

SERVING THE COMMUNITIES OF MID-COAST MAINE AND BEYOND

# The Times Record

www.timesrecord.com

## NEWS

### Easement protects 54 more acres along Maquoit Bay

By Beth Brogan, Times Record Staff

Published:

Thursday, June 24, 2010 2:10 PM EDT

Print Page

BRUNSWICK — Fifty-four acres of significant wildlife habitat on the western shore of Maquoit Bay, including more than 2,000 feet of tidal frontage, has been protected through a conservation easement between the owner and Maine Coast Heritage Trust, the trust announced Wednesday.

The property is owned by Susan Laskey, who grew up on the land and raised her seven children in a house that abuts the conserved parcel.

The property is considered by state and federal wildlife agencies to be a significant feeding and resting habitat for wading birds, ducks and migrating shorebirds, according to MCHT communications director Rich Knox. The conservation also will help sustain the health of Maquoit Bay, which is a valuable resource for the clamming and worming industry.

The 54 acres are adjacent to two other recently conserved parcels, including a 124-acre public preserve owned by the town of Brunswick and the Stoddard property, conserved by the Brunswick-Topsham Land Trust. The Laskey property will not be open to the public, according to the trust.

Preserving adjacent properties, Knox said, is beneficial for wildlife and good for the health of the bay itself by reducing development and "non-point source pollution," which occurs with developments such as subdivisions and with residents using fertilizers on their lawns.

"If Mrs. Laskey had chosen to sell her land for top dollar to developers, that could have been the fate, to increase the cumulative effect of non-point source pollution," he said.

"I am very pleased to know that this land will forever remain as it has for my lifetime — a beautiful mix of undeveloped fields and forests sloping down to the quiet shores of Maquoit Bay," Laskey said in a release. "Putting a conservation easement on the property helped meet the financial needs of my family, allows us to farm the land if we choose to do so, and benefits the wildlife that thrives in this area. My husband, George, was a shellfish dealer and he would have been pleased that this conservation agreement will help maintain the tradition of harvesting in the bay."

Funding for the project was provided by grants and gifts from The National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program, The National Fish and



The conserved Stoddard and Laskey properties are seen from the town preserve looking north. The Laskey property shorefront is the second point that sticks out farthest with the second stand of trees near the shore.

(Photo by Christina Epperson, Maine Coast Heritage Trust)

Wildlife Foundation, Open Space Conservancy, Inc. (an affiliate of the Open Space Institute, Inc. with a lead grant from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation), Ducks Unlimited Inc., The Casco Bay Estuary Project Habitat Protection Fund, The Brunswick Topsham Land Trust and Maine Coast Heritage Trust.

"Maine Coast Heritage Trust is grateful to the Laskey family and to the many conservation partners that made this important project possible," said Betsy Ham, MCHT land protection project manager for the Mid-coast, in a statement. "The pressures to develop coastal land in Cumberland County will only increase over time, and there are fewer and fewer chances to save what remains of our fragile coastline."

Within the past five years, 220 acres on Maquoit Bay has been preserved, either through purchase or easements, Knox said Wednesday.

[news@timesrecord.com](mailto:news@timesrecord.com)

Copyright © 2010 - Times Record

[x] Close Window