



NATIVE LAND CONSERVANCY



Welcome Vernal Equinox 2021

Schneider - 14.4 acres in Easton, MA

Lipnosky - 2.61 acres of Wakeby Islands, Mashpee

"For the love of the Land", Mark Robinson, NLC Advisor

THOUGHTS FROM THE CHAIRWOMAN

These long months spent inside our homes have brought up a lot of ideas to freshen up the home/wetu. It's remarkable how sharing time with our families also brings up ideas to freshen and deepen the relationships we have with one another. Another aspect of being sheltered in place is the question of how secure our emotions are in isolation. These subjects in a matrilineal culture, as with the Wampanoag, are all responsibilities of the women of the house/wetu. Traditionally, the women were responsible for everything inside the wetu, including the happiness that lives there. Ages of living closely together taught us that hate, greed, jealousy, and envy were not welcome in the village, and certainly not inside the wetu. The Clan Mothers watched closely the members of her clan to protect them from developing negative thought patterns during childhood.

Although I am using the word wetu which is a smaller dome shaped lodge, our winter homes were much larger housing dozens of people. The structure had no walls. It was a long house with bench beds on either side, with storage beneath, communal space and hearths in the middle. Each individual had to carry themselves with dignity, compassion, generosity, equanimity, gratitude, and understanding. These qualities were part of everyday society among our people mostly because we needed each other. We as human beings saw ourselves more like the other animals that lived and hunted together, shared food and humor, protected one another, and played together. We also adopted the tradition of dividing up into smaller groups during the spring and summer much like other species to gather and store food for the winter. Sharing the food gathered by our families was the greatest expression in tribal community. Delighting in sharing is an act of reciprocating all the living

things that support our lives. It is the women's duty to make sure the home is spiritually, emotionally, and physically safe for everyone who lives inside the wetu, and if someone became disruptive, their Clan Mother would speak to them immediately to help heal the situation. In the old days, we had calm warrior societies that would be available to the Clan Mothers if necessary to escort unruly individuals outside the village perimeter. Elders would comfort the individual and help them reclaim their better self. I hope you may consider how much the woman of the house has provided nourishment to the energetic spirit of the home. Men who live alone must notice the struggle to bring this feminine power into their space. It does take tremendous care and focus to keep the air clean of harmful feelings and dust.

In Thanksgiving,
Ramona Peters,
NLC Chairwoman
nativelandconservancy.org



SCHNEIDER - EASTON

14.4 acres

The Wampanoag Nation's homelands cover large areas of MA. The Wampanoag people have lived on Cape Cod and the Islands, west to the Blackstone River, north to the Merrimack River and south down into eastern Rhode Island, for thousands of years, and still today.

The NLC is happy to report that we have rescued land from generous donors in four Massachusetts counties so far: Barnstable, Bristol, Dukes and Plymouth counties.

Late last year, Elliott Schneider, donated 14.4 acres of flood plain forest on Dorchester Brook in Easton, MA. to the NLC. Recently, NLC board members, Kitty Hendricks, Marlene Lopez, Ramona Peters and Leslie Jonas, visited the beautiful property. Large White Pines, Holly Beech and Oaks are tucked throughout. There are paths leading to vernal pools, and some gently guiding us to a rocky outcrop, where in centuries past, Wampanoag Chiefs might have met with their councils. It was from this knoll where Marlene Lopez and Leslie Jonas, made offerings of tobacco and sang a song in gratitude for this land gift, our first in Bristol County.

We are truly grateful to rescue and steward this land and thank Mr. Schneider for his generous gift. The NLC will protect this beautiful land to fulfill the NLC's mission to preserve the best natural, cultural and scenic features of her in perpetuity.



LIPNOSKY - WAKEBY ISLANDS

2.61 acres on 3 islands - Cleveland, Jefferson and Keith

The Lipnosky family of Mashpee graciously donated three islands in Wakeby Pond in Mashpee to the NLC in 2019. The Trustees of Reservations holds a conservation restriction on the small islands to ensure perpetual preservation.

These Wakeby islands hold special meaning to the NLC because Wakeby Pond is considered sacred to the Wampanoag people as part of the spawning grounds for River Herring and Alewives ascending from the Mashpee River.

Wakeby in the Wôpanôôt8âôk (Wampanoag language) is wâkupee (wa-ku-pee), meaning moving water as in churned up or stirred up. Wakeby Pond has been known to have an unusual current, moving much differently than the typical motion of Cape Cod pond water, thus the reason for the name, Wâkupee, moving water.

During the 1800s, notable fishermen came to Wakeby Pond, including President Grover Cleveland, and actor Joseph Jefferson, with 2 of the islands named after them. All of the islands are in view of Conaumet Point. The land contributes to the protection of the scenic and natural character of the Mashpee Pond-Wakeby Pond complex and the protection of the land will enhance the open-space value of these and nearby lands. They are all dominated by Maple and Beech trees....quite glorious in the Fall.

There are three major publicly-accessible protected open space properties around Wakeby Pond with views to the island lands including the Lowell Holly Reservation (135 acres), Ryder Conservation Land and Sandwich Town Beach (254 acres) and the Pickerel Town Cove Conservation area (78 acres).

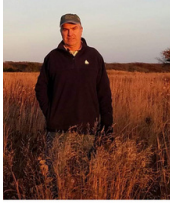
The islands are contained within a major State BioMap2 Core Habitat, the top-rated wildlife habitat areas in MA for rare species in a sustaining landscape. Wakeby Pond is part of BioMap2's critical nature landscape designation, high-ranking blocks of habitat that support the state's exemplary plant and animal communities. Rare freshwater mussel species are known to inhabit the pond.

The NLC is truly grateful to rescue and steward these beautiful islands and thank the Lipnosky family for their generous gift.



THOUGHTS FROM MARK ROBINSON

"For the love of the Land"



Despite the run-up in market value for real estate on Cape Cod, or indeed because of it, there are still good personal reasons for placing land out of the reach of potential development and into conservation status. In the past 35 years, I have met incredibly stubborn people on Cape Cod, determined to see the land they love preserved as a legacy for their family. Some who could ill afford it perhaps, have walked away from hundreds of thousands (even millions) of dollars in order that they not break the chain of generational concern for the land. Land is the resource base for all our environmental underpinnings, but it is also the platform for most of our emotional attachments to this place. Particularly when land has been in the same family for many years, a field or forest or edge of a pond, it is hard to think of it being developed and the family losing the connection.

I have sat with landowners literally on their deathbeds, surrounded by family members, and watched them struggle to sit up, propped by pillows, to take pen in hand and sign a deed or conservation restriction to secure the wild future of their family land. One elderly woman did so, then, exhausted by the effort, sank back to bed, saying, "There. Grandfather would be so pleased." She died days later, but 50 acres on Cape Cod Bay had been preserved forever.

That pen was mighty. When I struggle with frustration over environmental losses on the Cape, I think of these valiant souls and am refreshed and renewed to carry on myself.

What motivates landowners to put land into conservation? Well, death and taxes; those two certainties in life. Beyond the psychic bond that land holds over some of us, there are tangible rewards. Placing land into conservation status can generate powerful tax advantages. Property tax can be lowered or eliminated. Federal income taxes can be reduced through charitable deductions. Capital gains tax can be lowered or eliminated. Estate tax can be minimized.

The government understands that personal acts of charity, such as donating land for conservation or agreeing to restrict development, benefits the public by providing a service which government might otherwise have to undertake and so confers tax benefits to encourage that behavior. There are strategies associated with the timing and techniques of land donations (outright gifts, conservation restrictions, bequests, installment giving, reserved life estates, bargain sales) to maximize these advantages.

If you love something, set it free. It can then return to you, willingly and with grace. In this case, put some of your land into conservation.

The values—natural and economic—that will rebound in your favor can be great and everlasting.

The NLC receives technical assistance from the Compact of Cape Cod Conservation Trusts where Mark Robinson has served as Executive Director since 1986.





NLC SPOTLIGHT DAVID VANDERHOOP



DAVID VANDERHOOP AQUINNAH WAMPANOAG ELDER NLC BOARD DIRECTOR

Aquinnah Wampanoag elder, and NLC Board Director, David Vanderhoop, was born and raised on the island of Noepe, currently known as Martha's Vineyard. From an early age, David roamed the forests and shores of Aquinnah and he knows them like the back of his hand. David graduated from Lummi Indian College (now Northwest Indian College) with a degree in Aqua Culture and Fisheries Biology and worked for the Aquinnah Wampanoag Shellfish Hatchery. The Wampanoag territory and people have meant everything to David. Following the footsteps of his ancestors, he served on the board of selectmen for the Town of Aquinnah for 18 years. When the Aquinnah Wampanoag Tribe was federally recognized in 1988, David served as Vice-Chairman of the Tribal Council for 6 years. His yearning for more naturalist knowledge and earth skills to realize his dream of starting a "school", led David to Tom Brown

Jr.'s Tracker School. Over a timespan of several years, David participated in eight intensive courses, including primitive skills and ancient philosophy. David trained at the Vermont Wilderness School's Art of Mentoring week-long programs annually from 2002 - 2009, with the eight Shields Institute and has been involved in the Nature Connection Network from 2015 till now as a speaker and organizer. In 2005, David co-founded Sassafras Earth Education (SEE) with his wife of 20 years, Saskia. SEE, located on the ancestral homelands of the Aquinnah Wampanoag, became a nonprofit organization in December 2016. In addition to being a Nature Connection Mentor and speaker, David is an avid outdoorsman, hunter, fisherman, outdoor chef and, deeply committed to forwarding the natural ways of his people, by restoring the land and respecting the earth. David is a well-respected NLC Board Director and Aquinnah tribal elder, and we celebrate him in our 4th edition 2021 Vernal Equinox Newsletter.