

ANNUAL REPORT

FISCAL YEAR 2023



 Aquidneck Land Trust



OUR MISSION

To preserve and steward Aquidneck Island’s open spaces for the lasting benefit of the community, while connecting people with the land that defines the island’s natural character.

Dear ALT friends,

I am so pleased to welcome Terry Sullivan as the new Executive Director of Aquidneck Land Trust! Terry comes to us as a proven leader in conservation. We are so fortunate to have him bring his talents and experience to the Aquidneck Land Trust.

As my tenure comes to an end on the board, I could not be prouder of the accomplishments Aquidneck Land Trust realized in 2023, even in a time of notable change for the organization. At the beginning of the fiscal year, we passed a deficit budget; however, by the end of the year we found ourselves in a much different place. Aquidneck Land Trust Trustees and staff exceeded all goals for the year, helping us realize a financial surplus! Our conservation and stewardship work has been exceptional as well. Since October 2022 we have protected 49 acres of priority conservation lands, including farms, fields and wonderful vistas. In addition, we expanded our education, outreach, and community engagement.

At our Annual Meeting, we will honor departing trustees Ellen Bowman, Treasurer Zia Eftekhari, Dr. Martha McConnell, Steve McInnis, Dwight Sippelle, and Nancy Parker Wilson. We will also be welcoming new trustees Tom Gibson and David MacBain. We are deeply grateful to all our trustees and advisors for their knowledge and guidance.

Thank you for your continued support,

Tom Hockaday
Board Chair

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Cover: *Lazy Lawn, Middletown*
Conserved October 2023

Dear ALT friends,

As the new Executive Director, I am so impressed with the accomplishments of the Aquidneck Land Trust. Because of your enduring support for our critical mission of conserving land and protecting drinking water, we have had a tremendous year of accomplishments! From October 2022 up to the time of publication we have been busy protecting land! Lands conserved include the Peabody Farm and Lazy Lawn property in Middletown, and the Wood-Estabrook Preserve, Hedly Street Preserve, Sullivan Preserve, and Zurlo Family Farm in Portsmouth. Through these efforts we added a total of 49 acres to our conservation rolls.



We are thrilled to be approaching the incredible milestone of conserving one hundred properties across the Island this year. The collective commitment of so many over the years has been the driving force behind these amazing outcomes. From the dedicated staff members, our Trustees, devoted members, and generous donors—both past and present—who have built a solid and sure foundation, I express my heartfelt appreciation.

As we celebrate our accomplishments, it is crucial to acknowledge the challenges that we face as an island community. Climate change poses a formidable threat to Aquidneck Island, affecting our landscapes, ecosystems, and the very essence of our mission. In facing these challenges head-on, we are not just mitigating environmental impacts; we are shaping a legacy of resilience and sustainability for future generations.

Looking to the future, it will be imperative that we double down on our land conservation efforts. The increasing threats to our remaining unprotected lands demand a sense of urgency that matches the unrelenting drive to build out every remaining parcel of open space. We need to find new and creative ways to protect and restore our water resources. Poorly managed stormwater introduces pollutants into our Island waters. Aquidneck Land Trust hopes to find additional ways to partner with public and private entities in helping to solve this major problem.

Finally, I believe Aquidneck Island can become a model of climate resilience. Islands around the world are on the front lines of climate impacts through increasingly powerful storms and sea level rise. The Island can be a place where people and nature continue to thrive despite substantial climate challenges. By fostering innovative approaches and strengthening our communities' commitment to conservation, we can ensure a more sustainable future for Aquidneck Island and our communities.

Margaret Mead once said, "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has." As we embark on the journey ahead, we can and must draw strength from our shared purpose. The challenges of climate change, combined with unchecked development, may be daunting, but the power of a united effort dedicated to the wellbeing of Aquidneck Island is unstoppable. I have no doubt that our collective efforts, as a small but committed group, will continue to make a lasting impact, ensuring that the beauty, vitality, and rich cultural heritage of this island endures for generations.

Thank you for your unwavering support and effort. I look forward to making this hopeful journey with all of you.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Terry Sullivan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Terry Sullivan
Executive Director

Milestones

October 2022

- Hosted a Fall Foliage Walk and Talk along the Sakonnet Greenway Trail. Staff pointed out interesting plants and animals as attendees enjoyed the fall colors.
- Partnered with local universities throughout October. Conservation Director Alex Chuman gave a guest presentation on farm conservation to Salve Regina's 'Food Matters' undergraduate class, Stewardship Manager Sean Grandy led a tour of Oakland Forest for URI's Introduction to Forest Science class, and the Salve Regina University Environmental Club spent an afternoon at Oakland Forest helping to remove invasive Norway Maple.

November 2022

- Three new park kiosks were installed at the entrances to Miantonomi Memorial Park, featuring a map and park information. The Newport Health Equity Zone Greening Urban Spaces working group and the City of Newport partnered with us on the project as part of an initiative to further improve park access and usability. Funding was provided by a RIDOH grant, graphic design was by Spence Creative, kiosk construction by Aquidneck Land Trust, and installation by the City of Newport.
- Conservation Director Alex Chuman participated in a well-attended panel on watershed conservation organized by the Newport Garden Club at the Newport Library. Other panelists included Rob Schultz from the City of Newport and Kate Venturini Hardesty from the URI Outreach Center.
- Stewardship staff planted 26 native trees that were donated by People's Credit Union.

December 2022

- Conserved Peabody Farm, a 9.54-acre farmland property off Third Beach Road in Middletown. The property is within the Maidford River/Paradise drinking supply watershed and is located near other conserved lands.
- Our stewardship team completed the last of over 100 conservation easement site visits for 2022, fulfilling our perpetual obligation to monitor our conservation easements and fee properties to ensure they remain as dedicated open space.

January 2023

- The Town of Portsmouth completed major improvements to Mt. Hope Park, a small seaside park with fantastic views located just north of the Mount Hope Bridge. The Town and ALT worked to purchase and conserve the park in 2016. The Town owns and manages the park.
- Hosted a farewell to Chuck Allott in celebration of all his achievements at Aquidneck Land Trust over his 11 years as Executive Director.
- Welcomed two student interns for the spring: Science Communications Intern Ally Overbay from the URI Masters of Environmental Science and Management Program and Land Management Intern Max Van Winkle from Salve Regina University. Interns were able to earn course credit through completing projects.



New kiosks were installed at Miantonomi Memorial Park, with maps and park information to improve access and usability for all who visit.



A conservation easement was placed on Peabody Farm by the late John Peabody and his son, Forester Peabody.



A celebration was held to honor former Executive Director Chuck Allott for his eleven years of service to Aquidneck Land Trust.

February 2023

- The 2022 Annual Meeting was held via Zoom and featured an overview of the last fiscal year's accomplishments.
- Announced the winners of the 2022 Art & Writing Contest for students across Aquidneck Island, held annually to promote the importance and value of preserving open space. Thank you to sponsor Sixteen on Center for enabling ALT to make this contest happen every year.
- Conserved a 4.91-acre wetlands property on Portsmouth's northwest shore, donated by its owners, Peter S. Wood and Polly Estabrook. The parcel is part of a larger 44-acre marsh and beach area situated between the railroad line and the bay.
- Stewardship staff presented an interactive watershed education lesson to four Portsmouth High School classes. The environmental science students learned about the ways various pollutants, such as lawn fertilizers, pet waste, litter, and motor oil have impaired Aquidneck Island's drinking water reservoirs.
- Conserved the 11.48-acre Zurlo Family Farm property off Moitoza Lane in Portsmouth. The land is located within the drinking supply watershed, has excellent soils for farming, and is now being leased to Hawk & Handsaw Farm. ALT received a grant from the State of RI Agricultural Preservation Commission to help fund the conservation easement purchase.
- Stewardship Manager Sean Grandy participated in a panel discussion at St. George's School with other non-profits from across the Island. Students were able to ask questions and learn more about the different non-profits, including Aquidneck Land Trust.

March 2023

- Hosted a Pollinator Garden Workshop at Spruce Acres Farm. Stewardship Manager Sean Grandy led a discussion on creating pollinator habitat and then participants helped prepare pollinator nesting sites.
- Stewardship staff installed two new bat boxes and new bluebird nest boxes at Oakland Forest and Spruce Acres to improve habitat on these preserves. These improvements were funded through a Natural Resources Conservation Service contract.
- Welcomed a new Interim Executive Director, Brian Gallagher! Brian worked for six months to help ALT during the transition period between executive directors.
- Hired Leah Kossak, our new Marketing and Engagement Director.

April 2023

- The Almy Pond Watershed Protectors hosted an event to go over findings about pollution levels in Almy Pond, what the city and volunteers have done to better understand the sources of pollution, and what we can all do to help stop it. Speakers included Dr. Jameson Chace, professor at Salve Regina University; Alex Chuman and Chuck Allott from Aquidneck Land Trust; Elena Kissel, Esq. Environmental Attorney; Lily Dick, Chair of Newport Tree Conservancy; and Topher Hamblett and Wenley Ferguson from Save the Bay.
- Volunteers were active throughout the spring. The Salve Regina University Environmental Club helped plant 65 native shrubs on the Sakonnet Greenway Trail near Braman's Lane, St. George's School volunteers helped remove invasive species at Oakland Forest and



Stewardship staff presented an interactive watershed education lesson to four Portsmouth High School classes of environmental science students.



ALT conserved a 4.91 wetlands property on Portsmouth's northwest shore, donated by its owners, Peter S. Wood and Polly Estabrook.



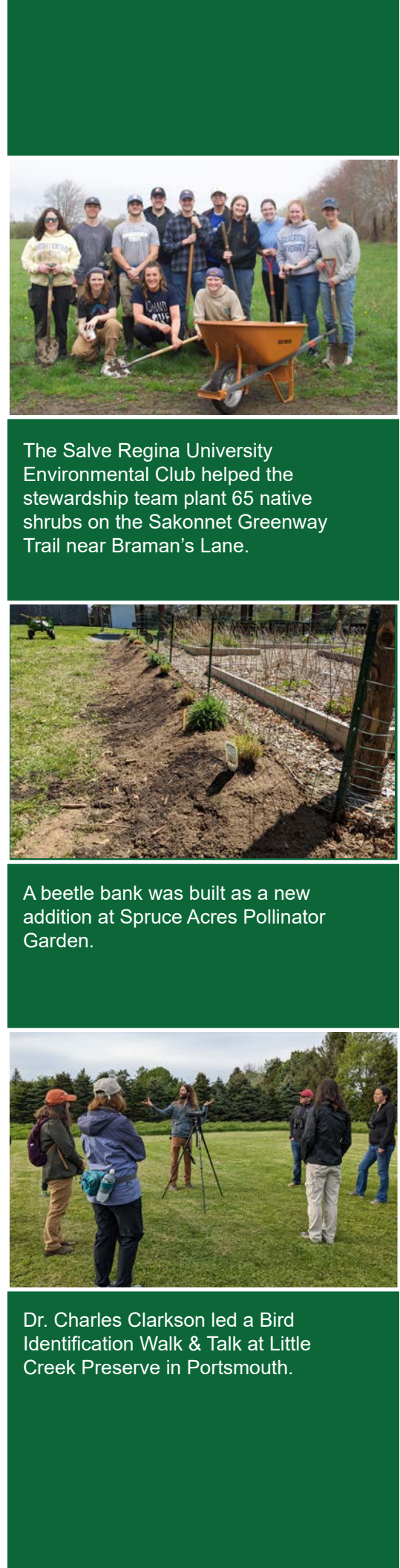
Volunteers of all ages braved the March weather to prepare nesting sites in the pollinator garden at Spruce Acres Farm.

Meadow, and St. Mary's volunteers helped at the Spruce Acres Community Garden as part of their "Day of Service."

- Hosted the fourth annual William H. Donner Climate Change Lecture series, offered as part of the Aquidneck Island Earth Week series of events. The presentation, made by URI professor Dr. Sarah Lindley Smith, was entitled: *Fisheries and Climate Change: Global Issue, Local Consequences*, and was presented free to the community via Zoom.
- Conservation Director Alex Chuman made a presentation to the Newport Channing Church as a part of their Earth Day Ceremony. The presentation focused on the importance of preserving and protecting our drinking water watershed areas. We thank the congregation for making a generous donation as part of the service.
- Stewardship Manager Sean Grandy attended the Portsmouth High School Earth Day Festival. Students learned more about Aquidneck Land Trust and were able to pin their favorite open space on the Aquidneck Island map.
- The stewardship team built a beetle bank as a new addition to the Spruce Acres pollinator garden. Complete with interpretive signage, the beetle bank offers a holistic option to control garden pests by attracting predatory insects.
- Hired new Assistant Development Director, Jocelyn Hopkins.

May 2023

- Hosted a Bird Identification Walk & Talk led by Dr. Charles Clarkson, former Board Member. Dr. Charles Clarkson identified birds by their songs and answered questions about the changing migratory patterns of different species.
- Dr. Brennan Phillips, a professor from URI, gave two lectures to Rogers High School and Portsmouth High School assemblies as part of the William H. Donner Climate Change program. Students completed a climate change unit and prepared exhibits on climate change resiliency ideas, with top exhibitors receiving cash prizes.
- Alex Chuman, Conservation Director, spoke at The Point Association of Newport's Annual Meeting about land conservation and community engagement work.
- Held a series of three workshops with GrowSmartRI (one in each town) exploring how smart growth policies can expand affordable housing and transportation choices while preserving the natural and historic beauty of Aquidneck Island. These events were made possible with generous support from the van Beuren Charitable Foundation.
- Welcomed summer interns Julie Rogers and Claire Williams. Every year, we hire two summer interns to assist with stewardship work, while learning best practices in land management and conservation.
- Sean Grandy, Stewardship Manager, led a hike on the Sakonnet Greenway Trail with Queer Hikes and Outhounds Adventure & Training Academy. The group checked out some plants along the boardwalk, and even got the chance to hear and see Bobolinks (a bird species of great conservation need in RI). It was a fun time for both humans and dogs!



The Salve Regina University Environmental Club helped the stewardship team plant 65 native shrubs on the Sakonnet Greenway Trail near Braman's Lane.

A beetle bank was built as a new addition at Spruce Acres Pollinator Garden.

Dr. Charles Clarkson led a Bird Identification Walk & Talk at Little Creek Preserve in Portsmouth.

June 2023

- Installed a composting restroom at Spruce Acres Farm, making visiting more convenient. Our thanks to the Champlin Foundation, Coll Family Foundation, Bafflin Foundation, and many community members and foundations who donated to this project.
- Officially opened the new Glen Pasture Loop off of Glen Farm Road in Portsmouth with a ribbon cutting attended by donors and friends. Staff led the first official hike of the loop that abuts historic Glen Farm Stables.
- Worked with the Portsmouth Town Council to secure unanimous support for town staff to work with us on a 10-year trail easement around the perimeter of Glen Farm Stables. This trail segment will connect the Sakonnet Greenway Trail to the brand-new Glen Pasture Loop trail, adding another mile to the longest nature trail on the Island!
- Conserved nearly 10 acres of wetland property on Hedly Street in Portsmouth. The majority of the property is forested wetland with a section of upland forest and meadow. Multiple tributaries meander through the property into Bloody Brook, which eventually empties into Narragansett Bay. The site has excellent habitat for year-round and migratory birds, raptors, amphibians, and mammals.
- Hosted a Landowner and Volunteer Appreciation BBQ at Ragged Island Brewery to thank them for their contributions to land conservation.
- Held a Botany Walk & Talk at Spruce Acres Farm led by University of Rhode Island botanist Dr. Brian Maynard. Participants walked the Gewirz Trail for a plant exploration and study.
- With funding through a Natural Resources Conservation Service Environmental Quality Incentives Program contract, Sweet Birch Consulting LLC completed a forest management plan for Oakland Forest. The plan will help us address the impacts of Beech Leaf Disease.

July 2023

- Our Evening At Home fundraising event was a great success! Groups of donors hosted dinners across the Island to support land conservation. Our thanks to McGrath Catering, Sweet Berry Farm, Garman Farm, Newport Vineyards, Greenvale Vineyards, and Ragged Island Brewing for their participation.
- In July and August, Newport's historic Miantonomi Memorial Tower was opened to the public on Monday afternoons by ALT, the Newport Open Space Partnership, Newport Health Equity Zone, and the City of Newport. These openings coincided with the farmers market in the park.
- Held more volunteer work days. Throughout the year, our network of volunteers helped with a variety of stewardship tasks, including garden maintenance, invasive species removal, and native plant establishment.

August 2023

- Held a special Walk & Talk at Spruce Acres Farm hosted by Lorén M. Spears, enrolled Narragansett Tribal Nation citizen and Executive Director of the Tomaquag Museum. Together, we learned more about Indigenous culture, traditional ecological knowledge, and medicinal plants.
- The Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Community Center's Adventure Summer Camp program visited Spruce Acres Farm. Sean Grandy, Stewardship Manager, taught the campers about pollinators, led a scavenger hunt around the Pollinator Garden, and everyone made their own bees with egg cartons, pipe cleaners, and creative colors.
- Held two public Trolley Tours with Alex Chuman, Conservation



The new Glen Pasture Loop opened in Portsmouth.



Thank you to all our landowners and volunteers! ALT hosted a cookout at Ragged Island Brewing as a token of our appreciation.




Lorén M. Spears hosted a fascinating Walk & Talk at Spruce Acres Farm to a full group, educating all on Indigenous culture and our collective relationships with plants.

Director, as the speaker. They were fascinating guided tours around Aquidneck Island to view first-hand some of the important properties that we conserved since our founding in 1990. The last stop was at Aquidneck Land Trust-conserved Sweet Berry Farm for a delicious wine and cheese reception.

September 2023

- In collaboration with the RI Wild Plant Society's Reseeding RI Initiative, our staff and volunteers planted 400 native plants at Spruce Acres Farm. The plants will create ecologically biodiverse habitats and will be harvested and used to increase the number of genetically suited native plants in the plant supply chain. A total of 200 narrowleafed mountain mint (*Pycnanthemum tenuifolium*) seedlings and 200 blue vervain (*Verbea hastata*) seedlings went into the "foundation" plots that were solarized over the summer.
- Hosted our 21st Golf Tournament at ALT-conserved Newport National Golf Club in Middletown. Our thanks to the club for hosting and all the golfers for their participation in this annual fundraiser.
- The URI Invasive Species Research, Management, and Policy course visited Oakland Forest and Meadow to learn more about the preserve and Aquidneck Land Trust's stewardship work. In addition to a guided hike from Stewardship Manager Sean Grandy, students put their skills to the test by removing invasive species and conducting a forest inventory of different plots throughout the old-growth beech stand.
- Terry Sullivan began his work and leadership as Executive Director. Terry, a national leader in conservation, came to Aquidneck Land Trust after many years with The Nature Conservancy. Terry was the Northeast Division Director and guided the collective efforts of ten chapters to realize large-scale conservation outcomes. Terry's leadership and extensive background in conservation, combined with his experience in strategic planning, fundraising, policy development, and management, will be invaluable to us as we continue our work and commitment to preserving and protecting land and waters on Aquidneck Island.



Volunteers, ALT staff, and RI Wild Plant Society's Reseeding RI Initiative members planted 400 native plants at Spruce Acres Farm. The plants will create ecologically biodiverse habitats.



Enjoy our chef-driven marketplace featuring high quality prepared foods, made to order meals, products and ingredients from local farms & purveyors, and much more!

Stop in, or order online for convenient takeout and delivery of select offerings.

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FOODLOVEMARKET.COM

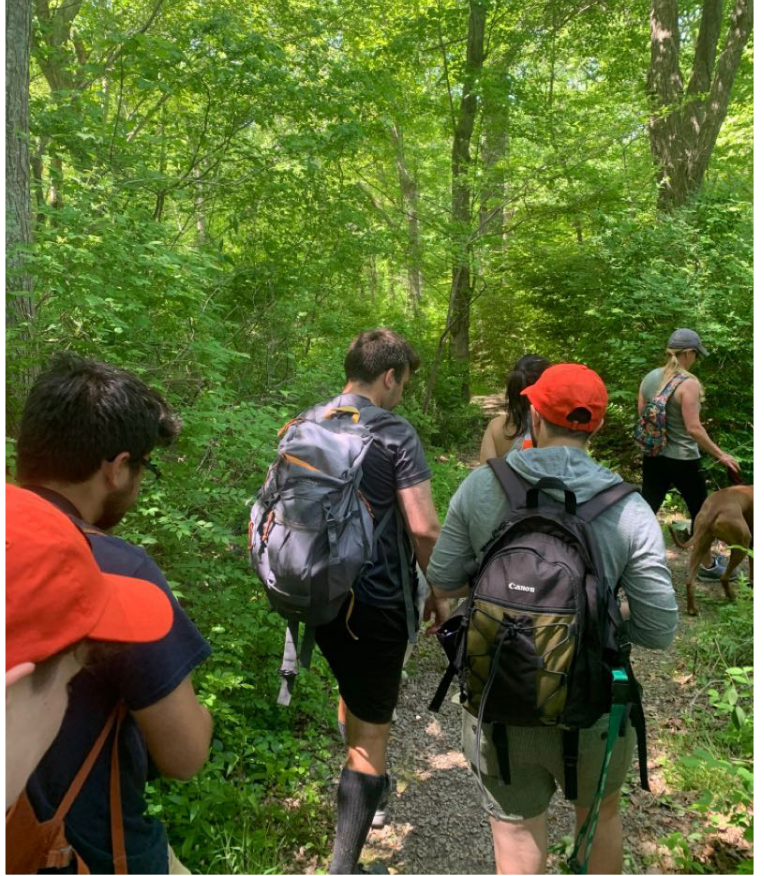
📷 @foodlovemarket

A Newport Restaurant Group Experience



Prepared Meals | Café | Grab & Go | Catering





A Legacy for All on Aquidneck Island



Karen and Conrad Donahue

Karen and Conrad Donahue moved to Aquidneck Island in 1999 so Conrad could study at the US Naval War College in Newport. They loved Aquidneck Island so much they made it their home. Now they are giving back to the Island in a big way by becoming members of The Green Island Society, the Aquidneck Land Trust's legacy giving program. Karen and Conrad have made a planned gift, generously dedicating a portion of their estate to the Aquidneck Land Trust.

Upon moving to the Island, Conrad set out to explore all the amazing places Aquidneck Island offered. He remembers most the sense of joy his family had in discovering the Island's farms, open spaces, and scenic vistas.

An avid hiker, Conrad introduced his passion to his children and grandchildren, venturing out as often as possible to hike the trails offered on the Aquidneck Land Trust's preserves. He notes, "I have hiked the trails hundreds of times with my grandsons, Devin (22), Ryan (20), and Tyler (5). I wish more people knew what a gem they have right in their backyards."

While spending 30 years in the Navy Submarine Force, and through his contracting and small business careers, Conrad never considered living anywhere else. Even when Conrad held a position that required him to commute to Boston, he endured the traffic to keep his family in their Aquidneck Island home.

Conrad has enjoyed walking along the Sakonnet Greenway Trail since its inception and watched as it expanded into the ten-mile trail that it is today. He and his family also venture out to the Aquidneck Land Trust's other preserves: Spruce Acres Farm, Oakland Forest & Meadow, and the new Glen Farm Pasture Loop where his grandson, Tyler, loves to sit and watch the horses.

When it came time for Conrad and Karen to make the decision about leaving their own legacy on the Island they cherish, they decided they could have the greatest impact by supporting Aquidneck Land Trust and its critical mission.

"Our family has spent countless hours enjoying the lands conserved by the Aquidneck Land Trust. We appreciate the quality-of-life benefits and enjoyment we and other Islanders derive from the conserved farms, open space, and natural areas. We are immensely happy that the Land Trust and its supporters had the foresight to conserve the special places that make this island a wonderful place to live and raise a family. The Aquidneck Land Trust's efforts benefit the whole Island now and into the future. We cannot imagine a better way for us to leave a lasting legacy!"

Landowner Partners

The Aquidneck Land Trust has conserved 2,816 acres since its founding in 1990. We gratefully thank these very special individuals, families, businesses, neighborhood associations, municipalities, and other government agencies who have partnered with us to preserve and steward their land in perpetuity. Their vision for the future and appreciation of the past leave a priceless legacy.

Anonymous (3)
Sandra B. Allen
Lewis Arnow
Friends of Almy Pond
Mr. and Mrs. Daniel J. Alvarnas
Edythe Anthony
Muriel Anthony
Armory Revival Company
The Ballard Family
Manuel J. Borges
Derek Boudreau and Tiffanie Starr
Mrs. Jean I. Braman
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Henry and Andrea Crump
Crystal Spring Water Company,
The Scott Family
Mary Cushing Coleman
Dave and Sandra Cotta
John Deveau
Loren Deveau
The Dey Family
The Dick Family

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Sweet Berry Farm
Jan Eckhart and Ted Eckhart
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Polly Estabrook
Roberta Faria
The Faria Family
Farmlands, LLC
Farmscapes Holdings, LLC
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Green Valley Country Club, Inc.
Hamilton Family Charitable Trust
Mrs. Samuel M.V. Hamilton
Diana Harrison
Mr. and Mrs. F. James Hodges, Jr.
JIC Capital LLC
Steve and Irene Johnson
The Estate of Helen Jones
The Kempenaar Family
Joe Lacerda, Jr.
Lazy Lawn Realty LP
Marcella McCormack
Town of Middletown
Middletown Main, LLC
Middletown Open Space and Fields
Committee
Katherine M. Murphy

The Nature Conservancy
Paul Nelson
Newport Country Club
Newport National Golf Club
John and Paul Nunes, Newport
Vineyards & Winery
Newport Water Department
Norman Bird Sanctuary
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Flaherty, and Edna North
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Bill and Barbara O'Reilly, Bally
Machree Farm, LLC
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The Peckham Family
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Marie Ney
Town of Portsmouth
The Preservation Society of
Newport County
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RI Department of Environmental
Management
RI Water Resources Board
Peter and Ann Randall
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Carol Rodrigues and Nancy
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John J. Slocum
Jason and Meredith Spitalnik
F.M. Sullivan
The Sullivan Family
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U.S. Dept. of Agriculture's Natural
Resources Conservation
Service (NRCS)
Valley Associates II
The van Beuren Family
John and Deborah Warner
Katherine and Michael Waters
Mr. and Mrs. James Webster
Charles R. Whitehouse
The Wicks Family
Wild Moor, LLC
Peter S. Wood
Paul and Sylvia Zurlo

Green Island Society

You can help conserve Aquidneck Island for future generations by making a planned gift to the Aquidneck Land Trust. Please let us know if you have included ALT in your estate plan so that we can thank you and welcome you to the Green Island Society. We honor this Society throughout the year and thank its members for their generosity and foresight.

Thank you to our Green Island Society members:

*Andy Arkway**
Dennis Bristow
Annie Castelnovo and Bill McMullen
Conrad and Karen Donahue
*Roger Leslie Englander**
*Beth Everett**
Michele Foster
John and Joanne Gorman*
*Bruce Hoitt**
Nancy Jamison
Steve and Irene Johnson
Paul and Beverly Kelly
Roger and Sandra King*
Sanne Kure-Jensen

*William Loeseke**
*Marcella Clark McCormack**
*William Mershon**
Jim and Jane Moore
Paul Simone and Carol Chabot
Edwin G. and Catherine S. Singen
Jonathan and Bettie Bearden Pardee
James V. Serzan
Drs. Christopher Pargellis and
Denice Spero
Don and Meg Steiner
Sheila Reilly
Lisa Trainor
*Marjorie Ward**

**Leaving a legacy
to protect the island
we love.**

For more information about how you can leave your legacy on Aquidneck Island, please contact Edward Magro at emagro@ailt.org or 401.849.2799, ext. 118

*DECEASED

99 Properties Conserved, and Counting!

The journey to 100! Aquidneck Land Trust has been protecting land since 1993, when we placed a donated conservation easement on the John J. Slocum Estate in Newport. Since then, we have saved open spaces of all types from habitat to farmland to water resources to estates and recreational lands. Highlighted are three properties from each town along the journey to 100!

MIDDLETOWN

Sweet Berry Farm (#4 -1996)

In 1980 Sweet Berry Farm started as a hobby farm run by owners Jan and Michelle Eckhart. Despite desires to grow, the expense of nearby land made it impossible to purchase more acreage needed to farm full time. By partnering with us in 1996, Jan and Michelle were able to acquire the farmland they needed, with Aquidneck Land Trust purchasing development rights on seventy-seven acres of land, ensuring it stayed open space in perpetuity. The Eckharts started their first farmstand out of beer coolers under white pop-up tents next to an old goat shed. In 2004 the farmstand was built, and the farm continues to grow into the community destination it is today. After the initial 77-acre deal, we continued to work with the Eckharts, protecting six more acres in 2002 and another five in 2021. Jan and Michelle now run the farm on one hundred acres with a successful farmstand, certified kitchen, and event space.



Middletown Valley a/k/a Kempenaar Valley (#30 - 2004)

The 45-acre open space was for decades nursery farmland owned by the Kempenaar family. Located adjacent to shopping plazas and a large residential neighborhood, it is the only large acreage open space in this part of Middletown, and prior to being conserved was under significant threat of being developed. In 2004, the Town of Middletown partnered with RI Department of Environmental Management, the City of Newport and us to purchase the land for \$3 million. Major conservation improvements made by the Town include a permeable walking trail, benches and signage, hundreds of new trees, and installation of green infrastructure to help improve water quality draining into Bailey Brook. It is a prime example of a multi-faceted conservation property, providing walkways for recreation, grasslands and wetlands for habitat, a scenic view, and protection of our drinking water sources.



Green End Preserve (#90 - 2022)

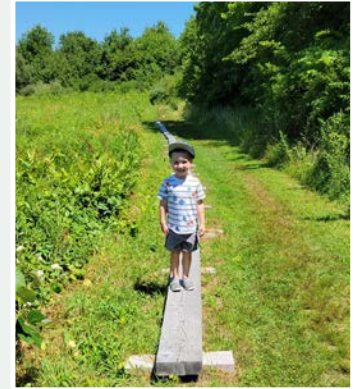
In the post-COVID real estate boom, the threat of losing our remaining open spaces has grown. The Green End Preserve at the intersection of Green End Ave and Vaucluse Ave was on the planning board docket in 2021 for between four and seven new homes across the fifteen acres. We were able to work out a deal with the developer to purchase the land for conservation with significant contributions from neighbors. The land now serves to protect Little Creek before it flows into the Sakonnet River, provides both wetland and grassland habitat, and maintains the scenic view along Green End Ave.



PORTSMOUTH

Oakland Forest and Meadow (#7 - 2000)

In the late nineties this 30-acre forest and meadow property was slated to become another condominium development. While the local neighborhood fought the development, local forester Matt Largess recognized the importance of the old growth American beech forest, with trees up to three hundred years old. ALT was able to step in to save the land with the help of the community. Now the regionally significant forest, part of the Old Growth Forest Network, is conserved, and includes a half-mile loop trail. It provides habitat and watershed protection around St. Mary's Pond, a drinking water source for the Island.



Escobar's Highland Farm (#37 - 2005)



In 2005, Aquidneck Land Trust and partners including the State of Rhode Island, USDA-NRCS, and the Town of Portsmouth worked with the Escobars to preserve seventy-five acres of the dairy farm off Middle Road in Portsmouth. Escobar Farm is one of the few remaining dairy farms in the state and sells milk as part of the Rhody Fresh co-op. Farmers and owners Louie (aka Mr. Portsmouth), who sadly passed in 2022, and Jane were featured in the 2016 film *Forgotten Farms*. The farm is also famous for its corn maze every fall and Fourth of July firework shows.

Little Creek Preserve (#79 - 2018)

In 2018, we were able to purchase this important fifteen-acre open space off Bramans Lane in Portsmouth. When the property was listed on the market, we reached out to the landowner, Dennis Silvia, to try and work out saving the property. Since its conservation, we have opened a trail with signage, installed a boardwalk and viewing platform, and put in a new permeable trailhead parking lot. Dennis continues to help take care of the land and trails. The land is the headwaters of Little Creek a tributary of the Sakonnet River and is a great place for birding and wildlife viewing.



Almy Pond Conservation Area (#15 – 2000)



After a developer in the eighties and nineties failed to get a twenty-seven lot subdivision through permitting on Spouting Rock Drive, the Aquidneck Land Trust and the City came together, with the support of neighbors, to purchase the twenty acres of land on the north and northeast shores of Almy pond to conserve it. More recently, the City has led a major pavement removal project, removing an old road and restoring the site into meadow habitat to help reduce stormwater impacts to the

pond. We are part of the Almy Pond Watershed Protectors group, a coalition with a mission to improve water quality by supporting green infrastructure projects in this heavily polluted pond.

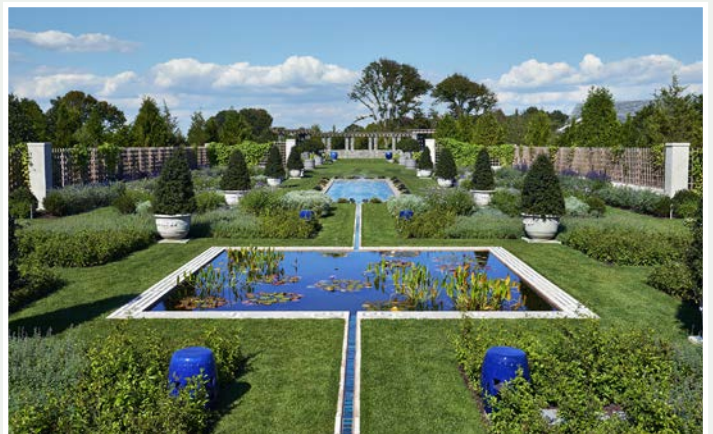
Miantonomi Memorial Park and Sunset Hill (#35 and #42 – 2005/2006)

Why would we place a conservation easement on a city park? The history of Miantonomi Park is a good example. In the early seventies the City of Newport was able to carve off an acre of the parkland to build the now vacant Maher Center, despite a deed restriction on the park. Since then a conservation easement on the land was granted in 2005 to Aquidneck Land Trust. The easement ensures the parkland will forever remain a public park. The park, which includes thirty acres, and the adjacent 5.5-acre Sunset Hill parcel, is an important open space for recreation, habitat, and tree canopy in the North End neighborhood. We partnered with the City, other non-profits and the community to make improvements in recent years such as a new restroom, new signage, playground equipment, and additional programming.

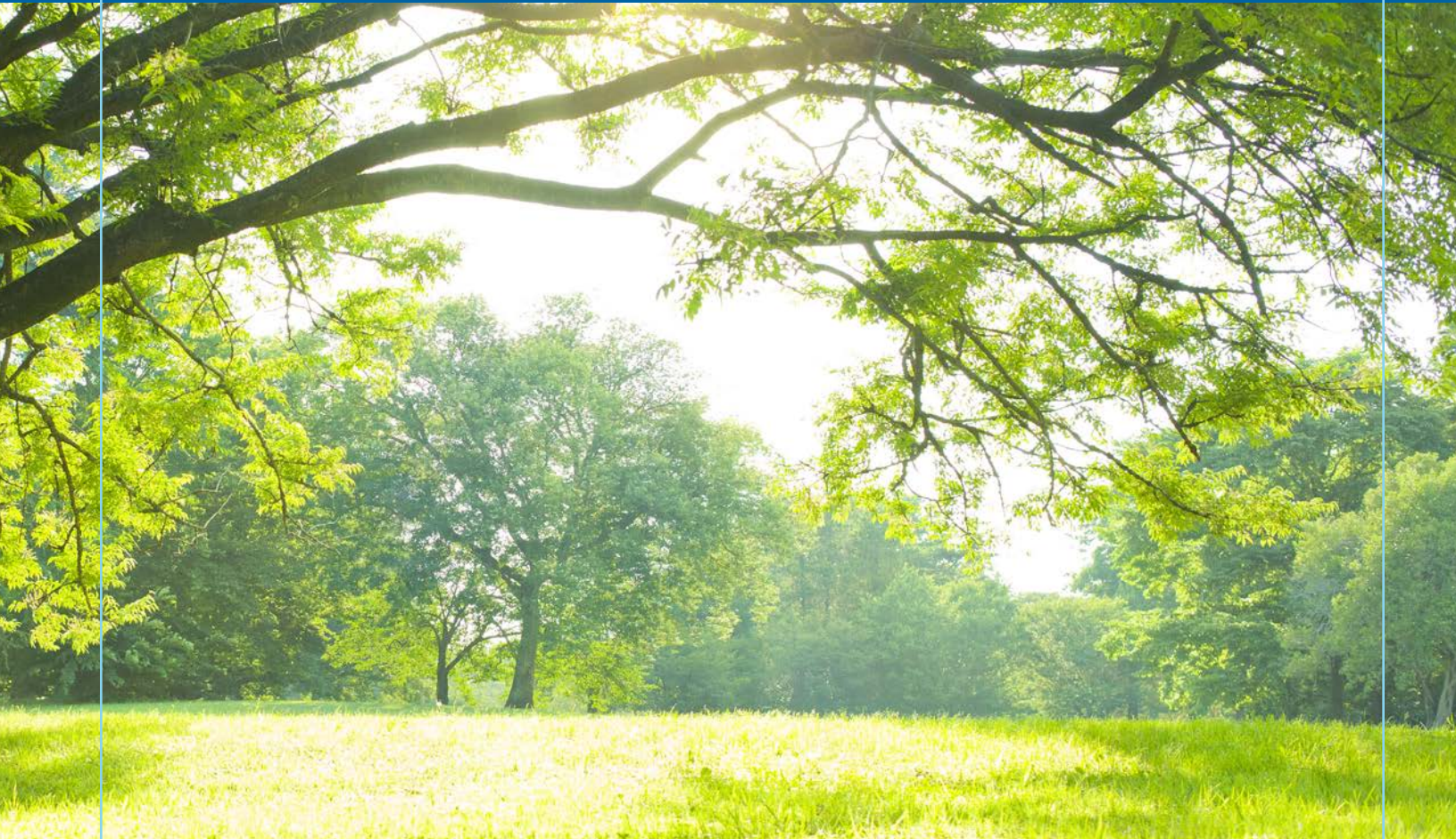


The Blue Garden (#80 - 2018)


A conservation easement on The Blue Garden, a 3.68-acre garden designed by Frederick Law Olmstead, Jr. in the early 1900s and restored in 2014, was donated by The Hamilton Family Charitable Trust. At the time of the donation, Matthew Hamilton stated, “The Blue Garden should at all times be a reflection of the aesthetics, health, maintenance, and love that represent our mother’s [Dorrance Hill Hamilton] vision for the garden, her generosity in rescuing this important place, and her faith that those standards are never compromised. For this reason, the Hamilton Family has partnered with the Aquidneck Land Trust knowing they will provide unwavering dedication to our shared goals.” The Blue Garden is designed with a mix of blue, purple, and white perennials, annuals, shrubs, and vines.



BankNewport is Proud to Support Aquidneck Land Trust



We're all in.

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Financial Summary (unaudited) for the Twelve Months Ending September 30, 2023

TOTAL SUPPORT & REVENUE

| | |
|--------------------------------------|------------|
| Grants | \$ 408,919 |
| Donations & appeals | \$ 559,616 |
| Membership dues & other income | \$ 143,973 |
| Net Investment gain | \$ 973,405 |
| Net special events income | \$ 170,236 |
| Land Acquisition Donations & Pledges | \$ 62,741 |
| In-kind contributions | \$ 48,600 |

TOTAL SUPPORT & REVENUE **\$ 2,367,490**

TOTAL EXPENSES

| | |
|----------------------|--------------|
| Program Expenses | |
| Land Acquisition | \$ 2,347,766 |
| Stewardship | \$ 273,598 |
| Outreach & Education | \$ 226,541 |
| Management & General | \$ 453,907 |
| Fundraising | \$ 257,620 |

TOTAL EXPENSES **\$ 3,559,433**

TOTAL NET INCOME **(\$1,191,943)**

NET ASSETS, beginning of the fiscal year

\$ 26,034,235

NET ASSETS, end of the fiscal year

\$ 24,842,292

| | |
|--|--------------|
| <i>Land (owned in fee)</i> | \$ 9,922,332 |
| <i>Land Preservation Fund</i> | \$ 5,136,032 |
| <i>Stewardship Investment Funds</i> | \$ 7,402,556 |
| <i>Legal Defense Fund</i> | \$ 221,027 |
| <i>Other Designated & Restricted Funds</i> | \$ 36,189 |
| <i>Merritt Neighborhood Fund</i> | \$ 114,011 |
| <i>Carol C. Ballard Park and Wildlife Preserve Fund</i> | \$ 297,724 |
| <i>Spruce Acres, Little Creek, Trail & Misc. Capital Improvement Funds</i> | \$ 317,056 |
| <i>General Operating Fund</i> | \$ 778,387 |
| <i>Property & Equipment</i> | \$ 616,979 |

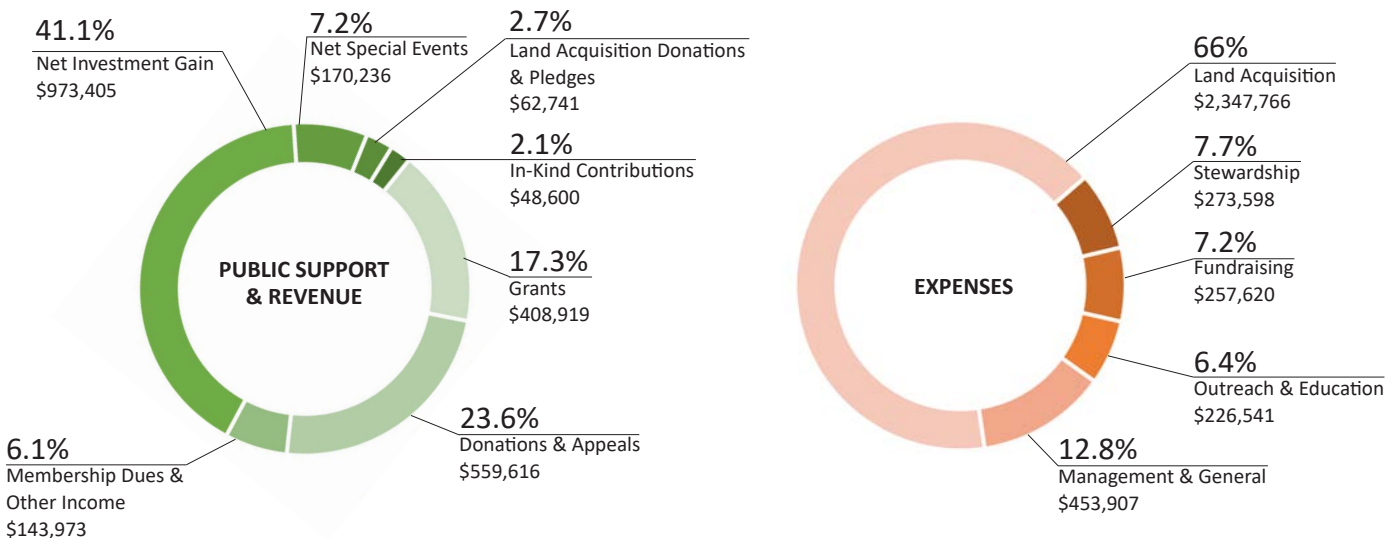
TOTAL NET ASSETS

\$ 24,842,292

The \$1,982,600 used in this fiscal year on fee simple and conservation easement acquisitions was raised by ALT in prior fiscal years. Conservation easements are expensed (\$1.659M in FY23), not capitalized as fee parcels are. Therefore, that expense decreases Net Assets.

| GENERAL OPERATING SUPPORT & REVENUE (included within the above figures) | | |
|---|---------|---------------------|
| Grants | 192,279 | |
| Donations & appeals | 405,786 | |
| Membership dues & other income | 145,339 | |
| Net special events income | 170,236 | |
| Net Investment income (available for general operation purposes) | 368,168 | |
| TOTAL GENERAL OPERATING SUPPORT & REVENUE | | \$ 1,281,808 |
| TOTAL GENERAL OPERATING EXPENSES | | (1,216,813) |
| GENERAL OPERATING NET INCOME | | \$ 64,995 |

As of September 30, 2023, ALT had protected 2,802 acres at a cumulative cost of approximately \$52,441,600, exclusive of legal and administrative costs related to the purchases.



If you would like a copy of the Aquidneck Land Trust's Audited Financial Statements for the twelve months ending September 30, 2023, prepared by Kahn, Litwin, Renza & Co., Ltd., please contact Martha Curley, Finance Director, at (401) 849-2799 or email mcurley@ailt.org.

By the Numbers 2023

CONSERVATION

2,816 Acres conserved 1990-2023

99 Conserved properties 1990-2023

255 Acres conserved in **Newport** (24 properties)*

929 Acres conserved in **Middletown** (42 properties)*

1,632 Acres conserved in **Portsmouth** (37 properties)*

11.5% Of Aquidneck Island conserved by ALT 1990-2023

*4 properties are split between Middletown and Portsmouth and are counted in each category.



Water Resources

47

Properties within drinking watersheds protected

22%

Of land within drinking watersheds protected

9.8

Miles of stream bank conserved

4.3

Miles of coastline conserved

527

Acres of wetlands conserved

RECREATION

875 Acres of recreational land protected

40 Public access properties

2 Golf courses protected

13 Miles of free public trail maintained

26 Parks protected and public preserves



FARMLAND

1,259

Acres of farmland protected

35

Properties with farmland

100% Of the farmland we own is leased



Collaborations

Aquidneck Land Trust partners with organizations to support clean water, working farmlands, accessible parks and trails, scenic viewsheds, effectively managed wildlife habitat, and smart environmental policy.

Green Infrastructure Coalition:
www.greeninfrastructureri.org

Scenic Aquidneck:
www.scenicaquidneck.org

Newport Open Space Partnership:
www.newportopenspace.org

HEZ/Women's Resource Center:
newporthealthequity.com

Aquidneck Land Trust is an exemplary organization that we are very proud and honored to support!



NEI is focused on responsible and sustainable development, planning, and conservation as well as providing resilient engineering and environmental science-based designs.

We have a commitment to give back to Newport County and Rhode Island organizations whose focus is set on environmental preservation.

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Our heartfelt thanks to all those who contributed to the Aquidneck Land Trust during the fiscal year concluding September 30, 2023.

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RI Dept of Environmental Management
Dwight and Susan Sipprelle
Meg and Don Steiner
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The William H. Donner Foundation

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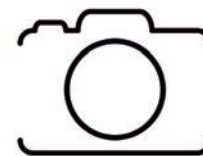
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