



## February 2016 E-NEWS

*Our purpose is to preserve and protect the intrinsic values and public benefits of the natural resources in the Towns of Chebeague and Cumberland - mainland, island and contiguous Casco Bay – and to be responsible stewards in perpetuity for those resources in our trust.*

### **Celebrate!**



*Photo: Knight's Pond*

On a crisp, sunny October day, 150 Cumberland and Chebeague residents trekked to Knight's Pond in mainland Cumberland. Their purpose? To celebrate one of the most important land conservation achievements in CCLT's history. There was so much to celebrate--215 beautiful acres preserved forever. Hiking, ice skating, fishing, birdwatching, kayaking, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing—all there for all to enjoy every day in every season forever. It was a celebration, too, of collaboration and commitment. Two towns—Cumberland and North Yarmouth—two land trusts—Chebeague and Cumberland Land Trust and Royal River Conservation Trust—and a national conservation organization—the Trust for Public Lands—worked together for two years to raise the \$1 million needed to purchase the property. CCLT President Penny Asherman marveled at the support the Knight's Pond project elicited in the two communities.

“People were so energized and their generosity was overwhelming. We’ve raised the last dollar. We’ve signed on the dotted line. It’s time to enjoy, treasure and protect this very special place, now and in perpetuity.”

### **And the Winner Is - Land Conservation**



*Photo: Knight's Pond*

Knight's Pond and 29 other conservation projects around the state found themselves in jeopardy last year because of a policy dispute between Governor Paul LePage and the Maine legislature. For nearly 30 years, the Land for Maine's Future program has been a critical source of funding for land conservation projects around the state. Here's how it usually works. The legislature asks voters to approve issuance of bonds to help local land trusts purchase land to be preserved. If the referendum passes, the Land for Maine's Future board allocates the money among projects it has approved and the governor authorizes selling the bonds. Last year, however, Governor LePage refused to sell \$11.5 million in bonds already approved by the voters. News reports indicated he was using the bonds as leverage to persuade the legislature to pass one of his policy priorities, an issue unrelated to the conservation bonds. In the face of strong, bi-partisan legislative support for releasing the money, the governor indicated in December that he would issue the bonds. Knight's Pond is one of 30 projects already approved by the LMF board. CCLT had put forth its own funds to cover the gap created by the delay in issuing the bonds. Assuming the Knight's Pond money is finally forthcoming, CCLT will be able to replenish its coffers and have the funds ready for the next conservation opportunity in Cumberland or on Chebeague.

## Winter Walks On Tap for Knight's Pond and Rines Forest



*Photo: CCLT Winter Hike*

Tired of watching yet another meaningless NBA game? Frustrated by losing still another game of UNO to your seven-year old granddaughter? Wondering how that extra five pounds has settled in around your waist for the winter? CCLT has the answer—actually, two answers—to these and other signs of the winter doldrums. We have two winter hikes scheduled with local naturalist Karen Herold. The first will be at Knight's Pond on Saturday, February 20 at 10:00 a.m. The second will be at Rines Forest on Friday, March 4, also at 10:00 a.m. Take a look at “A Guide to a Winter Walk at Knight's Pond” to get a preview of the season's natural delights to be found on these hikes. For more information, visit [www.ccltmaine.org](http://www.ccltmaine.org) or call Penny Asherman at (207) 807-8532.

## A Kayak Rack for Rose's Point



*Photo: Rose's Point*

Many conservation easements encourage public use of the protected properties. Land trusts, though, must be careful that the public's enjoyment of the property doesn't damage its natural resources. For the past several years, CCLT faced that challenge with its stewardship of Rose's Point. The beach that is part of this property

is a popular spot for kayakers on Chebeague Island. The beach is rimmed by dune grass, which is very delicate and, if harmed, dies off and does not grow back. Kayaks stored near the beach were damaging the grass. Last summer, CCLT's stewards for Rose's Point, the Chebeague Island Boatyard and the Chebeague Sailing School worked together to find a way to forestall further damage. The centerpiece of the solution was a temporary rack provided by the sailing school. The experiment worked. Boaters used the rack, not the dune grass for stowing their kayaks. Emboldened by this success, CCLT applied to the Recompense Fund, a small foundation that assists non-profit organizations on Chebeague, for a grant to purchase a permanent kayak rack. Last fall, the Recompense Fund's board awarded CCLT \$2,200 for acquiring a rack that will hold eight kayaks. The rack will be in place at the start of the boating season this spring. CCLT is deeply grateful to the Recompense Fund, the boatyard and the sailing school for helping us achieve a creative and workable balance between public use of a conserved property and protection of its habitat.

### **Federal Tax Helps Property Owners**



*Photo: CCLT Fall Hike*

Landowners have many reasons for donating a conservation easement on their property. One important one is the possibility of a federal income tax deduction. At the end of 2015, Congress made several changes to the tax code that should make this aspect of conservation easements more attractive to potential donors. The first is that the provision is now permanent. (It had been subject to yearly reauthorizations.) The second is that easement donors are able to deduct up to 50 percent of their income. (The old limit was 30 percent.) The third is that the donor can take that deduction for up to 16 years. (It used to be only six years.) These changes constitute a true win-win for property owners and land conservation.

## Puffin Expert Headed for Chebeague



*Photo: Puffin by Oscar V055 (own work) - [https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/1/17/Atlantic\\_puffin\\_055.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/1/17/Atlantic_puffin_055.jpg)*

Steve Kress, world-renowned expert on Atlantic puffins and seabird restoration, will conduct a program on Chebeague Island on Wednesday, July 20. Mr. Kress' inspiration and tenacity led the successful effort to restore Atlantic puffins to Eastern Egg Rock in Muscongus Bay. He is co-author of the book, Project Puffin, which describes his years-long campaign off the Maine coast and his attempts to replicate his success with puffins for other rare and endangered seabirds. Details about Mr. Kress' CCLT-sponsored visit to Chebeague will be available in the spring.

## Is There a Wet Wood Frog in Your Future? How About a Slithering Salamander? Or a Hell-Bent Horseshoe Crab?



*Photo: Salamander*

Two of CCLT's most popular events involve the annual rites of land and sea wildlife. On a March or April evening (the exact night depends on the weather and the frogs), dozens of volunteers organized by CCLT mobilize on a moment's notice to help frogs and salamanders leave the woods and cross Range Road in Cumberland so they can mate and lay their eggs at Frog Pond and Salamander Swamp on the other side of the road. It's great fun and helps our amphibian friends survive the dangerous crossing. Interested in

helping? Contact Penny Asherman via email: [ashermanpenny@gmail.com](mailto:ashermanpenny@gmail.com) and provide your cell phone number for text notification on the “big night.”

In June, horseshoe crabs emerge from Casco Bay to mate on the beach at Broad Cove Reserve. This year, CCLT will be there on Saturday and Sunday, June 4 and 5, to welcome them ashore. We’ll have naturalists to explain the horseshoe crab’s history and talk about why they are so beneficial to humans. There will be touch pools so participants can examine adults and their offspring. Registration information will be sent later this spring. The horseshoe crab events in past years have sold out, so, if you want to come, sign up early.

### **Join CCLT**

The Chebeague and Cumberland Land Trust is grateful to the many Cumberland and Chebeague residents who show their commitment to protecting our area’s natural beauty by supporting our many efforts. If you aren’t already a member and would like to join visit [www.cclmaine.org](http://www.cclmaine.org).



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