



# DENNIS CONSERVATION LAND TRUST

## Spring 2022 Newsletter

[www.dennisconservationlandtrust.org](http://www.dennisconservationlandtrust.org)

### Let's Protect Tobey West!

The DCLT signed a purchase and sale agreement this past December to buy eight acres of land along Route 6A - a portion of the original Tobey Farm, one of the oldest single family-owned farms on Cape Cod - for \$900,000. The Trust asked the Town of Dennis' Community Preservation Committee (CPC) for \$600,000, of which \$300,000 will be reimbursed by a State LAND grant. The project was recommended for funding by the CPC, and the article for the project has been placed on the Town Warrant for a vote by residents at the upcoming May 3, 2022 Annual Town Meeting. DCLT needs your vote for this important purchase that will benefit the Town of Dennis, which will receive a conservation restriction on this property, ensuring it is conserved forever.



Conserving Tobey West will provide recreational opportunities for the public while protecting Chase Garden Creek, wildlife habitat and the marsh, thereby mitigating climate change. With other protected lands nearby, the Chase Garden Creek area provides a critical refuge and corridor for rare wildlife to flourish.

**Please vote to protect Tobey West.**

### Indigenous Cultural Access Guaranteed Forever by Easement in Dennis

An historic document, the DCLT-Native Land Conservancy (NLC) Cultural Respect Easement, the first of its kind in Massachusetts, was signed on December 9, 2021. The Cultural Respect Easement ensures Indigenous access to all of the DCLT's properties for traditional ceremonies and practices in perpetuity.

The document, signed by Joe Masse, Chair of the Board of the DCLT, and Ramona Peters, President and Founder of the NLC, demonstrates a deepening relationship between these land trusts, and an understanding of the sacred connection of Native people to their ancestral lands.

NLC President and Founder, Ramona Peters, said, "A Cultural Respect Easement is the closest expression of land repatriation to Indigenous people achieved without an actual transfer of deed. It offers assurance for us to safely access areas of our ancestral homelands to exercise spiritual and cultural practices. Respect for our culture includes respect for our relationship with the earth, especially in areas where our ancestors prayed, danced, toiled, lived and were buried."

The Easement was forged in mutual understanding and respect. DCLT Chair Joe Masse said, "We wish to create an open and sharing relationship with the NLC, one in which we support one another, underscoring our mission to create and care for open space, as well as learning, together, how to create an environment of respect. Respect for one another. Respect for the land." The Easement protects and honors Indigenous lifeways on DCLT lands forever.



**For more information on the Native Land Conservancy: [www.nativelandconservancy.org](http://www.nativelandconservancy.org)**



## The DCLT Does Science and Education

David Fryxell, Land Manager

Coming to the DCLT as a freshwater ecologist, I knew my background would support land management here on Cape Cod – our ‘Land of Water.’ But it took some time to understand how.

After spending a few months out on the land and discussing ideas with our Trustees, staff, and partners, I hit the ground running with immense support and interest from the Cape Cod Five Foundation, the Cape Cod Foundation, and of course, all of you! This support, I am happy to report, has led to an exciting new initiative at the Trust – our Water Initiative. The Initiative acknowledges a need to understand and manage our waters with our lands. And indeed, the DCLT owns a LOT of wetland area – 350 of 439 acres, to be precise.



Our Water Initiative kicks into full gear this summer with Chase Garden Creek in central focus. The Creek and its Dennis saltmarsh (“Black Flats” - the second largest on Cape Cod!) provide breathtaking views, support critical wildlife habitat, and help to sequester a ton (really, tons and tons) of carbon annually. This ecosystem might be comparatively healthy today, but this is precisely why we must work diligently to monitor and protect it.

More exciting than the Initiative itself are the educational activities we have developed along with it. We recently kicked off a new Science Fair Program at Dennis-Yarmouth High School. Students will work to develop a research plan, and through their early senior year, collect data (some on DCLT lands!), create a project report, and compete at regional and state fairs. So far the projects include studying animal use of different habitats, monitoring tick abundance, testing effects of pH on shellfish, and testing effects of herring on cyanobacterial blooms. We hope the program stokes a passion for environmental science, and, with luck, contributes a local pipeline of science-minded environmental stewards for years to come. Special thanks are due to Adam Cutler, Chemistry Teacher, and Carl DePuy, Ecology Teacher, for their support and guidance with our new educational programs.

This summer sure is shaping up to be a busy and rewarding one! Thanks again to all our supporters, yourselves included, and please reach out for more info or to get involved.

For more information, contact [dfryxell@dennisconservationlandtrust.org](mailto:dfryxell@dennisconservationlandtrust.org)

## Korri Basinger, my Time with AmeriCorps at the DCLT

You may have seen me around the office, at our volunteer days, or Tuesday morning walks and wondered, “who is she?” Well, I am proud to say that I am the AmeriCorps placement serving the DCLT this year!

Originally from a rural farm town in Northwest Ohio, I graduated from Ohio University in May 2021, distanced six feet apart from my fellow graduates and sporting a black mask. I majored in Environmental Biology and earned minors in Political Science and Spanish. I made the 13-hour drive to the Cape after scouring the AmeriCorps website in search of a hands-on environmental position. I feel very lucky to have come across this one!

As an AmeriCorps member, I live in the LeHac House in Wellfleet and serve two days each week with the DCLT.

The rest of the week I join other members on group projects across the Cape. Our projects range from overwintering shellfish, removing invasives (I’m looking at you, bittersweet), conducting pile burns, and planning a Canal Clean-Up with the Army Corps.

At my placement with the DCLT, I’ve participated in a variety of projects. I helped design an interpretive sign for DCLT’s Flake Ground Meadow property, after researching its natural setting and historical significance. I’ve also helped with storm damage and beach cleanups and led a revamp of our GeoCaches. One of my favorite activities is getting out on the land to meet the people working behind the scenes to keep it beautiful.



While mostly indoors through the winter, I focused on two computer projects. I worked with Dave Fryxell to develop a series of maps using QGIS software to create an up-to-date ‘DCLT Pocket Land Atlas.’ Second, I used fundraising software to develop DCLT’s web pages for the summer auction and Duck Race. In between, I’ve attended DCLT Communications Committee meetings, written social media blurbs, and recently, researched vernal pools.

What’s next for me? This summer I’m excited to get outside and help with stewardship and DCLT’s Water Initiative. Beyond that, I plan to gain more environmental field experience in relation to climate change, and hope to narrow down a field of study to pursue for graduate school.

## Meet the New DCLT Trustees!

### Mark Burgess

Mark's background in Ocean Engineering led him to a career as a consulting engineer in Dennis, where he had spent childhood and college summers. He was drawn to the DCLT when he had the chance to preserve part of his own land and prevent it from being purchased by a developer. "The DCLT led me through the process completely, and I decided I should give back as much as I can." Canoeing, kayaking, camping, motorcycles, and "fixing and making things" are his favorite activities.



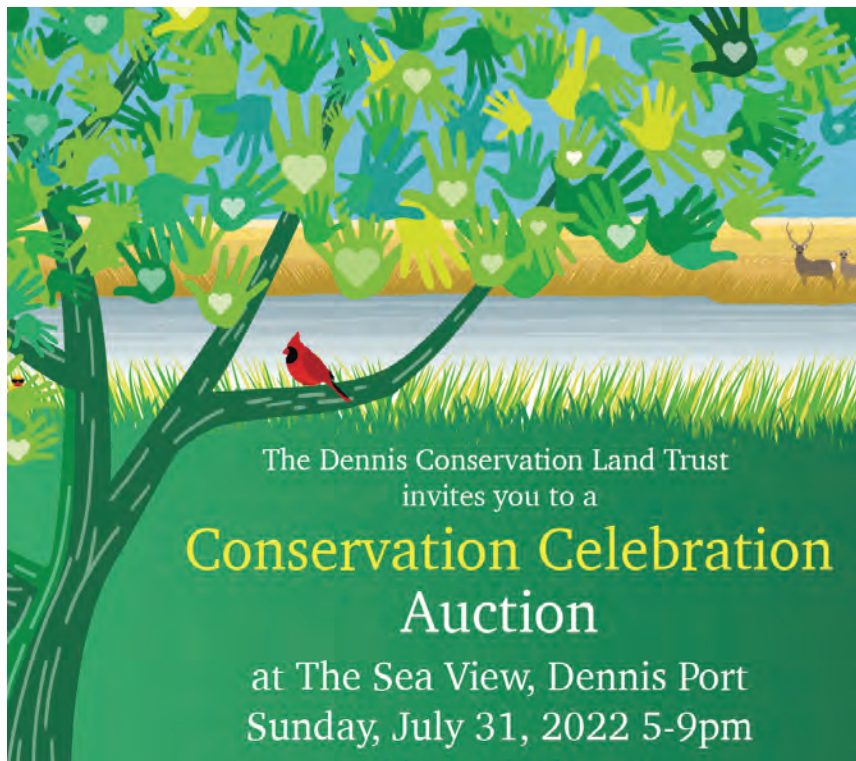
### Tom Dingman

Tom has had a lifelong connection to the Cape. Childhood memories and a long-standing family tradition of conservation sparked his desire to preserve and protect the environment here. "I remember phosphorescence, shooting stars, sand dollars, starfish, and horseshoe crabs: all likely threatened by overdevelopment. I want our grandkids to experience nature in its simplest form." His favorite thing to do is walking at low tide to Chapin Beach, or heading east from Cold Storage Beach to Quivett Neck. Racquet sports, reading, travel, and spending time with family are also priorities.



### Vicki Scaltsas

Many know Vicki through her work on recent DCLT auctions. She grew up on the Cape, enjoying all that Dennis had to offer her and her sisters – playing outside, horseback riding on the abundant trails through the woods, picking wild blueberries, and going to the beach. "After leaving the Cape for a while, it became clear how fortunate I was to live in an area surrounded by natural beauty . . . and that this environment needs to be protected and its natural beauty conserved." When she's not auctioning, she is an avid sports fan, horsewoman, and aficionado of film, theater, and "anything food related."



[www.DennisConservationLandTrust.org/Auction](http://www.DennisConservationLandTrust.org/Auction)

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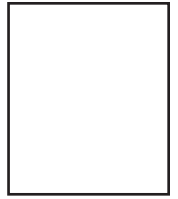
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THE DENNIS  
CONSERVATION  
LAND TRUST

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**VOTE YES on Warrant Article #30 to protect Tobey West!**  
**Dennis Annual Town Meeting**  
**Tuesday, May 3, 2022**  
**Wixon School, South Dennis**



**Read below for a message from the Chair of DCLT Board Joe Masse.**

This message will be short but I couldn't resist leading off with a portion of a song written by Joni Mitchell called "Big Yellow Taxi." Some of us from an older generation will remember the song, while a new generation of environmental conservators can continue to rally around the words.

*"Don't it always seem to go; That you don't know what you've got 'til it's gone; They paved paradise and put up a parking lot."*

In this newsletter, read about the Trust and Town's effort to preserve another part of what we all know as Tobey Farms. Tobey Farms as constituted was 42 acres. With the purchase of the western portion of the Farm, 8 acres, the Trust will have preserved 22 acres or 52% of Tobey Farms.

At Town Meeting in 2019, you were part of a unanimous vote to allocate \$400,000 from Community Preservation Funds toward the purchase of Tobey East (14 acres). This May we are asking you to support the "Tobey West" article in the warrant that will, after receipt of a matching grant from the State, cost the Community Preservation Commission, \$300,000.

Tobey Farms in Dennis Village is the last large piece of open space available in our Town. Tobey West is marsh and upland, wild and undisturbed. It is a place that remains as it was and with your support as it is, in perpetuity.

Thank you for being a member of the Trust. Thank you for supporting our efforts to preserve some of the "wild side" of Dennis. Please come to Town Meeting and support the Tobey West article as we begin the home stretch to preserve some of the last of the special open space places in Dennis.