Grindstone Island is the fourth largest island in the 1000 Islands Region. TILT protects approximately 40% of the island, including preserves and conservation easements.*

The Grindstone Island Nature Trail

Key
- TILT Preserve
- Conservation Easement (Private)
- Public Dock
- State Park

The Grindstone Island Nature Trail is a 3.1-mile loop that takes you through a variety of habitats, from open fields to wetlands. The trail is part of the Thousand Islands Land Trust (TILT) network of protected properties.

Heineman Family Nature Preserve - Songbird Forest

The Songbird Forest is the breeding ground for Neotropical migratory songbirds, like the Cerulean Warbler, Yellow Warbler and Common Yellow Throat. These birds winter in Central America and return to North America for the summer season. They need an undisturbed, leafy canopy where predators are less likely to live and where they can forage for tiny insects.

A Human Landscape Legacy

Throughout recent history, the island’s landscape has been dominated by human activity. Native Americans occupied Grindstone Island long before European explorers discovered its resources. Settlements found that easy access to the island made harvesting its forests and quarrying its rocks attractive.

Mid River Farm

Aesop provides nesting habitat for grassland birds, Mid River Farm also yields pasture and hay for agricultural use. The Mid River Farm easement was one of TILT’s first protected properties. Its owner at the time, Josephine Murray, was one of the Land Trust’s founders.

Lindley Pt.

Lindley Point was donated to TILT by island resident Tim Thacher, specifically to protect the area from the threat of development.

Potters Beach

One of the only naturally occurring sandy beaches in the Thousand Islands, Potters Beach has been a favorite summertime spot for generations. TILT purchased the beach in 1995 in order to ensure it remains open to the public.

A History of Resource Use

Native Americans harvested fish, tanned and foraged.

English settlers harvested the island’s oak and pine forests.

Scottish immigrants developed quarries to obtain granite.

Farms covered the island and provided milk for a cheese factory.

Today’s valuable resource is the island’s beauty and recreational opportunities.

What is a Conservation Easement?

A voluntary agreement between a property owner and TILT that helps the owner plan for the protection of the cultural and natural features of the property. Ownership status of the property does not change. Conservation easements are private property - Please be respectful of residents’ privacy when visiting Grindstone Island.

Arousal Island Preserves and Nature Trail

Where the Cultural and the Natural Come Together

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Ups & Downs of Island Life
Long ago, ancient rock formations were carved by glaciers to form an irregularly sculpted, local landscape. Lowlands along the shore are saturated by seasonal river level changes, springs and runoff from the island interior. These factors, along with human modifications, combine to create the island’s plant communities. Three major plant communities are seen, containing representatives of native and introduced species: Marshland, Shrublands and Forest.

Immigrant Trees

Walnut Trees: This section of the trail passes through a grove of walnut trees, presumably planted by early settlers to Grindstone Island in many areas of the United States, old-growth black walnuts have been harvested and not replaced.

Pine Oaks: Native Americans are believed to have brought Pine Oak seedlings to the island several hundred years ago – usually this species is only found as far north as the Hudson River Valley. It is unlikely that these trees will produce new seedlings, as the flooding which Pine Oaks need to continually populate an area no longer occurs, due to natural changes and human intervention.

Native Trees

Shagbark Hickory

Meadowsweet

Black Walnuts

Red Oak

Cattails

Birds abound throughout the adjacent Heineman Family Nature Preserve - Songbird Forest. Among the warblers that you may see are the Yellow Warbler, with its call of sweet, sweet, sweeter and the Common Yellowthroat, calling witchity, witchery, witchery. Various Gray Catbirds may appear sounding their cat-like mew, or and annoyed Common Crow might sound its incessant caw, caw. Also, you might be surprised by a Ruffed Grouse jumping up explosively.

Vernal Pools

Called “vernal” because they are at their peak in Spring and usually dry up in Summer, these pools are usually devoid of fish, which allows safe development for amphibians and insects. Species that rely on vernal pools for all or part of their lifecycle include Spotted Salamanders, Fairy Shrimp, Spring Peepers, Dragonfly and Darnedly larvae. Common Garter snakes, Painted Turtles and Leopard Frogs.

The Thousand Islands Land Trust (TILT) is a 501c(3) non-profit organization created in 1985 to conserve the natural beauty, diverse wildlife habitats, water quality and outdoor recreation opportunities of the 1000 Islands region, for present and future generations!

TILT is supported by donations from people who care about the Thousand Islands region of the St. Lawrence River. Our conservation work is only possible through the generosity of our supporters.

Donations of land conservation easements, and financial resources to TILT are tax deductible under provisions of the Internal Revenue Code. To find out more about donating land, creating a conservation easement, or including TILT in your will, please call us at 315-686-5345.

Please detach below & mail with payment to the address above.

Yes! I would like to support TILT and help conserve Grindstone Island Preserve.

Name ____________________________

Street ____________________________

City ____________________________

State/Prov/Zip/Postal ____________

Phone ____________________________

Email ____________________________

We accept Visa & MasterCard:

Card No. ____________

Exp. Date ____________

3-Digit Code ____________

□ $5000

□ $2500

□ $1000

□ $500

□ $250

□ $100

□ $40

□ Corporate/Personal ____________

□ Business Name ____________________________

My gift is □ in honor □ in memory of:

TILT’s efforts have contributed to the conservation of more than 30,000 acres along the St. Lawrence River.

For more information, visit www.TILandTrust.org

www.TILandTrust.org

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Printed by:

The Grindstone Island Nature Trail winds its way from Canoe Point to Picnic Point, through land owned by TILT and owned by the State of New York. It is jointly managed by TILT and the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, Thousand Islands Region.