

# Dennis Conservation Land Trust

Fall 2020

## In this Issue

1. Notes from Behind the Desk
2. Best Wishes and Farewell to Jim Wick
3. President's Message
4. Heat Islands
5. Comparing Land Trusts
6. Remote Internship
7. History of Conservation & the DCLT
8. My Experience as a DCLT Intern
9. A Day on the Palatinate Forest Trail
10. Virtual Internship
11. DCLT's Coles Pond Trail





Resting bench overlooking Swan River @fleetingmomentsphotos.com

# Notes from Behind the Desk

Julie Early, Executive Director

Autumn is a time in which we give thanks, and DCLT has many things to be thankful for. We are very grateful to our members, donors, Board, staff, AmeriCorps Member, Volunteers, and our business, government, and nonprofit partners. Many thanks to all!

As I sit here behind my desk, looking out at the colorful leaves, and feeling the cool breeze coming in, I can't help but think about how lucky we are to have our volunteer land stewards out in the field, hard at work making improvements on our trails, Board Members researching lands to conserve, and partners drafting language for new cultural easements and crafting policies to assist us on town conservation projects. This fall, I am also pleased to have the assistance of our AmeriCorps Member, Emily Ray, helping us with trail maps and visual tools to move our land projects forward. Thank you to Janice Backus, working in our office on projects such as printing our many thank-you letters, and volunteer Lou Lopes for getting them on their way to the post office. I am very thankful.

Our pace has not slowed over the past eight months of COVID. In fact, more people are using our trails, and appreciating the value and health benefits of being outdoors.

This issue of the DCLT newsletter begins with an inspiring message about wild spaces and nature's capacity for renewal from DCLT President of the Board, Joe Masse. If you haven't read Braiding Sweetgrass by Robin

Wall Kimmerer -- put it on your list of "must reads."

It will open your mind to new ways of perceiving and appreciating land, our relationship with the natural world, and those who have lived on these lands for thousands of years before us and who are still with us today.

Stewardship Coordinator Tyler Maikath describes a restoration project on one of our premier properties, Coles Pond Bog, and the new boardwalk that wends its way through a cedar forest. You'll want to head out and see the improvements made; they are well worth a visit! Also in this issue, we introduce the work of our three summer interns who made the best of their summer experience reporting from locations from Washington State to across the Atlantic in southwestern Germany. They shared a common enthusiasm for learning, a love of the outdoors, and perspectives on being New England college students during the pandemic.

We hope you will agree that we are very fortunate to be here in Dennis, participating in the restoration, protection, and conservation of our natural environment, and that we have the team we do. You may also reflect on how using computer technology, though not like being with one another in person, has its positive sides. It has enabled our land trust to work with young people from around the country and world to support local land conservation efforts, and to communicate with our members and Board Members regularly despite these challenging times. Again, many thanks!



# Best Wishes and Farewell to DCLT Trustee Jim Wick

Dorria DiManno, Trustee



Jim Wick and Board President, Joe Masse

From his sporty red-white-and-blue outfits at our events, to his always reasoned and thoughtful comments, and all the shared financial acumen in between, the DCLT will miss retiring Trustee Jim Wick. He and Helen recently relocated to western Massachusetts to be closer to their family.

Jim and Helen joined the Trust in 2005 and Jim quickly became a highly-valued – and beloved – member of the Board of Trustees. It is due in no small measure to Jim’s “financial smarts” that the DCLT has managed to purchase land, establish a small endowment fund, and survive a some very tough financial times over the past two decades. The Trust recognized Jim’s commitment to land preservation in Dennis in 2016 when he received their Norton H. Nickerson Conservation award



Jim tending to his hostas



Jim and Helen Wick

To say Jim “had a hosta garden” is a significant understatement. His West Dennis back yard boasted rows and rows of hostas of all sizes and varieties – a garden so grand that he even hosted a Hosta Garden Tour fundraiser for the Trust.

Jim Wick is kind and generous, a gentleman and a gentle man. We’ll miss him dearly.

# President's Message

Joseph Masse, President, Board of Trustees

In her book “*Braiding Sweetgrass*,” Robin Wall Kimmerer uses these words to describe how she felt as she celebrated the return of wild salmon to a river that had been “restrained” but was now unencumbered and once again able to welcome the salmon home.

*I want to stand by the river in my best dress.*

*I want to sing, strong and hard, and stomp my feet with 100 others so that the waters hum with our happiness.*

*I want to dance for the renewal of the world.*

The Dennis Conservation Land Trust works to ensure there is open space in the town of Dennis. We try to ensure there is wild space for all of us to enjoy, to appreciate, to learn from what is resting in a leafy branch, or ambling along a forest floor. Wild space helps us understand our place in the natural world.

The Trust, your Trust, fights to protect what is left of our natural world in our little town of Dennis. We do this, with you, just as we nurture what has already been saved so we can all stand by a river and sing and dance.

Through a more considerate appraisal of our role in the process of all that lives, perhaps we will find a way back to a balance that will allow the earth to sustain us while it nurtures every other natural being – whether that be tree or bee, ant or plant.

Open space is our mirror into the past— a reflection of what once was and what continues to be. We hope you will take the time to walk the trails and find yourself, in this mirror, as part of the process of sustaining these

precious oases of green, of trees and grass, of plants and shrubs, where everything that is wild finds a home and is welcome.

In the 1970's, the osprey had nearly disappeared from Cape Cod. It is estimated there were only one or two nesting pair on all of Cape Cod. DDT use led to osprey eggshells becoming thinner, and the birds were unable to reproduce successfully. In 1972, DDT was banned and something of a miracle occurred.

Nature can renew itself. All it needs is for us to pay attention, to care. All it needs is for us to provide the space.

I wish I had been here as the osprey returned, as we erected places for the osprey to nest and welcomed them home. Don't we all want to be a part of the natural process and ensure that every living thing has the opportunity to thrive so we can thrive, too? Aren't we thrilled and excited and filled with awe by the natural world? Don't we simply:

*Want to stand by the river in our best dress.*

*... to sing, strong and hard, and stomp our feet*

*with 100 others so that the river hums with our happiness ...*

*and dance for the renewal of the world?*

Please continue to help us. Please continue to be part of the renewal of the natural world in Dennis and Cape Cod. Together, with each success, each acre saved, we will all wear our best dress. We will make the river hum.







# Heat Islands

Emily Ray, Summer Intern

## What is a Heat Island?

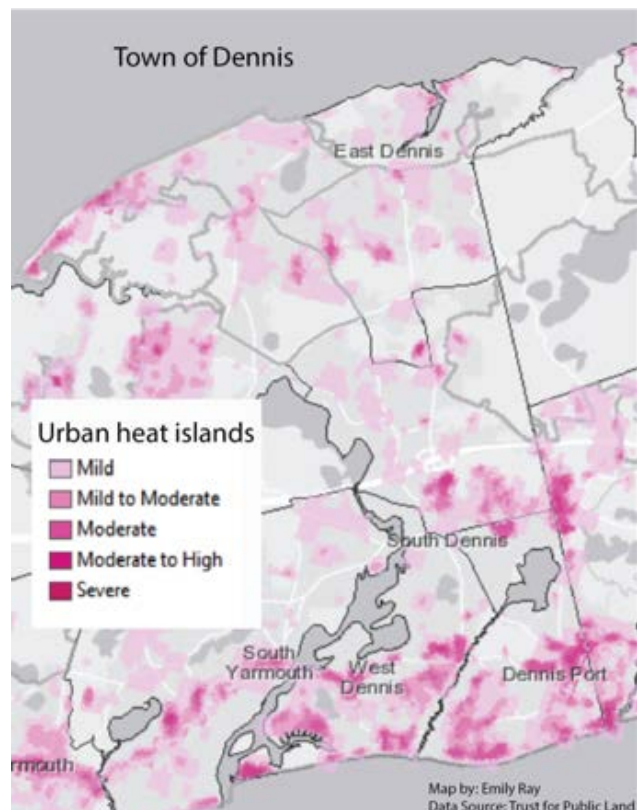
A “heat island” is a built up area that’s hotter than neighboring areas due to human activity. Cities in the United States can be 1-7° F warmer than their surroundings, and 2-5° F warmer in the evening. Urban heat islands exist in large cities, smaller cities, and even in suburban and rural towns like those in Barnstable County. The warmer temperatures that people experience in heat islands come from the density of buildings, roof and pavement materials that absorb the sun’s heat, a lack of trees and green space, and many other factors. The impacts of urban heat islands include increased energy consumption for cooling purposes, increased air pollution, compromised human health, and a reduction in water quality due to warm stormwater runoff.

## Significance

Urban heat islands are as relevant as ever in our world today. Climate change prompts temperatures in heat island areas to rise even higher. The coronavirus is disproportionately impacting urban centers around the country, where heat islands are most prevalent. Groups of people particularly vulnerable to the spread of the virus, including communities of color as well as those living in poverty, are all more likely to live in multi-unit housing and denser neighborhoods in more urban areas. This is also where the heat island effect shows up the most, and where heat equity comes into play. “Intra-urban” heat islands are neighborhoods that are hotter than other neighborhoods within a city due to a higher concentration of buildings and paved areas, fewer trees, and less green space. Higher temperatures compound factors that make at-risk populations more vulnerable to high temperatures. For example, excessive heat becomes a financial burden for low-income households, where families frequently live in homes that are not energy-efficient.



The Trust for Public Land’s 2020 report, “The Heat is On,” analyzes satellite heat maps for 14,000 cities and towns across the country.



Courtesy of The Trust for Public Land

## Definition and Measurement

How do we go about measuring urban heat islands? The heat islands are mapped with air temperature measurements taken at different locations all around a city. Satellite data can also provide surface land temperature measurements across cities to identify urban heat islands. The data tend to pick up big concrete areas as the hottest spots. This past May, The Trust for Public Land started to map urban heat island data for 14,000 urban areas in the country.

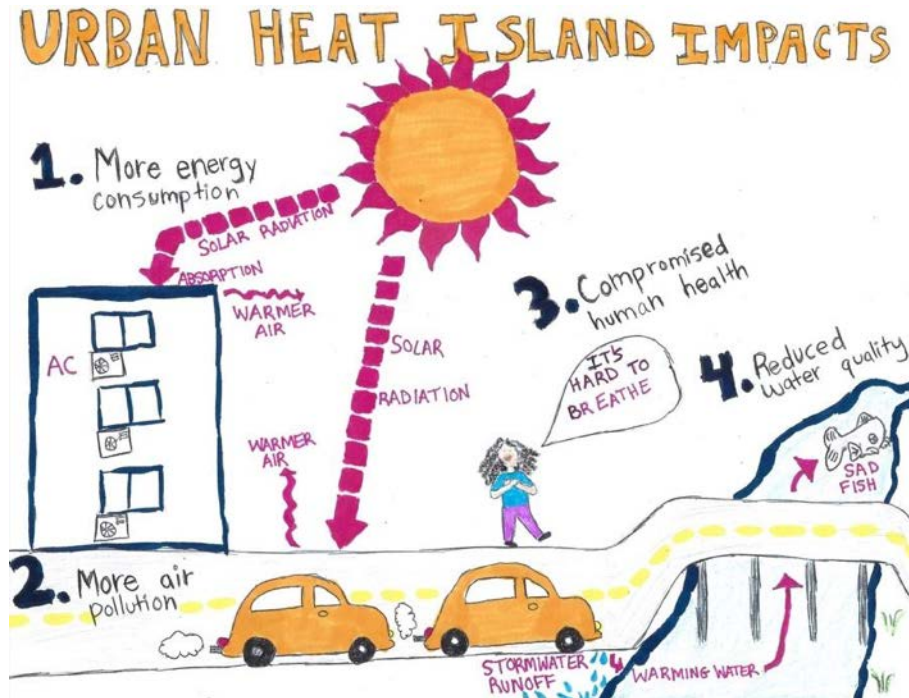


Diagram by Emily Ray

## Impacts

The impacts of the urban heat island effect on communities and their environments are complex. However, there are four core impacts. First, energy consumption is increased. Urban heat islands intensify the overall electricity demand, especially at peak times on hot, sunny summer afternoons, causing these systems to overload. Electricity demand for air conditioning and cooling increases with every degree increase in air temperature. Five-to-ten percent of the total demand for electricity in one community exists due to the heat island effect.

Next, air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions are increased in urban heat island areas. Electricity demand, increased where there are hotter temperatures, is often dependent on fossil fuel power plants. These fossil fuel power plants emit sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxides, particulate matter, carbon monoxide, and mercury. These pollutants form smog. Higher temperatures directly lead to the formation of smog, because the nitrogen oxides and volatile organic compounds (pollutants emitted by cars, power plants, chemical plants, etc.) react in an environment with hot weather and sunlight. In the summer, when part-time residents and visitors flood into Cape Cod, they bring with them more vehicle traffic and more electricity consumption to power their air conditioning. An average passenger vehicle emits about 4.6 metric tons of carbon dioxide each year. The buildup of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases such as methane and nitrous oxide is causing the atmosphere to get warmer. This is part of the heat island effect.

Next, we have to consider the worsening of human health and comfort as a result of urban heat islands. Higher temperatures in these areas cause general discomfort, breathing difficulties, heat cramps and exhaustion, heat stroke, and heat-related death. There are above-average rates of mortality in urban heat islands. Children, the elderly, and those with preexisting conditions are particularly vulnerable to the high temperatures.

The last major impact of urban heat islands is reduced water quality. Pavement and rooftop surface temperatures, which are much higher than other surface temperatures, can heat stormwater runoff. This process ends up raising the temperature of water flowing into lakes, rivers, and streams. Higher water temperatures are stressful and sometimes fatal to many aquatic species. The changes in temperature impact metabolism and reproduction. Warmer water, in combination with nutrients from storm runoff, create dangerous algal blooms. This leaves dead fish in ponds, and blooms can even clog filters, killing oyster spawn.

## COOLING STRATEGIES

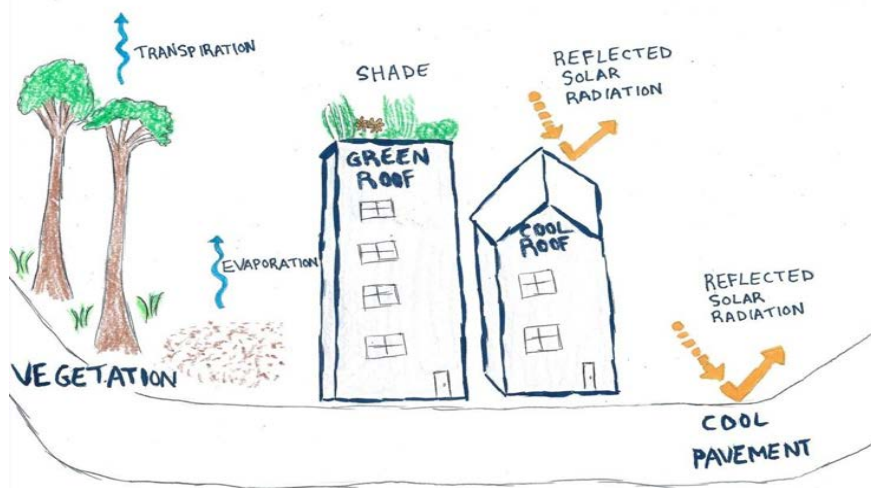


Diagram by Emily Ray

### Addressing

How can we mitigate the urban heat island effect by employing cooling strategies in these “hotspots”? There are a couple of major cooling strategies. One strategy, increasing the number of trees and the amount of vegetation cover, provides shade and cooling through evapotranspiration. Trees and vegetation absorb water with their roots and then release it through their leaves in the “transpiration” process. Water also evaporates from tree surfaces or the soil around vegetation, going from a liquid to gas. These two processes put together are referred to as evapotranspiration, where water is transferred from the land to the atmosphere by evaporation and transpiration, and air is cooled by taking heat from the air to evaporate water. In coastal areas, salt marshes act as a buffer and filter pollutants. These are some of the same important functions that parks and rain gardens provide in urban heat islands, filtering surface run-off water by removing silt and pollution and reducing storm water. Salt marshes and parks and rain gardens have something else in common too: carbon sequestration. It’s important to protect and develop these land features in urban and rural areas so carbon is sequestered, and not released.





Chase Garden Creek marsh @fleetingmomentsphotos.com

Salt marshes are also important in fighting against the urban heat island effect and climate change. Climate change is causing salt marshes to disappear.

Trees and vegetation can do even more than that—they also protect against erosion, a crucial function in coastal areas like Cape Cod. This urban heat island mitigation strategy fights back against increasing climate change-driven erosion of coastal areas and beaches. Beaches on the Outer Cape lose around three feet of shoreline each year. Over the course of nine years, Karen Johnson, Natural Resources Director for the Town of Dennis, has watched Chapin Beach lose about 30 feet to erosion.

More cooling strategies include installing green roofs, cool roofs, and cool pavements. Green roofs are where plants, trees, or other vegetative layers grown on a rooftop lower roof surface temperatures. The vegetation can also provide shade and the cooling effects of removing heat from the air through evapotranspiration. Cool roofs and cool pavements are made of materials or have coatings that reflect sunlight and heat away from a building, street, or parking lot. The materials reflect more solar energy and have a higher ability to cool down by emitting heat that was already absorbed. Several cool roofs are bright white to reflect more sunlight. There are many types of cool pavements, including permeable pavements that lower temperatures through letting water pass through the voids and then evaporate as the surface heats, drawing heat out of the pavement.

Another mitigation strategy is smart growth. This means development and conservation strategies that protect our natural environment and make communities more livable. A couple of the basic principles include: walkable neighborhoods, a variety of transportation choices, preserved open space, and fair development decisions with community and stakeholder collaboration.

### **Application of Heat Island Concept**

Climate change affects coastal areas like Cape Cod more acutely than inland areas, and the urban heat island effect and climate change are intertwined. Rural and coastal areas need to be part of the conversation as human activity increases, temperatures grow warmer, and sea level rises. One urban heat island mitigation strategy, increasing the amount of trees and vegetation, could be even easier to implement in more rural areas, where there is a little more space. Every little bit counts in our work to decrease the urban heat island effect and reduce our contributions to climate change.



# Comparing Land Trusts during COVID-19

Emily Ray, Summer Intern



Squires Lake by Hugo-90.



Point Whitehorn Marine Reserve, in Blaine, Washington, where Whatcom Land Trust holds a conservation easement. (Photo courtesy of Emily Ray)

How does land stewardship work during the pandemic? I decided it might be interesting to compare Dennis Conservation Land Trust’s COVID-19 approach to that of Whatcom Land Trust, the county-wide land trust that covers the city where I’m living this summer—Bellingham, Washington. Since 1984, Whatcom Land Trust has permanently protected over 24,000 acres of land. This differs from DCLT’s work at the town-level, protecting approximately 640 acres from development starting in 1988.

Cancelled volunteer opportunities during the pandemic have impacted land trusts across the country. At Whatcom Land Trust, all “work parties” and “Field Fridays” were cancelled beginning in March. However, monthly work parties restarted this August with very

limited attendance and social distancing protocols in place. This is similar to DCLT’s approach, suspending volunteer events early on in the pandemic and then restarting weekly property clean-ups this summer. To make up for cancelled events and programs, land trusts have started to look into new virtual programming ideas to engage their members. Whatcom Land Trust started the “Healthy Mind Challenge” and “Healthy Body Challenge” to get people out on their properties. One goal for members was to send in pictures of plants that they had identified while exploring close to home. The second goal was to cover 47 miles by walking, biking, running, or paddling. This is the length of freshwater shoreline habitat protected by the land trust. In Dennis, land trust members were encouraged to engage in a new webinar series highlighting ticks, nature poems, and horseshoe crabs. DCLT and Whatcom Land Trust both held online auctions to engage with members and raise money to protect more land. All in all, looking at my experience with Whatcom Land Trust and DCLT, I’ve noticed a similar spirit of perseverance during this time.



# Remote Internship with DCLT

Emily Ray, Summer Intern

I moved to Bellingham, Washington this summer, and so I found myself on the West coast, in one of the furthest spots in the country from the town of Dennis. In a way, when I started my remote internship at Dennis Conservation Land Trust (DCLT), it felt right. I was still living near the ocean and exploring beaches and mud flats. I tried to remind myself that I work for a land trust by hiking trails on land protected by Whatcom Land Trust, my local land trust here in Washington. This May, I graduated from Middlebury College in Vermont with a joint major in Environmental Studies and Geography, and a minor in French. I was lucky to find the DCLT and connect through a Middlebury alumni network.

I worked remotely for DCLT this summer, but I've had some practice doing remote work since March 10. That was the chaotic, emotional day that Middlebury announced that students would be leaving campus for the rest of the semester, my last semester of college. I moved back to my childhood home in Shelburne, Vermont and found myself logging onto Zoom for class discussions, lab projects, and even to show my cat to my Environmental Studies class.

This summer, I've been working on trail maps for DCLT and writing articles for this newsletter. Reviewing and making suggestions for trail maps, as well as conducting research on urban heat islands and land stewardship during COVID-19, have all been very conducive to remote work. Throughout this process, I learned a lot more about the trails around Dennis and their intricacies. Another highlight was connecting with Charlie McCabe, a parks consultant helping the DCLT form its new strategic plan, to talk about heat islands. Meetings are less frequent, virtual, and everyone is calling in from somewhere different, but one of the best parts of my internship was connecting with everyone at the DCLT.



Goat MountainMount Baker Wilderness, Washington. (Photo courtesy of Emily Ray)

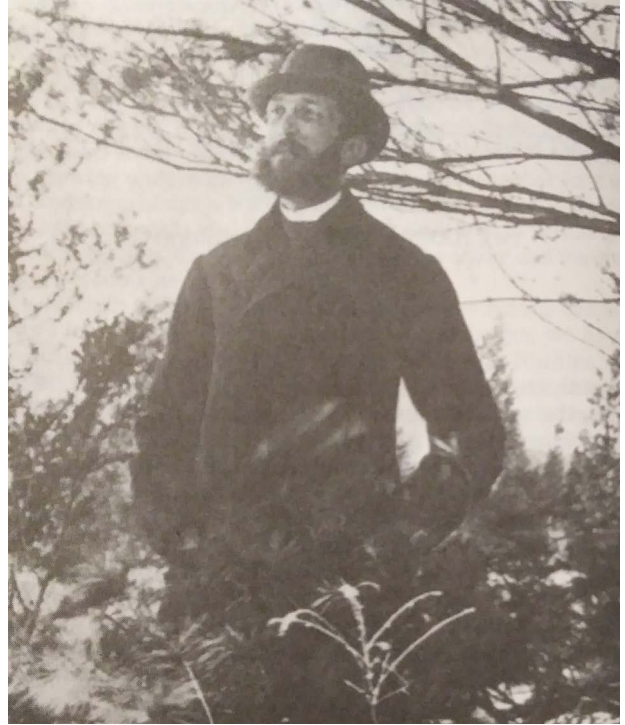
Working for the DCLT has pushed me to think much more about working for land trusts and other non-profit environmental organizations in my future. I just want to be connected to the land and help protect it! Ultimately, I hope to go to graduate school to do this. At the last minute this summer, I applied to the AmeriCorps Cape Cod program and was accepted! I'm incredibly grateful that I now get to come to Cape Cod and specifically, to the town of Dennis. I hope to continue to work on mapping, stewardship, and land conservation activities for the DCLT and the Town of Dennis Department of Natural Resources this coming year. When I make it back across the country all the way to Dennis this fall, I hope to see some of you around on the trails!



# History of Conservation and the DCLT

Lily Jones, Summer Intern

In the late 19th century the Northeast was facing rapid industrialization and urbanization, which brought with it disastrous degradation of the natural environment. Nature previously provided citizens with an escape from the ills of modern society, such as disease, pollution, and poor living conditions, but as Boston became the fourth largest manufacturing city in the nation, this reality was changing. New Englanders witnessed large, landscape scale preservation efforts in the American West, and soon started advocating for preservation of their own treasured lands. The most prominent advocate was Charles Eliot, a landscape architect from Boston, who was troubled by the disappearing wilderness. In 1890 Eliot wrote in the horticulture journal *Garden and Forest* proposing a conservation organization that a year later would be created and named The Trustees of Reservations. The Massachusetts Legislature established the organization “for the purposes of acquiring, holding, maintaining and opening to the public...beautiful and historic places...within the Commonwealth.” Eliot believed that the country needed protected land “just as a Public Library holds books and an Art Museum holds pictures.” Eliot’s vision was that a board of trustees would oversee the land with the support of local government and without being taxed. The Trustees stated their mission as “The Preservation of Beautiful and Historical Places.” The group argued that these places “should be withdrawn from private ownership, preserved from harm, and opened to the public.” The Trustees of Reservations is the oldest nonprofit land trust in the United States and worldwide, with approximately 140,000 paying members to date and has title to 116 properties on 27,000 acres. This group was the blueprint for hundreds of conservation organizations and land trusts in the Northeast and throughout the world, including the National Trust in Great Britain.



Charles Eliot, c. 1895

A century after the Trustees of Reservations made history, citizens of Dennis were noticing a similar pattern of environmental degradation and development encroaching on precious land. In the 70s and 80s, DCLT founding member Carole Bell recalls that Dennis was experiencing rapid development and often developers were able to ignore the will of the voters. Real estate interests had a majority voice on many town regulatory boards and commissions. “When you realize that you can no longer ride [horseback] or walk in the woods where you grew up because there is a new fence, a new house, or a ‘No Trespassing’ sign, you begin to take notice. You learn that the town has very little protected land.” Another founding member, Beverley LeBlanc, noticed similar degradation. After moving to Dennis in 1979 she saw the town quickly run out of undeveloped land. “A lot of people on Cape Cod



were 'land poor' because all their assets were tied up in land, so it was hard to resist when developers came by and offered good money for land," said LeBlanc.

Dissatisfied with these negative changes, many Dennis residents decided to come together and take action, calling themselves the Dennis Committee. LeBlanc, who chaired the committee recalls, "We ran it like a political campaign, had a whole 'dog and pony show,' and financed ourselves with buttons that said 'I love Dennis' and prints of a painting by Dennis artist Ric Howard called Dennis 1960." The largest success took place in 1985 when the Committee got a \$2 million funding package passed by the town. It was the first package passed with multiple parcels of land on the Cape, ten in total, and therefore set a precedent in local conservation. The Committee's power was underestimated by many, but their grassroots methods paid off during the vote. "The afternoon of the vote we met with the finance committee and

were bluntly told by a member of the committee that this wasn't going to pass. But then there were 1,000 people there in support of the bill," said LeBlanc. Pictured is a newspaper article from the campaign persuading citizens to vote, "a vote of confidence in the future of this town." After the successful acquisition, the Dennis Committee disbanded and the Dennis Conservation Trust evolved. "Rich [Johnston] reached out to me because he was concerned that Dennis was one of two towns on Cape Cod without a land trust, so we called around and found people who were interested," said LeBlanc. At first, the Land Trust struggled to raise money but members reached out to their neighbors and businesses and the organization grew from there.

Since its inception, members of the Trust have been hard at work preserving land in Dennis. One goal has been spreading awareness and educating landowners. The Trust isn't just about buying land, encouraging people to consider keeping

**Town meeting votes \$2.6 million for Simpkins Neck**

By Barry S. Abrams

The appetizers had been served. The voters were waiting for the main course to come...and it came.

Voters in Dennis filled the Nathaniel H. Wixon School auditorium in South Dennis last Tuesday night at a special town meeting. Six articles appeared on the town warrant. However, the voters came primarily to decide whether they wanted the town to purchase property on Simpkins Neck on the town's north side.

Once the voters had heard proponents and opponents speak they gave the town its answer.

By an overwhelming margin, 742-92, the voters authorized the selectmen to purchase property for \$2.6 million from Dr. Harold Gursha of South Yarmouth, owner of Gurshall Realty Trust. Gursha owns a 35-lot subdivision on 41 acres of land on Simpkins Neck.

The offer is contingent on a friendly agreement with Gursha. It includes the guarantee that no rights to another party will be granted.

The purchase of Simpkins Neck is also contingent upon receipt of an unspecified amount of reimbursement from federal, state or self-help funds. Under the agreement, the town would require right of access over those roads to the property.

Purchase of the land is also contingent on a successful override of Proposition 2½.

Voters have the opportunity to override Proposition 2½ at a special town election today (Tuesday).

Continued on page 16



**Where to vote today**

Just a friendly reminder. A town election will be held today (Tuesday) to see whether voters in Dennis want to override Proposition 2½ for the purchase of the Simpkins Neck property on the town's north side.

According to the clerk's office at the town hall in South Dennis, voting will be held at five precincts:

- Carlton Hall in Dennis;
- the West Dennis Community Building in West Dennis;
- the Nathaniel H. Wixon Middle School in South Dennis;
- the VFW Hall in Dennis Port;
- and the Dennis Senior Center in East Dennis.

Polls will be open from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Wayne Bergeron of Dennis and Beverley LeBlanc of South Dennis, whose respective local civic organizations petitioned the article for the purchase of the Simpkins Neck property go over some notes prior to the special town meeting in the Nathaniel H. Wixon Middle School auditorium in South Dennis last Tuesday. (Photo by Barry S. Abrams)

Cape Cod Times 1985 news article - Beverley LeBlanc, a DCLT founder pictured with Wayne Bergeron.

their land, but limiting future development. By transferring development rights to a conservation organization or governmental entity such as the Town of Dennis with a conservation restriction, landowners receive a substantial reduction in their property taxes. "Education is a constant challenge," said Bell, "I still encounter people who ask me if I am with the town's Conservation Commission." The Trust has been able to work with the Town and the Water District on joint projects as well. "We have the same goals: save the ambience and the natural part of Dennis," said Bell.

A more recent major success of the Trust has been the 2016 signing of the Cultural Respect Agreement with the Native Land Conservancy, a private nonprofit established in 2012 to rescue land and its stories, according to Ramona Peters, NLC Founder and President. This Agreement honors the continuous association of Indigenous People in Dennis and supports the preservation of Dennis' natural and cultural resources, specifically at Chase Garden Creek. It also offers access to DCLT properties on Chase Garden Creek for Members of the NLC to practice cultural and traditional ceremonies consistent with



DCLT's land conservation practices.

Most recently, in January 2020, the Trust preserved an additional 14 acres on the southern portion of Chase Garden Creek, known as Tobey Woodlands. This land was part of one of the oldest family-owned farms on Cape Cod—farmed since the 1690's— and preserved a part of the region's natural and cultural history.

Looking forward, the Trust continues to reach out to the younger generation, fostering new ideas and energy. "This generation needs to realize that they

have power and get involved with their town: sit on a committee, vote, write letters, gather momentum, as we did 30 plus years ago," said Bell. The town is nearing build-out, meaning that the remaining land is at best, marginal, wet, and fragile and should be protected. Water quality and preservation of wildlife habitat is critical. "In the future undevelopment might be as much a part of our mission as preserving land," said LeBlanc. As the organization continues preserving precious land around Dennis, it is important to look back at the organization's early days and carry the spirit of the 1985 campaign into the future.

---

## *My Experience as a DCLT Intern*

Lily Jones, Summer Intern



Lily Jones

After getting evacuated during my second semester at Middlebury College due to the arrival of COVID-19 in the US, I spent many weeks at my home in Minnesota under quarantine. I was afraid that because of the health risks of the virus, I wouldn't be able to have any meaningful

work experiences this summer. After securing a part-time job, I was still looking for a productive way to spend all my extra time. Thankfully, I saw a post online advertising a virtual internship at the DCLT and I jumped at the chance! After spending four years volunteering at a local domestic violence nonprofit near me, I was interested in developing my knowledge of the non-profit field. I also gained a passion for environmentalism during my freshman year after taking a class on climate change. This opportunity combined these interests and gave me both flexibility and structure.

I worked directly with Executive Director Julie Early to find roles that fit my interests as well as benefitted the Trust. I worked about 10-15 hours a week creating email blasts, posting on social media, creating suggestions for the website, and conducting research for the newsletter. I gained new skills that I know I will use in other work experiences in the future. I also got to Zoom weekly to check-in and learn more about the Trust. One of my favorite parts of the summer was helping advertise the online auction, which had some amazing items and was a huge success! As a history major, I also loved the chance to talk to DCLT Board Members Beverley LeBlanc and Carole Bell about the history of the Trust's beginnings.

This internship has inspired me to continue exploring the non-profit sector and use my new knowledge of conservation to my advantage. I also now have visiting the beautiful town of Dennis on my bucket list! I am sincerely grateful to the DCLT for this great opportunity!

# A Day on the Palatinate Forest Trail

Christina Park, Summer Intern

Beer gardens, otherwise known as “Biergärten” are popular go-to quick eats spots in Germany. One particular biergärten I visited was just on the outskirts of my city, situated next to a trail. After eating a bratwurst (a typical German sausage) and sauerkraut in the courtyard overlooking the woodlands, I went for a walk on the trail with my family. As we passed by other



Humberg Tower, in the Palatine Forest-North Vosges Biosphere Reserve, southern Germany. (Photo courtesy Christina Park)

After resting for a bit near the wooden hut, we trekked to the top of the trail where we reached “Der Humbergturm,” or Humberg Tower, an observation tower on the Humberg hill. This particular tower is a popular observation spot that overlooks the city of Kaiserslautern. Many Palatinate Forest Trail hikers go to take picnics and enjoy the scenery before making the trek back down.

The Palatinate Forest Trail is an important conservation area that is a part of the Palatine Forest- North Vosges

families taking a hike as well, we took extra precautions by wearing a mask and maintaining distance despite the narrow walkways as we approached the top. At the halfway point there is a beautiful stream that cascades down a series of boulders and rocks, although this particular time I visited, there was no water because it had not rained in a several days.



Humberg Tower, Palatine Forest-North Vosges Biosphere Reserve in southern Germany. (Photo by Christina Park)

Biosphere Reserve. The Biosphere Reserve was established in 1998 as the first UN ESCO bioserve that crosses national boundaries - a portion in Germany and a portion in France. It contains forests, special rock features, castle ruins and an interesting mix of plant and animal species, among them vineyards, chestnut trees, lynx, and peregrine falcons. This trail is conserved and maintained jointly with the Palatine Forest Club and municipal authorities. The park employs a similar concept to how the government or private foundations support parks and trails in the United States.



# A Virtual Experience at DCLT

Christina Park, Summer Intern



Christina Park on vacation in Italy, pre-COVID

A virtual internship at a land trust? Just several months ago, I would have been quite skeptical about such an idea. How could one possibly contribute to an organization that works closely with its vast conservation property without even setting foot on said land? There is so much more to a land trust than scouring trails and snapping pictures of the beautiful landscapes in the town of Dennis. The process is so much more nuanced than that, and I have only just begun exploring the tip of the iceberg that is the work that goes into managing a land trust.

My plans took an unexpected turn in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic as I, among many other college students, was faced with bouts of uncertainty including but not limited to what the summer would hold. Flying back to Germany to be with my parents, I looked for ways to get involved and make the best of the situation. Fortunately, I was able to connect with Dennis Conservation Land Trust (DCLT) through exploring my college's alumnae network, and found

an opportunity to contribute to the DCLT's efforts to protect wildlife habitat working as a virtual summer intern.

Working closely with staff, made possible by Zoom video conferencing, I learned about the intricate process of acquiring and handling funds for land acquisitions and the importance of maintaining a close relationship with community members involved with the DCLT. As I helped draft funding proposals for private and public foundations to support a project on interpretative signage, I learned that it was not as simple as writing a lump sum amount and stating what the funds will be used for. I learned that detail was crucial, and gathered information on pricing for the goods and services used for the project. Having specifics on how the funds would be used was essential to ensuring transparency, and important in assuring the funder that DCLT would make the best possible use of their donations.

Additionally, I appreciated the intimate touch that was added to every final report in the form of images of the land that was purchased or the project that took place, for it allowed for a greater sense of connectedness between the DCLT and the donors. All in all, it was nice to see the workings of a nonprofit organization that works to foster a greater sense of community among the townspeople, members, and donors while working to preserve the beautiful landscape that is Dennis.

As I return to Wellesley College to continue my education as an economics major, I will take with me a greater understanding of what a nonprofit organization is and what working for a nonprofit entails. Furthermore, I hope to develop myself in a way in which I will be able to do work just as impactful and meaningful in the near future.

## BONUS FEATURE

# Highlight on DCLT's Coles Bog Pond Trail

Tyler Maikath, Stewardship and Outreach Coordinator



AmeriCorps Members and DCLT Stewardship Volunteers pose after installing a boardwalk at Cole's Pond Bog. (Photo by Tyler Maikath)

Coles Pond Bog is an approximately 7-acre property that the Trust acquired in 2010 from the Welch family with the support of the residents of Dennis at Town Meeting. Located in Quivet Neck in East Dennis, Coles Pond Bog is in the neighborhood of Coles Pond Estates, yet feels cut from the same wilderness cloth as adjacent Crowes Pasture. The property consists of upland early-successional scrub brush land with scattered mature Eastern red cedar, tupelo, pitch pine, red maple, and black oak trees. There is even a huge, stately pitch pine growing along a stone wall approximately 3' in diameter. Given its size and location, this tree is probably well over 100 years old, likely surviving the Hurricane of '38. In aerial photography from that time, this area of Quivet appears as pasture with scattered trees and cranberry bog land. Today, the old cranberry bog has grown back as a red maple-tupelo swamp with a sizeable number of highbush blueberries in the undergrowth. Elsewhere, a diversity of shrubs and vines, such as fox grape, Virginia creeper, and black raspberry, provide a critical food source of mast (fruit and nuts) for the wildlife that inhabit Quivet. Our game camera has captured photos of wild turkeys, raccoons, white-tailed deer, and Eastern coyotes—just

a few of the species that can be found here.

DCLT's loop trail established by land steward volunteers five or six years ago, is approximately 0.5 miles long, and takes you into the heart of the swamp. The grassy trail continues to be maintained by DCLT Trustees, Staff, AmeriCorps Service Members, and Volunteers. For years though, the trail remained inaccessible during the wettest months of the year due to the flooding of the swamp and adjacent muddy areas. In 2019, Trustee Bob Laufer and DCLT Outreach and Stewardship Coordinator Tyler Maikath created and implemented a plan to address the flooding by installing elevated rustic bog bridges throughout the property. With generous support from neighbors, DCLT successfully raised the funds needed to embark on this major trail improvement project. Today, it represents one of the finest trails in the DCLT trail system.

The Coles Pond Bog trailhead is located at 82 Coles Pond Drive with space for one or two cars along the road by the DCLT sign. Given the property's location within a residential subdivision, please kindly park immediately in front of the trailhead.



## The Dennis Conservation Land Trust

### Trustees

Joseph W. Masse, President  
Carole W. Bell, Vice President  
Frank Dahlstrom, Treasurer  
Dianne Callan, Clerk  
Connie Bechard  
Katie Clancy  
Dorria DiManno  
Chris Foley  
Kathleen Fowler  
Richard Johnston  
Bob Laufer  
Paul McCormick  
Paul Prue  
Norman Taupeka  
John Todd

### Advisors

Brad Boyd  
David Berry  
Mark Burgess  
Thomas Dingman  
Peter Flood  
Dorria Marsh  
Connie Mooers  
Vicki Scaltsas

### Trustees Emeritus

Beverley LeBlanc  
Edmond Nickerson  
Christopher Wadsworth  
James Wick

### Staff

Julie Early, Executive Director  
Janice Backus, Administrative Assistant  
Tyler Maikath, Stewardship and Outreach Coordinator

### Consultants

Charlie McCabe, Stewardship/Strategic Planning  
Dina Pandya, Newsletter Design  
Emily Ray, AmeriCorps  
Karen Ryder, Webmaster

811 Main Street, Unit 1B; P.O. Box 67  
East Dennis, MA 02641  
508.694.7812  
[dennisconservationlandtrust.org](http://dennisconservationlandtrust.org)

THE DENNIS  
CONSERVATION  
LAND TRUST

