

Nature Rules!

STANDING UP
FOR THE
SPECIAL PLACES
IN OUR
COMMUNITY



SELT

2024 ANNUAL REPORT

You Bring Certainty

There's the short game. There's the long game. And then, there's the forever game. Conservation is the forever game—the deepest commitment we can make to our land, our communities, and future generations. It's a promise without an expiration date, and at SELT, it's the heart of everything we do.

This enduring commitment is our shared ethos. Together, we are a growing force of nature's defenders, working to save, share, steward, and sustain the lands we love.

We cannot ignore the realities of today's world. Political uncertainty and shifting federal priorities have introduced new challenges across many sectors, including land conservation. Yet, even amidst these headwinds, I remain firmly confident in SELT's mission and strategic vision to accelerate conservation and protect more of the special places in our communities for clean water, outdoor recreation, fresh food, wildlife, and healthy forests.

As we have over the years, with you by our side, we will do whatever it takes to save, share, steward, and sustain the lands we love.

And we are acting—boldly and with purpose. In the past year, we launched our most ambitious Strategic Plan yet, shaped through thoughtful conversations with neighbors, partners, and—most importantly—you, our dedicated supporters. What emerged was a powerful, unified message: the time to act is now. We must quicken the pace of land conservation.

Open space is finite. As real estate pressures intensify across southeastern New Hampshire, our work has never been more urgent. But we are ready. Over the past two decades, SELT has conserved more than 28,000 acres. We've built a deep well of knowledge, tools, and partnerships—and we're just getting started.

Thanks to your steadfast generosity, SELT remains financially strong. Recent campaigns like the Pam Hall Challenge Match and Merrymeeting Clean Forever have not only secured critical resources, they have also welcomed many new supporters into our growing community. And with the creation of the Conservation Acceleration Fund, we now have the agility to seize transformative opportunities as they arise—amplifying your impact in real time.

Yes, the political terrain may shift, but our focus never will. We remain unwavering in our mission to protect the lands that matter—to you, to wildlife, and to the enduring health of our communities.

Thank you for playing the forever game with us.

Warmly,

Brent Merriam
PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD
SOUTHEAST LAND TRUST OF NEW HAMPSHIRE



Let's Stay Connected

Visit seltnh.org to discover our work, download trail guides, sign up for field trips, volunteer, and become a member.



Facebook.com/seltnh



@SELTNH

Cover: Hadley Franceschini having fun at Burley Farms. SELT STAFF
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From the Watershed to the Water Ditcher

Protecting Jones Brook Means Clean Water for Thousands

On a steamy summer day in 2024, SELT, the Carl Siemon Family Charitable Trust and US Natural Resources Conservation Service, and landowner George Szirbik partnered to conserve the 558-acre Jones Brook property in Milton, a significant resource for drinking water in Strafford County. Jones Brook lies entirely within the Somersworth Water Works Source Water Protection Area and encompasses two miles of Jones Brook and Hart Brook, which are known to contain native brook trout and other aquatic species of concern.

This property sits under the northern shadow of Mount Teneriffe, adding to a broader 4,000-acre

tapestry of conservation, which includes Teneriffe Mountain Forest (a joint project between SELT and Moose Mountains Regional Greenways).

“Jones Brook is the missing piece in a 4,000-acre block of conserved land,” says Lori Sommer, SELT’s Coastal Watershed Land Conservation Manager. “The conservation of this land is a major achievement on behalf of the greater Milton community and provides critical protection of a drinking water supply that serves tens of thousands of New Hampshire residents.”

The clear waters of Jones Brook.

Making Waves

The Ronald and Nancy Bottom Forest in Hampton Packs a Coastal Conservation Punch

Marielle Gomez-Kaifer and Angel Kaifer swapped one Atlantic coastline for another when they moved from Miami to Hampton and were happy to exchange the warmth of Florida for the seasons of New Hampshire. Lovers of wildlife and the scenic Seacoast, the Kaifers leapt at a chance to purchase a beautiful property from their neighbors, the Bottom family, and fixed their vision on long-term conservation.

That vision came to reality when Marielle and Angel generously donated a conservation easement to SELT on The Ronald and Nancy Bottom Forest.

At just over 20 acres, this property packs a lot of value within its boundaries, especially when it comes to coastal health.

Nestled adjacent to the Batchelder Farm conservation easements, its benefits are sterling: pollutant attenuation, climate resilience, priority habitat, flood storage and risk mitigation, and wildlife corridors. With SELT's continued focus on protecting the health of our coastal watershed, every acre counts and The Ronald and Nancy Bottom Forest is one of the best "bangs for your buck" you're going to find.

The Ronald and Nancy Bottom Forest safeguards the coastline.





Schafer Woods, an Atkinson gem.
The covered bridge is a beloved element of the trail. SELT STAFF



Building a Bridge to a Legacy

SELT's Newest Trail System is Filled with Family History and High-end Ecological Value

The birth of Schafer Woods can be traced to the 1980s, when Dr. Rick Schafer pieced together a few acres at a time, eventually assembling a 141-acre piece of property square in the middle of the white-hot development venue that is Atkinson.

In August, The Schafer Family donated the property outright to SELT, providing Atkinson and surrounding towns with a prime outdoor destination. Assisted by friends and family members over the years, Dr. Schafer had built and maintained over two miles of trails on the property, which required very little work on SELT's end to update. (Tip: if you visit, be sure to check out the hand-built covered bridge!)

The significance of Schafer Woods has long been recognized by the Atkinson Conservation Commission. The land's ecological importance

stretches well beyond the boundaries of town, as it protects Hogg Hill Brook and its tributaries, safeguards drinking water wellheads, and provides regionally significant wildlife corridors for animals moving between large blocks of conservation land. The Town of Atkinson provided a generous contribution from the Conservation Fund to support SELT's transaction costs and long-term stewardship of the property.

"Over time, the pressure to sell or develop the land intensified," said family member Rebecca Schafer, "yet the family remained firm in our shared desire to protect the land, the natural resources, and the critical wildlife habitat it provides. We are thrilled it remains in its natural state for generations to come for all to respect and enjoy."

Making Mast Road More Accessible

The Trails at Mast Road Received a Major Upgrade to Welcome More Users

100,000 pounds of material. Five bridges repaired. Two bridges replaced. Over the summer, SELT's Mast Road Natural Area in Epping benefitted from an epic stretch of management and improvements as staff, volunteer land stewards, and corporate partners rolled up their sleeves and got to work.

They focused on a stretch of property that starts at the Mast Road kiosk and parking area and runs for a half-mile. This section of the trail is flat, wide, and, with the edge work, fill, and new surface, much more agreeable to users with mobility challenges.

"It's a beautiful trail," said Tyler Goodwin, of Goodwin Family Management, whose employees contributed their efforts to the project. "It's great to get out of the office and enjoy nature, mix things up and help SELT out."

Goodwin Family Management volunteers putting in the work at Mast Road Natural Area. SELT STAFF





Here They Grow

ATLAS is Inspiring the Next Generation of Conservationists

ATLAS (All-Terrain Learning Adventures), SELT's nature-based education initiative is blossoming. Lamprey River Elementary School (LRES) in Raymond launched their full ATLAS program in fall 2024, with K-3 students participating in a monthly "Forest Friday" programs led by ATLAS educators.

Hiking, sledding, cross-county skiing, pond exploration, critter hunting it's all on the menu and with LRES on board, ATLAS is now bringing the wonder of nature to over 1,000 young conservationists each year.

This impact has resonated in a big way with the community, so much so that SELT's Board of Directors has woven the measured expansion of ATLAS for underserved communities into our Strategic Plan. That means more schools, more kids, and more "campfire calzones."

Just take it from one of our elementary school partners: "Thank you so much for your commitment to our students and providing our kids with authentic and beautiful connection to our natural world."

Volunteerism Goes into Overdrive

Powering the Engine of Local Conservation and Stewardship

Volunteers are the bedrock that supports SELT's mission. From land stewards to trail workers to office support to Board leadership, the spectrum of support that we receive from our SELTies is immense and indispensable.

In 2024, the volunteer program grew to 188 active volunteers, contributing over 6,400 hours (the equivalent of three full-time positions!), with a financial value of nearly \$215,000. This volunteer horsepower proved especially important during the development of the Strategic Plan,



which relied on interviewers (and interviewees), folks to organize the voluminous survey responses, and our leadership committees to choose and implement the goals that make up SELT's vision going forward.

"Our volunteers bring expertise, efficiency, and enthusiasm to SELT," said Zoe Graves, SELT's Outreach and Education Director. "This past year showed how much our community responds to our shared mission of saving, sharing, stewarding, and sustaining the lands we love."

Above: Volunteering at Dandelion Forest Farm. SELT STAFF

Below: SELT's volunteers gather for the annual volunteer appreciation event. SELT STAFF



SELT by the Numbers

1,338 acres (or about 984 football fields) worth of land conserved for clean water, wildlife habitat, scenic beauty, and outdoor recreation.



Over **380,000 pounds of food** could be produced annually from farmland conserved by SELT in 2024.

Just under **9 miles** of shoreline along rivers, streams, lakes, and ponds protected.



62 miles of trails maintained and powered by **2,949 hours** of contributed volunteer time.



Over **6 miles of trails** evaluated for trail accessibility.

14,956 acres of easement-conserved land monitored by SELT's stewardship staff.



250 bulbs planted in newly-built garden beds by **over 200** Epping elementary students for the ATLAS Ag farming program.

\$122,701 raised through The SELT Match, a matching challenge powered by SELT Board member Pam Hall.



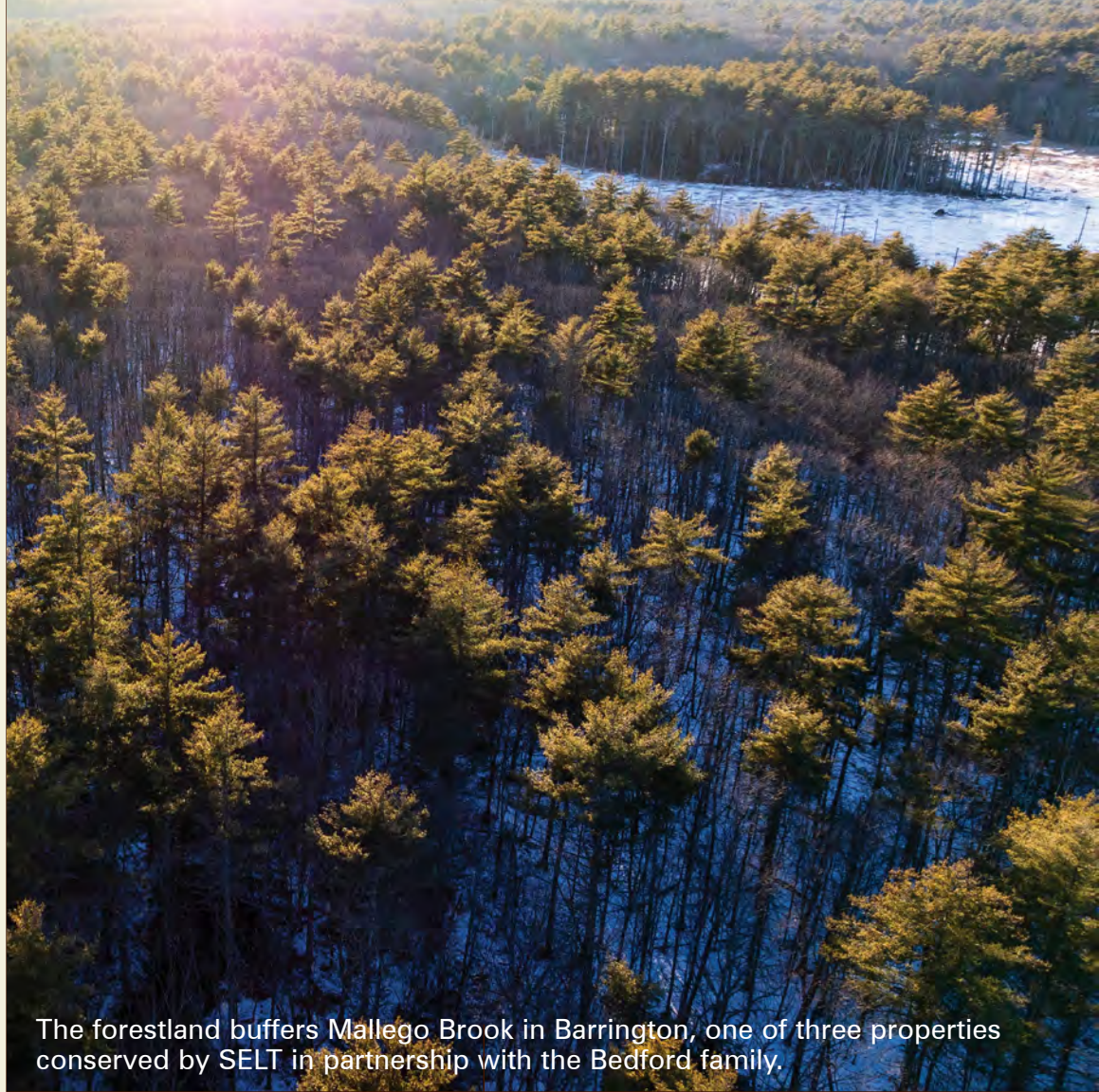


SELT Receives Accreditation

In 2024, SELT renewed its land trust accreditation for a third consecutive term, joining a network of over 450 accredited land trusts across the country.

“We are proud to recognize SELT’s continued commitment to conservation excellence,” said Melissa Kalvestrand, Executive Director of the Commission. “The accreditation seal is a mark of distinction that stands for excellence, trust and permanence. SELT is part of a network of over 450 accredited land trusts that are united by their strong ethical practices. Accredited land trusts inspire confidence and respect among their peers and in their communities.”

“Renewing our accreditation shows SELT’s continued commitment to permanent land conservation, good governance, and sound fiscal management,” said Brian Hart, SELT’s Executive Director. “We are a stronger organization than ever for having gone through the rigorous accreditation renewal process for a third consecutive term. Accreditation comes at a perfect time for SELT as we accelerate our pace of conservation to protect lands for clean water, wildlife habitat, local farms, and outdoor recreation.”



The forestland buffers Mallego Brook in Barrington, one of three properties conserved by SELT in partnership with the Bedford family.

2024 Board Members

Brent Merriam President, Epping
Peter Bergh Vice President, Portsmouth
Pam Hall Treasurer, Portsmouth
Haley Andreozzi Secretary, Deerfield

Don Briselden Exeter
Tom Chamberlin New Castle
Daniel Clapp Madbury
Bruce Goodwin Portsmouth
Reggie Hall Hampton
Philip Lovejoy Strafford
Scott Marion Rye
Joan Pratt Exeter
Samuel Reid Portsmouth
Edie Shipley Brentwood
Laurie Smith Dover
Roger Stephenson Stratham
Jim Varn Kensington
John Wallace Barrington
Alison Watts Newfields

2024 Staff

Brian Hart Executive Director
Beverly Shadley Deputy Director
Deborah Goard Stewardship and Land Engagement Director
Duane Hyde Land Conservation Director
Zoe Graves Outreach & Education Director

Katie Bates Conservation Easement Steward
Emily Burns Conservation Coordinator
Kaitlin Deyo Conservation Project Manager
Bridget Drake Executive & Office Assistant
Amanda Ellms* Easement Stewardship Manager
Kay Emery* Seasonal Land Steward
Ben Engel Conservation Project Manager
Chad Fierros Forest and Wildlife Habitat Manager
Lizzy Franceschini Education Program Manager
Yohann Hanley Trails and Community Engagement Manager
David Johnson Senior Communications Advisor
Jeremy Lougee* Senior Conservation Project Manager & Farmland Coordinator
Amy Shellenberger* Donor Relations Specialist
Lori Sommer Coastal Watershed Land Conservation Manager
Jean Standring Database and Gift Entry Manager
Derrick Trent Events & Outreach Specialist

* former



COURTESY PHOTO

A Mark of Distinction

The accreditation seal AFFIRMS national quality standards are met.



- ✓ SOUND FINANCES
- ✓ ETHICAL CONDUCT
- ✓ RESPONSIBLE GOVERNANCE
- ✓ LASTING STEWARDSHIP

www.landtrustaccreditation.org

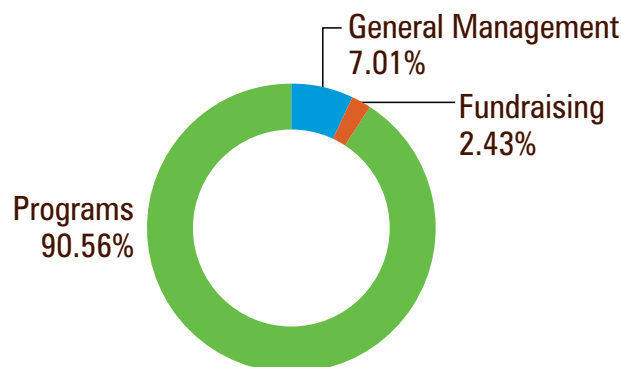
2024 FINANCIAL REPORT

This summary financial report is pending completion of SELT's 2024 audit and preparation of Financial Statements, to be prepared by the certified public accounting firm of Rowley & Associates, PC. Figures for 2024 are pending final review and subject to change. A copy of the complete Financial Statements for 2024 or prior periods is available upon request. Please contact Brian Hart, Executive Director, at 603-778-6088, or info@seltnh.org.

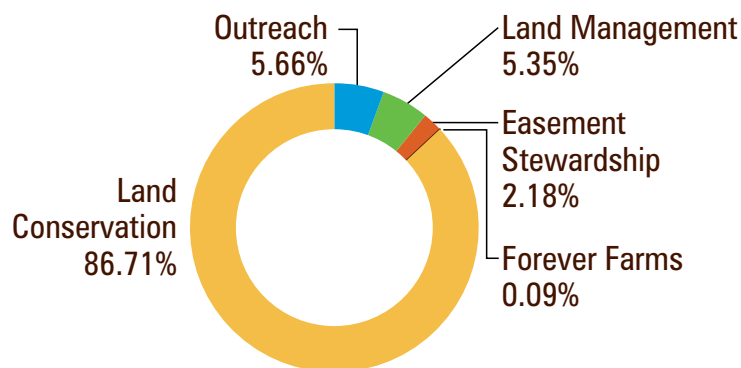
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

REVENUES	2024	2023
Operating		
Contributions	\$1,446,446	\$1,674,595
Membership Dues	154,254	156,545
Special events	67,394	71,220
Interests and dividend income	332,626	271,205
Contracted services	6,867	2,170
Other	83,741	102,110
Unrealized Gain/(Loss) on Investments	\$482,448	\$709,496
Special Projects¹		0
Contributions	\$5,614,988	\$5,274,850
In-kind services	0	1,660
Donated land and easement value	4,427,401	1,429,803
Total Revenues	\$12,616,164	\$9,693,653
EXPENSES	2024	2023
Operating		
Program		
Easement Stewardship	\$178,454	\$155,972
Forever Farms	7,666	28,334
Land Management	340,562	239,096
Land Conservation	395,108	291,824
Outreach & Education	462,827	306,492
General and Administrative	632,772	804,025
Fundraising	219,226	221,338
Special Projects		
Land Management	96,909	197,790
Land Conservation	6,695,907	2,702,807
Total Expenses	\$9,029,431	\$4,947,678

– 2024 EXPENSES ALL ACTIVITIES



2024 PROGRAM EXPENSES



Financial Footnotes

- ¹ Special projects include the acceptance of land or easements and the completion of significant land management projects such as trail construction.
- ² The New Hampshire Charitable Foundation (NHCF) holds and manages \$735,622 of the 12/31/2024 balance.
- ³ The reported balances include property specific funds as well as funds for general land management.
- ⁴ Held and managed by the NHCF. SELT receives an annual distribution, based on the performance of the investments for a 20-quarter rolling average.

RESTRICTED AND DESIGNATED FUNDS

SELT holds numerous funds that are donor-restricted or Board-designated for specific purposes.

FUND	Purpose	12/31/2024	12/31/2023
Conservation Acceleration Fund	To accelerate strategic conservation in the Coastal Watershed	\$1,342,431	\$776,500
Conservation Easement Stewardship Fund^{2, 4}	To cover the annual costs for stewardship and defense of all conservation easements held by SELT	3,425,936	3,085,902
Land Management Fund³	To support the long-term ownership, management, and stewardship costs of fee-owned properties of SELT	3,647,516	3,104,667
Lamprey River Land Protection Fund	To support land conservation efforts on the Wild and Scenic Lamprey River	413,485	296,065
Legal Defense Fund	To support the legal defense of all conservation easements, executory interests, and fee ownerships of SELT	462,570	414,104
Nature-Based Education Funds	To support SELT's nature-based education initiative in Epping and other communities	186,443	114,798
Piscassic Greenway Fund⁴	To support the long-term management, stewardship, and protection of SELT's Piscassic Greenway	127,514	122,134
SELT Fund⁴	To support the mission and operation of SELT	122,264	117,105
Sweet Land Protection Fund	To provide short-term financing to purchase land or conservation easements	80,547	129,205
Total		\$9,808,705	\$8,160,480



SELT

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