



RIVER TIDINGS

The Newsletter of DRA (www.damariscottariver.org)

SPRING 2012 EXTRA

SPECIAL LANDS UPDATE: Land for Maine's Future Supports Ripley Purchase in Edgecomb

On February 2, DRA closed on the Ripley Property in Edgecomb. Purchasing these 69 acres of scenic woodland in the watershed opens up new trail opportunities for River ~ Link while also protecting wildlife habitat, including perched wetlands noisy in spring with wood frogs.

The purchase was a deep "bargain sale," meaning that the price was significantly lower than the appraised value. The difference between sales price and qualified appraisal is a donation by the seller to the land trust and is thus, generally, deductible. Donated value can also serve as "match" for grants. In this case, Land for Maine's Future required a substantial local match which was met fully by the value of the bargain sale donation.

The Estate of Suzanne Ripley sold the land to DRA at less than half of its appraised value. The Land for Maine's Future program funded the acquisition and transaction costs were supported by both the Fields Pond Foundation and the Hochgraf Charitable Foundation.

"Land for Maine's Future and the Maine Department of Conservation were invaluable partners," notes DRA

executive director Steven Hufnagel. "The staff members were incredibly helpful and professional and the funding made possible the purchase of land that will serve the community and wildlife for years to come. I feel grateful to the people of Maine for supporting the land bonds over the years that make LMF's work possible."

Hufnagel also expressed his and DRA's deep appreciation to the family of Suzanne Ripley for their dedication to this project and for their generosity.

DRA Stewardship Director Steve Spencer performed initial site reconnaissance and expressed enthusiasm about the many interesting trail layout possibilities. Following a management planning



A stream running through the new Ripley property.

process over the next few years, DRA will establish access improvement priorities and begin work on the preserve. Ultimately, connections into the primary River ~ Link trail are envisioned and anticipated.

The property will be named "The Ripley Preserve" in honor of the substantial donation and support of the Ripley Family.

PROPERTY DESCRIPTION
EXCERPTED FROM
SUBMISSION TO LAND FOR
MAINE'S FUTURE BOARD

The 69-acre Ripley Property in Edgcomb is moose country in the midst of a more developed region. A proportionately narrow parcel with its major axis running east-west, the land bridges the core of the River~Link properties inland and River Road toward the shore. The property's location will allow for the creation of a trail access point mid-way along the River~Link corridor, with corresponding protection of wildlife travel routes. Moose sign and browse abound on the land: "Herd path" hardly does justice to the substantial moose and deer "highways" present on the property.

Primarily forested upland with noteworthy outcrops and stepped cliff bands, the property also boasts several small and productive perched ponds and marshes. Old woods and farm roads, along with intermittent stone walls, attest to an active agricultural history, most likely a combination of pasture and woodlot. Today, forest cover is complete and much of the forest is relatively mature with white pine and red oak in abundance.



Location of property.

LETTER FROM LEILA RIPLEY,
SUZANNE RIPLEY'S DAUGHTER



Suzanne Ripley (pictured at right)

Dear Steven,

Thanks for your note and help navigating through this process. It has been so reassuring for us to know that you are as excited as we are about the future of the Ripley Preserve and are dedicated to the protection of the rich natural beauty and habitat of the land. Your description of your walk with Steve Spencer last year was so moving and alluring that we can't wait to explore the trails ourselves in the future.

The donation in the form of a bargain sale was really the extension of an idea that my mother had been contemplating for many years prior to her passing. It seemed to fit with our family's love for the Damariscotta River region, as well as the ideal of preserving the "River Link" area. We are ardent fans of the trail system on Dodge Point and some of my favorite memories and conversations with my mom took place on our "leg stretches" (as she would call them) there and at many of the other DRA/BRLT sites.

I hope that by having the Ripley name attached to this area, this will serve to honor the memory of my mom, Suzanne, and my grandparents, William and Lydia Ripley (who purchased this piece of land in the early 60's), and will also be a source of pride for future generations of our family. We have family ties to the River Road that now stretch back five generations.

My hope is that once the trail systems are established, it will be a resource as well as an escape for people (including but not limited to my family) looking to appreciate the beauty of the area. Our son, Nolan, has learned to LOVE the backpack carrier and so we are so looking forward to exploring some other parts of the River Link.

*Sincerely,
Leila Ripley*