



2021 ANNUAL REPORT



A Record-Breaking Year

When so much feels uncertain and fleeting, it's satisfying to know you're making a lasting difference for the Maine coast.

This is one thing that makes land conservation exceptional: once land is protected, it will always be protected—and it will sustain more lives and livelihoods than any of us can imagine, now and far into the future. Your ongoing support of Maine Coast Heritage Trust is essential—we must continue to care for this land over the long haul—and there are many more special places along Maine's stunning coastline still in need of protection. But because you and others gave last year, 29 more places—including seven whole islands—are now forever protected. That's something you can count on.

Together, we conserved a total of 16,646 acres in 2021, which is more than the previous seven years combined. In a rapidly changing climate, when large-scale land protection is critical to saving Maine's vulnerable wildlife and sustaining healthy ecosystems, these numbers are deeply heartening. You can feel good knowing you did something tangible and meaningful in 2021 to mitigate climate change's impact on the Maine coast.

Throughout this Annual Report you'll read about incredible places now forever open to the public, like Casco Bay's stunning Little Whaleboat Island, pictured on the cover. And don't forget the 150 preserves you helped MCHT stewards maintain and keep open to folks when they needed fresh air, connection to nature, or to get to work on the water. In the photo opposite this letter, you'll see a young family enjoying the sun setting over Penobscot Bay from Witherle Woods Preserve in Castine, MCHT's very first preserve. Up and down the coast, you made special moments like this possible for countless people.

We're particularly grateful for the record number of people who supported us this year, and we couldn't be more excited for what this growing community will be able to make possible for the Maine coast in 2022 and beyond. Thank you for being a part of the effort to create more public access to the coast, support Maine's coastal communities, and strengthen the coast's resilience to climate change. We can't do this work without you, and we're so glad you're a part of MCHT.

Sincerely,



A blue ink signature of Tom Armstrong.

Tom Armstrong, *Chair of the Board*



A blue ink signature of Kate Stookey.

Kate Stookey, *President and CEO*

KEEP THE COAST WORKING

KEEP THE COAST HEALTHY

KEEP THE COAST OPEN

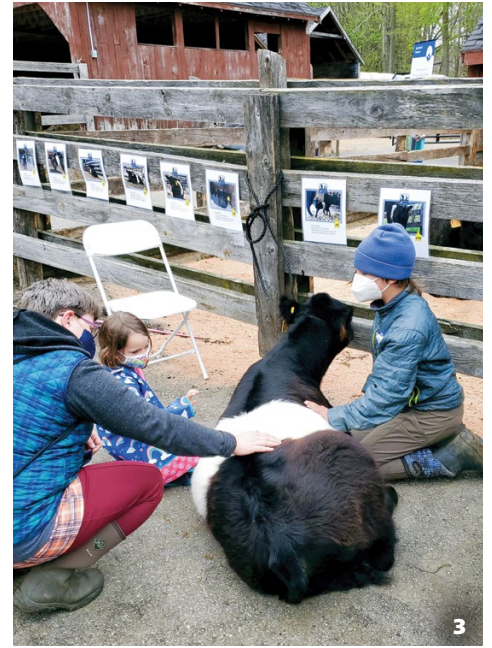
KEEP THE COAST BEAUTIFUL

KEEP THE COAST MAINE





Not only is Erickson Fields Preserve in Rockport a great place to take a hike, it's also a source of food for folks in the Midcoast. Members of our Teen Ag Crew and staff at Erickson Fields Preserve worked with volunteers to grow, harvest, and distribute more than 22,000 pounds of food to local hunger relief organizations in 2021.



A lot has changed over the past couple of years, but, as Aldermere Farm Preserve Manager Heidi Baker says, "Cows don't care about pandemic protocols." Once again, baby Belted Galloways filled the barnyard and pastures last spring and, after a year hiatus, members of the Midcoast community were able to join us in-person for Calf Unveiling Day to celebrate spring and the baby Belties.



Protecting Maine's salt marshes—including the lands surrounding them that will become marsh as sea level rises—is a priority in our effort to make Maine more resilient to climate change. To help us better understand how Maine salt marshes are responding to sea-level rise, Bates College students collected marsh core samples at Cousins River Fields and Marsh in Yarmouth, a property that will be officially purchased and transferred to MCHT in 2022.



Legislative leaders from both parties and Governor Janet Mills joined together to approve a four-year, \$40 million Land for Maine's Future (LMF) appropriation. MCHT co-lead this effort and, in the coming years, land trusts, state agencies, and communities will be able to conserve dozens of publicly accessible natural areas, as well as working farms, forests, and waterfronts throughout Maine with these funds. Pictured here is the Height of Land property conserved by Rangeley Lakes Heritage Trust with LMF support in 2007.



In 2017, MCHT's Ciona Ulbrich (right) and Penobscot resident Bailey Bowden (left) began to work on a plan to restore fish passage for alewives in the Bagaduce River Watershed. Over the next five years, working with numerous partners, MCHT co-lead the effort to install five nature-like fishways, bringing back thousands of the ecologically important sea-run fish. The final fishway project was completed in 2021, making the Bagaduce the first fully restored watershed for fish passage in the state of Maine.

Cover: In the fall of 2021, thanks to the generosity of hundreds of donors, we acquired Little Whaleboat Island for conservation and public access, rounding out the amazing collection of MCHT island preserves in Casco Bay—including Clapboard Island East, the Goslings, Lanes, Malaga, and (Great) Whaleboat.

Page 2: A family sneaks in a hike after work and daycare and enjoys watching the sun set over Penobscot Bay from Witherle Woods Preserve in Castine. Visitor levels at MCHT preserves remained high in 2021 as people pursued safe, outdoor activities through the pandemic.

Right: Thanks to the incredible generosity of its former owner, who gifted the island to us, Enchanted will become our eleventh island preserve in the waters off of Stonington—an archipelago of over 50 islands beloved by boaters and paddlers the world over. Enchanted Island was first protected through a conservation easement (a legal agreement to limit development) 15 years ago. Now, it's available for people to land on and enjoy.





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Through the conservation of a 1,700-acre property known as Schoodic Forest, we made significant progress in our effort to protect one of the last places on the Eastern Seaboard where wildlife can roam to and from rocky shores and inland woods seeking food and refuge. Large-scale conservation becomes increasingly important in a changing climate, as animals and plants will require broad swaths of land to move within to find food, water, and shelter as temperatures warm.



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We're deeply grateful to long-time volunteers like Tom Carr, who helped MCHT steward Amanda Devine with just about everything on our Midcoast preserves in 2021. One day while trail building, Tom took down a rotten leaning tree and shrimp-sized grubs came tumbling out of the hollow main trunk!



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Freeport-based Maine Beer Company gave \$50,000 to help protect Casco Bay's Little Whaleboat Island (officially conserved in November of 2021) and a couple of months later released a beer by the same name to help raise awareness for MCHT's mission. Cheers to a new public preserve in Casco Bay!

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See what you made possible in 2021

Thanks to your generosity last year, Maine Coast Heritage Trust was able to conserve 29 more special places on the coast of Maine, totaling 16,646 acres. Beyond that, you helped

us steward the 41,498 acres in our care—which includes building trails, removing trash from the shore, looking out for wildlife, removing invasive plants, and so much more.

Learn more about your impact.

mcht.org/2021-impact

The maps on the following three pages span the entire coast of Maine and showcase some of the work made possible thanks to donor support.

● **New places** conserved in 2021

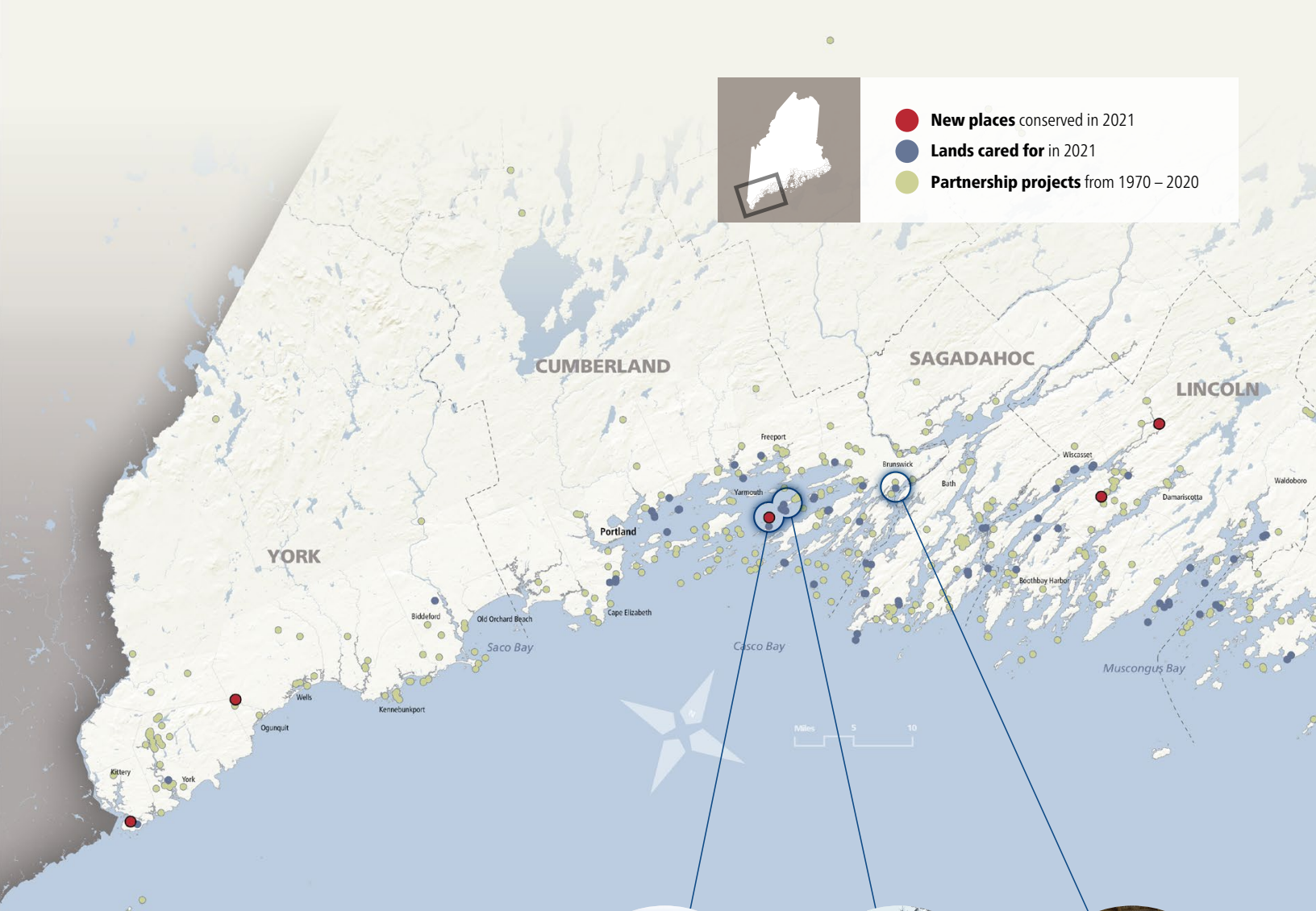
These 29 places comprise 16,646 newly protected acres (nearly the size of the town of Camden!), including more than 20.85 miles of shoreline (the distance from Ellsworth to Bar Harbor!).

● **Lands cared for** in 2021

MCHT stewardship staff monitored and cared for 41,498 acres (about the size of the city of Portland) in 2021, including maintaining over 100 miles of trail (the distance from Kittery to Damariscotta).

● **Partnership projects** from 1970 – 2020

In addition to conserved land under our care, MCHT has worked with partners to conserve hundreds of places up and down the coast. Of the 29 projects completed in 2021, 14 were partnership projects.



Donations by the numbers

4,410 people gave to MCHT in 2021, which is nearly **25%** more than the prior year!

1,027 people gave for the first time, which is over **50%** more than the number of first-time donors the prior year. (Welcome to MCHT!)

312 of you are Anchors, supporting this work with a monthly gift. (A **20%** increase!)

210 of you are part of Next Wave—the next generation of land conservationists.

824 of you are members of *The President's Circle*, giving **\$1,000** or more annually.



Generous landowners allowed people to visit Little Whaleboat Island for years. Now protected in perpetuity, the island will be officially open to the public.

We added **5** new MCHT preserves and expanded several existing preserves by nearly **300** acres.



A camper sets up on a tent platform at the Goslings Preserve for a magical experience camping on a Maine island.

People flocked to our island campsites! More than **250** people booked reservable campsites and hundreds of others stayed at first-come, first-served campsites along the coast.

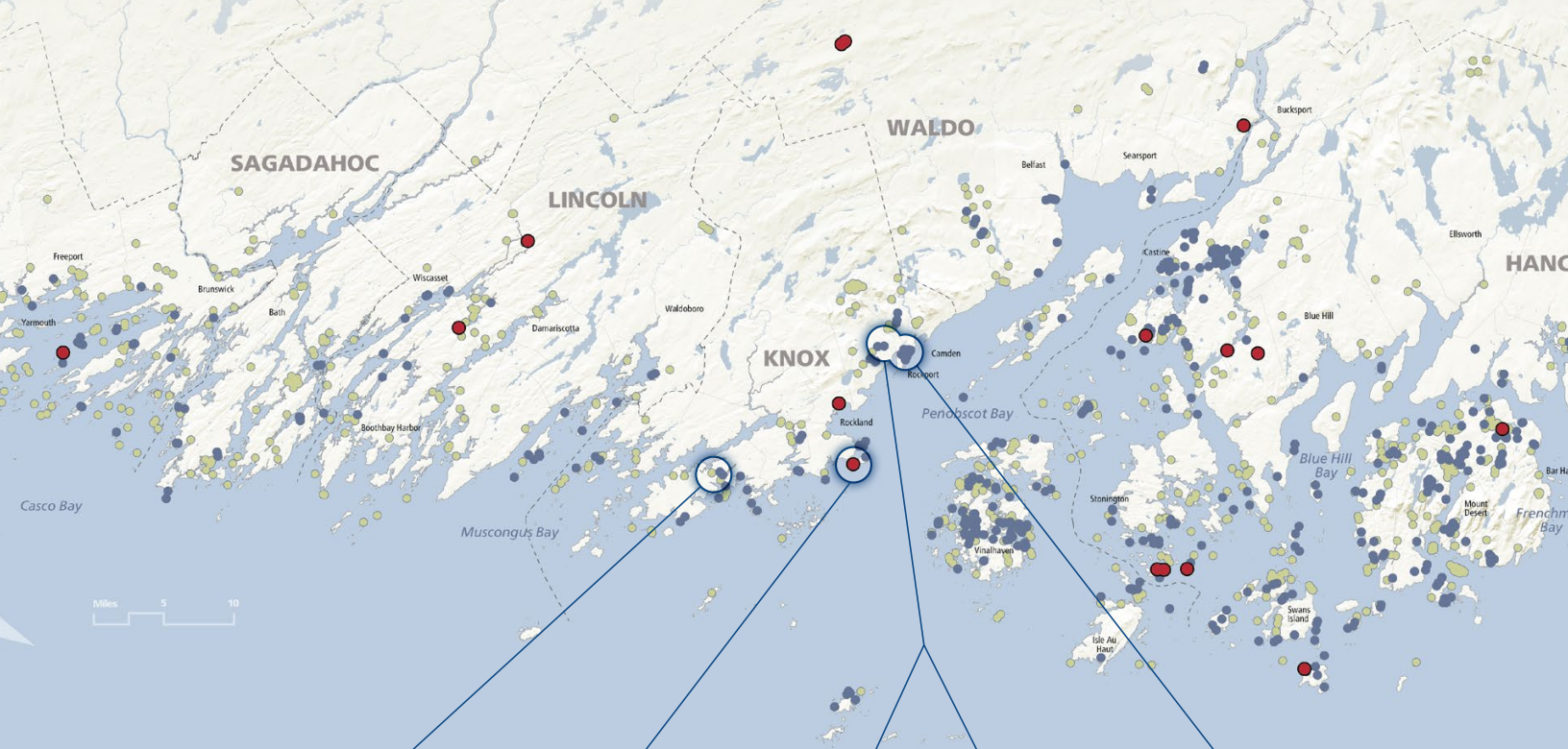


2021 interns gathered at Woodward Point Preserve in Brunswick for a chainsaw training course.

10 Maine students participated in the Richard G. Rockefeller Conservation Internship Program, pairing students interested in land conservation with land trusts throughout the state. To date, we've had **47** graduates of the program!



- **New places** conserved in 2021
- **Lands cared for** in 2021
- **Partnership projects** from 1970 – 2020



At Bamford Preserve in St. George, a steward removes invasive multiflora rose to make way for native plants that provide more nutrition for wildlife.

Land stewards oversaw significant invasive plant removal projects at **5** of our preserves, in addition to monitoring and managing invasives at other preserves up and down the coast.



Sheep Island is now the third MCHT island preserve off Owls Head.

7 entire islands were conserved.



A bin of freshly washed carrots from Erickson Fields Preserve.

Erickson Fields Preserve staff, volunteers, and program participants grew **26,235** pounds of produce—**86%** of which was donated to hunger relief organizations. Additionally, MCHT donated **1,000** pounds of Aldermere Farm beef to local food pantries.



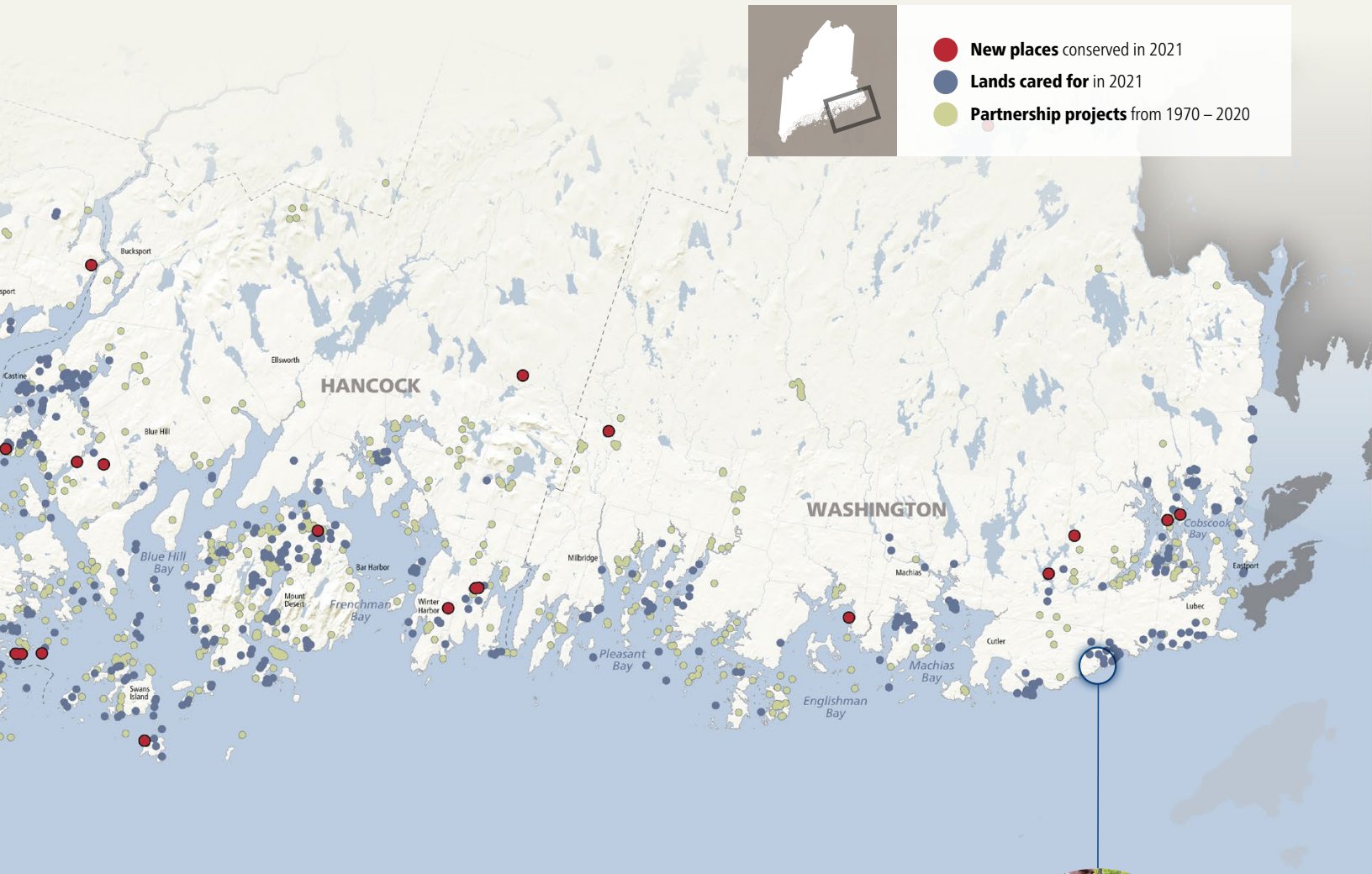
A gardener and her pup pay a visit to their community garden plot at Erickson Fields Preserve.

Every plot in our community gardens at Babson Creek, Kelley Farm, and Erickson Fields preserves—**76** total—was filled!



Families gather at Aldermere Farm to meet the baby Belted Galloways on Calf Unveiling Day.

Over the course of the year, a total of **800** people joined us at Aldermere Farm for a series of COVID-friendly events.



Land trust leadership by the numbers

\$40 million! After co-leading a **5-year** campaign, MCHT celebrated new funding for the Land for Maine's Future program. Governor and state legislature approved, this investment builds upon a **35-year** record that has conserved more than **600,000 acres**.

75 representatives of land trusts throughout the state participated in a **3-part workshop series** entitled:

"Learning to Do Better: Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion and Maine Land Trusts" coordinated by the Maine Land Trust Network, a program of MCHT.

375 participants in our first virtual Maine Land Conservation Conference gathered to discuss climate resilience, Indigenous engagement, nature-based education, and responding to increased preserve use.

Learn more about our Land Trust Program—devoted to strengthening Maine's entire land conservation community of over 80 land trusts.



Stewards add rock steps to the Bog Brook Cove Preserve Ridge Trail, which will last much longer than wooden steps.

Stewards maintained over **100 miles** of trails on our preserves for the public to enjoy.

[mcht.org/
land-trust-program](https://mcht.org/land-trust-program)



Access, climate, and community: three pillars of our work together

With your support, Maine Coast Heritage Trust is on a mission to ensure the Maine coast is accessible to all, as resilient to climate change as possible, and home to strong and thriving communities—now and far into the future.

We're the one land conservation organization focused on Maine's entire coast, with staff living in the communities we serve. We have the capacity to catalyze crucial statewide initiatives in response to the looming threats of climate change and diminishing access to the coast.

We also have the experience to know that diverse input, collaboration, and creativity are essential to making a meaningful difference. Every community we work in is unique, and so is every land conservation project.

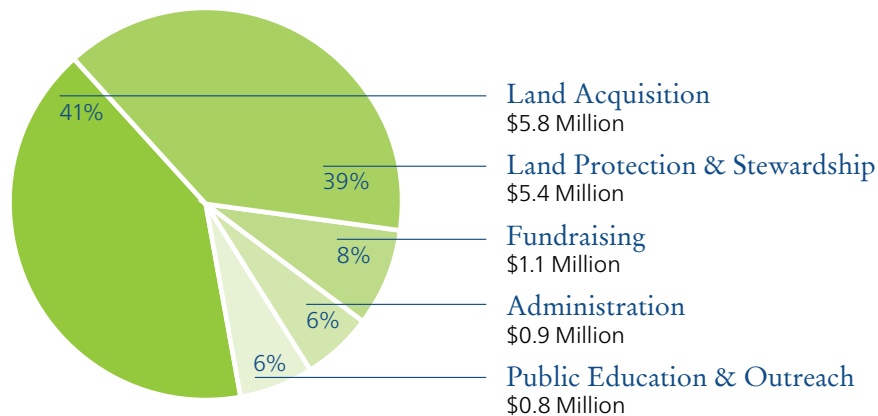
At MCHT we're about listening, building relationships and consensus, and getting the work done. And that's all possible because you give—thank you.

Learn more about our access, climate, and community work.

mcht.org/our-work

Generosity in action, 2021

We value your gift to Maine Coast Heritage Trust, and we're making sure it goes as far as possible for the Maine coast. For every \$10 MCHT spent in 2021, \$9 went directly to protecting and caring for coastal lands and islands and connecting people to the coast.



Where do those funds come from?

- Private Restricted Contributions & Grants (46%)
- Investment Draw (22%)
- Annual Fund (20%)
- Public Restricted Grants (9%)
- Other Revenue (3%)

The above represents a summary of how your generous contributions were spent during 2021 and the sources of funds applied. Our 2021 audited financial statements and Form 990 will be available later this year. A complete set of MCHT's 2020 audited financial statements are available at mcht.org/financials.

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“After an extended period of isolation, the outdoors has come to be more deeply meaningful to me. It has provided comfort and solace, perspective, and retreat in a way I hadn’t fully appreciated or depended upon before. MCHT’s work preserving coastal lands and waterways is critical to ensuring the Earth’s scarce and precious natural resources exist in a relationship of reciprocity with us humans for generations to come.”

— Emily Bruce, Board Member

Our community of supporters is growing by leaps and bounds, and so is our collective impact.

Thanks for all you made possible for the coast in 2021!

