



Site Lines

FALL 2019

SOUTH KINGSTOWN
LAND TRUST

BUILD NOW PROTECT FOREVER

Since our founding in 1983, the South Kingstown Land Trust has grown from a passion and a vision into a thriving vital organization with hundreds of members, dozens of volunteers, frequent programs and a portfolio of more than 2,900 acres of protected lands and cultural landscapes in South Kingstown.

We are honored to work in tandem with individuals and the community to protect and steward over 170 properties, but our work is neither simple nor free. Easy to grasp are the costs and equipment needed to create and maintain a trail system free and open to the public. The time and energy required to pick up roadside trash, yard waste and junk people dump in “vacant” lots are also easily understood. Rebuilding stone walls at Weeden Farm, maintaining a 300-year-old mill, mowing fields, and removing fallen trees are clear.

Less obvious, but often more expensive, are the costs of the legal enforcement and insurance responsibilities for each of the properties. SKLT has hundreds of neighbors and dozens of land-owner partners, not all of whom honor the land. Many properties have restrictions against hunting, wheeled vehicles, certain types of farming, building, tree-cutting, planting of non-



native species; it is our job to monitor and enforce these restrictions. We must ensure the properties in our care are both protected from encroachment or development and stewarded thoughtfully for future generations, in keeping with the restrictive covenants that run with the deeds.

SKLT directors and staff work tirelessly to create and operate an organization worthy of the trust, the land, and the donations that you, our community, have placed in our care.

In 2014, we began to look for a permanent location near the field office at the Barn to house the expanding inventory of maintenance equipment currently, and “temporarily,” being stored by various neighbors. In 2015, SKLT became an Accredited Land Trust, establishing and following rigorous standards in all accounting, legal and stewardship practices. In 2016, we completed a long-range plan and hired an executive director.

As that executive director, I am tasked with

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BUILD NOW PROTECT FOREVER *(continued from page 1)*

building a tractor shed, enhancing our stewardship fund, and increasing community engagement and the efficacy of our staff. I have been working closely with the board, staff, and key stakeholders to craft a comprehensive solution to address these three significant goals. We have decided to locate all staff and equipment on site at the Barn by building a 1,300-square-foot tractor shed and a 1,300-square-foot welcome/administration center.

Initially, we had hoped the Barn could be remodeled to accommodate staff needs, but the cost to do so would be prohibitive. The new center will be compliant with the Americans With Disabilities Act from the start and will facilitate expanded outreach and education events.

Following a feasibility study, we established a monetary goal of \$1 million; as of August 30, we have raised over \$557,000 and an additional \$25,000 in pledges over three

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THE THREE GOALS OF BUILD NOW PROTECT FOREVER

Build an equipment shed to store and maintain farm and land stewardship equipment.

Currently, SKLT's maintenance equipment is scattered throughout South Kingstown in the sheds of neighbors and friends. We seek to create efficiencies and equipment-sharing opportunities for young farmers and to expand our volunteer training and field education programs.

Augment the Stewardship Fund, the financial resource that funds the perpetual management, legal defense and preservation of properties protected by SKLT.

In addition to the daily and seasonal care required for the stewardship of each SKLT protected property, monitoring and legal protection are significant concerns and fiscal responsibilities. While not glamorous and often overlooked, insurance and legal defense are the core responsibilities ensuring that land protected by SKLT will in fact be protected in perpetuity. Building this fund will ensure long term protection.

Construct a modest welcome center/administrative building adjacent to the proposed tractor shed on site with the Barn.

All SKLT staff needs to be under the same roof and on the same site. We need to provide hands-on training for our volunteers and fully engage and educate our community. With a majority part-time staff currently housed in different locations, collaboration is lost and redundancies are frequent. A central ADA-compliant location for staff, equipment and programs will build the base needed to steward the land and serve the community.



BUILD NOW PROTECT FOREVER *(continued from page 2)*

years. Pricing for the buildings is coming in higher than desired, so we are “sharpening our pencils” and looking at ways to value-engineer the plans.

In our efforts to increase our stewardship fund, we are actively speaking with friends about our EverGreen Society and the option of including SKLT in estate plans. According to the national Land Trust Alliance, a land trust with the amount of land we have in our care should strive for a \$5 million stewardship fund. This age of catastrophic fires, rising seas, and dramatic weather and blights such as emerald ash borer make that amount seem ever more necessary.

We hope every member of the South Kingstown Land Trust and every lover of our very special community will make SKLT a philanthropic priority with a significant

gift to this campaign, in addition to their already generous support of our annual operations. Our goal is to continue serving the community with open trails, clean water, and protected vistas, farms and native habitat. But to meet the growing demands of land management, lack of storage, and limitations of part-time staff, we need single-site equipment storage and a welcoming facility with centrally-located staff.

While design and permitting are still in process, we are so excited that we want our members to be fully “in the know.” Please call or email me if you have questions, would like additional information, would like to make a contribution or to join the EverGreen Society. I look forward to seeing you at our launch event in the new year.

~Julia Landstreet

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HONORING CLARKSON COLLINS

Clarkson, aka Clark, aka Tuby, Collins has made the decision to step off the staff of the South Kingstown Land Trust on December 20, 2019. Whereas he may be a man of many monikers, he is most singular in talent, intellect and passion. Clark has been passionate about enjoying and protecting nature in South County ever since he learned to dog-paddle in Potter’s Pond as a small child in the early 1950s.

A graduate of Brown University, Clark went on to receive a Masters in Marine Affairs at the University of Rhode Island and worked at URI’s Coastal Resources Center on environmental planning for the lands bordering Rhode Island’s coastal ponds. He later brought this experience to the position of Director of Community Development for the Town of Narragansett for 20 years. Clark has been involved with SKLT since our founding in 1983, serving on the Board and as its President from 1992 to 2004.

Ironically, Clark’s first paying job was as a summer farm hand for the Smith family on Weeden Farm, which is now home to the SKLT Barn. In 2006, Clark took a part-time position with SKLT as Land Management Director, working out of the Barn at Weeden. His perseverance, knowledge and passion have resulted in improved farmland and forest health, increased habitat diversity, an extended trail system, and the restored stone walls (and views) of Weeden Farm.

While his many skills and incomparable knowledge will be missed in the field, we will also truly miss his enduring patience, sense of humor and wise counsel. He has promised to stay involved, and lucky for SKLT, Clarkson Collins is most definitely a man of his word.





SKLT CLOSES ON ALEWIFE BROOK PRESERVE

In March 2018, SKLT agreed to buy 43 acres of woodlands on the south side of Worden's Pond Road from the Rhode Island Boy Scouts. Thanks to funding from the R.I. Department of Environmental Management (RIDEM), the Town of South Kingstown, the Bafflin Foundation, The Nature Conservancy and Champlin Foundation, we are very happy to announce that we have now closed on the property!

This property, now called Alewife Brook Preserve, provides many public benefits— protection of a drinking water recharge area, wildlife habitat, wetlands protection, and soon, public access trails. Magnifying these benefits is the fact that this property abuts four other protected open space parcels: two Audubon Society of Rhode Island parcels, a RIDEM parcel, and the Town's Tuckertown Park.

Together, these properties make up 167 acres of protected land. Across the road to the north is the Boy Scout's 193-acre Camp Aquapaug. A concentration of 360 acres of undeveloped land provides a haven for wildlife of all sorts.

The newly-acquired land contains a mixed hardwood forest, a wetlands stream complex, statewide important farmland soils, and scenic views along two roadways. Alewife Brook, flowing from Tucker Pond to Worden Pond, forms the property's southern boundary, with little evidence of invasive exotic plants.

SKLT will start planning a trail system, including a parking area and informational kiosk, within the property in 2020 and will solicit assistance from local civic organizations, private individuals and non-profit charities to implement the plans. Please contact the office if you would like to help.

~ Joanne Riccitelli

MEET SKLT TENANT TAYLOR OLSON, OWNER OF MOONSTONE FLOWER CO.

Taylor Olson, owner of Moonstone Flower Co., has been a South Kingstown Land Trust tenant since July 2018. She discovered a love of farming on protected land at Perry Raso's organic vegetable farm for the Matunuck Oyster Bar. "I quickly fell in love with the freedom farming gave me... the freedom of the mind mostly, the freedom to dwell, and ultimately, to be" says Taylor.

Taylor initially had a love for foraging and designing with flowers and a dream of owning her own business. This idea brought her to SKLT and

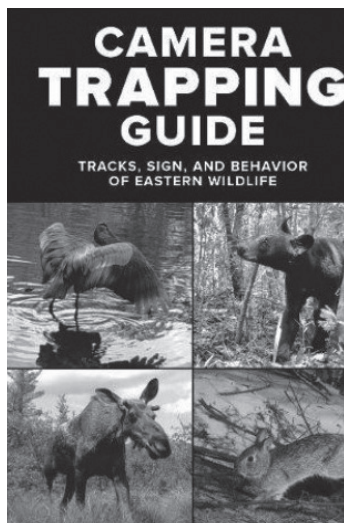


to the place where Moonstone Flower Co. was born. "Protecting open space and bringing industry and home-grown food and flowers to Rhode Island is something I'm so passionate about and thought what better way to support that than to also support the continued presence of the Land Trust and the great work that they do."

As a tenant and young farmer, Taylor notes, "farming takes time, unfortunately some money and investment, and a whole lot of patience, but I've found the Land Trust and all of its members to be extremely helpful and willing, not only to participate when needed but also to be there as a wealth of knowledge and support moving forward in my journey. For that and everything else, I am extremely grateful."

~ Heidi Taraska

JOIN US FOR THESE UPCOMING SKLT PROGRAMS



Using Trail Cameras to Study Wildlife Behavior

On Wednesday, Oct. 23 at the Barn, SKLT will host Janet Pesaturo for a presentation on camera trapping. Janet is a conservation biologist, certified tracker and writer who travels around the country tracking and camera trapping everything from mouse to moose. In 2018, she published her first book, *Camera Trapping Guide: Tracks, Sign and Behavior of Eastern Wildlife*. This one-hour talk followed by book sale and signing will introduce trail cameras—how they work and how to set them up—and discuss smart camera placement so you, too, can capture photos and videos that reveal the secret habits of animals. Bring a dish to share! Potluck supper begins at 6 p.m. followed by lecture at 7 p.m. Books available for \$20 (cash only please).

Animal Conservation Presentation

An illustrated presentation with Lou Perrotti, Director of Conservation Programs at the Roger Williams Park Zoo, on the active wildlife conservation programs at the Zoo and beyond. Presentation and potluck on Thursday, Nov. 7 at the Barn. Bring a dish to share! Potluck supper begins at 6 p.m. followed by lecture at 7 p.m.

Please RSVP for all events at sklt.org/events-calendar or by emailing: info@sklt.org



THANK YOU HEIDI TARASKA, SKLT SUMMER INTERN!

In late June, I began my internship with the South Kingstown Land Trust to count toward credits at Rhode Island College. My goal was to use maps and spatial data to assist with solving environmental issues and to assist in land conservation procedures. All the employees at the Land Trust were very welcoming and happy to allow me to shadow them. I did some fieldwork that entailed geo-referencing and mapping with ArcGIS. I also did some graphic design and historical research. This internship experience turned out to be as well rounded as my degree. I graduated in August with a B.A. in geography and minor in environmental studies.

~Heidi Taraska





MILESTONES

Summer 2019 was simply amazing. After a rather soggy spring, every day this summer was prettier than the last. Even the temperature was fabulous, save the weekend of the SKLT Car Show when a rather sweaty July Sunday kept some antique cars off the road. But THANKS to the many who brought their cars, motorcycles, and bicycles despite the heat and to Kevin McCloskey and car show veteran Bill Wright, who organized a fabulous team of volunteers and sponsors to create a family event with animal education, a vintage corn sheller demonstration and the beautiful Aberdeen. Thanks to family for bringing cars from Bob and Diane Smith's collection – a fitting tribute.

In August, Jessica Bradley, Kaitlyn Mellor, and Santiago Mejia did a great job visioning and creating the B5 party. The raffle, food, and band were all fabulous. The Great Outdoors Celebration and Auction was perfect, with exceptional community donations. Auctioneer Louis Raymond flew in from Key West and inspired us to generosity. Clarkson Collins was a worthy honorary chair, and many have donated on his behalf to fund the restoration of the Biscuit City pond. He may be stepping down from our staff, but I think it is only so he can spend more time at that magical place.

The strong foundation for launching the campaign was provided by the SKLT Directors past and present who hosted and/or attended outreach events all summer. They opened their homes, served yummy foods and gave me opportunities to share the details of the campaign and invite people to participate. We still have a long way to go, but we are ever closer to adequate storage, a coherent workspace and a stewardship fund.

Thanks to Caroline Wilkel who opened her home to host a special thank you moment for the members of our EverGreen Society. SKLT deeply appreciates those among us who have made land protection their legacy.

And a very special thanks to the land owners who worked with us to protect their land this summer – what a gift.

Julia Fry Landstreet

Julia Fry Landstreet, Executive Director



The mission of the South Kingstown Land Trust is to conserve and protect the natural resources and open spaces of our town for the enduring benefit of our community.

SOUTH KINGSTOWN LAND TRUST

Officers

Chairperson: Martha Day
Vice Chairperson: Susan S. Lovejoy
Secretary: Linda Green
Treasurer: James Farrell

Directors

Jessica Bradley
Heather Mae Breau
Ellen Grebstein
Kevin McCloskey
Timothy Philbrick
Jeanine Silversmith
Ted Watson
Caroline Wilkel
Charles Lewis, Trustee Emeritus
Sophie Page Lewis, Trustee Emerita
Michael Sherry, Trustee Emeritus

Staff

Julia Fry Landstreet
Executive Director
Joanne Riccitelli
Land Protection Director
Clarkson Collins
Land Management Director
Michael Bontecou
Land Operations Coordinator
Doug McGovern
Land Operations Coordinator
Angela Brunetti
Development Coordinator

Main Office
227 Robinson Street, Wakefield, RI 02879
401-789-0962
Field Office (SKLT Barn)
17 Matunuck Beach Road
401-783-4999

JOIN US IN PRESERVING OPEN SPACE IN SOUTH KINGSTOWN

Your support for open space preservation continues to strengthen our organization and invigorate our work. Join or renew your membership, make a general donation, or become an EverGreen member! The South Kingstown Land Trust is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization, so your donation is tax-deductible. Your generosity is greatly appreciated.

MEMBERSHIP:

I want to: ☐ Join ☐ Renew *at the following level:*
☐ Individual \$30 ☐ Family \$50
☐ Steward \$100-\$249
☐ Guardian \$250-\$499
☐ Conservationist \$500-\$999
☐ Benefactor \$1000-\$2,499

GENERAL DONATION:

I'm already a member, but I would like to make an additional donation in the amount of \$_____.



EVERGREEN:

I have already planned a legacy gift to SKLT and qualify to be an EverGreen member through:

☐ Estate Plan ☐ Trust ☐ Other
☐ Please contact me about making a legacy gift.

SUSTAINING MEMBERSHIP:

This program allows our donors to easily establish and maintain their membership through a monthly, automatically recurring gift.

☐ I want to become a sustaining member at the monthly amount of \$_____. Please charge my credit card:

Credit Card # _____

Exp. _____ Billing Zip Code _____

Name on Card: _____

Signature: _____

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OTHER SUPPORT

☐ I'm a landowner interested in preserving my land.
☐ My employer will match my gift. I've enclosed a matching gift form.

Name: _____

Address: _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

Please make checks payable to: South Kingstown Land Trust, 227 Robinson Street, Wakefield, RI 02879



WE HAVE AN smile WISH LIST!

There's more than one way to give to the Land Trust! Consider a tax-deductible in-kind donation. From tick protection and sunscreen for staff and volunteers, to day-to-day office supplies, to materials for successful and eco-friendly events, and more, in-kind gifts help us out in so many ways.

And don't forget to add South Kingstown Land Trust as your Amazon Charity every time you shop on AmazonSmile- it really does work! You can find our wish list and AmazonSmile page at smile.amazon.com/ch/05-0516985.



SOUTH KINGSTOWN LAND TRUST
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WAKEFIELD, RI 02879

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Site Lines



Join Us For These UPCOMING SKLT EVENTS

Every 1st Sat	10 a.m.	All Ages Rx Hike, Browning Woods Trail
Thu, Oct 17	8:30 a.m.	3rd Thursday Hike, Yawgoo Pond Trail
Wed, Oct 23	6 p.m.	Using Trail Cameras To Study Wildlife Behavior, Potluck & Presentation, the Barn
Thu, Nov 7	6 p.m.	Animal Conservation, Potluck & Presentation, the Barn
Thu, Nov 21	8:30 a.m.	3rd Thursday Hike, Duval Trail
Thu, Dec 19	8:30 a.m.	3rd Thursday Hike, Biscuit City Preserve

Stay tuned for our:

"Build Now Protect Forever" campaign launch at the Barn

For programs and events, please register online at sklt.org/events-calendar/ or call (401) 789-0962 x204

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OPEN SPACE MAKES ALL THE DIFFERENCE