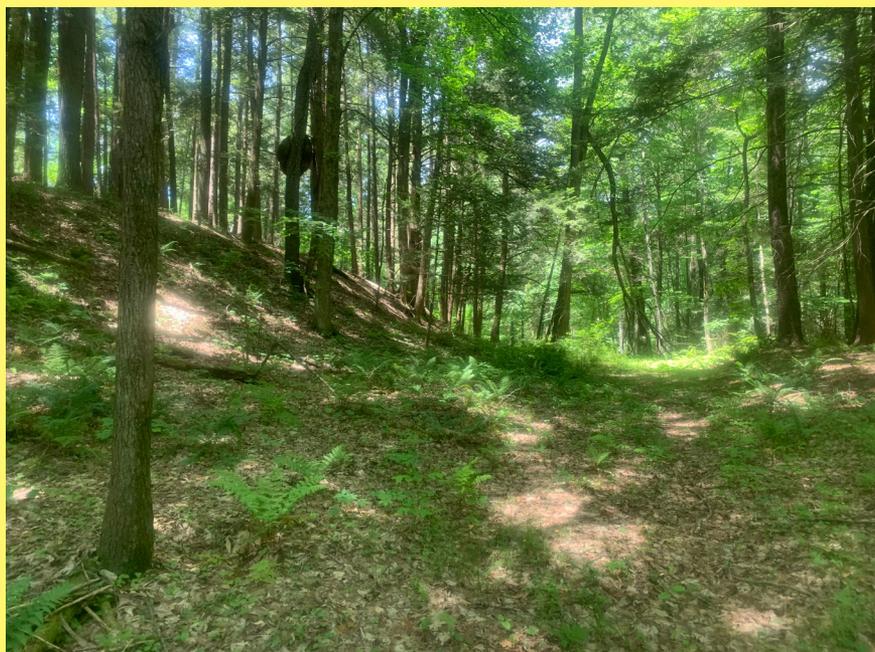


Sheffield Land Trust

*Protecting Sheffield's Natural, Scenic,
Agricultural and Rural Character*

2020 Annual Report



Old logging road to be reclaimed and improved into a trail on the Bow Wow Woods property off of Bow Wow Road and Route 41.

The Sheffield Land Trust, Inc.
Statement of Financial Position
December 31, 2020

Assets

Current Assets:

Cash and equivalents	\$ 298,323
Membership receivables	19,350
Pledges receivable, net	17,423
Prepaid expenses	4,560
Current portion of notes receivable	<u>2,400</u>
Total Current Assets	\$ 342,056

Board restricted cash	44,300
Pledges receivable, net of current portion	3,350
Notes receivable, net of current portion	18,717
Property and equipment, net	10,834
Land	<u>1,999,307</u>
Total Assets	\$ 2,418,564

Liabilities and Net Assets

Current Liabilities:

Accounts payable	\$ 4,144
Accrued interest	—
Line of credit	24,381
Current portion of capital lease obligation	1,039
Current portion of long-term debt	<u>—</u>
Total Current Liabilities	\$ 29,564

Deferred revenue	101,000
Capital lease payable, net of current portion	3,650
Long-term debt, net of current portion	<u>—</u>
Total Liabilities	\$ 134,214

Net Assets:

Without donor restrictions	\$ 2,230,269
With donor restrictions	<u>54,081</u>

Total Net Assets **\$ 2,284,350**

Total Liabilities and Net Assets **\$ 2,418,564**

*Complete audited financial statements may be obtained
by contacting the SLT office.*

You, Our Members, Are Amazing!

Here's what you helped make possible in 2019-2021:

- Completed fundraising for the Housatonic Valley Association Greenprint Partners **\$200,000** Batacchi-River Lea Challenge.
- Organized **2** tree plantings and **3** tree, shrub and bulb giveaways with the Sheffield Tree Project involving over **20** volunteers and providing over **500** trees, shrubs and bulbs to area families.
- Protected the first part of the **270-acre** Batacchi Farm on Lime Kiln Road with an Agricultural Preservation Restrictions (the second part will close in January), bringing the total number of acres that SLT has helped families protect in Sheffield to **4,987**, including 18 farm properties.
- Hosted **1** live and **1** virtual annual Winter Lecture, attracting over **100** participants each year to learn about "Growing Food & Eating Fresh" and "Conservation Tools for Protecting Your Neighborhood" from local and regional experts.
- Held a very successful neighborhood gathering for the Batacchi and River Lea farm protection projects with over **60** neighbors.
- Doubled the Legacy Circle of members who include SLT in their estate planning, with **6** families now having let us know that they have done so.
- Held multiple clean-up and work days at Ashley Falls Woods, where over a dozen volunteers maintained the trails, removed invasive species, monitored for rare species, continued to improve signage, and installed **2** benches with funds given in tribute to former SLT president John Wightman and long-time resident Jessica Roseman.
- Celebrated SLT's **30th** anniversary and moved to a new office at 75 Main Street in Sheffield.
- Signed a purchase and sale agreement to protect the **54**-acre Bow Wow Woods, which will include developing a public trail and youth-education programs, in partnership with Egremont Land Trust and Greenagers.

Sheffield Land Trust's Current Project Areas

In addition to our ongoing education and outreach work, our primary focus continues to be on land conservation work in three landscape and recreational areas, as well as conserving agricultural land throughout Sheffield and Ashley Falls:

- The **Sheffield-Egremont Agricultural, Ecological & Scenic Corridor** remains a rarity in the state—a relatively intact and unfragmented rural landscape. The heart of the Corridor is over 2,000 acres of field, forest and wetlands in southeast Egremont and northwest Sheffield, which connect to over 5,000 additional acres of protected land, including the Appalachian Trail, Mt. Everett and Jug End State Reserves, wildlife management areas, and other privately conserved land.

This year we helped the **Batacchi** family complete an Agricultural Preservation Restriction as part of Phase 4 of the Corridor, and we are beginning Phase 5 of the Corridor with the campaign to protect **Bow Wow Woods** with a \$500,000 challenge that will match gifts dollar for dollar.

- The **Housatonic River Corridor** protects farms and wildlife areas on both sides of the river. Since Sheffield was settled in the 1700s, farmers have prized the rich “bottom land” along the Housatonic River.

Most recently along the river, you helped us complete the fundraising campaign for the **River Lea Farm**

Agricultural Preservation Restriction on Boardman Street. Other farms and properties in the Corridor that we have helped families to protect include **Wolfe Spring Farm**, **Larkin Dairy Farm** land, the **Corn Crib** (now **Whalen's** tree nursery), **Balsam Hill Farm**, the former **Cavalier** property that's now part of Pine Island Farm, **Egerton Family Farm**, **Howden Farm** and half a dozen conservation and deed restrictions—more than 1,200 acres altogether.

- The **Community Trail Network** includes the **Deborah Reich Trail** near the center of Sheffield, which runs from Salisbury Road to the Southern Berkshire Regional School District campus, and which is also available to be used as an outdoor classroom; and **Ashley Falls Woods**, whose network of trails are loops of varying length is near the center of Ashley Falls off Ashley Falls Road (Route 7A).

These primarily forested properties have seen a tremendous upsurge in use by people of all ages during the pandemic, as is the case with trails all across the country. Dogs are welcome so long as they are leashed. Both properties have a pack-in, pack-out policy, so please plan ahead.

We are continuing to make improvements to these recreational properties and are working to raise the final \$400,000 from the community and foundations to complete the improvements and stewardship funds for this ongoing work.

Volunteer with one of our working committees—it's a great way to make new friends while making a difference.

The Sheffield Land Trust accomplishes its work through the efforts of our Board of Directors and many other volunteers. We are local residents who contribute our time and skills to manage the organization with the help of our staff. Volunteers and staff work together through three standing committees to achieve our goals.

The **Outreach & Education Committee** does many things. It is responsible for the organization's press releases, ads, displays, brochures, and other literature. It produces newsletters and invitations and provides material for the organization's website. It organizes SLT's events—and its Food Committee is famous for serving up fabulous food at events and gatherings. The Outreach and Education Committee also works with the community and the schools on educating students and the public about Sheffield's natural world, its farms, and farming opportunities. The Committee meets on one Saturday morning every other month.

The **Land Protection Committee** works with families to conserve their land, mostly using two conservation tools, private Conservation Restrictions (CRs) and the Massachusetts Agricultural Preservation Restriction (APR) program. APRs are a way that the state helps families get the equity out of their land without having to sell it or to stop farming it. SLT raises the required local share of the value of the APR.

Both APRs and CRs are voluntary restrictions

that a family places on its land to ensure that the family's vision for the land endures for the benefit of future generations. Both APRs and CRs restrict certain uses of the land that are incompatible with the conservation values of the property and the family's vision, restrictions that stay with the property on the deed through all future owners. Families that donate all or part of the value of the APR or CR can often realize savings on income, capital gains or estate taxes.

We can also protect land by owning it. We keep our land on the tax rolls and enroll it in the relevant current-use program for forestry, agriculture or wildlife (Chapter 61, 61A or 61 B). We can accept gifts land to conserve, and gifts of non-conservation land or buildings to be sold to help fund the protection of other land. Donations of land can provide the same kind of tax benefits as with CRs and APRs. We also occasionally purchase land to protect it.

The Land Protection Committee is also responsible for monitoring the land we own and the CRs we hold to make sure that the conservation values and the terms of the CRs are being upheld. Volunteer monitors become familiar with a property, each year walking the area under protection and filing a report. (For APRs, the state monitors the land.) The Land Protection Committee meets on one Tuesday afternoon every other month.

The Funding & Financial Management Committee draws on its members' expertise and talents to monitor and help plan SLT's financial well-being, both long-term and day-to-day, and to organize and oversee fundraising for SLT's conservation projects, outreach and education work, and operations. The Funding & Financial Management Committee meets on one Friday afternoon every other month.

Board

President: Susan Rothschild
Vice President: Kerry Douglas
Treasurer: Jack Bode
Secretary: Andrea Scott

Ann Barrett
Sari Hoy
Robin Kriesberg
Ken Schopp
Alicia Szendiuch
Don Ward
Ron Yaple
Sally Cook, Emeritus
Nancy Smith, Emeritus

Staff

Kathy Orlando, Executive Director, Land Protection
Bob Ronnow, Executive Director, Operations
Judy Magenis, Administrative Assistant

Sheffield Land Trust

P.O. Box 940, 75 Main St.
Sheffield, MA 01257-0940
(413) 229-0234
shefland@bcn.net
www.sheffieldland.org
and follow us on Facebook!

*Dedicated to protecting the land essential to Sheffield's
natural, scenic, agricultural and rural character.
Since 1989, helping families protect almost
5,000 acres, including 18 farms.*

Please remember us when doing your estate planning!