

Donation leads to land conservation in Portsmouth



The Aquidneck Land Trust announced the conservation of a 4.91-acre wetlands property on Portsmouth's northwest shore. PROVIDED BY AQUIDNECK LAND TRUST/JESSICA POHL

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The Aquidneck Land Trust announced the conservation of a 4.91-acre wetlands property on Portsmouth's northwest shore.

The property was donated to ALT by its owners, Peter S. Wood and Polly Estabrook, and is part of a larger 44-acre marsh and beach area situated between the railroad line and the bay.

A CRMC-designated path runs through the site and offers public beach access and parking near Pheasant Drive.

The site includes salt marsh and scrub-shrub habitat, visible from the path, railroad, surrounding houses, and boats out at sea. The property is strate-

gically located should a multi-use path on the adjacent railroad line ever be created.

A number of bird species have been recorded on ALT site visits, including glossy ibis, osprey, great egret, and American black duck.

"Conservation has long been my particular concern," said Peter Wood, "especially the preservation of open space as an antidote to overdevelopment. My step-daughter and I are delighted that ALT will look after these marsh lands and the wildlife they sustain. As former Newport residents, my wife Shirley and I have wonderful memories of walking the wooded paths in the Norman Bird Sanctuary. We have always wanted to contribute to the island's conservation as we were able to do on Block Island,

where we have been part of the community since 1967."

Peter and Shirley Wood were the owners and editors of the Block Island Times from 1986 to 1995. They were key supporters of the BI Conservancy and donated land for the creation of the BI Greenways.

"Wood Estabrook Preserve has many important conservation values," said Chuck Allott, ALT executive director. "In addition to offering wildlife habitat and public shore access, the property acts as a coastal resiliency buffer, helping to soak up storm surge with rising seas. We are very grateful to Peter Wood and Polly Estabrook for their generous donation and for their commitment to land conservation on Aquidneck Island."