

2020 Highlights



Friends of Sears Island

2020 Highlights

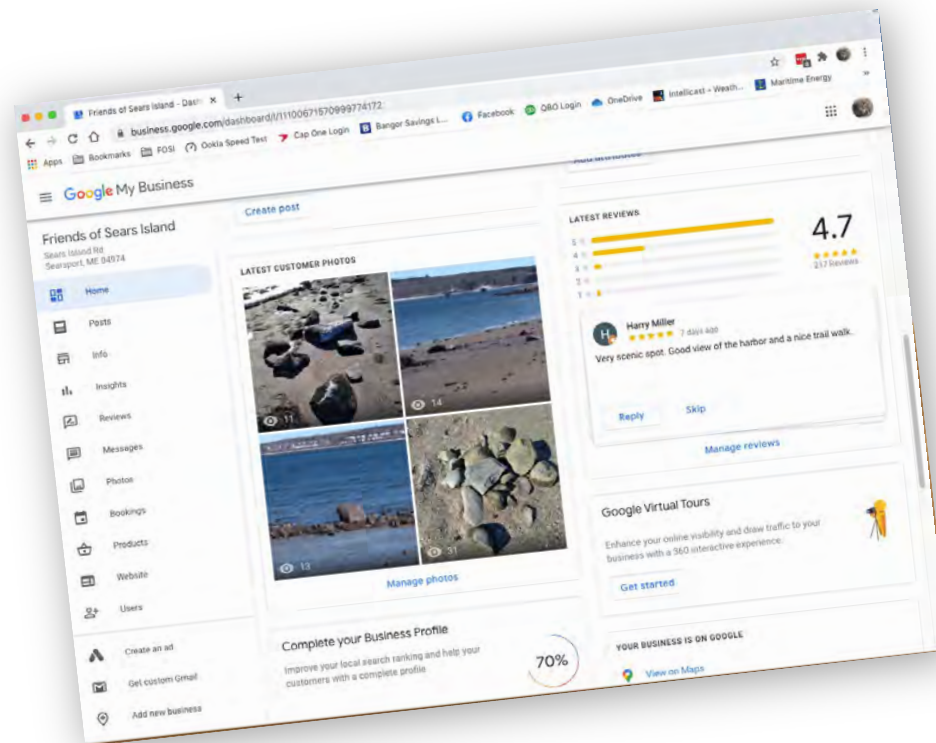
MORE VISITORS DURING 2020

- Despite a reported 32% drop in tourism to Maine this year, we had about 12% more visitors to Sears Island than last year – nearly 23,000 cars, from May-September.
- If each car had two people, that's 46,000 visitors. Many are local, but many come from much farther away, including several states and even foreign countries.

2020 Highlights

People Love Sears Island!

- 212 reviews on our Google My Business web page, with an overall 4.7-star rating out of 5, people love Sears Island.
- One visitor called it “Jewel of the Mid-Coast.”



2020 Highlights

PUBLIC PROGRAMS

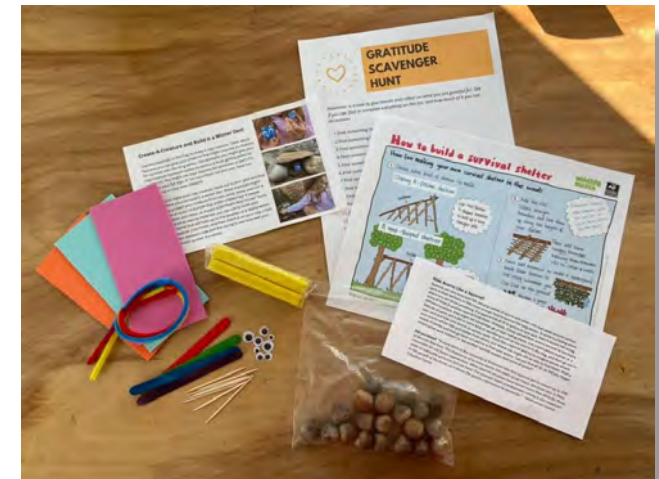
- FOSI continued to offer many free programs for all ages.
- **Science Squad:** New self-guided “Grab-and-GO” activity kits for families that included supplies and instructions, for pick up at Carver Library.
- **“Sears Island Exploration Backpack”** contains a spotting scope, a GPS with instructions for geocaching, a field guide, a pocket microscope and more. Pick up at Carver Library.



2020 Highlights

PUBLIC PROGRAMS

- Videos on Facebook and website: Vernal Pool, and slide show of Karl Gerstenberger's amazing bird photos
- Bingo Scavenger Hunt for kids and families
- Story Walk on the Homestead Trail, with Carver Library
- Poetry Walk on the Homestead Trail



2020 Highlights

PUBLIC PROGRAMS

- Zoom programs, hosted with the Belfast Free Library, were very popular.
- Topics included vernal pools, animal migration, wildflowers, monarch butterflies, and more.
- More than 70 viewed our November program on the seasonal habits of Maine's mammals.



2020 Highlights

PUBLIC PROGRAMS

- Yoga on the Beach drew 48 in two live, outdoor sessions – *socially distanced, of course!*
- In all, hundreds of people benefited from our programs this year.



2020 Highlights

VOLUNTEERS

- FOSI volunteers help with strategic planning, marketing, fundraising, and trail maintenance, among other activities.
- 1,972 volunteer hours of service, with an estimated value of about \$50,148, by national standards.



Strategic Plan 2021-2025 Tasks and Timeline

Goal 1: Protect and preserve the natural, cultural, historical, and recreational resources of Sears Island.

Task	Who's Responsible	Completion Date
1. Create a schedule to monitor sensitive sites based on information from Aleta.		3/31/2021
2. Recruit volunteers to monitor sites.	Janet Williams	6/30/2021
3. Implement trails plan: 3a. Complete Scenic Overlook & Sears Summer Home Loop trails. 3b. Design & install Ledges Trail to eastern shore. 3c. Explore feasibility of eastern shoreline trail.	Janet Williams Rob Burke Jill & Bill Kulbe	3/31/2021 6/30/2021 6/30/2022 12/31/2022
4. Monitor compliance with conservation easement annually with DOT and MCHT.	Susan White, Greg Biddinger	Annually
5. Inventory FOSI's tools/equipment and create a maintenance schedule.	Bill Kulbe	3/31/2021
6. Collect and review existing management plans.	Susan White, Jim Gilbert	3/31/2021

2020 Highlights

VOLUNTEERS

- In July, Matthew Southard of Boy Scout Troop 34, designed and built a new stairway to the western shore, as his Eagle Scout project, with materials donated by Viking Lumber.
- Our trail team continues to keep things safe for hikers, and we scouted and marked three new possible trails.
- New trail signs by Cloe Chunn



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New Trails

- FOSI volunteers planned and cut new trails at the south end of the island, one to help people find the remains of the Sears summer homestead, and another leading to a scenic south-facing lookout point about 60' above the shore.



2020 Highlights

EXPLORING NEW PARTNERSHIPS

- Sears Island is owned by the people of Maine, and FOSI is the designated Land Management Entity for the Conservation Area, in collaboration with the Maine Department of Transportation, the Maine Coast Heritage Trust, and the Town of Searsport
- This year we explored how FOSI might partner with other state agencies whose missions involve recreation, land stewardship and management.



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EXPLORING NEW PARTNERSHIPS

- In September, we welcomed the director of Maine's Bureau of Parks and Lands to Sears Island, along with two others from his office, to see if there are other State resources that can be brought to bear in support of our conservation, recreation, and education efforts.
- This was their first visit to Sears Island, and they were impressed.



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NEW INTERPRETIVE SIGNS

- Three new interpretive signs were researched, designed and installed, with funding support from the Maine Community Foundation, GBL Charitable Foundation and the Town of Searsport.



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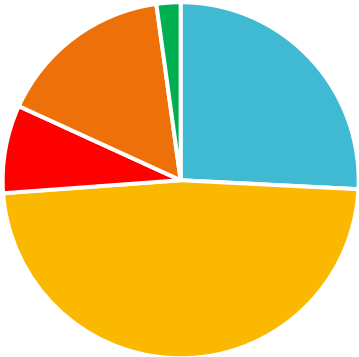
December plastic spill

- On December 2, 2020, two bales of “Solid Recovered Fuel” fell into the water while being offloaded from a ship at the Sprague Terminal on Mack Point. Each bale weighed about 2,500 pounds
- One bale broke apart, spreading shredded plastic and other materials along the western beach of Sears Island, requiring a significant cleanup effort. The second bale was recovered intact.
- In addition to a crew paid by Sprague, dozens of volunteers arrived to help, including a few state legislators.



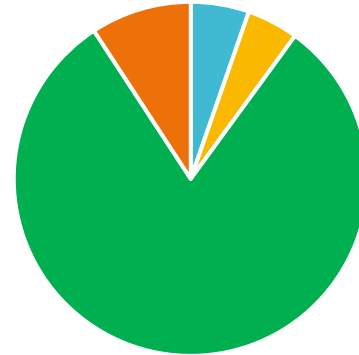
2020 Highlights

Total Income \$25,019



- Business Donations: \$6,456
- Individual Donations: \$12,017
- Municipal Donations: \$2,000
- Grants: \$4,000
- Events & Misc: \$546

Total Expenses \$29,564



- General Operating: \$1,574
- Fundraising: \$1,391
- Programs: \$23,874
- Trails/Maintenance: \$2,725