

Appendix 16
Harpswell Conservation Commission
Recommended Focus Areas

During 2008, the Harpswell Conservation Commission identified **12 focus areas** and **19 islands** in Harpswell for conservation. Please see **Appendix 15** for our methodology and criteria for determining these focus areas and the note at the end of this **Appendix 16**. We have listed the focus areas below geographically to include land and corridors of lands on Great Island, Orr's and Bailey Islands, Harpswell Neck and the Islands.

Great Island

1. Long Reach-Long Marsh Area (Long Reach Cove and land on both sides)

- Long Marsh (which is defined by the State as a significant salt marsh)
- Fresh Water Wetland 8 West (East of Misery Hill on RT 24 with 26.3 acres with 8E in Resource Protection) drains directly into Doughty Cove and is important for habitat wildlife, role in marine food chain and nutrient absorption and sediment/toxin removal
- Coastal Marsh Wetland 20 (Long Reach Mountain to Henry's Creek with 8.6 acres in Shoreline Residential)
- Coastal Marsh Wetland 21 (Strawberry Creek with 8.4 acres in Shoreline Residential)
- Coastal Floodplain Wetland 22 (Long Reach with 87.8 acres in Resource Protection) with value for wading birds and waterfowl and its location within the 100 year flood plain.
- Coastal Marsh Wetland 25 (Doughty Cove with 77.1 acres in Resource Protection)
- Includes large area with state and HHLT conserved land, as well as Town land with the Cliff Trail

This area is the most important undeveloped and connected land in Harpswell for preservation as open space. **It is important because of its:**

- High value habitat, including habitat for rare/threatened/endangered species and significant wildlife habitat for waterfowl and/or wading birds
- High value water resources, including five (5) wetlands, a marsh and a cove with clam flats. The wetlands provide habitat and protect the cove and creek from pollution.
- Significant corridors for wildlife
- Trails for recreation on both sides of Long Reach Cove
- Covers a significant amount of land, some of which is already preserved by the state and HHLT

2. Brickyard Cove Watershed (East Harpswell Area from Route 24 to Cundy's Harbor Road/Birch Run/Cranberry Horn Hill Area)

- Freshwater Wetlands 6 (Cranberry Horn Hill with 8.8 acres in Shoreline Residential) which drains into Orr's Cove in Quahog Bay and has an important function for production export and wildlife habitat
- Freshwater Wetland 7 (East of Cundy's Harbor Road with 23 acres in Shoreline Residential) which drains into the mud flats in the New Meadows River and has important functions for production export, habitat for wildlife, and sediment/toxin removal.
- Forested Freshwater Wetland 8E (East of Misery Hill on RT 24 with 37 acres in Resource Protection) with value for wildlife habitat, role in marine food chain and potential to protect Quahog Bay

This area is important for conservation because of its:

- High value habitat, including inland and tidal habitat for waterfowl and/or wading birds.
- Freshwater wetlands that play a role in the marine food chain by absorbing sediment, pollutants and excess nutrients which might run into the New Meadows River and Quahog Bay.
- Interspersion of wetland types in a small area.

3. Bethel Point Area (Southeast Quahog Bay/Hen Cove Area)

- Both sides of Bethel Point Road and upper portions of Cundy's Harbor Road
- Freshwater Wetlands 2 (Junction Cundy's Harbor Road and Bethel Point Road with 28.5 acres in Resource Protection) drains into Quahog Bay and is important for wildlife habitat and prevention of sediments and toxins into Quahog Bay.
- Freshwater Wetland 3 (Bethel Point with 10 acres in Resource Protection) drains into Quahog Bay and is important for wildlife habitat, nutrient absorption and toxin removal.

This area is important because of its:

- High value habitat, including inland and tidal habitat for waterfowl and/or wading birds
- Valuable freshwater wetlands which protect Quahog Bay and marine ecosystem
- Wetlands which provide wildlife habitat and have a role in our marine food chain
- Provides a significant corridor for wildlife.

4. Sandy Cove Area (Beach and East Cundy's Point)

- Coastal Marsh Wetland 27 (Sandy Cove with 7 acres of habitat in Resource Protection) is part of the 100 year floodplain.
- Includes Sandy Cove Beach which should be preserved for recreation and hiking

This area is important because of its:

- Potential recreation resource for hiking on the west side of the cove

- High value habitat (salt marsh), including habitat for tidal waterfowl/wading bird areas
- Historic location of salt farm and ice production

5. Ice Pond (Dan’s Pond between Gun Point and Long Point)

- Freshwater Wetland 23. The pond between Gun Point and Long Point has 38.6 acres in Resource Protection, is the only Great Pond in Harpswell and is in the 100 year floodplain. At the south, it drains into the ocean. It is important for its habitat and its toxin removal absorption.
- Privately owned with no public access

This area is important because of its:

- It is the only Great Pond in Harpswell
- Potential for public access and recreation
- High value habitat, including tidal habitat for waterfowl and/or wading birds

Orr’s and Bailey Islands

6. Wilson Pond (Orr’s Island)

- Freshwater Wetland 13 (Wilson Pond with 14 acres in Resource Protection) which drains into Reed Cove in Harpswell Sound and has important functions habitat and toxin removal
- Surrounding undeveloped land
- High value habitat, including habitat for inland waterfowl/wading bird

This area is important because of its:

- The only significant wetland on Orr’s and Bailey Island
- Provides wildlife habitat
- Existence of undeveloped land in the area
- Significant inland habitat for water fowl and wading birds.

7. Cedar Beach (Bailey Island)

- Important sand beach

This area is important because of its:

- This beach is an important recreational resource for town. It is located at the end of a private road. In order to guarantee public access, the Town should consider the pursuit of a right of way to the beach and the provision for parking.
- High value habitat (salt marsh), including tidal habitat for waterfowl/wading bird areas

Harpswell Neck¹

8. Otter Brook Corridor (North Harpswell Corridor from Mill Cove to Harpswell Cove, including Otter Brook)

- Freshwater Wetlands 9 and 10 (North Harpswell north of Mountain Road with 19 acres in Resource Protection) has value for wildlife habitat, its role in the marine food chain and its potential to absorb excess nutrients.
- Coastal Marsh Wetland 18 (High Head with 7.2 acres in Resource Protection) is in a 100 year floodplain.
- Coastal Marsh Wetlands 11 and 12 (North Harpswell with 28 acres in Resource Protection)
- Area includes Liberty Farm and Skolfield Cove

This area is important because of its:

- Number and connectivity of five wetlands over a 2 mile corridor
- Provides a significant wildlife travel corridor in North Harpswell
- High value habitat, including habitat for tidal waterfowl/wading birds.
- Includes shell fish habitat

9. Widgeon to Wilson Coves Area

- Includes Dunning Farm of historic importance to town and HHLT Lookout Lot
- Undeveloped land with potential for 250 acres of connected area
- Includes coastal marsh in Widgeon Cove

This area is important because of its:

- High value tidal habitat for waterfowl and/or wading birds , including an important salt marsh with habitat for pintail ducks
- Potential large block of undeveloped land with wildlife corridor and connection of two coves
- Farm is culturally important

10. Lookout Point Corridor (Lookout Point to Stocurro Drive)

- Freshwater Wetlands 16 (Harpswell Center with 3.2 acres). Note that 2002 Land Use Committee recommended removal from Shoreland Zoning.
- Includes and connects to HHLT Hackett land

This area is important because of its:

- Includes the largest undeveloped habitat near Harpswell Center with up to 200 connected acres
- Significant wildlife habitat for tidal waterfowl/wading bird and shorebird areas.

¹ In early 2008, the State of Maine established a new high priority area for conservation in Maquoit Bay and Middle Bay which includes the north western shore of Harpswell Neck. The HCC did not include this area in our Focus Areas because the west shore of Harpswell is highly developed with homes.

11. Allen Point Road Corridor

- Freshwater Wetland 14. South end has 11 acres in Resource Protection which drains into the ocean and influences the clam flats.
- Small pond across from South Harpswell Post Office

This area is important because of its:

- Fresh water wetland
- Significant tidal habitat for water fowl and wading birds.
- Provides shellfish habitat

12. Basin Curtis Coves Area

- Undeveloped area along Basin Cove of about 80 acres
- Includes a high value pond on right of Basin Cove Road

This area is important because of its:

- Scenic area
- Only remaining undeveloped habitat in South Harpswell
- Significant tidal habitat for water fowl and wading birds

13. Islands

Island ecology is by nature fragile and easily destroyed, therefore, the Harpswell Conservation Commission believes that the undeveloped portions of the islands over one (1) acre in Harpswell are a high priority for preservation.

The islands are important because they provide:

- Important wildlife habitat, especially for nesting waterfowl. Thirty of our islands have been identified by the Maine Dept of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife as important seabird nesting islands and have been zoned for Resource Protection.
- Many are surrounded by clam flats that benefit from the fact that the islands are not developed
- Most have large undeveloped areas on them
- They all provide scenic views from the mainland of Harpswell
- The islands that have been preserved to date by HHLT and other conservation groups provide recreational opportunities for the community, including camp sites, hiking, picnicking and sites for day trips by boat. If other islands were preserved, they also could provide recreational opportunities for the town.

Note on Methodology for Rating of Habitat Type

In order to determine, if each focus area had **high value habitat**, the HCC consulted the United State Fish and Wildlife Service Gulf of Maine program. This program defines a high value habitat as one that is important to 91 species of fish and wildlife in the Gulf of Maine watershed. These species regularly inhabit the Gulf and are listed as either threatened or endangered. The four basic habitats include forest, grass, wetland and salt water marshes over 5 acres in size. In addition, the HCC used the maps of the Beginning with Habitat program. The maps provide information about the location of essential and significant wildlife habitat for rare and/or exemplary plants, threatened and/or endangered wildlife, high and moderate value deer wintering areas and travel corridors; high and moderate value waterfowl and wading bird habitats; shorebird nesting, feeding, and staging areas and seabird nesting islands. Harpswell has five (5) locations with rare and threatened species, 19 seabird nesting islands, and waterfowl and wading bird habitat on the majority of its shores.

As can be seen in the Table on the following page, the HCC identified at least one or more high value habitat areas in each of the 12 Focus Areas, plus the islands.

**Significant and Essential Wildlife Habitat in the
Focus Areas of Harpswell**

Focus Area	Essential Wildlife Habitat for	Significant Wildlife Habitat for			
	Endangered/Threatened Species (Bald Eagle / Rosette Tern)	Tidal Waterfowl / Wading Birds	Inland Waterfowl / Wading Bird	Shorebird Area (Feeding/ nesting/ staging areas)	Seabird Nesting Island
1. Long Reach	X	X			
2. Brickyard Cove Watershed		X			
3. Bethel Point-SE Quahog Bay		X	X		
4. Sandy Cove-East Cundy's Point		X			
5. Ice Pond		X			
6. Wilson Pond			X		
7. Cedar Beach		X			
8. Otter Brook Corridor		X			
9. Widgeon-Wilson Coves		X			
10. Lookout Point Corridor		X		X	
11. Allen Point Corridor		X			
12. Basin-Curtis Coves		X			
13. Islands	X	X			X

Data from: Beginning With Habitat "High Value Plant and Animal Habitats" , Map dated 08.13.2008