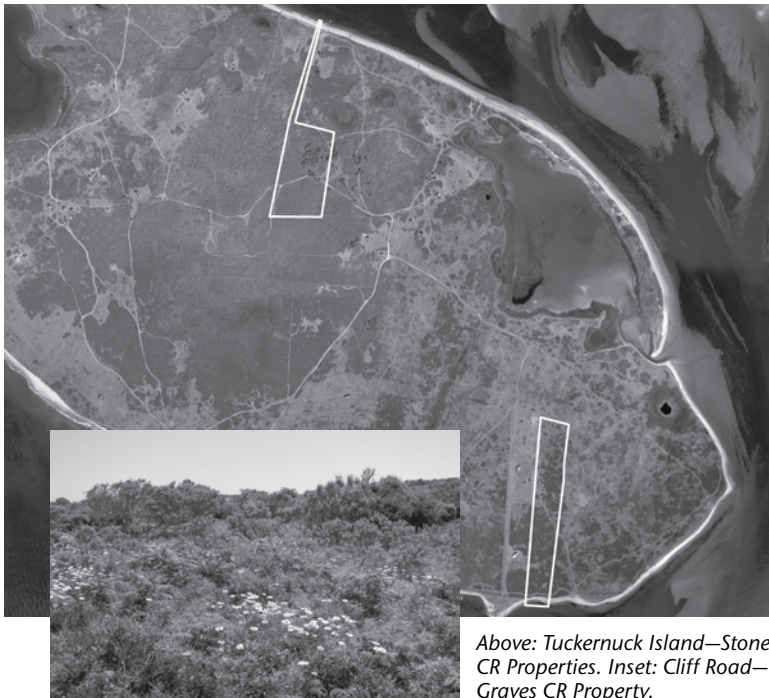




Nantucket Land Council, Inc.

Planning ~ Protecting ~ Preserving

NLC NEWS Summer 2011



Above: Tuckernuck Island—Stone CR Properties. Inset: Cliff Road—Graves CR Property.

Land Council Records 75th Conservation Restriction

This past spring the Nantucket Land Council successfully recorded three additional conservation restrictions. The NLC now protects over 1300 acres with 75 conservation restrictions on Muskeget, Tuckernuck, and Nantucket Islands.

Susan Stone donated two restrictions on Tuckernuck Island, protecting two separate properties with unique and noteworthy environmental attributes. One property totaling a little over 11 acres protects a gorgeous sandplain grassland—a rare plant community and ecosystem found only on Nantucket, Martha's Vineyard and surrounding islands. The property provides an important conservation connection between a 50-acre Trustees of Reservations parcel and a 38-acre parcel previously protected by the NLC. The second property, approximately 9 acres in size, also connects two previously protected areas and represents an excellent example of a coastal maritime oak forest plant community providing rich habitat to migrating neotropical birds.

continued on page 2

New Brochure Available to Explain Conservation Restrictions

Now available from the Land Council is a new brochure, *Conserving Your Land*. This brochure has been created to provide Nantucketers with basic information about the hows and whys of conservation restrictions (CR's).

"As year-end 2011 draws nearer, we want to remind Nantucket property owners that Congress has renewed a tax incentive for private landowners who protect their land with a voluntary CR, allowing landowners until December 31, 2011 to take advantage of significant tax deductions," said Land Council Executive Director Cormac Collier. "Our new brochure answers frequently asked questions about the process and can lead to a more in-depth discussion with our legal experts."

The enhanced incentive passed by Congress in late 2010 applies to a landowner's federal income tax and raises the deduction a person can take for donating a voluntary conservation agreement from 30% of their income in any year to 50%. Farmers and ranchers are allowed to deduct up to 100% of their income. Additionally, the incentive increases the number of years over which a deduction can be taken from 6 to 16 years.

For a copy of the new brochure, contact the Land Council office at 508-228-2818 or view it online at www.nantucketlandcouncil.org.





Nantucket Land Council, Inc.
P.O. Box 502, 6 Ash Lane
Nantucket, MA 02554
508.228.2818
www.nantucketlandcouncil.org

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cormac@nantucketlandcouncil.org
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emily@nantucketlandcouncil.org
Linda Sperry, *Development Director*
linda@nantucketlandcouncil.org
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OF COUNSEL

Peter R. Fenn & Associates

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Land Council Premieres New Film Series

A series of three new films—*Planning, Protecting, Preserving*—can now be viewed on the home page of the Land Council's website, www.nantucketlandcouncil.org. The films made their debut at the NLC annual meeting on August 10. A ten-minute compilation of all three films can also be viewed on the website.

Produced over the summer by the Land Council in cooperation with Nantucket-based September Productions and veteran filmmaker Dan Driscoll, the film focuses on various aspects of the organization's year-round work and includes commentary by NLC Executive Director Cormac Collier, Resource Ecologist Emily MacKinnon, Board President Karen Borchert, Water Quality Scientist Dr. Jim Sutherland, Town of Nantucket Shellfish Biologist Tara Riley and Nantucket New School Science Teacher Matt Liddle. Also appearing in the film is NLC Intern Alex Barham. The voice of Theatre Workshop of Nantucket Executive Director Gabrielle Gould can be heard in the opening and closing sections of each film.

"We felt this series of short films would be helpful in explaining the Land Council's mission and in differentiating our work from that of like-minded organizations such as the Nantucket Conservation Foundation and the Nantucket Land Bank," said Collier. "Though we engage in similar land protection initiatives, our organizations are also focused on very different programs. Our goal in showing this film series on our website is to foster a widespread understanding of the work we do year-round here on the island."



Land Council Records 75th Conservation Restriction *continued from page 1*

The third conservation restriction resulted from a requirement by the Massachusetts Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program as part of the Graves family's subdivision application for 129 Cliff Road. In order to better protect harrier hawk (*Circus cyaneus*) habitat, Mass Heritage required the Graves to place a conservation restriction on significant portions of their property and to provide an undisturbed buffer zone around two wetland ecosystems. They were also required to create a protected upland corridor between the harrier hawk's traditional nesting habitat and foraging habitat on the abutting Nantucket Conservation Foundation property to the west.

We thank Susan Stone and the Graves family for working with the Land Council to protect these valuable and important conservation parcels.

SCIENCE NEWS

Land Council Issues Challenge Grant to Upgrade Shellfish Propagation Lab

Earlier in the summer the Land Council issued a \$10,000 challenge grant for the Town of Nantucket Marine Department's Brant Point Propagation Facility to fund equipment and operation of the lab under the direction of Shellfish Biologist Tara Riley and Harbormaster Dave Fronzuto.

"The work that is being done at the lab is critical to the health of our harbor and the island's overall shellfish populations," said Land Council Executive Director Cormac Collier. "By matching each dollar contributed in support of the propagation lab up to \$10,000, we can make a real difference in upgrading the equipment that is sorely needed to carry out state-of-the-art research."

The current needs for the propagation facility include equipment that will increase survival rates related to shellfish culture during the critical larval stage and also equipment that will allow more of the water quality analysis to be done on site rather than being delayed by being shipped off island.

"Tara has been able to achieve some outstanding results with the limited funds she has to work with," said Collier. "However, Nantucket's shellfish industry and water quality are too important to have this type of research being done with subpar equipment."

In addition to issuing the challenge grant, the Land Council also began monthly tours of the lab starting in June, attracting capacity crowds, enabling adults and children to learn more about the vital shellfish propagation work being done and also to learn about land use practices to help keep our harbors clean.

To date, several generous donations have been received in response to the challenge grant. We look forward to making an announcement of the total at the Land Council's fundraising dinner on Labor Day at Straight Wharf Restaurant. A check will be presented to Harbormaster Fronzuto from the Land Council so that the new equipment can be purchased over the fall and winter. If you are interested in making a tax deductible donation, please contact the Land Council.



Shellfish Biologist Tara Riley leads tour of Propagation Lab.



Shellfish Propagation Lab

COMMUNITY NEWS



End of Season Fundraising Dinner at Straight Wharf

Straight Wharf Restaurant will be the location of this year's traditional end of season fundraiser for the Land Council on Labor Day, September 5. Serving once again as dinner chair is Land Council board member Karen Clark.

The event is one of the main sources of financial support for the Land Council and its mission of protecting Nantucket's natural world and preserving its rural character. The 6 p.m. cocktail reception will feature live jazz performed by Peter Watrous, Andy Bullington and friends, followed by a gourmet dinner at sunset.

Straight Wharf has long been known for its creative cuisine, thanks to chef/owners Amanda Lydon and Gabriel Frasca. In addition to offering an outstanding dining experience, Straight Wharf is the first Certified Green Restaurant on the island of Nantucket. Tickets are \$1,000 per person, and \$850 is tax deductible. To reserve tickets, please contact Development Director Linda Spery at the Land Council office at 508-228-2818.

Biodiversity Initiative News

The Nantucket Biodiversity Initiative (NBI), a collaboration of island organizations including the NLC, will be holding the 4th Biennial NBI Conference on Saturday, November 5th. The conference will be held at the Coffin School on 4 Winter Street. Presenters from on and off island will share the results of their research on a wide range of biodiversity related topics. Mark your calendars and join us to learn more about the island environment around you. For more information go to www.nantucketbiodiversityinitiative.org.

Gardner Road Subdivision Appeal Update

Trial proceedings in the Nantucket Land Council's Land Court appeal of a 2007 subdivision off of Gardner Road finally began in March and continued through the summer months. The NLC along with several abutting homeowners, are petitioning the court to overturn a Planning Board permit on inadequate access issues, stormwater management concerns, and wetland impacts. Executive Director Cormac Collier and Resource Ecologist Emily MacKinnon both provided testimony, along with NLC consultant Scott Horsley.

The Land Council also requested the Conservation Commission to revoke a previously granted permit on the basis of new groundwater level information. The Conservation Commission partially sided with the NLC by requiring stormwater design changes for portions of the system. Unfortunately the Commission failed to require needed changes to the system in Gardner Road. The NLC is still concerned about potential infrastructure failures and subsequent impacts to surrounding wetlands.



NLC Intern Alex Barham and Water Quality Scientist Dr. Jim Sutherland check the circulator in Head of Hummock Pond.

Head of Hummock Pond Update

Throughout the spring and summer, Dr. Jim Sutherland, along with Land Council Resource Ecologist Emily MacKinnon and Intern Alex Barham, have been conducting water tests at regular intervals in the Head of Hummock Pond to evaluate the condition of the water this year, and to determine the effectiveness of the SolarBee water circulation unit installed by the Land Council in April. The solar-powered device has been afloat in the pond since that time, circulating 10,000 gallons of water a minute in an attempt to help get rid of the harmful blue green algae that has plagued this pond and others on the island. The decision to install the 12-foot-wide circulator was based on Land Council-funded research by Dr. Sutherland.

In his 2010 report documenting his findings on the Head of Hummock Pond's water quality, Dr. Sutherland confirmed the degraded state of the pond and also identified the presence of particular blue-green algae (*cyanobacteria*), which produce neurotoxins. Dr. Sutherland states the likely causes of the poor water quality are nutrient contamination from atmospheric deposition, fertilizer use, septic systems in the watershed, or some combination of these three factors. He has made recommendations for additional work to narrow down the sources and extent of nutrient contamination.

The installation of the circulator was made possible by a grant awarded to the Land Council by the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) and approved at the April 2011 Annual Town Meeting. The CPC funding is being applied toward a lease-with option-to-purchase arrangement between the Land Council and the device's manufacturer, North Dakota-based SolarBee, whose representatives were on island for the installation of the circulator this spring.

Summer Collaborations with the Garden Club

NLC Resource Ecologist Emily MacKinnon helped the Garden Club get back into the summer swing by presenting at their first meeting of the season. Her presentation, titled *American Elms, the Rise, Fall, and New Beginnings*, reviewed the history of American elms in the post-colonial landscape of New England. She discussed the tree as a cultural icon, its decimation by the importation of Dutch Elm Disease, and more recent efforts by scientists to cultivate disease resistant replacements for the American elm. The Garden Club awarded the NLC a grant in 2008 for the production of our *Trees of Downtown Nantucket* brochure, which is distributed to participants on the NLC's downtown tree tour.

The NLC also participated in the Garden Club's 46th annual Green Thumb Flower Show this summer with a conservation exhibit on fertilizer impacts on our water resources. The exhibit was educational, with an emphasis on using native plants in garden and landscaping installations. Brochures and pamphlets at the exhibit emphasized that native plants require little to no fertilizer and drastically reduce the application rates necessary for a property. The NLC exhibit was recognized with the Marion Thompson Fuller Brown Conservation Award.



NLC exhibit at Garden Club Flower Show



NANTUCKET LAND COUNCIL, INC.
6 Ash Lane
Post Office Box 502
Nantucket, Massachusetts 02554
www.nantucketlandcouncil.org

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The Nantucket Land Council, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) environmental nonprofit dedicated to the protection of Nantucket's natural resources. 6 Ash Lane, P.O. Box 502, Nantucket, MA 02554
nlc@nantucketlandcouncil.org ~ www.nantucketlandcouncil.org ~ 508.228.2818

Nantucket Land Council, Inc.

Planning ~ Protecting ~ Preserving

Established in 1974, the Nantucket Land Council is the only environmental watchdog group on Nantucket Island. The NLC works to protect Nantucket's natural resources in three major areas—planning, protecting, preserving.

PLANNING: The NLC monitors development proposals, offers educational programs, grants and scholarships, and makes recommendations to voters on issues which affect the environment.

PROTECTING: The NLC conducts scientific research to support the protection of our natural resources such as native species, wildlife habitat, and water quality.

PRESERVING: The NLC specializes in holding conservation restrictions. CR's allow the property to remain in the owner's hands, while ensuring that the land remains preserved.

SAVE these DATES

Downtown Tree Walks

Call the Land Council office at 508-228-2818 to pre-register.
Tuesday, August 30 @ 1 p.m.

End of the Season Dinner at Straight Wharf

Call the Land Council office at 508-228-2818 for invitation and information.
Labor Day, Monday, September 5 @ 6 p.m.

Monarch Butterfly Tagging

Call the Land Council office at 508-228-2818 to pre-register.
Tuesday, September 13 @ 3 p.m.
Tuesday, September 20 @ 3 p.m.



Nantucket Biodiversity Conference

Visit www.nantucketbiodiversityinitiative.org for more information.
Saturday, November 5—Coffin School