Dorothy had it right. There is no place like home. A special longing draws us back to the community we love, along with a desire to preserve it forever for those who follow. A unique sense of ease often settles over us as we return home from time away. We are fortunate to live in communities where a unique quality of place underlies this special feeling of home.’ We want our children and grandchildren to experience ‘home’ in the same way. Beautiful landscapes and coastal vistas, active farmland, trails revealing nature’s wonders, clean air and water, people connected to one another and the land – all these contribute to our sense of home here in our beautiful corner of the world.

As we settle into a new office this fall, the ideas of community and ‘home’ are at the fore of our thoughts, and we realize how much conservation is grounded in our appreciation of home. Local leaders recognize that it is possible to balance economic development and sustainable communities. We don’t have to choose between either new businesses and housing or protected farmland and wildlands. This understanding underpins the cooperation and partnerships that the Land Trust enjoys with our local governments and other community organizations. It also guides our efforts to nurture economic development in ways that respect and complement our natural resources. Promoting local agriculture and strengthening our local food system protects traditional landscapes, livelihoods, and natural resources. Protecting our quality of place and connecting people with land through trails and educational events also supports the business community in attracting visitors, investors, and job seekers to our region. Through these types of collaboration, we can maintain the special character of our home for generations to come.

The incredible support we receive from our over 1,000 member-families and local businesses is a sign that our community values the Land Trust’s contribution to its sense of home. This strong support inspires us to keep moving forward, redoubling our effort to secure the unique quality of place we cherish and responding creatively to opportunities and challenges over the long haul.

Angela Twitchell, Executive Director
Brad Babson, Board President
What makes our communities feel like home? We believe it is, in part, the special places where we have strong personal connections. These might include a cherished place to watch the sunset, timeless hours exploring the coast and rivers, a sense of peace found along a quiet trail, searching the woods for the first lady-slipper of the season, picking strawberries at a local farm, the smell of freshly cut hayfields, gatherings at a favorite community park, watching life return to plots at the community garden in spring, seeing your first owl along a hiking trail, and learning to fish on a local stream with your grandfather.

Many of these experiences take place on conserved properties made accessible to all. This is why, over the past 31 years, a core part of the work of Brunswick-Topsham Land Trust has been to protect the special places that make our communities feel like HOME. Now we are redoubling our efforts to preserve the unique quality of place we cherish and to respond creatively to opportunities and challenges over the long haul.
Record Year in Land Conservation

Homes for wildlife, watersheds, farmland, and working waterfront

Thanks to the generosity of our donors, the Land Trust had a record year for land conservation. We conserved 12 properties totaling 200 acres in some of our highest priority conservation focus areas including the Cathance River, New Meadows River watershed, Pennellville/Middle Bay, and farmland in Topsham and Brunswick. Here are some of the highlights:

Woodward Cove, Brunswick
The Land Trust acquired twenty acres of undeveloped land, including 1,500 feet of tidal frontage at the head of Woodward Cove, from the Unitarian Universalist Church (UUC) of Brunswick. The parcel was a priority because it provides public access to some of Brunswick’s most productive, yet least accessible shellfish and baitworm mudflats—and gorgeous views of the waters of Woodward Cove. Long-term plans for this property include improving the existing parking area, securing permanent access for shellfish and baitworm harvesters, and building a recreational woodland path on the parcel for walking and birding.

The project was a collaboration with support from the Town of Brunswick and Maine Coast Heritage Trust. We are incredibly grateful to UUC for their commitment to earth stewardship that made conservation of this property possible.

Cathance River
In 2000, 163-acre Bradley Pond Farm was the only conserved land along the Cathance River in Topsham. Today, 20 properties totaling 1,001 acres have been conserved. Seven of these properties were conserved in last year alone. This success exemplifies the power of collaboration and community to protect places of value close to home. The seven properties conserved this fiscal year are:

Head of Tide Farm, Topsham
This 15-acre property protects the view from Head of Tide Park, conserving 1,100 feet of river frontage adjacent to the Park. With this property, all land surrounding the Cathance River’s head of tide is conserved.

Cathance River Wetlands Preserve, Topsham
Identified as properties of highest conservation value in the Topsham Conservation Commission’s inventory of town-owned lands, these five riverfront properties were transferred from the Town of Topsham to the Land Trust. These predominantly wetland parcels will be permanently conserved and managed for their ecological, habitat, and outdoor recreational values.

Fairwinds Farm, Topsham
Pete and Cathy Karonis, owners of Fairwinds Farm, are well-known in the local agricultural community. A conservation easement on 19 acres of their family farm protects 700 feet of shoreline along the Cathance River, as well as active farmland and wetland resources.
Dana Cary, proudly displaying the harvest from his conserved land in Topsham.

“We are very pleased to know this land will remain as it is forever, and grateful for the opportunity to partner with the Land Trust to protect both the Cathance River and productive farmland.”

– Pete and Cathy Karonis

Pete and Cathy Karonis.

Courtesy of Town of Bowdoinham.
Tom Settlemire Community Garden (TSCG)
In its fifth season, TSCG hosted over 80 plotholder families, including three who were offered scholarship plots. The Garden continues to grow fresh, organic produce for Mid Coast Hunger Prevention Program through the efforts of a dynamic volunteer team, where a typical harvest day includes volunteers ranging from age 2 to 82.

Saturday Farmers’ Market at Crystal Spring Farm
Maine Women Magazine recognized our Farmers’ Market as, “chock-full of vendors and fresh produce and sociable neighbors… To experience the market is to really see a community come alive.” We agree! Our 40 vendors, talented musicians, dedicated volunteers at the Land Trust booth, loyal customers, and remarkable farm setting make Saturday mornings at Crystal Spring Farm a weekly celebration of local food and crafts that we are proud to curate and manage.

Merrymeeting Food Council (MFC)
Especially exciting this year was the wonderful success of the Merrymeeting Gleaners, whose pilot effort rescued over 6,000 pounds of food from local farm fields for distribution by area food banks. The Food Council brought shares of sustainably caught wild Alaskan salmon to the midcoast and provided an opportunity for community members to meet local fishermen.

A Local Look at Our Changing Climate
This year, in collaboration with Cathance River Education Alliance and numerous other community partners, we presented a year-long series of events to share stories of understanding and hope in a changing climate. Experts and community members shared insights on topics ranging from local fisheries to bird migrations and invasive forest insects at lectures, field trips, and hands-on events.
Volunteer Spotlight

Corie Scribner is a Topsham elementary teacher and has been a volunteer educator for our Young Explorers program since its inception. We are grateful for the creative activities, songs, and outdoor learning she has brought to countless Young Explorers.

"Working with Brunswick-Topsham Land Trust has been a great source of joy for me. I love helping families enjoy the natural world. The Land Trust’s properties provide locations for outings that are so pleasant, diverse, and easily accessible to the homes of so many of us!"

Volunteers like Corie are key to making programs like Young Explorers possible. Thank you, Corie, for all that you do to support our mission!
Stewardship Program Adds Value to Our Conservation ‘Homes’

Buying a new home is thrilling! Then comes the reality of maintenance and (if you’re so inclined) increasing its value. Such is the task our stewardship team faces every year – maintaining the conservation value of the properties we’ve acquired and – when we have the opportunity – enhancing those values.

This year, we added value by building new trails at Chase Reserve in Brunswick, and along the Androscoggin River in Topsham. These new trails were the product of tireless work by volunteers, landowners, community partners, and two amazing staff members. Irene Syphers, our Summer Steward, and Margaret Gerber, our new Stewardship Associate, love to heft stone, dig in the dirt, build trails, and sling chainsaws. Syphers led the charge in the field, spending countless hours hewing a mile-long trail out of the woods at Chase Reserve, an easement property on Bunganuc Road featuring some stunning old hemlock. Aided by loyal volunteers, she scouted, cleared and leveled the trail, built four bog bridges, removed difficult blowdowns, and created 100 feet of crushed stone pathway to connect this spectacular trail with adjacent Freeport Conservation Trust trails.

Syphers also led construction of the Town Landing Trail along the Androscoggin River in Topsham, a project contracted to us by the Town of Topsham.

We continued maintenance of existing trails, including many hours re-routing trails and replacing bog bridges at Cathance River Nature Preserve. These and other trails are highly valued for local recreation and spiritual renewal. With the help of trail monitors and community members, we responded to wide-ranging issues associated with trail use, weather, changes in the environment, and land use. Trails need constant attention, but when we do our job well – removing blowdowns, cutting grasses, clipping branches, etc. – our work is invisible to most users. At the same time, our stewardship team worked in the background managing our many easements to ensure their conservation values are maintained.

Many thanks to our trail monitors, easement and fee property monitors, and small but mighty cadre of trail workers! We always welcome more help on the trails and hope everyone will consider making an additional gift this year to grow our Stewardship Endowment!
Stewardship Endowment
Funds raised during our recent comprehensive campaign allowed the Land Trust to create our first ever endowment fund to support ongoing care of our conserved properties. The campaign also increased the pace of land conservation. Since 2008, our portfolio of properties has grown from 25 to 52. Through the generous support of campaign donors, we grew dedicated stewardship funds to $370,000 by the end of FY2016. This is a great start! But we need much more to fully fund our commitment to robust stewardship of our conserved lands in perpetuity. Our goal is to grow this dedicated stewardship fund to $2 million in the coming years. Please contact Angela if you wish to contribute to our stewardship endowment.

Raffle for Stewardship
This summer Land Trust members Martin Wilk and Kerford Marchant generously donated a beautiful 18’ Night Heron wooden kayak they had built for a summer raffle. The raffle raised money for and awareness of the Land Trust’s Stewardship Endowment. The endowment supports management of our cherished conserved lands, ensuring they retain their values long into the future.

With the support of Land Trust members, volunteers, and the community at large, a total of $8,019 was raised for stewardship. Our heartfelt thanks to the volunteers and ticket purchasers who made this raffle a success!
After successfully completing a 5-year comprehensive campaign last year, the Land Trust is now focusing our fundraising on (1) developing sustainable sources of unrestricted annual gift income to support the operating budget, (2) broadening the community’s awareness of and support for the Land Trust, and (3) raising dedicated funds for endowment, stewardship, programs and land acquisition.

We have established three new giving societies to help us meet these goals:
• Community Partners (individuals giving $1,000 or more annually);
• Business Partners (businesses giving $1,000 or more annually);
• Brunswick-Topsham Land Trust Legacy Society (donors who include BTLT in their estate plans).

The Land Trust made significant progress toward these goals in FY2016. Highlights include:
• Growing our membership to just over 1,050;
• Increasing our Community Partners to 56 and Business Partners to 23;
• Raising our stewardship endowment funds to over $370,000.

Our FY2017 fundraising goals include:
• Growing general membership to 1,100 members;
• Increasing Community Partners to 70 and Business Partners to 35;
• Encouraging long-term supporters to support our work in perpetuity through a Legacy Gift;
• Seeking major gifts and grant awards for imminent land conservation projects and community programs;
• Building our stewardship and endowment funds to $400,000 by end of FY2017 with a goal of reaching $2 million in coming years.

“At Wild Oats, we believe in supporting non-profits that have an immediate and significant role in our community. With the Brunswick-Topsham Land Trust, we know that one hundred percent of our dollars are making a local and direct impact on our community and the environment. Through their work in environmental conservation and land stewardship, the Saturday Farmers’ Market, and the creation and maintenance of public access trails, the Land Trust has added immeasurable value to our local communities.”

Becky Shepherd, owner of Wild Oats Bakery & Café, a long-time Business Partner.
Business Supporters
One of our most significant development successes this year was the growth in the number of business supporters backing our work. We feel fortunate to have the support of our vibrant local business community. Together we are supporting the economic vitality of our region while making the Brunswick-Topsham area a special place to live, work, and visit.

Business Partners contribute $1,000 or more of unrestricted support to the Land Trust annually. Please help us thank our Business Partners:

Albert Putnam Associates
Applewald Farm
Bowdoin Baking Company
Cribstone Investment Services
Crystal Spring Community Farm
Down East Cleaning
El Camino Restaurant
Fairwinds Farm
Five Pine, LLC
G.M. Wild Construction
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To find out more about becoming a Business Partner please visit www.btlt.org/business-partners or call the Land Trust at (207)729-7694
Thank You to Our Donors!
Brunswick-Topsham Land Trust gratefully acknowledges the following individuals, foundations, and organizations for their contributions during fiscal year 2015-2016.

Community Partners
Community Partners contribute $1,000 or more to the Land Trust annually. These annual gifts are key to the Land Trust’s ability to continue to innovate and creatively meet the needs of our community. The Land Trust is grateful for the broad base of support we enjoy, but we are especially thankful for those who are willing and able to give at this higher level.

Edwin Allen, Jr. & Barbara Bean
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Marty & Jan Wilk

To find out more about becoming a Community Partner please visit www.btlt.org/community-partners or call the Land Trust at (207)729-7694
Farewell to a Beloved Friend

In the spring of 2016, Walter M. Norton passed away and conservation lost a great colleague and friend. Along with his wife Helen, Walter championed the environment at the local, state and national level including supporting every major effort of the Brunswick-Topsham Land Trust. Over the years, the Nortons supported our very early work to conserve and reinstate Crystal Spring Farm to a working farm, sustained our efforts to protect important wildlife island habitats along the shores of Brunswick, and provided a key lead gift to our recent campaign which focused on raising support for conservation, stewardship, and growth of our education and outreach efforts.

Their efforts provide lessons for us all on how to balance the needs of our natural world with the challenge to grow and create healthy communities. Walter will be sorely missed for his generosity, wonderful stories of his youth and the history along our coast, and deep appreciation for how quality of life and our natural world intersect.
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Helen Coxe
“One of my first bike rides after I arrived in Brunswick was on Pleasant Hill Road and I have loved the area ever since. How fortunate we are that the Land Trust created the Saturday Farmers’ Market at the farm. The quality of the food is unsurpassed, as is the relaxed atmosphere of friendliness and warmth among customers and vendors. It is festive and fun to be there.

Volunteering at the Land Trust booth at Market, I have the chance to talk with people about the Market, conservation, and community, which add so much to our quality of life here. It is a pleasure to support these things that make midcoast Maine a wonderful place to live, a place I am happy to call home.”

Averil Fessenden, Land Trust member and volunteer
“For the past 15 years, I have been caretaker of the Land Trust’s tree swallow and bluebird houses. Over these years, Barbara and I have happily watched the increase in the number of Land Trust members working in different ways and places to benefit people, food, plants, and animals.

We are especially thankful to those who gave their time and energy to build a rich foundation for the Land Trust’s many programs which enhance life in Maine for all of us. Both Barbara and I most enjoy time where we can draw, paint, write and observe the variety of life—from bears to bats, beetles to butterflies, and bogs to barrens. The Land Trust is integral to the joy we find living in Maine. We also delight in knowing that BTLT will continue to ensure that our community’s conserved lands will be enjoyed by future generations.”

Ted Allen, long-time BTLT member, volunteer, and former Board member

Ted Allen and wife Barbara Bean.

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Long-Time Board Member Honored with Espy Award

Tom Settlemire, an active BTLT Board member since 1988, was recognized for his outstanding contribution to land conservation in Maine with the Espy Land Heritage Award at the 2016 Maine Land Conference. Among other things, the award recognized his innovative thinking about how land trusts can advance local food economies. Tom has long recognized a strong link between land conservation goals and active farms. He was instrumental in conserving Crystal Spring Farm (CSF) and promoting its return to commercial farming. A natural innovator, Tom recognized that, to be a successful land trust project, CSF must benefit not only its tenant farmer but also other participants in the local food economy. Tom first envisioned the farmers’ market at CSF—now a thriving local food hub and model for others. More recently, Tom helped to launch the Merrymeeting Food Council, a collaboration of stakeholders working to advance a resilient food system. Tom’s enthusiasm and persuasiveness have inspired BTLT and the broader community to actively promote conservation and local agriculture initiatives, with great success. His parting words at the awards ceremony were: “We must find ways to engage the next generation. Now let’s get back to work—because we are not done yet!”
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We’ve tried our best to ensure the accuracy of this donor list. We sincerely apologize if there are any errors. If your name is omitted or listed incorrectly, please call 729-7694 or contact angela@btlt.org. Thank you!

“To me, a gift to the Land Trust is an investment in the future—an enduring gift that becomes more valuable as years pass. The Land Trust enriches our lives in many ways—ensuring in perpetuity the stunning beauty of midcoast Maine, mitigating the negative effects of climate change, protecting natural areas threatened by development, encouraging local agricultural resources. They also provide accessible, affordable recreational opportunities in peaceful surroundings and steward these lands, year after year, for future generations. Thank you, Brunswick-Topsam Land Trust.”

Nelia Dunbar, long-time BTLT member, volunteer, Advisory Board Member, and former Board member
Leaving a Legacy

For more than 30 years, Brunswick-Topsham Land Trust has protected places that make our community and landscape extraordinary. By including the Land Trust in your estate plans, maintaining these extraordinary places for future generations can become part of your legacy.

Planned gifts come in many different forms. Each gift is an expression of one person’s desire to have a lasting impact. Every gift – large or small – makes a difference. We can work with you and your advisors to create your unique legacy to conservation in our community. If you wish to learn more or have included a bequest to the Land Trust in your estate plans, please contact Angela Twitchell at 207-729-7694 or angela@btlr.org.
Your donations continue to strengthen the financial capacity of your land trust. With nearly $3.7 million in net assets and a growing stewardship endowment, we are confident in the organization’s ability to fulfill its mission, now and in the future.
Support, Revenue, and Gains by Category
Totaling $1,038K for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2016

Expenses by Category
Totaling $823K for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2016

Program Expenses by Category
Totaling $634K for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2016
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