

OWLS HEAD CONSERVATION COMMISSION - ANNUAL REPORT 2021

OHCC MISSION STATEMENT

The Owls Head Conservation Commission seeks to preserve and protect the natural resources of Owls Head, and to advise, educate and make recommendations to its residents and to the town's governing bodies. The commission works to create opportunities for residents to interact with the natural world, thus fostering life long stewardship in retaining the environmental health and natural beauty of Owls Head for future generations.

Plaisted Preserve continues to welcome many visitors this second year of the pandemic. As you know, the preserve is maintained by OHCC members along with a few steadfast volunteers. Georges River Land Trust continues to monitor and support the work through their guidance, resources, and the shear brawn of Program Director Annette Naegel, who is often on hand to wield a tool and heft a wheelbarrow full of wood chips. Yes, her contribution is worth a mention here. GRLT does much more than hold the land in protection. This year was marked with many fallen trees across the trail system which required the work of a professional tree removal company. Kindly they left wood cut in lengths to be used for further bridging over wet areas. Resulting wood chip have been used to maintain the trails. You may note that a good pile remains, and we are always looking for volunteers to assist in this work. If you cannot volunteer, please consider making a donation to the OH Conservation Commission, Town of Owls Head, with a designation to Plaisted Preserve. Funding is imperative to our mission to maintain the preserve.

OHCC now has its own web page which you can access from the town's website. Click on OUR COMMUNITY, then click CONSERVATION COMMISSION. There you will find meeting agendas and minutes, current events, information regarding sea level rise initiatives, related maps, a list of preserves and walking area in the town and much more. Please visit this site. We'd love to get your feedback.

The OH Select Board and the OHCC offered an info session related to Sea Level Rise and Flood Resiliency in July, which featured several area professionals involved in this most important initiative. Maps were provided to make clear future projections and impacts of SLR and flood surges in our area. The goal is to be proactive rather than reactive in putting safety measures in place to best protect persons and properties in the future; a plan that will also save the town tax dollars. Good planning is ultimately cost effective, and currently there are federal funds available to support preventative and safety measures, so the time to act is now. A Sea Level Rise and Flood Resiliency workshop, to assess our readiness, is scheduled for September. The workshop will involve all areas of town government, outside consultants, including our state representative. Stay tuned for the results of that workshop. Updates will be on the OHCC website.

The Roadside Pick-Up was again affected by the pandemic, eliminating any plan to involve the local schools. However a sturdy few showed up on the designated day and amassed a few truckloads of roadside litter which was delivered to the transfer station. Watch for the call for volunteers next April. You are needed!

The OHCC is currently working on pesticide initiatives to ensure safe and healthy practices within our borders. If you have an interest in this area, please join us.

The OHCC meets the first Wednesday of the month at 6PM. All are welcome. Meetings are held in the community room of the town office.

Respectfully submitted, Kathryn DerMarderosian