



# Tracts & Trails

Newsletter of Scarborough Land Trust

## Changes at Fuller Farm Preserve

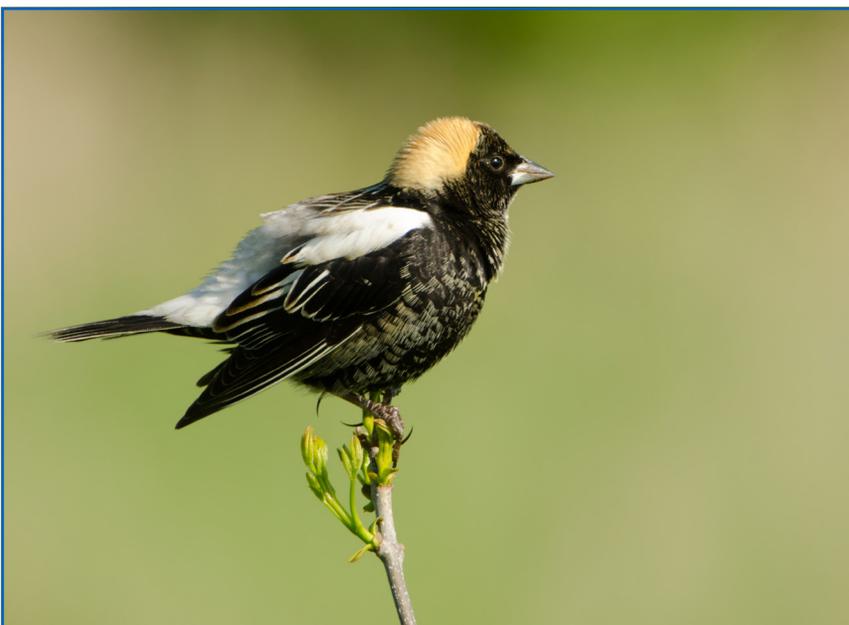
Fuller Farm Preserve is a favorite property for residents of Scarborough and surrounding towns. Go there on any sunny weekend and you will see firsthand this popularity, resulting often in an overflowing parking lot. With the start of the pandemic in March 2020, many more people have realized the importance of places such as Fuller. We have known all along that our preserves are very special places; locations to seek renourishment and serenity. As other places closed and acceptable activities diminished with COVID-19, our visitation increased across each of our preserves. Fuller Farm with its varied habitats and extensive trail network is at the top of the list for visitors. Not only can parking be difficult, but we have seen additional impacts to the natural resources of the property. Starting in May, we are taking steps to improve this condition.

SLT has contracted with L.P. Murray & Sons to redo the parking lot at Fuller Farm. This construction work will add an additional six to eight spaces of parking and make maneuvering easier and safer. In the next couple of months,

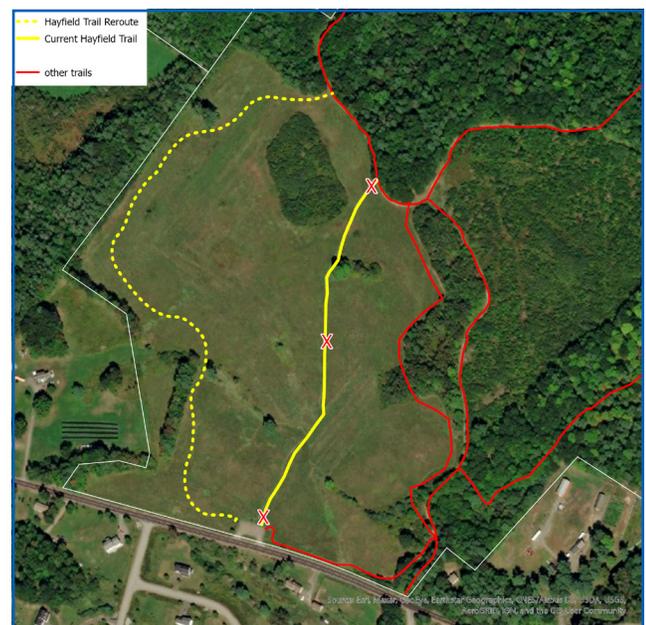
we will also be rerouting the Hayfield Trail. Closed now for grassland bird nesting season, the trail crosses a low point in the field creating what we have nicknamed the mud pit. The vegetation here is sensitive to human foot traffic. Also, since the Hayfield cuts through the center of the field, its very existence causes impacts to the nesting Bobolinks.

The Bobolink (*Dolichonyx oryzivorus*) is a medium-sized songbird closely related to blackbirds, such as the Red-winged Blackbird. The scientific name means “rice eater” referring to their fondness for rice and other grains especially during migration. As a grassland nesting bird, their life is dependent on suitable grasslands such as hayfields. Due to changes in land use and agricultural practices, all grassland birds are declining. The North American Breeding Bird Survey identified a 65% population decline in Bobolinks between 1966 and 2015. SLT is managing the grasslands at Fuller Farm Preserve to protect the nesting Bobolinks, which includes reducing disturbance from humans and dogs from May 1st to August 1st each year.

(continued on page 2)



Male Bobolink - a grassland dependent breeding bird at Fuller Farm.



Map of Hayfield Trail new route to reduce disturbance to nesting birds & natural resources.

## Executive Director's Message

by Andrew Mackie



As I write this letter, my time with Scarborough Land Trust is approaching six months. These months have been filled with learning about the organization, the community and the ecology of southern Maine. I have been getting to know the directors, committee members, supporters, volunteers and partners. I

can you tell this from my experience so far, the Land Trust has incredible people working and volunteering for the organization. The dedication of these individuals is at the heart of our success. This commitment was clearly noticeable when I interviewed for the position and was a key factor in my decision to move to Scarborough.

I look forward to meeting more individuals in the coming months, and getting out into the community as pandemic conditions change. We have already scheduled a host of new programs taking place outside on our properties. We are restricting the number of participants at programs and following guidelines for social distancing. All of us at the Land Trust are excited about reconnecting with the community and fostering our role in creating experiential learning opportunities for kids, families and adults. **Check our website**

([www.scarboroughlandtrust.org](http://www.scarboroughlandtrust.org)) and the back page of this newsletter for a calendar of upcoming events.

We have a lot to do. Our commitment to you is as strong as ever. We are working on strategies to increase our pace of conservation. Scarborough is changing, growth is a reality and with it comes a responsibility to save identified important lands for conservation. This will take broad community involvement. Scarborough Land Trust is already a proven leader in this effort with our recent protection of the Blue Point Preserve. Also, we are contributing to the Town's update of the comprehensive plan. Our hope is to have a park, natural area or trail within a ten-minute walk of every resident. We also want to protect our working agricultural lands, streams/ rivers, and wildlife corridors. Another major initiative is to buffer the state significant Scarborough Marsh. As we move forward, the Land Trust is planning a major initiative to develop strategic priorities. The first steps are underway by updating our current protected lands map and identifying key resources not yet protected. **Check out the article on page 3 to find out more about our efforts.**

The Land Trust also realizes its tremendous responsibility of managing and monitoring the lands we own or are under conservation easements. Our Stewardship Director, Samantha Wolf, has taken the reins of this cart, moving forward on trail maintenance, invasive plant control, people management and more. Samantha is out working with volunteers, carrying out the tasks it takes to manage 1,408-acres spread across 25 parcels. No small feat.

*(continued on page 3)*

*(Changes... continued from page 1)*

SLT has partnered with the Bobolink Project, a collaboration between Mass Audubon, Audubon of Vermont and New Hampshire Audubon. In addition, the Project benefits from research carried out by the University of Vermont and the University of Connecticut. The Bobolink Project has provided SLT with some financial help for mowing the field after the nesting season and with technical advice.

Over the next few months, we will permanently close the Hayfield Trail through the center of the property. Instead, a new longer trail will exit to the left of the parking lot and follow the tree line around the field, linking up with the existing trail system. This will accomplish three items: 1. Eliminate the seasonal closing of the trail for Bobolink nesting (the new trail along the edge of the field can stay open year-round), 2. Avoid the "mud pit" thus preventing impacts to the natural resources and allowing this area to recover, and 3. Create a longer trail system as requested by many visitors. The new trail requires the construction of

a bridge to cross a stream and some bog bridges over wet areas. We will also post the hayfield with seasonal closure signs to help protect the Bobolinks.

The changes at Fuller Farm Preserve represent what SLT tries to accomplish with stewardship of properties. We work to balance human use with the protection of natural resources.

### We can use your help.

The improvements to Fuller Farm cost \$13,000. We are moving ahead with all the changes out of necessity. If you care about and use Fuller Farm, donate to this project. Any amount will be helpful. You can donate on-line at (<https://secure.givelively.org/donate/scarborough-land-conservation-trust/fuller-farm-preserve-improvements>) Or send a check to: Fuller Farm 2021, Scarborough Land Trust, PO Box 1237, Scarborough, ME 04070. Make the check payable to SLT.

## Mapping Our Way to the Future

*(Executive... cont. from page 2)*

This summer, we plan to take a large step forward with hiring an Education and Communication Intern. The position was created to help jumpstart SLT's efforts in reaching out to our community. Our hope is to increase the educational programs offered at our properties. This is the part of our mission to connect people with our natural and agricultural resources. The intern will help us expand our partnerships with entities, such as the Scarborough Library, local farms, Friends of Scarborough Marsh and more. In addition, the intern will help with our messaging to supporters and the general public, adding to our social media presence and print news coverage.

Working behind the scenes is our new Office Manager, Liz Hayden. Liz started in April and is already an indispensable member of the team. I have found from my years of working for land trusts, you are never finished improving the systems needed to run an effective conservation organization. While not discussed on regular basis, it is the thousands of small day to day functions that keeps SLT moving forward. Liz and I are steadily working to improve our data management, financial systems, monthly e-newsletters, program registrations, and everything else that a land trust requires.

I hope you will join us in continuing to make SLT a leader in the conservation of Scarborough. The future is bright and full of potential.

It is true, land trusts love maps. At its essence, a map is a graphic representation of land forms, water courses, parcel boundaries, wetlands, and hundreds of other layers of data. This is the very essence of what we try to accomplish, identifying and protecting land that the community thinks is important for the future.

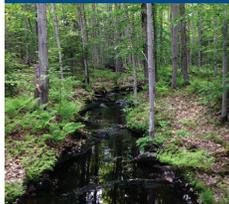
As part of SLT's overall strategic planning initiative, the organization is updating our current "protected lands" map for the Town of Scarborough. This sounds simple but is actually a fairly complex activity involving cooperation with the Town, partner organizations and GIS specialists. If you are new to conservation planning and how maps are made today, it starts and ends with Geographic Information Systems (GIS). GIS is a computer-based system capable

of storing, managing and analyzing data. Each set of data is a "layer" that can be graphically displayed on a map. For example, one layer might include all soil types for a region or another layer could include all known Bald Eagle nests.

In addition to updating our conservation lands map, we are looking both backwards and forward. First, we want to track change over time by developing a time-lapse view of land uses occurring in Scarborough over the last 100 years. Next, we want to set our priorities for conservation. This conservation planning will help SLT focus on the most critical lands for wildlife habitat, watershed protection, working farms, new trails and access, and other uses vital to the community. Stay tuned for further details.



## Make a Lasting Impact -



## Donate Real Estate to the Scarborough Land Trust

### Property/Lands for Conservation

Discuss whether your property is suitable for a new preserve, protected farm, or conservation easement.

### Benefits:

- Opportunity to leave a permanent legacy in Scarborough
- Avoid capital gains on highly appreciated property
- Charitable income tax deduction
- Reduce estate tax burden
- Support an organization with a long-track record of conservation success
- Foster the protection of watershed and wildlife conservation
- Preserve valuable agricultural land

### Property/Lands for Resale

Donate vacant, residential, or commercial property for resale by the Land Trust to help support conservation projects.

Contact Executive Director, Andrew Mackie to discuss possible real estate donations at [amackie@scarboroughlandtrust.org](mailto:amackie@scarboroughlandtrust.org) or (207) 289-1199.



SCARBOROUGH  
LAND TRUST

**SCARBOROUGH LAND TRUST**  
 (207) 289-1199  
 Email: [Info@ScarboroughLandTrust.org](mailto:Info@ScarboroughLandTrust.org)  
 Website: [www.ScarboroughLandTrust.org](http://www.ScarboroughLandTrust.org)

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**Staff**

Liz Hayden, *Office Manager*  
[lhayden@scarboroughlandtrust.org](mailto:lhayden@scarboroughlandtrust.org)  
 Andrew Mackie, *Executive Director*  
[amackie@scarboroughlandtrust.org](mailto:amackie@scarboroughlandtrust.org)  
 Samantha Wolf, *Stewardship Director*  
[swolf@scarboroughlandtrust.org](mailto:swolf@scarboroughlandtrust.org)

**Newsletter**

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Conserving land for people, for wildlife – forever.

Upcoming Program and Events

**MAY**

**Saturday, May 15 @ 9:00 am to Noon** · Native Plant Sale with Rebel Hill Farm, location – back parking lot for the On the Vine Marketplace, 591 U.S. Route 1, Scarborough  
**Saturday, May 22 @ 3:30 pm** · Birding with Eddie Woodin – Broadturn Farm  
**Saturday, May 29 @ 8:00 am** · Birding Walk with Andrew Mackie – Fuller Farm

**JUNE**

**Saturday, June 5 @ 9:30 am to 12:30 pm or 1:30 pm to 4:30 pm** · Nature Journaling with Sherrie York – Pleasant Hill, Fee  
**Wednesday, June 9 @ 7:00 pm** – **\*\*Virtual SLT Annual Meeting\*\*** · Save the Date!  
**Thursday, June 17 @ 4:30 pm** – Mushroom Walk with North Spore – Pleasant Hill, Fee  
**Saturday, June 26 @ 10:00 am** – Wildflower Walk with Becky Seel and Kelsey Kaufman – Warren Woods

**AUGUST**

**Thursday, August 26 @ 6:00 p.m.** – **\*\*Broadturn Farm Dinner\*\*** – Save the Date!  
 – Tickets will go on sale in July

All programs/events require either registration or tickets, visit [www.ScarboroughLandTrust.org](http://www.ScarboroughLandTrust.org) or call **207-289-1199**.  
 We love dogs, but ask that you leave them home for all programs and events.