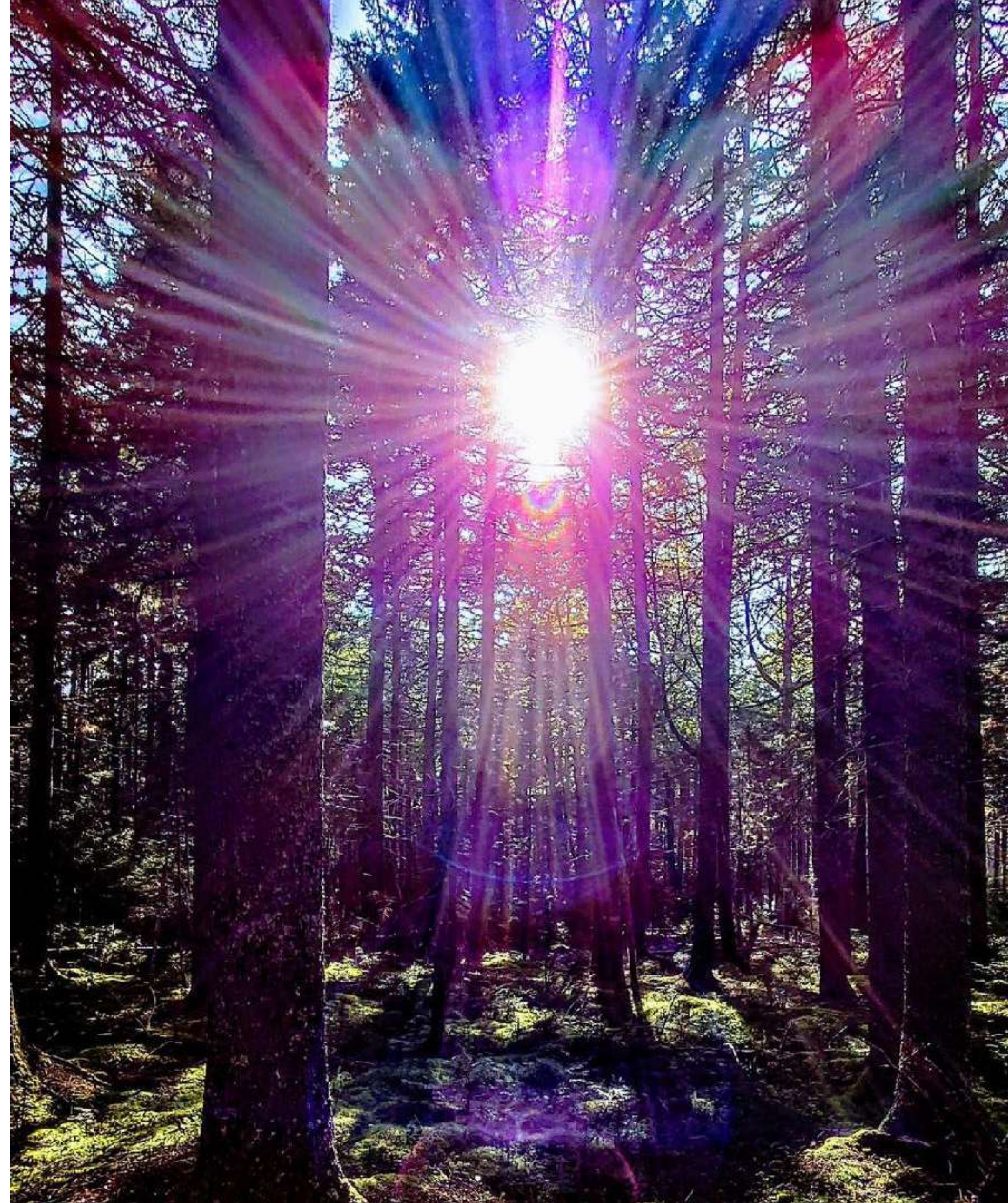


2022 Review & Looking Ahead: Highlights, Challenges & Goals



The Year in Review

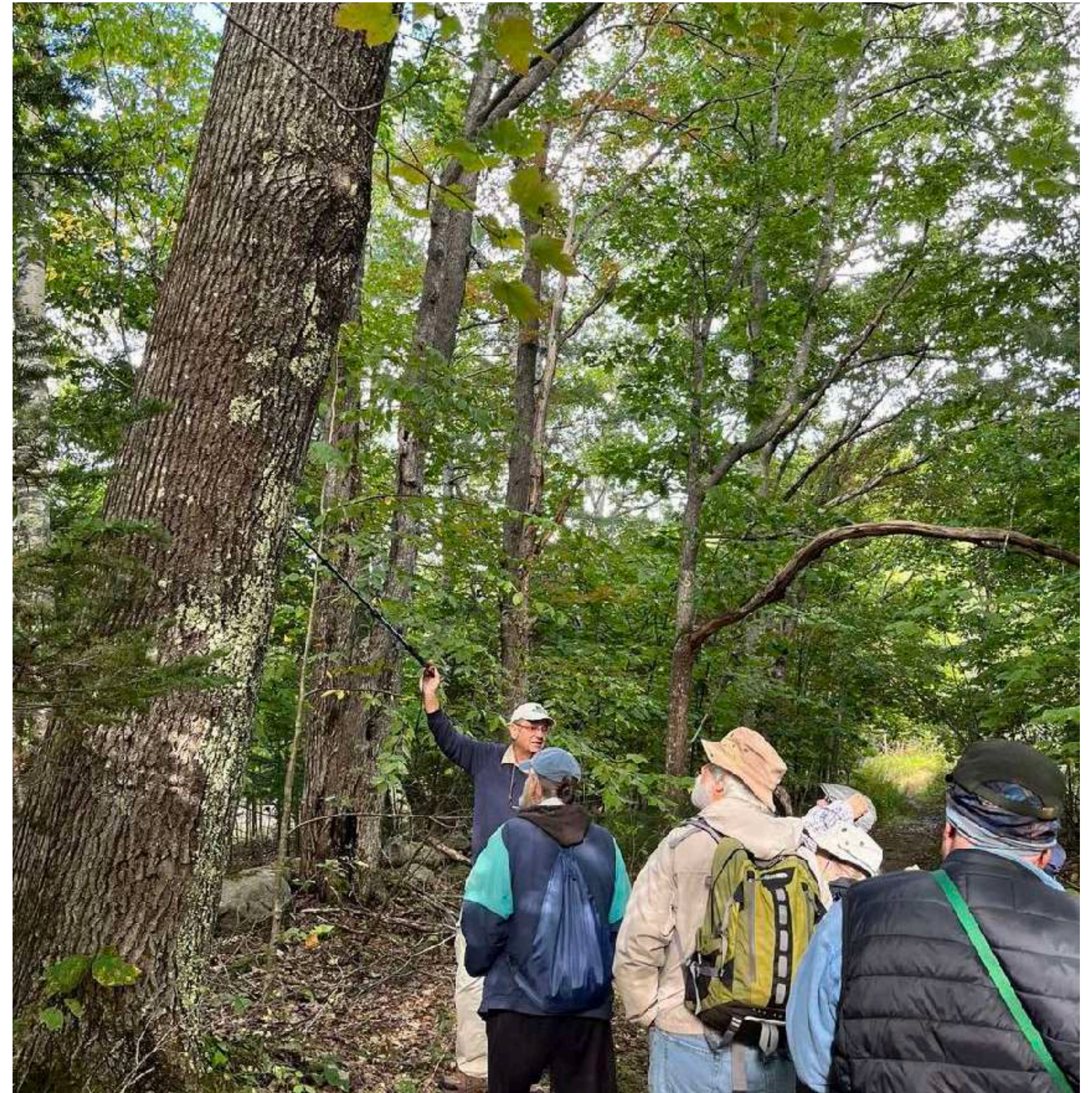
In 2022, FOSI...

- Connected with many people, growing our audience and membership
- Collaborated with many new and old community partners
- Had multiple fundraising events with partners, both new and existing
- Continued to adapt our public programming to meet the ever-changing landscape of the pandemic
- Helped raise awareness about the proposed offshore wind port project



Educational Programs

- In 2022, FOSI opted to offer a hybrid model of programming. We continued hosting remote virtual learning events, creating reservable activity kits, and installing self-guided StoryWalks, but we were thrilled to be able to bring back some in-person programs as well.
- Over the course of 2022, we offered 11 public programs (a combination of in-person on Sears Island, and Zoom presentations), with over 900 participants.



In-Person Programs

- Our in-person programs included beach yoga, a children's nature art workshop, and a guided trees walk.
- WABI TV came out to the island and did a news story on the butterfly tagging workshop we had in August.



Friends of Sears Island Presents:

August

23

9am-11am

**MONARCH BUTTERFLY
TAGGING WORKSHOP
FOR ADULTS**


with Serena Cole

Pre-registration required.
Email satnam23410@yahoo.com to sign-up.

Friends of Sears Island Presents

Yoga on the Beach

JULY 20, 9:30AM



with Missy Hatch

Sept
23
3:00pm

THE LUCKY TREES OF SEARS ISLAND

with Forester Jake Maier



Presented by Friends of Sears Island
Meet by the kiosk on Sears Island, no pre-registration required

Nature Art Workshop for Kids

A Science Squad program for children ages 6-12 on Sears Island
with Ashley Megquier & Sandi Cirillo



September 28, 4pm
Register by emailing outreach@friendsofsearsisland.org





Virtual Programs

- Virtual programs continued to be an excellent way to reach our audience, particularly in the colder months. We offered presentations on winter birding, the browntail moth in Waldo County, an informational session about the proposed offshore wind project, and a nature photography program.



Carver Memorial Library & Friends of Sears Island Present:

Zoom-In:
Winter Birding
with Bob Duchesne

January 11 6:30pm

TO JOIN, VISIT:
<https://networkmaine.zoom.us/j/83550395555>



Browntail Moth and Emerald Ash Borer in Waldo County

Organized By



- Belfast Bay Watershed Coalition with expert assistance from the Belfast Free Library

Co-Sponsors

- Belfast Free Library
- Belfast Garden Club
- City of Belfast Parks & Rec
- Friends of Belfast Parks
- Friends of Sears Island
- Keep Belfast Maine Beautiful
- Waldo County Soil & Water Conservation District


Recorded February 1, 2022

with Tom Schmeelk,
Maine Forest Service Coordinator for the Browntail Moth Program



Friends of Sears Island & Carver Memorial Library Present

Maine Through the Seasons
with Naturalist & Photographer Sandra Mitchell



November 15 at 6:30pm via Zoom

FMI visit friendsofsearsisland.org or carverlibrary.org

Activity Kit Program

- We created 290 activity kits for families, focused on seven different themes, including Outdoor Survival, Earth Day, Ecosystems and Terrarium Building, and Ocean Explorers.
- These continued to be very popular and a great way for families to pick up nature-based educational content to learn together at home at their leisure.



FRIENDS OF SEARS ISLAND PRESENTS:

Outdoor Survival

A Science Squad Grab-and-Go Activity Kit for Kids

In the cold of January, we often wonder how animals survive living outdoors in Maine. With this activity kit you'll learn about some of their adaptations to living in a cold climate, and also what to do if you ever find yourself in a survival situation outdoors. Materials to make a paracord survival bracelet and some items to start your own survival kit will be included, as well as instructions for building a snow shelter.



For kids ages 5-12. To request a free kit, email outreach@friendsofsearsisland.org

FRIENDS OF SEARS ISLAND PRESENTS:

Winter Wonderland

A Science Squad Grab-and-Go Activity Kit for Kids

February is a month of celebrating love, and it is also a great time to get outside and explore the wonders that winter has to offer. Discover how much there is to LOVE about nature in winter! This month's kit will include tools, handouts, and instructions to make frozen ice globes, bubbles, and sun catchers, do experiments with snow and ice, create a snow cake and snack garland for animals trying to survive, and learn how to identify evergreen trees.



For kids ages 5-12. To request a free kit, email outreach@friendsofsearsisland.org



FRIENDS OF SEARS ISLAND PRESENTS:

Build a Terrarium

A Science Squad Grab-and-Go Activity Kit for Kids

Our March activity kit will include materials to get you started on building your own terrarium at home. These self-sustaining mini ecosystems for plants are a great way to learn about the water cycle, and they are fun to make! This kit will include pebbles, activated charcoal, and potting soil to create the right environment for your plants, as well as some figurines to live inside your mini-world. You'll just need a recycled jar or soda bottle from home, and a willingness to dig up some moss and small backyard plants outdoors once the snow melts! Project instructions and information about ecosystems and the water cycle will also be included.



For kids ages 5-12. To request a free kit, email outreach@friendsofsearsisland.org

Earth Day Activity Kits

Brought to you by Friends of Sears Island, Belfast Bay Watershed Coalition, and Waterfall Arts

In honor of Earth Day, we are giving out 100 activity kits for children ages 5-12! These Earth Day Kits will include a packet of sunflower seeds, a Bird Bingo game and birdseed, instructions for building a bird house, Earth Day stickers, and a zine made by Waterfall Arts. An Earth Day Pledge card and a list of events happening locally to celebrate Earth Day will be included as well.



Available starting April 12, until they're gone!

No reservations required- simply stop by the Belfast Free Library or Carver Memorial Library to get yours

FRIENDS OF SEARS ISLAND PRESENTS:

Spring Has Sprung!

A Science Squad Grab-and-Go Activity Kit for Kids

Spring is finally here! Birds are busy building nests, plants are growing, and there is plenty to discover outdoors. Our May Activity Kit will include materials to make seed balls to plant in your garden, a challenge to build a nest that can actually hold eggs, and a recipe for making edible bird nest snacks at home. Handouts on identifying bird songs, nests, and a signs of spring scavenger hunt will also be included!



For kids ages 5-12. To request a free kit, email outreach@friendsofsearsisland.org



FRIENDS OF SEARS ISLAND PRESENTS:

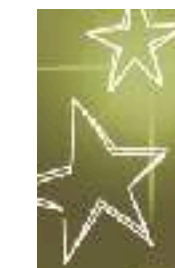
Ocean Explorers

A Science Squad Grab-and-Go Activity Kit for Kids

To coincide with our Between the Tides StoryWalk going up in July, we are offering a summer activity kit designed to help you explore the intertidal zone and learn more about ocean life! This kit will include a magnifying glass for up-close observations, printouts to make your own marine field guide to take to the beach, sidewalk chalk and instructions to draw various sea creatures to scale (even a blue whale), and materials to make a tiny boat to float!



For kids ages 5-12. To request a free kit, email outreach@friendsofsearsisland.org



FRIENDS OF SEARS ISLAND PRESENTS:

Share the Light

A Science Squad Grab-and-Go Activity Kit for Kids

With the solstice and the holidays approaching, now is a great time to reflect on winter, our relationship to the earth, and how we can share our light with others during the coldest and darkest months of the year. This kit will include materials to make natural homemade fire starters for staying warm on winter nights, gold paper to make star ornaments or a garland for the solstice, a kindness calendar, ideas for helping animals in winter, and suggestions for celebrating the solstice!

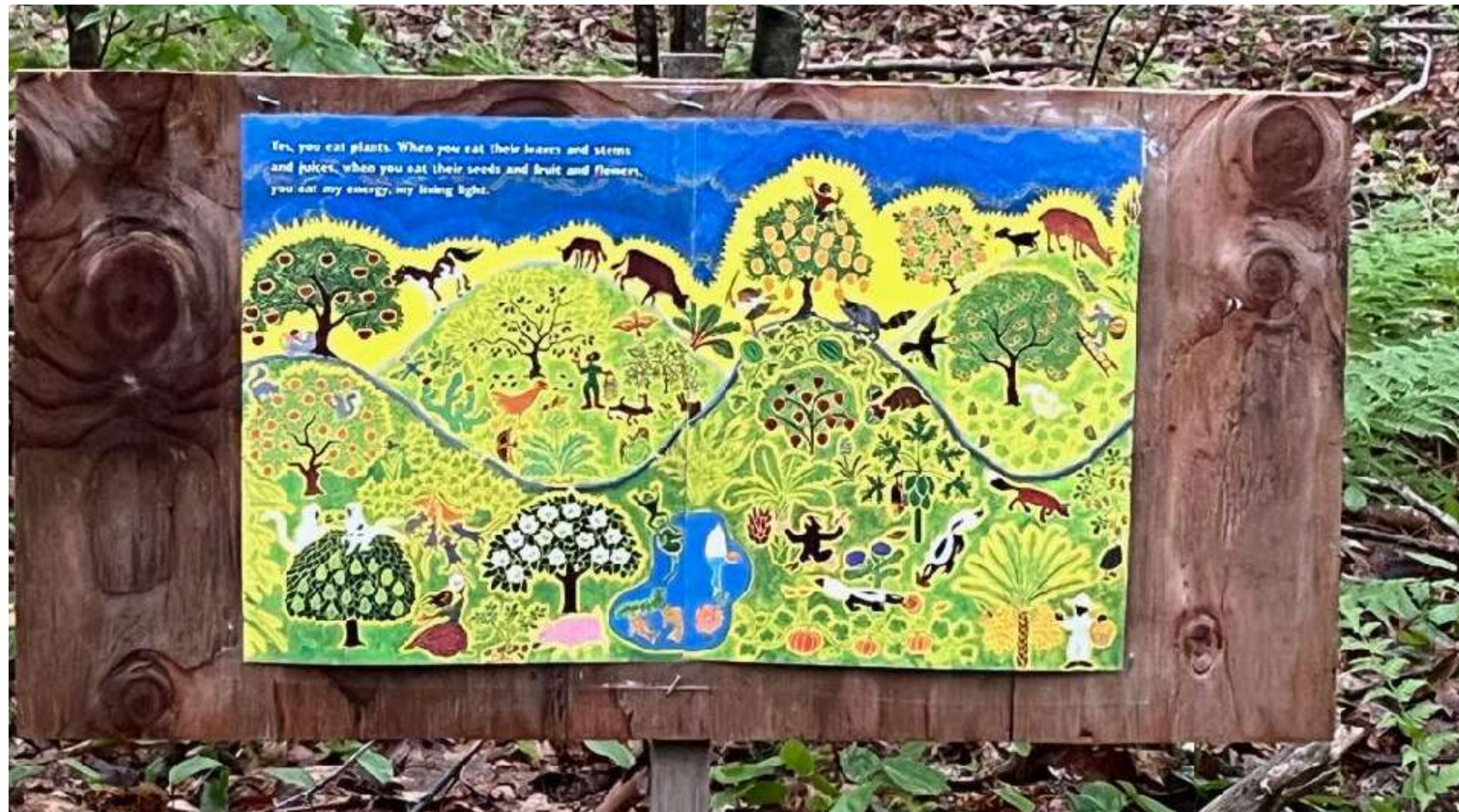


For kids ages 5-12. To request a free kit, email outreach@friendsofsearsisland.org



StoryWalks

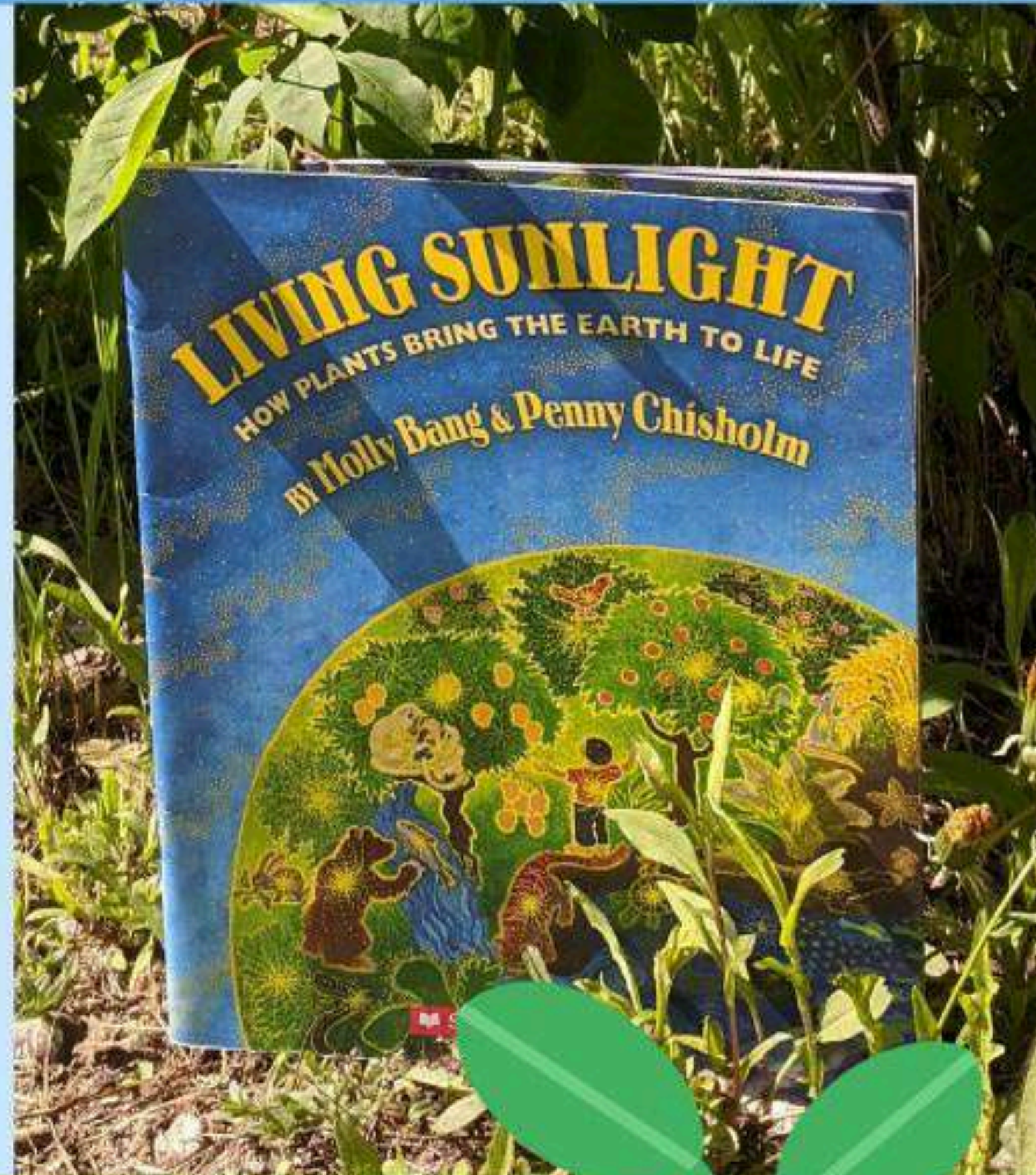
- We offered four StoryWalks on Sears Island in partnership with Carver Memorial Library in 2022, one in each season.



Check out our StoryWalk® on Sears Island!

To celebrate the summer solstice, from June 15th- July 15th, you can read a book while you hike on the Homestead Trail. Our featured story is Living Sunlight: How Plants Bring the Earth to Life, by Molly Bang and Penny Chisholm. You'll learn how the sun's light and energy becomes part of all life on earth, including humans!

This project is a collaboration between Friends of Sears Island and the Carver Memorial Library



FRIENDSOFSEARISLAND.ORG
CARVERLIBRARY.ORG

Check out our StoryWalk® on Sears Island!

From July 15th - August 31st, you can read a book while you hike on the Homestead Trail. Our featured story is Between the Tides by Fran Hodgkins and illustrated by Jim Sollers. Learn about life in the intertidal zone and how animals have adapted to constantly changing tides. Explore the beach afterwards to see what sea creatures you can find!

This project is a collaboration between Friends of Sears Island and the Carver Memorial Library

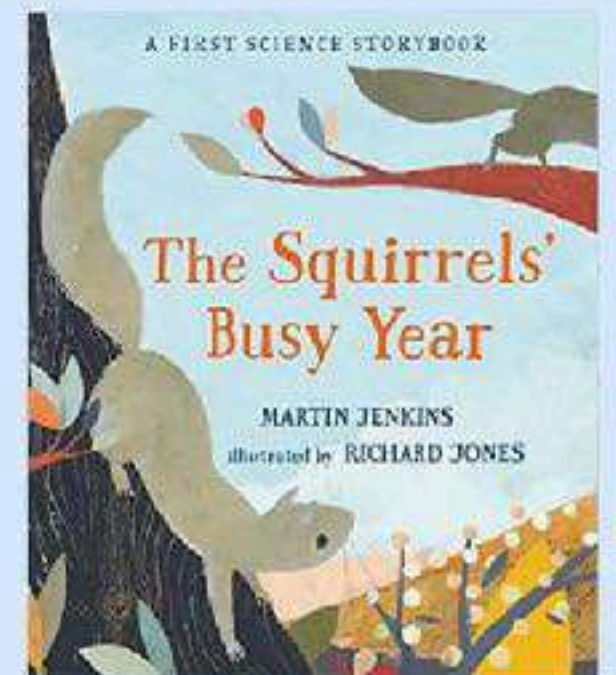


FRIENDSOFSEARISLAND.ORG
CARVERLIBRARY.ORG

Check out our fall StoryWalk® on Sears Island!

From September 5th-30th, you can read a book while you hike on the Homestead Trail. Our featured story is The Squirrels' Busy Year, by Martin Jenkins and illustrated by Richard Jones. This book follows squirrels through the seasons to teach young readers about the ways squirrels adapt to a changing environment. While exploring the island, be sure to look for signs of squirrel life!

This project is a collaboration between Friends of Sears Island and the Carver Memorial Library

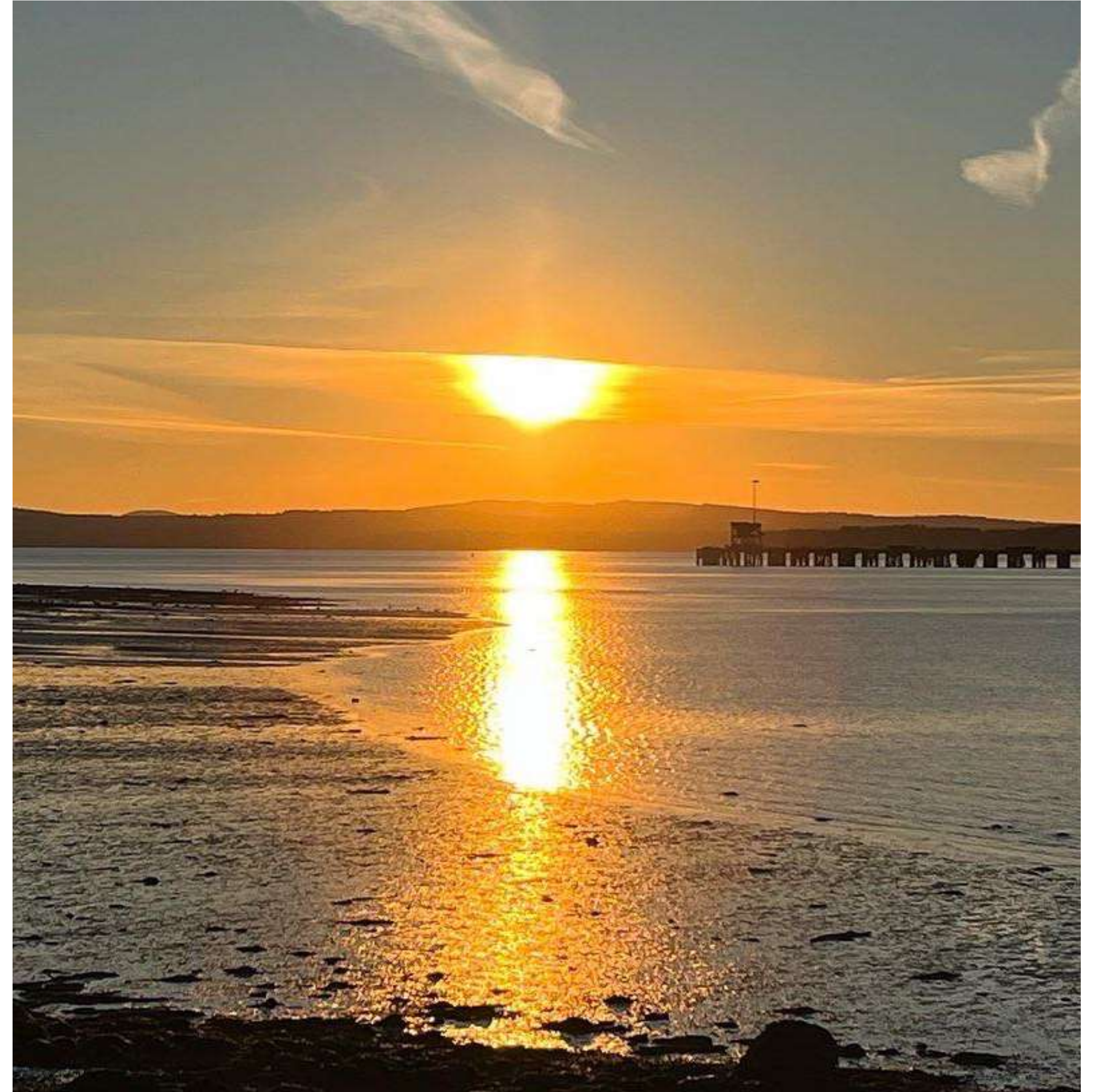


FRIENDSOFSEARISLAND.ORG
CARVERLIBRARY.ORG



Solstice Celebrations

- Two of the biggest event highlights of 2022 had to be hosting our summer and winter Solstice by the Sea celebrations again, each of which drew hundreds of people to Sears Island!
- Our summer solstice celebration included hula hooping, giant bubbles, ice cream, activity stations presented by Carver Memorial Library and the Penobscot Marine Museum, poetry readings, and a festive parade with a crowd following a large smiling sun effigy.
- On the winter solstice, hundreds of people enjoyed a walking loop lined with luminarias and a StoryWalk of a book about the shortest day of the year, as well as cocoa, cookies, music, and a decorated tree with free ornaments to take home.





Summer Solstice by the Sea

June 21, 2022





Winter Solstice by the Sea

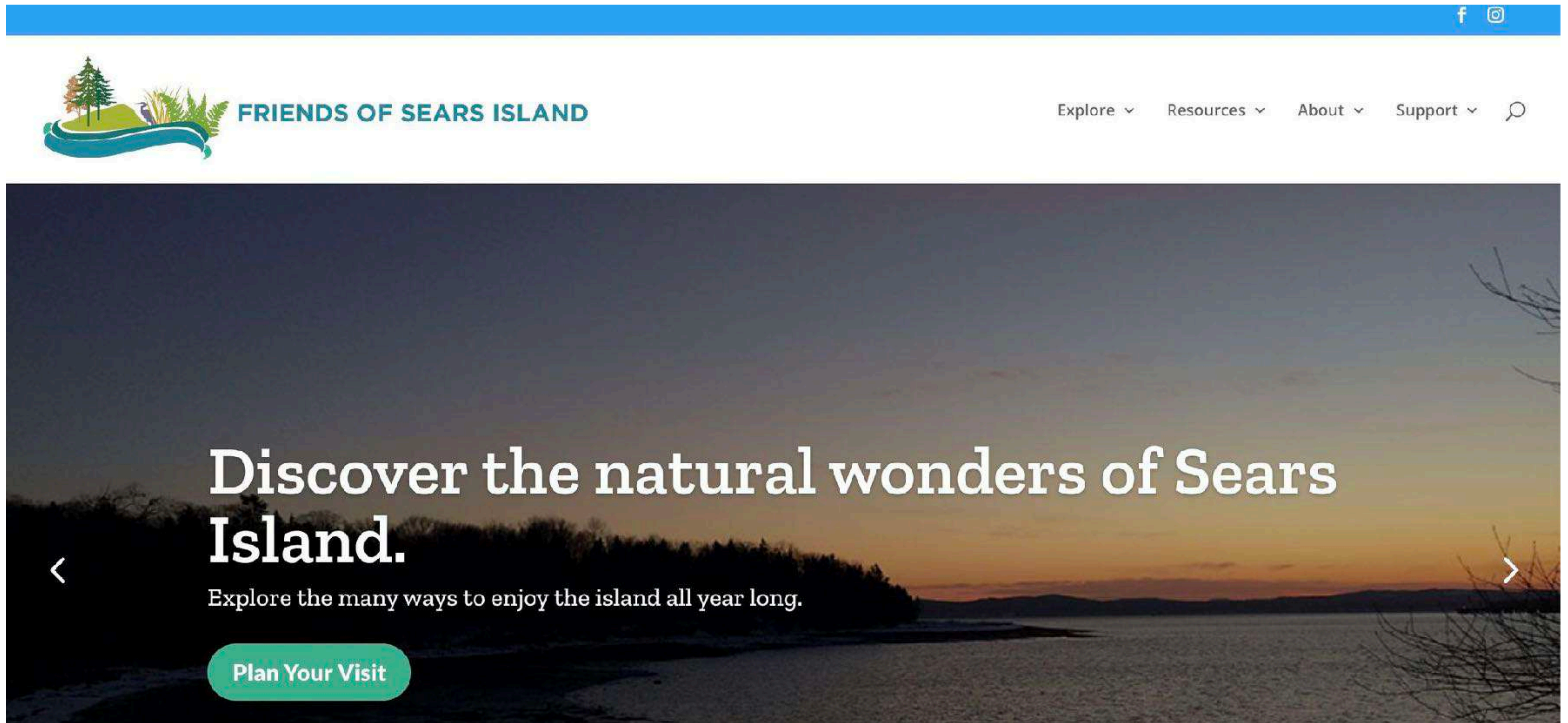
December 21, 2022







Website Redesign



Website Redesign

- With a grant from the Wild Blue Fund at Maine Community Foundation, we were able to complete an overhaul of our website.
- Our goal was to update the design, simplify navigation, and make it easier for a volunteer to keep it up to date. We completely reviewed, updated, and edited all content and added a few new features, including a video virtual tour of the island.
- Pica, a marketing, brand identity, and web design firm in Belfast worked with us in the spring and the site was launched in June.
- We also added a new “Activity & Education Resources” section, where we can post PDFs of all activity kit handouts for families, teachers, and other organizations to access.



Website Redesign



FRIENDS OF SEARS ISLAND

Explore ▾

Resources ▾

About ▾

Offshore Wind Project Resources

by Rolf Olsen | Mar 10, 2022 | FOSI News | 0 comments

The Proposed Offshore Wind Project & the Future of Sears Island

Resources to help you understand this project
and its potential impact on Sears Island

Community Collaborations

Over the past year, FOSI has built dynamic collaborations with new community partners while strengthening existing relationships. We have worked closely with:

- Carver Memorial Library
- Belfast Free Library
- Searsport Recreation Department
- Penobscot Marine Museum
- Congregational Methodist Food Cupboard
- Belfast Bay Watershed Coalition
- Waterfall Arts
- The Experiential Learning Program at Searsport High School





Wind Port Updates

Sears Island appears to be a likely choice



What a “marshaling port” might look like



Wind Port

3 Locations Under Consideration

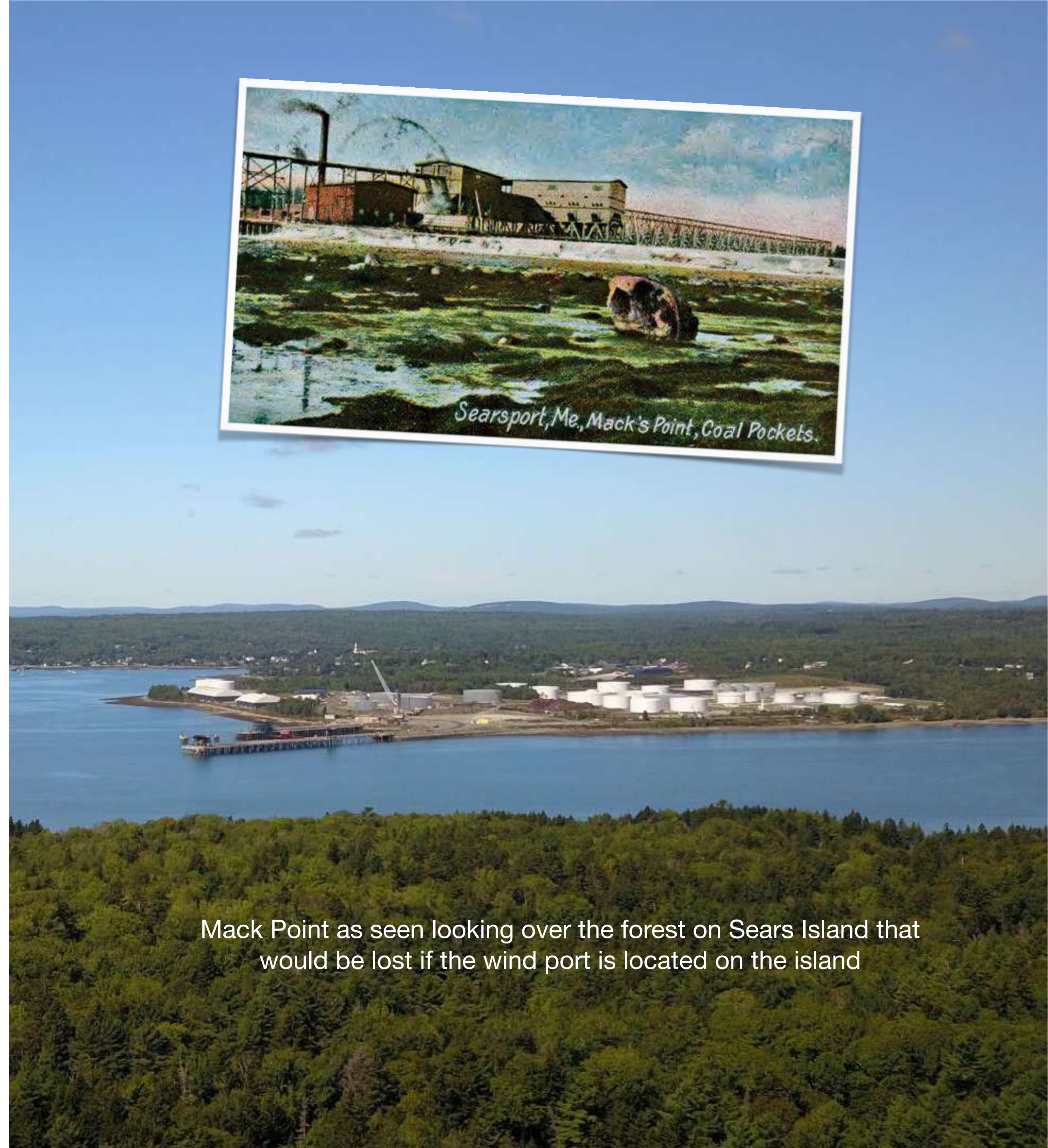
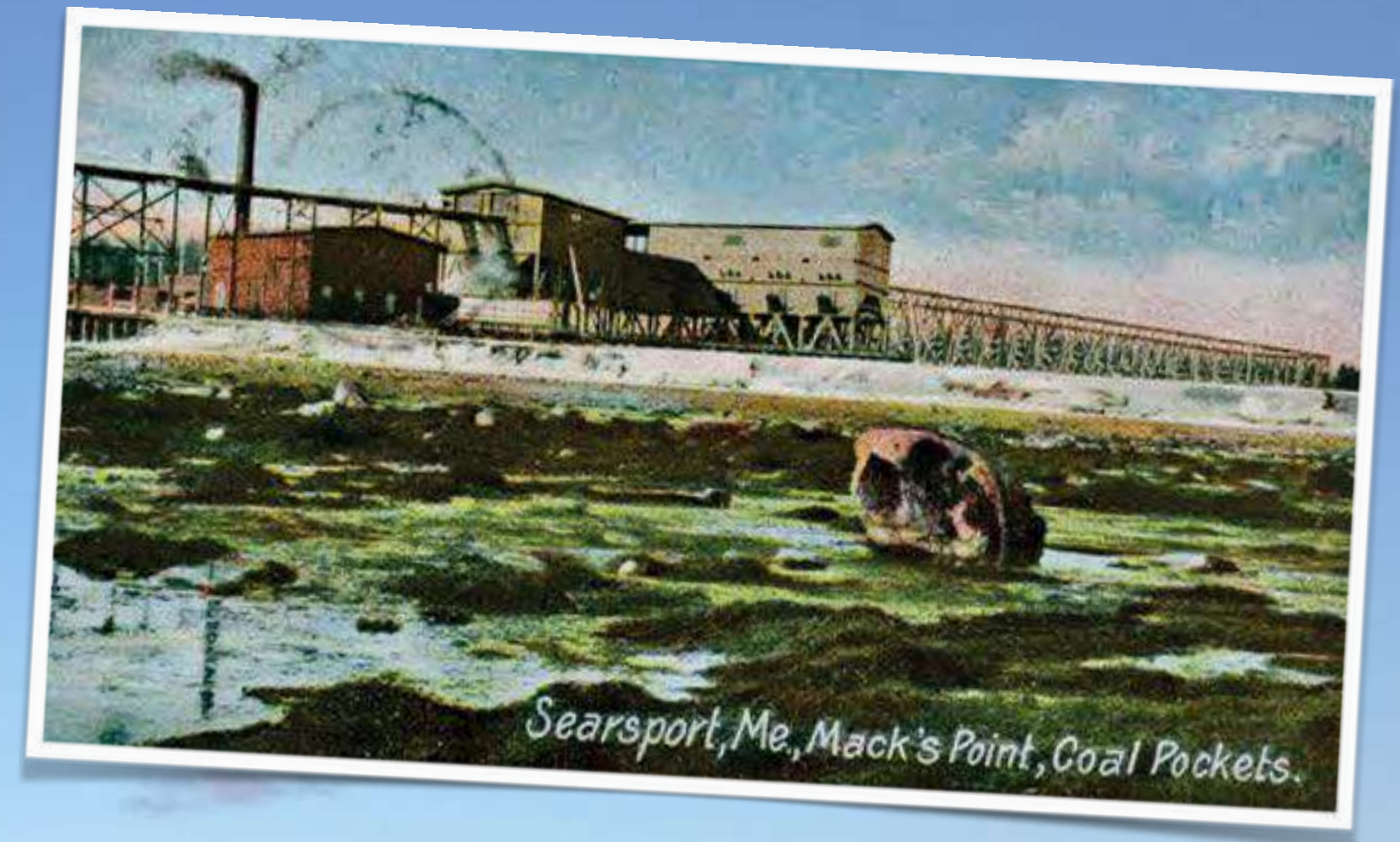
- Sears Island
- Mack Point
- Eastport



Wind Port

Mack Point makes the most sense

- An industrial site for more than 100 years
- Land is available
- Repurposing “brownfield” area to build renewable energy capability
- Forest & marine habitat on Sears Island remain intact



Mack Point as seen looking over the forest on Sears Island that would be lost if the wind port is located on the island



Trails Report

We are fortunate to have a dedicated group of trail maintenance volunteers who do their best to keep them safe and in good condition. Over the past year, our crew:

- Removed many browntail moth winter nests near our kiosk on the paved road
- Trimmed trails back and weed-whacked grasses
- Added "You are here" signs and new trail name signs to make our trails more navigable and safe
- Began rebuilding some old bridges, but also adding new sections of bridges
- Cleared trees fallen across trails with chainsaws, after powerful storms







Volunteer Report

- Volunteers are the backbone of our organization, and we depend on them to do a multitude of tasks. Last year, the FOSI Board and Advisory Group put in 2,455 hours of volunteer work for FOSI, which is almost 23% more than the year before!
- Other volunteers from the community help out too. In 2022, Searsport High School's Experiential Learning Program, the Unity Homeschool Group, and individual volunteers helped with trail work and beach cleanups.

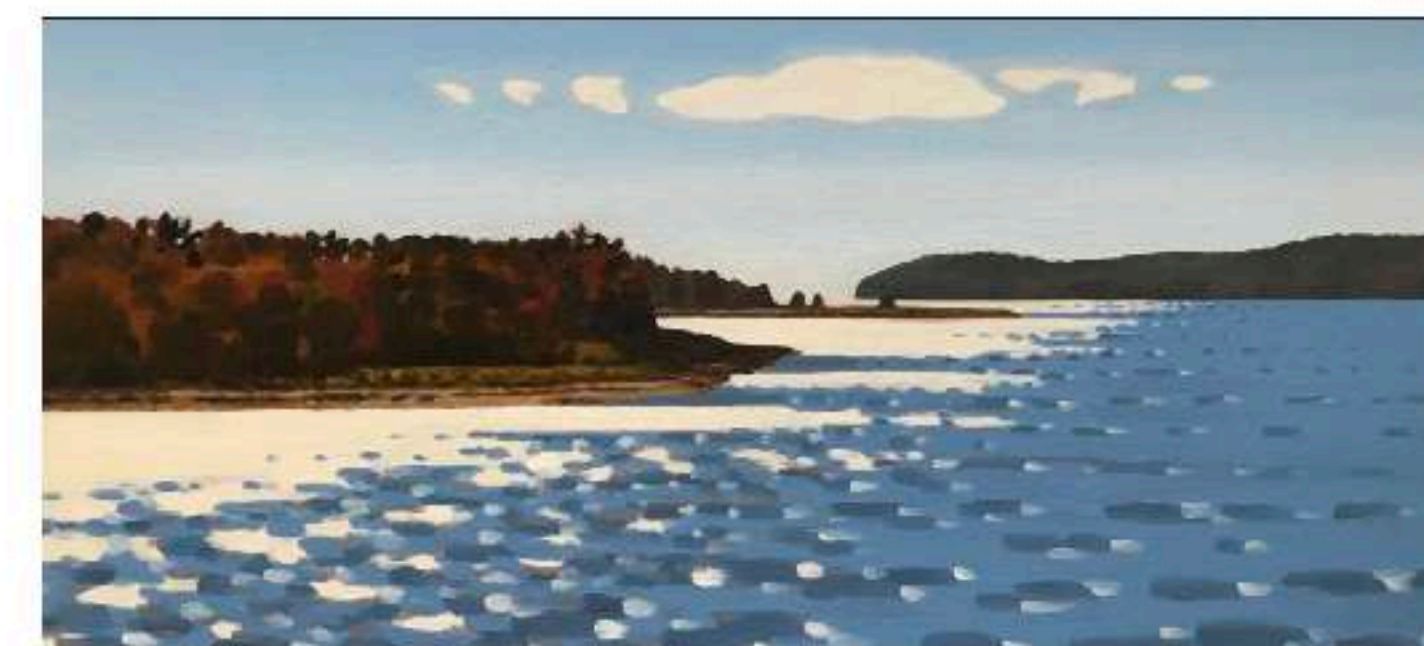


Fundraising Activities

- FOSI held several fundraising events this past year, raising \$3645.00.
- Many of our fundraisers were collaborations with local businesses, such as benefit dinners held at Nautilus and Rio's Spiked Cafe, and a scone mix fundraiser with The Scone Goddess. FOSI was also a recipient of funds raised from The Green Store's Anniversary Fundraiser and received donations from a special promotion that The Parsonage Gallery ran on the sales of paintings to FOSI members.
- Bill and Jill Kulbe sold nearly all the leftover goods from last year's yard sale, and Marge Knuuti finished selling the rest.
- Our summer and winter solstice events netted \$740.00 and \$843.00 respectively.



The Parsonage Gallery will donate \$50 to FOSI for every work of art sold to FOSI members during the rest of December!

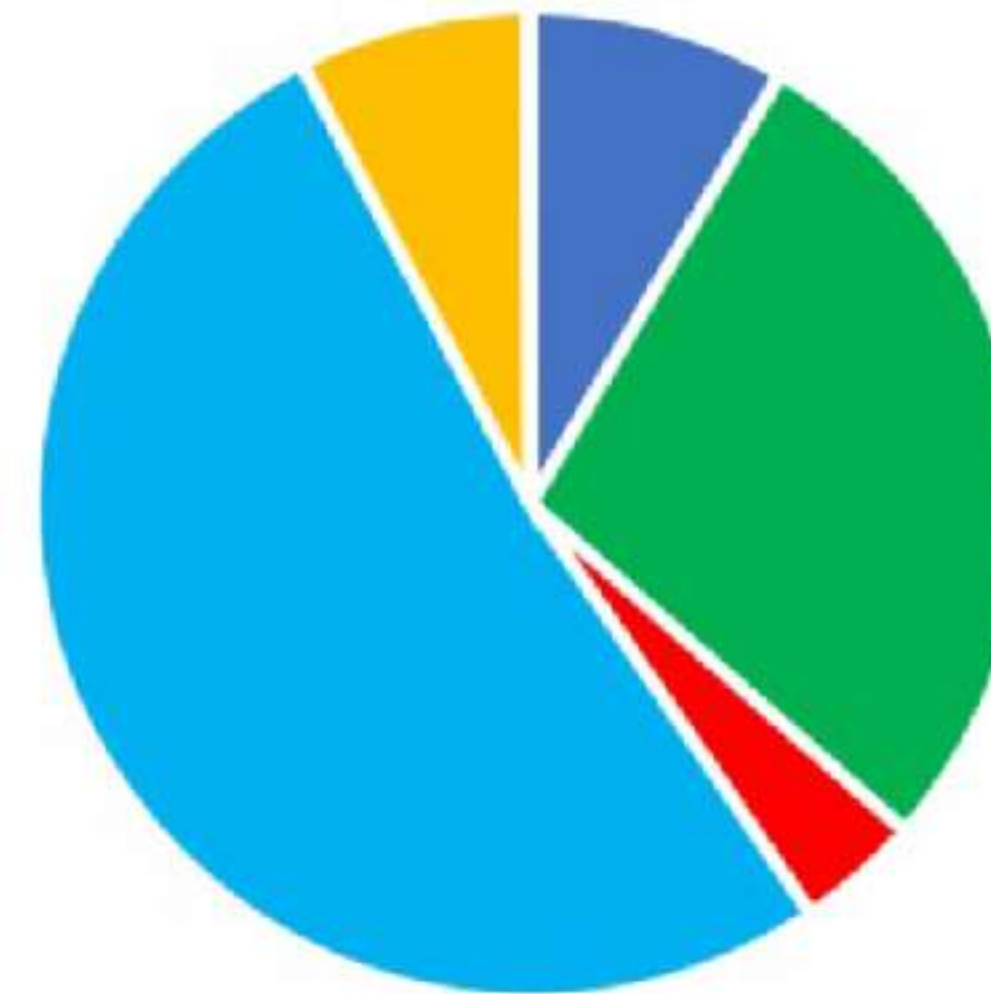


Clouds over the gap, October view to Sears Island and Northport, from the Sears Island Causeway, Maine - oil/panel, 10 x 22"

Financial Review

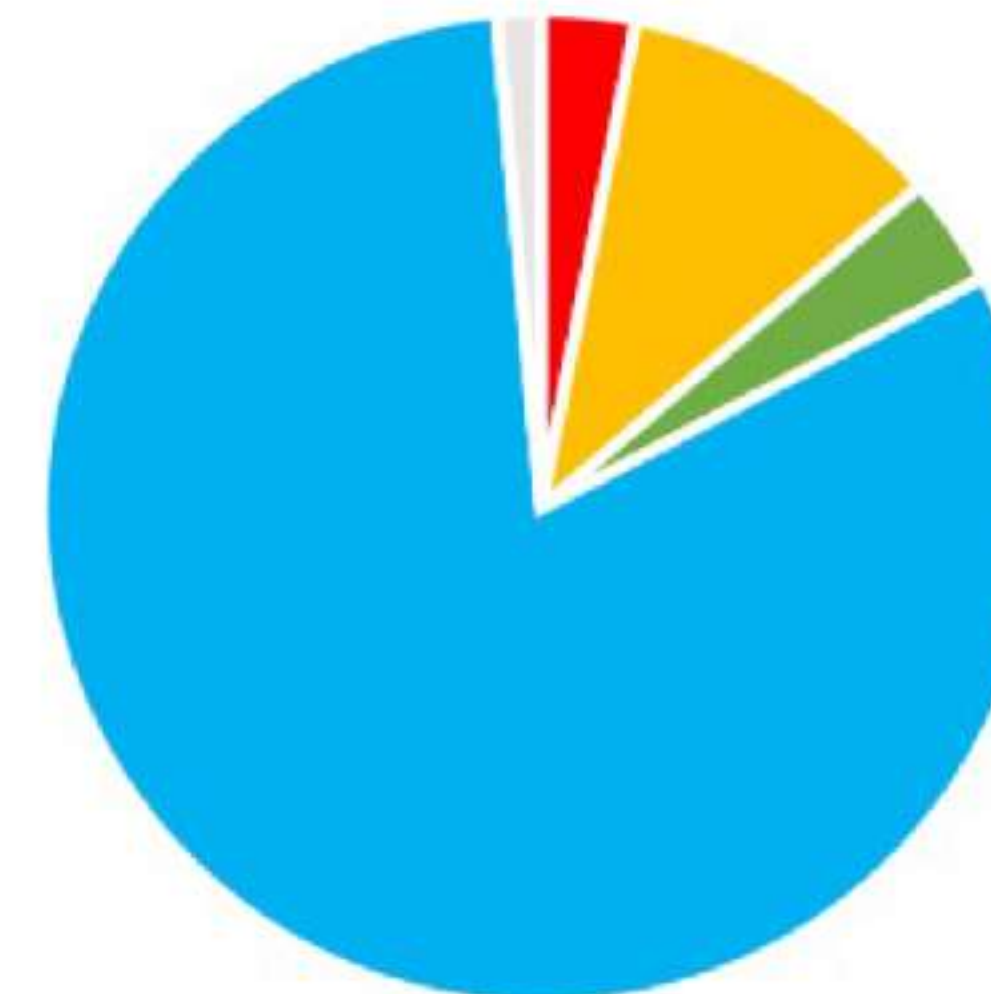
- This year we received two unexpected and very generous grants from the Jewish Communal Fund that has put FOSI in a solid position at the end of the year. The purpose of the grants is to support the Outreach Coordinator position. Without those grants, we would have ended the year with a deficit.
- This points out the urgency of engaging new individual and business donors, encouraging our current donors to increase their support, and identifying and applying for new grant opportunities. Without growth in contributed income, FOSI cannot become fully sustainable.

Income \$49,644



Business Donations
Individual Donations
Municipal Donations
Grants
Fundraising
Other

Expenses \$32,955

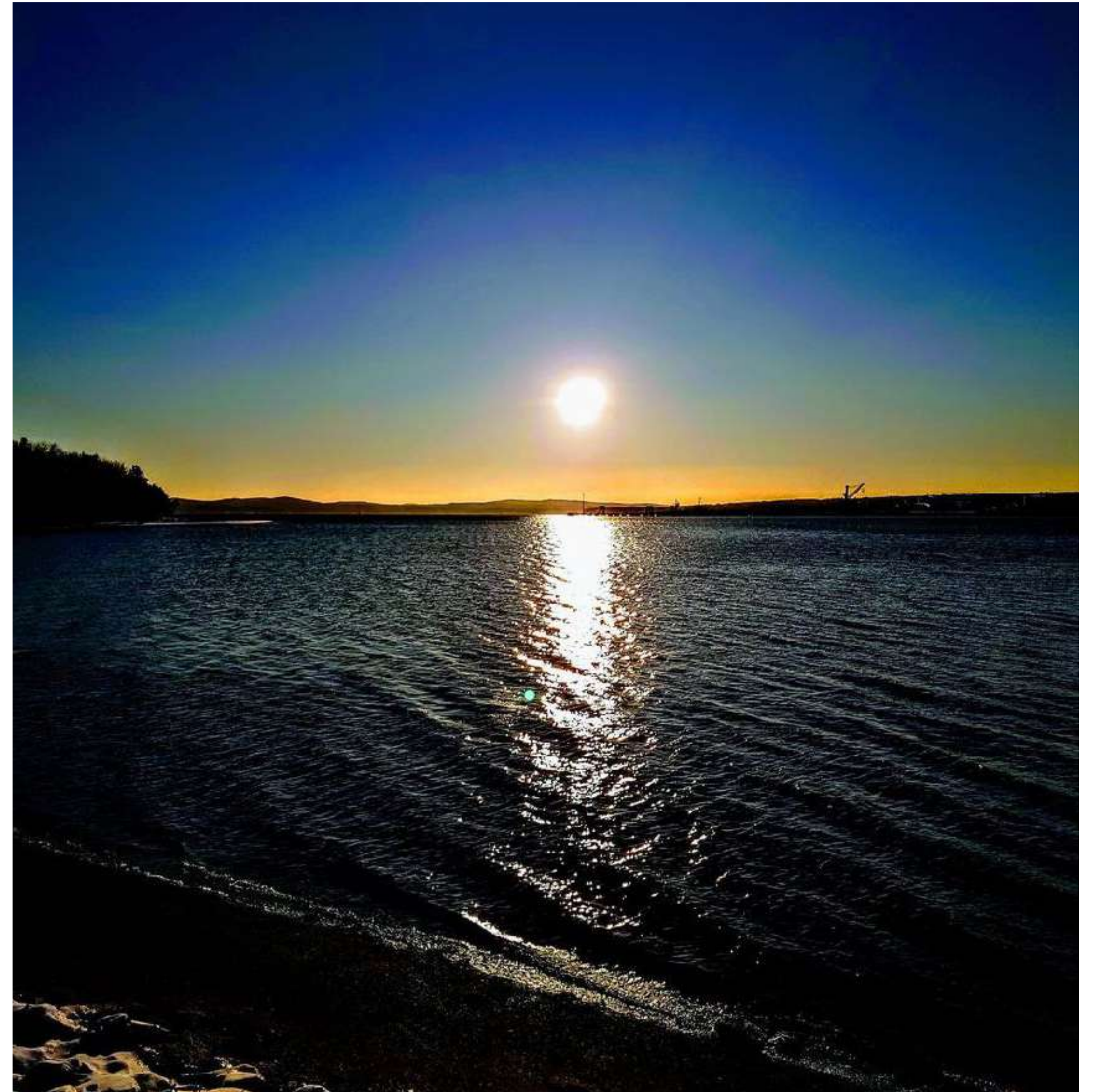


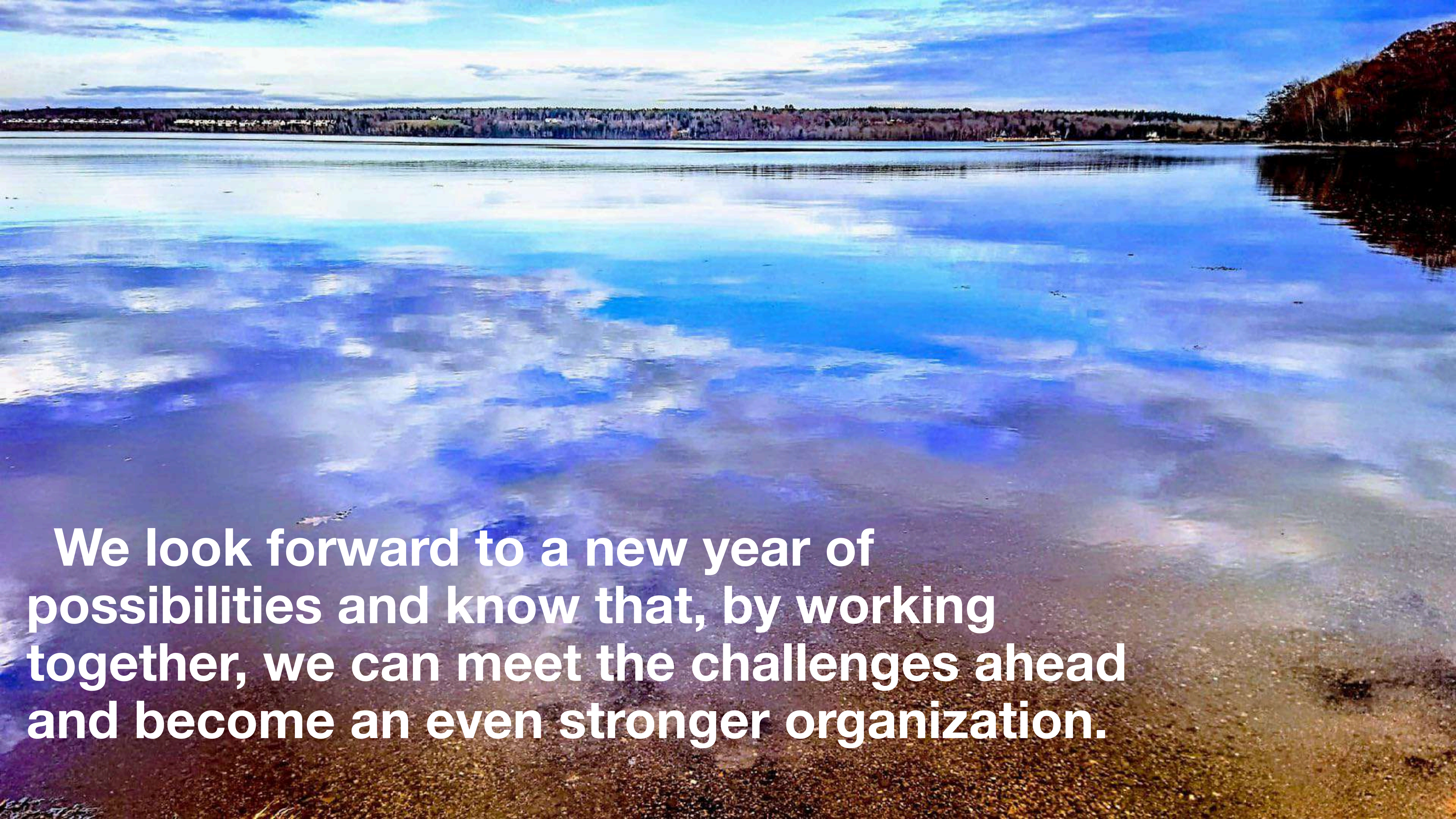
Operating Expenses
Marketing Expenses
Postage and Printing
Program Expenses
Trail Maintenance

What's on the Horizon?

In the year ahead, we'll tackle some exciting new work and continue with ongoing projects that are important to keep the organization sustainable, including:

- Replacing the stairs to the eastern beach
- Rerouting trails to prevent erosion of a shoreline bank
- Working with a local art gallery and other artists in the area to hold at least one fundraising event
- Making a plan to manage the invasive species on the island
- Producing a rack card to replace our brochure
- Creating a plan to monitor visitor numbers and use on a long-term basis
- Expanding our membership base and increasing our income stream to fund our diverse programs and projects





We look forward to a new year of possibilities and know that, by working together, we can meet the challenges ahead and become an even stronger organization.







**Thank you for
another great
year!**

