

LYME LAND CONSERVATION TRUST

Dear Friends:

Our core mission is acquiring and protecting land of high conservation value. And just about every year we have been able to report to you on another acquisition, sometimes two. This year is no different, as we are finalizing a large donation totaling 235 acres that we have been working on all year. The land abuts other significant open space parcels in Lyme and beyond, the ideal from a conservation point of view. And we have other important initiatives in the works that we hope to be able to report on soon.

This year has marked an important inflection point in the history of the Land Trust. While we remain committed to our core mission, we drafted a new Five Year Strategic Plan in January that calls for "increasing substantially the Trust's educational offerings to youth and adults." As the Events and Education section of the Report reflects, we are already beginning to make good on this objective. Last year we increased the guided and self-guided nature walks, lectures and presentations on environmental issues, newsletter articles and educational outings on our Preserves. Read about Earth Day, NaturePlace educational outings, Curiosity Shop and the Tree Collective later in the Report.

As importantly, our Events and Education Committee is working on its own strategic plan that eventually may include a programmatic series of educational events for youth in cooperation with schools and other conservation organizations. In parallel, we are exploring the recruitment of interns majoring in the environmental sciences at nearby universities to conduct summer scientific studies on some of our Preserves. Stay tuned on both counts!

Finally, our Stewardship Committee was very active last year. Highlights included major improvements to our new Thach and Riverside Preserves in preparation for their opening ceremonies. The Thach Preserve now hosts a cedar bench near the top of a rock face and a picnic table in a serene setting overlooking a busy beaver pond. And our Riverside Preserve now has a pavilion over a picnic table overlooking the Eightmile River. Pack up your picnic baskets and head out to these very beautiful and accessible spots!

We hope you will review the balance of our Report, which delves more deeply into our accomplishments of the last year. And don't miss the piece on our Heritage Society in the Philanthropy section.

With our thanks for your generous support,

John Pritchard President

Photos Above: Volunteer of the Year Award presented to Parker Lord; dedication of Thach Preserve; dedication of Riverside Preserve. Photos by Wendolyn Hill, Sue Cope, Regan Stacey, Mary Guitar and Kristina White. **THE LYME LAND CONSERVATION TRUST** achieved accredited status five years ago, and we are up for renewal this year. The Land Trust Alliance, which grants accreditation, states that it is "a mark of distinction, showing that a land trust meets high standards for land conservation. The accreditation seal offers the assurance that a land trust can keep the promise of perpetuity and that it is worthy of the

public trust." High standards are required for policies and procedures, financial measures, and reserves for contingencies.

Our members, foundations, Tour de Lyme sponsors, riders and volunteers have been extremely generous, enabling us to cover our annual operating expenses,

property purchases, and required reserves to maintain our accreditation. We want to assure that our future leadership will enjoy the same level of financial support that we enjoy today. To help meet that challenge, we have established the Heritage Society to acknowledge those individuals who, in addition to providing support currently, have included us in their estate plans.

The Heritage Society is growing and now includes twenty-six members. Bequests can be made by executing a codicil to a will. But many deferred gifts can be made with a call to your bank, broker, financial advisor or life insurance agent.

Philanthropy Chair

MILT WALTERS

Most of our deferred gifts to date have been through wills, beneficiary designations from IRAs, or Charitable Annuity policies offered by the Community Foundation of Eastern Connecticut.

Our endowment fund will grow as deferred gifts mature. Our goal is to build the fund to \$4,000,000, and including deferred gifts, we're likely approaching the halfway mark. If you're not a Heritage Society member now, please consider joining us.



Land Trusts Photo Contest Youth winners; bonfire at Banningwood Diana's Field; community walk on Patrell Trail; Audubon bird walk at Hartman Park.

THE LAND TRUST'S STEWARDSHIP efforts continue to evolve to meet the challenges of conserving land in Lyme with high conservation value and maintaining the beloved trails on our Preserves. In the past year we've made many improvements to, and investments in, our Preserves.

One of our newest Preserves, the Thach Preserve, opened in fall 2018. It boasts a custom cedar bench with seasonal views near the top of a fascinating rock face, and a newly constructed cedar picnic table in a serene setting overlooking the busy beaver pond.

In fall of 2018, we began our timber harvest in Slawson Preserve in order to create our "rabbit-tat" for the Young

Forest Project. This project works with landowners to create rotating parcels of young forest, or early successional habitat, for nearly 30 species of birds and wildlife which would otherwise struggle to thrive, including the threatened New England cottontail rabbit. The cut was completed in the spring of 2019. You can learn more about this project and others like it at youngforest.org.

Our most recently acquired parcel, the Riverside Preserve on Salem Road, was generously donated to us by local conservationist Barbara O. David in the summer of 2018. We had a grand opening in spring 2019, which featured an inspiring talk by Connecticut DEEP Fisheries Biologist Steve Gephard, who highlighted this parcel's unique location along the pristine Eightmile River. Riverside features a short pollinator field trail, and a beautifully crafted timber frame picnic pavilion sheltering a picnic table by the river's embankment. Expect more to come with this unique and diverse Preserve, and in the meantime, go there for a picnic!

Stewardship also worked with DEEP's Gephard and his team in the winter and spring of 2019 to support their effort to rebuild a crumbling submerged rock wall in the Eightmile River. This "wall" does not inhibit the flow of water but rather creates a physical reminder to migratory fish that they should turn left and head towards the Moulson Pond fish ladder and not continue forward to the impassable dam. Prior to the rebuilding of the wall, the ladder saw no fish pass upriver in the spring and summer of 2018. Upon

> completion of the diversion wall, shad, alewife, herring and sea lamprey were able to migrate upriver.

> A notable addition to Stewardship this year was the nomination of our new chair, Mal Karwoski. Mal officially joined the Land Trust board at our Annual Meeting in June. The new Lyme resident was already a very active volunteer in trail management, and

we are delighted to have him on our team. Mal is motivated to help Stewardship in the recruitment and training of a most-valued resource, our volunteers, and he will work closely with our Environmental Director Sue Cope in all phases of Stewardship.

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer in our Preserves, and beyond, we would love to have you join us! You can email stewardship@lymelandtrust.org for more information.

Stewardship

Stewardship Chair Mal Karwoski Environmental Director Sue Cope AS PART OF THE LONG-TERM strategic plan, the Lyme Land Trust Board of Directors is focused on increasing educational offerings to both youth and adults. The newly created Events and Education Committee, with two cochairpersons, Regan Stacey and Wendolyn Hill, has been tasked with achieving that goal. Through events, programs, and other forms of involvement, the Committee seeks to broaden community awareness of open space and instill conservation values, with special emphasis on engaging and inspiring the next generation to love and conserve Lyme's remarkable resources.

Partnerships: Our activities have regional appeal, and we often work in partnership with other organizations. This year we offered a series of programs through the Lyme Forest Block Conservation Project with Audubon Connecticut, the Town of Lyme, the Eightmile River Wild and Scenic Committee and many area partners. The goal is to encourage land owners to enhance their property to make it more bird-friendly.

We also collaborated for the 13th year with five neighboring land trusts to host the Annual Amateur Land Trusts Photo Contest. The contest encourages people to share photographs of the scenic beauty around us. It culminated in a festive reception on April 12. The New England Mountain Bike Association of Southeast CT,

SECT NEMBA, also worked with us to enhance trails, including those used for the Tour de Lyme.

Tour de Lyme: On May 21, despite the rainy spring, the Tour de Lyme had lovely weather and was a resounding success, attracting 625 bicycle riders from Connecticut and surrounding states to tour our beautiful landscape.

Our **Annual meeting** on June 21 was a congenial gathering which celebrated our membership with cheer and refreshments. During the meeting, we announced our first Volunteer of the Year Award, honoring Parker Lord's decades of service to the Town of Lyme and particularly to the Land Trust.

NaturePlace, our educational space in Banningwood Preserve, hosted a series of family-oriented educational programs. The programs included autumn and spring equinox hikes and bonfires, a geology walk with Ralph Lewis, a maple syrup presentation, winter fun, and a bat presentation. On June 1, as part of CT Trails Day, we unveiled the NaturePlace Interpretive Trail for All Ages with a ribbon cutting by Parker and Diana Lord followed by a guided tour. The self-guided walk brochure highlights interesting facts about ecology, history and geology at marked stations, based on the inventory compiled by forest ecologist Anthony Irving and geologist Ralph Lewis.

Curiosity Shop: In April, Lyme Elementary School students were treated to four nature programs on Land Trust Preserves through a collaboration with the PTO's Curiosity Shop, an after-school program.

The Tree Collective, a program created by Director and Co-Chairperson of the Committee Regan Stacy to engage young conservationists ages 14-18 in outdoor fun and education, while working to maintain trails, became very active last year and meets monthly.

Informative presentations for adults included Elusive Bobcats with CT DEEP biologist Jason Hawley, and Treasures of Southeastern CT with Steve Fagin, columnist for The Day. In September, the Land Trust hosted the annual sunset cruise on the RiverQuest to experience the awesome display of migrating swallows.

We also celebrated two new preserve openings this year. On November 4, we opened the Thach Preserve with a ribbon cutting by the Thach family, followed by a guided ecology walk with Anthony Irving. On June

> 23, we opened Riverside Preserve with a ribbon cutting by Preserve donor and conservationist Barbara O. David. Steve Gephard, CT DEEP fish biologist, regaled us with the ecological benefits of removing Ed Bill's Dam on the Eightmile River.

On December 1, we inaugurated

the **George and Rosemary Moore Trail** as the Moore family, whom the trail honors, cut the ribbon. Attendees were then invited to join tours on portions of the trail, which provides a 9-mile scenic loop in the River to Ridgetop Preserves.

Community walks and work parties: Co-Chairperson Wendolyn Hill organized several walks and work parties on Lyme's Preserves throughout the year. Highlights included a Sunday after Thanksgiving Walk, the Annual New Year's Day Walk to the overlook at Pleasant Valley Preserve, and a Groundhog Day's Walk. Anthony Irving led a Spring ecology walk at Thach Preserve on June 8. And we held the first Lyme Trails Boot Camp on October 21 to provide hands-on training to stewardship volunteers and stewards.



The Tree Collective; Lyme Elementary School students in the nest they built during a Curiosity Shop after-school program; SECT NEMBA and volunteers at Goodwin Trail in Hartman Park.

Events and Education Chairs

Wendolyn Hill Regan Stacey

During this past year, the Land Trust has been working with two landowners who are considering donations of property to the Trust. One parcel is a five-acre wooded lot that abuts other protected property and would become a pocket park for the neighborhood. The other is a large donation totaling nearly 235 acres that also abuts other open space parcels. These properties are important because they add to the larger network of protected lands, thus ensuring their future as providers of ecological services such as clean air, water and enhanced habitat for wildlife.



Volunteer work party at Banningwood Preserve.

Preservation Chair

ANTHONY IRVING

It is the responsibility of the Land Trust to evaluate the merits of each property and assist the potential donor or seller with information as to the different options available to them. Only when a landowner is convinced that working with the Trust is in their family's and the land's best interests can we formulate the desired outcome that serves all parties involved. These decisions cannot be rushed and sometimes take many years before the fate of a particular property is decided.

In all cases, the Land Trust depends on the caring and commitment of landowners when it comes to land protection. It is the sharing of these goals that makes the relationship

between the community and the Land Trust so vital. With this in mind, the Trust is always available to answer questions and guide prospective landowners interested in the protection of their family lands for future generations.

These properties came to our attention from supporters wishing to

see the conservation value of significant lands protected. In almost all cases such as these, much time and deliberation is needed to sort through the various protection strategies that will have permanent implications for future generations.

BUILDING ON ACCELERATING

revenue growth and continued spending restraint, fiscal year 2018-19's operating results (which by definition exclude contributions for land acquisition and other capital projects) easily eclipsed our financial goals.

At the top line, double-digit increases prevailed across the revenue streams. Membership dues and Tour de Lyme both climbed 20% to all-time highs of \$82K and \$113K, respectively, while fund donations reached \$198K.

Meanwhile, cost containment efforts—in particular, a contingency fee agreement with outside counsel litigating a long-running easement defense case—produced \$134K in



Work party at Riverside Preserve.

Treasurer

George Lombardino

annual savings. The Tour, benefiting from declining marginal expenses, saw spending fall 13% as ridership rose 22%. The lower burn rate in total expenditures helped to finance unbudgeted initiatives, including construction work at the Trust's preserves.

The combination of strong receipts, modest disbursements, and \$62K in interest, dividends and unrealized stock market gains, generated \$201K of income, well above 2017-18 after adjusting for last year's large legal award. When combined with \$61K in pledges collected for preservation, the organization's net assets grew by \$262K.



SECT NEMBA and Timberland volunteers on Goodwin Trail in Hartman Park; Lyme Trails Stewardship Bootcamp; dedication of the George and Rosemary Moore Trail.

Statement of Financial Positi as of June 30, 2019	ion
ASSETS	(\$ in 000s)
Assets	
Cash & Equivalents	\$ 892.8
Long-term Investments	1,162.1
Conservation Land	5,864.8
Other Assets	0.6
Fotal Assets	\$ 7,920.3
IABILITIES & EQUITY	
iabilities	
Current Liabilities	49.0
Long-term Debt	160.0
Fotal Liabilities	\$ 209.0
Equity	
Retained Earnings	5,705.7
Fund Balances	
General Fund	474.3
Endowment Fund	556.3
H. Templeton Brown Preservation Fund	534.6
Rufus Barringer Stewardship Fund	220.3
Other Donor-restricted Funds	220.2
Γotal Equity	\$ 7,711.3
Total Liabilities & Equity	\$ 7,920.3
Statement of Income	
July 1, 2018 - June 30, 2019 Operating Revenues	
Membership Dues	\$ 82.3
Donations	5 82.3 198.1
Tour de Lyme	112.5
Other Revenues	124.6
Fotal Operating Revenues	\$ 517.5

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Operating Expenses	
Compensation	\$ 159.5
G & A	6.0
Communications & Events	54.0
Other Operations	71.0
Property Stewardship	59.1
Miscellaneous Expenses	29.7
Total Operating Expenses	\$ 379.3
Other Income/Deductions	62.3
Net Income	\$ 200.6
Land Acquisition & Endowment Capital	61.3
Change in Net Assets	\$ 261.9

WITH SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR GENEROUS DONORS

July 1, 2018 - June 30, 2019

Over \$10,000

Anonymous Baxter, Andy David, Barbara O. Hargraves, John & Newcomb, Nancy Pritchard, John & Lee

\$2,500-9,999

Beglin, Brian & Cynthia Duncan, James & Laura Embree, Jeb & Dianne Gahagan, Frederick & Mary Lou Griswold, Evan & Fisher, Emily Jackson, Mark & Hagberg, Karen Konst, Jozef & Copp, Betsey Millerbernd, Donald Richardson, Michael & Faye Walters, Milton & Caroline

Over \$1,000 Ashley, Frances Barringer, Charlotte P.

Birch, Susan Raible & Michael Braddock. Rick & Susan Brewer, John & Margaret Butler, Jonathan & Deborah Clark, Ronald & Jane Deane. Curtis & Shoemaker, Tom Douglas, J. Scott & Wendy Dowling, Vincent Enders, Anthony & Elizabeth Fav. John & Isleib. Jonathan Fetter, Trevor & Melissa Ford, Wendy Gerber, Donald & Carleen Hastings, Mark & Susan Klimek, Carol Lears, Katherine & Phillips, Toni-Jean Leonardo, Melodee Lombardino, George Luce, James Mallory, Scott & Sonstroem, Sara Martin, William Scott McKee, Nicholas & Tracy Melville, Gregory & Fox, Susan Merrill, Newton & Polly

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Corporate and Foundations

CT River Gateway Commission LaBoiteaux Family Foundation Lyme Farmers Market Patagonia Rayonier Advanced Materials

Matching Gift Programs

Aetna Foundation BMS Dominion Foundation Pfizer Foundation Matching Gifts and Volunteer Program Travelers United Technologies

Land Trust Photo Sponsors

Alison Mitchell All Pro Automotive Art Emporium Ashlawn Farm Coffee Ballek's Garden Center Ct River Expeditions Denali Essex Savings Bank Evan Griswold, Coldwell Banker Lorensen Auto Group Morgan Stanley Oakley Wing Group Red House Cultural Arts Center The Valley Railroad Two Wrasslin' Cats Coffee House

Heritage Society Members

Charitable Gift Annuity Inclusions

Anonymous (6) Baxter, Andy Cushman, Katherine Rose* Hessel, Susan & Dahle, Karen Howard, Shirley Irving, Anthony & Lees, Deborah Lord. Parker & Diane Millerbernd, Donald Moore, George & Rosemarie Pritchard, John & Lee Rich, Ann Simon, Nissa Tyler, Humphrey & Susan Ulmer, Gordon* Walters, Milton & Caroline *Deceased

2018 Tour De Lyme Platinum

Benchmark Wealth Management Essex Savings Bank-Essex Financial Services Lyndon Haviland and Company Northstar Wealth Partners Pasta Vita

Gold

Block Design Build Reynolds Garage and Marine Waller, Smith and Palmer Lawrence and Memorial Hospital

Silver

All Pro Automotive Bouvier Insurance Branford Jewelers Denali Geomatrix Judge's Farm River Valley Periodontics Shoreline Eye Group Shoreline Periodontics Wilmington Trust

Bronze

Advanced Family Dentistry Antonino Acura BMW of New London Bogaert Construction Brodeur and Company, CPAs Burnett's Landscaping Centerbrook Architects Coldwell Banker Fallon and Wilkinson New England Power Equipment NRG Sked Electric White Gate Farm William Pitt Sotheby's

In Kind Donations

Clif Bar Coca-Cola Bottling Co of SE CT Coffee's Country Market Gull Associates LymeLine.com SECT NEMBA Select Physical Therapy Signore Septic The E-List Vitality Spa

UPCOMING EVENTS FALL 2019

Saturday, September 7, 10 a.m.: Butterfly Walk with Rich Chyinski

Join Rich Chyinski, a local butterfly expert from Salem, CT at the Pleasant Valley Preserve. Rich will lead a walk in search of native butterflies and migrating monarch butterflies. Email: openspace@townlyme.org

Friday, September 20, 5:00 to 8:00 p.m.: Cruise to View Swallow **Spectacular**

Eagle Landing State Park, Haddam. Join fellow Lyme Land Trust members on a cruise aboard *RiverQuest* to view this miraculous display as swallows amass above an island in the CT River as a part of their migration ritual. For more info and to register, see website.

Saturday, September 21, 9:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m.: Demonstration and Work Party with an Audubon Expert, Identifying and Removing Invasive **Plants**

Join an expert from Audubon Connecticut at the Hartman Park main entrance to learn how to identify and remove invasive plant species along the trail at Hartman Park. This free event is part of a Bird Workshop Series offered by the Lyme Forest Block Conservation Project. For more information, see website.

SAVE THE DATE

Sunday, May 17, Tour de Lyme 2020

Please join us for the seventh annual Tour de Lyme cycling event with beautifully scenic routes for all ages and levels. We're looking forward to seeing you! For more information, visit the Tour de Lyme webpage: TourDeLyme.org.

Photos this page: Spotted salamander (red eft) in Pleasant Valley Preserve; full moon on the spring equinox at Banningwood's Diana's Field.





Check our website lymelandtrust.org for upcoming events, walks and work parties.

lymelandtrust.org Follow us on: E F 5



OUR 2018-19 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Brantley Buerger Jonathan Butler Wendolyn Hill Dan Hulseberg Anthony Irving George Lombardino, Treasurer Nancy Newcomb John Pritchard, President

Ann Rich Regan Stacey Joe Standart Milton Walters, Vice President Melvin Woody, Secretary George Moore, Director Emeritus Kristina White. *Executive Director* Sue Cope, Environmental Director



Mission Statement

To conserve in perpetuity for the public benefit Lyme's natural, scenic and historic land and water resources by: acquiring and stewarding real properties and conservation easements; supporting open space acquisition by third parties; facilitating scientific study and management of our resources; and educating the community regarding the natural world and the benefits of conservation.

LONG RANGE PLAN

- Conserve land of environmental, cultural or historical importance
- Carry out work of Trust in an operationally, fiscally, legally and ethically responsible manner
- Increase substantially the Trust's educational offerings to youth and adults
- Facilitate scientific study of the natural resources present on selected Preserves for educational and land management purposes
- Strengthen the Land Trust financially and through increased and more effective use of volunteers
- Continue strengthening the Land Trust's stewardship program