



Protecting land for the community, *forever*.

Serving the communities of

Rockport, Camden, Hope, Lincolnville, Northport, Belfast, Belmont, Morrill, Waldo, Swanville, Brooks, Knox, Searsport, Stockton Springs, and Prospect.

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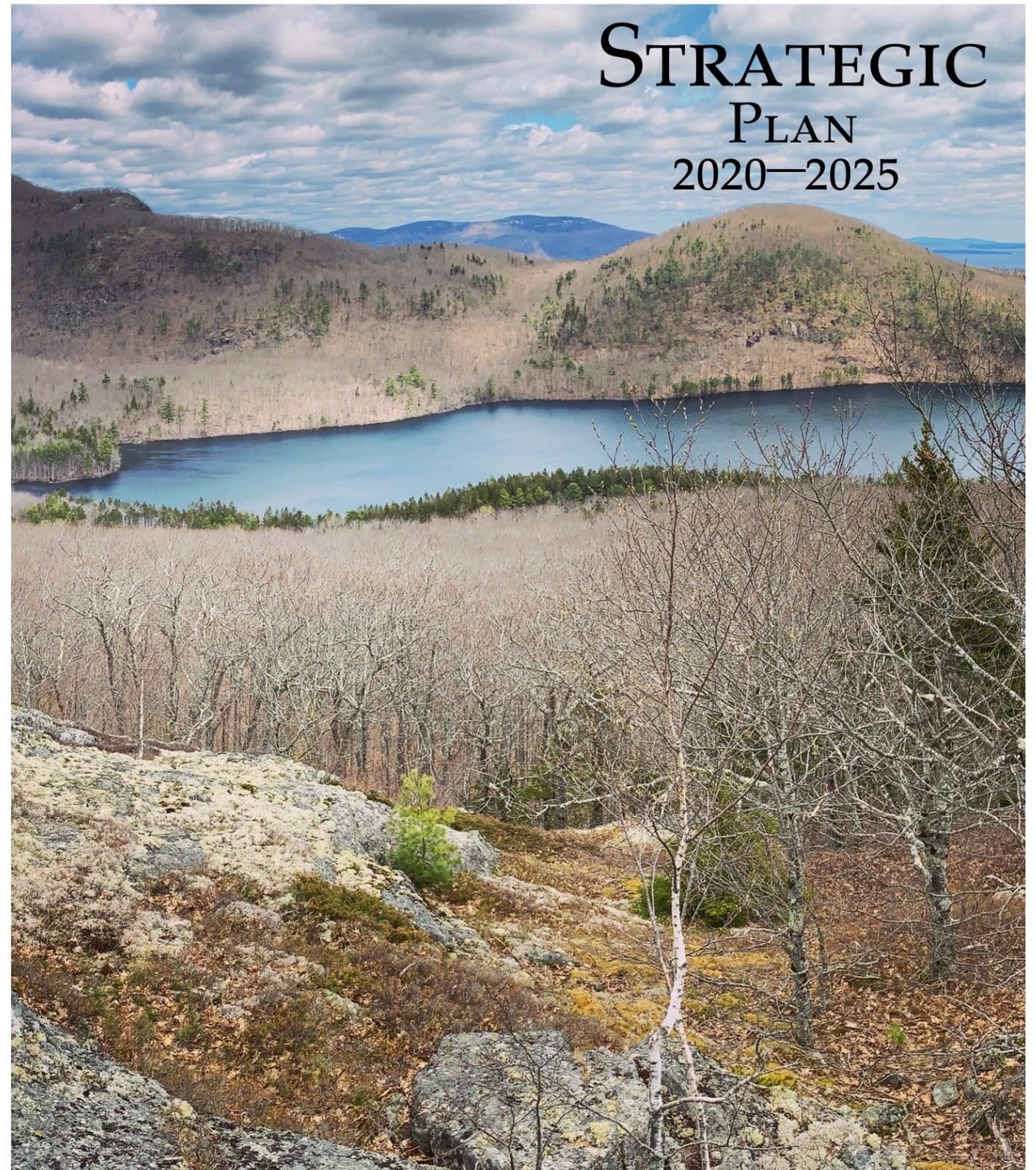
Approximately 200 strong!

MEMBERS

1,350+



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STRATEGIC PLAN 2020—2025



**COASTAL MOUNTAINS
LAND TRUST**

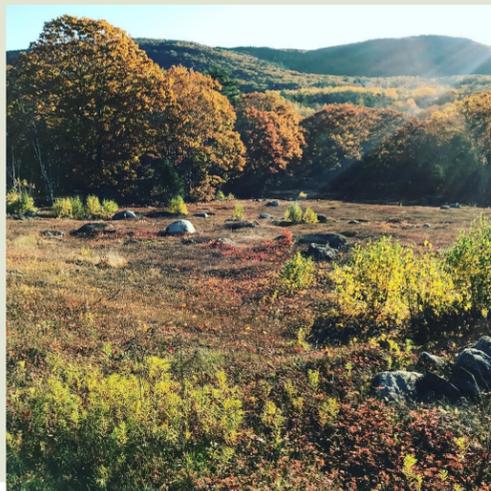


Vision

A future in which the mountains, lakes, woods, streams, and open spaces that sustain the diversity of our region's native ecosystems, define our sense of place, and support a strong local economy are preserved and valued by the community.

Mission

Coastal Mountains Land Trust permanently conserves land for the benefit of the natural and human communities of the western Penobscot Bay region.



Values

LEGACY: We are committed to securing long-term outcomes to benefit future generations.

RESPECT: We base our relationships — within our organization, with the public, and our members—on trust, openness, and inclusion.

INTEGRITY: We work to provide public benefit, not private or individual gain. We are transparent and fiscally responsible while striving to be both effective and efficient.

COLLABORATION: We partner with individuals, organizations, and communities to identify challenges, create solutions, and achieve mutual goals.

INTENTIONAL: We work toward specific outcomes based upon research and planning while remaining flexible to opportunities.

Coastal Mountains Land Trust will fulfill this Strategic Plan by pursuing the following four goals over the next five years:

GOAL #1: Land Protection

GOAL #2: Land Stewardship

GOAL #3: Connecting People with Nature

GOAL #4: Organizational Excellence



STRATEGY #4d: Increase all sources of annual philanthropy in support of the mission.

Benchmarks:

- Donors are cultivated, retained and their commitment grows through personalized outreach and engagement. (Annual)
- All trails are adopted via the **Adopt-A-Trail** program. (2025)
- Seed funding for schools / community programs position is secured. (2021)
- Land Trust increases annual operating support through unrestricted operating grants. (2025)

STRATEGY #4e: Meet goals for land protection initiatives.

Benchmarks:

- Funds have been secured for Round the Mountain, Beech Hill expansion, Hurds Pond, and Mt. Tuck projects. (2023)





Goal #4: ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE

Grow the Land Trust's capacity to deliver its land conservation programs and accomplish strategic objectives.

STRATEGY #4a: Maintain a volunteer board and active committees which represent our service region, possess specialty skills, and have a deep commitment to the Land Trust's mission.

Benchmarks:

- The Board of Directors maintains 15+ members and represents the diversity of the communities we serve. (ongoing)
- Board leadership succession policy is updated and implemented. (2020)
- Two high school students (one each from Waldo and Knox Counties) serve on the Land Trust board/committees. (2021)

STRATEGY #4b: Retain qualified, professional staff who enjoy rewarding careers at the Land Trust, and an active volunteer base that extends the capacity of the organization.

Benchmarks:

- Retain experienced staff by cultivating a collaborative team culture, setting clear priorities upon which annual performance is measured, and by providing opportunities to grow in one's position. (ongoing)
- Hire additional stewardship and community engagement positions as needed to fulfill plans. (ongoing)
- Core group of 200+ volunteers is retained through proper orientation, deployment, and recognition. (ongoing)
- Pro-bono professional services are recruited to assist with all aspects of the organization. (ongoing)

STRATEGY #4c: Plan for and address facility and equipment needs; take action as needs and/or capacity merit.

Benchmarks:

- Land Trust reviews alternatives for office space and other infrastructure needed to support expanding staff and volunteer capacity. (2020)
- Energy audit to assess and develop strategies to reduce the organization's overall carbon footprint completed. (2022)
- New roof and solar panels installed on existing office if merited. (2023)



Goal #1: LAND PROTECTION

Proactively conserve land in conservation focus areas and pursue projects that secure significant community values.

STRATEGY #1a: Increase the amount of land conserved in Land Trust focus areas.

Benchmarks:

- Priority land protection projects identified in the Conservation Plan are secured in the following focus areas: Mt. Tuck (2), Bald & Ragged Mountains (3), Hurds Pond (3), and the Ducktrap River (2). (2025)

STRATEGY #1b: Secure land with high community values.

Benchmarks:

- Establish **outdoor classrooms** within walking distance of two area schools. (2023)
- Identify and create a **trail corridor connection** linking a community with nature. (2024)
- Complete two **water access** projects (permanent access to rivers, ponds or the ocean). (2025)

STRATEGY #1c: Evaluate projects proposed by landowners outside focus areas.

Benchmark:

- Land projects will be completed as presented if donations and funding are available for acquisition and stewardship costs, and as long as they do not conflict with or jeopardize priority projects. (ongoing)

STRATEGY #1d: Foster partnerships to assist with the implementation of the Conservation Plan.

Benchmarks:

- Share the plan widely to educate the community about the goals of our land conservation program. (2020)
- Continue to collaborate with partners including Georges River Land Trust, Maine Coast Heritage Trust, Maine Farmland Trust, Midcoast Conservancy and local municipalities as appropriate. (2022)



Goal #2: LAND STEWARDSHIP

Care for the Land Trust’s preserves and easements; maintaining their conservation values through exemplary land management practices.

STRATEGY #2a: Maintain the conservation values of the Land Trust’s lands.

Benchmarks:

- Uphold obligations for preserves and easements; meet national accreditation standards for monitoring all preserves and conservation easements on an annual basis. (ongoing)
- Complete management plans, ecological assessments, and baseline documentations for all preserves within one year of acquisition. (ongoing)
- Maintain communication with easement landowners and buyers of conservation easement properties. (annual)

STRATEGY #2b: Demonstrate and implement land management practices to enhance our conservation lands.

Benchmarks:

- Update and implement Beech Hill Preserve Management Plan. (2021)
- Exotic invasive management plan for preserves and conservation easements is drafted. (2022)
- Complete plan for enhancing ecological values on select Land Trust preserves through active management (including sustainable forestry). (2023)

STRATEGY #2c: Sustainably manage trails and public access on conserved land.

Benchmarks:

- Maintain and enhance existing 50+ mile network of trails, signage, and trailhead infrastructure. (ongoing)
- Complete 1/2-mile trail connecting Beech Hill Preserve and Erickson Fields Preserve. (2021)
- Revise and update Ducktrap River Preserve trail system. (2021)
- Complete Mt. Tuck trail system. (2023)
- Plan for trails around Grassy Pond are developed. (2024)

-STRATEGY #2d: Complete construction of the Round the Mountain Trail.

Benchmarks:

- Phase I of Round the Mountain Trail construction from Camden Snow Bowl to Thorndike Brook Trailhead is completed, along with trailheads at both locations. (2020)
- Phase II of RTM Trail is complete, Thorndike Brook to Little Ragged. (2021)
- Phase III of RTM Trail is complete, Little Ragged Trailhead to Camden Snow Bowl. (2022)

STRATEGY #2e: Expand stewardship capacity.

Benchmarks

- Each preserve and trail has a trained and active volunteer steward. (ongoing)
- Two active corps of volunteers are engaged for weekly work crew in north and south service areas. (ongoing)
- Community groups and peer organizations have management responsibilities (e.g. trails) on our preserve lands, and we work in partnership. (ongoing)



Goal #3: CONNECTING PEOPLE WITH NATURE

Invite people to enjoy the outdoors and foster a community committed to caring for the land.

STRATEGY #3a: Host events on Land Trust properties and in the community.

Benchmarks:

- **Arts-on-the-Hill** program continues as a premier seasonal community arts series at Beech Hill, Rockport. (annual)
- **Coastal Mountains Nature Program** provides monthly natural history educational events. (annual)
- Host ten **Kids and Families** events annually. (annual)
- Hosts trail events including the annual **Trails Challenge**, a new **Round the Mountain Trail event** (2022), and continue to participate in the **RunBelfast collaboration** that includes the **Pendleton 5K** run on the Belfast Rail Trail. (annual)

STRATEGY #3b: Engage our communities, with a special focus on the ‘next generation of conservationists,’ in the use and enjoyment of our lands.

Benchmarks:

- Develop a comprehensive communications plan that places emphasis on engaging the next generation. (2020-2021)
- Self-guided programs (such as Junior Ranger program) for K-8 students and their families are launched. (2023)
- Partner with organizations and schools throughout service region to connect students with nature as a regular part of the K-12 experience. (2022) These programs shall include the following components:
 - * Elementary Schools: Field trips to preserves.
 - * Middle School: Develop access to and infrastructure on land within 10 minute walking distance of the school and train teachers to utilize these areas as outdoor classrooms.
 - * High School: Service learning, research, internship, committee representation, and seasonal position opportunities.

STRATEGY #3c: Inform local officials and elected representatives about the work of the Land Trust. (ongoing)

