



2024 Maine Land Conservation Conference

Presented by Maine Coast Heritage Trust

SATURDAY WORKSHOPS & EVENTS

Land Fair Exhibits and Breakfast in the Gym 8 – 8:45 am, 10 - 10:30 am

Plenary Session in the Orion Performing Arts Center Auditorium 8:45 – 10 am

- **Keynote Address** “Weaving Wisdoms: Introducing the New NSF Science Technology Center for Braiding Indigenous Knowledge and Science” by Bonnie Newsom Ph.D, Associate Professor of Anthropology, Faculty Associate Climate Change Institute, Co-PI Center for Braiding Indigenous Knowledge and Science

Indigenous Knowledge offers valuable insights into climate change as it encompasses multi-generational understandings of local ecosystems and human engagement with changing environments. This knowledge can reveal patterns of environmental change and new ways of living and coping with a changing planet. By bringing Indigenous knowledge and western science together to address contemporary climate change issues, we can foster new strategies for developing effective and holistic responses to the climate crisis. This presentation introduces the new Center for Braiding Indigenous Knowledge and Science (CBIKS), an NSF-funded center aimed at creating ethical pathways to bring holistic thinking to bear on contemporary climate change issues. Dr. Newsom will present an overview of CBIKS goals, values, and objectives and highlight the University of Maine’s role as the Center’s Northeast Hub.

- **Presentation of Espy Land Heritage Award**

Workshop Session A 10:30 am – 12 pm

A1: Relearn, Recenter, Return – Sharing the Work of First Light

The collaboration between First Light and the Wabanaki Commission is reshaping land relationships and conservation in Wabanaki homelands now called Maine. First Light has developed over the past seven years to become a community of non-native organizations committed to working together to relearn history, recenter Wabanaki voice in conservation, and return land, access, financial resources, and more to Wabanaki communities. The Wabanaki Commission on Land and Stewardship, including members from Mi’kmaq, Maliseet,

Passamaquoddy, and Penobscot Nations, was created to lead and guide this work. Together, we are preparing for and undertaking the important work of return.

But what exactly does “return” mean, and how can all organizations contribute to this work? In this workshop, we seek to update the Maine land trust community on this collaboration and invite them into the work of return. Representatives from First Light and the Commission will share how we conceptualize the return of land and other resources. We will update the community on recent land return projects and the scale of return we see going forward. First Light community members will offer examples and models of the many paths and options land trusts can consider to engage in this work to prepare for return. We will also share details on the next First Light Learning Journey (starting late 2024), which will offer more space to dive deeper into these questions and the changing conditions of land relationship in Maine.

This workshop will include both presentations and small group conversations. Presentations will offer a chance for attendees to hear directly about this work, and how it supports the health and wholeness of all beings, while small group conversations will offer a space for processing, sharing, and building relationships to strengthen the network engaged in this work.

Presenters: Gabriella Alcalde, Executive Director, Elmina B. Sewall Foundation; Brett Ciccotelli, Tribal Land Recovery Manager, First Light; Jeff Davis, board member, Coastal Mountains Land Trust; Ellie Oldach, Program Manager, First Light; Darren Ranco, Planning Team Member, Wabanaki Commission on Land and Stewardship; and Kara Wooldrik, Catalyst for the First Light Community

A2: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Practitioners Circle

Whether beginning this work or deep in program development, join the circle as we seek to create a learning community and cohort for support and connection. We will start by establishing brave space for this session, adapting and adopting working agreements. Participants (whether new to DEI practice or seasoned veterans) will have the opportunity to offer experience, questions, comments, observations, stories, to the group. Anyone who cares to explore how we attend to diversity, equity, inclusion, social justice and belonging in the context of land and water conservation is invited to join, regardless of what stage you are on your learning journey. We will invite attendees to share their ideas, experiences, lessons, and questions about this focus and talk together as a group about tools and information.

Presenters: Stefan J. Jackson, NATURAL DIFFERENCE LLC, and Jessica Burton, Momentum Conservation

A3: Working Waterfront Conservation: tools, approaches, lessons learned

In this roundtable discussion, we'll cover a wide range of options and approaches for land trusts to conserve working waterfront in their communities. Recent changes in enabling legislation explicitly names land trusts as qualified holders of working waterfront covenants, which work like conservation easements. Meanwhile, coastal communities are looking to land trusts to partner on conserving working access to the water. We'll hear about working waterfront covenants, fee acquisition and wharf ownership, use agreements, inventory tools, and ways to engage effectively with fishing, aquaculture, and other marine businesses, and we'll discuss the opportunities and address the challenges for land trusts to protect working waterfront.

Presenters: Sam Belknap, Island Institute; Melissa Britsch, Maine Coastal Program; Emily Farr, Manomet; and Jonathan Labaree, Gulf of Maine Research Institute

A4: When is Conservation not Conservation? Conflicts between protecting ecological values and recreation

This workshop will review some of the impacts of recreational use on the land, its vegetation and wildlife. Presenters will discuss issues such as: What does “protecting” land mean? What does it require? Which activities are low vs high impact and does that matter? Can we define low impact? What level of use is right – or too much? Four panelists will touch on different aspects of these questions, and time will be set aside for a robust discussion with participants.

Panelists: Jane Arbuckle, Maine Coast Heritage Trust; Steve Kasecek, Outdoor Sport Institute; Janet McMahon; and Rex Turner, Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands

A5: Comprehensive Capital Campaigns – An in depth look at Frenchman Bay Conservancy’s “A Watershed Moment: From the Forest to the Sea” Campaign

In this workshop, Frenchman Bay Conservancy (FBC) will describe their experience planning and executing their current comprehensive capital campaign. The Maine Won’t Wait Climate Action Plan, the Global Biodiversity’s 30×30 target initiative, and the Wildlands and Woodland report, all urging for bold action to conserve land now to address the joint biodiversity and climate change crises inspired FBC’s 3-year strategic plan. The goals of their ambitious strategic plan, and the need for the financial capacity to reach those goals motivated them to launch a 32-month comprehensive capital campaign.

FBC’s Executive Director and Director of Development will describe what a comprehensive capital campaign is, and how it is different from a more targeted and specific capital campaign. They’ll discuss why they chose this fundraising approach, and the initial skepticism from some who favored a more traditional route. They will talk about how a pre-campaign feasibility study helped them connect with major donors, learn how those donors viewed FBC’s work, and set a campaign goal of \$10 million. FBC staff will share what approaches worked well for them from the silent phase of the campaign, to the public launch, to today. They’ll describe how they engaged their board of directors, organized their campaign committee, secured early support from major donors, developed a well-crafted case for support, created promotional and solicitation materials, and hosted strategic campaign events. FBC staff will share what they learned from their campaign that has raised over \$10 million to date.

FBC believes that other land conservation organizations have an exceptional opportunity to make a strong case for support as they did, and they hope their experience will inspire or guide others as they pursue ambitious fundraising goals.

Presenters: Thomasina DiBiase and Aaron Dority, Frenchman Bay Conservancy

A6: Strengthening LMF to Meet Future Opportunities

There have been many changes at the Land for Maine’s Future Program in recent years: new staff, new legislation, new board policies, and a new director. Through these transitions, the program has continued to effectively invest the \$40 million proposed by the Governor and

appropriated by the legislature in 2021 to complete farmland, working waterfront, water access, and conservation and recreation projects in all sixteen counties. LMF Director Laura Graham will present the current state of the program and MCHT Senior Public Policy Manager Jeff Romano will outline recent legislative changes. The session will quickly transition to an interactive discussion with a focus on how land trusts, LMF staff, and other partners can work together to ensure the program successfully addresses Maine's land conservation priorities in the years to come.

Presenters: Laura Graham, Land for Maine's Future Program and Jeff Romano, Maine Coast Heritage Trust

A7: Information Pathways: Understanding Maine Trail Finder and Digital Resources for Promoting Outdoor Access

Today, individuals wanting to get out on trail have an unprecedented number of digital resources that they can turn to in order to find the most appropriate outdoor adventures that match their interests and abilities. Launched in 2010, the award-winning Maine Trail Finder website (MaineTrailFinder.com) has been a well-used and trusted resource in the state. This "one-stop-shop" for trails features over 6,000 miles of non-motorized trails, hundreds of which are managed by various land trusts, and that have been viewed by over 5 million users.

This workshop begins with a review of the most common tools and resources available to individuals looking for trails as well as land managers wanting to promote their trails and lands. Within this wider context, we will provide an overview of Maine Trail Finder's current functionality along with examples and case studies showcasing the different ways trail managers and trail stakeholder groups are using the website to connect more people to trails and outdoor activities, support trail stewardship, promote local businesses, and improve trail access.

Over the last five years, Maine Trail Finder has taken multiple steps to improve and enhance the website to better support the informational needs of individuals living with disabilities, and to more widely communicate the personal experiences of this diverse and less seen community of trail users. The workshop will conclude with a closer look at how Maine Trail Finder is addressing dimensions of trail access and equity, and will underscore the importance—regardless of what trails communications platforms are used—of providing current, accurate, and detailed descriptions about trails, facilities and infrastructure, and outdoor events.

Presenters: Stephen Engle, Enock Glidden, and Hope Rowan, of Community Geographics

A8: Land Conservation and Affordable Housing Partnerships

Maine communities are facing an affordable housing crisis. How can and should Maine land trusts be part of the solution? Workshop presenters from affordable housing organizations will share an overview of how housing challenges affect communities and help land trust attendees become more familiar with the fundamentals of affordable housing solutions. We will present information about the network of housing organizations in Maine, as well as resources and ideas for collaboration. Representatives from land trusts, including Coastal Rivers Conservation Trust, Kennebec Land Trust and Maine Coast Heritage Trust, will be on hand to share their partnership examples and thoughts on how land trusts might consider their mission, resources, and position in their communities when exploring opportunities for collaboration.

This workshop is designed to encourage cross-movement conversation and collaboration. Please bring your thoughts and questions and join this conversation.

Facilitated by Misha Mytar, Maine Coast Heritage Trust

Presenters: Ryan Fecteau, Avesta Housing; Marla O'Byrne, Island Housing Trust; and Ian Stewart, Coastal Mountains Land Trust

A9: Remarkable Trails for Passionate People

Land trusts are in the outdoor recreation business and like it or not, that means we're also in the marketing business. How do we make outdoor places inviting to visit? How do we stand out in a field crowded with outdoor options? This slideshow-based workshop tries to answer that question with some inspiration from western York County.

In Acton, the steep, rocky woods of Goat Hill have been transformed by construction of the state's most ambitious ADA trail and a summit park with panoramic view. In Springvale, a mowed path through fields and orchards makes it possible to walk between ten farms on Open Farm Day. At Sanford Community Forest, native plantings of diverse color, fragrance and taste are jump-starting the reclamation of damaged woodlands. And in the village of Springvale, the restoration of a namesake spring is driving the rejuvenation of a trashed woodland park.

This workshop also provides practical suggestions for transforming forbidding places into inviting places. A spectacular view certainly helps, but it's not a prerequisite for a memorable trail experience. What makes a place special? Is there an interesting story to be told about geology, rare plant communities or land use history? Place names, museum-quality interpretive signs and events are all great opportunities enhance trail experiences.

Presenters: Lee Burnett & Keith Davis, Three Rivers Land Trust

A10: Understanding and Leveraging the ROI from Your Strategic Plan

Do you (does your land trust) have a love-hate relationship with Strategic Planning? Is your Plan collecting a little dust? You are not alone. Strategic Planning, however important, requires a significant investment – in time and money. Too often, the return on that investment (ROI) is not recognized, understood or leveraged. In this interactive session including small groups, we'll discuss various planning processes, share our successes and challenges with planning, learn how to re-kindle the Strategic Planning fire, use your Plan internally to keep the fire burning, and just as important, use your Plan to generate exciting new support for your land trust – all guaranteeing your ROI is strong.

- Learning Objective 1: Understand the basic process of Strategic Planning and why it's important for organizations.
- Learning Objective 2: Learn the types of tools used to implement the Plan internally, keep the organization moving forward and on track.
- Learning Objective 3: Know how to leverage Plan goals and objectives to generate new enthusiasm and resources for their organization.

Presenter: Nancy Moore, Managing Partner, Conservation Consulting Group (CCG)

A11: Accessible and Inclusive Outdoor Recreation

Natural spaces promote health and quality of life of the whole community. Unfortunately, many people cannot recreate in outdoor environments due to inaccessibility and the historic exclusion of people with disabilities in these spaces. To promote a more equitable experience for all, this session will empower organizations and individuals to prioritize accessible and inclusive recreational opportunities for older adults and individuals with disabilities— individuals who are already vulnerable to health and quality of life disparities. Following this session, organizations and individuals will better understand disability, recognize disability bias and implement strategies to reduce bias, improve communication, create more inclusive organizational infrastructure, improve the accessibility of trails and infrastructure, enhance information-sharing, and better understand and apply inclusive strategies to programming. Participants will also be introduced to established accessibility guidelines and best practices in outdoor developed areas and recreational activities with examples. Finally, participants will become familiar with additional available resources to support this work. This session will include brief presentations, small group conversations, and larger group discussions for each topic.

Presenter: Kathryn Palano, PT, DPT, NCS, MPH, Clinical Specialist in Neurologic Physical Therapy & Accessible and Inclusive Recreation Consultant

A12: The Social Resilience Project: A unique way land trusts can help to increase the resilience of their local communities to climate change

The number of extreme storms that down trees, cause flooding, and cut off roads and power is expected to increase with climate change. Building a strong network of connections between people and organizations of all types within an area is one way for communities to become more resilient and be better prepared for supporting their residents during these extreme events. This network is called social infrastructure, and it's essential for effectively providing support for vulnerable residents.

The Social Resilience Project is an effort in Southern Midcoast Maine that focused on evaluating social infrastructure in eight neighboring communities and working to strengthen the region's social infrastructure. The project brought together participants in the conservation, municipal, social service, and emergency management sectors. This presentation will share the process that was used to identify gaps and bring together groups throughout the region to discuss their role in supporting vulnerable populations. It will also share the actions and resources that participants in the region thought would be most useful for increasing the region's social infrastructure.

The presentation will include an opportunity for brainstorming and conversation about the ways that your land trusts could or may already be working with nontraditional partners to strengthen social infrastructure in your communities. It will also include space for conversations about the ways that land trusts can provide support for vulnerable populations during storm preparation, response, and recovery.

Presenters: Ruth Indrick, Kennebec Estuary Land Trust, and Elizabeth Hertz, Blue Sky Planning Solutions

A13: Healing Across Concentric Bodies: Water, Land, Organizations, Homes, and Hearts

As we turn toward the work of understanding land back, analyzing organizational governance, personal growth and healing- many emotions come up. These works are interconnected, along with many others. This workshop is an exploration of the hard emotions they evoke, commonalities these works share, and some pathways to navigate these tricky terrains with more awareness, community, and grace.

Grounded in validation and respect, along with an awareness that the places its harder to prioritize and tend are also where healing lies, we'll explore the emotions that come up when we consider the gap between organizational roles and community needs, work expectations and mental health, land conservation and land back. Expect challenges, respect, somatics, guided questions, and gentle course corrections.

Presenter: estephanie martinez-alfonzo, Mycorrising

Lunch in the Cafeteria 12 – 1:15 pm

Workshop Session B 1:15 – 2:45 pm

B1: Equitable Hiring Processes – Best Practice and Case Studies

The practices and processes we employ with hiring let potential applicants know a lot about our organizations. Ensuring that these practices are centering our values is essential as we seek to transform our movement to be attractive to people from all backgrounds and lived experiences. Join folks from Momentum Conservation (formerly known as Southern Maine Conservation Collaborative) and the Maine Environmental Education Association to learn about best practices in equitable hiring. We will each share case studies on our organization's recent hiring processes. We will include workshop time so participants can begin to take action towards advancing equity through shifting hiring practices at your land trust. This will be a combination of presentation, full group discussion, small group break outs, and possibly some solo time to think and write.

Presenters: Jessica Burton, Momentum Conservation, and Anna Sommo, Maine Environmental Education Association

B2: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Practitioners Circle

Please see description for A2

B3: Identifying and Designing Freshwater Wetland Restoration Projects

The goal of this workshop will be to discuss the ecological value of freshwater wetland restoration and the process to identify and design freshwater wetland restoration projects. The workshop will be moderated by The Nature Conservancy and will consist of case studies from three different presenters describing active or completed freshwater wetland restoration projects that have been conducted on conserved lands in Maine. The projects will primarily consist of those that have successfully received awards from the Maine Natural Resource Conservation Program (MNRCP) but may also include other restoration projects funded by other sources.

Project examples will focus on freshwater wetland restoration (as opposed to coastal/salt marsh restoration) and will range in size and complexity. Case studies will be presented by award recipients and/or consultants and will focus on the process to find and identify potential wetland restoration opportunities, the steps involved in carrying them forward to the design and implementation phase, and the ecological benefit of implementing the projects.

Presentations will include a discussion of lessons learned during design, implementation, and post-construction monitoring, as well as the MNRCP application process (if applicable). After the presentations of case studies, there will be a question-and-answer session with all presenters.

Presenters: Hans Carlson, Blue Hill Heritage Trust; Isobel Curtis, Midcoast Conservancy; Bryan Emerson, The Nature Conservancy; Laura Hatmaker, SWCA Environmental Consultants; Katelin Nickerson, Flycatcher LLC; and Sandy Walczyk, Blue Hill Heritage Trust

B4: Measuring Carrying Capacity: A Data-Driven Approach for Future-Forward Land Trusts

Join us for a hands-on session to empower you to gauge your community's carrying capacity. "Carrying capacity" is typically used to define the maximum number of a species that a habitat can support indefinitely. We expand that concept to include economic and social capacity as well. This holistic perspective aligns with the multifaceted challenges faced by land trusts in today's world. Participants will develop a set of metrics aligned with their community and land trust goals, mapped to a catalog of diverse, ready-to-use data sources spanning ecological, social, and economic indicators. Bring your laptop!

We will begin with an understanding of carrying capacity (ecological, social, and economic) in land conservation. Participate in an engaging discussion where we explore your aspirations for the future of your community. Discover how the concept of carrying capacity intersects with these visions, and unravel the impacts of emerging trends on sustainable land use. Aligning metrics with community goals is crucial for land trusts who need to consider community aspirations in their conservation efforts. We will then identify data sources crucial for measuring carrying capacity. We'll brainstorm a comprehensive list tailored to the unique needs of your community. In small groups, participants will engage in a hands-on exercise to identify specific metrics aligned with your community's goals. Explore how these metrics can serve as practical tools for measuring and managing carrying capacity.

Presenter: Rachel Bouvier, rbouvier consulting llc

B5: Building a Donor Centric Individual Giving Program

Our workshop is targeted to philanthropy staff, board members, organizational leaders and land trust staff that would benefit from tips on how to build a high-performing, individual gift program, focusing on individuals.

For years, land trusts have largely relied on foundations and a handful of loyal, repeat donors for support. The strength of any mature development program, however, requires consistently identifying and qualifying new prospects, moving current donors through the fundraising cycle with careful attention to stewardship, and ensuring a robust annual giving program to support and refresh the donor pipeline.

Philanthropy Squared will show you the most strategic ways to grow your annual fund, how to launch a mid-level donor initiative, and how to create a successful major gift program. As part of the discussion, we will explore prospect research, effective donor strategies, the need for consistent cultivation and stewardship, and how and when to launch a capital campaign.

Presenters: Peter Jones and Betsy McGean, Philanthropy Squared

B6: Developing a More Comprehensive Approach to Invasive Species Management

This workshop seeks to discover ideas from the land trust community that will help develop a more comprehensive and effective approach to invasive species management in Maine. A short presentation summarizing the results of a 2022 survey and capstone paper will be followed by facilitated group discussions. The goal of the workshop will be to help develop a plan for policy development and support suggested improvements that may include rulemaking and/or legislation.

Presenter: Gary Fish, State Horticulturist, Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation & Forestry

B7: Fundamentals of Sustainable Trail Layout and Design

This workshop will focus on the fundamentals of sustainable trail layout and design for upgrading existing trails and addressing problem areas. The basis of this workshop will focus on the restoration of damaged trails, prioritizing maintenance through trail triage, understanding hillside hydrology, how trails should work, developing trail eyes, trail structural options, and construction logistics.

Presenters: Erin Amadon, principal, Town4Trail Services LLC

B8: Family Dynamics and Land Conservation

Many of Maine's most spectacular and cherished landscapes are owned by families representing some of the most important conservation opportunities for land trusts. As most land trust practitioners are aware, there are all sorts of important legal, financial, tax, and land use issues that come up when dealing with the conservation of family ownerships. While each of these topics can be challenging, many land trusts have discovered that often the most serious obstacle to a successful family lands conservation project can be the inability of family members to come to agreement on the future of their lands. This workshop will explore the challenges associated with conservation projects involving family lands and strategies that can be used to bring about successful conservation outcomes.

Presenters: Jerry Bley, Creative Conservation LLC; Lee Dassler, Western Foothills Land Trust; Betsy Ham, Maine Coast Heritage Trust; Nick Ullo, Boothbay Region Land Trust, and Steve Walker, Brunswick-Topsham Land Trust

B9: Together, let's create a more inclusive language of conservation

Despite good intentions, land conservation professionals can still choose language that excludes people, inflicts harm, and can perpetuate some of the very systemic injustices they want to redress. In this workshop, participants will learn how the vocabulary, sentences, and framing of

land conservation can perpetuate white supremacy, racism, classism, ableism, heteronormativity, ethnocentrism, etc., as well as ways to re-word and re-frame communications to be more welcoming and inclusive. After a brief presentation, participants will work collaboratively to identify jargon and exclusive or problematic language in their own work. Then, in small groups, participants will identify and present creative and original alternatives that better support their communication goals while contributing to conservation for all.

Presenter: Catherine Schmitt, Science Communication Specialist, Schoodic Institute

B10: Leaders Are Made Not Born: The Art of Good Governance

Time – Talent – Treasure. Doer – Door Opener – Donor. Work – Wisdom – Wealth. If you are a Board member or executive staff member, you’ve probably heard at least one of these three timeless descriptions summarizing the role of a “good” Board member. Simply put, a land trust cannot excel beyond the well-directed skills, highly-toned muscle and commitment of its Board. Keeping individual Board members on the right track, out of the (invasive) weeds, and offering appropriate levels of “care and feeding” to empower Board members to new levels of success and engagement requires great skill, muscle and commitment as well.

In this interactive session, we’ll “unpack” what it means to govern a land trust with distinction. Board leaders and executive staff will get some new tools and tips to ensure Board member expectations and goals align with the organization, Board members are energized and empowered by the experience, and their leadership shines. Focused – Fulfilling – Fun.

Learning Objectives:

- Have a renewed, fresh understanding of the leadership role and responsibilities of Board members and how to build strength/muscle in the Board
- Establish Board development goals (personal or organizational) that serve their organization distinctively
- Experience a renewed sense of purpose, focus and energy in leadership.

Presenter: Nancy Moore, Managing Partner, Conservation Consulting Group (CCG)

B11: Broadening Access and Inclusion on Trails

What does it look like to create trails and outdoor spaces that are more inviting, inclusive, and supportive of people living with different disabilities? How can we rethink outdoor spaces and how we communicate about them in order to welcome those who have historically been marginalized in conservation and the outdoors? This workshop draws wider attention to the diverse experiences, needs, and challenges of individuals living with disabilities, and provides concrete suggestions for how to identify, eliminate, and minimize infrastructure and informational barriers that prevent wider access to, and use of, trails and lands.

Please note that this workshop is not designed to advise participants on how to build or modify trails to make them fully compliant with federal legislation; rather, instruction focuses on making more immediately attainable shifts to trails, infrastructure, and communications that begin to welcome and accommodate a greater number of people looking to be active outdoors.

Presenters: Enock Glidden and Kara Wooldrik of Community Geographics

B12: How Maine Farms Can Advance Our Shared Climate Goals

Farmland protection and local food production and consumption are critically important as we prepare our state and its residents for the worst impacts of climate change and make meaningful reductions to our State's carbon footprint. *Maine Won't Wait* set the goals of conserving 30% of Maine's lands and waters by 2030 and having 30% of food consumed in Maine, grown in Maine. But how can Maine farms, along with the conservation community, help our state achieve those laudable goals and contribute to building a resilient future for Maine?

This workshop will provide an overview of the links between farmland protection, local food system strengthening, and climate action; the current status of Maine's farmland protection and access efforts; and ideas for how we can accelerate our progress towards achieving our shared climate goals through farmland conservation and climate friendly farming practices. The current work of the Maine Climate Council's Natural and Working Lands Working Group will be reviewed as well as recommendations that are emerging from the Conservation and Local Food Sub-Groups. We'll share some examples of strategies that farmers are using to access farmland affordably, as well as on-farm adaptations to strengthen their climate resiliency.

Join us for this exploration of farm-centered opportunities to accelerate progress towards Maine's climate goals.

Presenters: Adam Bishop, Vice President of Programs, Maine Farmland Trust; Melissa Law, Bumbleroot Organic Farm; Shelley Megquier, Policy & Research Director, Maine Farmland Trust; and Alex Redfield, Food Solutions New England and Wildlands, Woodlands, Farmlands & Communities

B13: Wabanaki Plant Gathering in Acadia National Park: Mobilizing Indigenous Knowledge to restore traditional sweet grass harvesting

Indigenous communities in North America are actively engaged in reestablishing plant gathering rights on federal landscapes, including those of the U.S. National Park Service (NPS). Suzanne Greenlaw will present on the interdisciplinary work to restore Wabanaki sweetgrass gathering within Acadia National Park. She will report on a gather-led harvest study and stewardship approach, cultural protocol agreement, and Indigenous developed interpretation. This work is a collaborative effort to address NPS policy requirements and create an emergent shared governance approach within monitoring and management of a culturally important species.

Presenter: Suzanne Greenlaw, Ph.D.

Afternoon Break outside the cafeteria 2:45 – 3:15 pm

Closing Session in Orion Theater 3:15 – 4:30 pm

Learning to Do Conservation Better: Cross-Cultural Collaborations

All attendees return to the Orion Theater for a facilitated conversation with partners involved in innovative efforts to: restore Wabanaki presence in land stewardship and support land return; and connect New Americans to agricultural lands and lands & waters for recreation and well-

being. Panelists will share how they have worked together to accomplish shared goals and talk about the challenges and successes they have encountered. Lessons learned and advice on how to move forward with this work will be highlighted.

Panelists include:

- Agricultural Access for Somali Bantu Community:
 - Muhidin Libah, Executive Director for Somali Bantu Community Association
 - Adam Bishop, Vice President, Programs, Maine Farmland Trust
- Connecting New Americans to Nature in Maine:
 - Moon Nguany, Community Wellness Program Coordinator, Maine Association for New Americans
 - Simon Rucker, Executive Director, Maine Appalachian Trail Land Trust
- Restoring Wabanaki Presence in Land Stewardship and Land Return:
 - Suzanne Greenlaw, citizen of the Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians, author, and PhD candidate at the University of Maine
 - Darren Ranco, citizen of the Penobscot Nation, Professor of Anthropology, Chair of Native American Programs, and Faculty Fellow at the Mitchell Center for Sustainability Solutions at the University of Maine
 - Ciona Ulbrich, Senior Project Manager, Maine Coast Heritage Trust

Facilitator: Gabriela Alcalde, Executive Director, Elmina B. Sewall Foundation

Adjourn 4:30pm