Dear John and Jane,

As fellow new residents, we hope you are as thrilled as us to call Cumberland home. We moved from Washington, D.C. last year and, perhaps similar to you, we wanted to settle in a community-oriented town with ample green spaces where our two-year-old daughter could run around, quiet forest trails where we could hike, bike, and snowshoe, and clean beaches where we could swim. We feel incredibly fortunate to have found all that - with much more yet to discover - in Cumberland.

We have come to learn many of our town’s special places have been protected, and so many of our adventures made possible, by the efforts of the Chebeague and Cumberland Land Trust (CCLT), its members, land partners, and supportive Town officials. For their forethought and generosity, our family is deeply grateful.

This past year our daughter has watched frogs migrate en masse from their forest hibernation to the frog pond off Range Road, witnessed hundreds of horseshoe crabs crawl out of the ocean to lay eggs on the Broad Cove Reserve beach, stared at giant trees in Knight’s Pond Preserve in wonderment over the ambitions of local beavers, and quietly observed the mesmerizing noise of the spring snow melt flowing over the waterfalls in the Rines Forest. We find it amazing that all of us, as residents in this community, have access to such precious sites to recreate, learn, and cherish. Equally wonderful is the fact that all these sites are protected forever - for us and future generations.

We became CCLT members this year to support the important ongoing initiatives of the all-volunteer non-profit. We also agreed to write this letter to fellow new residents because, like us, you may have been unsure how to learn about Cumberland’s conserved lands, where to access them, and what recreational uses are allowed on particular properties. We are thrilled to tell you that CCLT just launched a new, informative website at ccltmaine.org that now includes maps with GPS addresses to all CCLT properties and detailed descriptions about the preserves and permitted uses. On the website you can also find out about free CCLT events, ask any questions you may have, and with a few clicks become members of the Land Trust. Included in this mailing is a CCLT brochure you also can mail in to become a member.

CCLT has many important initiatives planned, including protecting the entirety of Knights Pond and creating connecting trails across our town for hiking and biking. Strong membership is key to the success of these and other initiatives, the Land Trust’s educational events, and the stewardship of existing properties. We hope you will join us as new members of our town’s Land Trust to further the important work of preserving the natural resources of our community.

Hope to see you out on the trails!

James Mallar & Matie Little