

Highlights from the Region

2022 Annual Report



Awakenings

Like a sleepy bear sniffing the spring air, 2022 was a time of awakenings.

We began the slow process of returning to normal post-pandemic operations, invigorated by our team of passionate experts and you, our supporters, who stood by us and the cause of conservation through these unusual past few years.

Your commitment is paying off! With the addition of a 570-acre conservation easement on the Wildwood in Dublin, NH, the Conservancy protected 1,300 acres in 2022. We now own or hold conservation easements (a permanent, deeded agreement between a landowner and the Conservancy never to develop a property) on over 23,000 acres regionally. How far we have come since our modest beginnings in 1989! This growth shows how important the land is to our community. This region, and those who support protecting it, are special. The Conservancy is honored to be your ally in this effort.

In the following pages we invite you to discover the properties that were forever conserved in 2022 along with insights into our Stewardship team, the Cheshire Walkers, and the Monadnock Forever Society. Each conserved acre represents effort and support. These are your victories, and we hope this annual report helps you to visualize the enormous impact your support is having on the Monadnock region.

Thank You

2022 funding to buy land and conservation easements and for all project costs was generously provided by the Diane Schott Conservation Fund of the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation, the Quabbin-to-Cardigan Partnership, the Thomas W. Haas Fund of the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation, the Monadnock Region Land Protection Assistance Fund of the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests, the Town of Rindge, C&S Wholesale Grocers, the Bailey Charitable Foundation, the Alstead Conservation Commission, and other private and anonymous donors.



Stephen H. Gehlbach



THE WILDWOOD

570 acres ~ Dublin

Along route 101 in Dublin, the Wildwood is significant for its 1,200-acre size, its connections to other conserved land, and its benefit to wildlife. The Putnam family worked with the Conservancy to place a perpetual conservation easement on 570 acres of the property and donated the remaining 630 acres to the Northeast Wilderness Trust. The achievement is the culmination of a decades-long effort to add the Wildwood to a massive block of conserved land surrounding Mount Monadnock. We thank the Putnams and everyone who worked over the years to see this done. Contiguous stretches of conserved land are vital for wildlife as they adapt to climate change because they allow plants, animals, and their habitats to slowly move northward as temperatures rise. Climate change mitigation is another important reason we worked so hard to conserve this land. New Hampshire is at risk from hotter summers, warmer winters, coastal flooding, and more intense storms. Fortunately, forests like the Wildwood—when they remain forests—store more carbon in plants and soil than they release, which is why conserving large tracts of forest is one of the simplest yet most effective natural climate solutions available.

MAYNARD FOREST III

250 acres ~ Keene

For years, the City of Keene and numerous conservation groups wanted to conserve a 250-acre forest in northern Keene along Old Gilsum Road. In 2022, we finalized the purchase and now own and manage this property. Like the Wildwood, Maynard Forest III helps to form a contiguous block of conserved land. The property connects the City of Keene's 1,044-acre Goose Pond Forest with the Conservancy's 267-acre Maynard Forest, creating a contiguous block of conserved land extending north into Gilsum. The property is also part of a larger landscape of nearby conserved lands, including Surry Mountain Lake, owned by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and The Nature Conservancy's 1,368-acre Surry Mountain Preserve. It's cause for optimism that so many different organizations are working together to protect these spaces for current and future residents of the Monadnock region.



THE MATTABESECK WILDLIFE CORRIDOR

228 acres ~ Rindge

Another contiguous block you ask?

Yes! In Rindge, the 228-acre Mattabeseck Wildlife Corridor abuts the 1,500-acre Annett State Forest. This land, on which the Town of Rindge gave a conservation easement to the Conservancy, is especially important for wildlife. There are 33 acres of wetlands, including 11 vernal pools and confirmed populations of blue-spotted salamanders and other rare wildlife. A rare black gum-red maple swamp on the property hosts black gum trees more than 250 years old! And critters aren't the only ones who are celebrating: 30 acres of the property overlie a portion of a groundwater aquifer that serves the Town of Jaffrey's public water supply. So, drink up Jaffrey, safe in the knowledge that a key source of water is protected.



SHOLL WETLAND

56 acres ~ Jaffrey

Speaking of drinking water and the town of Jaffrey, in 2022 the Conservancy worked with the children of Nan and Cal Sholl to conserve the family's 56-acre property in the northeast corner of town. The land, which the family donated to the Conservancy, features 28 acres of wetlands and overlies a stratified drift aquifer — a critical and highly productive groundwater resource for local drinking water supplies. Along with over 2,400 feet of streams and a connection to 941 acres of conserved properties to the east, the Sholl Wetland is an ideal habitat for wildlife. It was important for the Sholl children to honor their late parents' love for this land, and we couldn't be happier they chose to work with us. The Monadnock Conservancy is proud to honor Nan and Cal and forever conserve an important area of water resources and wildlife habitat.



BULLOCK CONSERVATION EASEMENT

79 acres ~ Fitzwilliam

One for our furry friends of the forest – Scott Brook and Scott Pond are home to mink, beaver, and many other native species. The land, forever protected by a conservation easement in 2022, boasts nine acres of wetlands and 16 acres of shrubland habitat, which is in decline in New Hampshire. It also features a half mile of frontage on Scott Pond and a third of a mile on Scott Brook, allowing natural and unencumbered access for many semi-aquatic animals. Across the road to the south is another 125-acre conserved property owned by the Town of Fitzwilliam. Big thanks to Rick Bullock for working with us to conserve forever this land for all Monadnock region residents – including the little furry ones.

DENNETT

56 acres ~ Alstead

Wins for wildlife were everywhere in 2022! In Alstead, Nancy Dennett worked with the Conservancy to donate a conservation easement on her land, protecting an important wildlife corridor for species including black bear and barred owls. Like many of the properties conserved in 2022, the Dennett property connects blocks of conserved land: this 65-acre tract connects to 441 acres of previously conserved land to the north and south.



Want to conserve your land?

By donating or selling land or a conservation easement to the Monadnock Conservancy, individuals and families make a significant impact on protecting the region's rural character. If you'd like to begin the conversation about how to conserve land, please contact Anne McBride, land protection director, at Anne@MonadnockConservancy.org or 603-357-0600, ext. 102.

NIGHT FLIGHT FARM ADDITION

34 acres ~ Rindge

The Conservancy was pleased to work with Steve and Beverly Lindell, who added 34 acres to our Night Flight Farm conservation easement in Rindge. The Hogan family first donated a conservation easement on 170 acres of the farm back in 2000, but not all the land was included. The Lindells, who purchased the land from the Hogans, wanted to ensure that the important agricultural land was also conserved. The newly protected acreage includes a stream and some woods, but it is predominantly open fields that are actively used for pasture and hay.



KROKA ROGERS ROAD FARM

15.6 acres ~ Alstead

We are so happy to have worked with Kroka Expeditions – a non-profit wilderness expedition school in Marlow – to conserve 15.6 acres of highly productive farmland and forestland in Alstead. The property's 11 acres of "prime" farmland produces vegetables and berries for the school's students, faculty, and staff, and hay for the school's livestock. Prime farmland soils, which are uncommon in New Hampshire outside the major river valleys, took thousands of years to develop but are highly threatened by residential and commercial development, being flat and well-drained. With the addition of Kroka's farmland, the Conservancy now holds conservation easements on more than 80 properties in some form of agricultural production.



Stories About This Place 2022

In March of 2022, the Conservancy presented the eighth annual Stories About This Place – a free storytelling event where Monadnock region residents talk about their connection to the land. Held virtually in 2022, the event featured stories from Doug Sutherland of Hancock, farmer Jodi Farwell of Harrisville, poet Rodger Martin of Harrisville, and forester Steven Roberge of Peterborough.

Doug Sutherland spoke first, sharing the story of how he ended up in the Monadnock region, became captivated by the region's beauty (even the harsh winters), and his how his love for the outdoors and working with young people cemented his decision to stay in the region. Doug also talked about how – as a Black man – it was especially important for him to represent to other people of color that the outdoors, and this region, are for everyone.

Jodi Farwell spoke next, reading a story she wrote, called “The Promised Land,” about the power of farming and farm life and their impact on her family. In beautiful prose, she described the at-times difficult situation her family was in as they tried to balance their desire for clarity about their role on the land with the wishes of its owner – Jodi's father. Although both parties wanted the Farwell's to farm the land, there was tension around who would own it and what would happen in the future if the need for income overwhelmed their desire to stay on the land. This tension led to a difficult decision, one that divided her family. The story is touching, real, and asks difficult questions about the nature of family and community.

Rodger Martin, the third speaker of the event, began by describing his arrival to the region in the late 1960s after his service in the Vietnam War. Like Doug, he was immediately captivated by the beauty of Mount Monadnock, deciding in short order to never live or work more than 30 miles from its peak. He then read a series of poems inspired by the region, including a poem about the John and Rosemarie Calhoun Family Forest, land owned and managed by the Conservancy. Rodger's poems display in vivid imagery how nature exists in parallel to the people who lived, and live, here. The connection between the land and its people has never sounded so beautiful.

Steven Roberge was the final speaker of the evening and shared how his love of nature developed from a childhood spent outdoors. This love became a lifelong passion and, eventually, a career in forestry. In 2006, Steve landed in Keene working as the UNH Extension forestry educator for Cheshire County. He talked about how this job gives him the opportunity to share his love of nature with the public, and how his family used the COVID lockdown to give their child more opportunities to engage with nature.

More Stories!

March 31st, 2023 — Stories About This Place returns in 2023 in Cohen Hall at the Keene Public Library. For the first time in three years, the event will be in-person, featuring Chief & Elder Paul (Gwilawato) Bunnell (Ko'asek Traditional Band of the Sovereign Abenaki Nation); Mary Ann Kristiansen (Executive Director, Hannah Grimes Center); Alan Rumrill (Executive Director, Historical Society of Cheshire County); Lila Thorne (Director of Development, Northern Forest Center); Kim Peavey (Hillside Springs Farm); and the music of Ben Cosgrove! For more information, please see Upcoming Events on the Monadnock Conservancy website.



Cheshire Walkers

In addition to protecting land, the Conservancy is a resource for the community to engage with nature. It is well established that physical activity in the outdoors is good for physical and mental health, which is why, in the fall of 2022, we assumed leadership of the Cheshire Walkers. Originally founded and run by Cheshire Medical Center for decades, the Cheshire Walkers is a walking and hiking group for people of most abilities, with an emphasis on seniors and others who might prefer an easier pace. Throughout the fall, members of the Conservancy's staff led the Walkers on nine outings on conserved land. The walks provide an opportunity to exercise the body and the brain, offering participants spirited social interaction and opportunities to learn about the nature they are experiencing. This group is free and open to the public, for more information contact Kate Sullivan, at kate@monadnockconservancy.com or call 603-357-0600, ext. 101.

“ It has been wonderful to have the Cheshire Walkers ‘adopted’ by the Monadnock Conservancy. So many of us missed the beloved program during the height of Covid. I attended several of the walks this season. They were well done, and the staff on each walk were well prepared and knowledgeable. It was also nice connecting with old friends. I am looking forward to the spring season. ”

– Barbara Coffin,
Cheshire Walkers member



Stewardship

It would be easy to assume that, once the land is conserved, the Conservancy's work is done. But our stewardship team would have something to say about that. When a conservation easement is placed on a property, that's when the work begins for Stewardship Director Alex Metzger and Stewardship Coordinator Richard Pendleton. They and a team of trained volunteers monitor every acre of conserved land to ensure that the terms of each easement – which restricts development and most commercial uses outside of forestry and agriculture – are being upheld. And, when a dispute arises or an easement term is violated, it's their responsibility to defend the land, up to and including taking legal action.

Saying no all the time is not an easy job, but, fortunately, there's a bright side to Alex and Richard's work. Far more often than playing the enforcer role, they get to advise the owners of land on which we hold conservation

easements, answering their questions about land management, connecting them to professionals like foresters and ecologists, and even steering them toward grant programs to help them manage their land more effectively.

In 2022, Alex, Richard, and the volunteers they supervise walked hundreds of miles of conserved land, monitoring boundaries, taking note of any changes to the landscape (man-made or otherwise), and working with diverse stakeholders, all with an eye toward upholding the complex rules governing each conservation easement. Along the way, and through all kinds of weather, they spotted moose, monitored forest insect outbreaks, and learned the hard way that not all jackets are rain-proof. They do this to ensure that a conservation easement is more than the paper it's printed on. These are living agreements, and our team is always hard at work ensuring that they live on forever.



Monadnock Forever Spotlight

Lew and Kris Shelley were raised in the Monadnock region (in fact, Lew's family has been in the area for ten generations), and both grew up with a deep appreciation for the natural world. They both have memories of exploring the woods and fields around their childhood homes, skiing, paddling, swimming, and relishing in the open space they roamed freely. As adults, they dedicated their education and careers to the natural world.

One spring, while driving from the Grand Canyon to Zion National Park, Lew and Kris began discussing estate planning, their shared love for the environment, and what they could be doing in their own backyard. It was an easy decision, then, for them to become members of the Monadnock Forever Society, a growing group of people who have included the Monadnock Conservancy in their estate plans. Lew and Kris have designated the Conservancy to receive a portion of their assets upon their passing.

"Having grown up here, witnessing changes in development and to the natural world, we know that we want to protect this place for future generations so they may have experiences similar to what we had. If you value open space, then there is one organization, the Monadnock Conservancy, that can ensure protect land will still be here in the future," says Lew. Kris adds, "Both of us had parents who



MONADNOCK
Forever
SOCIETY

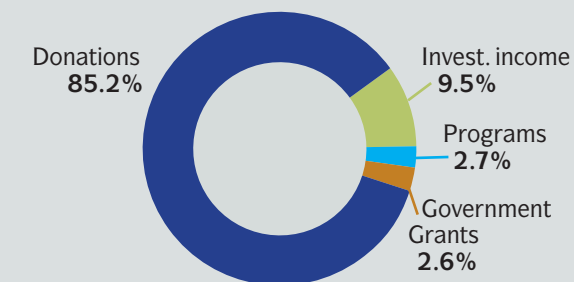
were great role models by sharing their appreciation of the natural world. This is how we can do that for other families."

Planned gifts like Lew and Kris's are key to ensuring our region will be protected well into the future. For more information on becoming a member of the Monadnock Forever Society, please contact Lindsay Taflas, development director, at Lindsay@MonadnockConservancy.org or 603-357-0600, ext. 113.

Would you like to be a part of the future of conservation?

If you are interested in joining the Monadnock Forever Society, please contact Lindsay Taflas, development director, at Lindsay@MonadnockConservancy.org or 603-357-0600, ext. 113. Please also contact her if you have already included the Conservancy in your estate plans so you can be appropriately acknowledged.

Income

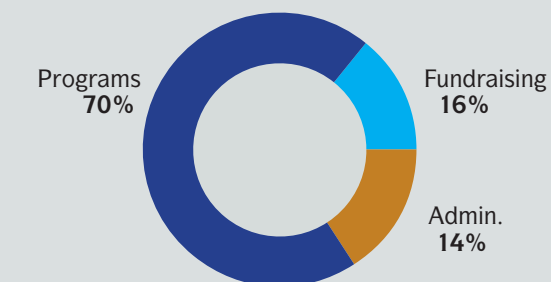


Individual, business, & foundation donations	\$ 1,822,265
Investment & endowment income	\$ 204,916
Programs & other	\$ 56,752
Government grants	\$ 55,636

Total: \$ 2,139,569

** The Conservancy also experienced significant unrealized investment losses during fiscal year 2022, consistent with other investors.*

Expenses



Programs	
Land protection	\$350,025
Conservation easement stewardship	\$182,167
Land management & recreation	\$155,613
Outreach	\$122,965
Community conservation	\$79,340
	\$ 890,110
Fundraising	\$ 196,785
Administration	\$ 172,818

Total: \$ 1,259,713

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

The above numbers reflect the 2022 fiscal year (October 1, 2021, to September 30, 2022) and, at the time of printing, were unaudited. Audited financial statements will be available upon request.

Your Support Matters

Once again, gifts from individuals, businesses, and foundations comprised the majority of revenue in FY22.

Land protection projects completed during the year were atypically low in cost, in large part thanks to landowners who donated, rather than sold, land and conservation easements. As a result, total spending was likewise atypically low as compared to many prior years. This made FY22 fundraising and administration expenses appear abnormally high as a percentage of total spending. In fact, these expenses have generally remained consistent from year to year, with annual increases driven primarily by health insurance premiums and keeping salaries on pace with inflation. With more than \$6 million in endowed, restricted, and other long-term funds, the Conservancy remains in good financial health.



Together, protecting forever
the land we love

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