Frenchman Bay Conservancy

Conference Summary Report and Next Steps

For

CONVERGENCE 2011!

Exploring Opportunities for Research, Education, and Conservation in a Charismatic Landscape

Friday 17 June 2011

University of Maine at Machias

Introduction

Downeast Maine's greatest asset is its unique and charismatic natural capital: intact ecosystems, healthy watersheds, and distinctive glacial geology. In addition to its natural assets the region boasts thousands of acres of potentially accessible lands in the form of national and state parks, wildlife refuges, working forests, and lands conserved by land trusts. Scientific studies show that the Downeast and Acadia region (Hancock and Washington counties) contains many of the cleanest, most natural and least developed watersheds and wildlife corridors on the East Coast of the United States.

In response to the increased interest in regional research and conservation, the Frenchman Bay Conservancy (FBC) and its partners held a Downeast and Acadia Research, Education, and Conservation Roundtable on August 23, 2010. The goal of the roundtable was to explore the concept that the ecologically valuable lands of the Downeast region, if promoted for research and education, could be an economic driver for the communities in the area. The primary outcome of the roundtable, which was attended by 34 regional representatives, was a consensus to move forward on forming a research, conservation, and education network and to hold a more comprehensive conference in 2011. FBC received a grant from the Elmina B. Sewall Foundation in fall of 2010 to continue these efforts.

The Convergence 2011 Conference was held at the University of Maine at Machias (UMM) on June 17, 2011 and was attended by 70 participants from 49 different organizations and agencies (see Participant and Network List attached). The conference was designed to foster a day-long networking opportunity and discussion on how collaborative research and education can be enhanced in the rich lands and waters of Downeast Maine. The format included a keynote speech by Tim Glidden from Lands for Maine Future and now Maine Coast Heritage Trust and a presentation about currently available GIS technology by Tora Johnson from UMM. This was followed by presentations by Mark Berry on Natural Capital and Tom Sidar on the meaning of "Convergence." After lunch there was a panel discussion about models of success from our region followed by a break out session designed to stimulate discussion about how to enhance networking and collaboration and how we might move forward as a community of conservationists (see Agenda attached).

Presentations

Keynote Speaker: "The Convergence of Research, Education, and Conservation in Maine" - Tim Glidden, President of the Maine Coast Heritage Trust and formerly Land for Maine's Future

Tim spoke on several topics exploring how we can move to a stronger model of sustainability including land conservation history in the state and in the "Acadian locale," the players involved in land

conservation and large-land ownership, and the relationship between the needs of humans and the environment.

When the Land for Maine's Future program started in 1987 the amount of land conserved was less than 5% of the state; today it is 20%. The growth in conserved land in the Acadian locale has been very significant in recent years; there is now a landscape of public lands, conserved working forest lands, wildlife refuges, community forests, and other conserved holdings stretching from the Penobscot River to the St Croix River and into Canada. This is not a "pristine landscape;" commercial forest management extends across these lands. However, this landscape is in remarkably good condition especially in a global context. The major conservation players in the Acadian locale continue to be the Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands, the National Park Service, and the US Fish & Wildlife Service as well as the numerous land trusts and academic and government researchers.

Although Maine is currently the lowest density state east of the Mississippi, it is expected to add the population equivalent of two Portlands in the near future. Maine will need to invest in research in marine technology, renewable energy, and environmental preservation. Furthermore, protecting these assets will require research to inform future management decisions and education.

"Mapping the Charismatic Landscape" - Tora Johnson, UMM with input from Gordon Longsworth, College of the Atlantic (COA)

Tora presented numerous GIS maps, graphics, and statistics which describe the physical, biological, and social characteristics of Hancock and Washington counties and which illustrate the great potential of GIS technology.

- Hancock and Washington counties total land area is 4,445 sq miles/ 11,500 sq km
- 2010 population for Hancock Co is 54,418 and Washington Co is 32,856. Hancock Co has seen a 5% increase while Washington has seen a 3 % decrease.
- Resource-based economy includes fisheries, forest products, and agriculture. There is also a large tourism, real estate, and construction economy.
- Both counties together have 200,000+ acres of ponds & lakes; 3,300+ miles of streams; 1,000+ river miles; and 2,700 sq mi of forest cover
- The two-county region has 54 of Maine's 87 (62%) globally significant seabird nesting islands as well as thousands of acres of significant shorebird, eelgrass, eagle, wading bird, and waterfowl habitats.
- The region is home to nine significant Atlantic salmon (and 10 other migratory fish species) watersheds as well as numerous smaller coastal drainages.
- It is bordered on the west by the Penobscot River, which is the state's largest and New England's second largest watershed, and on the east by the St Croix River International Waterway.
- The region boasts 5 universities/colleges, ~11 land trusts, ~15 conservation organizations/institutions, ~6 state and federal government agency offices and four Native American tribes (Passamaquoddy, Penobscot, Maliseet, and Micmac).

"Natural Capital: A Case Study of Downeast Lakes Land Trust" - Mark Berry, Downeast Lakes Land Trust

Based in Grand Lake Stream, Downeast Lakes Land Trust's mission focuses on economic and environmental well-being achieved through exemplary forest management in the Grand Lake Stream region. The organization recognizes that the region's natural resources have direct and indirect economic value: clean water, clean air, employment (timber, tourism, fishing), forest products, recreation, scenic beauty, and a sense of place (traditions). Projects that help achieve their goal include: Downeast Lakes Conservation Area for Wagner Forest Management, Webber Ownership

Projects, and the Farm Cove and West Grand Lake Community Forest Projects. The Trust practices "Focus-Species Forestry" which integrates a full range of native wildlife habitat with sustainable timber management. They partner with Washington County-based Project SHARE when working on projects to restore salmon habitat. Recreation projects include both water related (boating, fishing, etc) and land related (hunting, hiking, camping) activities. Community Forest craft products include basketry, canoe building, wreath making, and general wood crafts. Research and education partnerships include numerous internship programs.

The Trust actively evaluates the overall economic impact of conservation and has determined that sustainable forest management generates an average of 3.2 total jobs/1000 acres (1.4 direct and 1.8 indirect); a high portion of gross revenues support jobs; the infrastructure investments add to impact; and the benefits increase over time. Success of projects is measured through preventing losses in tourist economy, providing environment for continued success, confidence for investment in businesses, new /increased recreation opportunities, community events, and quality of life and attractiveness of region.

"Convergence of Our Strategic Interests" - Tom Sidar, Frenchman Bay Conservancy
Strategic convergence is a business term used to describe the phenomenon which occurs when a geographic region has the natural attributes that make it advantageous for organizations or business to locate there. Over time, this convergence shapes the regional economy and culture around a central theme. Examples include strategic convergences that arise from the extraction of coal in West Virginia or the extraction/processing of oil in Texas and the Gulf of Mexico.

Although the attributes of Downeast Maine are much different, there is a major strategic convergence going on here in Washington and Hancock counties too. The most important assets of our region are from nature: clean watersheds, dramatic geologic features, and undeveloped habitat corridors. Likewise, the organizations and individuals protecting important tracts of critical wildlife habitat and open space are integral to this convergence. Over the years, the outstanding natural quality of Downeast Maine has attracted the attention of prominent educators and researchers.

Today we are bringing research, education, conservation, and community leaders together with the purpose of

1. exploring new ways to publicize the scientific, social, and economic value of the many and diverse conservation, education, and research efforts in this region,
2. articulating a sustainable ecological and economic vision for Downeast/Acadia, and
3. beginning to outline a work plan for moving forward that includes timeframes, costs, and potential roles of our different organizations.

Breakout Session Highlights

- Work on finding common ground among organizations rather than focusing on differences
- Encourage data and resource sharing among collaborators
- A network can leverage funds and resources better than single organizations (more power as a group)
- Need to encourage individual participants to conduct individual next steps
- Need an articulated and agreed upon vision with a broad inclusion of interests
- Need some achievable first steps that describe the current state of convergence in order to develop the vision, such as sharing participant list and current research

- First steps will precede yet inform vision
- Vision should include:
  - Increased knowledge about natural assets of Downeast (DE) –through research, outreach, and education
  - Increased conservation of critical areas in DE (areas determined through a above)
  - More young people of DE working in conservation, research and education in DE
  - Improved economy of DE - collective ability to attract more dollars for projects

Next Steps

Below are the four central themes/goals that emerged from the conference as well as individual short-term tasks that will help to achieve these goals. Some of the tasks may be achieved within the next six months while others will require additional planning and funding. See summary table below.

1) **Engage researchers in order to promote conservation and social research on Downeast and Acadia conserved lands.**
   a. Conduct bi-annual or annual research exchange meetings in which area researchers present/share their studies and findings with other researchers and area conservation organizations. Research exchange meetings can rotate among the various regional research institutions such as COA, UMM, and SERC.
   b. Establish and maintain a research project database which lists the researcher, institution, location, and description of the project.

2) **Develop effective GIS mapping tools and land conservation databases in order to facilitate collaborations between conservation organizations and researchers.**
   a. Establish and maintain a land conservation database which consists of parcel location, owner/steward, access information, biological and geological information, and research needs.
   b. Encourage and find funding for GIS mapping projects at UMM and COA that help to characterize the landscape and promote research.

3) **Strengthen network communications**
   a. Generate and maintain a Downeast and Acadia Research and Conservation Network participant list and email distribution list. Designate a point person who is the main contact for sharing research-conservation information.
   b. Create and maintain a clearinghouse-format website that would include information on regional research projects, potential funding sources, intern and employment opportunities, databases, news and events, resources, and related links.
   c. Establish a Downeast and Acadia Research and Conservation Network Steering Committee to include representatives from research and educational institutions, conservation organizations, natural resource agencies, and potential funders.
   d. Begin planning Convergence 2012

4) **Establish a process that explores and documents the economic value of regional conservation research and education**
   a. Work with an economist to develop a framework that captures the econometrics of a regional conservation-economic driver theory
   b. Establish a mechanism and format for collection of the econometric data

c. Collect examples and anecdotal information that illustrate how researchers and conservation managers use the region (e.g. recent SERC expansion, SERC/UM intern program, recent Josselyn Botanical Society visit, COA and UMM graduates living and working in region)

Next Steps Summary Table

	Task	**Timeframe**	**Funding**	**Lead**
1a	Conduct bi-annual or annual research exchange meetings	Fall/Winter 2011	Yes thru 2011	FBC, SERC, COA, UMM
1b	Establish and maintain a research project database	Fall 2011 & ongoing	Yes thru 2011	FBC and Partners
2a	Establish and maintain a land conservation database	Fall 2011 & ongoing	Yes thru 2011	FBC and Partners
2b	Encourage and find funding for GIS mapping projects	2012 & ongoing	Needed	All partners
3a	Generate and maintain a participant and email distribution list	Fall 2011	Yes thru 2011	FBC
3b	Create and maintain a clearinghouse-format website	Fall 2011 & ongoing	Yes thru 2011	FBC and Partners
3c	Establish a Network Steering Committee	Fall 2011	Yes thru 2011	FBC and Partners
3d	Begin planning Convergence 2012	Spring/Summer 2012	Needed	Steering Committee
4a	Develop a framework that captures the econometrics of a regional conservation-economic driver theory	Winter/Spring 2012	Needed	FBC and Partners
4b	Establish a mechanism for collection of econometric data	Winter/Spring 2012	Needed	FBC and Partners
4c	Collect examples that illustrate how researchers and conservation managers use the region	Winter/Spring 2012	Needed	FBC and Partners

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Participant and Network List*

** Some individuals listed below were unable to attend but wish to be part of the Network*

Name		Affiliation
Robin	Alden	Penobscot East Resource Center
Jane	Arbuckle	Maine Coast Heritage Trust
Barbara	Arter	BSA Consulting
Kevin	Athearn	University of Maine at Machias
Rich	Bard	Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife
Mark	Berry	Downeast Lakes Land Trust
Tom	Boutureira	Downeast Coastal Conservancy
Amanda	Butak	University of Maine
Aram	Calhoun	University of Maine
Stephanie	Clement	Friends of Acadia
Ken	Cline	College of the Atlantic
Les	Coleman	Downeast Coastal Conservancy Board
Dennis	Damon	
Yvonne	Davis	Schoodic Education and Research Center Institute
Michael	Day	University of Maine
Bob	DeForrest	Maine Coast Heritage Trust
Jane	Disney	MDI Biological lab
Cheri	Domina	Great Pond Mountain Conservation Trust
Frank	Dorsey	Friends of Taunton Bay & Frenchman Bay Conservancy
Amos	Enos	Resources First Foundation
Jay	Espy	Elmina B. Sewall Foundation
Dick	Fisher	Town of Gouldsboro
David	Garcelon	Natural Resource Conservation Service
Tim	Glidden	Maine Coast Heritage Trust
Beth	Goettel	Maine Coastal Islands National Wildlife Refuge
Alan	Goldstein	Schoodic Education and Research Center
Regina	Grabrovac	Farm to School
Leda Beth	Gray	Downeast Audubon
Kehben	Grier	Beehive Collective
Robin	Hadlock Seeley	Rockweed Coalition / Cornell University
Paul	Haertel	Frenchman Bay Conservancy
George	Herrick	Eastern Maine Conservation Initiative
Lisa	Heyward	Frenchman Bay Conservancy
Tom	Hitchins	Downeast Salmon Federation
Kristen	Hoffmann	Forest Society of Maine
Bill	Horner	Maine Institute for Human Genetics & Health
Cindy	Huggins	President University of Maine at Machias
Alan	Hutchinson	Forest Society of Maine

Tora	Johnson	University of Maine at Machias
Meredith	Jones	Maine Community Foundation
Alan	Kane	Downeast Salmon Federation
William	Kolodnicki	Moosehorn National Wildlife Refuge
Melissa	Lee	Maine Coast Heritage Trust
Jim	Levitt	The Harvard Forest, Harvard University
Rob	Lilieholm	University of Maine
Gordon	Longsworth	College of the Atlantic
Anne	Marshall	Pleasant River Wildlife Foundation
Mark	Mass	Resources First Foundation
Cathy	Melio	Maine Community Foundation
Abe	Miller-Rushing	Acadia National Park & SERC Institute
Glenn	Mittelhauser	Maine Natural History Observatory
Paul	Molyneaux	Fisherman's Voice
Val	Peacock	Sumner Pathways @ Sumner High School
Ann	Rappaport	Tufts University
Lydia	Rogers	
Tricia	Rouleau	FB Environmental
Nathan	Rutenbeck	Yale Forestry School
Bill	Schlesinger	Cary Institute
Nancy	Sferra	The Nature Conservancy
Dwayne	Shaw	Downeast Salmon Federation
Molly	Shea	Beehive Collective
Tom	Sidar	Frenchman Bay Conservancy
Diane	Smith-Halkett	Sunrise County Economic Council
Craig	Snapp	Downeast Coastal Conservancy
Lee	Sochasky	St Croix International Waterway Commission
Mike	Soukup	Schoodic Education and Research Center Institute
Sherrie	Sprangers	University of Maine at Machias
Natalie	Springuel	Maine Sea Grant
Sheridan	Steele	Acadia National Park
Medea	Steinman	Science Education Research
Ander	Thebaud	Sumner Pathways @ Sumner High School
Karin	Tilburg	Forest Society of Maine
Nikki	Tourigny	Beehive Collective
Jude	Valentine	Tides Institute and Museum of Art
Jacob	van de Sande	Downeast Salmon Federation
Jill	Weber	Consulting Botanist/Ecologist
Thomas	Weddle	Maine Geological Survey
Deirdre	Whitehead	Maine Coast Heritage Trust
Lois	Winter	Pleasant River Wildlife Foundation
Bill	Zoellick	Schoodic Education and Research Center Institute

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AGENDA

Time	Activity
8:00-9:00	Continental Breakfast & Registration All morning sessions are in the Science Bldg Auditorium.
9:00-9:15	**Welcome & Introduction:** Dr. Cynthia Huggins, President UMM and Lisa Heyward, President Frenchman Bay Conservancy
9:15-10:00	**Keynote Speaker: "The Convergence of Research, Education, and Conservation in Maine"** - Tim Glidden, President of the Maine Coast Heritage Trust
10:00-10:15	Break
10:15-10:55	**"Mapping the Charismatic Landscape"** - Tora Johnson, UMM
10:55-11:30	**"Natural Capital: A Case Study of Downeast Lakes Land Trust"** - Mark Berry, Downeast Lakes Land Trust
11:30-12:00	**"Convergence of Our Strategic Interests"** - Tom Sidar, Frenchman Bay Conservancy
12:00-1:00	Lunch and Networking Session at Portside in Kimball Hall
1:00-2:00	**Panel Discussion** (Science Bldg)**: "Models of Successful Collaboration"**
2:00-3:00	**Break Out Session** (2nd Floor Torrey Hall)**:** Researchers, educators, and land stewards discuss the opportunities, challenges, and needs associated with building conservation-research collaborations in the region.
3:00-3:30	Break and Networking Session
3:30-4:00	**Next Steps** (Science Bldg)**:** Meredith Jones, Maine Community Foundation
4:00	Adjourn