Orono Bog Boardwalk Annual Report 2015

On Friday, October 16, 2015 the Orono Bog Boardwalk (OBB) closed the gate on another successful season of serving as the premier nature destination for those living in the greater Bangor area. This marked the end of our 12th season. This year we closed six weeks early because of the start of the removal of sections 203-252, 1 interpretive stations, and 2 wheelchair turnarounds in anticipation of replacing these with new sections before we open in May, 2016.

On June 22nd, Jeremy Libby, Independent Living Specialist with AlphaOne, Bangor, was our honorary opener for our thirteenth season. Jeremy is a longtime supporter of the Boardwalk. Here is what he wrote for our case for support statement: "Precious few locations exist in Maine, or beyond, where a person with significant disability can enjoy immersion in nature. The Orono Bog Boardwalk shares the gift freely and is critically important to our community." Jeremy's talk was very well received and inspiring. Approximately 45 people attended. We also had a brief dedication of section 154 in memory of Professor Bill Glanz who passed away earlier in the year. Bill was our May migratory bird walk leader since the Boardwalk opened. Jim Bird and Professor Andrei Alyokhin, Director of the School of Biology and Ecology, gave brief presentations at section 154, detailing Bill's service to the Boardwalk and his love of teaching.

This year we do not have an accurate count of visitors because our electric eye counter was not working. We will attempt to get it fixed before the start of the 2016 season.

In the sections that follow we provide information about publicity, events attended, docents, guided group walks, nature walks, maintenance, Boardwalk finances, the capital campaign, and Boardwalk reconstruction. We feel fortunate to have a core group of volunteers that have stayed active over the years and a number of new volunteers who joined us this year. We realize, however, that as with any volunteer-run organization, it is important to increase the volunteer base. Our two primary goals for the coming year are to (1) recruit, train, and retain volunteers and (2) to continue to raise funds for replacement of the wooden Boardwalk with long-lasting composite material.

As Director, I thank the many individuals who have volunteered their time and talent this past year, especially the Group Leaders and the Management Committee: Al and Nancy Larsen, docent scheduling); Phil Locke, maintenance coordinator; John Maddaus and Kourtney Collum, guided tours coordinators; Capital Campaign Committee members Donna Dwyer, Gerry Dwyer, Kourtney Collum, Cindy Mehnert, Jerry Longcore, Jen and Cason Snow, Judy Round, Wendall Tremblay, and Jim Bird; Jerry Longcore, Orono Land Trust representative to the Management Team, Endowment Fund coordinator and record keeper of the Operating Fund; Erik Blomberg, University of Maine representative to the Management Committee and OBB webmaster; and Tracy Willette, City of Bangor representative to the Management Committee. I also thank all of the docents, guides, reconstruction, and maintenance volunteers who have contributed greatly to the operation and mission of the Boardwalk. A list of all dedicated volunteers is in **Appendix 1**. We again calculated the number of hours volunteers worked at or for the Boardwalk this year and the total equaled a minimum 4,200 hours. Based on the figure of 20.54 / hour as a benchmark value for a volunteer hour in Maine (as reported by Independent Sector (http:// independentsector.org/volunteer time), we will be able to report over \$86,000 of in-kind support when completing grant proposals.

Our year at the Boardwalk was successful in many ways, as described in the sections that follow.

Publicity, Events Sponsored or Attended, and Other Activities

For the sixth consecutive year all incoming first year students at the University of Maine were required to volunteer time at area non-profit organizations. Fourteen University of Maine incoming students plus 2 student supervisors worked at the Boardwalk for 2.5 hours on Saturday, August 29th. Phil Locke was the Boardwalk supervisor. The students did an excellent job trimming vegetation away from the Boardwalk and making sure that shims were properly placed and that individual Boardwalk sections were aligned. They also removed pine needles and leaves from between section boards. The students also moved all old sections from next to the outhouse to the area across the road from the outhouse and raked the burn area, bagging up debris.

Boardwalk volunteers held their 12th annual Orono Bog Boardwalk Yard Sale on September 12th. Forty-one volunteers helped set up and staff the yard sale throughout the weekend and the result was \$3983.21 raised for our Boardwalk Capital Campaign account. The amount raised was not our highest total but given the fact that we only has two items priced at over \$99, it was a very good total. A special thanks to Mr. Golding of Kelly Road Storage, Orono, who every year provides us with a storage unit. We have now raised almost \$50,000 at our annual yard sale. Thanks to all donors of items and to volunteers during the sale!

The OBB had an informational table at this year's Hope Festival in April at the University of Maine Student Recreation and Fitness Center. Our volunteer sign-up sheet resulted in a couple new volunteers. Thanks to all who helped at the Hope Festival, including Donna and Gerry Dwyer, John Maddaus, Hope Brogunier, and Al and Nancy Larson.

The Boardwalk had an informational table at the annual University of Maine Retirees Homecoming on June 2nd. Several people stopped by the table to find out about the Boardwalk. It is worth noting that for the first time in 12 years the Boardwalk did not have a presence at the Orono Festival Day. This year the town decided not to have the festival on Mill Street but at the Asa Adams School. We decided not to attend and from what we heard after the festival day from other vendors, this was the right decision.

Boardwalk hats: This year we decided to have the popular Leppard Frog, from several years ago, reproduced. It continues to be a good seller.

Boardwalk postcards: Volunteer Brandon Keim created 5 different Boardwalk postcards that we sold at the information kiosk. We sold some in sets of 5 for \$7.00. Brandon waived the \$100 cost for producing the postcards as a donation to the Boardwalk. Thanks Brandon.

The Boardwalk continues our bottle deposit at Burby and Bates in Orono. We typically make about \$80/year. Thanks Jerry.

We received 2 yards of crushed stone at the cabin area thanks to Tracy Willette. Phil Locke, Dic McClay, and Jim Bird spent a couple hours spreading the rock around the cabin to cover the rubber sleeve around the cabin.

Boardwalk silent auction/potluck dinner: For the first time in several years we decided not to have our silent auction/potluck. We usually have it in October but with our work on the Boardwalk this year we did not have enough time to plan and host it. The auction will be held on May 21, 2016. We will have a live auction to go with our silent auction.

For the 8th year, Boardwalk volunteers (Jerry Longcore, Chris Wilkins, and Jim Bird) staffed a table at the University of Maine, Page Farm and Home Museum Holiday Shoppe. This was a great opportunity to talk with visitors about the Boardwalk and we earned \$432 for the Boardwalk Capital Campaign account through the sale of Boardwalk merchandise and contributions. Jessica Wade made some wonderful pendants, pins, and earrings by encasing wood and lichens from used deck boards. Al Larson framed some his wonderful photographs with used deck boards and we sold three of these. We thank Patricia Henner, Director, Page Farm and Home Museum, for hosting this annual event and we look forward to next year's Holiday Shoppe.

On October 25th the Boardwalk and the Friends of Edith Marion Patch co-sponsored a talk by Professor Erik Blomberg titled: Monitoring Bat Populations in Maine: New Strategies for Citizen-Science Data Collection. The talk was held at the Media Room, The Inn at Dirigo Pines, Orono. Erik made an excellent presentation to about 20 people.

Docents and Student Intern

Docents are volunteers who daily open and close the Boardwalk gate, greet visitors, inform users of Boardwalk rules, maintain the appearance of the cabin and Boardwalk, answer visitors' questions about bog natural history, sell boardwalk t-shirts, hats, and other items, provide local area information and insight, and generally oversee the day-to-day workings of the Boardwalk. Without these volunteers, a visit to the Boardwalk would be a much less satisfying experience. Paul Markson conducted two docent training sessions (June 7th and June 13th) for old and new docents. Thanks Paul. A guide training session coordinated by Kourtney Collum was help on June 13th. Thanks Kourtney. Unfortunately we again did not have a student intern. We will try very hahrd to hire a student intern for the 2016 season. A list of Boardwalk docents is provided in **Appendix 1**. We were extremely fortunate to have Al and Nancy Larsen as our docent calendar scheduler again this year.

Guided Group Walks (contributed by John Maddaus and Kourtney Collum):

Twenty groups participated in tours of the boardwalk in 2015, despite the fact that the boardwalk was only open from June 1 to Oct. 15 due to reconstruction work in both Spring and Fall. Nine of the groups were school groups, six groups were from higher education, four groups were adult organizations, and one group was a children's summer program. 425 people participated in the seventeen tours for which data are available. Three school groups made donations. Ten people served as guides: Donna Dwyer. Al Larson, John Maddaus, John Pickering, Kourtney Collum. Phyllis Leeman, Jerry Longcore, Donne Sinderson, Janet Gorman, and Grace Bartlett.

Victoria Grotton, who teaches two half-day PreK classes at Glenburn School, brought her combined classes to the boardwalk in the June and again in October (the students were different, since these tours were in different school years). She provided the following feedback after the tour in October: "The bog boardwalk field trip for my students and their families was wonderful! The guides had great details and this led into my unit on decomposition and decay nicely. We currently have a "Decay Museum" in our classroom. I asked the kids to put a food item that is still edible or beginning to decay in a clear jar with a lid to create a museum we can observe for change to go along with our rotting pumpkin." This is a great example of a teacher building on what students learned at the bog for a subsequent classroom activity!

Phyllis Leeman, one of the tour guides, offered these thoughts about her experiences as a guide: "I can't begin to relate to you how much I enjoy the Bog Boardwalk. Having the responsibility of guiding and being a docent is most rewarding. This has been a wonderful year." Thank you, Phyllis, for all that you do at the boardwalk! We look forward to a longer season and many more tours in 2016!

Nature Walks

Every year we arrange for a variety of "by reservation-only" nature walks led by experts in particular professions. In March or early April, potential leaders are contacted to see if they would like to lead a nature walk related to their area of interest or expertise. This year we hosted four nature walks. Attendance numbers are in parentheses: Fall Plant Walk (4) led by Professor emerita Christa Schwintzer, Bog Hydrology (4) led by Professor Andy Reeve, Fungi (6) led by Professor Seanna Annis, and Bog Ecology (6) led by Professor Emeritus and Boardwalk founder Ron Davis. Thanks Christa, Andy, Seanna, and Ron!

Maintenance, Construction, Replacements (contributed by Phil Locke)

During the 2015 Boardwalk season there were 36 names on my e-mail list of maintenance volunteers. I sent requests for help with specific boardwalk tasks as the need arose. Most of these people (but certainly not all) volunteered for one or more maintenance tasks during the season. For convenience I assigned numbers to these tasks as indicated below:

- 1 Replace/repair rotting rails, deck boards, and joists (requires carpentry skills)
- 2 Scrape and touch-up/repaint benches, railings, and picnic tables
- 3 Help with leveling and shimming (requires some heavy lifting)
- 4 Sweep the Boardwalk clear of debris (leaves, needles, twigs)
- 5 Trim back encroaching vegetation
- 6 Re-label faded sections numbers

- 7 Weekend cleanings of the outhouse (several of us took turns)
- 8 Organize and tidy up the storage cabin (inside and underneath)
- 9 Use truck to go pick up wood from lumber yard
- 10 Remove old sections and replace with new composite sections (requires some heavy lifting)

Accelerating decay of the old hemlock boardwalk sections remains a worrisome problem, even though nearly half of the old boardwalk has now been replaced by new composite sections. If each of the 36 volunteers spent an average of 4 hours per week on maintenance tasks, the total person-hours for the shortened 15-week 2015 season would be 36 x 4 x 15 = 2,160. This is probably a conservative estimate.

Task 7, weekly cleanings of the outhouse, continues to be the least popular job with volunteers. Each of these persons cleaned at least once: Erik Blomberg, Jim Ecker, Helen Koch, Genevieve Trafalet, Dick McClay, Adrienne Leppold, Steve McKay, Jim Bird, Phil Locke (Helen Koch cleaned 6 times, Jim Ecker 5 times.) Even so, three weekends were not covered.

During the winter of 2014-2015 I built a solid cedar picnic table which Karl Hill and I delivered to the cabin area in the spring.

Karl, Justin Landry, and I built a roof for a second kiosk. Several other volunteers helped with installation of this kiosk. (Note: a list of maintenance volunteers is in **Appendix 1**.)

Financial Information: Fund-raising (contributed by Jerry Longcore)

The Operating Fund began the fiscal year with equity of \$1,309.88. The Operating Budget is based on the current

University of Maine 2015 fiscal year, which extended from July 1, 2014 thru June 30, 2015. During this period income was \$1,853.71 and expenses were \$1,057.92 resulting in a balance of \$2,105.67. Income from the annual Yard Sale was \$3,983.31. Money pipe cash donations equaled \$2,355.48 and donations from products equaled \$1,498.00 based on records kept at the Cabin. No usual Festival Day was held this year and no Potluck/Silent Auction was held, but is scheduled for May 2016. Income from the Christmas Shoppe held at the Page Museum equaled \$432.00. Total income from all these sources was \$8,004.98. Except for a few early weekly collections, which went into operating fund, all other funds went into the Capital Campaign fund. Temporary investment income was \$0.75. Expenses were for Dues and Fees (\$198.00), Supplies and Materials (\$763.76), and Telephone and Website (\$96.16).

Endowment Fund income for FY-2015 was \$20.00 since November 30, 2015, which reflects the switch to focus on raising money for the Capital Campaign Fund. The total Endowment Fund principal as of December 31, 2015 was \$183,472.26, but the Fair Market Value of the Endowment Fund had decreased to \$176,420.55, because of the market downturn late in 2015.

The balance in the Capital Campaign Fund as of November 30, 2015 was \$46,419.84. Since then an additional \$6,798.97 has come in resulting in a balance of \$53,218.81 as of December 31, 2015. Note that these fund totals have not had final verification by the accounts.

Boardwalk Reconstruction Campaign Committee

The Capital Campaign Committee has met fairly regularly this year. Members are Jerry Longcore, Judy Round, Jim Bird, Donna and Gerry Dwyer, Jen and Cason Snow, Kourtney Collum, Cindy Mehnert, and Wendall Tremblay. Welcome to Kourtney, Cindy, and Gerry – our new members for 2015. Jim Bird and Jerry Longcore continue to prepare grant proposals. We received \$30,000 from the Maine Timberlands Charitable Foundation (co-written by Jim Bird and Elizabeth Erickson). We also received \$500 from the Bangor Savings Bank Corporate Giving fund. We currently have a proposal to the Betterment Fund for \$70,000, the Penobscot County Conservation Association for \$5,000, and the NER Centennial Fund (National Park Service) for \$7,000. The year grant proposals to the Quimby Family Foundation, the Libra Foundation, the Fisher Foundation, the Camden National Bank Foundation, and the Bangor Savings Bank Foundation were all rejected. In the first half of 2016 we will be working on and submitting proposals to Hannaford (\$50,000), Emera Maine (\$40,000), L.L. Bean (\$50,000), and a concept letter to the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation.

In the late summer and early fall, Phil Locke and Karl Hill with help from Justin Landry built the 2nd kiosk roof for our new campaign kiosk. The in the fall, Gerry Dwyer, Jerry Longcore, Phil Locke, and Jim Bird with the help of Nick Fiore from the City of Bangor, installed the new campaign kiosk near the picnic table. Jim Bird and Kourtney Collum prepared the poster showing in photographs our reconstruction effort and why it is necessary to replace the Boardwalk and Jerry Longcore and Kourtney Collum prepared the campaign donor poster. We received a number of positive comments about the two posters. (Thanks Kourtney). We plan to update the campaign donor poster before we open on May 1, 2016.

We held a fund raiser at 5 Guys Burgers in the Bangor Mall area on Monday, October 5th. 5 Guys donated 10% of all money made between 5-8pm that day. We made \$126 + \$61 in donations. Thanks Jerry for organizing!

The Natural Living Center placed a Boardwalk Reconstruction donation can at one of their check-outs. We have been raising

about \$50 a month. Thanks Jerry for this great idea and thanks Natural Living Center.

In early December, the Orono Brewing Company on Main St. Orono launched a maple beer in support of the Boardwalk. Abe and Heather Firth, owners, will give \$1.00 to the Boardwalk reconstruction campaign for every pint of beer sold. On opening night the Orono Brewing Company sold 100 pints and the Firth's figure that it will be gone in about 2 months. Thank you Abe and Heather and to Jerry Longcore for approaching the Firth's about a donation to the campaing.

In December we sent out a one page letter to all Boardwalk campaign donors thank them for their support. The letter included photographs by Donna and Gerry Dwyer and Doug Comstock. The layout of the letter was done by Kourtney Collum. Several campaign donations we received as the result of the letter. We plan to update all campaign donors every six months.

Jerry Longcore gave a talk about the Boardwalk and our reconstruction efforts at the Orono/Old Town Kiwanis meeting on August 25th. The talk was well received.

Jim Bird gave a talk about the Boardwalk and our reconstruction efforts to the Xi Sigma Pi Forestry society meeting at Nutting Hall on September 23rd. One of the purposes of the talk was to recruit student volunteers to help us. The talk was well received.

Jim Bird gave a presentation to the Operations Committee of the Bangor City Council on April 7th. The purpose of the presentation was to inform the council of our reconstruction work and ask if the City of Bangor would consider sponsoring two Boardwalk sections. The councilors were impressed with the Boardwalk and the volunteer work done there and voted to allocate \$2,000 to sponsor two Boardwalk sections. Thanks to Tracy Willette for arranging the presentation. Thanks to volunteer Jennifer Snow we now have a QR matrix code that leads to the Boardwalk homepage. The code will be posted on our campaign kiosk.

Boardwalk / University Connection

As of January 2016 no work has been done on updating the Memorandum of Understanding or on clarifying Boardwalk ownership and liability issues.

Boardwalk Reconstruction

The 48 new sections, interpretive station, and 2 wheelchair turnouts arrived at the Boardwalk on September 29th. The Boardwalk closed for the season at the end of the day on Friday, October 15^{th.} The next day we started to remove the next 48 sections, interpretive station, and two wheelchair turnouts. By the end of the day Sunday, October 17th, all sections were removed. As they did last year, Bangor Home Depot loaned us carts that we used for section removal. On Monday October 18th we started on the installation of new sections. The new sections were all in place at the end of the day Friday, October 30th. It was an amazing accomplishment to get this done so quickly. Twenty-nine volunteers worked 462 hours to get this done. The year we had the services of 4 trustees provided by the Penobscot County Sheriff's office. We also had members of UMaine's Sigma Chi fraternity thanks to the philanthropy chair of the fraternity Michael Briganti. The new sections still have to be leveled and the bolts have to be tightened. We plan to do both in April 2016. Once that is done, Steve Merriam (Great Northern Docks) has to come to the Boardwalk and measure the angles at turns so they can fabricate the wedge pieces. This will take approximately two weeks. Note: We will open May 1st. If the wedge pieces are not in place we will just close that part of the Boardwalk.

Toward the end of the year Tracy Willette had the city of Bangor remove the remaining old sections near the outhouse. The city crew also used a magnetic roller to pick up nails and screws. Thanks Tracy.

(Note: A list of reconstruction volunteers is in Appendix 1).

Boardwalk User Survey

We conducted a user survey of Boardwalk visitors in 2004 and 2010. A third user survey will take place in 2016. This survey will be the same as the ones given in 2004 and 2010 however we will add some new questions about the newly reconstructed part of the Boardwalk.

Webpage and Facebook page

Our webpage is now hosted by the University of Maine and has been up and running for almost two year. Erik Blomberg, University of Maine representative to the Management Committee, has done a fine job updating and maintaining this page. Over the next year (2016) we hope to load former Intern Sue Priest's lesson plans. We already have loaded many of her bog fact sheets.

Thanks to Boardwalk volunteers Donna Dwyer and Jennifer Snow our Facebook page is going strong: www.facebook.com/ OronoBog Boardwalk. During the latter half of 2015 Donna Dwyer has taken over as the sole person in charge of the page. Over the past year it has become very active and has helped us to inform the public about the Boardwalk and all that we do. We have also recruited some volunteers because of the page.

Boardwalk Camera

Thanks to Boardwalk volunteer Bryan Wells, our Boardwalk nighttime video camera functioned part of the season but to keep it

going we have to have a volunteer to work with Bryan to maintain the camera.

Boardwalk Vandalism:

This season we have not had any vandalism on the Boardwalk. However during the summer someone set fire to the old Boardwalk sections on the other side of the road near the outhouse. The fire consumed the entire stack of old sections. We were very lucky that the City Forest did not burn.

Conclusion

We have accomplished much this year. I look forward to our next season as we continue to raise funds and install Boardwalk sections, expand our volunteer base, and increase our educational outreach to area schools and other groups. I have tried to include all that we have accomplished this year, but if I have missed something or neglected to mention a volunteer, please let me know.

Thank you all!

Jim Bird Orono Bog Boardwalk Director 1/27/2016

Appendix 1: 2015 Boardwalk volunteers.

Note: 1=docent, 2=general volunteer, 3=maintenance volunteer, 4=walk guide, 5=walk leader, 6=committee leader/co-leader, 7=reconstruction volunteer.

Jim Allen (3,7) Peter Altmann (7) Mark Anderson (2) Grace Bartlett (4)

Deirdre Birbeck (7) Michael Briganti (7) Jim Bird (1,2,3,4,5,6,7) Mary Bird (2,5)Erik Blomberg (2,3,6,7)Hope Brogunier (1) Kathy Burns (1) Barbara Cole (2) Tim Cole (2) Kourtney Collum (2,4,6)Doug Comstock (7) Donna Comstock (7) Lee Cummings (2) John Daigle (2) Lee Davis (1,4)Ron Davis (1, 2, 4, 5)Lynn DeGrenier (2) Christina Diebold (1) Donna Dwyer (1,4,7)Gerry Dwyer (3,7) Mike Enos (7) Sharon Fitzgerald (2,7) John Fitzgerald (7) Nancy Forster-Holt (2) Barb Friedman (1) Janet Gorman (4) Lauren Hain (7) Karl Hill (3,7) Chris Jones (1) Brandon Keim (2,7)Fred Kirchesis (3,7) Helen Koch (2,7)Philip Koch (2) Bill Kuykendall (2) Jacob Jennings (7) Ron Lamb (2,3,7)

Justin Landry (1,3) Mart Lapin (2) Mary Lapin (2) Al Larson (1,2,3,4,7) Nancy Larson (1,2,7)Phyllis Leeman (1,4) Adrienne Leppold - (2,3,5,7)Dale Levesque (7) Ed Lindsey (7) Phil Locke (1,3,4,6,7) Jerry Longcore (1,2,3,4,5,6,7) Joyce Longcore (1) Rolando Luna (7) Jennifer Lund (5) John Maddaus (2,4,6) Paul Markson (1,6) Ben MacAlexander (7) Dick McClay (1,3,7)Steve McKay (1,3,7)Molly McLean (2) Nancy Michaud (2) Libby Norton (1) Matt Pelletier/Delta Kappa Phi (7) Penobscot County Sheriff's Office + 4 trustees John Pickering (1,2,4) Andy Reeve (2,4,5)Rocky Robichaud (2) Casey Robinson (7) Judy Round (2) Marianne Sarrantonio (2) Christa Schwintzer (5) Donne Sinderson (4) Genevieve Smith (1,2,3,4,7)Cason Snow (3,7)Jennifer Snow (2,7)Lilly Snow (7)

Jerri Stone (2) Robert Sypitkowski (7) Linda Rogers Tomer (1,2) Wendall Tremblay (1,2,4) Ken Tudor (2) Matt Tully (3) Becky Van Beneden (2) Chris Van Beneden (2) Chris Wilkins (2,7) Tracy Willette (2) Jessica Wade (2) Bryan Wells (2)

Appendix 2: Guided Walks 2015

Date	Tour	Number	Age/Grade
June 1	Deer Isle Stonington ES Bangor City Forest	26+4	Κ
June 2	Glenburn School	17+18	Pre-K + parents
June 9	Brooksville School	10+3	Grades 3-4
June 22	Sunbury Village	9+1	Seniors

July 18	Unitarian Universalist Bangor summer camp	15+4	Ages 6-12
July 24	Audubon Western Mass.	4+1	Adults
July 31	UMaine Intensive English Institute	18+2	Adults - International Students

September 9	William Cohen Middle School	32+2	Grades 6-8
September 14	Sebasticook Garden Club	6+1	Adults
September 14	UMA-Bangor BIO 110	?	College
September 17	Orono Middle School	45+5	Grade 7
September 21	SFR UMaine Recreation Management	16+1	College

September 21	UMaine Sustainable Ag.	4+1	College
September 23	EES 177 UMaine	50+1	College
September 29	Belfast Homeschool Group	15+9	All Ages
October 1	Deer Isle Stonington E.S.	26+4	К

Appendix 3: Active Tour Guides 2015

Phyllis Leeman	Kourtney Collum	Janet Gorman	
Donna Dwyer	Al Larson	Grace Bartlett	Jerry Longcore
John Maddaus	John Pickering	Donne Sinderson	