

For Immediate Release

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Second Year of Waldo County Conservation Initiative Conserves Additional 200 Acres

(Belfast) – Coinciding with the celebration of Earth Day, Coastal Mountains Land Trust proudly announced the year two successes of the Waldo County Conservation Initiative – an effort that launched in November 2022 with the goal of conserving open space in the 12 Waldo County towns served by the Land Trust in support of *wildlife conservation, recreation, outdoor learning, and climate mitigation*.

\$265,000 was raised from grants, local businesses, and members of the community to support the acquisition and stewardship of four special properties: (1) **Waldo Pound Preserve** – the first preserve in the town of Waldo, and a 118-acre property that hosts a section of the Hills to Sea Trail and abuts the Waldo County Technical Center. The preserve's proximity to these important places is another big step forward in our Learning Landscapes work to connect students with nature and ensures the longevity of recreation in this area. *This project was funded in part by the Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund, in which proceeds from the sale of a dedicated instant lottery ticket (currently a \$3 ticket called Bee Bucks) are used to support outdoor recreation and natural resource conservation. For more information about MOHF, go to www.maine.gov/ifw/mohf.* (2)

Kingfisher Preserve – the Land Trust's first preserve in Morrill. It protects pristine habitat along the mostly undeveloped shores of Mixer Pond. Coastal Mountains Land Trust is working to open the property for public access in the coming years. (3) **Mount Tuck Preserve Additions** – two tracts that conserved an additional 45 acres in Stockton Springs and Prospect. The 288-acre Preserve now protects the entirety of Mount Tuck and its 1.7 mile hiking trail leading to scenic views of Penobscot Bay, Blue Hill Peninsula, and Acadia. The Preserve is adjacent to the HRS Wildlife Sanctuary and Sandy Point Wildlife Management Area, which together comprises 1,300 acres of conserved high value habitat. (4) **McLellan-Poor Preserve Addition** – an additional tract to the popular preserve in Northport, expanding the total conserved area to 100 acres and increasing cross-country skiing and hiking opportunities along the southern shore of Little River and Brewster and Ramsey Brooks.

The four projects described above and the 11 completed in the first year of the Initiative total 693 acres across nine Waldo County towns: Knox, Swanville, Belfast, Morrill, Stockton Springs, Prospect, Searsport, Waldo, and Northport.

Spring and Earth Day are powerful reminders of both the resiliency and fragility of nature. It also serves as a call to action for our community, and communities everywhere to do their part to care for natural places, reduce waste, conserve resources, and support sustainable practices. Coastal Mountains Land Trust's *Waldo County Conservation Initiative* will continue in the coming year to conserve land within large ecologically significant areas that preserve the most diverse

ecosystems in our region, and special properties valued by our community, that provide for trails, access to lakes, rivers and the ocean, and spaces for outdoor learning. There are many ways to get involved: You can join the 14 local volunteers on the committee who are working together to build a fund to support current and future Waldo County projects, make a gift to the Initiative, help spread the word, or learn more by visiting a proposed project with a Land Trust representative. The Land Trust invites members of the community who are interested to contact the Land Trust directly through its Development Director, Tempe Landi, by email at tempe@coastalmountains.org or phone at 236-7091.

Coastal Mountains Land Trust thanks the Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund, Davis Conservation Fund, Maine Community Foundation Land Protection Fund, Leaves of Grass Foundation, and an Anonymous Foundation, and property owners, David and Ann Somers, Courtney Collins, Elisabeth Wolfe and Michael Cuning, and Cindy Mathies for their significant contributions to year two of the Waldo County Conservation Initiative.



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Coastal Mountains Land Trust has worked since 1986 to permanently conserve land to benefit the natural and human communities of the western Penobscot Bay region. The Land Trust has protected over 13,000 acres, offering 55 miles of trails for public recreation. The Land Trust currently has over 25 preserves in Waldo County and was a lead partner alongside the City of Belfast in establishing the Belfast Rail Trail in Belfast.

For more information, please visit www.coastalmountains.org/waldo-county-conservation-initiative