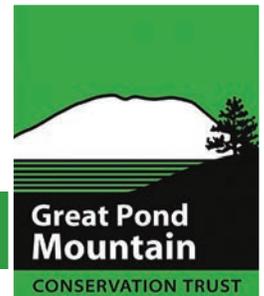


The Mountain Ear

The Great Pond Mountain Conservation Trust Newsletter

FALL / WINTER 2016 / 17



Great Pond Mountain

CONSERVATION TRUST

Conserving Land, Water and Wildlife Habitat for the Communities of Northwest Hancock County

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THE MOUNTAINEAR
Published by the Great Pond Mountain Conservation Trust

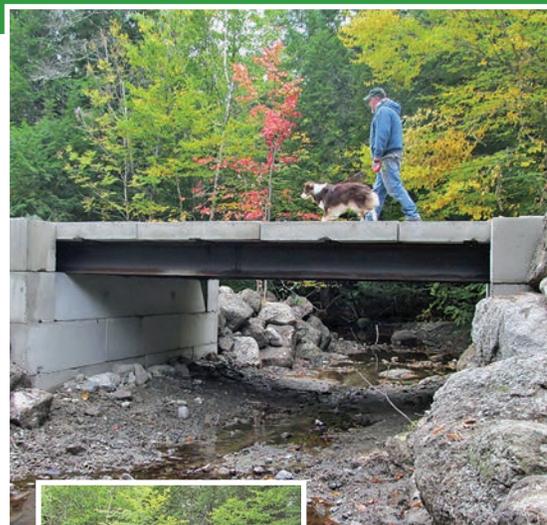
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Design: Olga Lange
Contributors: Cheri Domina, Emily Hawkins, Bob Gomes, Hans Krichels, Roger Greene, Karen Balas-Cote, Brian Keegstra, Caren Mulford, Beth DeLong, Sarah LeVine

Printed on recycled paper.

Trout and Trails Get a Boost

Three wild brook trout streams in the Great Pond Mountain Wildlands received upgraded crossings this October, thanks to grant funding from The Nature Conservancy and USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. Great Pond Mountain Conservation Trust (GPMCT) replaced damaged and/or hanging culverts with concrete bridges on three tributaries to Hothole Brook—which bisects the 4,500-acre conservation area—re-opening miles of headwater stream habitat that had been difficult or impossible for native fish to access since the 1990s.

Big storms, like the one that dropped 9+ inches of rain in Orland on September 30, 2015, can overwhelm undersized culverts and cause washouts, destroying roads and silting streams. Hanging culverts, which create a waterfall at one end, can make it impossible for fish to pass



CHERI DOMINA (BOTH)



The Baker Brook culvert on the Valley Road suffered a complete wash-out in 2015 (shown after a temporary repair at right). This fall the damaged crossing was one of three replaced by cast-concrete bridges (above).

Fish were captured, counted, and moved to safety prior to work on the stream crossings.



CHERI DOMINA

upstream to spawn or find shelter in deep pools during dry summers. Both situations are common, and a number of government agencies and non-profit organizations are joining forces to combat the problem, improving fish habitat, public safety, and road maintenance budgets.

“You’d be surprised at how many fish are in these little streams,” said Cheri Domina, GPMCT Executive Director. Biologists from the NRCS, US Fish and Wildlife Service and Hancock County Soil & Water Conservation District came out before construction began to help catch and move the fish away from bridge sites. “Even though the water was very low,” Domina said, “they caught 222 fish of six spe-

“Trout and Trails Boost” continues on page 2



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From the President's Desk

Emily Fuller Hawkins

Mother Nature provided spectacularly vivid foliage this autumn—especially the fiery red maple leaves. Enjoyment of such landscapes calms, pleases and renews one's spirit, which is most welcome this year.

In early October, I had the opportunity to spend almost a full day in the Great Pond Mountain Wildlands, when I met and welcomed a dozen members of the local Trot Club. Some of these equestrians had not experienced the Wildlands, and several had not been there in many years. All were ecstatic about the condition of Valley Road and the views from Flag Hill and Mountain View trails. They rode 12 miles that day, and some returned the following week. I learned about the types of horses they had, such as non-gaited (who walk, trot, canter) or gaited (like Tennessee Walkers, which are smoother to ride long distances). I had a great time and almost wish I still rode.

I also took in the enlarged views from the Mountain View Trail, where there's once again a panorama that includes a snippet of Penobscot Bay, Great Pond Mountain and the distant hills beyond. Go see for yourself!

The Baker Memorial Chestnut Grove is flourishing, thanks to the volunteer efforts of Renaud Cloutier and young Zachary Johnson, and students from U-Maine, Orono, and Maine Maritime Academy who carefully mulched the nearly 30 young chestnuts, some now several feet high. The grove is in an open area on a gentle hill not far from the Baker Brook lean-to.

Lastly, I marveled at our new bridges that will improve stream connectivity, allowing fish to pass more easily. You can read more in this newsletter.

Looking ahead, the trust will soon be hiring a new steward, as Brian Keegstra will retire in March, 2017. Brian will be a tough act to follow... his talents as a craftsman and artist are evident throughout the Wildlands, from the wooden seats on bridges, to the stone entrance on the Birches Path, to the new Stuart Gross Trail bridge. His easy-going, cheerful and patient approach has engendered loyal volunteers and new members. Please express your appreciation for his work when you see him. Brian, thank you!

"Trout and Trails Boost" c continues from page 1

cies in just a couple small pools—including an American eel and a half-dozen fingerling brook trout."

The new bridges also improve passage over much-used trails for snowmobiles, horses, bikers, hikers and runners, and will protect those trails and the streams they cross from damage when the next 100-year storm event hits. Land trust staff and volunteers use the gravel roads—built by the previous landowner—for maintenance and logging access as well.

Funding for the three bridges (and a rock ford) came from two sources. The Nature Conservancy's Maine Road Stream Crossing Habitat Restoration Program, funded by a grant from the National Fish & Wildlife Foundation, made the largest bridge possible, where a four-foot culvert had washed out on Valley Road at Baker Brook. Two other bridges and a rock ford—on another branch of Baker Brook, and on Cascade Brook at Hillside Trail—were funded by Natural Resources Conservation Service's Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). Dirigo Timberlands performed the work.

Our "Trout and Trails Initiative" will seek to fund replacement of seven culverts per year, starting with those on streams, in order to protect our fish and our trails from effects of climate change and future erosion.

Below—Among the fish relocated away from construction areas was this small eel. It had to have made its way past two dams as well as many other obstacles.



CHERI DOMINA

NEW MEMBERS The following new members joined GPMCT between May 21 and November 8, 2016. *Thanks!*

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Mark Anderson & Lorraine Ostergren | Mary Kellogg and Wally Jakubas |
| Amy B. Beem | Carol Kinsey |
| Gregory Biddinger | CJ Langley |
| Melinda & Matthew Bishop | Christopher LaRiviere |
| Stefan Blanchard | Marcia Lizotte |
| Leslie & Warren Curtis | Judith A. MacPheters |
| Todd Devenish | Christopher Migel |
| Paul Devore | Joseph Ranzoni |
| Downeast Outing Club | Jonah & Christine Rounseville |
| Claire K. Eaton | Mark Salom |
| Gregory J. Greenman | Albert Soucie, Jr. |
| Matthew S. Johnson | Martha J. Tompkins |
| Joel Katz and Adrienne Volenik | |

Trail News

Kimball Property Trail in Progress

Our summer intern, Joe Ranzoni, worked to build and map a new loop trail on our 65-acre Kimball property on the Upper Long Pond Road in Bucksport, which features a spectacular view north to the old Stone House site, and a 5.5-acre blueberry field. On October 23, a group of eight volunteers ventured out to finish cutting the trail. Big thanks to Joe Ranzoni and his cousin John, Ginna Erlanson, Jennifer Riefler, CJ Langley, John Wedin, Brian Keegstra and Cheri Domina. This spring, signs and blazes will go up and we'll construct some new parking spaces. Watch for our map and grand opening announcement in 2017!

Mitchville Path to Make a New Mead Mountain Hiking Loop

Our newest (and most challenging) trail in the Wildlands will be the Mitchville Path, a "heritage trail" following the 75-year old route from Flying Moose Lodge boys camp on Craig Pond, down into the Wildlands to the primitive Mitchville Campsite. Bob Mercer led volunteers (Sarah LeVine, Bob Gomes, Chris Johnson, Jack & Bonnie MacBrayne, George Motycka) in rebuilding a section of this trail between the campsite and the new Mead Mountain overlook this fall. It will be completed and officially open in spring.

"I would say that this is a very rigorous trail and not for the faint of heart," said Mercer. "The footing is rocky in places and you need to pay attention. For those who are up for a challenge, the rewards make it all worthwhile."

Last fall, volunteers finished the Mead Mountain Path to the overlook; now we will have a loop. For a peek at this Path and overlook, see Aislinn Sarnacki's video and article on this path published in October: <http://actoutwithaislinn.bangordailynews.com/2016/10/18/one-minute-hikes/1-minute-hike-mead-mountain-in-orland/>.



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Left—Summer intern Joe Ranzoni mapped and began a new trail on GPMCT's Kimball property. Right—volunteers Ginna Erlanson, Brian Keegstra, CJ Langley, Jennifer Riefler, John Weedon, Joe Ranzoni and cousin John finished cutting the trail in October.

Mercer recommends hiking the loop by going up the current Mead Mountain Trail/Path to the overlook, then coming down to Mitchville. Allow three hours for a hike from the Mead Mountain Trail/Valley Road junction, back to Valley Road.

Help for Hillside Trail

Hillside Trail, one of the few multi-use loops in the Wildlands, has always had problematic wet spots and poor drainage—then, last winter, tree harvesting left branches and tops in the trail. To ameliorate one erosion-prone spot, we used Natural Resource Conservation

Service funds this fall to build a rock ford where the trail meets Flag Hill Road. Next, GPMCT rented a mulching machine and operator to reroute and rebuild the trail. The mulcher would attempt to mulch downed limbs, create a more stable path, and also circumvent the ford for horses and bikers. However, after an attempt to mulch almost 1,000 feet of rock-bound soil, we learned that we'll also need to rent an excavator to move these boulders, costing \$5,000 to \$8,000 to finish. We have \$2,000 in hand from donors now. Can you help? We hope this becomes a favorite loop for many users when we're done!

The Mead Mountain overlook loop down to the Mitchville Campsite will officially open next spring.



CHERI DOMINA

GPMCT, Downeast Audubon Seek Joint Education Staff

GPMCT and Downeast Audubon (DEA) will be advertising to jointly hire a part-time staff person this January, funded by grants and donations from Davis Conservation Foundation, Maine Community Foundation's Hancock County Fund, and DEA's annual Birdathon. The Education Coordinator will work with our Outdoor Education Team and area teachers to develop fun outdoor learning opportunities for local students, including those in RSU 25 (Bucksport, Orland, Verona, Prospect), and schools on the Blue Hill peninsula. We are seeking to help teachers enhance outdoor science and environmental education, and introduce students to land trust properties in western Hancock County.

The Outdoor Ed Team is already busy with our Vernal Pool Initiative—Bucksport 4th graders have had two field trips to a vernal pool on town property near the school, where our volunteers are working with the Town, a high school building class and students doing community service to construct a trail and platform for the students to study the wetland. We hope to install it in summer 2017, and we're seeking donations to purchase materials!



CHERI DOMINA

GPMCT's Outdoor Education Team has been working with Bucksport 4th grade students as part of the Vernal Pool Initiative.

Eagle Scout Project Benefits Wildlands

Eagle Scout candidate Erik Taylor-Lash, 17, of Orland built us 12 rustic benches this fall, to be placed at ¼ mile intervals from the three Wildlands gates. We hope these benches make the Valley Road and Dead River Trail more inviting to those whose legs need an occasional rest! Big thanks to Erik and his family, and to Wyatt Astbury and Ray Merrill for donating cedar logs, to Home Depot for hardware, and to members of Orland Boy Scout Troop 102, Sea Scout Ship 1102 and Pamola Lodge Order of the Arrow for construction help.

Erik Taylor-Lash with benches he built for the Wildlands as his Eagle Scout project.



CHERI DOMINA

Goupee, VanDongen Win Wildlands Trail Race

ORLAND—Andy Goupee of Dedham and Jennifer VanDongen of Bar Harbor led the pack over the finish line in the Wildlands Trail Run Sunday, October 30—then went on for the second year in a row to become Downeast Double Trouble Trail Race champs, also win-



HANS KRICHELS

ning Frenchman Bay Conservancy's Autumn Trail Race November 6.

Fifty-six runners from around the state turned out for the first race in the 2016 Downeast Double Trouble Trail Race Series, a 6.3-mile dash across Oak and Flag Hills and Flying Moose Mountain in the Great Pond Mountain Wildlands. Goupee, 35, who won the race in 2014 and was crowned Double Trouble Champ in 2015 (coming in second in the Wildlands Run and winning the Frenchman Bay Conservancy's Autumn Trail Run), came in this year with a time of 44:58. VanDongen, 38, has been the female winner for four years, and is also undefeated as Double Trouble Champion; her time was 50:01. She came in sixth overall.

Second and third-place men's winners were Eric Mauricette, 25, of Grand Lake Stream, with a time of 46:04, and J. Chase Reidelbach, 22, of Virginia

Ed Hawes of Bar Harbor trails John Peckenham of Orland in the October 30 Wildlands Trail Run.

Beach (a student at Maine Maritime Academy), coming in at 47:01. Second place in the women's division went to Dara Knapp, 38, of Columbia Falls, with a time of 53:55, and third was Maddy Glover, 28, of Ellsworth, 56:54. Full race results and photos are available at www.greatpondtrust.org.

Both races in the Downeast Double Trouble Trail Race Challenge series are sponsored by Hancock County land trusts and proceeds benefit local land conservation and public trails.

Big thanks to our sponsors: Stanley Subaru; Awards, Signage & Trophies; Nick Vachon, Podiatrist; Dave's Tractor Services; Curtis Family Shoe; MacLeod's Restaurant; Tradewinds Market; Woodland Studios; Cadillac Mountain Sports; Morton's Moo. And thanks to those donating door prizes: Hannaford's Supermarket (Bar Harbor), Cadillac Mountain Sports, China Joy, A&B Naturals, Jordan's Restaurant, Ben & Bills Chocolate Emporium, Trailhead Cafe, EPI Pizza, Ollie's Trolley.

From the Forester...

by Roger Greene

Boundary Maintenance

Roger's Linear Rangers completed 4.1 miles of Wildlands boundary renewal in 2016, after several harrowing adventures afield. That places our progress at nearly 12 miles—removing brush, limbs and windfalls and re-blazing and painting. We're a little more than halfway done! We have 28 people on the Linear Rangers roster, with 3-5 present at every outing. Thanks to this season's Rangers: Wendy Alpaugh, Linda Bohm, Beth DeLong, Bob Gomes, Emily Hawkins, Sarah LeVine, George Motycka, Joe Ranzoni, Dan Rhodes, Al Soucie, and of course, Brian Keegstra... with hopes that scrapes and bruises heal, tools are re-sharpened, boots greased and muscles recovered for next season's adventures.



BETH DELONG

Roger's Linear Rangers completed 4.1 miles of Wildlands boundary renewal this year, bringing the total to nearly 12 miles—almost halfway done!

Chestnut Plantings

This year, we planted about 50 new American chestnuts raised with donated pots and attention at Ledgewood

Gardens in Orrington. Best seedlings we've ever had! For trees planted 2012-2014, a forestry mulching machine expanded the growing area this fall to afford additional light for proper development. Widening the planted old skid trails was not only successful, but pretty nice-looking, too.

tings that lower the amount of diseased Beech present in hardwood stands, as well as set the stands up for additional treatments.

Bob Gomes and Al Soucie set a boundary corner post.



BRIAN KEEGSTRA

Forest Management Practices

We've applied to the Natural Resources Conservation Service for another 5-year contract for additional forest thinning, to improve stand quality, tree growing space, forest species composition and wildlife habitat diversity. Beginning in January, we hope to thin 50 acres this winter, then 60 acres per year for the next 4 years.

Given the small amounts of firewood generated in last winter's operation, we found that it was too expensive to bring in a skidder and remove the downed trees in some stands—so we let them lie to return to the earth. We've developed and applied a few new prac-

MMA students Chase Davidson, Alex Pan and Mike Wise fence and mulch chestnuts.



BRIAN KEEGSTRA

Wreathmaking Workshop

Sunday, November 20, 1-3 pm
Craig Brook National Fish Hatchery, East Orland

Learn how to make your own balsam fir wreath and take it home. Connie Tuller will lead this free indoor 2-hour workshop for ages 8 to 88. Wreath rings and wire and fir branches will be supplied; bring your own sturdy snips. Space is limited; pre-register at 469-6929 or info@greatpondtrust.org. Sponsored by Great Pond Mountain Conservation Trust.

Christmas Greens Gathering

Sunday, November 27, 1-3 pm
Great Pond Mountain Wildlands, Orland
Sunday, December 4, 1-3 pm
John & Diane Barlow's, 15 Cross Road, Orland Village

Get a full, traditional Christmas tree in Orland Village this year, or find a wild one the old-fashioned way in the Wildlands—either way benefits Great Pond Mountain Conservation Trust!

Sunday, November 27, 1-3 pm,



CHERI DOMINA

come to the Great Pond Mountain Wildlands in Orland for a wild Christmas tree, a hayride, hot cocoa, goodies and a bonfire! Some trees will be available for cut-your-own; there will also be pre-cut trees, both sheared



CAREN MULFORD



BOB GOMES



CHERI DOMINA

Thanks to

Donna Canary for tending the South Gate Fridays this season... **Jane Crosen** for donating *The Secret Pool*... **Denise Buckley** from **Craig Brook Nat'l Fish Hatchery**, **Matt Bernier** from NOAA and Alewife Ambassador **Brett Ciccotelli** (with the mobile smoker) of **Downeast Salmon Federation** for partnering on the May 22 World Fish Migration Day open house at Orland Village Dam... **Jennifer Riefler** and **Patrick Reid** for leading 19 on the June 30 Solstice Paddle, and **Bob & Marsha Mushrall** for the bonfire... **Cheri Domina & Karen Francouer** from Castine Kayak for leading 40 paddlers on the Alewife Run June 25, and **Bonnie MacBrayne, Sarah LeVine, Jennifer Riefler, Bob Gomes** and **Brian Keegstra** for setup and staffing the Orland River Day booth...

Carolyn Coe for her outdoor yoga class contributions... **Jennifer Riefler** for the Perseids party August 12... **Carl Derian & Jackie Hewett** for staffing a table at the Craig Brook NFH open house Aug. 13... **Caren Mulford** and our friends at **WERU-FM**, guitarists **Alison Dibble, Bob Gomes, Shawn Mercer** and all 40 people who came to help Sing out the Summer at our campfire sing-a-long August 31... Artist **Renee Lammers** and **Gina Bushong** for their efforts on behalf of the Plein Air Art Festival that didn't quite come off this year due to low signups... **Jack & Bonnie MacBrayne** for hosting the Volunteer Appreciation Picnic Sept. 9... Artist **Lyndsey Marston** of 3 Legged Dog Ink and **The Good Kettle** in Stockton Springs for another Good Kettle

Does Good benefit September 15... **Jackie Hewett** for the open equestrian trail ride Oct. 2... **Roger Greene** for all his donated hours... **Jennifer Riefler, Peter Keeney, Maddy Glover, Bonnie & Jack MacBrayne, Ryan King, Karen Cote, Karen Keeney, Chris Johnson, Iris Simon, Geo Atwood, Dan Rhodes, Olga Lange, Emily Hawkins, Hans Krichels, the Berrys, Gene Behrenshausen, Sarah LeVine, Ginna and Amy Erlanson, Patrick Reid** for volunteering at the Oct. 30 Wildlands Trail Run... **Gina Bushong** for use of the Alamoosook Lakeside Inn... **Leah Page** for trail map updates... our new Outdoor Ed Team: **Jennifer Riefler, Ruth Gomes, Connie Tuller, Joyce Schelling, Beth DeLong, Karen Johnson, Gina Bushong**... **Chris Johnson** for help in the

and open-grown available, or you may cut greens. Cutting help and handsaws available; no chainsaws please. Cost is \$25 per tree and includes the hayride and treats. Access the Wildlands from South Gate on Rte. 1 (near the Rte. 176 junction in East Orland) or North Gate on Bald Mountain Road (0.2 mi from Winkumpough). Only one weekend this year, as we work with Mother Nature to restock our Christmas tree supply!

Like your Christmas trees a little fuller? Want to choose and cut a fresh one without a hike? Join us Sunday, December 4, 1-3 pm at John & Diane Barlow's, 15 Cross Road in Orland Village, where nearly 200 trees, both



HANS KRICHELS

sheared and open-grown, large and small, await. Cookies and cocoa, cutting help and handsaws available; no chainsaws please. Proceeds benefit GPMCT. Take the Dark Mountain Road off Rte. 166 (was 175) in Orland Village, turn left on Cross Road.

Check web or Facebook for weather updates, changes or cancellations. Call 469-6929 or info@greatpondtrust.org for more info, or 974-7097 that weekend.

Wildlands Snowshoe Race & Winter Fun Day

Sunday, February 5, 2017

Come spend the day outdoors with us, snow or no, at Craig Brook National Fish Hatchery and the Dead River side of the Wildlands! Stay tuned for details!



CHERI DOMINA



SARAH LEVINE



BOB GOMES

office... **Dick Brubaker, Erik, Shellie, Logan and Gavin Tourtillotte, Shaw Smith, Dave Doherty, Connie Tuller, Dan Rhodes, Christina Perkins, Geo Atwood, Beth DeLong, John Wedin, Bob Mercer, Hans Krichels and KidsPeace crew** for Wildlands trail work... **Alicia Riddle Hirons** for cleaning birdhouses... **Logan Benedix, Renaud Cloutier and Zachary Johnson, Chase Davidson, Alex Pan, and Mike Wise** for work on American chestnuts.



Special thanks to Hans Krichels & the KidsPeace, Ellsworth team for close to ten years of weekly service workdays in the Wildlands! The kids and staff accomplished so much for us, from trail work to birdhouse cleaning to Christmas tree thinning. Brian Keegstra,

Connie Tuller and Dan Rhodes spent many hours afield with the kids as well. Hans has retired from KidsPeace and the Wildlands outings have ended for now—but we are so grateful for all they've done!



Thirty-five Bucksport High School freshmen, plus teachers and chaperones came out to the Wildlands for the day on Oct. 12 to open up another Christmas tree management area. They thinned out poplars and birches around dozens of balsam firs up to 4-feet-tall that will make great Christmas trees for our annual event in 3-4 years.

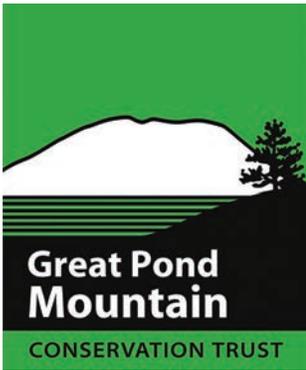


Doug Tallamy's lecture June 30 in Blue Hill, a collaboration between GPMCT,

Blue Hill Heritage Trust, Island Heritage Trust, Downeast Audubon and the Wild Seed Project, was a great success and standing-room-only. Thanks to Doug, our partners and attendees!



Forester Roger Greene and Steward Brian Keegstra hosted about 30 land stewards from around the state in the Wildlands October 13 for the annual Maine Land Trust Network Stewardship Day. Participants enjoyed a talk by Greene on maintaining boundaries, a demo by Appalachian Mountain Club on moving large rocks without machinery, and a tour of Craig Brook Nat'l Fish Hatchery, among other things. Thanks to Brian, Roger, and the staff at Craig Brook for hosting!



The Mountain Ear

PO Box 266
Orland, ME 04472



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BECOME A MEMBER OF GPMCT, RENEW OR MAKE A GIFT

If you're not yet a member, you can show your appreciation for GPMCT's conservation work by joining—and consider giving memberships to friends and family! Membership benefits include the *MountainEar* newsletter (2x/year), and invitations to the annual meeting and events.

Please consider becoming a **Conservation Leader** by making a monthly gift! Use your bank's billpay service or donate online via our website and choose the recurring donation option

Please enter my 2016/17 membership:

- Individual: \$30
- Family: \$50
- Pathfinder: \$100
- Trailblazer: \$250
- Mountaineer: \$500
- Summit Club: \$1,000

Name(s) _____

Street _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

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Name(s) _____

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Please make checks payable to GPMCT and mail to PO Box 266, Orland, ME 04472. Contributions are tax-deductible to the full extent allowed by law. (You can also donate online: www.GreatPondTrust.org) Thank you!