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The 300 Committee is a private, non-profit land trust dedicated to preserving natural places in Falmouth for everyone to enjoy now and in the years to come. Since 1985, The 300 Committee has taken a lead role to acquire treasured open space for conservation, recreation and water protection. In the last 39 years, more than 2,600 acres have been permanently protected through our efforts.

Leaves

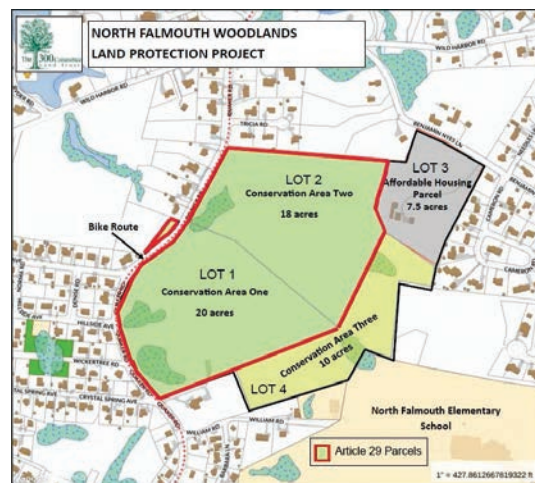
Town Meeting Approves \$3 Million for North Falmouth Woodlands

Since August, T3C has been working on a complex land acquisition that will permanently protect 48 acres of important woodland, wetland and priority habitat, while also reserving approximately 7 acres for affordable housing. We reported in our last newsletter (November 2023) that T3C had secured an agreement with LTC, LLC (owned and managed by Ruth and Steven Augusta) for the purchase of 56 acres at 48 Benjamin Nyes Land and 0 Quaker Road.

The land's price tag of \$5.95 million, plus project support costs (legal, engineering, site assessments), and endowment for future maintenance, bring the total project budget to \$6.1 million, requiring a funding plan puzzle that taps state, municipal and private monies.

T3C and the Falmouth Conservation Commission (ConCom) were delighted that Spring Town Meeting members voted strongly in favor of the project, approving \$3 million in Community Preservation Act funds, a major piece of the puzzle. This grant will cover the ConCom's purchase of conservation restrictions that extinguish all development rights and secure the Town's interest in the property while ensuring protection of the land and public access in perpetuity. If all goes according to plan, \$1 million will be reimbursed to the Town (in two \$500,000 grants, 2024 and 2025) from the MA LAND Grant program. T3C will apply for the first of these grants later this spring.

There are few, if any, remaining potential acquisitions of 50+ acres in all of Falmouth, and there is relatively little protected open space in North Falmouth Village. The land is close to the Shining Sea Bikeway, abuts the North Falmouth Elementary School and is within walking distance of the village hub. While the 56 acres were appraised using the "highest and best use" scenario for a 110-unit Chapter 40B development, limited redevelopment is in the works for the ~7.5 acres slated for housing. T3C is finalizing an agreement with Habitat for Humanity of Cape Cod for the



This map simplified Article 29 for April Town Meeting members. The \$3M appropriation from Community Preservation funds for the North Falmouth Woodlands project passed without question.

Town Meeting Approves \$3 Million for NF Woodlands continued

purchase of this portion of the property, including an open area where an old farmhouse is sited, for the construction of up to 15 deed-restricted affordable homes.

The land is remarkable for its natural resources and high conservation value, with extensive and largely undisturbed pitch pine-oak upland forest, multiple wetlands, potential vernal pools, prime farmland soils and rare species habitats. Protecting these 48 acres from development will save critical natural resources while also supporting water quality in the nutrient-impaired Rands Harbor, Fiddlers Cove and Wild Harbor embayments.

Owned by the Healer family for decades, and at the top of T3C's priority parcel list almost from our beginnings, the land was purchased in mid-2023 by the Augustas, who originally intended to develop it. However, when T3C expressed interest, the landowners came to the table, willing to sell the property to further open space and community housing goals for Falmouth.

T3C has seized this unique opportunity to permanently preserve one of the largest remaining swaths of Falmouth's woodland, while also partnering with a local housing nonprofit to help meet the critical community need for affordable housing. We welcome any and all support for this important project.

North Falmouth Woodlands Funding Plan

Town of Falmouth (CPA Funds)*	\$2,000,000
MA LAND Grant #1	500,000
MA LAND Grant #2	500,000
Habitat for Humanity of Cape Cod – grants & private fundraising	1,000,000
T3C fund raising (Opportunity Fund, foundations & individuals)	\$2,100,000
TOTAL	\$6,100,000

***\$3M approved, with \$1M expected to be reimbursed by MA LAND grants.
Town's net contribution = \$2M**

T3C, Commonwealth of MA and Falmouth Housing Trust Work Together *New acquisition preserves land for Open Space and Affordable Housing*

T3C has facilitated another land acquisition for open space and affordable housing: 3.8 acres at 419 Waquoit Highway. The \$900,000 purchase will be jointly funded by T3C, the state Department of Conservation & Recreation (DCR) and Falmouth Housing Trust (FHT), and is projected to close at the end of May.

T3C has been successful in working with both DCR and FHT on the purchase of the property from the Servis family. The land, with an existing house, is within the mixed use/residential/commercial Village of Waquoit. The DCR will own 2.7 wooded acres with frontage on Bourne Pond, which is within the Waquoit Bay Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC); these woods connect with walking trails on nearby conservation lands. DCR will hold, manage and protect this land in perpetuity as part of the Waquoit Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve (WBNERR).

FHT will acquire about one acre with frontage on Waquoit Highway that includes the existing house, with the intent to redevelop this area with the construction of six homes — affordable, deed-restricted workforce housing for eligible homeowners earning up to 120% of the median income for Barnstable County. The location of the housing in a Village Center allows for pedestrian access to services, employment and public transportation.

“T3C is very excited to be part of this land acquisition,” said Executive Director Jessica Whritenour, “which brings together state, local and private funds to preserve environmentally significant land, while helping address Falmouth's affordable housing crisis.”



The Servis parcel at 419 Waquoit Highway.

300-Mile Challenge Spurs On Hikers

At the beginning of 2024, T3C launched its 300-Mile Challenge, an incentive program to get people out on the many and varied trails in conservation lands throughout Falmouth. Featured below are three members who have embraced this challenge in earnest. We hope they will inspire others to explore our beautiful protected areas, the special natural resources they protect, and the miles and miles of trails all over town.

Jeanne Cosgrove (as of mile 188): “Hiking this winter has given me a new appreciation of the varied landscape and habitats in Falmouth — the hills, valleys, kettle ponds and boulders of the Moraine to the flatter trails and grasslands in East Falmouth. And what a surprise to discover how some properties connect along streams and wetlands and estuaries...especially along the Coonamessett Greenway. It's been a delight to discover many new places, ...like Crane West with incredible views of Buzzards Bay from Mount Zig and Mount Otis!”



Jeanne Cosgrove at Long Pond.

Roger Kligler (at about 270 miles): “I started walking with my dog when I retired due to disability 9 years ago. After I recovered from back surgery, I started exploring the woods. I need to walk every day; it is my meditation. The 300-mile Challenge has helped provide structure for my daily walks, and it's been rewarding to see my miles accumulate. I especially love seeing wildlife and hearing owls in Beebe Woods. I enjoy walking when the moon is full and after dusk with a good headlight.”



Roger Kligler and Lexi in Beebe Woods (Roger completed his entire 300 miles at the end of March)

Pamela Rothstein (as of 175 miles): “I love this challenge & applaud T3C for promoting it! Even before the challenge, I walked an average of 5-6 miles a day. Now I deliberately seek conservation parcels and elevation wherever I can find it (always training for hiking hills and peaks). Nature is a wonder. Gratitude grows with each mile as I revisit familiar parcels and explore new ones.”



Pamela Rothstein in the woods behind Peterson Farm.

Along their treks, these walkers and others have remarked on the birds and wildlife they've seen and heard: a family of otters, Bald Eagle, Saw-whet Owl, Great Horned Owl, Eastern Bluebird, Kingfisher, Yellow-rumped Warbler, red squirrel, deer, Carolina Wren, Golden-crowned Kinglet, and so many others.

T3C is working on small recognition prizes for those who reach the 100, 200 and 300 miles. Won't you join in the challenge? We promise you'll be glad you did!

Hats off to T3C's Outdoor Volunteers

From October through April, our dedicated stewardship volunteers have donated 150+ service hours through Coffee Cleanups and trail crew sessions at more than a dozen conservation properties across Falmouth. A special shout-out to Trail Crew Leader Charlie Peterson, and the reliable trio of Barry Good, Bob Laquidara and Helen Mangelsdorf. T3C truly appreciates all our volunteers and their enormous contributions of time and effort!



Stewardship volunteers enjoy some spring sunshine at the Coonamessett Reservation. (L to R): Dan Walsh, Dave Knaack, Barbara Walsh, Ed Jackson, Bob Laquidara, Tom Duncan, Will Poirier, Rolf Brandt, and T3C's Alexandra Zollo. (Mark Kasprzyk photo)

T3C Investigates Climate Change Actions for Conservation Lands



Last fall, The 300 Committee launched a major initiative on conservation land management for climate change. Alexandra Zollo, Director of Stewardship & Community Engagement, and Briana Lombard, T3C's Terracorp Service Member, conducted a meta-analysis of 20 publications on land management recommendations.

They identified eleven natural climate solution pathways (NCSPs) or deliberate actions to restore, protect or improve the management of forests, grasslands, oceans, wetlands and agricultural lands to mitigate climate change. Based on a content analysis and term search, they ranked their effectiveness for climate adaptation and mitigation.

Alex and Briana presented these findings at the Southeastern MA Land Trust Convocation in early February, and again at our Annual Stewards Meeting later that month. Please visit T3C's website (300committee.org) for more information about the natural climate solutions noted below.

Natural Climate Solution Pathways identified in the literature include:

1. A/R: Afforestation, reforestation, and avoided deforestation emerged as the top pathway for climate change mitigation and adaptation, emphasizing the importance of preserving and restoring forested land.
2. Protecting Blue Carbon: Wetlands preservation ranked second, underscoring wetlands' role in carbon sequestration and vulnerability to climate stressors.
3. Genetic and Structural Diversity: Forest composition and structure diversity were highlighted for long-term carbon storage and ecosystem resilience. Complexity in structure and uneven-aged management assist in stronger ecosystem functioning.
4. Connectivity: Conserving, restoring, or establishing connected habitats was recommended to help species adapt to environmental changes.
5. Competition Control: Managing competition among species in forests can increase productivity and carbon storage.
6. Managing Soil Carbon: Improving soil quality can enhance climate resilience and carbon storage. Unfortunately, once soil organic carbon (SOC) is depleted, restoring it to its original levels on climate-relevant timescales is often impossible.
7. Wood Harvesting: Sustainable logging practices and wood product alternatives can mitigate carbon emissions and provide localized production.
8. Fuel Reduction: Fuel reduction strategies in fire-prone forests can prevent catastrophic wildfires and increase biodiversity.
9. Translocation: Assisted migration may be necessary to prevent species loss due to climate stressors.
10. Windbreaks: Planting windbreaks or managing for high wind events can protect forest health and improve climate resilience.
11. Bioenergy: Biomass utilization for energy production offers a climate-friendly alternative to fossil fuels.

Looking ahead, we plan to conduct feasibility studies to implement these solutions on T3C's conservation lands to enhance resilience to climate change and identify opportunities for partnership with other local and regional organizations.



Briana Lombard and Alex Zollo present their findings on Natural Climate Solution Pathways at the Annual Stewardship Meeting in February.

For Your Calendar

T3C's Annual Meeting, Thursday, July 11, at the Navigator Clubhouse, Ashumet Road, Hatchville.

6:30 pm: social gathering on the patio; 7:15 pm: Meeting and Awards. We encourage members to join us in celebrating another successful year of permanently protecting important lands across Falmouth.

A Changing of the Guard

After 23 years at T3C, Lucy Helfrich will soon be retiring. “I’m not going away!” she laughed. “I’ll still be here in Falmouth but I’m easing out of work to focus on family and new adventures.” For now, Lucy will continue to be in the office a couple of days a week and will help orient T3C’s new 20-hour-a week Communications Associate, Elizabeth (Liz) Saito. Plans are underway to hire another part-time staff member to focus on membership and fundraising support.

Lucy began part-time in 2001, when her three children were young, putting her writing skills to work in support of T3C’s newsletter, membership and grants. Over the years, as the land trust grew and matured, she deftly added hours and responsibilities: overseeing the membership program and T3C’s database, coordinating communications with T3C’s many constituents and leading creative projects like map upgrades and interpretive signage. “I’ve really enjoyed the variety in my work and the people involved with T3C,” she reflected. “And because I love Falmouth and our many beautiful protected lands, it’s been easy to share my enthusiasm for T3C’s conservation mission.”

T3C President Jo Ann Muramoto reflected on Lucy’s tenure. “On behalf of the T3C Board of Directors and staff, I offer our deepest thanks and appreciation to Lucy for her many years of service to T3C and all that she has done for us. As a key member of our team,

Lucy’s tireless yet enthusiastic professionalism has helped us to become one of the best and most accomplished organization in town! We hope she will enjoy her retirement knowing that her efforts have enabled us to build and maintain our membership, engage people in our mission and activities, and obtain those all-important grants and donations that support our staff and programs.”

Liz Saito has already proven herself to be a huge T3C fan. As we reported a year ago, Liz authored and published the book, *Walking Falmouth*, a guide to the trails and history of selected conservation lands in town, which was Eight Cousins Bookstore’s #1 best-seller of 2023. After reporting and editing for *The Enterprise* for many years, Liz will bring her creativity and talent to T3C to communicate our work to an ever-expanding audience. We are delighted to have her joining T3C’s team.

Best of luck, Lucy, and welcome, Liz!



Lucy Helfrich and Liz Saito

We are Grateful!

Grants. Since our last newsletter, T3C has been awarded grants that provide vital support for our work. Special thanks to:

- **The Falmouth Fund** of The Cape Cod Foundation for its support of the T3C-TerraCorps partnership for the 2024-25 service year.
- **The Rotary Club of Falmouth** for funding to help T3C create trailhead kiosk signage for several local conservation areas.

Outreach Does it Again

T3C’s Outreach Committee enthusiastically helps organize and execute activities and events that spread the word about T3C and engage members of the community. We are grateful to our friends on the committee who provided fabulous support for these events:

- **Winter-Spring 2024 Speaker Series**
- **Eyes on Owls live owl program**
- **Wayfinding Walks, themed nature walks and bird walks at special places all over town**

Special thanks to Jeff Hamilton (Hamilton Tree & Landscape) for huge support over 10 years maintaining the streetscape at Teaticket Park.



Great Horned Owl with young.
Photo © Mark Wilson / Eyes On Owls
More than 160 attendees, young and old, were awe-struck by the magical live owls in the two April 6 shows “Who’s Watching You? Owls of the World,” presented by Mark and Marcia Wilson of Eyes on Owls. T3C hosts this very special program every few years to rapt audiences.



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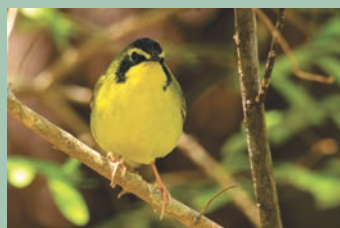
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GIFTS IN MEMORY OF...

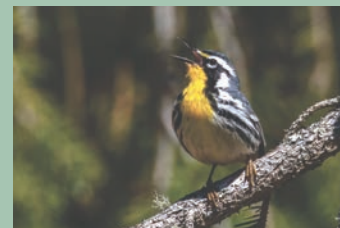
- ♥ **Lois Butterfield** from Steven Osterhout
- ♥ **Anatol Eberhard** from Wendy & Bill Hilburn, Gail Stetten
- ♥ **Alan and Virginia Gibb** from Jan Hamilton-Sherwonit
- ♥ **Elizabeth and Irwin Golden** from Meredith Golden & Bob Chen
- ♥ **Janet McCreery Gregg** from Patricia Carr
- ♥ **Edward J. Harris** from William & Joanne Gilbrook
- ♥ **Carl Ketchum** from Lorraine Stratis
- ♥ **Arlene Black Mollo** from Peter Mollo
- ♥ **Sheila Payne** from Laurie Raymond
- ♥ **Robert Reddy** from your storm chasers
- ♥ **Jerry K. Robbins** from Pelle Robbins
- ♥ **Beth Schwarzman** from Natalie Mariano & Shelley Fenily, Wallace & Pamela Stark
- ♥ **Jacek Sulanowski** from Anne Richards & Mike Fogarty, Margaret Sulanowski
- ♥ **Bruce and Elaine Tripp** from Nancy Cloos Babin
- ♥ **Bruce Tripp** from Terence & Katherine Hammar, James Vieira & Pamela Truesdale
- ♥ **Gerry Travis** from Luann Travis
- ♥ **Virginia Valiela** from Judith Fenwick, Joanna Lowell, Pam & Chris Polloni
- ♥ **Roland L. Wigley** from Cynthia Domack
- ♥ **Yvonne** from Werner & Barbara Deuser

GIFTS IN HONOR OF...

- ♥ **Amy Bower's birthday** from Carolyn Fisichella
- ♥ **Carl & Jean Bowin** from Claire Bowin
- ♥ **Paularose Bartolomei Chisholm** from Carla Zavorskis
- ♥ **Susie Goodman Hallstein** from Pamela Goguen & Peter Conzett, Bill Hallstein, Eric Hallstein & Suzanne Lippert, Jerry & Lalise Melillo, Nawrie Meigs-Brown & David Brown
- ♥ **Lucy Helfrich** from Josef & Emily Kelldorfer
- ♥ **Susie Houghton** from Helen & Jack Barnes
- ♥ **Patty Johnson & Carolyn Partan** from the Aronson Family
- ♥ **Kobe** from Ken Foreman & Anne Giblin
- ♥ **Mary Saudade & Donald Landing** from Deb, Jean-Marie & Robin Saudade
- ♥ **Dr. John Schade** from Marcia Macedo
- ♥ **T3C's HQ Committee, chaired by Adam Thomas** from Anne-Marie Runfola & Ken Kostel



Local birder and loyal T3C volunteer Mike Tucker photographed both of these birds, a Yellow-throated Warbler (April, at right) and a Kentucky Warbler (May). "Both of these are considered 'spring overshoots,' and they are uncommon, or even rare in New England," he said. "What a delight to have them show up in my yard!"



A New Chapter for T3C

The 300 Committee (T3C) is finally moving! We are getting very close to occupying our new headquarters, the Millstone Farm at 13 Thomas B. Landers Road in East Falmouth.

"We are at the finish line in terms of the building's modifications for accessibility and office space," said T3C Executive Director Jessica Whritenour. "This move has been a long time coming, and we are all very excited at the prospect of migrating over and getting settled."

T3C will be happy to welcome visitors who stop in to see our new headquarters. Open house opportunities will give us a chance for small group celebrations of our land trust's new chapter. Stay tuned for more details.