

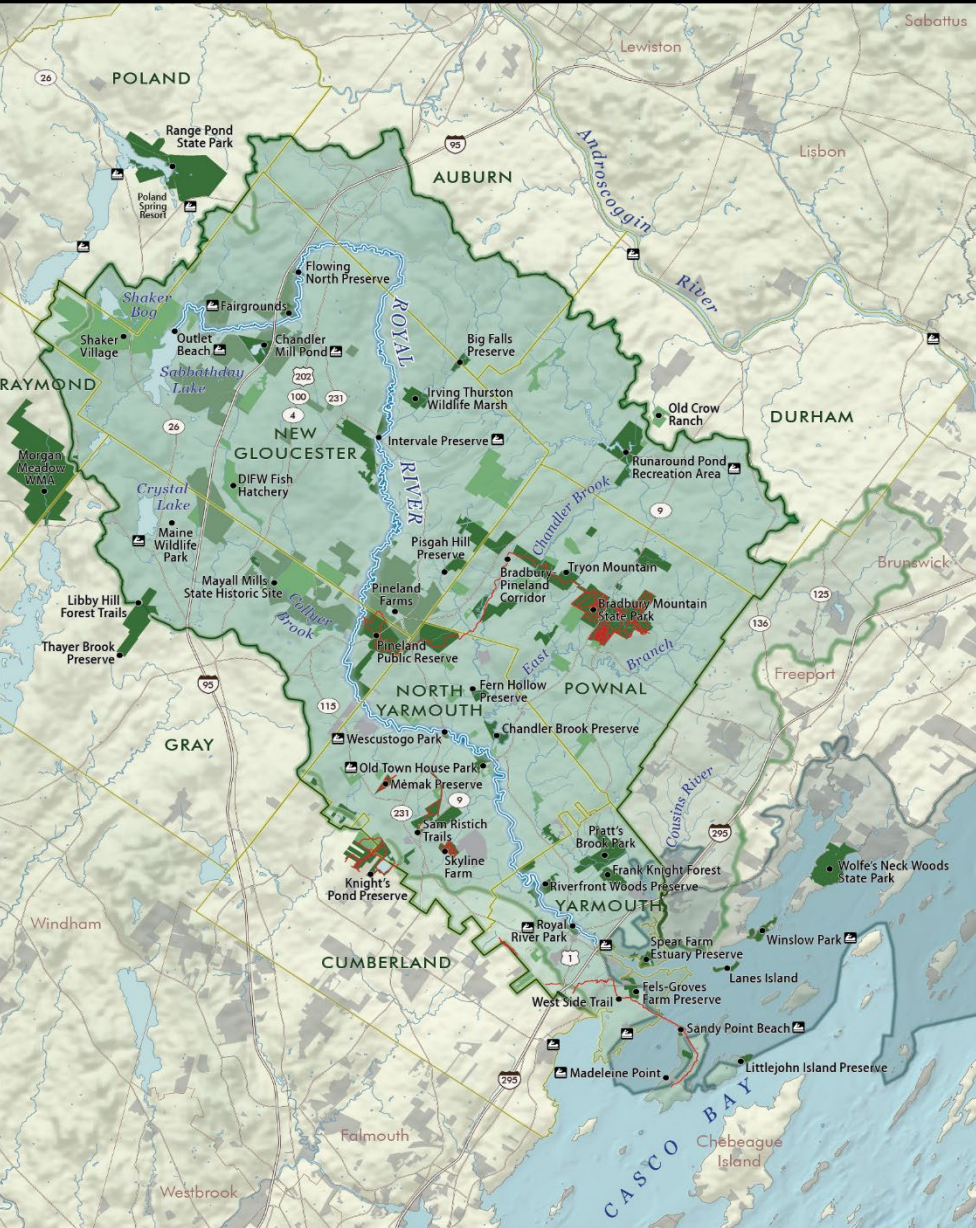
Thayer Brook Preserve

Presentation to the Gray Town Council

April 19, 2022



Royal River
Conservation Trust



RRCT: a non-profit conservation landowner, governed by local membership

- Gray**
- New Gloucester**
- North Yarmouth**
- Durham**
- Auburn**
- Pownal**
- Yarmouth**

RRCT:



Farms

Hills

Trails

Forests

Rivers

Streams

Casco Bay



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RRCT Strategic Plan Goals:

Conserve more land

Connect people to conserved land

Engage communities

Care for the land we own



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Why?

Habitat

Clean Water

Recreation

Respite

Carbon sequestration

Climate resilience

Public health




Education

More



Proximity to New England Conservation Land

Map Legend

-  Southern Maine
-  Royal River watershed
-  Lowest 10% of conserved lands in New England (census tract with a 10 kilometer buffer)

Key Notes

Figure 6 on the previous page in this Conservation Plan presents underserved conserved areas for census tracts with a 1 km buffer. This map depicts the same data but with a 10 km buffer in an attempt to better depict the amount of conserved land near a person's home and work.

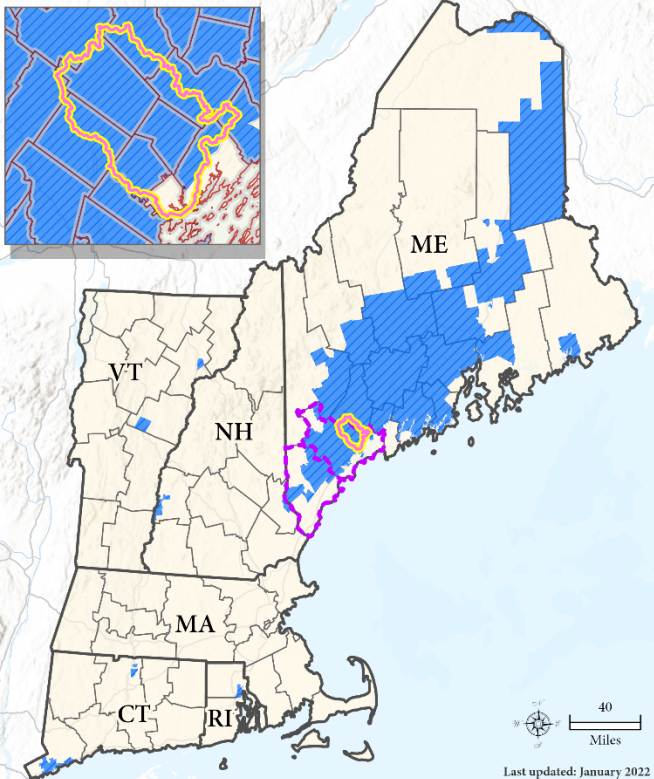
All lands in the lowest 10% have less than 9.92% of the total land area in their census tract (and 10km buffer) conserved. Maine has the highest number of census tracts in the lowest 10% conserved at about two thirds of all tracts. Census tracts have varied geographic size and Maine has the largest sized census tracts.

Ecology and public access are not accounted for in the conserved lands dataset, and not all lands included in the dataset are permanently protected.

Reference

Sims KRE, Lee LG, Estrella Lona N, Larie M, Thompson JR. 2021. *Environmental Justice Criteria for New Land Protection*. *Conservation Efforts to Address Disparities in Access to Nearby Open Space*. Amherst College, Harvard University, StarLuna Consulting.

The conserved lands dataset is "New England Open Space". It was published in January 2021 by Harvard Forest and is a compilation of various spatial datasets.



40 Miles
Last updated: January 2022

Interpreting the Data

The data presented here is a model and should be treated as such. The conserved lands dataset approximates conserved land but cannot capture all lands because of reporting challenges and the constant addition of newly conserved land.

Outside of Yarmouth, the entire Royal River watershed is in the bottom 10% of New England census tracts. Recent acquisitions, particularly by RRCT and Maine Woodland Owners, would remove New Gloucester and potentially neighboring towns from the bottom 10% if they had been included in the data. In general, towns in the Royal River watershed are in the bottom 10% because the 10 km buffer combines more conserved areas with less conserved municipalities such as such as Auburn, Durham, Gray, Raymond, Lewiston, and Poland.

Southern Maine and the state's I-95 corridor lag behind much of New England's conservation in proximity to people. As communities continue to grow in and around the Royal River watershed, our municipalities, conservation organizations, and other groups have a tremendous opportunity to plan and invest in open space and the many benefits it provides our people.

Percentage of Census Tracts in Lowest 10% of Conserved Land

- Maine: 67%
- Connecticut: 20%
- Rhode Island: 11%
- New Hampshire: 1%
- Vermont: 0.5%
- Massachusetts: 0%

RRCT 2022 Conservation Plan:

Conservation land in all communities equitably.

Gray and RRCT: shared goals, needed momentum



Percent conserved:

30% by 2030: US goal

30% by 2030: Maine goal

20.5%: Maine 2021

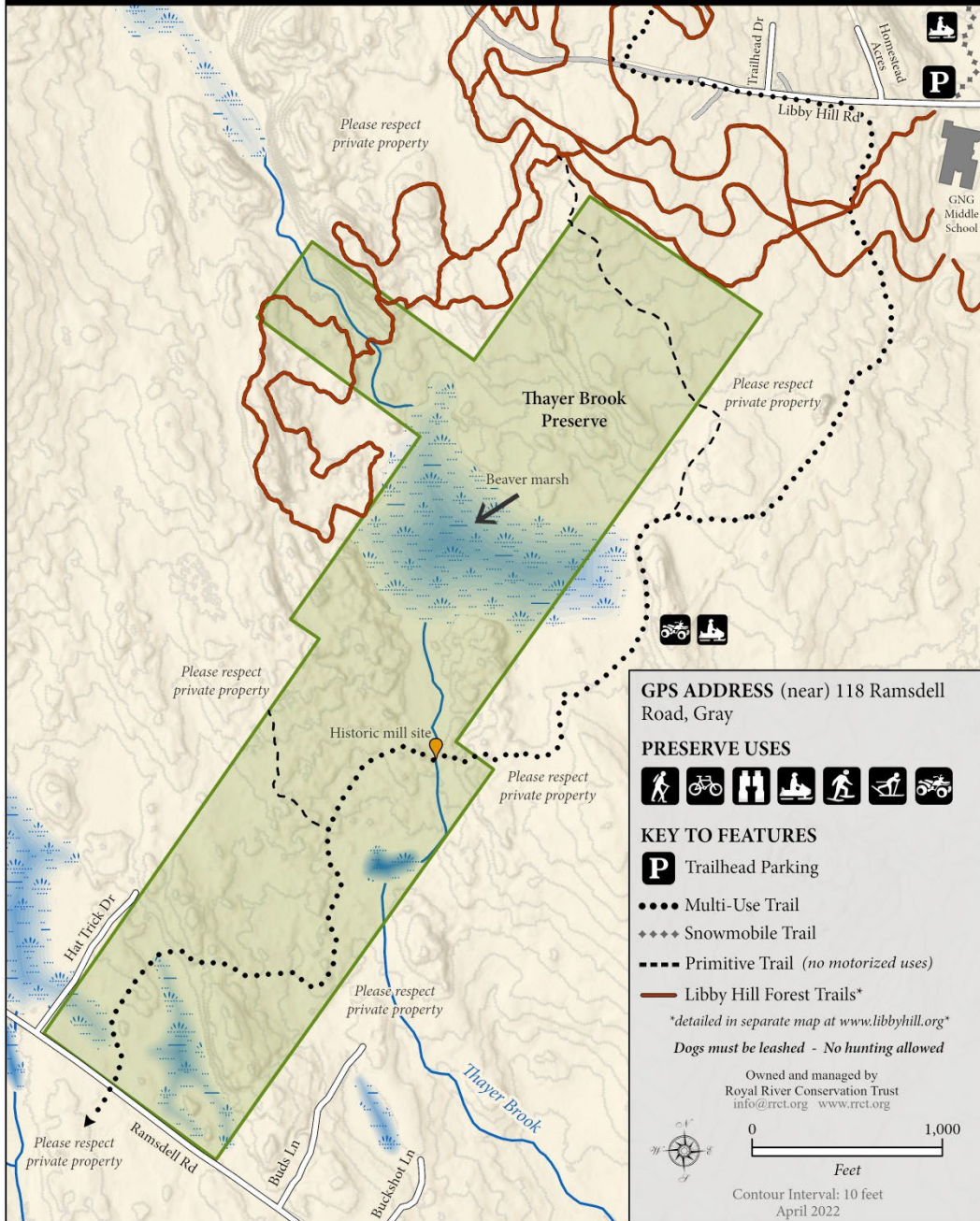
10.9%: Cumberland Cty 2021

5.9%: Gray 2021



Gray has exceptionally large remaining forests supporting trails and recreation, and an adopted Open Space Plan and Comprehensive Plan with a stated goal of retaining key rural and forested areas of Gray.





GPS ADDRESS (near) 118 Ramsdell Road, Gray

PRESERVE USES

KEY TO FEATURES
P Trailhead Parking
 ●●● Multi-Use Trail
 ◆◆◆ Snowmobile Trail
 - - - Primitive Trail (no motorized uses)
 — Libby Hill Forest Trails*
 *detailed in separate map at www.libbyhill.org
 Dogs must be leashed - No hunting allowed

Owned and managed by
 Royal River Conservation Trust
info@rrect.org www.rrect.org

0 1,000
 Feet
 Contour Interval: 10 feet
 April 2022

Thayer Brook Preserve

147-acres

Acquired March 28, 2022

Doubling the conservation & recreation acreage behind the schools

Gratitude: the descendants of Evelyn Morrill Durgin -- the Durgin and Rogers families

Exceptional recognition: Steve McPike, Carl Holmquist, Anne Gass

Funding: An anonymous family (bridge financing), Casco Bay Estuary Partnership, more discussion later this evening.

Thayer Brook Preserve



- One of the largest inland Great Blue Heron nesting colonies (rookeries) in Maine
- Six beaver dams
- Within one of the largest remaining forested habitat blocks in greater Portland
- Entirely undeveloped watershed upstream.
- Compelling reasons for conservation dialog with abutters





Thayer Brook Preserve

- Exceptional coordination from day #1 with Libby Hill Forest and Presumpscot Regional Land Trust
- Recent coordination with ATV club and snowmobile club.
- Planned future coordination with NEMBA (mountain bikes)
- Existing and planned new hiking and biking trails: “the quiet side” of Libby Hill
- Planned trail-head parking lot on Ramsdell Road (Town Council proposed budget).





Next steps:

Property clean-up

More outreach to neighbors & abutters

Ramsdell Road trailhead parking lot planning-scoping

Meet & greet treks: This Thursday at 10:00 am & 5:30 pm at Ramsdell Road details at RRCT.org. Also May 5th.

RRCT Preserve Outreach Group (trail planning, trail work, more) chaired by SteveMcPike@gmail.com



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Next steps (funding):

RRCT purchased the property with charitable bridge financing.



RRCT aims to replace the bridge financing with funding from donors, foundations, and applications pending before the Land for Maine's Future program (State of Maine government) and the US Fish & Wildlife Service (NAWCA).

RRCT requests Town Council support of RRCT's pending application to the Land for Maine's Future program. See Council agenda and Council packet. Separate Council proposal to financially support a planned new trailhead parking lot.

RRCT relies on local membership contributions, local businesses, and local philanthropy for ongoing work.

Contact RRCT at RRCT.org

Preserves & Trails for new preserve and trail maps (Thayer Brook Preserve)



“Subscribe” for email updates

“Donate” for project support

“Events” for upcoming events

info@RRCT.org for any questions, any issues

SteveMcPike@gmail.com to join the
Preserve Outreach Group (trail work, more)



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**Thank you landowners & volunteers.
Dianna Ridlon (Durgin), Steve
McPike, Alex Rogers, Cindi Rogers**