Spring 2019 LANDKEEPERS
REPORT AND ANNUAL REPORT 2018 Fishing in the Housatonic River? Absolutely! Landkeepers like you are working together to build the High Road in Williamstown, Great Barrington, and Richmond

LANDKEEPERS REPORT & 2018 ANNUAL REPORT

Spring 2019

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Take BNRC's new app hiking with you, try out the various features, share it with friends! Just go to the app store for your device and search "BNRC." Photo courtesy of the *Berkshire Record*, Emily Thurlow.

Dear BNRC Supporter,

As I complete my first year at BNRC, I'm incredibly proud to share with you this report on the year just ended. Page through to learn about land preserved, trails built, wildlife protected, and all the exciting plans underway for 2019.

There are so many ways to be involved in BNRC. Many of them you already do: you can hike our trails, come to a volunteer workday, or be a trail steward. Here are two new ones:

You can **download our new Berkshire Trails mobile app**, just released after more than a year of development.

The app is free, no ads, and no hidden fees, just a lot of great information about all of BNRC's trails as well as those of other organizations like the Trustees, Mass Audubon, and the Department of Conservation and Recreation. It will also show you restaurants and lodgings near the trails, so you can plan an entire trip easily.

Eventually we hope to add every public trail in Berkshire County.

Check it out and let us know how you like it!

You can also help chart BNRC's direction for the next three to five years. I'm one of those people who LOVES strategic planning—taking the time to dream big about how to make the greatest impact on the things we care about most, and plotting the steps to achieve those dreams. I welcome your thoughts about where BNRC has done a great job, and where there's still more to do.

Keep an eye out for opportunities to answer a survey, participate in a focus group, or just send me your ideas any time. I'd love to hear from you.

See you out on the trails!

— Jenny Hansell

FAREWELL TO A TRUE CHAMPION OF THE LAND

Honoring the legacy of Gige Darey

We said goodbye to a wonderful friend of Massachusetts, and the Berkshires in particular, when George "Gige" Darey died in December at the age of 90. A native of Lenox, he devoted his life to service in many forms—as a high school teacher, sports coach and club leader: Town of Lenox Selectman. Tree Warden, and Conservation Commission member; long-time member of the Massachusetts Fish & Wildlife Board (35 years as Chairman); member of BNRC's board of directors for numerous terms over a quarter century; and serviceman in the Korean War.

Gige was modest, but his work in conservation was widely recognized. In 2004, Mass Fish & Wildlife re-named a reserve off New



Gige Darey, shown here with his longtime partner Ginny Akabane, made countless contributions to ensure that our forests, streams, and fields will be protected for generations to come.

Lenox Road the George L. Darey
Housatonic Valley Wildlife
Management Area, and last October
bestowed upon him the Francis W.
Sargent Award for conservation.
After he stepped down from

BNRC's board last year, he was named its first Donald B. Miller Honorary Life Director.

Gige was an avid sportsman and helped forge strong alliances between sportspeople and other conservationists. He knew the Berkshire woods like the back of his hands, and generously shared his knowledge, experience and stories, always with a twinkle in his eye.

He talked of hauling logs across
Parsons Marsh with a team of horses,
and hunting on Yokun Ridge when
the forests were so young you could
see all the way to Mount Greylock
from there. He was one of a kind—a
legend, really—and will be long remembered and greatly missed. The
Berkshires will forever be better because Gige was here.

FISHING IN THE HOUSATONIC RIVER? ABSOLUTELY!

In Hinsdale/Dalton, Old Mill Trail makeover in progress

The Old Mill Trail, along the banks of the Housatonic River in Dalton and Hinsdale, is a Berkshire gem, offering easily accessible walking, great fishing, and an immersive riverside experience.

The first 0.7 miles of this well-built path is an accessible trail, commissioned by the Housatonic Valley Association with strollers and wheelchairs in mind. Peter S. Jensen designed and built both the accessible and riverside trails.

The Old Mill Trail also offers great fishing in the healthy East Branch of the Housatonic River.

This reserve, officially opened for public recreation in 2010, was first protected by Crane & Company through a conservation restriction held by MassWildlife and the donation of a trail easement to the Housatonic Valley Association. In 2016, Crane & Company donated ownership of the land itself to BNRC.

BNRC will be raising funds this year to tune up the trail for visitors and to care for the surrounding ecology. Improving bridge approaches, re-forming trail bump-outs, widening the trail corridor, enhancing parking lot access and visibility, eliminating invasive species, and managing the understory are all part of keeping the Old Mill Trail in tip-top condition for all visitors.

Trailhead access is in Hinsdale, on Old Dalton Road, directly adjacent to Hinsdale Trading Company.





PARTNERSHIPS LAYING GROUNDWORK FOR THE HIGH ROAD Williamstown Rural Lands joins with BNRC to plot key routes

The High Road is an ambitious plan, and BNRC can't do it alone. To build a network of trails to connect towns to conservation land and create a 100% walkable Berkshires, BNRC will rely on partnerships with the many groups that conserve land and create opportunities to hike, bike, and explore. Working together, we can magnify the impact of these

open spaces and trail networks by linking them together—connecting public and private lands to communities—with relatively small amounts of new trail.

BNRC and Williamstown Rural Lands Foundation (WRLF) have both launched visionary ideas for linking town and community centers to outdoor destinations. For WRLF, it's the "Ring Trail" which connects the Taconic Range on the town's western flank to the venerable Mount Greylock and Appalachian Trail. BNRC and WRLF will partner on the southern leg of this ring—in part, directing the route through an 82-acre parcel both organizations conserved at the end of 2018. Stay tuned!





NEW OPPORTUNITY FOR CRUCIAL HIGH ROAD CONNECTION

You Can Double the Tom Ball Reserve

Building on momentum from the conservation of the northern end of Tom Ball Mountain last year, BNRC has secured an option to buy approximately 242 acres on the southern end of the Tom Ball ridge.

Your help will enable us to purchase this key property from the Barbieri family, another step towards creating through hikes to West Stockbridge, Lenox, and even Pittsfield.

You already saved the northern

end of the mountain, with its windswept summit and unique plant and tree life. Now we need your help preserving this southern gateway. In addition to the potential for a world class hiking trail, this project also protects the habitat connection between the scenic shore of Long Pond and the mountainside beyond.

For more information on how you can help protect this special place, contact Narain Schroeder or Jenny Hansell.







BERKSHIRE FARM PROJECT MEETS IMPORTANT MILESTONE

Your help in Richmond will conserve critical habitat

BNRC is working to conserve +/- 340 acres of land in Richmond that will double the size of the Hollow Fields Reserve, protect crucial waters, and ensure access to historic Perry's Peak. The Richmond Land Trust (RLT) and the Town of Richmond have joined with BNRC to conserve this property.

The parcel is currently owned by the Berkshire Farm Center and

Services for Youth, based just across the state line in New York. Conserving it connects key wildlife corridors in about 12,000 acres of adjacent nature preserves, and will protect the headwaters of the Scace Brook and Sleepy Hollow Brook.

Each of the three partners is contributing \$125,000 to this project, which will increase the amount of conserved land in Richmond by 33 percent. BNRC will own the property and the town and RLT will co-hold the conservation restriction.

If you would like to know more about the project and how you can help, contact Mackenzie Greer at mgreer@bnrc.org.

VOLUNTEER KEEPS PERRY'S PEAK TRAIL OPEN

In Richmond, Karen Ross works to connect Taconic Crest Trail with new conservation lands

Karen Ross, a long-time BNRC board member and volunteer, is dedicated to maintaining the Perry's Peak trail. As a member of the Taconic Hiking Club she has worked on many miles of trail up the western border of Berkshire County, and on building a partnership between the two organizations.

Why is Karen so passionate about this area? She writes that "growing up in Pittsfield was a delight, especially if you loved the outdoors with its readily available hiking, skiing, and swimming. As kids we used to be 'shooed' out the door and could run off to the woods to wander around, investigate ponds, and yes, even drink the stream water! Childhood experiences like these naturally morphed into an adult realization of how vulnerable our natural places and resources are. What could be better than working to protect them!"

Find Karen's complete essay about her love for the Berkshires and for volunteering at BNRC.org/blog.







QUITE SIMPLY, YOU ARE AMAZING! Here's what you did in 2018:

Protected another 650 acres in Berkshire County, bringing the total to 22,934 acres of wildlife habitat and natural beauty

Cared for 55 miles of trail, keeping 54 BNRC reserves open and safe for everyone

Offered 41 free guided outings enjoyed by hundreds of hikers

Enlivened 402 learners through 32 classroom, library, and community center programs that encourage the next generation of stewards of the land

Volunteered **561** hours over **14** group workdays, helping neighbors connect while building new trails

Provided 1,755 trail maps to users of BNRC properties

Gave 4 interns months of productive, enriching, and valuable experience

Opened 1 new accessible trail, at Parsons Marsh in Lenox, giving people of all abilities the chance to enjoy the serenity of nature

Developed **1** new Berkshire Trails mobile app to enable people to have reserve and trail information at their fingertips





YOUR TRAILS, YOUR FIELDS, YOUR MOUNTAINS, YOUR BERKSHIRES

Your generosity this year protected vulnerable wildlife habitat, educated new stewards of the land, and created a legacy for people you love.



Tribute gifts

In honor of Mariah Auman, from Bill & Liz Auman

In honor of the Berkshire Opera Festival, from Jonathon Loy & Christopher Riggleman

In honor of Monica Briggs & Stefanie Komorowski, from Katya Bowen

In honor of David Challinor, from Tom & Karen Challinor

In honor of Mackenzie Greer, from Katherine & John Keenum

In honor of the marriage of Katherine Hand & Matt Brogan,

from the happy couple and friends

In honor of Jenny Hansell, from George & Alice Wislocki, Austin & Heidi Frye In honor of Patrick Laughran & Chrissey St. Andre, from Susan Santolin

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30-39 years

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Madeline & Martin Lizt
Lockshop of Berkshire County Alyssa Lovell & Alison Perlo Jonathon Loy & Christopher Riggleman James P. Maĥer John & Linda Mancia Bill & Lisa Martin Chris May Builders, Inc. Lise & Allen Mayer Felicity McClenachan Patrick McLendon James McMahon Richard McMahon Steve & Marsha McMahon Barbara McShane Margaret McTeique & Tom Wessel Caleb Medders Cateb Medders
David Medlyn
Chris & Kate Meyer
Ellen M. Miller
Gwen Miller & Eammon Coughlin
Robert L. Miller & Victoria Choy Mindy Miraglia Jessića & Hussain Mooraj Dennis Moore Moresi & Associates Kathleen & Paul Murphy Scott Murray Alex & Judith Nardacci Cynthia & Richard Nasman Newer England Consulting Jonathon & Andrea Nix Elizabeth & Michael Nolan Anita Ytuarte Oelkers Elton Ogden & Jan Salzer-Ogden Anna Oliver & Stephan Klein Nina & Jonathan Palmer Gail M. Parker Dan & Marcia Parnell Lauren Paul Stephanie Petillo & Toby Schneider Barbara A. Pike lleen Pinhasi Mike Poirier The Porches Jonathan Pratt Jeff Pringle Marc Pritsky Project Native Patricia Purdy Murray & Deborah Ralph Frederic Raymond Leslie M. Reed

Caleb & Trish Rick Roberts & Associates Realty, Inc. Janet A. Robertson Tom & Debbie Roche Brian Rod Claire Rosenberg Bess Rouse Marcel Roux Bliss Rufo George F. Rufo Sr. Frank & Linda Russell Russett Trio William Ryan Beth B. Sackler & Jeffrey N. Cohen Jane Salata & Rich Hayes Salesforce.org Sandisfield Cultural Council Susan & David Santolin Sally Schnappauf & Paul Kaplan Dawn Schober Louis & Carolyn Schwartz David Seligman & Kate Sontag Naomi O. Seligman Peter & Karen Sheffer Sheffield Land Trust Shining Mountain Children's Center, LLC Leonard H. Sigal Brad & Michael Simon Karen Simon James Sinkoff & Sally Hildebrandt Karen Slade Kenya C. Smith Suzi & Paul Souza John Spellman & Cindy McCollum David Sterman Stockbridge Land Trust Deirdre & William Swindlehurst Dotty Taft Stephanie & Robert Talanian Mary Jeanne Tash David & Elaine Thorne Thomas & Madeleine Tiktin June & Rick Tinkhauser Joseph & Lynn Toole The Tuesday Women Hikers Floyd & Marcia Tuler Peter Vacchina Adrian Van Zon Bob Vaughan & Kate McNulty-Vaughan Ron & Sandra Veillette Lynn Villency-Cohen Sally & Jeff Vincent Martha Waldman Town of Washington Board of Selectmen Diane I. Weinstein Ellen Whittaker Philip & Deborah Wick Marina & Doug Wilber Jane H. & Robert H. Willis Sean & Kathryn Wilson Michael Winter Dr. Jay Wise Craig Wojcicki Frank Wojciechowski Emmett & Kara Wood Wrenegade Sports Foundation Ltd Your Color Connection Mady & Steve Zawel

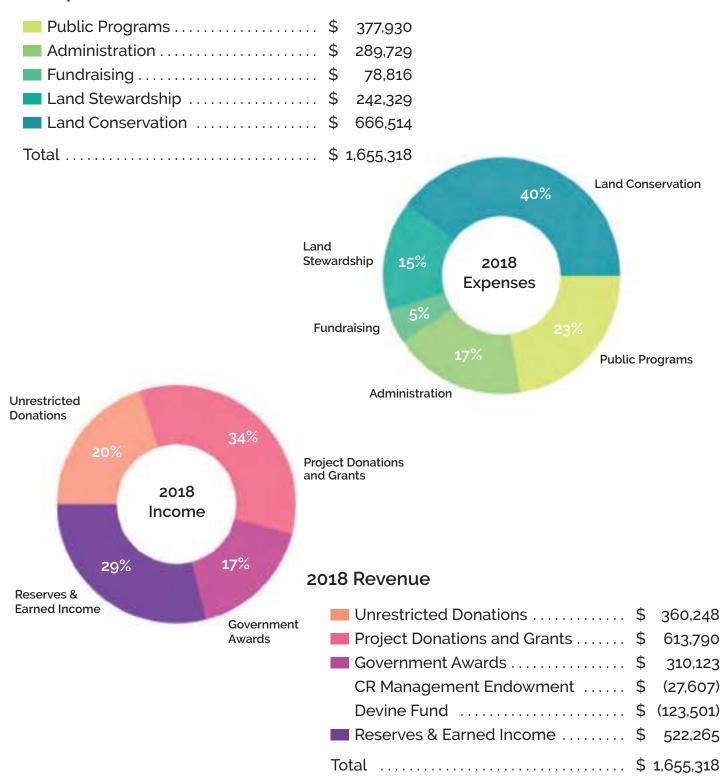
Michael Zisk

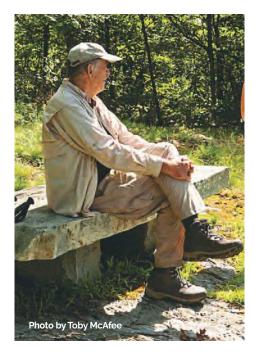
2018: INCOME AND EXPENSES

January 1, 2018 - December 31, 2018

This summary is drawn from internal accounting. Audited financial statements will be available after August 15, 2019.

2018 Expenses







THANK YOU!

From the rarest of wildflowers, to the songs of the bullfrog, to glimpses of nesting bluebirds, you helped protect and preserve nature for everyone in 2018. Thanks for sharing your love of the peaceful woods and rugged trails, conserving important habitat, and building new places to walk.





