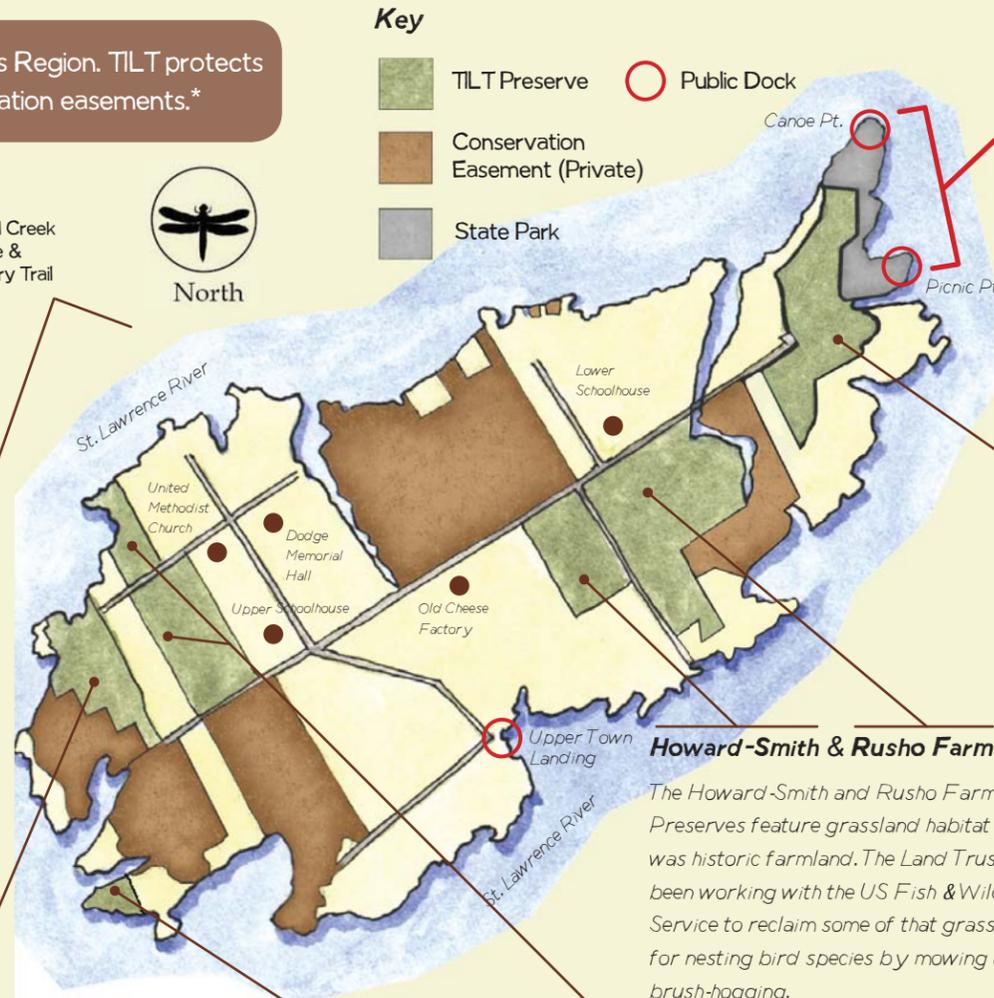




Grindstone Island is the fourth largest island in the 1000 Islands Region. TILT protects approximately 40% of the island, including preserves and conservation easements.*



The Grindstone Island Nature Trail

*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.

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. Settlers found that easy access to the island made harvesting its forests and quarrying its rocks attractive.



Forest communities that once covered the island have been reduced to minor areas by human activities.



Cleared lands recovering from resource use contain new plant community members introduced by humans.



This picturesque plant community is rare in the 1000 Islands region and sensitive to human interference.



In contrast to the uplands, Grindstone contains some of the largest, undeveloped wetlands in the region.

Mid River Farm

Besides providing 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.

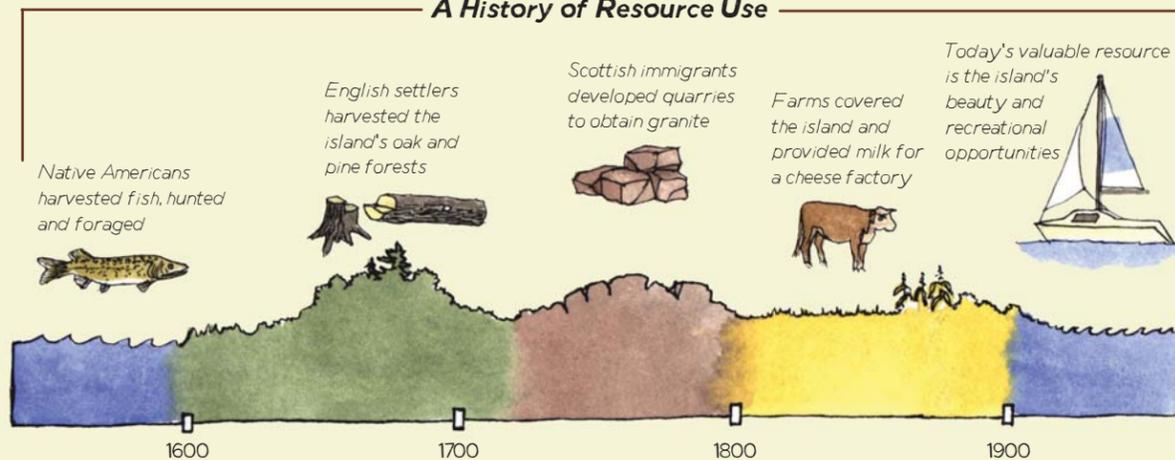
Potters Beach

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.

Howard-Smith & Rusho Farm

The Howard-Smith and Rusho Farm Preserves feature grassland habitat that was historic farmland. The Land Trust has been working with the US Fish & Wildlife Service to reclaim some of that grassland for nesting bird species by mowing and brush-hogging.

A History of Resource Use



Access to Grindstone

While there is no public ferry service to the island, TILT hosts various "treks" on Grindstone throughout the year - biking, kayaking, kids' activities, our famous mule tour and more! See the full schedule on the TILT website: www.TILandTrust.org.

Grindstone Island/Nature Trail Brochure © 2014 Thousand Islands Land Trust

Front cover photo of a restored pothole on the Rusho Farm Preserve & back cover photo of Potters Beach by Ellen Stagg

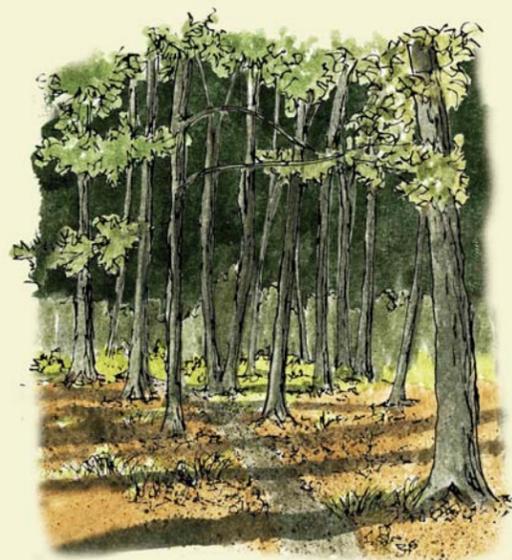
All Illustrations by Robert McNamara of The Art of Wilderness



The Thousand Islands Land Trust (TILT) is...

Working to conserve the natural beauty, diverse wildlife habitats, water quality and outdoor recreation opportunities of the 1000 Islands region, for present and future generations!

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.



Birding Along the Trail

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, sweet, sweeter-than-sweet* and the Common Yellow Throat, calling *witchity, witchity, witchity*. Various Gray Catbirds may appear sounding their cat-like mew, or and annoyed Common Crow might sound its incessant *caw, caw, caw*. Also, you might be surprised by a Ruffed Grouse jumping up explosively.



All Illustrations by Robert McNamara of The Art of Wilderness

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.

Pin Oaks: Native Americans are believed to have brought Pin 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 Pin Oaks need to continually populate an area no longer occurs, due to natural changes and human intervention.

Plant Communities

- Shrublands
- Shallow Emergent Marsh
- Hardwood Forest



North



Leopard Frog

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 & Damselfly larvae, Common Gartersnakes, Painted Turtles and Leopard Frogs.

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.

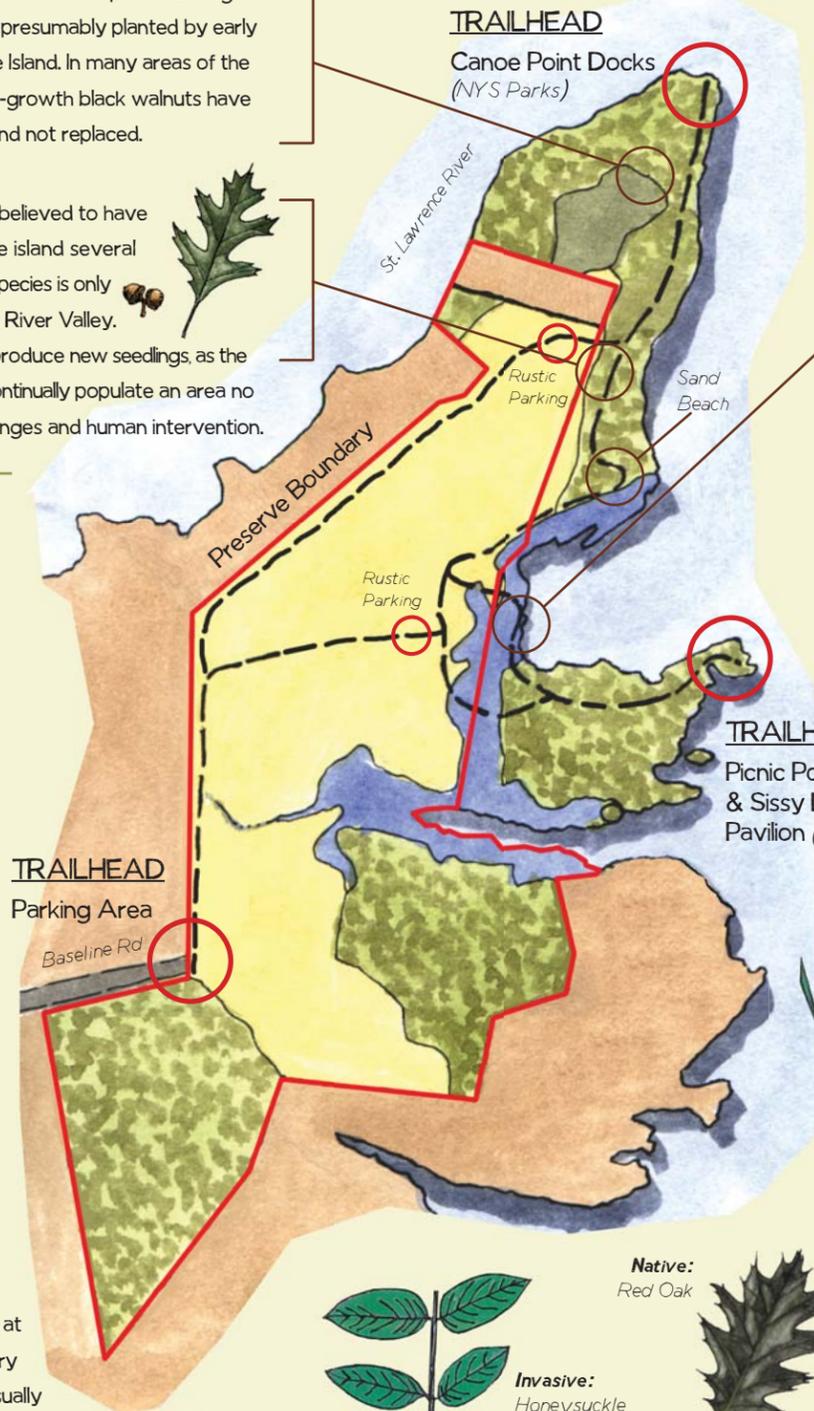


Wooden Bridge and Loon Nesting Platform

A wooden bridge traverses the shallow emergent marsh, complete with benches for viewing native wildlife. Have a seat, you may spot a Least or American Bittern, Kingfisher, Mink, Muskrat, Otter, Beaver or Short-tailed Stoat. The floating platform seen out in the open water of the marsh is a nesting platform for Common Loons. Human development along the shoreline has eliminated many areas that were once loon nesting sites. The platform also provides safety from raccoons, who destroy the nests.

Competition in the Wild: Natives vs. Invasives

Plants along the trail are engaged in a battle for dominance. Human activity is commonly the reason for the introduction of invasive and non-native species, which then has a trickle-down effect on the entire ecosystem. For example, the lower water levels created when the St. Lawrence Seaway was built allowed fast-growing, non-native cattails to move in. This now crowded environment forces Northern Pike to spawn in deeper waters, which affects the entire wetlands food web.



Native: Red Oak



Invasive: Honeysuckle



Native & Non-Native: Cattails



Native: Mayapple



Invasive: Garlic Mustard



Native: Meadowsweet



Native: Shagbark Hickory



Preserve Rules: Preserve open sunrise to sunset • Stay on trail • No motorized vehicles
No camping, dumping, fires, or collecting flora & fauna • Keep pets on a leash • No trapping • Hunting by permit only
The roads on Grindstone are public but smaller trails may be private. Please respect the privacy of the island residents.



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The Thousand Islands Land Trust (TILT) is a 501(c)(3) not-for-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 Preserves:

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- Friend of the Land \$5,000
- Guardian \$2,500
- Islander \$1,000
- Steward \$500
- Partner \$250
- Contributor \$100
- Family/Individual \$40
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