

Readfield's Town Farm and Town Forest

In the 19th and 20th centuries, many Maine communities provided a home for residents with financial or mental health needs. Town farms like Readfield's provided housing in exchange for labor. Readfield had at least two town farms. The first records for this one date from the early 1900s. The farmhouse had at least six bedrooms, a wood shed, an icehouse, a milk room, and barns for cattle, horses, and hogs. The farm was busy during the 1930s, often taking in those who drifted through on the railroad.



Jym St. Pierre

This land, now Readfield's 110-acre Town Forest, is managed for the conservation of natural and historic features, recreation, and timber production. Since the 1970s the Readfield Conservation Commission has overseen this community property. Most recently, in January of 2009, twenty-five acres of white pine and hardwoods were selectively harvested and hundreds of invasive honeysuckle plants (*Lonicera* spp) were removed from around the town farm foundations with Maine Forest Service Project Canopy funds. In forests that are managed for timber production, honeysuckle can create a dense understory and compete with economically valuable tree seedlings. Invasive species can also out-compete native species that are important food sources and nesting habitat for wildlife.

Forests, Flora, and Fauna



Indian cucumber root
(*Medeola virginiana*)

A partial list of common native plants, and resident and migratory bird species.

Canada mayflower (*Maianthemum canadense*), blue bead lily (*Clintonia borealis*), goldthread (*Coptis groenlandica*), false Solomon's seal (*Maianthemum racemosum*), fly honeysuckle (*Lonicera canadensis*), bird-on-the-wing (*Polygala paucifolia*), painted trillium (*Trillium undulatum*), partridge berry (*Mitchella repens*), red trillium (*Trillium erectum*), sarsaparilla (*Aralia nudicaulis*), starflower (*Trientalis borealis*), wild oats (*Uvularia sessilifolia*), wood sorrel (*Oxalis montana*), partridge berry (*Mitchella repens*)

Floodplain plant species

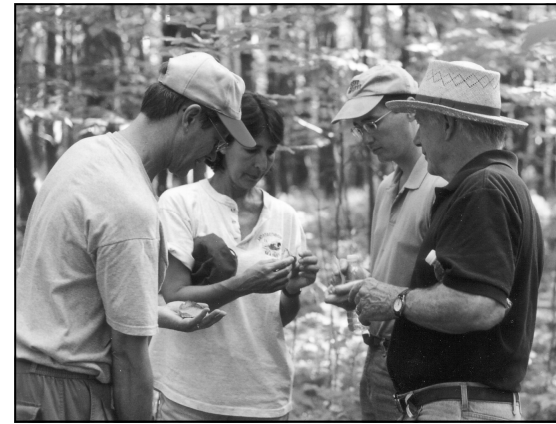
black willow (*Salix nigra*), dwarf gingseng (*Panax trifolius*), foam flower (*Tiarella cordifolia*), Jack-in-the-pulpit (*Arisaema triphyllum*), ostrich fern (*Mattencia struthiopteris*)

Birds

American crow, American goldfinch, American woodcock, barred owl, black-and-white warbler, black-capped chickadee, black-throated blue warbler, black-throated green warbler, blue jay, blue-headed vireo, brown creeper, brown-headed cowbird, chestnut-sided warbler, chipping sparrow, common raven, common yellowthroat, downy woodpecker, great-crested flycatcher, hairy woodpecker, hermit thrush, least flycatcher, magnolia warbler, mourning dove, northern parula, ovenbird, pileated woodpecker, pine siskin, pine warbler, purple finch, red-eyed vireo, rose-breasted grosbeak, ruffed grouse, scarlet tanager, song sparrow, white-throated sparrow, winter wren, wood thrush, yellow-rumped warbler, yellow-shafted flicker

Field id Ron Joseph, USFWS and Tim Sniffen, RCC, 2008-2009

Kennebec Land Trust



KLT

Maine's Wildlife Heritage

The Readfield Town Forest and KLT's Macdonald Conservation Area are part of a much larger undeveloped landscape. These forests and wetlands are critical habitat for black bear and moose - wildlife species with extensive home ranges.



A full listing of Kennebec Land Trust properties and their recreational uses, and an interactive map with directions, can be found at our website:

www.tkl.org

Please join us!

**KLT~PO BOX 261; 134 Main Street;
Winthrop, Maine 04364~207-377-2848**

Thanks to those who contributed expertise and time for this brochure: Howard Lake, Tim Sniffen, Jerry Bley, Jane Davis, Jym St. Pierre, Janie Matriciano, and Ron Joseph, USFWS~ May, 2009



KLT MACDONALD CONSERVATION AREA AND READFIELD TOWN FOREST



Readfield Town Forest, Jym St. Pierre

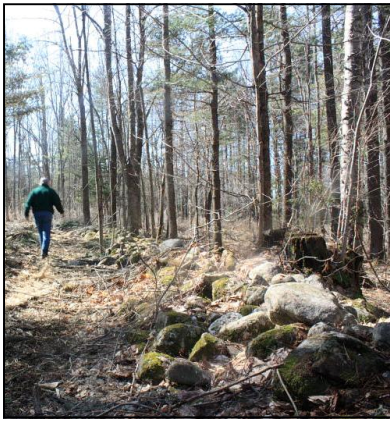
The **Readfield Conservation Commission** is a municipal board concerned with local environmental practices. It oversees town-owned open space lands, provides conservation information, and works with landowners, agencies, and organizations to encourage exemplary stewardship of natural resources.

The **Kennebec Land Trust** works cooperatively with landowners and local communities to protect natural areas and working landscapes by preserving their natural, educational, and recreational values.

WELCOME TO KLT'S MACDONALD CONSERVATION AREA AND THE READFIELD TOWN FOREST

We hope you enjoy your visit!

These woodlands and intermittent streams preserve valuable wildlife habitat and open space for recreational uses. The Readfield Town Forest, formerly the Readfield Town Farm, is also managed as a woodlot. Together, these 210 acres include over 4 miles of hiking trails that feature stone walls and cellar holes, Jones Brook's seasonal flowage, and a small nutrient-rich floodplain. These conservation parcels and the hundreds of acres of adjacent land are year-round and seasonal habitat for many species of birds and mammals.



Jane Davis

CATTLE LANES AND STONE FENCES

In the 18th and early 19th centuries, New England and New York farmers used oxen to haul stones and clear forests for croplands. These farmers built over 252,000 miles of walls — the distance between the earth and the moon is 240,251 miles! These stones, in foundations and walls, are artifacts of New England's last period of glaciation, which ended approximately 14,000 years ago.

As you hike the trails, look closely at the parallel stone walls of the former cattle run. This cattle lane had a barn at one end and a rough pasture, today a white pine, hemlock, maple, and birch forest, at the other. A hundred years ago, hay and other crops were growing where today you see white pine stands, and stone fences kept cattle *in* the pastures and *out* of the cultivated fields.

Can you find openings in the Town Forest cattle run and the stone walls in the Macdonald Conservation Area that were the entrances to farm fields?

KLT MACDONALD CONSERVATION AREA

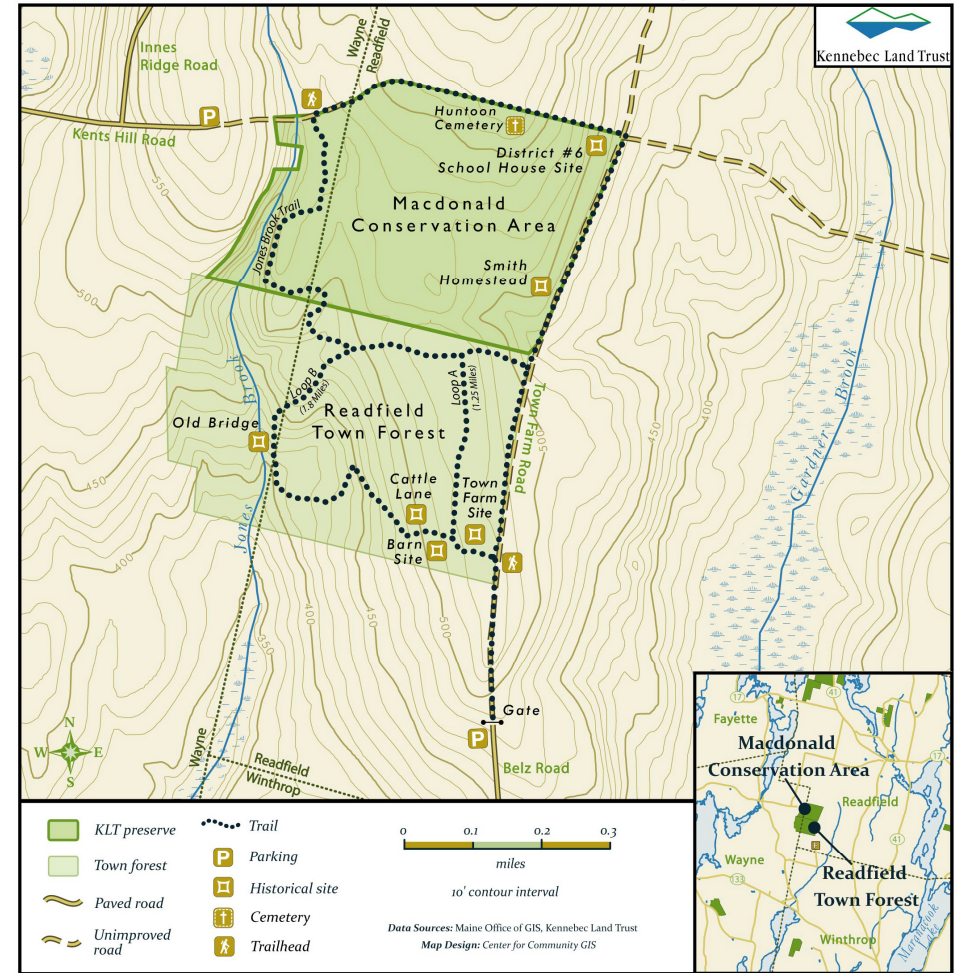


KLT

Selden Smith foundation, KLT Macdonald Conservation Area

In the 1800s the Selden Smith family farmed what is today's Macdonald Woods. A town road, part of today's trail network, linked the Smith farm to neighbors in Wayne and Readfield and to markets in larger communities. A one-room schoolhouse, Readfield District #6, was 0.25 miles north of the Smith farm. The Smith house and barn foundations are reminders of a time when orchards, pastures, and fields would have surrounded this farmhouse. In 2003, Douglas and Jessie Macdonald donated 100 acres of the former Smith farm to KLT for the protection of wildlife habitat and the preservation of New England's farm history.

KLT Macdonald Conservation Area & Readfield Town Forest, Readfield & Wayne



Macdonald Conservation Area ~ 100 acres ~ owned by Kennebec Land Trust
Readfield Town Forest ~ 110 acres ~ owned by Town of Readfield

Trails and Access: The approximately 2.3 mile easy/moderate **Jones Brook Loop Trail** begins at the KLT trailhead off the Kents Hill Road. It follows the northern loop of the Town Forest trail to the Town Farm Road and the Selden Smith farm foundations. **Town Forest Trails:** Two loops, inner loop A - 1.25 miles; outer loop B - 1.8 miles

Caution: Some or all of the Readfield Town Forest/Jones Brook trails are closed during bird nesting season. **From April through July, check the posting at the entrances or call KLT.**

Directions to Town Forest trailhead: From Route 133 near Berry Pond in Winthrop, turn north onto North Wayne Road. Go 1.3 miles and turn right onto the Hathaway Road; go 0.7 mile and turn left onto the Belz Road. Just before the gate at the end of the road there is parking on the left along the road for a couple of cars. Do not block the driveway or the turnaround. Proceed on foot past the gate about 0.5 mile. **Directions to KLT Macdonald trailhead:** From Route 133 turn north on North Wayne Road for 3 miles to the T; turn right (east) on the Kents Hill Road; go about 1 mile uphill (you will pass the Innes Ridge Road on your left); look for a KLT parking sign, parking is available on the left side of the road at the sign, please do not block the road or driveways.