

# **Together We Did It!**

## **Blaisdell Land Challenge a Success!**



Thanks to the generosity of many wonderful donors, 7 Lakes Alliance is pleased to announce that we have successfully raised \$40,000 toward the matching challenge from the McCann family for a total of \$80,000. With your support, 7 Lakes has now fully retired the loan for the recent 119-acre Blaisdell Property between The Mountain and Mt. Phillip which overlooks Great Pond. This land is an important buffer for water quality on Great Pond and connects four intermittent streams with significant wetland and streamside habitat.

## **Family of Richard McCann Announces a SECOND Challenge!**

We are grateful for the strong response which has inspired the McCann family to issue a second challenge to ensure that this land is cared for today and for future generations. These additional funds will enable 7 Lakes to focus on long-term stewardship, and sustainable trail development, including kiosks, signage, mapping and educational materials. Together, we are in the home stretch in making this vision a reality!

This is a wonderful opportunity to double your gift today to protect the lands and lake we love in memory of Richard McCann with a tax-deductible donation to 7 Lakes Alliance.

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!!!**



Ensuring Our Future

Dear Neighbors, Friends and Family,

I hope that you and yours are well. After a challenging year, reunions on the lake this past summer were especially precious. For our family, summers on Hoyt's Island on Great Pond have long been a special tradition.

As many of you know, our family spent our first summer without our beloved husband/father/grandfather Richard McCann. Being on Hoyt's this summer was bittersweet for us. A friend commented that it seemed to be a good place for both grieving and healing – which is very true. An informal memorial gathering with Maine family and friends, outside on a glorious August day, was particularly helpful. Time on idyllic Hoyt's Island this summer provided a respite for all of us, just as it did for Richard.

Richard was remarkably passionate about life, his family, service to others and our wonderful time spent together on Great Pond. He was a generous spirit, a beloved and dedicated surgeon whose belief in serving others took him to Haiti to provide critically needed medical services. He loved the beautiful lands and waters surrounding Hoyt's Island, and he loved to share his enthusiasm for windsurfing, paddling, sailing and fishing with friends and family. He developed a daily running ritual that took him throughout the local landscape. Having grown up in Yarmouth, Maine and attended Camp Bomazeen (on the North Bay of Great Pond), buying his own "camp" on Great Pond was truly coming home. He loved this place.



*Richard McCann teaching his grandson how to drive the boat; Mt. Phillip in the background*



*View of Mt. Phillip from direction of Quill Hill Farm and The Mountain*

Richard's birds-eye view as a pilot gave him a valuable perspective on the interconnected nature of our lands and waters. He deeply appreciated how the surrounding landscape enriches our sense of place on Hoyt's, providing beautiful, largely uninterrupted views of the mainland. Cherished by so many of us, these lands hold the special places where we hike, bike, explore, and enjoy each other's company. We find peace and solace here.

These lands protect the quality of the water where we swim, sail and make memories by keeping soil (with its algae-feeding phosphorus that can turn the lake green) on the mountain and out of the lake.

Richard took none of this for granted, and neither can we. He felt a responsibility toward this special place that is so important to all of us. In his memory, our family has promised to help conserve critical lands overlooking Hoyt's Island now and for future generations. With this in mind, The McCann family made a matching grant this summer of \$40,000 to forever conserve key land in the heart of this landscape. Thanks to your overwhelming generosity, 7 Lakes Alliance raised the matching \$40,000. With our match, this \$80,000 has allowed 7 Lakes to complete payment on their recent purchase of the 119-acre Blaisdell property, overlooking Great Pond.

The Blaisdell property lies in the heart of the land corridor between existing conserved lands and trails, from The Mountain in Belgrade Lakes to Mt. Phillip in Rome. The Blaisdell family's ancestors settled these lands as early as the late 1700s. Today, this land buffers Great Pond water quality, sits amid nearly 875 acres of largely undeveloped wildlife habitat and connects to four intermittent streams and significant wetland and streamside habitat.

In late 2020, Hillary and Peter Schultz generously offered to 7 Lakes the opportunity to connect The Mountain Trail to the Blaisdell property along the edge of their beautiful Quill Hill Farm, extending the trail nearly to Mt. Phillip. By completing funding for land acquisition, the Richard McCann Blaisdell Land Challenge will enable 7 Lakes and its dedicated stewardship team to focus on trail development.

Our family has been truly inspired by the overwhelming support to complete the Blaisdell land purchase. Thank you to everyone for enthusiastically helping us meet this challenge in Richard's memory. With momentum of having successfully met this initial challenge, the McCann family is excited to announce that we are making **A SECOND \$40,000 MATCHING CHALLENGE** to ensure that this land will have dedicated long-term stewardship funding. These funds will enable 7 Lakes stewardship team to provide trail development, signage, mapping, erosion control to prevent runoff into Great Pond. This lasting stewardship will allow us and future generations to truly enjoy this beautiful land between The Mountain and Mt. Phillip.

Please consider making a gift today that will be DOUBLED to protect the lands and lake we love in memory of Richard McCann with a tax-deductible donation to 7 Lakes Alliance. [Visit our website and choose the Richard McCann Blaisdell Land Stewardship Challenge under Special Programs](#), or see gift options below. [Help conserve these beloved lands for people, water quality, and wildlife now and for future generations.](#)



Sincerely,

*Meg McCann*

*Proposed The Mountain - Mt. Phillip Trail Corridor*



*View of the Blaisdell property from the west side of Hoyt's Island*



*Richard McCann on Great Pond*

**About 7 Lakes Alliance:** The 7 Lakes Alliance combines the strengths of its predecessors, the Belgrade Regional Conservation Alliance and Maine Lakes Resource Center. We bring 30 years of conserving land, including the Kennebec Highlands, and decades of water quality science and education to achieve our mission, “To conserve the lands and waters of the Belgrade Lakes region for all.” 7 Lakes is accredited by the national Land Trust Alliance, which independently certifies exemplary conservation practices and financial integrity.

Our watershed conservation strategy includes land and habitat conservation, water quality science and protection, public access for recreation, education and science, health, and support for a sustainable natural resource-driven economy. Our 7 Lakes Alliance-Colby College Water Quality Initiative monitors, analyzes and develops recommendations to protect and restore water quality throughout the Belgrade Lakes. We remove and control invasive organisms including the milfoil infestation in Great Pond’s North Bay. We prevent other invasive infestations through Courtesy Boat Inspections. We help prevent harmful algal blooms by battling erosion with tools such as the Youth Conservation Corps, LakeSmart voluntary shoreline protection, and by leveraging federal erosion control funds. 7 Lakes provides education and science opportunities for all ages, hosts stewardship days, hikes, trainings and interpretive field trips, and provides access for low impact recreation, such hiking, biking and cross-country skiing.

**To make a donation,** go to [7lakesalliance.org/donate](http://7lakesalliance.org/donate), or mail contributions to the address below. *Be sure to identify the Richard McCann Blaisdell Land Challenge by selecting the dropdown option under Special Programs on the web donation form, or in your check memo.* For information on stock donations or other ways to contribute, call Mary at 207-495-6039.

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Ensuring Our Future

