



Summit area of Bauneg Beg Mountain Recreation Area, courtesy of Tom Gilmore Photography

WOODS TO WATERS

The Campaign to Fund Salmon Falls Tidal Waters & Bauneg Beg Mountain Recreation Area



GREAT WORKS
REGIONAL LAND TRUST



View of the Salmon Falls River, courtesy of Brett Cropp

ABOUT US

Great Works Regional Land Trust (GWRLT) is a member supported service organization, driven by volunteers, and assisted by a small professional staff of six. We provide conservation options to landowners within the towns of Eliot, Wells, Ogunquit, South Berwick, Berwick, and North Berwick. These options include conservation easements, and land donations. In the case of significant lands of conservation value and community importance, GWRLT will also purchase certain properties in fee.



GWRLT offices at Beach Plum Farm, in Ogunquit

THE CAMPAIGN

The Woods to Waters Campaign is our effort to complete the final funding needed to accomplish twotime-sensitive conservation projects and continue our work in our community. **Bauneg Beg Mountain Recreation Area** encompasses the highest elevation of our service range in North Berwick; the **Salmon Falls Tidal Waters** project is comprised of 79 acres across three contiguous parcels along the Salmon Falls River in South Berwick. Together, these projects amount to the largest fundraising effort GWRLT has undertaken outside of Mt. Agamenticus to the Sea.

Fifteen miles and 800 feet of elevation difference may separate these two projects, but they are intrinsically connected. Moreover, these projects represent what GWRLT does best. We rally our communities to permanently conserve lands assessed to have high conservation and cultural value. We act when such lands are threatened by development pressure and work closely with landowners, town governments, and concerned community stakeholders to conserve these lands in perpetuity. We manage these conser-

vation projects and coordinate their funding through state, federal, and private grant sources, in addition to municipal sources and fundraising in our community. Since 1987, GWRLT has successfully completed 149 conservation projects in our region. We also steward these lands so that they can be sustainably enjoyed by the public for access and traditional uses. We have 20 preserves open to the public and have created and maintain 31 miles of trails.

With these two projects scheduled to close this calendar year, we have plenty of work on our plate. However, our work does not stop there. GWRLT is currently working on over ten additional conservation projects involving over 400 acres of land, in addition to our commitment to stewarding the land and providing accessible community programs. Building upon our past success and tremendous community support, we are seeking public and private funders to help us continue our mission to save these resources—*for everyone, forever!*

FUNDING THE PROJECTS

Bauneg Beg Mountain Recreation Area (BBMRA) and the Salmon Falls Tidal Waters (SFTW) projects have been successful in raising both federal and state funds. Between these projects, Land for Maine's Future (LMF) proposal requests were funded in full in separate LMF funding rounds.

Federal funding from the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF, Project 23-00906) and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service specific to the natural resources found in the two project areas have been either successfully awarded or are pending within the timeframes of their approval process—LWCF has already contributed half the cost of BBMRA already. Both projects have received generous support with successful warrant town meeting articles from their respective towns. Under the umbrella of the Woods to Waters Campaign, it is now time to better connect these projects with the public and capture the personal support and funding needed to deliver these projects to our land trust community.



Summit pin within the BBMRA project site



View over the salt marshes of the Salmon Falls Tidal Waters project



The open summit of Bauneg Beg Mountain Recreation Area



Wildlife corridor at SFTW project site

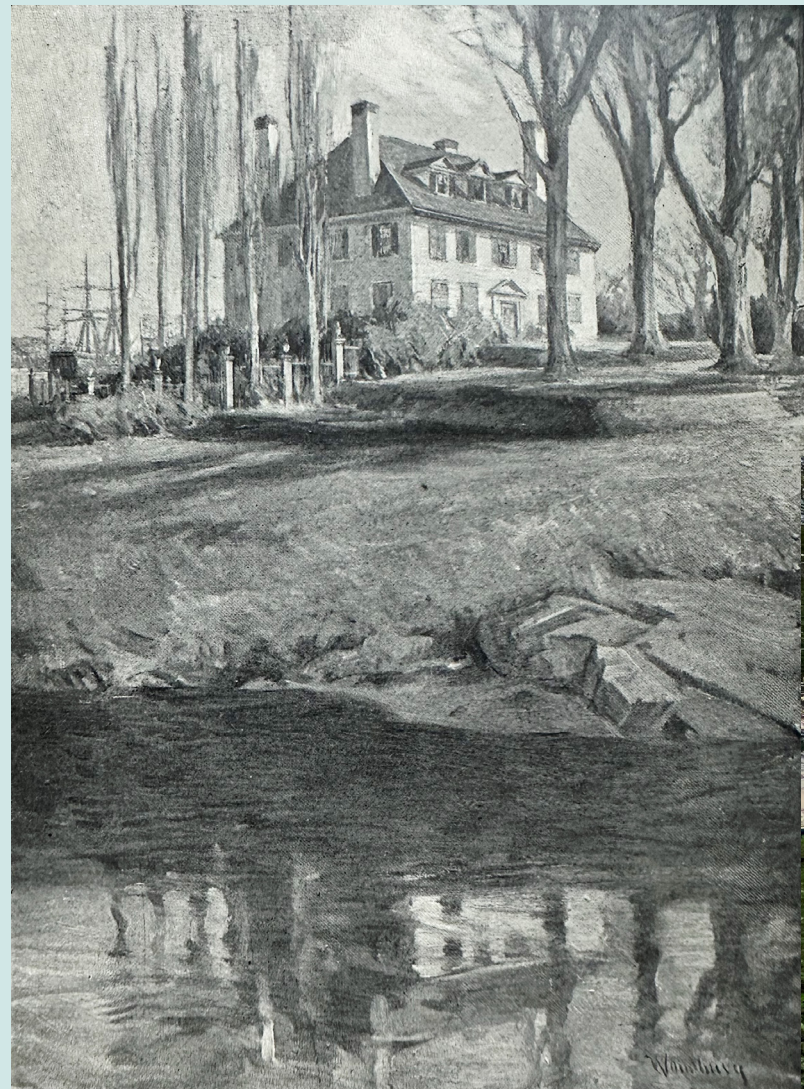
THE CONNECTION

From the summit of Mt Agamenticus, the prominent peaks of Bauneg Beg Mountain direct the visitor's gaze toward the distant peak of Mt. Washington. This summer, that view has been elusive as Canadian wildfires created hazy conditions, that sometimes even made seeing Bauneg Beg Mountain a challenge. In 1902, a similar haze descended throughout our region from wildfires in the White Mountains themselves. The effects of these fires were documented by Emily Tyson at the Hamilton House on the Salmon Falls River, just upstream from the SFTW parcels.

The rain that falls at the summit of the southern peak of Bauneg Beg lands on shallow soils and rocky outcrops. The woods on and around that summit help slow the runoff and allow that moisture to be absorbed by roots and nourish the forest and the animals that call the summit home. To the west, the rain flows towards the Salmon Falls River and provides drinking water to the towns of Berwick and Somersworth, NH.

To the east those raindrops flow towards the wetlands surrounding the upper reaches of the Great Works River and on towards Bauneg Beg Pond with its canoe launch and seasonal camps. To the south they flow through farmlands and woodlots to Estes Brook and the Negutaquet River which eventually meets the Salmon Falls Estuary via Great Works River—as it flows through North Berwick and into South Berwick.

The rain powered grist, lumber and textile mills in both communities which helped define their downtowns through the industrial revolution, shaping those communities as they progressed from agrarian colonial times to bustling 19th century hubs. The confluence of the Great Works River with the Salmon Falls happens below a dam—currently a hydropower



Hamilton House illustration from Jewett's "The Tory Lover" (1901)

site — which was the first permanent mill site in Colonial America with its millworks coming from England on The Pied Cow in 1636. The outflow from the dam enters the upper Salmon Falls Estuary, where time has seemingly stood still for centuries. The shoreline of the upper estuary is mostly undeveloped on both the New Hampshire and Maine shorelines. A canoe trip here allows a paddler to return to sights and sounds which native Wabanaki would have enjoyed. Otters and bald eagles fish the river. Black ducks, cormorants, mallards, egrets, and herons rest and feed through their migrations. A variety of birds nest nearby in fringe wetlands or larger rookeries in remote regional wetlands. Fish such as rainbow smelt and blue backed herring make their way upstream to spawn in the freshwaters above head tide. Just downstream, the Hamilton House welcomes visitors back to scenes from the 18th century and life of the 19th/early 20th centuries. Vaughan Woods Memorial State Park welcomes visitors to walk the historic trails.

What happens to the rainfall on Bauneg Beg Mountain depends on the qualities of the land that this water flows through. All along this journey water travels through lands conserved in partnership with GWRLT — where conservation-minded landowners have accessed our services—helping buffer and balance

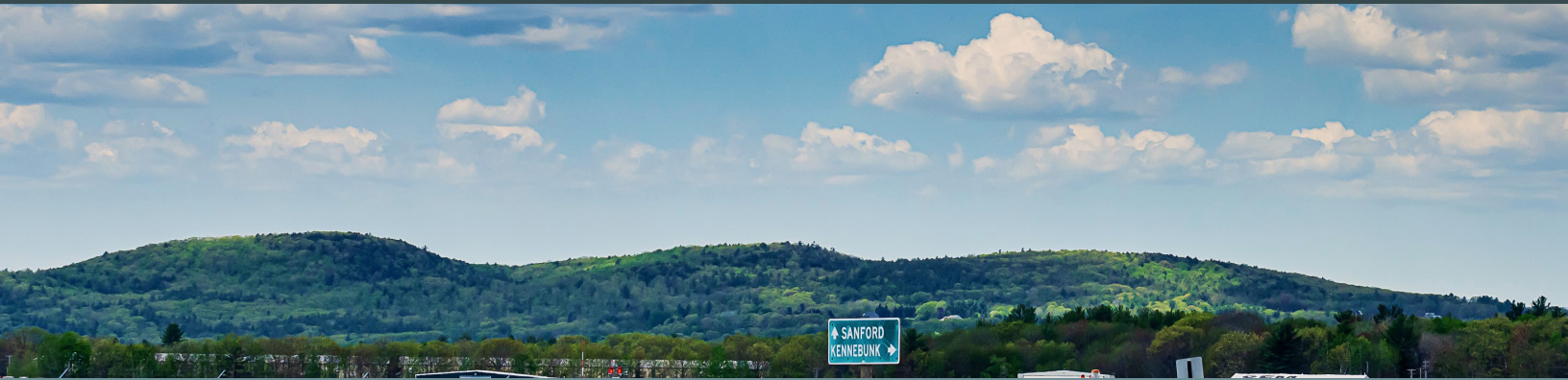


Isabella Curtis "Gathering flowers," Hamilton House, South Berwick, Maine, 1903. Courtesy of Historic New England

the impacts of suburban development. Easements protect farmland and woodlots. Donations protect valuable wetlands which filter and retain water to refill aquifers. All the while, historical resources, and access to traditional use of these lands are conserved for future generations. The populated lands around our village centers tend to channel this water course adding byproducts of "civilized life" from lawns and roads. Once in the river watercourse these by-products will impact the wildlife supporting capacity of the water quality in the SFTW salt marsh and tidal waters on their journey to the Atlantic Ocean. While the environmental link is undeniable, these two projects are also an integral part of the fabric of these two communities—past, present, and future.



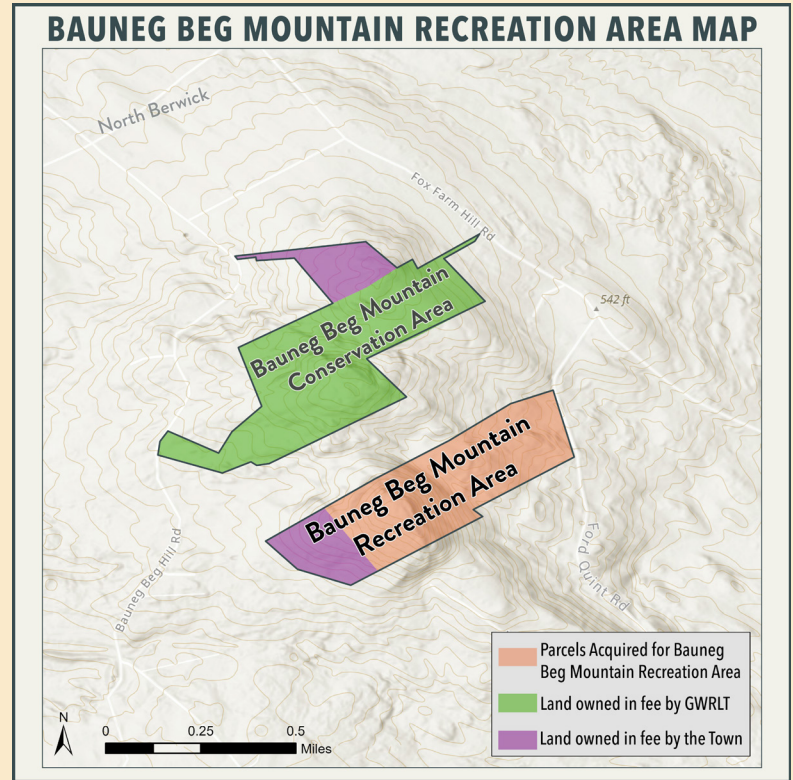
Salmon Falls Tidal Waters Campaign Event at Hamilton House courtesy of Sandy Agrafiotis



The three peaks of Bauneg Beg Mountain as seen from Sanford Airport, courtesy of Tom Gilmore

BAUNEG BEG MOUNTAIN RECREATION AREA

For offshore mariners, the hills of Bauneg Beg and Mt. Agamenticus serve as a guide along the shoreline between Portland, ME and Portsmouth, NH... as they have for centuries. In the mid-17th century, Scottish prisoners captured by Oliver Cromwell at the Battle of Dunbar turned indentured servants, took to the hillsides of Bauneg Beg once freed. Farmland was available and affordable away from the coast where they had served. Descendants of those early farmers still live along the shoulders of these hillsides in North Berwick. Revolutionary War veterans are buried in the small family plots on Ford Quint and Oak Woods Rd. During the 1930s and 40s, the hillside even hosted a ski area with a 250 foot vertical slope.



Spring trail runners at Bauneg Beg Mountain Conservation Area

Many do not know this cultural history. Even more may disregard this knowledge as remote and insignificant; however, the forested hillsides of these peaks are not. Thankfully, North Berwick recognizes the local importance of these peaks and included them in their comprehensive plan, clearly prioritizing their historical and recreational value. Undeveloped coastal peaks usually house cell towers or roof tops seeking “spectacular ocean and mountain views”—but not this mountain top! The State has recognized the ecological values of these hillsides in making them one of the focal areas of the State Wildlife Action Plan. Rare orchids, deer wintering habitat, importance to

“The preservation of Bauneg Beg Mountain makes me so happy because it is one of the spots that sparked my own personal thirst for adventure. Without the experience of biking and hiking on old tote roads, trails, and ultimately bushwhacking to the top nearly 40 years ago, I might never have fallen so in love with being outside. I hope that every student in our schools gets a chance to visit the top and see that there is so much more to experience, always knowing the mountain will be there when they come home.”

–Beau Lambert, North Berwick Resident and Executive Director of First Push Syndicate

migratory birds and other species of concern require the landscape Bauneg Beg offers. Current and past voluntary conservation success helps create an oasis for wildlife in a rapidly growing region. Forests and fields are adaptable functions of land uses, but mountain tops and shoreline are finite and fragile.

Most people today see Bauneg Beg from Rt. 99 or Rt. 109 driving into Sanford. Autumn bronze and golds dotted with the perennial greens of pines

and hemlocks. Countless “first mountain climbs” for children in the region were made on the middle peak of Bauneg Beg since it’s conservation 25 years ago, and the existing Bauneg Beg Trail Network was developed. The Town of North Berwick has consistently supported these efforts including their own lands in this conservation matrix which, once completed, will ensure public access to all three peaks.



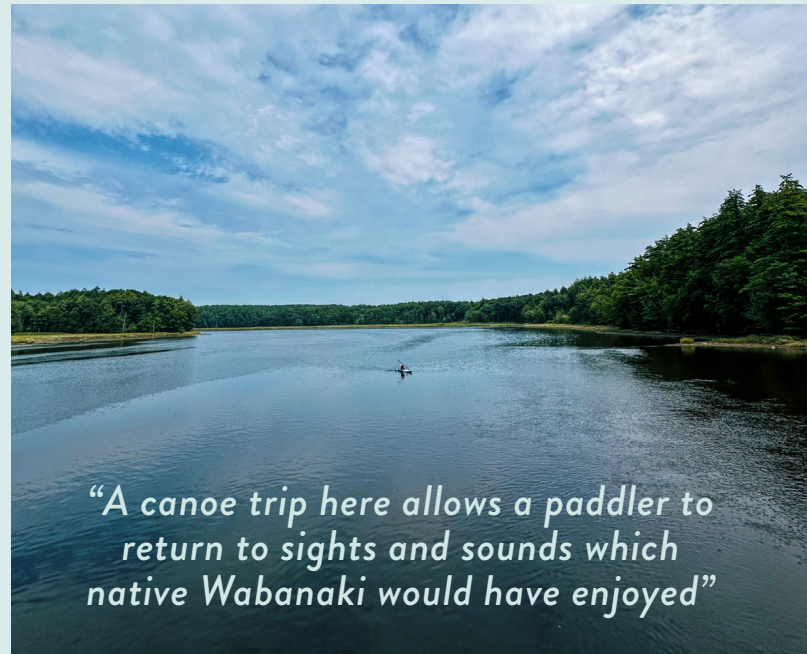
Salt marshes along the Salmon Falls River at the SFTW site

SALMON FALLS TIDAL WATERS

While many of us enjoy views of the estuary shoreline as we cross the Rte. 101 bridge, few of us contemplate who owns the land and what will happen to it when that ownership must make a transition. Looking upstream on the Maine side we see a fringe marshland with tall pines on the bluffs standing over them. The NH side is equally forested and natural and evokes thoughts of the former State slogan of “Welcome to Maine—the way life should be!”

Those more familiar with the Salmon Falls Estuary know that a canoe trip with the incoming tide from the William A. Bray Park canoe launch to head tide will set back the hands of time, as around that bend unfolds the visage of the Hamilton House sitting majestically on its knoll. This Historic New England holding was the home of Jonathan Hamilton which was lovingly restored in the late 19th century by the donors of this property to both Historic New England and the

State of Maine (Vaughan Woods State Park). Further upstream the river narrows and the Great Works River enters over the dam on the Maine shoreline. The Salmon Falls River is tidally shallow between here and the former mills at head tide which was ideal for the flat bottomed gundalows which ferried 19th century goods between the mills and farms of South Berwick to Portsmouth 6 miles downstream. Wildlife abounds in the water and along the shoreline, just minutes from the highways and town centers. The first permanent conservation of shoreland acreage began in 1949 and has progressed steadily through today thanks to the initiative and efforts of the community writ large. Much of the New Hampshire shoreline woods and farmlands have been permanently conserved. A considerable amount of the Maine shoreline has also been protected. These efforts have been the result of committed conservation landowners that understood a larger importance of their lands than their personal interests.

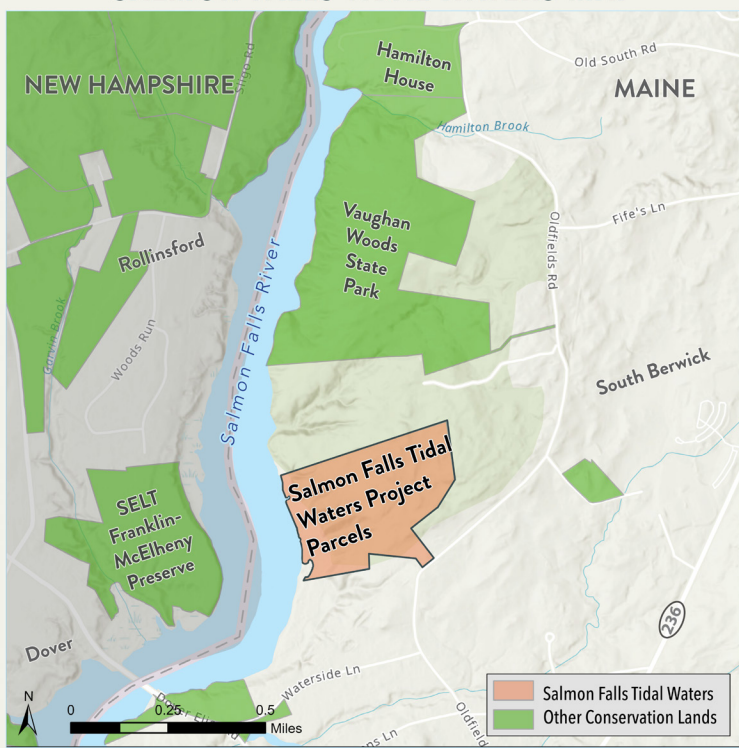


Kayaker In Front of the SFTW Project Site on the Salmon Falls River, Approaching the William A. Bray Memorial Park Boat Launch

The upper Salmon Falls Estuary was an inspiration for many of Sarah Orne Jewett’s short stories and novels. A 19th century conservation ethic was expressed in Jewett’s *A White Heron*, where a local child was approached by an ornithologist bird collector looking for an egret. While the child discovered where to find one, she opted to not tell the collector even though he had offered she and her grandmother \$10—a considerable sum at that time. She saw the beauty of the bird and how it fit into the landscape and valued that over the money. It was Jewett who enticed Emily Tyson and stepdaughter, Elise Vaughan, to buy the Hamilton House and restore it.

Today, land values rarely afford landowners to philanthropically give their land away. And so it is with SFTW. The landowner is willing however, to allow for a substantial bargain sale which makes this project feasible if not challenging as this is the largest campaign for GWRLT to date. We have risen to this challenge, as have the voters of South Berwick, who overwhelmingly supported Questions 1 & 2 in 2022, to lend municipal support to SFTW.

SALMON FALLS TIDAL WATERS MAP



OUR WORK

GWRLT has continued to provide conservation options to landowners while simultaneously working on these two major projects. Most projects require many months of negotiations and procedural diligence (e.g., surveys, title searches, environmental hazard assessments, legal review, etc.) prior to being finalized. During this period, GWRLT rarely speaks publicly about them to maintain confidentiality and provide the privacy landowners need to make critical family decisions.

Our staff supports conservation functions needed to complete these projects. Meetings are needed to discuss conservation options, conservation values are researched, assessed, and documented, and funding for these projects are coordinated — all the while, the wheels of the organization need to continue to turn. Conservation easements require funding to support the legal obligations of monitoring and enforcement in perpetuity. Additionally, GWRLT pays property taxes on most of its fee-held lands and creates public access where sustainably supported. Easement purchases combine the costs of all the diligence of fee purchases



Community hike at Balancing Rock, Orris Falls Conservation Area

plus the ongoing cost obligations of easements. This campaign will also support these efforts.

Current projects include::

- Four easement donation projects, involving over 190 acres of forest and farmland
- Four land donation projects, encompassing over 60 acres of shoreline and forest
- Two critical easement purchases, totaling an additional 190 acres of forest and farmland

Not to mention:

- Land stewardship of 6,091 acres
- Development and management of community partnerships, programs, and educational opportunities for children and adults.

The maps included in this case statement show the BBMRA and SFTW projects alongside the matrix of other lands conserved by GWRLT and other conservation partners. Many of the projects in the above list will fit into the range shown on these maps and add to buffering the impacts of development pressures which are only increasing as time and property values march on. We are blessed to live in a region where landowners see—as did Sarah Orne Jewett’s young heroine in *A White Heron*—that a resource holds higher value than the top dollar for which it could be gained from its sale. While smaller in scale relative to BBMRA and SFTW, these projects have earned our support and deserve the support of our entire community.



GWRLT stewardship volunteers



Aerial view of the Salmon Falls Tidal Rivers parcels (foreground), courtesy of Keith Allan Chick

CONSEQUENCE

WHAT HAPPENS IF WE DO NOT MAKE OUR FUNDRAISING GOALS?

The owners of the Salmon Falls Tidal Waters properties would resume their sale of the property for development. Twenty or more homes with river views could be constructed. The ability of the salt marshes to support wildlife would be degraded. The historical quality of the landscape would be permanently altered.

Public access to the third and highest peak of Bauneg Beg would be lost as it would be part of a residential

subdivision.

Without financial support to continue GWRLT's work, some of the ten plus projects underway would be stalled, potentially forever losing the conservation opportunity to present development pressures. Our ability to respond to landowners' conservation needs interest is usually a time-sensitive occurrence. Once lost, many of these opportunities will never again present themselves.



Aerial view of the open summit of Bauneg Beg Mountain, courtesy of Keith Allan Chick

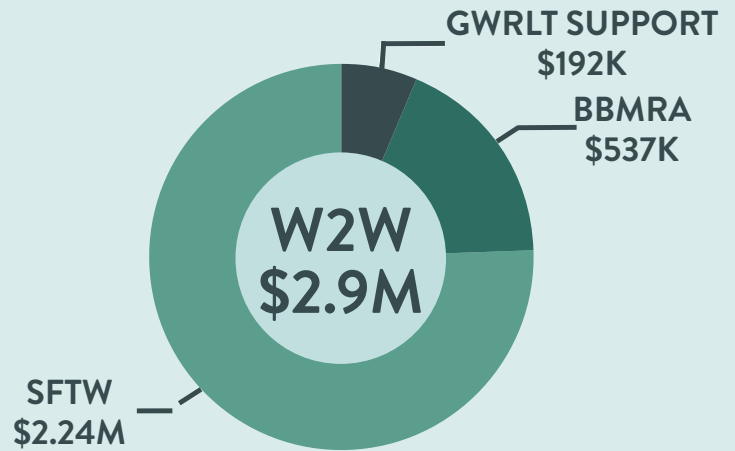
WOODS TO WATERS – Where We Stand as of September 18, 2023

GWRLT has raised over \$2.2 million to date from municipal, state, and federal sources. To successfully protect SFTW and deliver BBMRA for public enjoyment, we need to raise \$2.9 million.

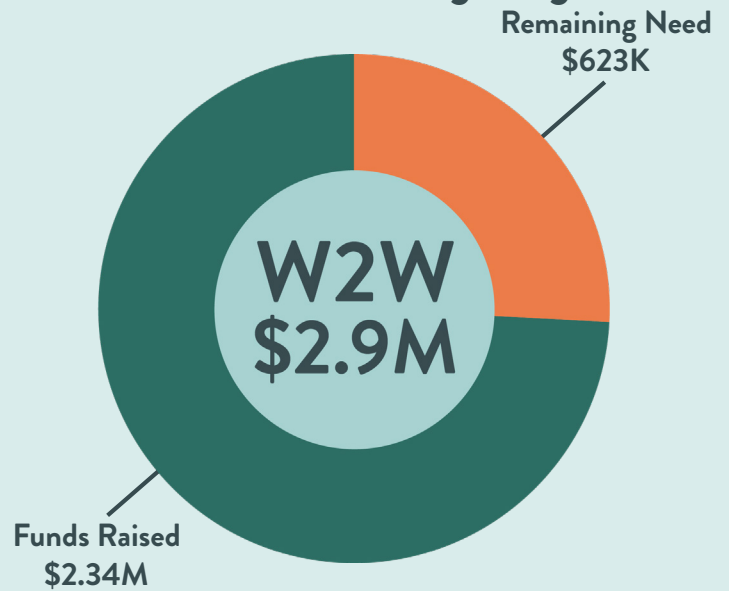
The Salmon Falls and Bauneg Beg projects depend on and have received substantial grant funding from federal and state sources. These grants, while initially written by community volunteers and board members, require a great deal of technical information and support from staff. GIS maps that support these projects have been generated in-house by GWRLT stewardship professionals. The Land Protection Coordinator completes the grant application submissions, working with the granting agency, often requiring sophisticated on-the-spot editing to meet technical submission requirements. These grants have detailed project contracts governing how land will be managed in perpetuity and annual reporting requirements. Staff coordinate community engagement initiatives to increase awareness of conservation successes and opportunities, which rally integral community support to quantify the importance of our work to grantors. Stewardship staff are involved in planning out the public access, trail maintenance and invasive species management. Both SFTW and BBMRA have been in progress for two years and bring us here, to this moment when we need your support to deliver these projects to our communities.

Most grants do not permit their dollars to be spent towards the essential support of staff members. Some permit funding of hard infrastructure, such as parking areas, but not the staff time to hire and oversee the performance of contractors. **Sustaining this support staff is an essential part of organizational capacity and continuity** — thus the costs for staff are included in our individual project budgets as well as the Woods to Waters Campaign budget.

WOODS TO WATERS CAMPAIGN: Budget Proportions By Project



WOODS TO WATERS CAMPAIGN: Cumulative Fundraising Progress



GWRLT community hikers on Bauneg Beg Middle Peak

CAN YOU HELP GWRLT CROSS THE FINISH LINE?

Great Works Regional Land Trust is a member supported, independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit land trust. This means that support from individuals is an integral part of the organization. Your support as members, as individual contributors, as voters, and as concerned citizens is the foundation upon which we build our work. Your contributions enable us to coordinate and secure municipal, state, federal, and private foundation grants. But when opportunities for such large-scale grant funding have been exhausted, we turn to our communities for contributions to make projects such as BBMRA and SFTW a reality.

Here's how you can leave your mark on GWRLT's Woods to Waters Campaign:

Great Works Regional Land Trust will gratefully accept cash, securities and stocks.

Values of stocks and securities will be determined on the day of transfer.

Pledges may be made payable for up to three years.

- Donors of \$100,000 will be recognized with a trail named in their honor at the project of their choice.
- Donors of \$50,000 will be recognized with a bench at the project of their choice.
- Donors of \$10,000 will be recognized on a kiosk plaque to be installed at the project of their choice.
- All donors will be recognized in the GWRLT newsletter/e-newsletter which has a circulation of over 2000 households and businesses.

For more information or to arrange for your gift to GWRLT's Woods to Waters Campaign, please contact Executive Director Jordan Kelley at 207-646-3604 or email jkelly@gwrlt.org.

**SCAN THE QR CODE TO MAKE
YOUR CONTRIBUTION TODAY**

GWRLT TAX ID: 22-2736228



Great Works Regional Land Trust preserves sit on the traditional ancestral homeland of the Abenaki and Pennacook Peoples of the Wabanaki Confederacy. We acknowledge and honor with gratitude the lands, waterways, flora, fauna, and the Alnôbak (people) who have stewarded these lands throughout generations. We recognize that every member of our six towns has, and continues to benefit from, the use and occupation of this land. Consistent with our deeper values of community, inclusion, and diversity, we have a responsibility to acknowledge and make visible GWRLT's relationship to the Native peoples. It is vitally important that we not only recognize the history of the land on which we stand, but also, we recognize that there are native people in Maine and the wider Wabanaki homeland today, and that their story has continued for more than 12,000 years.