

About this Preserve ... and the Great Bay Resource Protection Partnership

Lubberland Creek Preserve is a remarkable natural area where visitors can see a mosaic of estuarine, grassland, forest, and freshwater wetland habitats. The Nature Conservancy acquired the first of many tracts comprising this preserve in 1999, and protection efforts here continue to this day.

Some of the lands for this 231-acre preserve were acquired by the Conservancy on behalf of the Great Bay Resource Protection Partnership. Launched in 1994, the partnership is an innovative science-based effort among several agencies and organizations to protect critical habitats in the Great Bay watershed.

The Nature Conservancy serves as lead acquisition and fiscal agent. Principal partners also include the Audubon Society of New Hampshire, Ducks Unlimited, Great Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve, Natural Resources Conservation Service, New Hampshire Fish and Game Department, Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Funds to make the partnership efforts possible have come from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the North American Wetlands Conservation Act, local communities and many individual donors.

The Seacoast Region is the fastest-growing part of the state and has some of the most ecologically important areas in New Hampshire, including major nesting and migratory habitat for waterfowl. As of January 2004, the partnership had engaged in the permanent protection of more than 6,000 acres of critical plant and wildlife habitat, including many important local partner projects that have served to stretch limited resources. The partnership's success has served as a model for coastal land protection in other parts of North America.

For more information on the Conservancy and the Great Bay Resource Protection Partnership, visit www.nature.org/newhampshire.

The History

David Davis and John Smith were among this area's early settlers in the late 1600s and early 1700s. First Davis, then Smith, lived in a garrison (fortified house) that's remembered by a nearby stone marker. Agriculture, including cutting hay from the salt marsh and raising sheep on the uplands, had long been a major part of the area. Robert Channell purchased this land around 1817 and passed the lands down through generations of Channell family. Successful endeavors on the land through

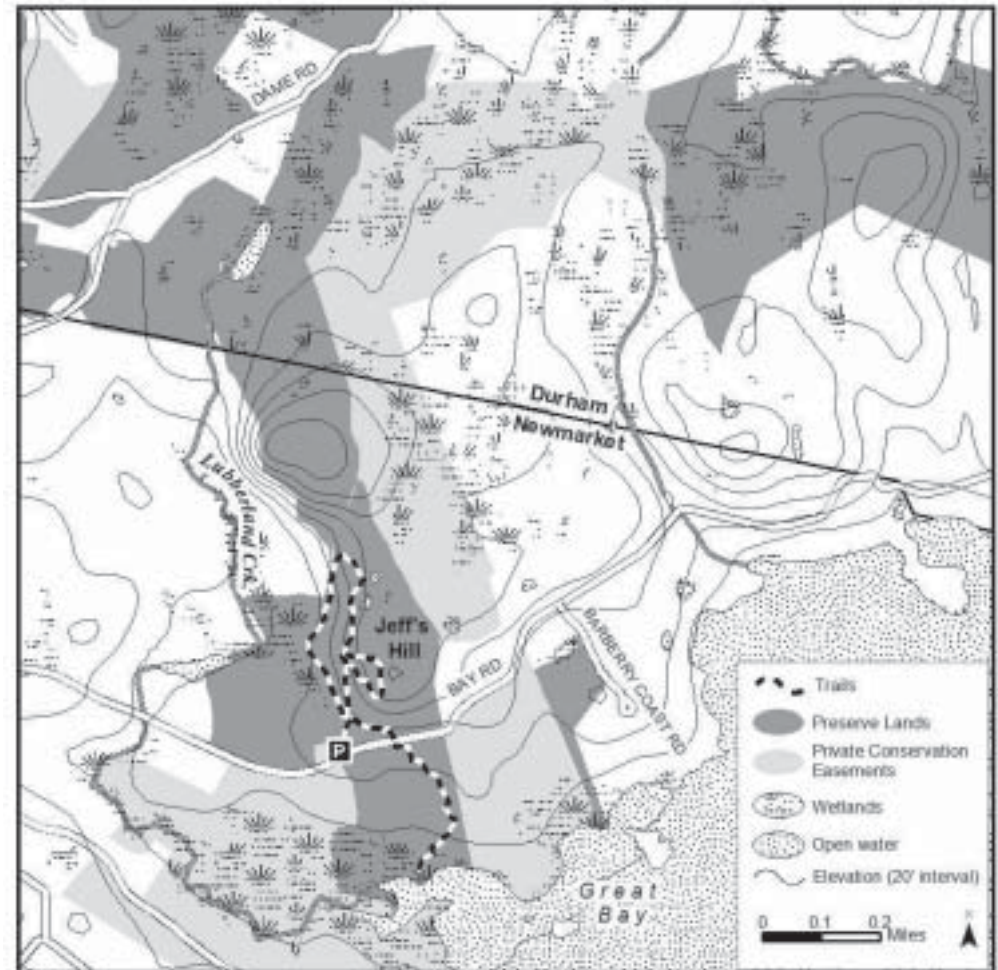
the 1800s included dairy farming and granite quarrying. Remnants of the quarry are still visible on Jeff's Hill (named after William Jefferson Channell). Stone from the property was used to build some of the mills at Newmarket Manufacturing Company, along with other landmark buildings in downtown Newmarket. Between Jeff's Hill and Great Bay lay open pastures and fields where cows, oxen and horses grazed. Stone walls and the foundations of the Channell family's house and barn are reminders of this once busy landscape. The land stayed with the Channell family until 1999 when they sold it to The Nature Conservancy.

In the early 1970s, oil tycoon Aristotle Onassis proposed building the world's largest oil refinery nearby in Durham. Onassis and his agents actually acquired options to purchase one-third of the land in Durham, including parcels north and east of here. Despite an all-out effort by Onassis, Gov. Meldrim Thomson and The Union Leader newspaper, the refinery proposal failed in March 1974 when grassroots organizers helped persuade Durham voters and the state legislature to oppose the idea. Had it been built, this area would have changed forever and become an industrial landscape.

Today, Lubberland Creek and the adjoining Crommet Creed watersheds comprise the largest remaining intact block of forest and freshwater wetlands adjoining Great Bay. The Nature Conservancy seeks to permanently protect and conserve these special resources for the benefit of current and future generations.

The Trails

The Nature Conservancy has created a 1.1-mile trail network to let visitors enjoy the preserve. On the south side of Bay Road, a 0.3-mile spur trail leads down to the edge of Great Bay at the mouth of Lubberland Creek. You can see an osprey nesting platform in a neighboring field near the bay's edge (but please don't approach!). The terrain is gentle, and footing is fairly level. On the north side of Bay Road, a 0.8-mile trail loop travels over Jeff's Hill, passing wetland edges, rocky outcrops, stone walls, and old foundations. The terrain is moderate, with some uneven footing in places. Beware of poison ivy along parts of both trails.



Ecological Values

Extending from Great Bay's tidal shoreline to the rocky outcrop of Jeff's Hill and its nearby beaver ponds, the Lubberland Creek Preserve has a diverse mix of upland, wetland and estuarine environments. Among the highlights:

- Extensive oak-hickory and hemlock-beech-oak-pine forests, providing habitat for songbirds, porcupine, fisher, deer, and other wildlife, and also supporting rare plant species;
- Important frontage on Great Bay and Lubberland Creek, including exemplary salt marsh and broad intertidal flats;
- Active beaver ponds and other freshwater wetland basins on Jeff's Hill;
- High quality vernal pools supporting various insect, reptile and amphibian species, including the rare Blanding's turtle;
- Abundant waterfowl habitat associated with tidal wetlands, beaver flowages, and streams supporting wood duck, black duck, ring-neck duck, mallard, common and hooded mergansers, and others; and
- A great blue heron rookery with one nest that has been occupied by ospreys.

Preserve Guidelines

This preserve is open to the public for non-motorized recreation and education. Please, for the protection of the area and its inhabitants, and for everyone's enjoyment:

- Foot travel only (no horses or bikes)
- No pets
- Carry out trash
- Stay on marked trails
- No removal or destruction of plants, wildlife or minerals
- Take appropriate precautions during hunting season
- No camping or open fires

Support for this preserve comes from the Greater Piscataqua Community Foundation. A special thanks to all the supporters of the Great Bay Reaching for Greatness Campaign.

Directions to the Preserve

From Route 108 in Durham, turn east onto Durham Point Road and drive 6.3 miles. The preserve parking lot is on the right. From Route 108 in Newmarket, turn east onto Bay Road and drive 1.4 miles.

The preserve parking lot is on the left.

The Nature Conservancy

The Nature Conservancy's mission is to preserve the plants, animals and natural communities that represent the diversity of life on Earth by protecting the lands and waters they need to survive.

The Conservancy has protected more than 116 million acres of valuable lands and waters worldwide. The organization accomplishes its mission through the efforts of state and country chapters, which are responsible for protecting and managing conservation land, and for raising operating and capital funds to support their programs.

Since 1964, The Nature Conservancy of New Hampshire has helped protect more than 121,000 acres of ecologically significant land and currently owns and manages 30 preserves across the state.



Wild Columbine



22 Bridge Street 4th Floor
Concord, NH 03301-4876
(603) 224-5853
www.nature.org/newhampshire

© The Nature Conservancy
Eric Aldrich photos © The Nature Conservancy



SAVING THE LAST GREAT PLACES ON EARTH



Lubberland Creek Preserve