



WILLIAMSTOWN
Rural Lands

Forests, fields, and farms — for you, forever.

2021 Annual Report



Summer 2022

Sheep Hill | 671 Cold Spring Road | Williamstown, MA 01267



From the President—Greg Islan

My predecessor Malcolm Smith described in 2020 how Williamstown Rural Lands stepped up when the pandemic hit. We built on that foundation 2021, when WRL's trails were never so busy. Our staff worked harder than ever to get out more information to guide sustainable and safe use of trails and lands. Julia Morgan joined us to coordinate events, resume our children's programs, and create new programs for adults. As the pandemic receded in the summer of 2021, we were able to run our summer Nature Discovery kids programs and a community get-together in the fall.

It was a start-and-stop kind of year, including in leadership. We said good-bye to Executive Director David McGowan, and long-time friend of Rural Lands Hank Art served as Interim Executive Director, helping to kickstart the in-person community engagement we all craved.

A big step was taken when the Town of Williamstown and Rural Lands extended the partnership to have WRL maintain town trails. Both entities, and joined by Williams Outing Club, are committed to working together to make outdoor nature-based recreational assets easier to navigate and more welcoming and accessible to a diversity of recreators. The placement of trailhead kiosks and an accompanying brochure highlighting each featured trail in 2021 was enthusiastically received by the public. The project was made possible through the Mary and Henry Flynt Fund of the Community Chest.

Our membership elected four new board members: Tu Le, Malcolm Moutenot, Rhon Ernest-Jones, and Averill Cook. The 2021 Lewis Conservation Legacy Award went to outstanding farmer Kim Wells for his leadership in farmland conservation.

We finished on strong financial footing with an exciting new brand and website in place. All this speaks to the dedication of our staff and the many volunteers and supporters to keep open space accessible.

Thank you all.

From the Director—Robin Sears

It is an honor to serve as the fourth executive director of Rural Lands in 36 years. Since my arrival in March 2022, every day I am humbled by the generosity of our members and volunteers – from hike leaders to board members. I am motivated by the shrieks of the kids catching frogs and not quite catching that resident garter snake. And I am energized by the many conversations I have with community members as I cycle to Sheep Hill, hike the trails, and shop at the Farmers Market.

Not a day goes by that I don't marvel at the centrality of our little organization in this community, and beyond, and appreciate the leadership that preceded my arrival. Outgoing director David McGowan sums up our mission: "Rural Lands plays a role in preserving many of these things [to love in Williamstown] – wildlife habitat, productive farmland, healthy watersheds. Land protection coupled with nature-based education and recreational access to the outdoors forms the foundation of our work."

David and Interim Director Hank Art worked diligently in 2021 to maintain the important working relationships with the town, the college, and the community at-large. As evidence, at the Town Meeting, the people voted overwhelmingly in support of a WRL-sponsored warrant article to help conserve more farmland in town through the Massachusetts Agriculture Protection Restriction (APR) program. We intend to continue to prioritize farming preservation – both the land base and the conditions for farm-based livelihoods to thrive.

Our members continued their generosity during the pandemic, recognizing the critical role Rural Lands plays in keeping open space accessible to the public. In addition, we received grant funding from multiple foundations and government programs for special projects.

I look forward to a productive tenure at Rural Lands, building on this amazing legacy.

Echoes of Camaraderie on the Trail

Last year was a banner year. I don't say that because we got a lot done. (We did.) I say it because we worked with a lot of people. Old faces, new ones. Young people, old, and in-between. After the isolation of the pandemic's first year, I really appreciated being around other folks as we worked to steward the land and trails here in Williamstown.

Our summer field season is a good example of what I'm trying to describe. Early on, we rebuilt a hiking bridge in the Hopper at Mount Greylock. A lively group of volunteers carried fresh lumber to the site and disassembled the shattered remains of the old bridge. A few weeks later, a volunteer group of Overland summer campers hiked it out. On a weekend each month, we invited the public to join us on various trail work projects around town. We saw many new faces as we laid stepping stones through the Stone Hill Road Trail and built a boardwalk at the foot of the Berlin Pass Trail. This last effort, the boardwalk, set the stage for a mighty work crew from the Student Conservation Association (SCA). Over the course of 20 days, they heaved stones into place for rock staircases and cut 1000-feet of new tread. Each night, they retreated to the foot of Sheep Hill to camp on the grounds before setting out again each morning.

When I hike at Stone Hill or Berlin Mountain, or head into the Hopper, I'm reminded of the camaraderie brought about by each of these projects. It was especially meaningful in 2021. And it's something I hope we can build on in the years ahead.

- Dan Gura, Lands & Trails Coordinator

The Thrill of Possibility

Last year, we decided to try an online auction for the first time in place of our usual in-person silent auction paired with a local foods dinner. Our board, staff, many of our members and local businesses generously contributed unique experiences, services, special dinners, art, vacation stays and more. It all made for a tempting array of offerings. Unhindered by the discomfort of bidding against a friend, which sometimes occurs at our silent auctions, lively and unfettered bidding abounded. The auction was a resounding success, and our thanks go out to the many who played in the bidding as well as the donors.



Board members with Wild Oats "Round up for Change" check

WRL is successful because of the generous member support. Additionally, we are most grateful for the hard work and financial support of the community and these foundations, programs, and individuals in 2021

Mass DCR, Forest Stewardship Program & Working Forests Initiative

MassTrails/EEA/DCR

MassWoods/DCR

Student Conservation Association (SCA)

USDA Environmental Quality Incentives Program

USDA/NRCS Forest Management Grant

Williams Outing Club

Williamstown Community Chest,

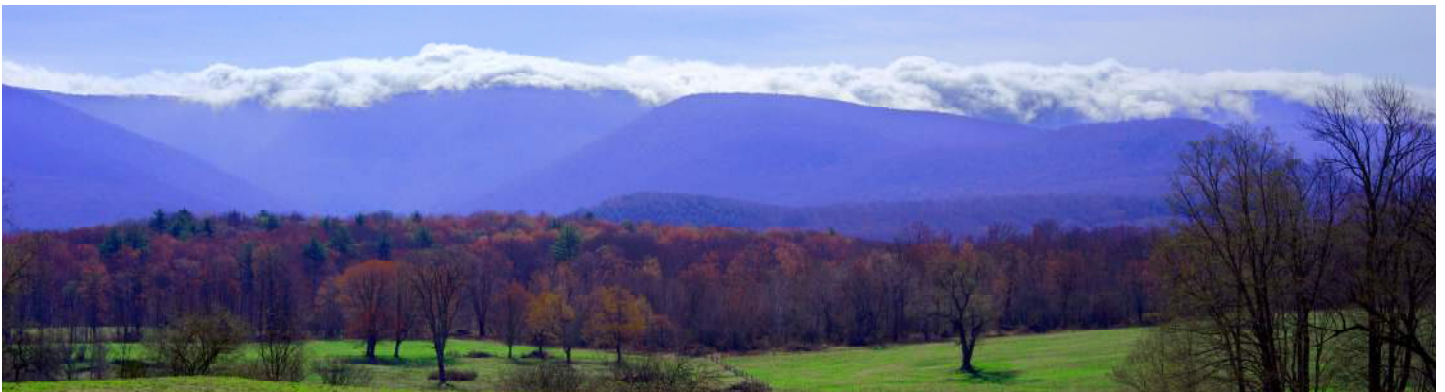
Mary and Henry Flynt Fund

Keep in touch!

Mail: 671 Cold Spring Rd.
Williamstown, MA 01267
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Web: www.rurallands.org
Meta: WilliamstownRuralLands
Insta: Williamstownrurallands



The allure of an auction is in the possibility it presents. We are planning an online auction again for this fall, so please stay tuned. After all, winning bid or not, the thrill is in the chase!



Farewell to dear friends

When an organization has been at work for as long as Rural Lands, it is thanks to a great many people. Since our founding in 1986, we have been supported by the efforts of board members, staff, volunteers and our membership. Last year, we were saddened by the loss of several close friends of the organization. Among them were long serving and dedicated board members as well as close friends who were really part of the Williamstown Rural Lands family.

William Broadbent was an ardent champion of land conservation. Bill and his wife Camille supported land conservation financially and by raising awareness, in our region and spanning the country. Their early support for WRL led to the establishment of an endowment fund in 1999. Bill's commitment and dedication was unflagging. He was a true friend who will be greatly missed.

Chester Lasell was a long serving board member who brought his expertise from a career in advertising and public relations along with a good measure of management common sense. Chet's amiable nature will be missed.

John L. Sprague was one of our longest serving board members who lent his wisdom and vast experience to the organization. He and his wife Jid set a fine example in conserving their own land along Bee Hill Road. His sense of curiosity, adventure, and his many interests never waned. His kindness and generosity of spirit will be missed.

Richard Steege was a long serving board member and a gifted educator who enriched the lives of many generations of children in Williamstown. Dick's contributions to nature education at Sheep Hill and well beyond live on. We and a great many others will remember him fondly.

Kathryn Winant, known to all as Katey, was a longtime and steadfast volunteer and a lively supporter. Her delightful and sharp wit and sense of humor will be missed.

We were honored to be named as a recipient of donations in memory of John Sprague, Richard Steege and Katey Winant. We thank the Sprague, Steege and Winant families, and the many friends and family members who made gifts in their memory.

Gifts for the Endowment of the Mathias J. Bartels Environmental Award Fund support an annual award to a graduating senior at Mt. Greylock Regional High School who has demonstrated environmental leadership. It is named in memory of Mathias Bartels, who set an example of leadership at Mt. Greylock. In 2021, the award was made to Christian Sullivan.

Gifts for the Endowment of the Mathias J. Bartels Environmental Award Fund

David and Devan Bartels
James R. and Donna Heekin
Timothy and Sunnie Heekin

Gifts in Memoriam

In Memory of John Foehl

Pooh and Charlie Lockwood

In Memory of Richard Colburn Steege

Elizabeth and Thomas Bartels

John and Judith Blackmer

Joan Dix Blair

David and Maribeth Casey

Anne and Andrew Crider

Jason Dohaney

Alice Edelstein

Shelley Geller

Bob and Abbie Hatton

James and Jennifer Jayko

Ann Kremers

Candy and David Low

Kelly Ryan and David McGowan

Jerry O'Neil

Devin Pharr

Arthur Evans and Leslie Reed-Evans

Judith Reichert

Michael Skelly

Gwen Steege

Rosilene and John Steege

Jane and Win Stuebner

Peter Boudreau and Cathy Talarico

Linda Wagner

Edward Warren

Margaret Weinland

Michael Weinstein-Reiman

Elizabeth Whately

Bud Wobus

Larry and Judy Wright

In Memory of John L. Sprague

John and Jane Allen

Mark Asetline

Patricia Patterson and Alan Evenson

Diane and Peter Fish

Susan Gold

Paul Hake

Mark Gold and Ellen Kennedy

Kristi Kingston

Carol Miller and Richard Levy

Kelly Ryan and David McGowan

Phil and Kathy McKnight

Don and Barbara McLucas

North Star Teens

Penn Interactive

Arthur Evans and Leslie Reed-Evans

Jane and Win Stuebner

Peter Boudreau and Cathy Talarico

Ann L. Wells

In Memory of Kathryn G. Winant

John and Barbara Craig

Susan Gold

Greg and Anne Islan

Killeen, Arace & Quinn, PC

Rod and Betsy MacLeod

John Roman and Bill McGee

Daphne and Bob McGill

Kelly Ryan and David McGowan

Phil and Kathy McKnight

Arthur Evans and Leslie Reed-Evans

Carol and Bob Stegeman

Sheila M. Stone

Jane and Win Stuebner

Peter Boudreau and Cathy Talarico

In Memory of Kathryn G. and John Winant

Warren and Brammie Cook

Don and Barbara McLucas

Broadbent Endowment Fund for the 21st Century Gifts

On the heels of a successful 2018 giving challenge, William and Camille Broadbent announced a second challenge: to donate \$50,000 to the Williamstown Rural Lands Broadbent Endowment for the 21st Century if an additional \$50,000 can be raised by Bill's 50th Williams reunion in 2023. We were saddened to learn that Bill passed away in September of 2021. As a result of thoughtful planning, the challenge continues in accordance with Bill's wishes.

Gifts Prior to September 2021

John G. and Amy Smith Berylon and Jennifer Berylon Block

Camille and William Broadbent†

Peter and Yumi Farwell

Paul J. Isaac and Karen Cromer Isaac

2021 Gifts in memory of Bill Broadbent

Henry and Pamela Art

Williamstown Rural Lands Board of Directors

Kelly Ryan and David McGowan

Arthur Evans and Leslie Reed-Evans

Peter Boudreau and Cathy Talarico

The passion the Broadbents have shown for land conservation is inspiring, and we appreciate their generosity and that of all donors. Gifts to the endowment fund will be a lasting legacy for all who

Comparative Financial Summary Williamstown Rural Lands Foundation, Inc.

CONDENSED COMPARATIVE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION December 31, 2021 and 2020

	2021	2020
Cash and other receivables	\$ 254,493	\$ 322,127
Conservation Land at cost	3,164,610	3,160,010
Property and Equipment	344,484	359,268
Investments and Endowments at Market Value	1,513,464	1,318,377
TOTAL ASSETS	\$5,277,051	\$5,159,782
Total Liabilities	\$ 101,384	\$ 151,750
Total Net Assets	5,175,667	5,008,032
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	\$5,277,051	\$5,159,782

CONDENSED COMPARATIVE STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES For the Years Ended December 31, 2021 and 2020

	2021	2020
Membership Revenue	\$ 167,755	\$ 151,579
Donations, Fundraising, Grants, and other	195,467	161,804
Subtotal	363,222	313,383
Investment income	76,059	56,455
Net Unrealized Gain/(Loss) on Investments	87,288	63,844
Total Revenues	526,569	433,682
Total Expenses	358,934	329,058
Increase in Net Assets	167,635	104,624
Net Assets at Beginning of Year	5,008,032	4,903,408
NET ASSETS AT END OF YEAR	\$5,175,667	\$5,008,032

You can leave a legacy through your bequest to Williamstown Rural Lands

A bequest to the Williamstown Rural Lands Foundation can have a lasting impact on the unique rural character and scenic beauty of Williamstown while protecting its working farms and forests, and natural cultural heritage for the future.

Bequests allow you to make decisions about your estate and can be used to make a substantial gift to a specific fund, such as WRL's land fund, or the Broadbent Endowment to ensure annual support for our general work. In some cases, a bequest may reduce estate taxes. Your Bequest will most certainly enhance WRL's ability to achieve its mission.

2021 WRL Board of Directors

Greg Islan, President
Barbara Carr, 1st Vice President
Phil McKnight, Vice President
Geraldine Shen, Vice President
Peter Thomsen, Treasurer
Robert D. Kraus, Secretary

Cosmo Catalano, Jr.

Averill Cook

Jenna Dickinson

Rhon Ernest-Jones

Tu Le

Penny Low

Tom Leamon

Dusty Lopez

Malcolm Moutenot

Wendy Skavlem

Stephen N. Pagnotta, Esq., Counsel

Staff

David McGowan, Executive Director

Henry W. Art, Interim Director

Cathy Talarico, Assistant Director

Dan Gura, Lands and Trails Coordinator

Julia Morgan, Programs Coordinator

Directors Emeriti

Marion C. Alton

Henry W. Art

Anita Barker

Elizabeth Bartels

Linda Becker

Roger Bolton

Jock Brooks

John C. Craig

Anne Crider

David P. Dethier

Maureen Dietze

Sam Edson

Karen Falk

Virginia Fletcher

Juliet Flynt

Henry Flynt, Jr.

Mary Lou Galusha

James C. Gibbons

Susan Gold

Dustin Griffin

Bruce D. Grinnell

Sherwood Guernsey

Amy Herring

David A. Horton

Tom Jorling

Libby Kieffer

Chester K. Lasell

Don H. McLucas, Jr.

Nancy Nylen

Claire-Ann Oakley

Stephen N. Pagnotta, Esq.

Charles Schlesinger

Malcolm Smith

John L. Sprague

Richard C. Steege

Win Stuebner

John Umlauf

Pam Weatherbee

Kim Wells

Samuel Westcott, Jr.

John Winant

Reinhard A. Wobus

Elizabeth Wright

(Italics indicate deceased)

Thanks to these friends and businesses for supporting WRL in 2021!

328 North
Ann Kremers Calligraphy & Illustration
A-oK Barbeque
Arthur Evans Associates
be FIT co.
Berkshire Cider Project
Brainspiral
Bright Ideas Brewing
Cheeky Fishing / Wingo Outdoors
Countryside Landscape & Design, Inc.

Coyote Flaco
East of the Bosphorus Fine Rugs & Flatweaves/
Nick Wright
InTouch Massage & Day Spa
Jim Galusha Contracting
John MacDonald
Julia Morgan Art
Lewis Studios
Mezze
Nature's Closet

Prospect Mountain
Spring Street Market & Café
The Clark
The Williams Inn
Tourists
Where'd You Get That?!Wild Oats
South Williamstown Community Assoc.
Williamstown Theatre Festival
WilliNet

Our volunteers make things happen!

Thank you for your dedication to WRL this past year!

Charley (Charlotte) Art
Pam Art
Peter Boudreau
Emily Bourguignon
Mark Brandriss
Brian Carpenter
Nick Carr
Tim Carr
John Case
Brian Cole
Kathy Chesney
Linda Conway
Heleny Cook

Rebecca Cook
Christopher Densmore
Greg Doench
Van Ellet
Art Evans
Alan Evenson
Karen Falk
Pete and Yumi Farwell
Ruth Giordano
John Gordon
Kelsey Gura
Paul Harsch
Bob Hatton

Emily Hennessey
Declan Houlihan
Drew Jones
Karen Kelly
Janette Kessler
Bill Levy
Scott Lewis
Nora Lopez
David Low
Jack Madden
Bill Maddix
Micah John Manary
Donna Manley

Jerry O'Neil
Overland Summers service
volunteers
Allen Pope
John Porcino
Hugh Pyle
Leslie Reed-Evans
Tommy Richey
Peter Rogers
Kelly Ryan
Stephen and Elizabeth St.
Clair
Gillian Sciacca
Dick Schlesinger

Robin Sher
David Skalski
Jennifer Swoap
Lauren Stevens
Ryan Tainter
Ted Upton
Eric White
Elizabeth Whitney
Williams Center for Learning
in Action
Williams Cross Country Team
WRL Board and Emeritus
Board

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