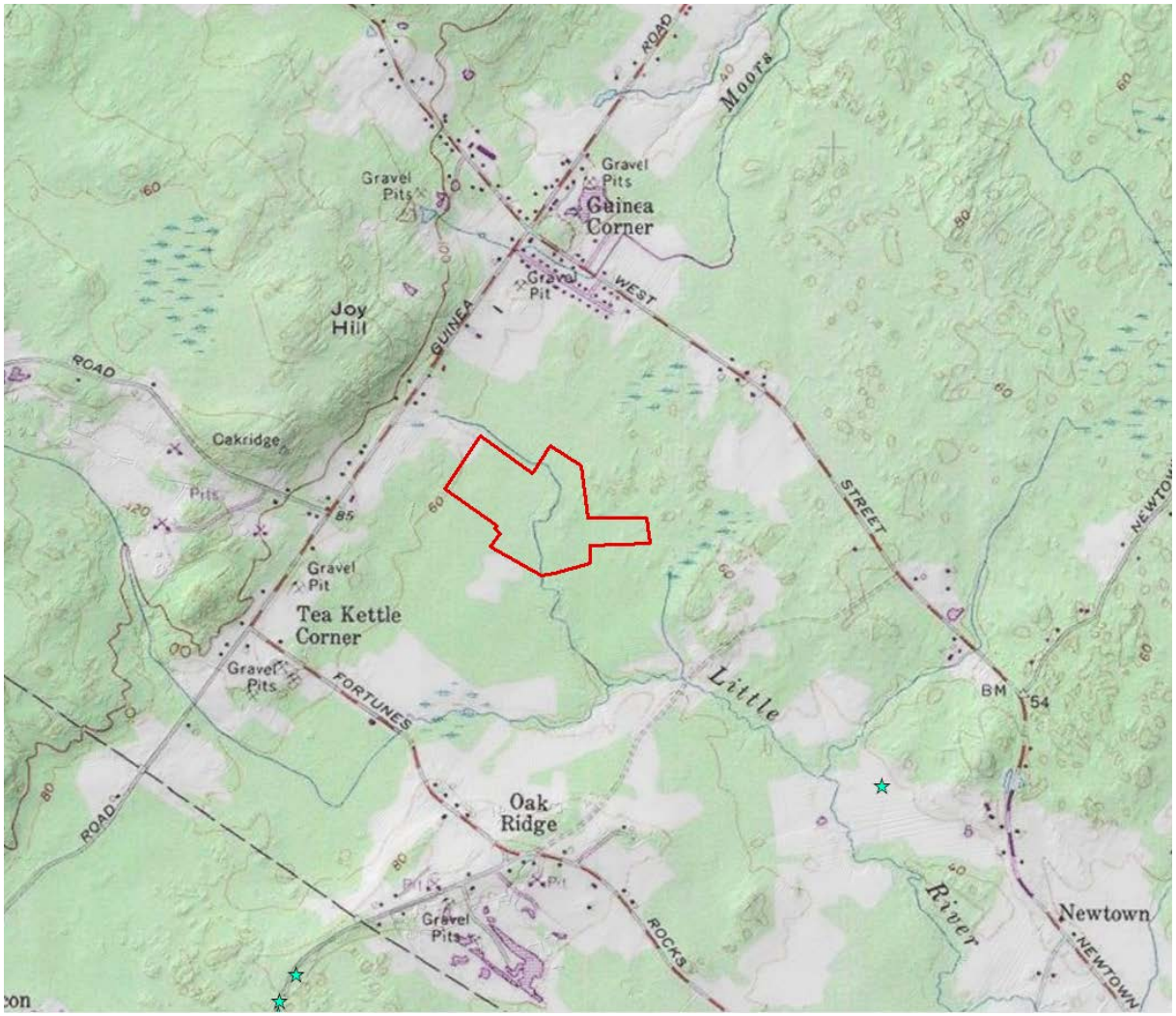
Driscoll Wetlands Project
York
Service Area: Southern Maine

The project is two parcels, owned by same landowner, that total 51.5 acres. An estimated 22.24 acres are forested wetlands including one potential vernal pool. The parcels abut land of York Land Trust (YLT) and Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife (MDIF&W) and are proximal to thousands of acres of conservation land in the Mt. Agamenticus region owned by these and other conservation groups. The parcels are within a 5,441-acre unfragmented block of forest, the Mt. Agamenticus Beginning with Habitat Focus Area of Statewide Ecological Significance, and MDIF&W Mt. Agamenticus Wildlife Management Area. The land is ranked High-Value for Wildlife Habitat, including potential habitat for rare Spotted turtles which have been documented on adjacent parcels. It is also ranked High-Value for Production Export reflecting abundant food sources in the wetlands. The parcels are part of a larger Central Hardwoods Oak Forest Ecosystem that extends through much of the Mt. Agamenticus Region. One of the parcels includes a Hemlock Hardwood Pocket Swamp, a rare natural community in Maine. State-threatened Chestnut Oak occurs on both parcels. The northern parcel was selectively harvested in 2009. By purchasing these parcels, York Land Trust will eliminate the threat of development and further timber harvesting.



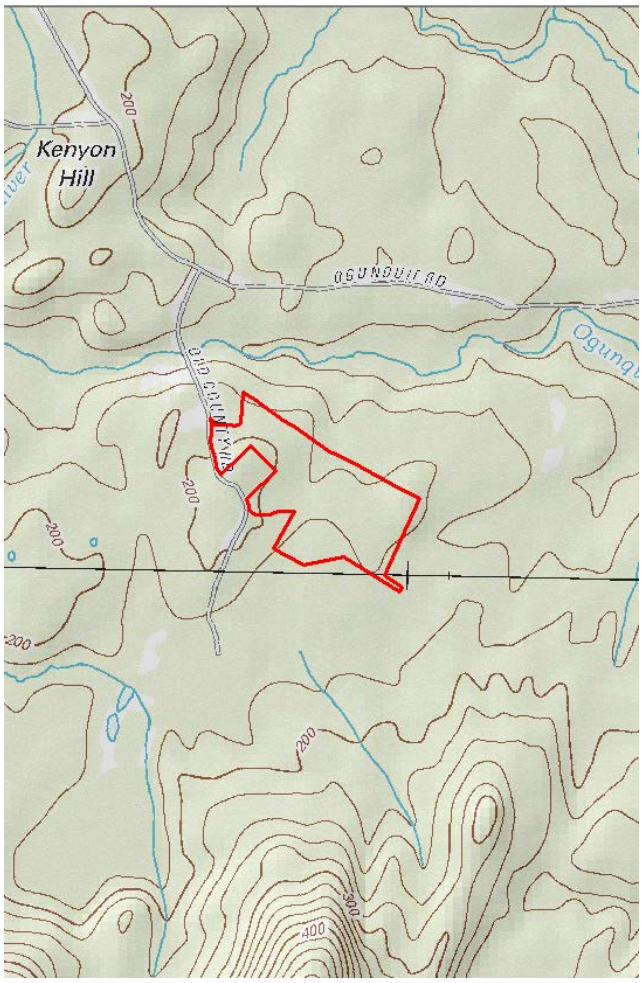
Little River Conservation Bridge (Chretien)
Biddeford
Service Area: Southern Maine

This project will result in the acquisition and protection of an approximately 50 acre parcel that lies in the Biddeford-Kennebunkport Vernal Pool Complex Beginning with Habitat Focus Area. Saco Valley Land Trust (SVLT) currently owns two adjoining parcels which bracket this property on the southwest and the northeast. The parcel to the northeast contains the headwaters of a Little River tributary, shares an irregular border with the subject property, and extends out to West Street. Just across West Street lies a University of New England parcel of more than 350 acres, over 150 acres of which is now permanently conserved through an easement held by SVLT. Completion of this project will connect the land trust's existing holdings. There is a challenge to be met from invasive plants occupying part of the site but the land trust is working with NRCS to deal with this issue on other properties. This project is part of an undeveloped habitat block. Wetland and aquatic features on the property include National Wetland Inventory-mapped forested wetland and perennial and ephemeral streams. The Little River is mapped as brook trout habitat. The state listed Blandings and Spotted turtles also likely use this tract. Several thousand acres are protected in this area within a few miles of the Chretien parcel, and more land is protected at the Rachel Carson National Wildlife Refuge's Little River unit.



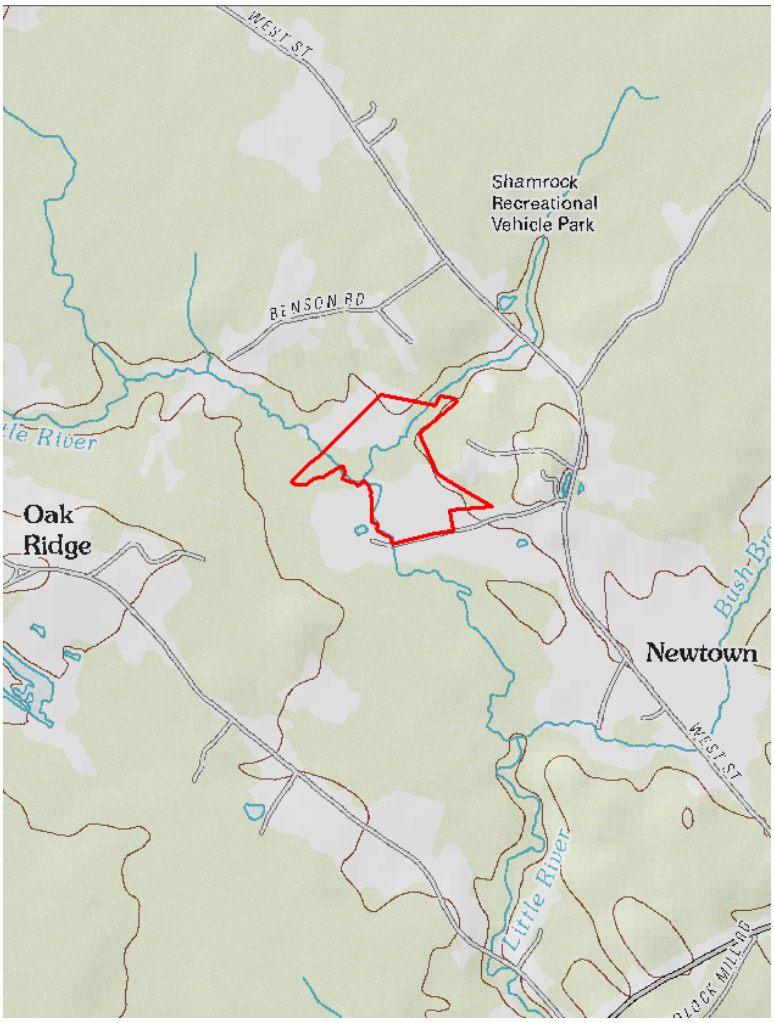
Ogunquit Headwater Wetlands
South Berwick
Service Area: Southern Maine

This project will permanently protect 52 acres of wetlands and surrounding uplands in the headwaters of the Ogunquit River through fee acquisition. It is within the Mt Agamenticus Beginning with Habitat Focus Area and is the connecting link between 12 contiguous preserved parcels and the conservation lands surrounding Mt Agamenticus, providing a permanently protected corridor between unfragmented blocks of 1356 and 5441 acres. The project area abuts conservation land to the east and south (owned by Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, Great Works Regional Land Trust, and York Land Trust) and is within a large undeveloped habitat block. Most of the wetland and upland area of the parcel drains north towards the Ogunquit River. In addition to being within range of documented locations for rare Blanding's turtles, the property was found to support two rare plant species and is within a large rare ecosystem type that extends through much of the surrounding undeveloped block. Vernal pool egg masses were located within the wetland in the northern part of the parcel where water has pooled. The wetland then drains north through an old stone wall marking the property boundary. The wetlands in this project area may also support Blanding's turtles as part of a mosaic of wetland resources within the surrounding area known to support these species. The project includes the removal of a quantity of debris, fishing and logging equipment accumulated in uplands on the site in several locations over the past two decades.



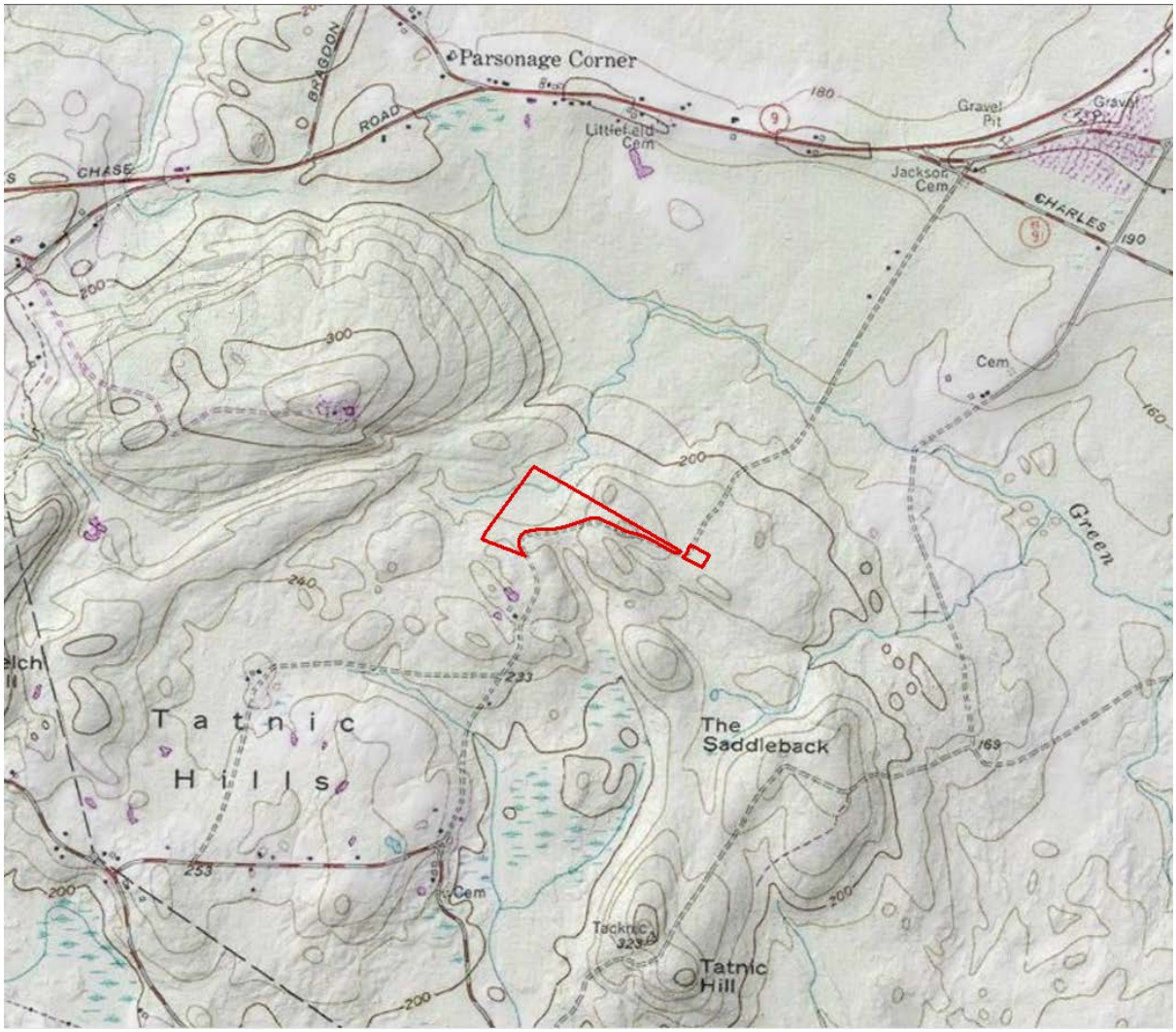
Smithfield Meadows - Gelardi
Biddeford
Service Area: Southern Maine

The 33 acre Smithfield Meadows tract will be acquired in fee simple and protected in perpetuity as a preserve by Saco Valley Land Trust. Wetlands will be restored and enhanced through a series of cost effective actions that will collectively improve and increase the wetlands values on the property. Resources include forested, freshwater emergent, and scrub-shrub wetlands; a river; and vernal pools. During the spring of 2013, the property was surveyed for vernal pools and several were found, including one with Spotted salamander egg masses and 43 wood frog egg masses. A wetlands specialist was hired to create a plan to restore and enhance wetlands on the property, and this proposal would implement that plan. This tract lies within the 16,000 acre Biddeford-Kennebunkport Vernal Pool Complex, a Beginning with Habitat (BwH) Focus Area of statewide significance. The parcel also abuts 54 acres of existing SVLT conservation land to the west, and is near several thousand acres of conservation land within the BwH focus area, in both Biddeford and Kennebunkport. The region is one of the best refuges left for the Spotted and Blandings turtles, state listed species. MDIF&W staff stated that, based on the records search: 'Given the number and configuration of Spotted turtle occurrences surrounding the parcel, it's reasonable to suspect that the Little River and its tributaries might provide a travel corridor for the species in this area. In particular, the tributary running north/northeast right through the parcel terminates near a large cluster of Spotted turtle observations.'



Tatnic Turtle Crossing
Wells
Service Area: Southern Maine

This project prevents the development of at least four house lots on 17 acres in the center of Blandings and Spotted turtle habitat in the Tatnic region of the Mt Agamenticus Beginning with Habitat Focus Area through fee acquisition. The four parcels contain wetlands, vernal pools and uplands, are adjacent to 171 acres of protected land and within two miles of 533 additional conserved acres. One of the wetlands will be restored through the removal of road sediment and gravel and the site stabilized to prevent reoccurrence. Two dump sites will be cleaned up and motorized access restricted. This area is referred to as a "hot spot" for Blandings and Spotted turtle. All four parcels are building lots of record (predate zoning) and only require a building permit for development. If the lots are not protected, it is likely that once developed, vehicle traffic on Cheney Woods Road will pick up in intensity and speed. Road kill "maybe the most serious threat to long-term population viability" for turtles. Cheney Woods Road is currently gravel and this project would add 1,530 additional feet to the current 500 feet where the road is permanently protected on both sides creating a broad wildlife corridor.



Walnut Hill-Sousa B Wetland Restoration
Alfred
Service Area: Southern Maine

This project involves wetland and stream restoration on a 21-acre parcel acquired with MNRCP funds in 2014. Prior to purchase of the land, a wetland was partially filled, a culvert installed, a stream possibly diverted, and an area close to the wetland cleared for gravel extraction. Restoration work will focus on discontinuation of the access road over the stream and riparian wetlands, through removal of the culvert and surrounding fill, and stabilization and revegetation of this corridor. Woody debris, excess fill, and the remains of a silt fence will be removed. The breach at the base of the north ditch will be sealed and the basin regraded to avoid erosion into the stream. A wetland consultant will be employed to determine the amount of fill and elevations for re-grading the wetland and surrounding area. A planked bridge will be installed primarily for pedestrian use, but will be large enough to accommodate a bush hog or small tractor for annual maintenance of the turtle nesting site if needed.