

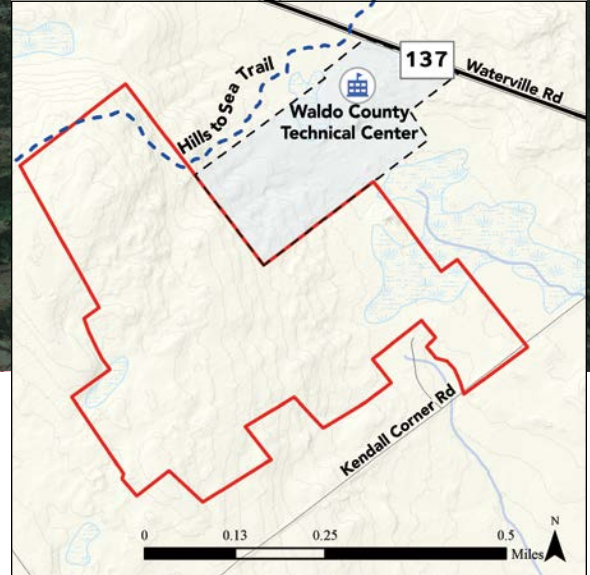
SCHOOL AND NATURE AS NEIGHBORS

Waldo County Conservation Initiative to create first preserve in the Town of Waldo

The Land Trust has taken another big step forward in support of our goal to connect students with nature by securing access to land within walking distance of schools. We are under contract to purchase a 119-acre parcel of land which abuts the Waldo County Technical Center (WCTC) in the town of Waldo. WCTC provides career and technical education to students from Belfast High School, Mount View High School, Searsport District High School, the Ecology Learning Center, and home-schooled students. The future preserve’s proximity to WCTC will provide opportunities for outdoor education for students from the school, whether it be for a fitness class to explore the trail, or a construction class to build a bridge or other recreational structure. This property is one of five proposed projects to be supported by the Waldo County Conservation Initiative in 2023–2024.

The preserve will also offer the broad community of Waldo a place to explore. The property facilitates a quarter-mile section of the Hills to Sea Trail, a 47-mile path that winds its way from Unity to the coast through the communities of Unity, Knox, Freedom, Montville, Morrill, Waldo, and Belfast, connecting to schools and farms along the way. Conserving another section of the trail will help to ensure the longevity of this important recreational community resource.

Following the development of a management plan, the Land Trust hopes to develop an additional 1.5 to 2-mile trail network for local users. We hope to integrate unique features of the property in the trail design, including an old square stone-walled structure, known



as the “town pound,” where residents historically would bring wayward cattle. Aside from a small field located along Kendall Corner Road, the property is entirely forested by a rich combination of mixed hardwood and oak-pine forest stands that have been well managed by the current owners over the past 40 years.

David and Ann Somers approached the Land Trust with the idea of conserving the property and have agreed to sell it for significantly less than its appraised value. We are immensely grateful for their generosity and foresight. David Somers said of the sale, “We purchased this parcel more than 45 years ago, before we were even married. It was love at first sight. The towering pines, broad wing hawks and eastern wood pewees calling in the summer, an old lean-to, and extensive stone walls including what appears to be the old town pound were a marvel then and remain so today. We are thrilled to work with the Coastal Mountains Land Trust to preserve this parcel in its beautiful, wild state.”

Get involved and learn more at www.coastalmountains.org/waldo-county-conservation-initiative.

GROWING A COHORT OF LEARNING LANDSCAPES TEACHERS

Land Trust hosts its first Outdoor Learning Retreat



Amy Tingle from Waterfall Arts leading a nature journaling workshop



Educators gathered on the first day of the retreat



Educators participating in a nature-based discovery game on Beech Hill's trails



Camden-Rockport Middle School's Symbiosis Unit project shared by Kristen Andersen

In August, the Land Trust hosted our first Outdoor Learning Retreat! This free, two-day professional development opportunity welcomed 18 local educators to the Beech Nut. The teachers spanned grades pre-K through high school, with a representation from art to English language arts, special education, math, and science. Each teacher went home with a Learning Landscapes backpack filled with supplies including hand lenses, field guides, magnifying bug boxes, homemade blindfolds and more. They are ready to grab their teaching pack and head out the door!

We dove into workshops on local ecology, nature journaling, group management in an outdoor setting, phenology, creating outdoor classrooms and forested play spaces, as well as our new Student Land Stewards program. Educators lent their wealth of information and resources to the group. Lisa Brita from Captain Albert Stevens School shared how she created an engaging literacy garden, and Kristen Andersen from Camden-Rockport Middle School explained how she and fellow educators have spent eight years teaching their symbiosis unit: outdoor and project-based learning which connects art, science, and English language art classes.

In addition to the educators who made the experience deeply enriching, we were grateful for the presenters who volunteered their time, resources, and expertise: Keri Kaczor from Maine Sea Grant, Amy Tingle from Waterfall Arts, and Heather Bowen from Camden-Rockport Elementary School.

The participating educators have been invited to become part of our first Learning Landscapes cohort, receiving one-on-one mentorship and workshops throughout the school year to continue sharing ideas, resources, and inspiration! We have only just begun.

Learning Landscapes aims to connect each child in our community with nature by securing land adjacent to schools, enhancing outdoor learning spaces, and supporting teachers in moving their curriculum outside through mentorship and a connection to outdoor resources.

If you are interested in volunteering in support of getting all children outside or learning more about our growing education program, contact Leah Trommer at leah@coastalmountains.org.

GIVING THANKS

18 collective years of incredible volunteerism to the Land Trust

As a grassroots organization, our Land Trust has always been driven in large part by the incredible service of volunteers, especially our volunteer Board members. This fall, we celebrate two Land Trust Board members, Roy Call of Hope and Dan Johnson of Camden, who recently completed their third and final term of service.

Soft-spoken and kind, Roy has been a terrific member of the Board dating back nine years. His extremely intelligent voice was always heard clearly in meetings as he brought thoughtful suggestions to improve the organization's process and decision-making. In addition to his role as a stewardship volunteer over many years, Roy served on our Finance and Executive Committees and recently chaired the ad hoc Building and Facilities Committee, which planned for critical improvements and additions to the Land Trust's office and stewardship field infrastructure.

Dan Johnson's first day at the Land Trust began with him carrying several 8-foot 6x6 beams up the trails of Ragged Mountain to help us build trail bridges. After volunteering with the Wednesday work crew for several years, Dan joined our Board and went on to serve as its Treasurer, Vice President and most recently President. Dan's incredible attention to detail regarding our finances or the support of our staff paired with his ability to use his booming voice

to make everyone in the room laugh will be greatly missed by all. We look forward to his continued participation as an active member of the Learning Landscapes Committee.

We are extremely grateful for the time and deep commitment of these two amazing partners.



Ian Stewart



Roy Call



Dan Johnson

NEXT IN LINE

Land Trust welcomes two new board members



Gerald Quirk

Gerald Quirk, a resident in the Eastward neighborhood of Rockport, is the Chief Legal and Compliance Officer for Syros Pharmaceuticals. While Gerald has worked as a lawyer in the biotechnology industry for nearly 30 years, his family constantly reminds him that his true calling is as a park ranger. His favorite two hours of each week over the summer were spent as a regular volunteer docent at Beech Nut. With his three kids out of the house and his legal career winding down, Gerald is enthusiastic to join the Land Trust Board and to continue to be an ambassador for the Land Trust and its mission.



Biz Gilmore

Elizabeth "Biz" Gilmore, who splits her time between Rockport and Cambridge, MA, has been a committed member of the Land Trust for many years and is currently serving on the Major Gifts and Beech Hill Fields and Habitat Initiative Committees. Biz brings a wealth of experience having served on many nonprofit and school boards including UNICEF New England and the Guidance Center Board. She also has a special interest in the Land Trust's growing Learning Landscapes program and brings the experience of having been the Founder of the Greentimes Newspaper, an environmental newspaper written by kids for kids in underserved public schools for an audience of 50,000 inner city children.

ONE STEP AT A TIME

Steps and bridges freshen up familiar trails

This summer, staff and volunteers completed a number of trail projects that make small but meaningful improvements to existing, well-loved trails. They aren't as flashy as our new trails, or as routine as mowing or clearing blowdowns, but these improvements, replacement bridges, steps, new kiosks and parking lots, drainage features, and reroutes make everyone's hikes, runs, walks, and bike rides so much better.

In Waldo County, Stewardship Manager Jack Shaida, intern Isaac Widmer, and the Wednesday work crew built new bridges at Piper Stream and Marsh Meadow Preserves, as well as an 18-foot bridge on the Little River Community Trail. They installed 28 wooden steps at the Stover Preserve, fixing the worst section of the trail and preventing possible erosion into the Passagassawakeag

River. They also built a 0.2-mile trail reroute at Main Stream Preserve, bypassing an area of persistent flooding caused by a 200-foot long beaver dam.

In Knox County, Stewardship Manager Ryan O'Neill, intern Sadie Woodruff, and their Wednesday work crew put in long days improving the Beech Hill Preserve and the Round the Mountain Trail. A set of wooden steps was installed at the Harkness Preserve to the delight of many locals. In addition to clearing many blowdowns at Fernalds Neck Preserve and replacing over 20 sections of bog bridging, they built a new 30-foot-long bridge using a fallen pine and a lot of ingenuity. We hope to build on our strong summer of success and keep making all our trails better, one step at a time.



Stover Preserve steps



Fernalds Neck Preserve log footbridge



Little River Community Trail bridge



Harkness Preserve log check steps

SAVE THE DATE

*Marsh Meadow Trail Opening
November 3 at 3pm*

The Land Trust's newest trail, and first in the town of Knox, will open at the 98-acre Marsh Meadow Preserve this fall. Join us for the trail opening and celebration on **Friday, November 3 at 3:00 pm**. We will meet at the new trailhead on Route 137 (please carpool if you can, parking is limited), share a few words and refreshments, then walk the new trail as a group!

The 0.75-mile trail starts at our new trailhead on Route 137 and parallels the edge of the ecologically vibrant and visually stunning marsh, before crossing a stream and making its way up the steep slopes of a small hill. Hikers are rewarded with a small view of Frye Mountain and the hills of Knox. The trail is closed before the opening, but please join us or visit after that date. For more information, visit coastalmountains.org/preserves.

2023 CONSERVATION AND VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION

ZWARTJES VOLUNTEER AWARD

This award is presented in honor of past Board Chairman, William J. Zwartjes, for an individual who has demonstrated extraordinary volunteer service to the Land Trust.



Erica Buswell and **Scott Giroux** have been stewards at the Long Cove Headwaters Preserve for over five years. Despite their busy work schedules, they do so much for the 500-acre Preserve: plowing the trailhead, clearing the trail, picking up trash (including a toilet that someone dumped by the trailhead), and monitoring the boundaries. Their quiet work at Long Cove is felt by all who visit. In addition, Erica provided strategic guidance as part of our Conservation Planning Committee in 2019.



Jim Ritter is a dedicated member of the Knox County Stewardship’s Wednesday work crew. For more than a decade, Jim has rarely missed a Wednesday morning, and offers much towards the lasting projects the team takes on throughout the year. Jim has built and dismantled bridges, constructed trails, raked blueberries, located evasive boundary pins, and even landscaped the top of Beech Nut’s historic sod roof. Jim is a

staple on our volunteer team, a dependable preserve monitor, and a dear friend. We are a better organization because of his commitment to our preserves and trails.

CONNECTING COMMUNITY & NATURE AWARD

This award honors the individual or entity that has demonstrated the highest level of commitment to engaging the people of our community with the outdoors and the lands protected by the Land Trust.



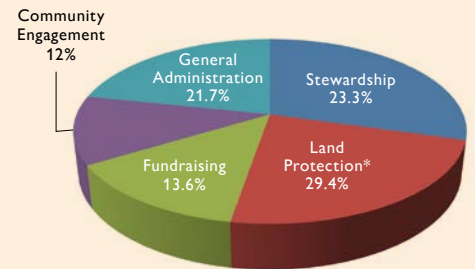
Katie Bauer and **Glen Widmer** are both local school administrators who have been dedicated advocates for outdoor learning. Katie is the assistant principal at Camden-Rockport Elementary School (CRES), where she supports teachers to incorporate outdoor learning into their curriculum. CRES has a wildly successful nature-based preschool, the first public program of its kind in Maine.

Glen is the principal of the Gladys Weymouth School in Morrill and the Ames Elementary School in Searsmont, where he has secured support from the national Food Corps program to incorporate outdoor agricultural education into the curriculum and created a full-time outdoor educator position.

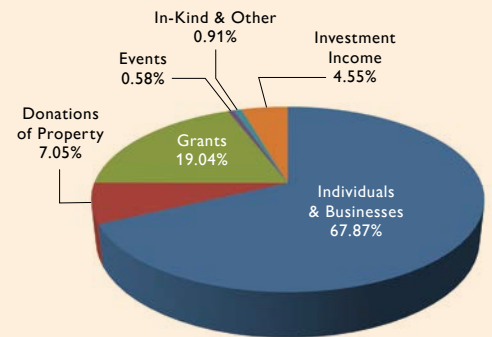
This is only a short summary of the long list of Glen and Katie’s accomplishments facilitating quality outdoor learning for countless numbers of children in our community. They both serve as guiding lights for Learning Landscapes, providing insight and expertise for our committee as we create this new, innovative program.

FY2022–2023 FINANCIAL SUMMARY

This was another great year for the Land Trust, with several new land acquisitions, programs, and projects taking place. Thank you to all our members for your fantastic support that balances the ongoing needs and growth of our organization. A complete set of our financial statements including Form 990 will soon be available on our website.



PROGRAM EXPENSES



PROGRAM INCOME

* Land Protection is the combined cost of acquisition activity and the assessment of “land impairment,” which is the value of the permanent conservation restrictions placed on the land.





101 Mount Battie Street
Camden, ME 04843
207-236-7091
www.coastalmountains.org

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Ducktrap River Preserve

PHOTO CREDIT: TIM SHAW

HOLIDAY SHOPPING

Coastal Mountains Land Trust's online store is now open!

Looking for the perfect gift this holiday season? You can find apparel, mugs, pet bandanas, aprons and more at our new online store. Look for the button on our homepage to shop for special Land Trust branded gifts.

It is also easy to give a gift membership:

1. Go to our website, www.coastalmountains.org/give-and-join.
2. Click "Give a Gift Membership" and enter a donation amount of \$50 or more.
3. Enter the gift member's name, mailing address, and email in the comments box.

Gift members will receive a welcome letter from the Executive Director letting them know of your gift to them. They will also receive the latest edition of *Landscapes*, a member sticker, and a trail guide.



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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LANDSCAPES