

MOUNT GRACE ANNUAL REPORT 2019



Stewardship Report

- **Dexter Park Innovation School, Orange**

A new trail was created at the elementary school with support from teachers and students in an effort to connect youth with the nature that surrounds them.

- **Forest Stewardship Management Plans**

Four of our 13 10-year forest stewardship plans were updated to specifically address climate change.

- **Skyfields Arboretum, Athol**

On Earth Day 2019, staff and volunteers gathered at our headquarters to remove invasive plants, clear around blueberry bushes, organize the office attic, perform general trail maintenance, and install five new blue bird boxes.

- **Fox Valley Wildlife Sanctuary, Phillipston**

Trail improvements were made to the public trail at Fox Valley along with a new property sign installed at the trailhead.

- **Eagle Reserve Conservation Area, Royalston**

Upon the official opening of the property, three new nature trails are now open to the public for a scenic view of the floating tamarack-bog with parking available for the crushed-stone trail for the mobility-challenged named the David H. Small Community Nature Trail.

- **Chimney Hill Farm, Petersham**

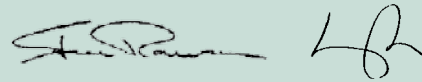
A new public trail called The Susan Hall Beard Memorial Trail was created at Chimney Hill Farm in Petersham. The trail connects to the Mass Audubon Rutland Brook Sanctuary with a scenic view from the Porcupine Ledge.

Benefitting the environment, the economy, and future generations by protecting significant land and encouraging land stewardship has been our mission since 1986. Today, 34,000+ acres later, protecting land is recognized as critical to removing carbon from the air and building with local wood, an excellent way to store carbon.

To maximize our impact, Mount Grace facilitates collaboration and capacity strengthening with our conservation partners across the region. Mount Grace was a pioneer of the regional conservation partnership model in 1997. Today, dozens of such groups are working across New England. The more hands on deck, the better. Thank you.

Steve Rawson
President

Leigh Youngblood
Executive Director



Conservation Report

September 2018 - August 2019

- **West Gate Farm, Bernardston, 52 acres**

Will and Shalee Pratt donated a Conservation Restriction on their farm located along the scenic Eden Trail. They are managing 15 acres of productive hay fields and harvesting timber from the land. The Pratt Family is graciously hosting the 2019 Mount Grace Annual Meeting on the farm. A new barn was recently constructed with wood harvested from the farm.

- **Sunset View Farm, Winchendon, 66 acres**

Mount Grace worked with Chuck and Livvy Tarleton to complete phase I of the protection of Sunset View Farm, with support from North County Land Trust. **Mount Grace and the Tarletons are working to complete phase II of the project to keep Sunset View Farm a whole farm forever** by placing an Option to Purchase at Agricultural Value on the land and house together.

- **Norcross Hill Conservation Project, Templeton, 465 acres**

Mount Grace partnered with North County Land Trust and MassWildlife on a state Landscape Partnership Program grant for the Norcross Hill Conservation Project in Templeton, MA. So far, our partner MassWildlife has purchased the 465-acre former Fernald Corporation property, which has become the Norcross Hill Wildlife Management Area.

- **Quabbin to Wachusett, multiple properties, 156 acres**

As lead partner in the federal U.S. Forest Service's Forest Legacy-funded Quabbin to Wachusett initiative, Mount Grace assisted in the permanent protection of the final five properties. The MA Department of Conservation and Recreation—Division of Water Supply Protection acquired 2 parcels totaling 60 acres in fee in Hubbardston as well as a 34 acre Watershed Preservation Restriction in Barre. In Westminster, the Fitchburg Water Department acquired 15.4 acres in fee, as well as a 46.9-acre CR on another property.

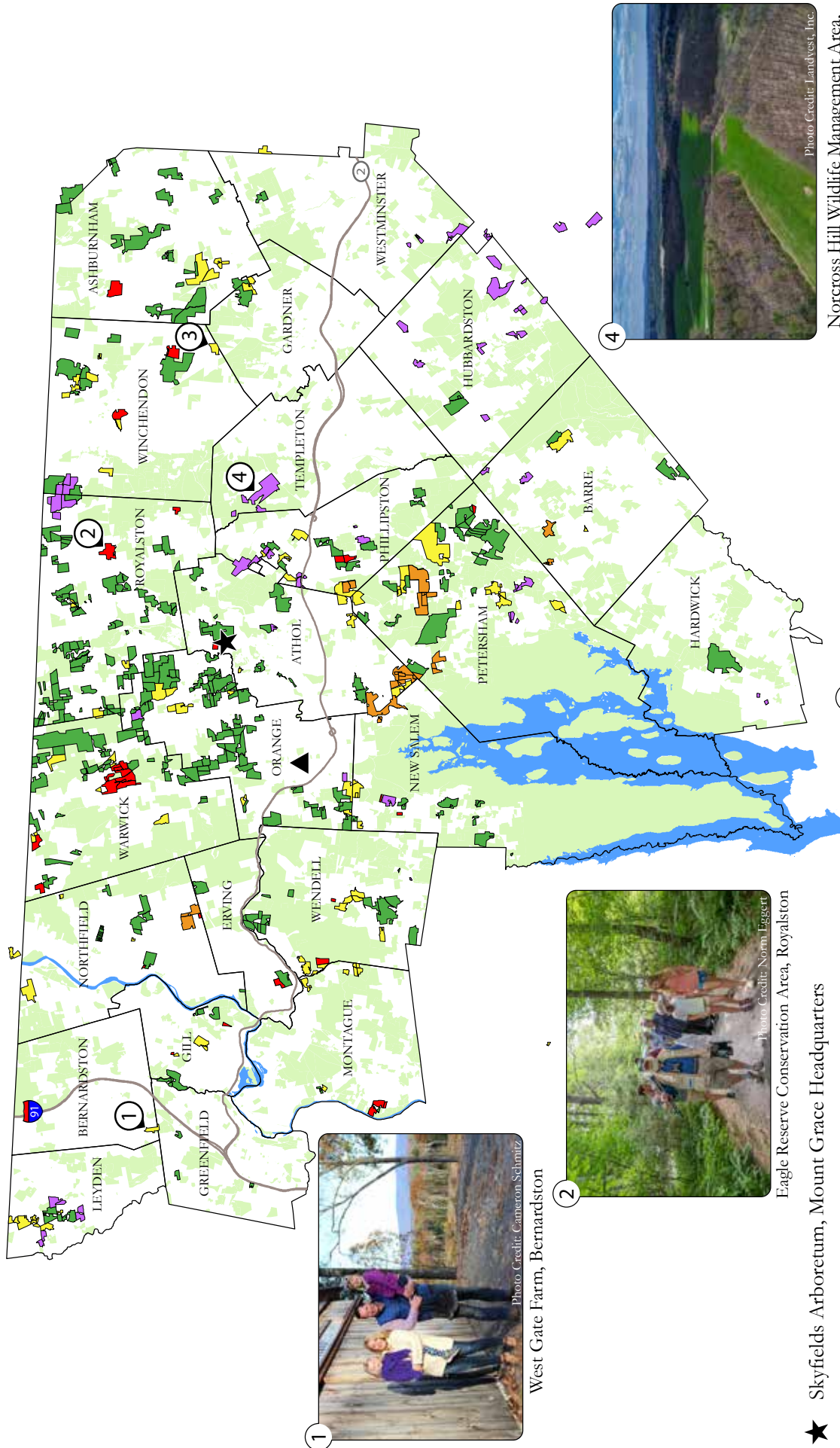
- **Alderbrook Meadows Wildlife Sanctuary, Northfield**

New handicap-parking signs were installed at the trailhead, in addition to new permanent interpretive signage along the Gunnery Sergeant Jeffrey S. Ames Wheelchair Accessible Nature Trail.

- **Conservation Areas and Restrictions**

Nearly 110 properties were monitored throughout the region to maintain the land we conserved to the highest level of stewardship.

Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust Conservation Projects 1986 to 2019



West Gate Farm, Bernardston



Eagle Reserve Conservation Area, Royalston



Sunset View Farm, Winchendon

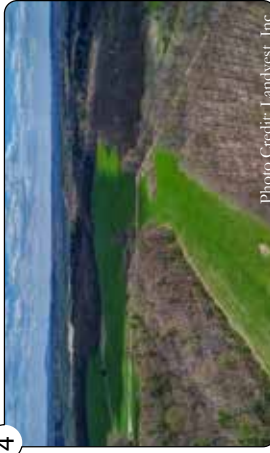
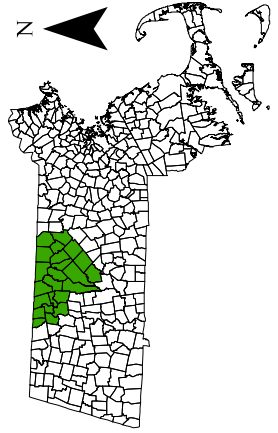


Photo Credit: Landvest, Inc.

Norcross Hill Wildlife Management Area, Templeton



★	Skyfields Arboretum, Mount Grace Headquarters	
▲	Quabbin Harvest Food Co-Op	
■	24 Conservation Areas	1,731 acres
■	85 Conservation Restrictions	5,739 acres
■	7 Stewardship Assists	1,752 acres
■	236 Facilitated Projects	21,922 acres
■	43 Project Assists	3,456 acres
■	Other Protected Land	
		34,600 acres
		Protected by Mount Grace



PHOTO CREDIT: LANDVEST, INC

Aerial view of the new Norcross Hill Wildlife Management Area, formerly owned by the Fernald Corporation.

Mount Grace's **Landscape Conservation Program** is the guardian of a rich mosaic of natural lands. We act quickly and strategically to safeguard our rural heritage and bolster our region's legacy of land conservation. Working with partners, we save the landscapes that our natural and human communities need to thrive. Together, we stitch these ecologically significant and locally important places into one connected and resilient landscape.

The **North Quabbin Regional Landscape Partnership**—an informal network of landowners, land trusts, planning agencies, academic institutions, and public agencies—is our primary mechanism for implementing this vision, as collaboration is the most powerful tool for achieving our mission.

After wrapping up our 4,100-acre Quabbin to Wachusett Forest Legacy project with dozens of partners and landowners, we switched gears and focused on securing state funding for a new multi-landowner project in Templeton. Throughout the fall, we worked with MassWildlife and North County Land Trust to develop the Norcross Hill Conservation Project with the Walter Fernald Corporation, LandVest, the Department of Conservation and Recreation, the Town of Templeton, and Jo-Anne and Danny Burdin. The project received funding from the MA Landscape Partnership Program in early spring, and, so far, the 465-acre Fernald property has become MassWildlife's newest Wildlife Management Area.

With the stellar help of our TerraCorps-AmeriCorps member, Michael McGrath, the Partnership spent much of the past year engaging partners in issues related to climate change. We partnered with Dr. Robert Gegeer to learn about the Beecology Project (beecology.wpi.edu) and how we, as conservation entities, can better protect native pollinators (particularly bumblebees) through citizen science. We also hosted a solar siting forum, led by members of local planning boards and energy committees, and grappled with new, municipal solar bylaw language developed by Tufts University students working with the Town of Athol. The Partnership also benefitted from a forum with MassAudubon about the state's Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Program, designed to help communities build resilience to climate change. We subsequently supported applications from three local communities for MVP planning grants.

In April, we hosted our 5th statewide Open Space Conference. This time, we drew 120 people—largely volunteer open space committee members and other town board volunteers—to Gardner for the climate change-themed conference. The premise of the conference is simple; we get people together to share their stories about what worked (or didn't) in their efforts to save land in their communities. This conference was funded through the MA Working Forest Initiative and planning for the 2020 conference is underway.

– Sarah Wells

The **Community Conservation Program** partners with community members, organizations, and municipalities to prioritize and conserve lands which benefit the health and wellbeing of our region's people and their natural environment. Our work extends beyond land protection as we empower communities to enjoy and steward their natural resources and strengthen their connections to the natural world. Throughout these processes we focus on ensuring equitable access to the benefits of our natural environment.

We are working with local landowners to conserve nearly 300 acres of land in the Mount Grace region most notably in Wendell, Royalston, and Petersham. The majority of these projects are generous donations by the landowner for which we are utilizing the Massachusetts Conservation Land Tax Credit Program which allows landowners to obtain a tax credit for up to 50% of the donated value up to \$75K. We have joined advocacy efforts led by partners including the Nature Conservancy and the Massachusetts Land Trust Coalition to support bills in the state legislature which raises the annual cap for the program. We are hopeful that the many stories of landowners' generosity to Mount Grace and the region will sway the state legislature to strengthen this valuable conservation tool.

We continue to cultivate partnerships with our communities through ongoing outreach in an effort to collaboratively protect land in the region. If you have a passion for a community-based conservation project in your area, please reach out and tell us about it!

— Fletcher Harrington

Our **Farm Conservation Program**

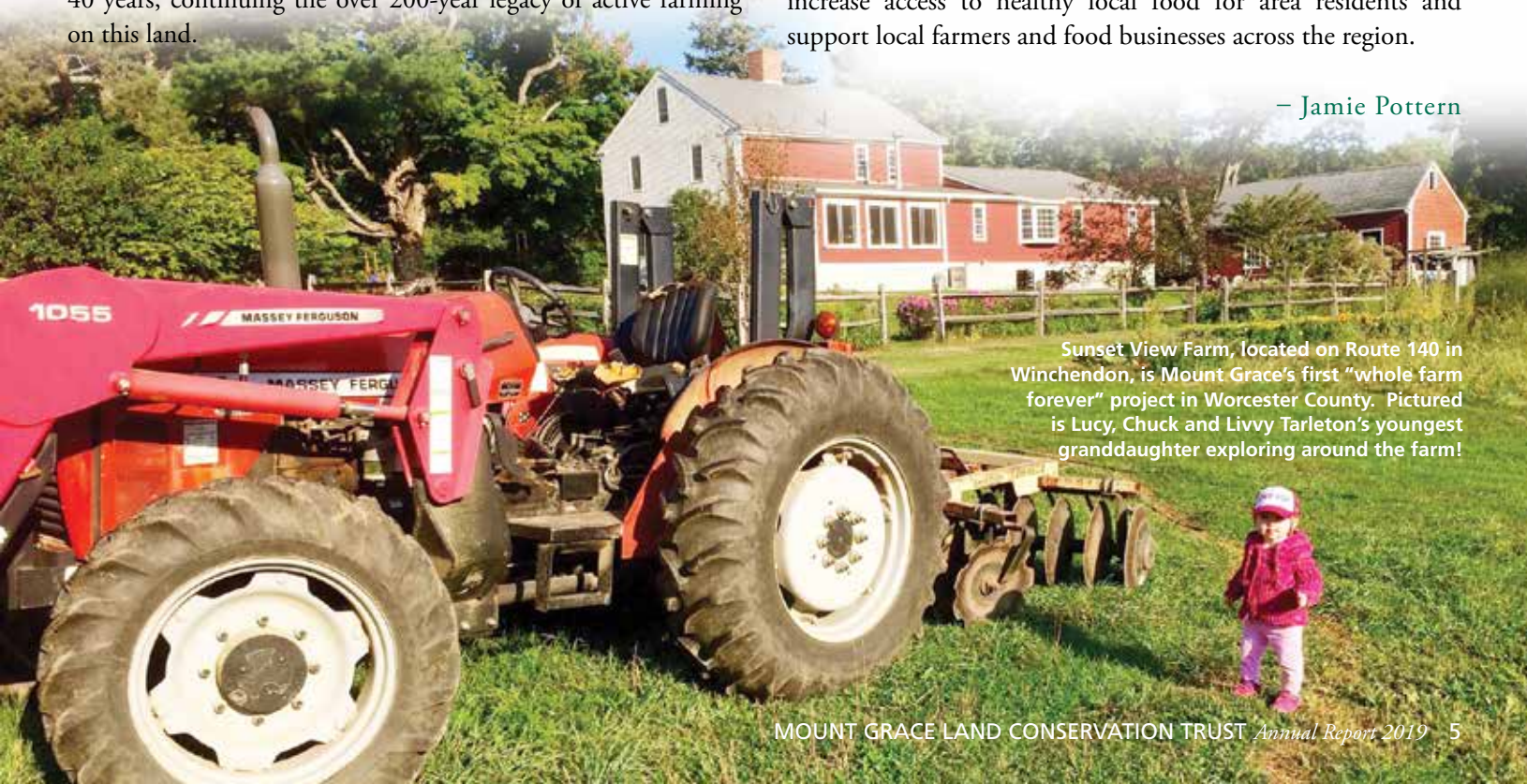
undertakes innovative projects that help sustain our local economy, increase community access to healthy, local food, and build Massachusetts' food self-reliance by protecting farms for future generations. We work to develop and employ new conservation models to ensure that whole farms remain affordable and will transfer to the next generation of farmers.

This year, we successfully completed phase 1 of the permanent conservation of the 70-acre Sunset View Farm in Winchendon, and are in the midst of a public campaign to further protect the affordability of the farm house, land, and buildings as a "whole farm" and ensure the whole property will always pass to future farmers. Landowners Chuck and Livvy Tarleton have been farming the land and running their much beloved farm stand for 40 years, continuing the over 200-year legacy of active farming on this land.

Our fabulous TerraCorps member, Kat Kowalski completed her second year of service with Mount Grace, finalizing our innovative farmland inventory, which will enhance our strategic farmland conservation plan and support local open space planning efforts. Kat also organized two estate planning workshops for farmland owners to learn about options for the future of their land.

The program continued the coordination of the Greater Quabbin Food Alliance (a regional food systems network founded by Mount Grace in 2013) by organizing two regional gatherings and smaller working group meetings throughout the year that brought together more than 150 stakeholders from across the region to connect and collaborate on ongoing food access and economic development initiatives. Mount Grace also celebrated our 5th year partnering with Quabbin Harvest in Orange to increase access to healthy local food for area residents and support local farmers and food businesses across the region.

— Jamie Pottern



Sunset View Farm, located on Route 140 in Winchendon, is Mount Grace's first "whole farm forever" project in Worcester County. Pictured is Lucy, Chuck and Livvy Tarleton's youngest granddaughter exploring around the farm!



Dave Small and KimLynn Nguyen on the opening day of the David H. Small Community Nature Trail at Eagle Reserve Conservation Area.

The **Stewardship Program** partners with experts, community members, and other organizations to demonstrate responsible land management, encourage outdoor recreation, engage future generations to steward the land, and provide long-term environmental and economic rewards. The success of our hands-on work is only possible with the extensive support from our volunteers, members, and partners.

While continuing to monitor more than 85 conservation restrictions and 24 conservation areas, the stewardship program also engaged many wonderful volunteers and youths from nearby local schools to get out on the land. It was because of incredibly dedicated volunteers that we were able to build our 2nd wheelchair accessible trail and wildlife viewing platform over a scenic wetland at Eagle Reserve Conservation Area in Royston. The property officially opened on June 28th. The crushed-stone trail was named the David H. Small Community Nature Trail in honor of Dave Small, president of the Athol Bird and Nature Club, a long-time friend and volunteer of Mount Grace.

After two years in the TerraCorps-AmeriCorps Program as the Land Stewardship Coordinator under the direction of Jay Rasku, KimLynn Nguyen now manages the Mount Grace Stewardship Program as full-time staff. KimLynn is excited to take the program to new heights!

– KimLynn Nguyen



Community Conservation Program Manager, Fletcher Harrington assisting in "build your own fire" activity during the 4th Annual Camp Out.

The **Community Engagement Program** strives to connect the people of our region and beyond, with our work and with the land. Through events and youth education programs, we engage multiple groups in learning about caring for and protecting the land. We offer various programs to ensure access to a broad spectrum of community members.

This year, Mount Grace offered a series of Pub Science Nights in collaboration with informative speakers and local breweries as part of our March Membership Drive initiative. Attendees learned about carnivorous plants, soil health, and turtle conservation, and how land protection is linked to all.

A year after the official opening, we commemorated Memorial Day at Alderbrook Meadows Wildlife Sanctuary in Northfield on the Gunnery Sergeant Jeffrey S. Ames Wheelchair Accessible Nature Trail. Veterans, families, and community members of all physical abilities joined together for a special ceremony by Northfield VFW Post 9874 and a lunch surrounded in nature.

Our on-going partnerships with 3 local schools (Athol Community Elementary School, Royston Community School, and Dexter Park School) continued. Our TerraCops member, Jess Tierney delivered lessons and worked with teachers to expand environmental education curriculum. After the school year, local families joined us at our annual family campout to spend two days immersed in the outdoors with lots of interactive and educational activities planned for all ages.

– Cami Duquet

Ways of Giving to Mount Grace

— David Kotker

Thanks to all of our supporters for partnering with Mount Grace to protect our farms, forests, water, and wildlife. Without your support, the conservation of our community resources would not be possible! Some creative ways that you can support our conservation and stewardship work include:

- **Monthly Giving** – Set up a monthly gift in any amount on your credit or debit card.
- **Real Estate Gifts for Resale** – Contact our staff about donating any type of real estate property located anywhere, especially non-conservation properties, to Mount Grace for resale to benefit conservation.
- **Website donations** – Visit mountgrace.org anytime you like to make a gift to support our work.
- **Workplace Giving** – If your employer offers matching gifts, simply include your company's matching gift form with your contribution. If your employer is a partner in Earthshare, a federation of environmental charities, you may designate an automatic deduction from each paycheck to Mount Grace.
- **Planned Gifts** – Please contact us if you are interested in learning about estate planning efforts that can benefit both your family and conservation. If you have put us in your will at any level we truly appreciate it. Please let us know so we may thank you in your lifetime!

We welcome your participation in the Mount Grace Margaret Power-Biggs Society

The Margaret Power-Biggs Society recognizes individuals, businesses, organizations, and foundations contributing at least \$1,000 annually to Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust.

To learn more about how you can become part of the Margaret Power-Biggs Society, contact Major Gifts and Grants Manager David Kotker at 978-248-2055 x19 or kotker@mountgrace.org.



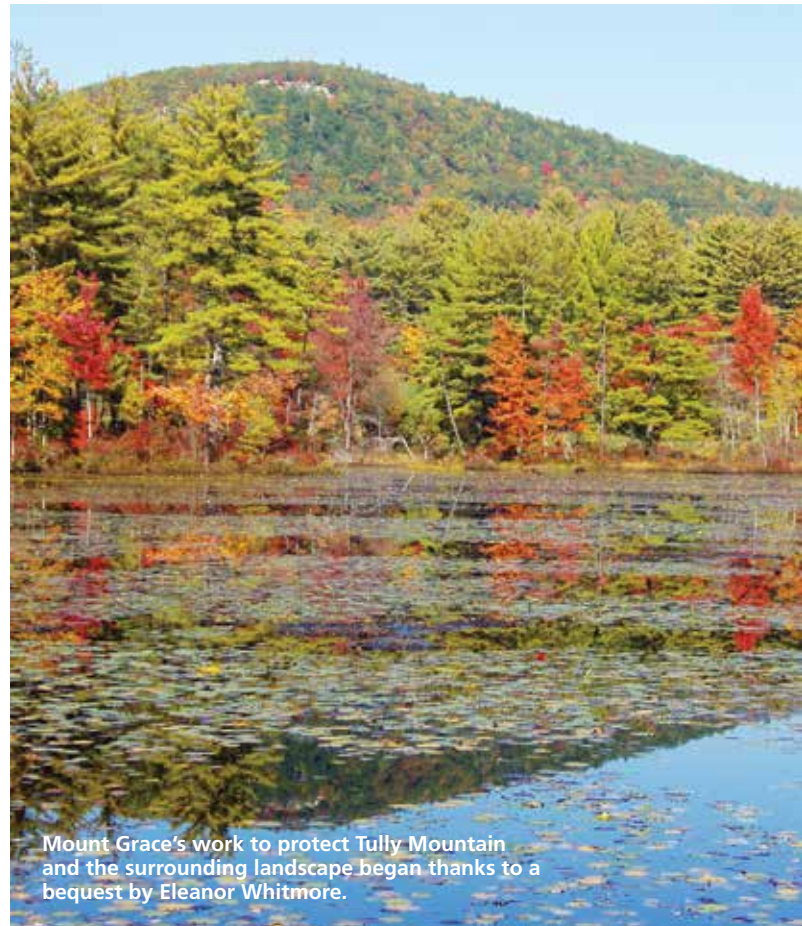
A Legacy for the Land

"The forests and farms I see every day make me thankful I live here, and Mount Grace has inspired me with its commitment to protect that land forever. My legacy will ensure that Mount Grace will always stand ready to protect and watch over the places that matter to me."—Steve Rawson, Founding Member, Mount Grace Legacy Society

Now, more than ever, Mount Grace needs community support to protect cherished local landscapes. We invite you to join with the founding members of Mount Grace's Legacy Society to consider planned giving as a way to support the land with Mount Grace.

Planned gifts have had an enormous impact on the history of Mount Grace. Our 9,000-acre Tully Initiative began thanks to a bequest from Eleanor Whitmore, who asked that her modest home on a small lot in Tully be sold and the proceeds used to conserve open land in her neighborhood.

Your gift can provide a legacy of land conservation that forever protects the land you care about. If you are interested in considering a conservation legacy of your own, please contact: Mount Grace Major Gifts & Grants Manager David Kotker at 978-248-2055 X19 or kotker@mountgrace.org.



Mount Grace's work to protect Tully Mountain and the surrounding landscape began thanks to a bequest by Eleanor Whitmore.

Grateful Thanks to Supporters of Mount Grace

Every contribution is special to us. Donors contributing to Mount Grace during the fiscal year (June 1, 2018 – May 31, 2019) are listed on these pages. Gifts of Services and In-Kind Gifts are not listed. We regret any unintentional omissions. Thank you to each and all.

The Margaret Power-Biggs Society recognizes individuals, businesses, organizations, and foundations contributing at least \$1,000 annually to Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust.

The generosity of Society members gives Mount Grace the resources to conserve the local landscape in a sustained manner that supports the rural character of the region.



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Jeff Legros
Walter and Marie Lehmann
Mark Lewis and Shana Wagner
Chris Lyons and Luther Otto
David MacLean
James MacPhee
Joanie and Max MacPhee
Sean Mahoney
Bob Mallet
Ken and Barbara Maniha
Lynne Manring
Bill Manser
Kelley Manson
Myron and Suri Maron
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Mike Mauri
Susan Mayer
Marion McCann
Robin and Terry McKeon
Nancy Mead
Ann Meilus, Esq.
Nancy and James Melbourne
Nini Melvin
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Anne Morehouse
North County Land Trust
Carrie Novak
John and Louise Nylander
Lindsay Nystrom
Dick O'Brien
Heather and Sean O'Connor
Catherine Offutt and Robert Laakkonen
Joseph and Anne Olivari
Anne M. Orlando
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Linda Overing and John Ryan
Hughes Pack
Lynne Page
Janet Paoletti
Jennifer Paris
Franklin D. Parmenter
Lloyd and Dorothy Parrill
Robert and Susan Pasteris
Christine and Gregory Pellerin
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Caroline Raisler
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Thank you to each and all of you for contributing to Mount Grace! We are so grateful for your support.

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Caro Roszell
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Lita Wright and Murray Biggs
Michaele and Greg Wright

VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers between September 2018 – August 2019

Bill & Nancy Ames
Nancy Allen
Kim Ansin
Beth Arseneau
Claire Baker
Megan Balmos
Jeff Blanchard
Maureen Blasco
Laurie Boosahda
Martin & Jennifer Bowers
Gary Brigham
Buckler Family
Katie Cauley
Anne Cervantes
Cynthia Cetto
Pam Chevalier
Robin Conley
Bill Corey
Kyle Cormier
Bill and Christine Copeland
Bobby Curly
Dave Davis
Jim Diamond
Nick Diamond
Christine Duerring
Cynthia and Roger Durham
Charlotte Duquet
Pascale Duquet
Norm Eggert
Aaron Ellison
Marie Erie

Dan Ewald
Laurel and Bill Facey
Max Feldman
Lula Field
Larry Fitzmaurice
Donald Flye
Norm Flye
Anne Gobi
Juli Gould
Celt Grant
Clare Green
Judy Grossi
Christian Hains
Brian Hall
Pam Hanold
Mimi Helen Jones
Beth Hingham
John Holston
Bonnie House
Michael Humphries
Michael Ttalia
Ray Jackson
Rob Jalbert
Mike Jones
Lenny Johnson
Jeff Johnstone
Carl Kamp
Will Lane
Pat Larson
Johanna & Darlene Lawlor-Moore
Ernie LeBlanc
Carol Lebo
Deem Leonard
Bryan Long
Dave MacLean
Gerald Marciano
Mike Mauri
Bill & Joanne McGee
Lis McLoughlin
Barbara Metzger
Danny Monette
Shannyn Moulton
Mindy Nadolski
George Northrop
Dick O'Brien
John O'Keefe
Desmond Pottinger
James Putney
Jay Rasku
Steve Rawson
Amilah Richards
Barbara & Sam Richardson
Gay Roberts
Al Rose
MacKenzie Sains
Dennis Sean
Susan Sharbaugh
Joel Shaughnessy
Al Siano
John Sisco
Dave Small
Jim Solinas
Sue Space
Joe Stacy
Steve Svoboda
Molly Tarleton
Keang Tedstone
Ben Urqhart
Marie Urqhart
Joelle Vautour
Jerry Wagener
Linda Wells
Mary Williamson
Francia Wisnewski
Holden Woodworth
Pat Worth
Michael Young
Michael Zlogar

Because a picture is worth a 1000 words...



Jay Rasku, former Land Stewardship and Engagement Director is now rooting for Sunset View Farm as a volunteer!



Sunny afternoon farm tours by Chuck Tarleton, enjoyed by Leigh Youngblood, Executive Director.



The greeting team at the Margaret Power-Biggs Society Dinner; Sarah Wells, Conservation Director and Steve Rawson, Board President.



Mindfulness walkers at Gifford Family Memorial Forest warming up by the fire on a cold December day.



Royalston Community School 4th graders smiling and learning at Eagle Reserve Conservation Area.



Northfield VFW Post 9874 during a salute on the accessible wildlife platform at Alderbrook Meadows on Memorial Day Weekend.



Annual tracking workshop at Skyfields Arboretum with Paul Wanta narrowing in on a Red Fox.



MOUNT GRACE ANNUAL REPORT 2019

Preliminary Financial Summary

Year Ending May 31, 2019

REVENUES	FY2019 PRELIMINARY	FY2018
Gifts & Memberships	\$ 660,789	\$ 454,290
Grants	\$ 324,266	\$ 1,065,961
Program Service Fees	\$ 76,730	\$ 298,260
Investment Income	\$ 13,311	\$ 14,712
Businesses & Community Orgs	\$ 29,474	\$ 19,938
Inkind	\$ 35,000	\$ 21,251
Other	\$ 8,757	\$ 17,937
TOTAL REVENUES	\$ 1,148,327	\$ 1,892,349

EXPENSES	FY2019 PRELIMINARY	FY2018
Landscape Conservation	\$ 106,436	\$ 162,951
Farm Conservation	\$ 99,057	\$ 139,507
Community Conservation	\$ 61,269	\$ 80,636
Land Stewardship	\$ 167,606	\$ 114,967
Engagement & Education	\$ 137,384	\$ 113,336
TerraCorps	\$ 163,828	\$ 795,014
Administration	\$ 198,436	\$ 274,300
Inkind	\$ 35,000	\$ 21,251
Fundraising	\$ 101,787	\$ 130,528
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 1,070,803	\$ 1,832,490
Surplus/Deficit	\$ 77,524	\$ 59,859

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION	FY2019 PRELIMINARY
Total Current Assets	\$ 1,157,142
Conservation Land & Restrictions	\$ 1,451,078
Buildings & Equipment	\$ 342,446
TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 2,950,666
Total Current & Long-Term Liabilities	\$ 363,993
Total Net Assets & Retained Earnings	\$ 2,586,673
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	\$ 2,950,666



Mount Grace congratulates TerraCorps on its first year of independent operation! TerraCorps now works from new offices in Lowell, preparing and

mobilizing emerging leaders to help communities gain access to and conserve land for people and nature. The decreases in expense and revenue from FY18 to FY19 are due to the successful establishment of TerraCorps as an independent organization.

Protected since 1986: 34,600 Acres

Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust

Our Mission: To benefit the environment, the economy, and future generations by protecting significant land and encouraging land stewardship.

We welcome your articles, photographs, comments, and suggestions. For information about becoming a member or to request a change of address, please contact our office at:

Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust

1461 Old Keene Road
Athol, MA 01331
978-248-2043 (tel)
978-248-2053 (fax)
landtrust@mountgrace.org
Visit our web site at
mountgrace.org



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MOUNT GRACE STAFF

Leigh Youngblood, *Executive Director*
Emma Ellsworth, *Deputy Director*
Sarah Wells, *Conservation Director*
Fletcher Harrington, *Community Conservation Program Manager*
Carol Mayer, *Administrative Assistant*
Sharon Hogan, *Finance Program Manager*
David Kotker, *Major Gifts and Grants Manager*
Cami Duquet, *Communications and Engagement Coordinator*
KimLynn Nguyen, *Stewardship Manager*

MOUNT GRACE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Max Feldman, *Vice President* Petersham
Lenny Johnson, *Treasurer* Carlisle
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