

Indian River Lakes

CONSERVANCY



PO BOX 27 REDWOOD, NY 13679

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May 6, 2014

Spring in the Indian River Lakes region is always an amazing and wonderful time. Watching as the natural world around us begins a new season of birth, growth, blooming, and “life” in thousands of different ways is really special. At the Indian River Lakes Conservancy we are always excited by Spring. It is the beginning of our busiest season with more public events, more activities focused on conserving our land and water resources, more progress improving our trails and other public access areas, and more opportunities overall to

Learn – Protect – Enjoy.

Our excitement this Spring, however, has a different air to it. With your help and support we have continuously strengthened our organization and expanded our capabilities. Now, with the hiring of our first staff person, April Frederick, who will start in late May as our Coordinator of Public Programs and Administration, the IRLC is taking a huge step forward. April has a BS in Natural Resources and is a Certified Master Naturalist and interpretive trainer/guide with over 20 years of experience in conservation organizations. She is outgoing and very personable so introduce yourself at our events or call/visit our office at 43982 Stine Road, Redwood. We are confident that April will very quickly have a significant, positive impact on the IRLC and our activities.

That is not our only significant change. As we begin our 17th year the IRLC’s vision of our own future has broadened and matured in important ways. We have established significant new external relationships and are actively expanding our partnering and collaboration efforts. Internally, several powerful new programs/projects have been initiated or are in the late stages of development. A number of these are summarized in outline form on page 3 of this newsletter. As always we would be happy to discuss any of them with you. Each project has one or more contact persons listed so please contact them directly or contact April at our Redwood office (482-4757) for more information.

Remember, YOU ARE the IRLC. You make the IRLC successful. You are the primary force powering the IRLC. Because of your energy and support, impact of the IRLC is accelerating and broadening rapidly. But we need your active involvement more than ever. We need you to bring your friends along too. Even with a full time staff person we will continue to be an organization powered by our volunteers and our donors.

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IRLC Spring 2014

The quiet, pristine Marc A.F. Baker Island Preserve with its beautiful trail and sturdy new dock demonstrates what can be accomplished when a number of people shared a common vision. While each of them helped in their own way as donors and/or as volunteers the result is magnificent. I suggest you take a paddle out on Grass Lake to experience this special place and see this great example of what can be accomplished by the combined effort of IRLC folks.

The Marc A.F. Baker Island Preserve Timeline

- Island acquired by an IRLC friend (Purchased for \$125,000 March '08)
- Donation by major donor to acquire and steward the island (\$62,174 gift Oct. '08)
- Bargain sale to IRLC with loan from seller (\$65,000 total paid toward bargain sale price of \$105,000 with \$50,000 mortgage in Dec '08)
- Temporary dock installed by volunteers (June '09)
- Island dedicated in memory of Marc A.F. Baker (July '09)
- Island trail laid out and marked by volunteers (Nov '10 and May '11)
- Island trail cut by volunteers (June '11)
- Mortgage fully paid with Great Lakes Restoration Initiative Grant (Aug '11)
- \$9,840 NYSCPP Grant awarded to develop Baseline Study and Management Plan for Baker Island (April '12)
- Rizzo family donates to construct/maintain a new dock in memory of Sam Rizzo (August '12)
- Installation of new dock by volunteers (Aug '13)
- Donation by major donor of \$20,305 for Preserve stewardship (Nov '13)
- New dock dedication in memory of Sam Rizzo (May '14)

I am personally asking each of you to please get involved this summer and fall in one or more IRLC programs or projects like this. Get involved in something you are passionate about. Pick an activity where you have special knowledge or skills you can bring to our effort. Maybe you have something you want to learn more about while helping the IRLC at the same time. Please VOLUNTEER in some way, your time and energy will have a powerful impact, and it is very rewarding and fun. DONATIONS, either financial or of in kind support, are also always very welcome. Another way you can leave a lasting legacy for this special place is to make a bequest to the IRLC in your will. Of course, doing ALL OF THE ABOVE would be really fabulous!

Thank you so much for everything you do for the Indian River Lakes area. We look forward to seeing you at our IRLC events, on our trails, on the lakes, and of course as a volunteer on one or more of our project teams. Please visit us in person at our office, meet April and others working there, share your ideas and suggestions with her or email or call any of our Board Members and let us know what you are thinking.

Thank you,
Elliott (Sandy) Hillback, President

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Founded in 1998, the Indian River Lakes Conservancy (IRLC) is a not-for-profit land trust with the mission of preserving the natural beauty of the Indian River Lakes Region for the enjoyment of present and future generations. The IRLC currently protects, stewards and provides **year-round public access** to 1700 acres of pristine land and shoreline in northeastern Jefferson and southern St. Lawrence Counties, including over 5 miles of hiking trails. This special region contains a great diversity of plant and animal life including a number of rare and endangered species. Annually the IRLC hosts a naturalist-led “Winter Wonderland” snowshoe, a spring “Birds, Blooms and Bugs” hike and an autumn “Falling Leaves” hike through which the unique qualities of this landscape are interpreted for the public.

Your support will help advance the following 2014 plans, projects and programs:

1. Awarding an annual scholarship for a JCC graduate and a local High school student who are planning to further their education in a field of environmental science. The IRLC has awarded these scholarships to two local students during each of the past 13 years.
2. Working closely with the Town of Theresa and lake associations to promote water quality monitoring, invasive plant control, and shoreline stewardship education.
3. Initiating a Golden-winged Warbler habitat restoration program in partnership with the Thousand Islands Land Trust and the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology, with support from a New York State Conservation Partnership Grant
4. Developing two public access handicapped accessible trails and a handicapped accessible canoe and kayak launch on IRLC's Boyd Pond and surrounding property, supported by a combination of public grants and private funding.
5. Working with the SUNY School of Environmental science and Forestry at Syracuse University to develop a graduate student project to inventory invasive and endangered species and develop a plan for their management on IRLC's 1000 acre Grand Lake Reserve.
6. Acquiring 154 additional acres on the Indian River through North American Waterfowl Conservation Act (NAWCA) funding in partnership with the Thousand Islands Land Trust and Ducks Unlimited.
7. Hiring our first full-time staff person, with funding support from the New York State Conservation Partnership Program.

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