



HOUSATONIC VALLEY ASSOCIATION

2017 ANNUAL REPORT

You make it possible!



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TO MEMBERS AND FRIENDS

Because of you, the Housatonic River Valley is a unique and special place. People come here from all over the world to hike, fish, paddle and enjoy nature's beauty.

Still, we are a region at risk. Floods, droughts and heat caused by a changing climate threaten our woodlands and streams, and the life they sustain.

The good news is that we've mapped our important forests and cold water streams. Because of you, we know where to focus land and water conservation in the Housatonic Valley to buffer against the effects of a changing climate and preserve clean, cold waters.

And because of you, in towns across the Berkshires and Litchfield Hills, along the Ten Mile River and in the lower Valley to Long Island Sound, a network of people and partners is working with one aim – to protect our cherished Housatonic River Valley.

Facing the challenges ahead, it is you, our members and friends, who balance the odds. It is you who make success possible.

On behalf of the Board and staff – thank you!



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Top: Paddlers enjoying an HVA guided trip on the Housatonic in Stockbridge; center photo below: River Steward Katie Jacob helps a turtle cross the road; left: green heron; right: deer on the Housatonic. All photos from HVA files except where noted.

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YOUR WATER

LAZLO GYORSOK PHOTO

You protect and restore clean water!

Because of you, the Ten Mile River and Wassaic and Webatuck creeks won New York State Inland Waterway designation! Your support now leverages public funds to help Ten Mile Watershed Roundtable towns protect this gem of a river valley.

You also monitored the Southwest Branch in Pittsfield; Wahconah Falls Brook in Dalton; Green River in Austerlitz, New York; and Alford, Egremont, and Great Barrington, Massachusetts; streams across northwest Connecticut and the Housatonic River; and streams feeding the Still River in Danbury, New Milford, Bethel, and Brookfield. And you found more than 400 compromised stream crossing road culverts that are severe barriers to fish, wildlife and water flow and need to be replaced to restore our waters.

You make it possible:

- Pond Mountain Brook in Kent, Connecticut, and Churchill Brook in Pittsfield, Massachusetts will improve as community leaders replace three barrier culverts.
- Sustainability is on the rise in Dover, New York as community leaders work toward Climate Smart Community Certification as a model for towns in the Ten Mile Watershed.

- Stormwater pollution is targeted in Pittsfield, Dalton and Lanesborough with new stormwater management plans; rain gardens on Pittsfield's Main Street; and "track-down" of pollution in the greater Danbury Still River watershed.
- The campaign for National Water Trail designation of the Housatonic River from Pittsfield to Long Island Sound gets underway, backed by U.S. Senators in both states.

You create new river access:

Check out new river access sites on the Still River at Erickson Road in New Milford, and along the Housatonic River in Stockbridge where steep slopes are navigated via a nifty floating dock launch. New sites are planned for the Housatonic at Division Street in Great Barrington, Massachusetts and North Kent Road in Kent, Connecticut; the West Branch at Mill Street in Pittsfield, Massachusetts; and the Still River at Harrybrooke Park in New Milford, Connecticut.

By year's end...

We were mapping water quality across the entire watershed, and prioritizing challenges and opportunities to share with our partners and you.



Waconah Regional High School student putting in buffer plants on the Old Mill Trail in the Dalton/Hinsdale area in Massachusetts.

New offices

We've moved into two new offices this year! The Berkshire office is now in Stockbridge's historic Merwin House (space we share with Historic New England) and the New York office is now in Maxon Mills in Wassaic.



AmeriCorps honors
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SPONSOR OF THE YEAR



Awarded for their dedication to members and their local community, Litchfield Hills Greenprint Collaborative was an outstanding sponsor for Class XXIII.



AmeriCorps volunteers
Kennedy with bunny and Sam
planting a community garden.



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YOUR LAND

You protect spectacular Housatonic Valley lands

The Greenprint Collaborative partners rock!

(See members on back page.) Eight land trusts tapped the Greenprint Jessie B. Cox Landowner Incentive Fund (\$85,000 for survey/legal/appraisal work) to save 1,850 acres of forest and habitat. The Greenprint Partners Pledge Fund topped \$650,000; partners leveraged it for \$3 million in public/private funding to save 800 acres. And a quarter of the \$8 million in Highlands Conservation Act (HCA) funds aimed at northwest Connecticut helped our partners save 1,600 acres to date.

You helped create the HCA, lauded by Congress this year as a model public/private partnership. We've matched each federal dollar with nearly four non-federal dollars. You make it possible!

Your impact:

- Another 320 acres of forest, greenway, scenic vistas and New England cottontail habitat in Winchester, Torrington, Kent, Sharon and Cornwall is conserved with state open space grants, matched HCA dollars to close the deals.
- The northern 23 acres of Robbins Swamp in North Canaan is finally conserved thanks to Greenprint member Norfolk Land Trust, a donation by a willing landowner – and you.

- Riverfront land is restored on the East Branch Housatonic River Old Mill Trail as students and interns replaced invasives with native plants in Dalton and Hinsdale.
- New partnerships emerge in the Ten Mile and Oblong valleys, and Sheffield and New Marlborough.
- The first comprehensive online Trails Map for the 21-town Northwest Hills Council of Governments – 540 miles – is ready!
- Sixteen AmeriCorps youth spent six weeks helping 20 land trust and community groups create/maintain seven trails and build nesting boxes and community gardens. They named the Greenprint Collaborative their Sponsor of the Year! (see sidebar)
- Your voice is represented on Regional Conservation Partnerships – Hudson to Housatonic, Berkshire-Taconic and Berkshire Wildlife Linkages – and shaping an emerging conservation vision across the Northeast.

By Year's End ...

we were into a six-month analysis of Housatonic Valley landscapes, identifying ecologically important forest corridors across the watershed and their links to a vast woodland corridor stretching from the Hudson Valley to Canada.



CHANGING LIVES

You touch lives across the Housatonic Valley

Nearly 600 young people from pre-school to high school explored rivers and wildlife this year – some coming nose-to-nose with frogs and salamanders for the very first time. From the Berkshire streams to northwest Connecticut’s Salmon Kill to the Still River in Danbury, youngsters stenciled storm drains, sampled water quality, planted buffers, made shade for brook trout and yes – even kissed a few frogs.

Dozens of families experienced the magic of the Housatonic River in guided canoe trips through the Berkshires and northwest Connecticut. And hundreds more joined Be RiverSmART, a Berkshire partnership with the Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts using art and science to reduce polluted runoff from homes and gardens. April was “Be RiverSmart” month at the Berkshire Athenaeum featuring workshops and displays. Everyone can do something to Be River Smart. Check out BeRiverSmart.org today!

You make it possible:

- The Still River is improving in Danbury as dozens of high school students replaced invasives with native buffer plants, restored riverfront habitat and reduced polluted runoff. Still River Watershed Connections, a partnership with area funders like you,

Danbury Youth Services and Danbury High School, engages young people – 64 so far – in improving the environment and learning essential job skills for the future.

- Downtown Pittsfield is a teaching tool as the public sees first-hand how sidewalk rain gardens prevent stormwater pollution.
- Take a walk on the wild side or step back in time with a new augmented reality “app” that allows you to see wildlife or view the Housatonic River as it was 100 years ago on the Old Mill Trail – thanks to Miss Hall’s School, historian John Dickson – and you!
- Hundreds of people shared a picture story of last year’s Housatonic River Source-to-Sound journey as part of River Art exposition sponsored by Jim Schantz and hosted by Dick and Pam Stebbins at the scenic Stockbridge Train Station to benefit river conservation work.

By year’s end ...

We were designing a new website, expanding social media, framing a video starring the Housatonic River, and exploring the idea of a watershed-wide gathering of activists and conservation partners to share goals and resources in the wake of diminished public policies and funds for our environment.

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"It was a delight to explore the Old Mill Trail. It is easily within reach of town centers, has a handicap-accessible section and offers time amongst lovely hemlocks and along the river. We're grateful to HVA, Mass Wildlife, and BNRC for their collaboration and hard work making this trail that offers something for everyone."

Karen Ross, BNRC member



Gifts received from August 1, 2016 through July 31, 2017

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS SUPPORT!

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Cooper Grace and River Jastremski plant buffers along the Still River in the Danbury area.



“As I was paddling through the Cobble one August evening, the bank swallow nests reminded me of pueblos. Now years later I remember that evening light as if it shone from a pink, southwestern sunset. Unimpressed, the sandpipers stood around bowing mechanically like wind-up toys. And the Holsteins were just Holsteins, wearing their yellow tags, moping down to the water and posing against a stand of butter-and-eggs, bittersweet, and the hills to the west.

Hilary Russell, auction donor



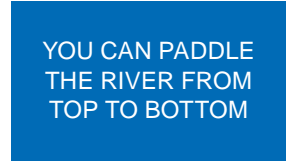
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“I grew up close to the Housatonic River Watershed, and have taken full advantage of the recreational opportunities it provides. It feels wonderful to help protect an area that I have grown to love and use.”

— Michelle Bissett
River Steward

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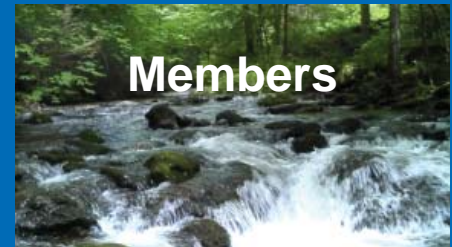


Noah Hassmer with a turtle he found on an HVA paddle trip at Woods Pond.



“Swift flowing water pure and clear, makes music for us all to hear. Your falls and rapids always thrill all creatures high upon the hill. Thanks to our friends at HVA, we all share the joy today, Keep it gleaming, keep it streaming, keep it gleaming.”

Nick Moore, Sharon, member since 1988



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AND FRIENDS ARE
DOCUMENTING
RIVER
CONDITIONS**



“The River Steward internship has not only been a great opportunity to give back to the environment, but has allowed me to share my summer with an incredible staff of inspiring individuals. All the while cementing the reasons I chose this field to forge a career in.”

— Katie Jacob
River Steward

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“Not all land trust members are born with a green hand. Many like myself have to learn the ropes from the ground up. HVA’s Greenprint Collaborative provides a level of assistance that cannot be found elsewhere and is my go-to source for the difficult questions concerning land preservation. The Goshen Land Trust is proud to be a supporting member”

Barry Donaldson, President Goshen Land Trust



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“The River Steward Internship with HVA gave a great opportunity to explore and learn about parts of our watershed while working on the stream team assessment project. I walked miles of river that many people don’t ever get to see while recording data along the way. This assessment project made me more conscious of how humans impact our water ways; now I wonder about anything out of place on any river or stream I go to.”

— Dylan LaChance
River Steward



“Paddling the Housatonic River is a great experience. I enjoy seeing birds, turtles and the wildlife along the river. As a volunteer with HVA, I know how important the Housatonic Watershed area is and want to help protect it now and for the future.”

Sharon Siter, HVA Berkshire volunteer



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THERE ARE MILES
OF TRAILS TO
EXPLORE IN THE
HOUSATONIC
WATERSHED



“The Housatonic River, with its prolific hatches of mayflies, caddisflies and stoneflies, is one of the finest flyfishing rivers in the Northeast. Its ‘Catch and Release’ and Trout Management Areas are destination points for thousands of anglers. Trophy sized trout, bass, pike and carp are caught in its waters annually.”

Gene Chague, member since 1992
Weekly Outdoor Sports Columnist for the Berkshire Eagle newspaper.



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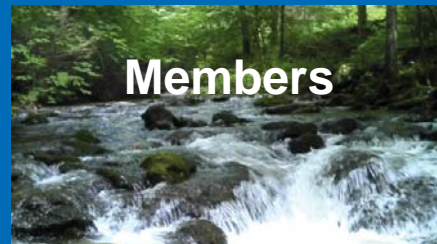


Volunteers work with HVA and BEAT (Berkshire Environmental Action Team) at a cleanup on the West Branch of the Housatonic River.



“Thinking about HVA’s work throughout our watershed I am reminded of the value of our caring for the habitat we all occupy. Aldo Leopold wrote, ‘Relegating conservation to government is like relegating virtue to the Sabbath. It turns over to professionals what should be the daily work of amateurs.’”

Shep Evans, member since 1995.



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James and Sandra Salice
Richard and Catherine Salice
Joseph and Patricia Salvador
Donald and Rosemary Schneyer
Nancy Socha
Jane Sparks
Stockbridge Fire Department, Inc.
Carol Sutton and Matt Sutton
Peter and Sheila Viale
Claire E. Williams
Joan T. and Peter C. Williams

**In Memory of Dr. Ellen
Rosenberg**

Leendert and Maryellen DeJong

**Photo at top of pages 7 to 13
is of the Salmon Kill.**

**And a special thank
you to all who
donated to, attended
and supported, our
“Fore the River”
Golf Tournament
and Auction for the
Environment.**

hvatoday.org

FINANCIAL REPORT

HOUSATONIC VALLEY ASSOCIATION, INC. AND HVA FOUNDATION, INC.

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2017

	UNRESTRICTED	TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED	PERMANENTLY RESTRICTED	TOTAL
REVENUES, GAINS AND OTHER SUPPORT				
Membership Dues	\$ 57,842	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 57,842
Contributions Above Dues	422,932	-	-	422,932
Grants	357,935	115,526	-	473,461
Events	190,165	-	-	190,165
Fees	6,764	-	-	6,764
Rent	9,176	-	-	9,176
Donated Goods	200	-	-	200
Investment Income	5,656	67,360	-	73,016
Unrealized Gains (Losses) on Investments	36,946	54,735	-	91,681
Net Assets Released From Restrictions	430,345	(430,345)	-	-
Total Revenues, Gains and Other Support	<u>1,517,961</u>	<u>(192,724)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,325,237</u>
 EXPENSES				
Program Services				
Issue Response	76,988	-	-	76,988
Environmental Education	200,089	-	-	200,089
Land Protection	558,028	-	-	558,028
Water Protection	346,058	-	-	346,058
Total Program Services	<u>1,181,163</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,181,163</u>
 Supporting Services				
Membership	79,507	-	-	79,507
Events	110,956	-	-	110,956
Management and General	23,483	-	-	23,483
Fundraising	131,062	-	-	131,062
Total Supporting Services	<u>345,008</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>345,008</u>
 Total Expenses	<u>1,526,171</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,526,171</u>
 Change in Net Assets	<u>(8,210)</u>	<u>(192,724)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(200,934)</u>
 Net Assets at Beginning of Year	<u>508,296</u>	<u>754,771</u>	<u>849,025</u>	<u>2,112,092</u>
 Net Assets at End of Year	<u>\$ 500,086</u>	<u>\$ 562,047</u>	<u>\$ 849,025</u>	<u>\$ 1,911,158</u>

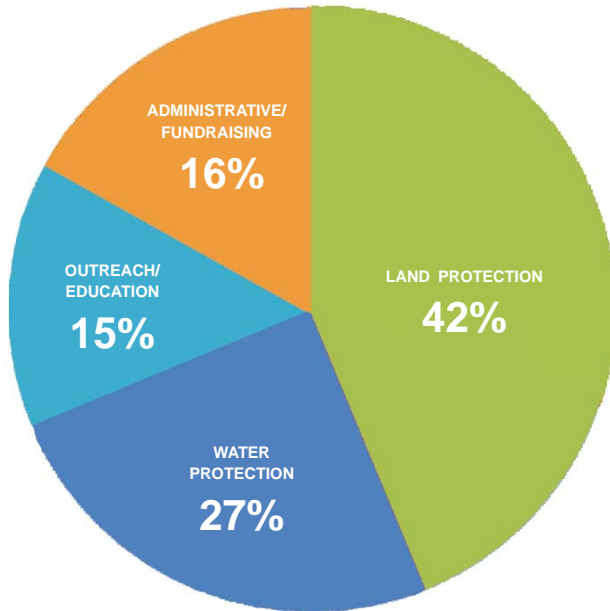
CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION JUNE 30, 2017

ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 115,698
Accounts Receivable	212,224
Prepaid Expenses	8,211
Total Current Assets	<u>336,133</u>
 Property and Equipment	
Land	216,206
Buildings and Renovations	354,511
Furnishings and Equipment	190,273
Less Accumulated Depreciation	(462,643)
Net Property and Equipment	<u>298,347</u>
 Other Assets	
Investments	1,350,638
Deferred Land Sale Costs	6,342
Total Other Assets	<u>1,356,980</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>\$1,991,460</u>
 TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	
Current Liabilities	
Accounts Payable	\$ 2,258
Equity Line	67,000
Accrued Salaries and Wages	11,044
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	<u>80,302</u>
 Net Assets	
Unrestricted, Equity in Property and Equipment	298,347
Unrestricted, Designated by the Board	62,000
Unrestricted, Undesignated	139,739
Total Unrestricted Net Assets	500,086
Temporarily Restricted	562,047
Permanently Restricted	849,025
TOTAL NET ASSETS	<u>1,911,158</u>
 TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	
	<u>\$1,991,460</u>

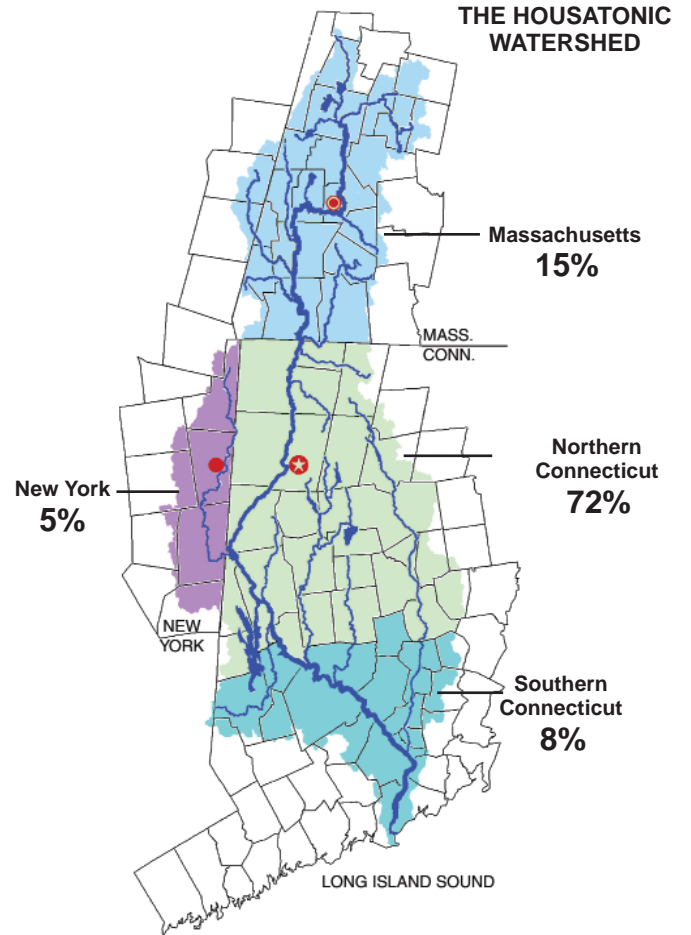
2017 AT A GLANCE

The Housatonic Valley Association's mission is to save the natural character and environmental health of our communities by protecting land and water in the Housatonic River Watershed.

How we spent our resources



Where we spent our resources



www.hvatoday.org

CT: P.O. Box 28, Cornwall Bridge, CT 06754 860-672-6678 E-mail: conn@hvatoday.org
MA: P.O. Box 496, Stockbridge, MA 01262 413-298-7024 E-mail: mass@hvatoday.org
NY: P.O. Box 315, Wassaic, NY 12592 845-442-1039 E-mail: mgrace.hva@gmail.com



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HVA STAFF

Lynn Werner
Executive Director

BERKSHIRE LAND AND WATER
Dennis Regan
Berkshire Director

Alison Dixon
Berkshire Outreach Program Manager

CONNECTICUTLAND PROTECTION
Tim Abbott
Greenprint Director

Connie Manes
Greenprint Manager
Stacy Deming
GIS Manager

CONNECTICUT/NEWYORK
WATER PROTECTION
Michael Jastremski
Watershed Conservation Director

Carolyn Klocker
*Ten Mile Watershed Manager**

Ryan Williams
Conservation Projects Manager
Savannah Judge
Conservation Project Manager

COMMUNITY EDUCATION AND OUTREACH
Richard Sears
Development Director

Rob Wallace
Communications Director
Brenda Singer
Membership/Volunteer Manager

Jane Bakker
*Communications Manager**

FINANCIAL
Patience Lindholm
Finance Director

CONSULTANTS
Carol Powers – Grants
Joseph Ruggiero – IT

*PARTTIME

Welcome Maria, Rob, Stacy, Courteny!



Maria Grace

Maria joined HVA as the New York Watershed Manager in May 2017 after serving as the River Adventure Coordinator for HVA's 2016 Source-to-Sound Paddle Trip. Before moving to Connecticut, she worked for several New Jersey conservation organizations – Conserve Wildlife Foundation of N.J., the South Branch Watershed Association and the Passaic River Coalition.



Stacy Deming

Stacy took the post of GIS Manager in 2017. She has extensive GIS and GPS skills gained over 18 years. From 2002-2009 she was a Survey Technician and GIS Specialist with the National Park Service Alaska Region. She then worked for the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection as a GIS Technician on its Protected Open Space Mapping project, and as a Naturalist/Interpreter in Connecticut State Parks.



Rob Wallace

Rob became Communications Director in January 2017. He's served as the VP of Communications at national nonprofit Keep America Beautiful, as a communications consultant and strategist for businesses and nonprofits of all sizes. Rob served on the boards of the Bethel Land Trust, Bethel Chamber of Commerce and the Bethel Inland Wetlands Commission.



Courteny Morehouse

Courteny filled the post of Conservation Project Manager in September 2017 working on programs in the Still River and Ten Mile River watersheds. Previously she worked as a Conservation Technician at the Hamilton Wetlands Restoration Project in Novato, California and an Operations Manager for a number of years at nonprofits focused on food, farming, and sustainable design.

Greenprint Collaborative

Aton Forest, Inc.
Audubon Connecticut/Audubon Sharon
Colebrook Land Conservancy
Connecticut Farmland Trust
Cornwall Conservation Trust
Flanders Nature Center and Land Trust
The Goshen Land Trust
Hartland Land Trust
Housatonic Valley Association
The Kent Land Trust
Lake Waramaug Task Force
Litchfield Land Trust
The Morris Land Trust
Naromi Land Trust
New Hartford Land Trust
Norfolk Land Trust
Salisbury Association, Inc.
Sharon Land Trust
Steep Rock Association
The Trust for Public Land
Warren Land Trust
Watertown Land Trust
Weantinoge Heritage Land Trust
The White Memorial Foundation
Winchester Land Trust