



# 2016

YEAR IN REVIEW

*Discover the river.  
Care for the land.*



APPLETON | CUSHING | HOPE | LIBERTY | MONTVILLE | OWLS HEAD | ROCKLAND | ST. GEORGE  
SEARSMONT | SOUTH THOMASTON | THOMASTON | UNION | WARREN



*“We are stewards rather than ‘owners’ of the land and so by making a gift of this land to the Georges River Land Trust, the public will be forever welcome to enjoy it as much as our family has.”*

—SUSAN ST. JOHN, on her donation of land to create Ash Point Preserve in Owls Head in December, 2016

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*Special thanks to Jim Robbins, who completed his term in September, 2016.*

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**georgesriver.org**

*D*ear Friends,

Thanks to our many friends in the community, Georges River Land Trust achieved considerable success in 2016. We produced new educational activities to expand our community's horizons, provided access to places that nourish our souls, and invited you to share fun and friendship along the river.

The diversity of activity that the Georges River Land Trust contributes to the midcoast would not be possible without an extremely committed group of people dedicated to ensuring the place we love will endure for future generations. In addition to a hard-working staff, we are fortunate to have the support of dozens of volunteers who organize events like our annual Garden Tour, maintain more than 40 miles of trails along the Georges Highland Path and help us steward the properties for which we are responsible in perpetuity.

Thanks to the generosity of Susan St. John's donation of 32 acres in Owls Head late last December, the Georges River Land Trust now owns and manages 17 Preserves throughout the watershed and beyond. We also added an additional 38 acres to our Riverview Hayfields Preserve in S. Thomaston thanks to the generous support of the Anderson family and contributions from 100 community members!

Our ability to complete conservation projects would not be possible without the support of far-sighted philanthropists who made possible the grants we received from the Aldermere Foundation, Bafflin Foundation, Davis Conservation Foundation, Fields Pond Foundation, Fund for Maine Land Conservation of the Maine Community Foundation, John Sage Foundation, K2 Foundation, Kohler Foundation, Louise H. and David S. Ingalls Foundation, Maine Coast Heritage Trust, Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund, Morton-Kelly Charitable Trust, Ram Island Fund of the Maine Community Foundation, Spectra Energy Foundation, The Wyeth Foundation and the Wyeth Family Foundation.

As you will read, 2016 was both busy and successful for the Georges River Land Trust and we look forward to maintaining this busy pace of conservation through continued focus on "Bridging Two Rivers" on the St. George peninsula, providing public access in Owls Head, linking conserved lands with the acquisition of a conservation easement in the upper watershed and helping conserve a family farm in our watershed's "farm belt".

We thank you for caring about this place that we all call home and hope that you will help to steward its transfer to the next generation – intact, precious and full of surprises. Your support truly achieves lasting results on the ground and makes all the difference in our local world.

Sincerely yours,



Bruce Sigsbee  
*President*





## Conservation Accomplishments 2016



*"We are pleased Georges River Land Trust will hold this property in permanent conservation, knowing it is in one of their priority areas," said Ray DeGrass, Plant Manager of Dragon Products Company.*

### *St. George River Frontage Conservation Easement*

Thanks to a permanent conservation easement donated by Dragon Products Company in February, thirty-eight acres of undeveloped forestland bordering the prominent "gooseneck" bend in the St. George River in Warren will ensure the valuable wildlife habitat and historic features found on the property remain intact in perpetuity. The property is comprised of deciduous forest, open fields and floodplain wetlands. This stretch of the St. George River is home to inland wading birds and waterfowl and the yellow lamp mussel, significant because of its requirement of high water quality. Maine Inland Fisheries and Wildlife has listed the mollusk as a threatened species.



*Flood plain forest along the St. George river.*



*Jean Mullen Carmean, granddaughter of John Anderson, said "I am pleased that our family's property and Finnish heritage is being preserved for the local community and future generations. As a family member, I would like to thank Annette Naegel for guiding us through this process. I also want to thank all those who helped in the funding of this project, making it a reality." Pictured: Conservation Director Annette Naegel and Joan Colsen, granddaughter of John Anderson.*

## BRIDGING TWO RIVERS

### *An Addition to Riverview Hayfields Preserve*

In search of a better life, the Anderson family left their native Finland and settled in South Thomaston in the early 1800s. Generations of the family farmed the fertile soils along the St. George River for more than 200 years. Many locals remember dairy cattle grazing the hills and lowlands of the Anderson Farm, but with family members now scattered across the country, the family chose to transfer this heritage to the Georges River Land Trust through a series of transactions beginning in 2013. This past October, the Land Trust purchased the 38-acre "Anderson West" parcel.

With this property now conserved, there is truly a land bridge between the St. George and Weskeag Rivers. In addition to the 500 acres conserved by Georges River Land Trust, the "Bridging Two Rivers" initiative includes the adjacent Waldo Tyler Wildlife Preserve and lands protected by the Maine Coast Heritage Trust—combining more than 1,300 acres of field, marsh and woodlands in this biologically significant riparian corridor that will remain intact and available for wildlife. The Georges River Land Trust offers public access through its Riverview Hayfields Preserve, which is adjacent to private farmland conserved through permanent conservation easements

## Conservation Accomplishments 2016



*Susan St. John and her husband, Bob Rheault, who passed away in 2013, have long been staunch advocates for thoughtful human interaction with the natural world and, since its inception, strong supporters of the Georges River Land Trust. In fact, a conservation easement conveyed in 1987 was the first to be held by the Land Trust*

### *Ash Point Preserve*

“In wildness is the preservation of the world” quotes Susan St. John who donated 32 acres fronting the Muscle Ridge Channel to the Georges River Land Trust this past December, evoking the spirit of Henry David Thoreau. “Bob and I felt that we were stewards rather than ‘owners’ of the land on Ash Point and so by making a gift of this land to the Georges River Land Trust, the public will be forever welcome to enjoy it as much as our family has.

The Land Trust plans to construct a small parking area in order to welcome the public to enjoy what Susan calls “ribbons of wonder”—old stone walls, ancient apple trees, and spruce and birch groves. A pathway leads to the Muscle Ridge Channel where “one can feel the pounding of the surf, play in the tide pools, and look across Penobscot Bay over North Haven, Vinalhaven, Hurricane Island and Heron Neck and seemingly to forever.”

### *By the Numbers*

The Georges River Land Trust currently holds conservation easements on more than 2,700 acres of private land throughout our service region which includes Owls Head and Rockland as well as the land area which drains into the St. George River.

Georges River Land Trust owns and maintains 17 nature preserves on more than 1,100 acres of land, providing public access and education as well as habitat for wildlife.

The Georges Highland Path provides almost 50 miles of hiking trails made available by private landowners and are maintained by Georges River Land Trust volunteers, partners and staff.

### **What is a Conservation Easement?**

A conservation easement is a voluntary agreement which limits development and subdivision when donated to a qualified organization. While conservation easements protect the natural qualities of a property in perpetuity, they do not necessarily convey public access. Each conservation easement is unique, reflecting the natural attributes of the property as well as the conservation goals of the landowner. Conservation easements are often a useful tool in estate planning and generational transfer. Speak with your financial advisor to see if the gift of conservation might also benefit your federal tax planning.

**To learn more visit [www.georgesriver.org](http://www.georgesriver.org)**



## Wet Paint on the Weskeag!

30 artists were selected by jury to participate in a plein air benefit auction featuring fresh paintings of the Land Trust's focus area encompassing the Weskeag and St. George Rivers. Held last August in collaboration with the Kelpie Gallery of S. Thomaston, the 3rd annual Wet Paint on the Weskeag! benefit grossed \$16,000. The proceeds were to be evenly divided between the Land Trust and the artists, though several chose to donate the full amount of their sale to the Land Trust. The final donation to the Georges River Land Trust

totaled \$9,225, and has directly supported programs to conserve the lands and waterways in the Georges River Watershed and surrounding service area.

Our generous sponsors included lead sponsors Bangor Savings Bank and On the Water Real Estate, auction sponsors Eastern Tire & Auto Service and Shepard Motors, supporting sponsors Brooks Trap Mill, Spruce Head Fisherman's Co-op and Schooner Bay Taxi, and beverage sponsors Rock Harbor Brewery and Savage Oaks Vineyard & Winery.

The Auction Jurors included Ron Crusan of Linda Bean's Wyeth Gallery, artist Dick Kelly of the Georges River Land Trust, and Susan Lewis Baines and Lauren Lewis, owners of The Kelpie Gallery.



The auction was presided over by “dueling auctioneers,” Bruce Gamage and Kaja Veilleux, who kept the action lively. All of the pieces went home with happy bidders.

Jurors' Choice Award—Carol Douglas  
*Fort Point Historic Site*  
oil on canvas board

Kelpie Gallery Honorable Mention—Nancy Morgan Barnes  
*Queen Anne's Lace, South Thomaston*  
oil on board

Georges River Land Trust Honorable Mention—Michael E. Vermette  
*Weskeag from Buttermilk Lane*  
oil on panel

Ron Crusan Honorable Mention—Stephan Giannini  
*Moonlight Over Weskeag*  
oil on canvas

Peoples' Choice Award—Holly Smith  
*August View of Bill's Island.*  
oil on panel

## 25th Annual Gardens in the Watershed



*Our Gardens in the Watershed tour is the largest annual fundraising event of the Georges River Land Trust and its success is crucial to our work of conserving ecosystems of the watershed and providing recreation and education opportunities to the public*

Despite a steady downpour the morning of our 25th annual garden tour, there was no damper on enthusiasm as nearly 500 attendees visited seven private gardens in St. George, Spruce Head and Port Clyde. Along with the opportunity to enjoy the diversity of the area and the horticultural creativity of each unique garden, attendees heard presentations by Jody Payne, former curator and director of the Rock Garden and Native Plant Garden at the NY Botanical Garden, and Morten Moesswilde, Maine Forest Service District Forester.

We owe gratitude to the gardeners who graciously opened their special places to us and without whom there would not have been a tour: Fred and Mary Carey and Les Hyde and Anne Cogger in St. George, Terry Smith, Sandy Hobby and Len Greenhalgh and Jocelyn Paquette in Spruce Head, and Lori and David Schwartz and Ed and Mary Cady in Port Clyde. Their dedication, hard work and love of the land were evident even on a cool, wet day in the wonderful diversity of beauty we were all privileged to experience on the tour. We are indebted to them for their gracious hospitality and incalculable contribution to the Land Trust.

Volunteers on tour day kept things running smoothly, from helping park cars and directing traffic to taking tickets, handing out lunches, selling raffle tickets and assisting the gardeners in various ways. We are grateful to the many volunteers who gave up a good part of their weekend to help us.

For this milestone anniversary, the committee chose a large raffle prize, which garnered lots of interest and increased raffle ticket sales to their highest of any tour yet. The successful winner of the 2016 John Deere Gator 560 XUV, drawn live at the final garden on tour day, was Beezie Bickford of Hope.

The members of the volunteer Garden Tour committee work tirelessly all year to make this event successful each year. Mark your calendars to join us for the 26th Annual Gardens in the Watershed tour on Sunday, July 16, 2017!





## Stewardship : A Commitment to Perpetuity

*Georges River Land Trust's stewardship program is two-pronged:* We ensure the permanent conservation of private lands for which we have been entrusted conservation easements and to utilize the



*In collaboration with Maine Woodland Owners, a chainsaw safety course was offered to the public.*



*Georges River Land Trust completed the second year of a vehicle donation program, Cars for Conservation, in partnership with Eastern Tire & Auto Service in Rockland. All proceeds from the sale of donated vehicles support local land protection, nature education, and the Georges Highland Path trail system. To date, the program has raised more than \$33,000 to benefit the programs of the Land Trust*

lands which we own and manage to exemplify land management and provide responsible access to special places. We are fortunate to have the help of committed volunteers to help monitor more than 40 conservation easement properties and care for our 17 Preserves.

This year, we were awarded three separate grants totaling \$42,600 which will be used to develop an ADA-compliant, accessible pathway through the Langlais Sculpture Preserve. Another grant will fund a tractor bridge at our Trolley Marsh Preserve in order to allow the fields and early successional habitat to be managed for this nationally declining natural habitat. Through a new collaboration with neighboring Spectra Energy at the Porter Preserve, we reopened a grown-in trail and constructed a parking lot and informational kiosk for visitors. This partnership saved around \$7,000.

Through our *Walk & Talk*, free educational events, we shared a diverse offering of natural resource based seminars which ranged from conservation mowing to an investigation of the link between bees and Maine blueberries to a look at various non-timber forest resources. In 2017, new preserves will be open to the public and Walk & Talk events every month will give our community numerous opportunities to come and connect with our place, The Georges River Watershed and surrounding communities.

### *White Oak Society*

GRLT's White Oak Society members have committed to giving \$500 or more each year in perpetuity to support the operations of the Land Trust. Through the meaningful commitment of our White Oak members, the Land Trust can be assured that nearly half of our operating budget is funded each year.



*64 White Oak Society families and their guests were celebrated last July at a barbecue, generously hosted by Ken and Barbara Wexler at their waterfront home in Owls Head*

***You too can state your commitment to the work we do by joining the White Oak Society and giving \$500 or more a year or \$42 or more through ongoing monthly giving!***



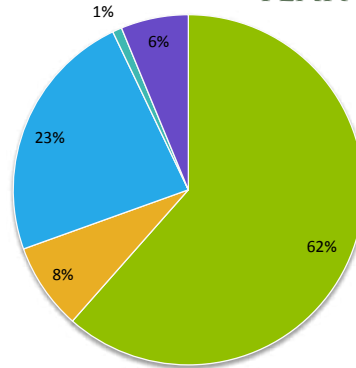
# 2016

## YEAR IN REVIEW

### INCOME & EXPENSES

#### INCOME

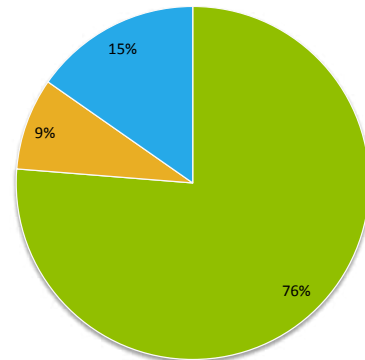
	2015	2016
Membership	\$71,023	\$78,062
Fall Appeal	\$49,313	\$74,754
Major Gifts	\$183,719	\$337,284
<b>Donations</b>	<b>\$304,055</b>	<b>\$490,100</b>
Events	\$63,519	\$63,773
Grants	\$13,234	\$186,312
Investment Income	\$5,459	\$6,895
Other Income	\$24,309	\$49,671
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$410,576</b>	<b>\$796,751</b>



■ Donations ■ Events ■ Grants ■ Investment Income ■ Other Income

#### EXPENSES

	2015	2016
Outreach	\$74,923	\$98,108
Land Acquisition & Pro	\$58,922	\$75,411
Stewardship	\$33,027	\$56,581
Conservation Trails	\$58,965	\$65,668
<b>Program</b>	<b>\$225,837</b>	<b>\$295,768</b>
Administration	\$41,148	\$32,704
Fundraising	\$50,378	\$59,322
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$317,363</b>	<b>\$387,794</b>



■ Program ■ Administration ■ Fundraising



*The Georges River Land Trust is responsible for the condensed, unaudited financial information presented in this report. For more detailed information, contact GRLT.*

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*We are grateful for the support of the following individuals, businesses and foundations who gave between January 1 and December 31, 2016.*

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Art and Hilje Zur Muhlen

*Every attempt has been made to ensure the accuracy of this list and we apologize for any errors or omissions. If you see a mistake, please contact us to correct our records.*

## Langlais Sculpture Preserve **Update**



Late last fall, the Land Trust purchased the property neighboring the Langlais Preserve from Tessie Montgomery to whom we extend our profound gratitude. The acquisition of that half-acre of land will enable us to construct a safe parking area and school bus turnaround for the visitors we expect upon the Preserve's opening next September. The Montgomery house was sold at auction and moved to make way.



We want to again acknowledge the unprecedented gift the Land Trust received from the Kohler Foundation and the support they and Colby College Museum of Art continue to provide to us. The Langlais Sculpture Preserve will forever be an asset to the midcoast thanks to their partnership.



The Conservators' work continued through last summer and will be back in May to complete their conservation work on the outdoor sculpture collection.

**We look forward to celebrating the Langlais Sculpture Preserve's opening in fall of 2017 and hope that you will be there to help!**

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is where we share the latest on events, fun info, photos and topical articles

### ☞ Volunteer with us

There are many ways to help! Office skills, trails work, committee participation and event coordination are all needed

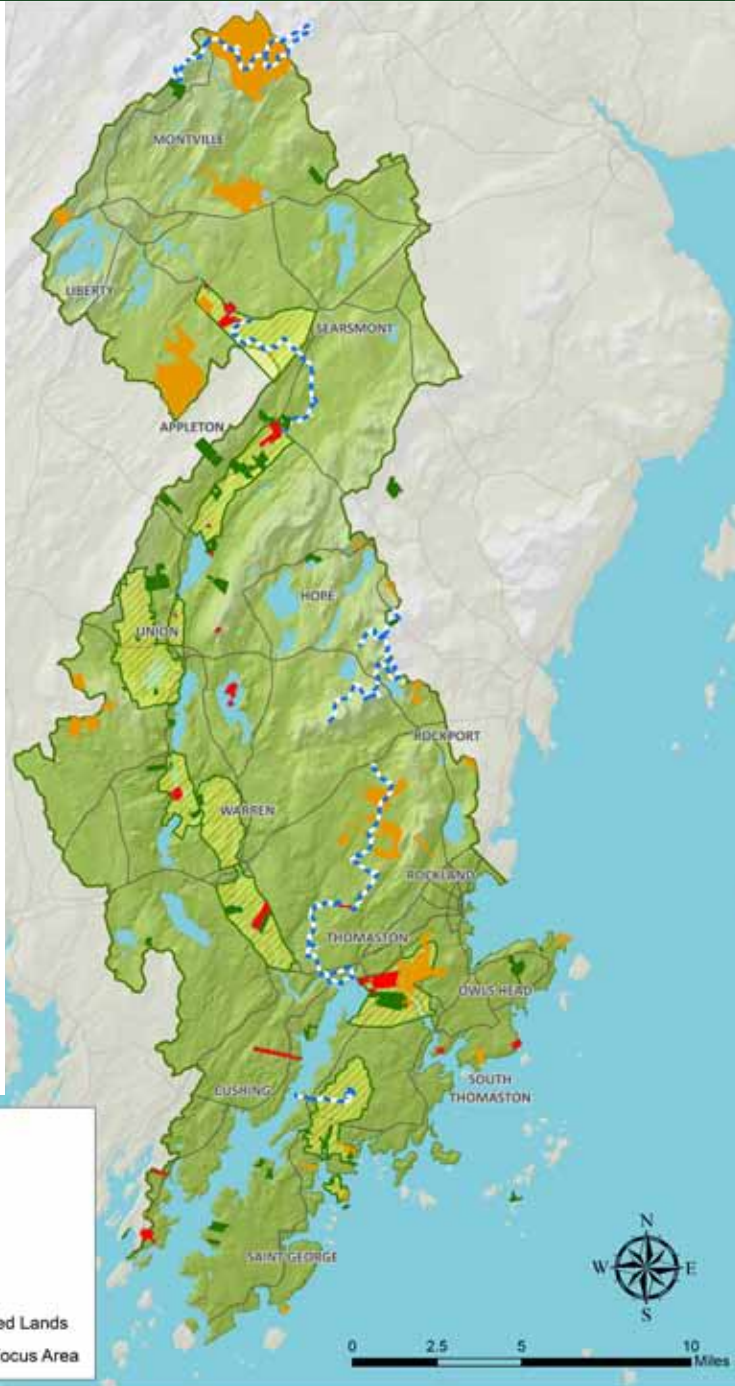
### ☞ Become a member

You can impact conservation in the Georges River Watershed through membership, join us at [www.georgesriver.org/membership](http://www.georgesriver.org/membership)

### ☞ Leave a Legacy

Join our Watershed Society with a planned gift through a bequest, IRA, life insurance benefit, or gift of real estate.

**cover photo:** *Young visitors enjoy the newly conserved addition to the Riverview Hayfields Preserve.*



[georgesriver.org](http://georgesriver.org)

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