

# Highlights From the Region 2020 Annual Report



Lindsay Tallis

“

**2020** has been a no good, terrible year in many ways.

But it has also led to a **recognition of how our community** and the **land we protect** have a tremendous **capacity to heal**, foster **wellness**, bring people together in a **common cause**, and create **social cohesion**.

”

– Andrew Bowman,  
president and CEO of  
the Land Trust Alliance



# VISION

*Thanks to your support...*

## Enhancing quality of life for people and wildlife

**Rolling hills and mountain ridges**, broad expanses of woods, and open meadows surround a village, a meetinghouse, a stone wall, a narrow dirt road. This beautiful landscape — anchored by Mount Monadnock, bounded by the eastern hills and the Connecticut River — has working farms and forests as well as wild lands. Moose browse on spring buds and black bears forage for blueberries; the deeper lakes are home to nesting loons, and native brook trout thrive in coldwater streams. There are places to hike, to hunt, to paddle, and to simply enjoy the quiet outdoors. The water is clean, the air clear, and the night skies dark.

The New England that has disappeared in so many other places is alive and well in the Monadnock region. The people who live, work, and play here value and care for the land, embracing the connections between the landscape and the economic and social vitality of the region. There is a strong sense of community, and people work together to ensure that the region's unique rural character will remain through the changes of today and tomorrow.

“  
This beautiful  
region offers a  
peaceful refuge  
and many places  
to explore.  
”



# BELIEVE

*Thanks to your support...*

## Fostering the future

**What a year!** From toilet paper shortages to Zoom dinner parties, almost nothing in 2020 was normal. But, when the stress and confinement felt too great, at least one thing held true: the outdoors still welcomed us to move our bodies and ease our minds.

To make this possible, one more thing remained constant: **your support.**

Here's what you've helped accomplish...

- Welcomed hundreds of people to the trails at six Conservancy-owned properties, including the brand-new Cunningham Pond and Chamberlain conservation areas;
- Completed two new conservation projects (see page 5), advanced eight projects, initiated several more, and responded to a significant increase in inquiries;
- Walked the boundaries of 226 protected properties, devoting a total of 811 staff and volunteer hours — that's more than 20 work weeks!;
- Empowered the board and staff to address locally some of the social and environmental inequities facing the nation, and become a more inclusive organization;
- Created a "community conservation" committee focused on listening to community needs and on developing new ideas of how connections to land and nature can help meet these issues; and
- Invited community members representing diverse constituencies to answer the question: *how can the Monadnock Conservancy address the needs and opportunities you see in your community?*

In these extraordinary times, land and nature have never been more important. Your gifts are investments in the well-being of you and your neighbors, and in the region's future. From the board and staff at the Monadnock Conservancy, **thank you!**





# CONNECT

*Thanks to your support...*

## Building community with the land and each other

**What do you know about trees?** Tom Wessels, noted ecologist and author, knows a lot about trees. He was on hand last March to answer questions from a standing room only audience following a film about old-growth forests in New England. This packed event was how the Conservancy started its year of programming, focusing on strengthening people's connections to the land and to one another.

In-person gatherings soon gave way to phone calls, emails, and virtual events. Participants expressed gratitude for the opportunities to talk and connect despite being isolated at home.

The Conservancy hosted four virtual hikes, co-hosted a self-guided scavenger hunt at McIntire Forest, presented its first interactive Annual Celebration online, and announced by video the celebrated opening of two new trails.

In addition, continued publication of two print newsletters, monthly e-newsletters, and posts on Facebook and Instagram brought nature home and highlighted the real-time work of staff in the field. Little by little, these offerings and opportunities go a long way toward bringing people together in their shared love of the region.





# PROTECT

*Thanks to your support...*

## Conserving fields, woods, wetlands, and rural livelihoods

**Lucius “Lucky” and Barb Evans are not farmers** themselves, but they lease their fields (24 of the 37 conserved acres) along Route 63 in Chesterfield to a local farmer who is able to harvest several thousand square hay bales in a good year. Similarly, their maple trees along the southern boundary are tapped each winter for maple syrup production. The town had prioritized the property for conservation, and that along with their passion for agriculture motivated the Evanses to conserve it.

**Straddling the Jaffrey-Rindge town line** near Mountain Brook Reservoir and the Contoocook River, the Bearce property has been in Jim Bearce’s family for five generations. Acres of woods, wetlands, a vernal pool, and over a mile of streams provide wildlife habitat and help preserve water quality for Franklin Pierce University’s water system. The conserved acreage (183 acres) is part of an expanding north-south wildlife corridor — an especially good thing for the critters, who may be on the move as climate change shifts their preferred habitats north.



Stephen H. Gehlbach



Anne McBride

“  
There’s just about  
every species of  
wildlife you could  
see and find in  
New England here.  
”

Anne McBride



# STEWARD

*Thanks to your support...*

## Nurturing a conservation ethic

**Alicia Lake's two school-age boys** follow Alex Metzger, stewardship director, as they walk the boundaries of Alicia's new property, on which the Conservancy holds a conservation easement, in Winchester.

Alex shows the boys the survey map and how to find the boundary markers. It's like a treasure hunt, and the boys are excited to discover new places and learn more about the woods, hills, and wetlands.

Regular visits, like with Alicia and her boys, are at the core of caring for conservation lands. They're a great example of how stewardship staff and volunteers foster relationships with all 175 owners of land protected by the Conservancy, providing the support and resources they need to thoughtfully look after their special place.

Meanwhile, Anna Hubbard, a recent college graduate from Marlow, was hired as a seasonal stewardship assistant. Anna brought much-needed help to increase outdoor recreation opportunities for people weary of staying home. She ignored the bugs and donned boots in all weather to rake trails, build stone steps, and haul lumber on several Conservancy properties. Nearly 16 miles of trails were maintained, expanded, or newly created at Calhoun Family Forest, McIntire Forest, and the Chamberlain, Cunningham Pond, and Goyette conservation areas. The work reflects the delicate balance we seek between protecting natural resources and actively using the land for recreation.



Richard Pendleton



Katrina Farmer



# SUSTAIN

*Thanks to your support...*

## Increasing capacity for today and tomorrow

### Deeply attached to the Monadnock region,

Josephine Russell wants to be sure it is cared for beyond her lifetime.

"I picked the Monadnock Conservancy to be the only beneficiary of my IRA because I have always been impressed with their work to protect land, organize hikes, and support local farmers," she said.

Josephine, a longtime resident of Surry and a well-known yoga instructor, enjoys hiking and canoeing.

Thanks to her love and appreciation for the outdoors, she has chosen to become a member of the Monadnock Forever Society, a growing group of people who have made arrangements for a planned gift. Josephine has decided that any money left in her retirement account will go to the Conservancy when she passes.

Gifts like Josephine's are key to building an organization that is here to stay, in addition to the regular support individuals and families generously contribute each year (see financial charts below).

Despite the economic uncertainties of a global pandemic, the Conservancy ended fiscal year 2020 in good financial health. Expenses exceeded income largely due to the purchase of 100 acres at Cunningham Pond in Peterborough, for which much of the money was raised in prior years.

“Preserved land is so crucial to humankind, other animals, plants, and to planet Earth.”



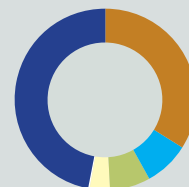
### Expenses

■ Programs	
Land protection	\$ 2,112,444
Land mgmt & rec	\$ 180,839
Outreach	\$ 157,342
Stewardship	\$ 120,319
	\$2,570,944
■ Fundraising	\$ 173,585
■ Administration	\$ 162,710
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,907,239</b>



### Income

■ Individual, business, & foundation donations	\$ 1,044,510
■ Government grants	\$ 755,468
■ Sale of real estate	\$ 176,003
■ Investment & endowment	\$ 163,102
■ Investment gains	\$ 79,317
■ Programs & other	\$ 4,152
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,222,552</b>



The Monadnock Conservancy is a 501(c)(3) organization.

The above numbers reflect the 2020 fiscal year (October 1, 2019, to September 30, 2020) and, at the time of printing, were unaudited. Audited financial statements will be available upon request.





Together, protecting forever  
the land we love

Founded in 1989, the Monadnock Conservancy is a nonprofit land trust working with you and your neighbors in 39 towns throughout the Monadnock region to protect the land and water of southwestern New Hampshire.



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*Thanks to your support...*

“ Joys come from simple and natural things:  
mists over meadows, sunlight on leaves,  
the path of the moon over the water. ”

*– Sigurd F. Olson,  
author and conservationist*



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