



A RARE CONSERVATION SUCCESS AT KEAY BROOK

Hidden among the forests of GWRLT's Keay Brook Preserve is something extraordinarily rare: a surviving population of native American chestnut trees.

Once one of the most dominant trees in eastern forests, the American chestnut was devastated by chestnut blight in the early 1900s. By the 1940s, billions of trees had been lost across the species' range. Yet at Keay Brook, a small population quietly endured.

These trees were never planted. They are naturally occurring native chestnuts that have persisted through decades of blight, sometimes losing limbs or dying back, but never disappearing entirely. Today, this is the only known surviving and reproducing native American chestnut population in our region.

Their continued survival matters. Because these trees are still reproducing, there is hope that natural genetic mutations could eventually produce greater blight resistance, helping support the long-term recovery of the species.

- continued on page 3

Great Works Regional Land Trust

Your local land trust in the communities of the Berwicks, Eliot, Ogunquit and Wells

www.gwrlt.org



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GREAT WORKS REGIONAL LAND TRUST is dedicated to the protection of the natural, historic, agricultural, scenic, and recreational resources within the Maine communities of Eliot, No. Berwick, So. Berwick, Berwick, Wells and Ogunquit. Great Works Regional Land Trust is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, tax-exempt corporation. Contributions are tax-deductible.

Dear Friends,

Summer is one of the best times to experience the lands and trails protected by Great Works Regional Land Trust, and this season has already been filled with stewardship projects, educational programs, volunteer efforts, and community events across the region.

As we continue celebrating GWRLT's 40th Anniversary Capital Campaign, I want to thank everyone who has supported our mission to protect forests, farms, wildlife habitat, and public access to the outdoors. Your support makes this work possible and helps ensure these special places remain protected for future generations.

I would also like to extend sincere gratitude to Chris Mende for his service on the GWRLT Board of Directors. Chris recently completed his term and his leadership and dedication have been deeply appreciated.

At the same time, we are excited to welcome four new Board members: Janet Cass, Ian Leavesley, Kimberly Richards, and Chelsea Goforth. We look forward to the experience and energy they will bring to the organization.

I also hope you will join us for our annual Summer Garden Party on Friday, July 17 from 4:00 pm to 8:00 pm. It is always a wonderful evening celebrating conservation, community, and the people who make this work possible.

Thank you for being part of the GWRLT community. I hope to see you on the trails and at events this summer.

With gratitude,

Katherine Derby
Development Director
Great Works Regional Land Trust

40th Anniversary Capital Campaign

PLEASE JOIN US!

Great Works Regional Land Trust rolled out the public phase of our 40th Anniversary Capital Campaign at our Gala on April 25, and we are appealing to one and all to contribute. The campaign has the full support of the GWRLT Board, and as a result of the generosity of our Board members and others who contributed during the "quiet phase" of the campaign, we have raised over \$1 million toward our \$3 million goal. The campaign is intended to accomplish the following:

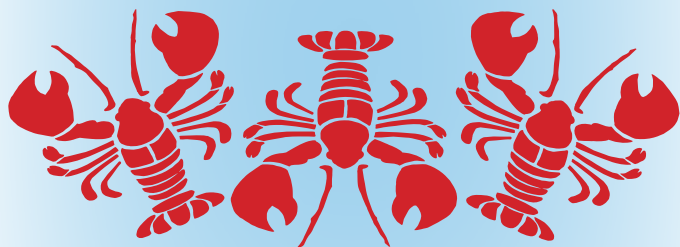
- 1. Enhance and Expand Conservation Efforts:** Establish an opportunity fund to acquire and create new conservation areas and secure new conservation easements.
- 2. Enhance and Expand Stewardship Efforts:**
 - a. Improve stewardship of existing lands, ensuring they remain healthy ecosystems, accessible and safe, and protected and beneficial for future generations.
 - b. Ensure that all conservation areas meet high standards of consistent signage and maps to promote the user experience.
- 3. Increase Membership and Community Engagement:**
 - a. Engage local communities through educational programming and organized hikes and recreational activities.
 - b. Double membership over the next decade.
 - c. Expand opportunities for volunteers



Spotlight on Upcoming Events

Great Works Regional Land Trust's **Beach Plum Farm** — **Lobster Dinner Raffle** —

**COMPLETE LOBSTER DINNER
FOR TEN!**



Sunday, August 30th
— **LATE AFTERNOON** —

Tickets \$10 each or three for \$25

Proceeds to benefit land conservation

DRAWING AUGUST 3RD, 2026



JULY 17TH, 2026 | 4 TO 8PM

For Members & Friends

Beer & Wine provided

RSVP online at: gwrlt.org/summerparty2026

A Rare Conservation Success... Continued from page 1

For years, conservationists rarely observed flowers or nuts at Keay Brook, likely because wildlife consumed them before they could be collected. But in 2018, local conservationist Bill Hills transplanted two small seedlings from Keay Brook to a protected field in North Berwick. Away from nearby sources of blight, the trees thrived and last year, one finally produced pollen.

Using pollen from the Keay Brook tree, GWRLT volunteer Kathryn Lea Sewell successfully pollinated another surviving native chestnut in Buxton. The effort produced ten seedlings representing new genetic diversity from the Keay Brook population.

Those seedlings are now being planted throughout southern Maine, including at Tuckahoe Preserve, Negutaquet Conservation Area, Berwick Community Gardens, Biddeford Community Gardens, and other locations extending north toward the Portland and Sebago regions through members of Great Works Regional Land Trust and The American Chestnut Foundation.

This small but significant step helps ensure that the genetics of the Keay Brook chestnuts continue to spread and contribute to the future of native American chestnuts in Maine.



Berwick Community Garden: (L-R) Angela Martin, K. Lea Sewall, Bill Hills, Amrita Cottrell, and Dennis Jackson

It is a powerful reminder that land conservation is about more than protecting scenic places; it is also about safeguarding the living legacy of species that might otherwise disappear forever.

40th Anniversary Gala and Capital Campaign



Many thanks to those that have already donated to the 40th Anniversary Capital Campaign Fund!*

Alexandros Orestis & Samantha Kelly
Andrew Proulx
Ann Dexter
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Barbara Thornton
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Will Berliner

and other anonymous donors

* As of May 31, 2026



THE RISE OF THE STORAGE BATTERY

TThere are many ways to store the intermittent energy generated by solar and wind farms (chemical batteries, fly wheels, compressed air, water reservoirs) but at the moment it is the battery—and specifically the lithium-ion battery—that dominates in energy storage.

A battery is a device which contains multiple electrochemical “cells” for turning chemical energy into electrical energy. It can’t store electricity per se, but it can store the chemicals which can react to produce a flow of electrons on demand. In the familiar lead-acid car battery, lead is used as one terminal and lead oxide as the other. When sulfuric acid is added as the medium, there is a reaction to form lead sulphate, creating a flow of electrons. This type of battery is relatively cheap to produce, and can be recharged, but it has a low energy density and thus is not practical for storing large amounts of energy.

That’s where the lithium-ion battery enters the picture. Lithium has been used in batteries for a long time, but in its modern configuration, graphite is used as the negative terminal because it readily yields electrons. A lithium compound attracts electrons and is used as the positive terminal. The medium (the electrolyte) is a lithium salt which produces a source of lithium ions.

The great advantage of this battery is that the reaction is fully reversible, so it can be readily recharged. It can also be designed like a dry cell, where the materials are applied as a thin film on metallic foil. Thus, a battery of multiple cells can be created by winding these foil strips (with a separator for each layer) around a core for a cylindrical battery, or stacked to create a different shape. This process creates a battery with a very high energy density.

These small cylinders or block shaped battery units can be combined in series to create ever larger batteries. Provided there is a means for keeping them cool, there is practically no limit to their size. Today huge lithium-ion batteries have been constructed to store energy until it is needed during periods of peak demand, thus avoiding the need to fire up fossil fuel plants. In addition to providing peak power, such batteries also act to smooth the flow of electricity into the Grid.

Maine has just made operational a large lithium-ion storage battery in Gorham. At 175 megawatts, it is the largest in New England, capable of supplying continuous power for about two and a half hours to approximately 19,000 homes. Yet it pales in comparison to new batteries in the West that can provide electricity to four hundred thousand homeowners for several hours—or to a hundred thousand homes for eight hours. Currently, only 2% of the U.S. electrical generation is connected to battery storage systems, so we are likely to see many more large batteries constructed in the years ahead.

Lithium-ion batteries, however, may not always dominate large storage systems. A facility in West Virginia is about to mass produce “iron-air” storage batteries, utilizing the oxidation (rusting) of iron to generate electricity. Iron is much cheaper, more abundant, and more environmentally sustainable than lithium. This type of battery has great potential where space and time of recharge are not important considerations. You won’t see one in a cell phone, though!

– Joe Hardy

KIDS PASSPORT CHALLENGE

Hit the Trails with your Trail Passport!

A great way to spend your summer vacation!

For
Kids &
Kids at
Heart

**6 Towns &
12 Conservation Areas!**

**Visit one listed trail in each
town to complete your
challenge.**

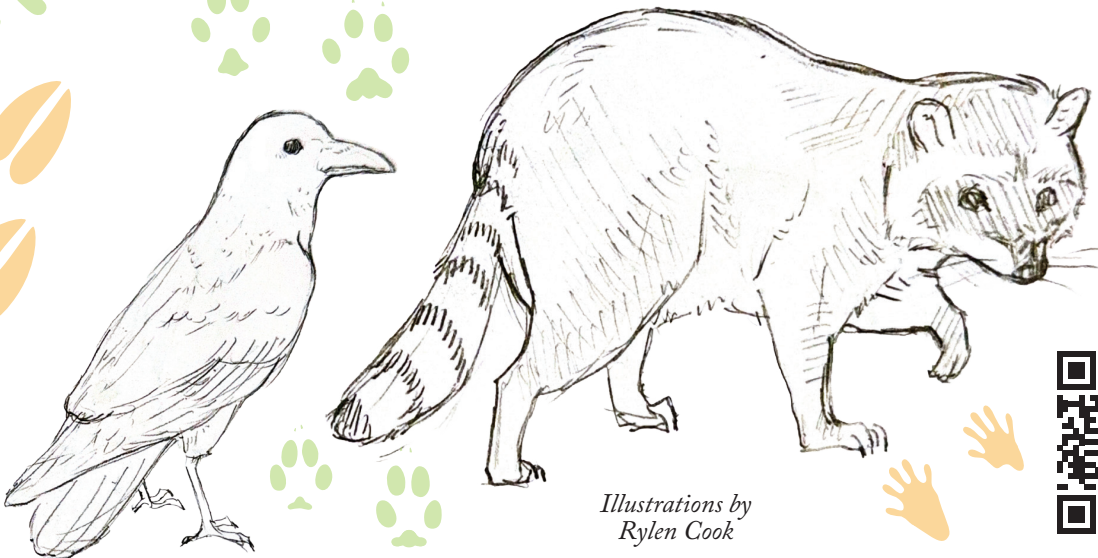
**6 Towns &
12 conservation areas!**

Visit *one* listed trail in each town to complete your challenge. Mark your tracks by rubbing a pencil or crayon over your paper to transfer the track graphic at each kiosk.

Passports are available at local libraries and the Great Works Regional Land Trust office at Beach Plum Farm. You can also download your Trail Passport at gwrlt.org/passport.

It's easy, just print it, fold it and use it!

After you have visited one trail in each town, bring your completed passport to Beach Plum Farm for a cool hiking boot sticker and to be entered into a drawing for a Young Explorer Backpack filled with useful gear for you to take on the trail!



Illustrations by
Rylen Cook



SCAN THE
QR CODE
FOR MORE
INFORMATION



You can help by joining **Great Works Regional Land Trust** today.

YES, I/WE WISH TO JOIN/RENEW.

Membership Levels:

☐ \$1000 ☐ \$500 ☐ \$250 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$50 ☐ Other \$ _____

Name(s) Written as you wish to be listed in our publications. If you do not wish to be listed, check here. ☐

Address _____

Town _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

☐ I'd like to receive emails about Great Works Regional Land Trust news and events

Want to volunteer?

Office help:

- ☐ Mailings
- ☐ Research

Committee Work:

- ☐ Development
- ☐ Community engagement and education
- ☐ Stewardship

Stewardship:

- ☐ Property maintenance
- ☐ Invasives removal
- ☐ Trail work
- ☐ Building maintenance

Special Events:

- ☐ Spring Auction (held in March)
- ☐ Annual Meeting
- ☐ Special Events

Outreach:

- ☐ Distribute newsletters, posters
- ☐ Give a talk to an organization
- ☐ Booth help at local festivals
- ☐ Write an article
- ☐ Photography
- ☐ Lead a hike

- ☐ I'd like to receive emails about volunteer opportunities.
- ☐ Please call me to discuss volunteering with GWRLT.

Become a Pledge Partner!

Please charge \$ _____ to my credit card ☐ monthly ☐ quarterly
☐ I understand this charge will be ongoing until I notify GWRLT otherwise.

☐ Check enclosed (payable to GWRLT) for \$ _____

☐ Credit/Debit Card: ☐ MasterCard ☐ VISA ☐ Discover

Credit Card # _____

Exp. Date _____ 3-digit code _____

Signature _____

Does your employer have a matching gift program? Please enclose forms.

Mail your check to:

GREAT WORKS REGIONAL LAND TRUST

P.O. Box 151 | South Berwick, ME 03908

GWRLT offices are at Beach Plum Farm

610 Main St. (Rte.1) | Ogunquit, ME

207-646-3604 | info@gwrlt.org



Scan QR Code to
donate or go to:
gwrlt.org/donate

Great Works Regional Land
Trust is a 501(c)(3) organization.
Donations are tax-deductible to
the full extent of the law.

A young explorer, participating in the Kids Passport Challenge, adds an animal track to his trail passport at the Savage Wildlife Preserve in South Berwick.



Membership Matters

- Your membership contribution helps us to respond to conservation opportunities in our towns.
- Enjoy membership priority for GWRLT walks and events
- Be sure to check the date on the address label to see when your membership expires.

Why I became a member...

I understand the importance of supporting GWRLT's efforts in preserving land for our future generations to enjoy. Plus, being on the Trust's trails can be emotionally uplifting and physically rewarding experiences (especially when accompanied by an exuberant pup). Just knowing that my membership is helping GWRLT offer our communities so much – from preservation to education and engagement – is priceless and gratifying.

– Rachel Schumacher



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Calendar

gwrlt.org

- Jul 11** Desrochers History Walk w/ Brad Fletcher | South Berwick | 10am
- Jul 17** Summer Garden Party at Beach Plum Farm | Ogunquit | 4pm-8pm (rain date, Jul 18)
- Jul 19** Pottery Class w/ Dover Pottery Studio at Beach Plum Farm | Ogunquit (Fee)
- Jul 25** GWRLT at Wells HarborFest - Wells Harbor Park
- Aug 1** GWRLT at Bring Your Lawn Chairs to Sullivan Square - Berwick Town Hall | Berwick
- Aug 3** Raffle Drawing for the Lobster Dinner for 10 at Beach Plum Farm on Sunday, August 30
- Aug 12** Wednesday Wandering: Old Boston Preserve | Ogunquit | 10am-12pm
- Sep 9** Wednesday Wandering: Kenyon Hill Preserve | South Berwick | 10am-12pm
- Sep 12** GWRLT at Millfield Festival | North Berwick | 9am-3pm
- Sep 13** Negutaquet Conservation Area History Walk w/ Brad Fletcher | North Berwick | 10am-12pm
- Sep 26** GWRLT at Eliot Festival Day | Eliot | 9am-3pm
- Oct 3** Punkintown History Walk w/ Brad Fletcher | South Berwick | 10am-12pm
- Oct 14** Wednesday Wandering: Grover Herrick Preserve | North Berwick | 10am-12pm
- Oct 23 - 25** Beach Plum Pursuit | Ogunquit
- Oct 31** Wild & Scenic Film Festival - the Halloween Edition at Jonathan's Ogunquit | Ogunquit (Fee)

Kids Passport Challenge
"bear track" located at the
kiosk of one of GWRLT's
twelve participating
preserves.

All outdoor hikes and adventures are open and free to all.
However, we suggest a \$5 donation per person
or \$10 donation per family for non-members.
Registration required.
Register at gwrlt.org/event today!