



WILLIAMSTOWN  
**Rural Lands**

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

## 2022 Annual Report



July 2023

Sheep Hill | 671 Cold Spring Road | Williamstown, MA 01267  
413-458-2494 | [www.rurallands.org](http://www.rurallands.org) | [williamstownrurallands](http://williamstownrurallands.org)



### From the President—Greg Islan



The past year has been one of recovery and renewed excitement for the outdoors by the many people who use the extensive trail system in Williamstown. We had a change in leadership in March, with the organization's fourth Executive Director Robin Sears taking the helm from David McGowan.

In 2022 our programs and events returned to normal. We were especially pleased to hold the biennial Sheep to Shawl festival in May, after missing it in 2020. It was an enormous success with the best attendance ever recorded, with over 360 people. The activity of the sheep, sheep dogs, sheep shearer, spinners, and weavers inspired awe; the musicians put a bounce in our steps; and the local crafts and foods were marvelous.

While trails and programs were hopping, we also had a banner year for land conservation. We received two donations of forest land: a hearty thanks to Anne Tiffany and Gerrit and Kathryn Van Duyn for their generosity and foresight. Additionally, in November 2022 the Williamstown Select Board assigned the right to purchase a tract of agricultural land on Oblong Road. We are grateful to our Board of Directors for their careful consideration of the merits of this project. WRL worked hard to start raising the money needed to purchase this beautiful farmland and viewshed loved by many—residents and visitors alike. (Spoiler alert: we closed on the property in 2023.)

When we look back at 2022, we will note that it was a year of recovery, masks on and off as things changed, getting together for events, then distancing again. Through it all, the WRL staff, our many volunteers, members, and neighbors have made it another outstanding year for Williamstown Rural Lands.

Thank you all.

### From the Executive Director—Robin Sears



It is an honor to co-pilot Williamstown Rural Lands with President Greg Islan, under the guidance of our Board of Directors and in partnership with our solid staff team. It takes a village to do what we do: conserve biodiversity, promote outdoor recreation, and educate the public about nature and the rural working landscape. Our members and volunteers also play critical roles in keeping the organization humming along.

Assistant Director Cathy Talarico's deep institutional knowledge has been invaluable as we steered through the 2022 staff transitions. She capably keeps the books, manages the office, provides input and guidance on all major decisions, and chips away at the burn pile each year.

Stewardship Director (a title change from Trails Coordinator) Dan Gura keeps the trails safe and secure, looks after the wellbeing of the ecosystems we conserve, and makes and keeps records of all things land. Dan began ramping up this year on planning for active land management into the future. He advises, too, on land conservation and acquisition projects, as each acre we conserve eventually gets his focused attention on supporting its ecosystem functions or maintaining recreational opportunities.

Our programs blossomed in 2022 under the leadership of Julia Morgan as Programs Coordinator, with book groups, seminars, and informative walks dotting our calendar. She led the organization of the Sheep to Shawl festival, too. Dana Williams succeeded Julia in September, and as Programs Director designs, publicizes, and implements engaging and informative programs for children, families, and adults. As a naturalist with a specialty in animal behavior, Dana is also our go-to for all things creeping, crawling, hopping, and flying.

Besides deliberating and deciding on key issues, members of our Board of Directors lead and serve on our standing and

ad-hoc committees, which lend essential support to the staff and board by deliberating proposals, solving problems, and implementing components of our work. We invite WRL members to get involved with our committees.

With the generous support and encouragement from our community, we accomplished quite a lot in 2022. Rural Lands was awarded four grants for a total of \$17,180 to cover programs and events, strategic planning, trail work, and data management—work that continues into 2023. We conserved 24 acres of forestland through generous donations and helped preserve 17 acres of farmland. Dan’s crew built a half-mile new trail—a rare event—on the Smith property. We received a Forest Stewardship Plan through the state forestry program for our Pine Cobble properties to help guide land management activities. This is our fourth such plan. We welcomed 797 participants to our various programs and community events—see the chart below.

We closed the year with 343 supportive members and aspirations for a most excellent 2023. Thank you all for accompanying us on this journey.

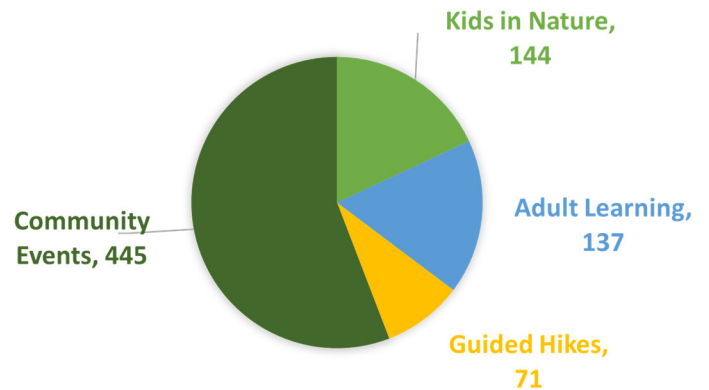
### Land Conservation in 2022

We are grateful to Gerrit and Kathryn Van Duyne and Anne Tiffany for their generous donations of land to conservation. The new Buxton Brook Preserve and Judge Tiffany Nature Preserve were added to the nearly 1000 acres of precious land we hold in trust for ours and generations to come. Mrs. Tiffany also donated a conservation easement on the land, and we are grateful to our friends at BNRC for holding it.

William and Kelly Galusha preserved 17 acres of farmland through the Commonwealth’s Agricultural Preservation Restriction (APR) program. We commend the townspeople and the Town of Williamstown for their moral and financial support of this project and generally for their foresight in designating ours as a Right to Farm community. Rural Lands helped facilitate this farmland preservation project and contributed financially.



### # OF PARTICIPANTS IN WRL PROGRAMS AND EVENTS, 2022





### Farewell to a dear friend, Jack Dietze

Last year we were saddened by the loss of a dear friend and neighbor, John ("Jack") Dietze, Jr. Jack was a major contributor along with his wife, Maureen, to Rural Lands. Maureen served on our board for 18 years with Jack supporting her all the way. Together they provided the leadership gifts and inspiration that helped transform the former dairy barn at Sheep Hill into an education center. The Jack and Maureen Dietze Interpretive Center at Sheep Hill opened in 2012 and features the natural and cultural history of our area and supports our nature education programs.

Jack was a true friend whose kindness and generosity of spirit will be missed by WRL and all who knew him. We were honored to be named as a recipient of donations in memory of Jack. We want to thank the Dietze family and the many friends and family members who made gifts in his memory.

### Gifts to our Endowment Funds in 2022

#### Broadbent Endowment Fund for the 21st Century

The passion that 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 appreciate Williamstown's fields, forests, and purple mountains.

#### Gifts were received from

Henry and Pamela Art  
Joseph and Françoise Connors  
Peter Boudreau and Cathy Talarico

#### Endowment of the Mathias J. Bartels Environmental Award Fund

This fund supports 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 2022, the award was made to Christian Sullivan.

#### Gifts were received from

James R. and Donna Heekin  
Timothy and Sunnie Heekin

### Gifts in Memoriam

In memory of Joyce Christopherson  
Cathy Talarico

In Memory of Michael Deep  
Jerry O'Neil

In Memory of John "Jack" Dietze, Jr.  
Maureen Dietze  
Tracy and Joe Finnegan  
James Fowler  
Dean Crawford and Darra Goldstein  
Karen G. Kelly and William K. Levy  
David and Candy Low  
Wayne and Annette McCary  
Phil and Kathy McKnight  
Don and Barbara McLucas  
Patrick Meaney  
Lisa Dietze Molloy  
Jerry O'Neil  
Arthur Evans and Leslie Reed-Evans  
Penn Staples  
Carol and Bob Stegeman  
Jane and Erwin A. Stuebner  
Peter Boudreau and Cathy Talarico  
Ann L. Wells  
Cheryl Westall

In Memory of John Foehl  
Sara Mayo and Charles A. Foehl  
Pooh and Charlie Lockwood

In Memory of Jim Rack  
Barbara and Joe Sciacca

In Memory of Wavalene "Jinx" Tong  
Jan Goldman-Carter and Mark Carter



WRL is grateful for the hard work and financial support of these grant programs for their special gifts in 2022

*Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation*  
*Appalachian Trail Conservancy, Wild East Action Fund*  
*Mass Cultural Council through the Cultural Council of Northern Berkshire*  
*Williams Outing Club*  
*Williamstown Community Chest, Mary and Henry Flynt Fund*



# Comparative Financial Summary Williamstown Rural Lands Foundation, Inc.

## CONDENSED COMPARATIVE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION December 31, 2022 and 2021

	2022	2021
Cash and other receivables	287,450	\$ 254,493
Conservation Land at cost	3,355,550	3,164,610
Property and Equipment	331,685	344,484
Investments and Endowments at Market Value	1,290,950	1,513,464
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>5,265,635</b>	<b>\$5,277,051</b>
Total Liabilities	139,795	\$ 101,384
Total Net Assets	5,125,840	5,175,667
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>	<b>5,265,635</b>	<b>\$5,277,051</b>

## CONDENSED COMPARATIVE STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES For the Years Ended December 31, 2022 and 2021

	2022	2021
Membership Revenue	172,813	\$ 167,755
Donations, Fundraising, Grants, and other	363,735	195,467
Subtotal	536,548	363,222
Investment income	37,082	76,059
Net Unrealized Gain/(Loss) on Investments	(229,417)	87,288
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>344,213</b>	<b>526,569</b>
Total Expenses	394,040	358,934
Increase in Net Assets	(49,827)	167,635
Net Assets at Beginning of Year	5,175,667	5,008,032
<b>NET ASSETS AT END OF YEAR</b>	<b>5,125,840</b>	<b>\$5,175,667</b>

### You can leave a legacy through your bequest

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 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 for conservation and stewardship or the Broadbent Endowment to ensure annual support for our work. In some cases, a bequest may reduce estate taxes. Your bequest will most certainly enhance WRL's ability to achieve its mission.

## 2022 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  
Janette Kessler  
Tu Le  
Tom Leamon  
Dusty Lopez  
Malcolm Moutenot  
Wendy Skavlem  
Janie Strachan  
Tamanika Terry Steward  
Stephen N. Pagnotta, Esq., Counsel

## 2022 Staff

David McGowan, Executive Director  
(through Mar 2022)  
Robin R. Sears, PhD, Executive Director  
(start Mar 2022)  
Cathy Talarico, Assistant Director  
Dan Gura, Stewardship Director  
Julia Morgan, Programs Coordinator  
(through May 2022)  
Dana Williams, PhD, Programs Director  
(start Sep 2022)

## Directors Emeriti

Marion C. Altont	David A. Horton
Henry W. Art	Tom Jorling
Anita Barker	Libby Kieffer
Elizabeth Bartels	Chester K. Lasell†
Linda Becker	Penny Low
Roger Bolton	Don H. McLucas, Jr.
Jock Brooks	Nancy Nysten
John C. Craig	Claire-Ann Oakley
Anne Crider	Stephen N. Pagnotta, Esq.
David P. Dethier	Charles Schlesinger
Maureen Dietze	Malcolm Smith
Sam Edson†	John L. Sprague†
Karen Falk	Richard C. Steeget
Virginia Fletchert	Win Stuebner
Juliet Flynt	John Umlauf
Henry Flynt, Jr.†	Pam Weatherbee
Mary Lou Galushat	Kim Wells
James C. Gibbons	Samuel Westcott, Jr.
Susan Gold	John Winant†
Dustin Griffin	Reinhard A. Wobus
Bruce D. Grinnell	Elizabeth Wright†
Sherwood Guernsey	
Amy Herring	

(† indicates deceased)

## Thanks to these friends and businesses for supporting WRL in 2022!

Amrita Lash Pottery  
Ann Kremers Calligraphy & Illustration  
Arthur Evans Associates  
BeFit Company  
Berkshire Cider Project  
Bill Greenwald, Pilot  
Bondhu  
Bousquet Mountain  
Bright Ideas Brewing  
Cheeky Fishing  
Countryside Landscape & Design, Inc.  
Coyote Flaco  
East of the Bosphorus Fine Rugs & Flat-weaves, Nick Wright

Eric Enderlee, Artisans of Thornliebank Rd.  
Ghetta Hirsch, Artist  
Gramercy Bistro  
Hancock Shaker Village  
Lever, Jeffrey Thomas  
Francesca Olsen  
Puddingstone Pottery, Helen Olshever  
InTouch Massage & Day Spa  
Jen Rork Design  
Jim Galusha Contracting  
John Porcino, Storyteller/Musician  
Julia Morgan Art  
Lewis Studios  
LIFT Bistropub

Mezze Bistro & Bar  
Nature's Closet  
Peterman's Boards & Bowls  
Prospect Mountain Ski Area  
Provisions Williamstown  
Robert H. Lafond, Artist  
Tasha Yoga  
South Williamstown Community Association  
Tourists  
Tracy Baker-White, Artist  
The Clark  
Tunnel City  
Where's You Get That?!

Williamstown Theater Festival

## Our volunteers make things happen!

Annie (Annabell) Art  
Peter Boudreau  
Emily Bourguignon  
Mark Brandriss  
Brian Carpenter  
Nick Carr  
Tim Carr  
John Case  
Deb Chaulk  
Kathy Chesney  
Brian Cole  
Linda Conway  
Greg Doench

Ken Egnaczak  
Van Ellet  
Art Evans  
Pete Farwell  
Yumi Farwell  
Ruth Giordano  
John Gordon  
Kelsey Gura  
Paul Harsch  
Bob Hatton  
Juliana Haubrich  
Emily Hennessey  
Drew Jones

Karen Kelly  
Jeffrey Levine  
Bill Levy  
Scott Lewis  
Nora Lopez  
David Low  
Jack Madden  
Bill Maddix  
Micah John Manary  
Donna Manley  
Daniel Mason  
David McGowan  
Elayne Murphy

Alex Olchowski  
Jerry O'Neil  
Overland Summers service  
volunteers  
Allen Pope  
John Porcino  
Leslie Reed-Evans  
Tommy Richey  
Kelly Ryan  
Dick Schlesinger  
Tamar Schragger  
Gillian Sciacca  
Robin Sher

Stephen and Elizabeth St.  
Clair  
Lauren Stevens  
Jefferson Strait  
Jennifer Swoap  
Elena Traister  
Ted Upton  
Eric White  
Elizabeth Whitney  
Williams College Cross  
Country Team

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