



Site Lines

Fall 2020  Open Space Makes All the Difference



Passion and Progress

Progress has been slow, steady and everything in between for our *Building Now Protecting Forever* capacity building campaign and building projects. Our construction project is, like all others, taking longer than desired, and further complicated by COVID related supply chain issues. To date we have not encountered excessive cost overruns and have even found ways to value engineer the project. Donors have been so generous it is incumbent on SKLT to remain as good stewards of the funds and building projects as we are of the properties we have been entrusted to steward.

Our generous neighbor who provided storage for the equipment started work early on reconfiguring his shed so after spending a few hot weeks in the sun, our tractors and equipment are happy to finally have a permanent home. The 1,600 square foot tractor shed will greatly facilitate the team's ability to tend the 170 properties (and growing) in our care. This is a time of settling into something that has been in the works for over ten years.

The welcome/office building has hit speed bumps along the way, but we have made the decision to remain on course to end up with what we want at the price we are able to pay. Fingers crossed completion by the end of the year, but early spring seems more realistic. On the bright side, it is 1,200 square feet of perfection looking over the fields of Weeden Farm and ultimately providing a central location for visitors and staff.



What remains a constant is the incredible passion our community has for the protection and stewardship of the land, and for helping the South Kingstown Land Trust satisfy its mission. **To that end a donor has stepped forward and offered a dollar for dollar match of \$100,000!** If you are able to help us reach this goal by the end of the year, we will be able to complete the construction projects AND contribute to Clarkson A Collins Stewardship Fund! WOW. I encourage you to contact me today at julia.landstreet@sklt.org, 789-0962 x205 to discuss further. *Julia Fry Landstreet*

Please consider supporting today: <http://sklt.org/supportsklt/capital-campaign/>

MILESTONES

“Hindsight is 2020” has come to take on whole new meanings. It has been a year of incredible highs and lows. The South Kingstown Land Trust continues to weather the storms with the incredible support of our members and donors.

The *Great Outdoors Celebration* was truly a delight, and special THANKS to the record number of event sponsors. It was a real joy for board and staff to share the fields of Weeden and various SKLT treats with those who attended.

Trail use continues to be high, and the Alewife Brook Preserve trail will be a super addition. We ask walkers to be mindful of others, stay socially distanced, please make sure your mask is called into duty when needed, and keep dogs with you and in your control. I know of one incident resulting in a trip to the vet, and another where someone was truly frightened by an exuberant unleashed dog. Please wear blaze orange as a precaution and help us keep our trails safe and open.

The transformation of the Grist Mill and its sluice is a highlight. The Mill was included in the National Historic Register for the role it played in the community, and the legacy continues. It is impossible to list and thank all the people who contributed to the project and they all had a story to tell or a memory to share. The project was a clear manifestation of the importance of preserving cultural landscapes by, for and with the community.

I shall look forward to sharing updates on the building projects, and the successes of the campaign. *Building Now Protecting Forever* has taken on new meanings as well.



Julia Fry Landstreet

SOUTH KINGSTOWN LAND TRUST

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Julia Fry Landstreet
Executive Director

Joanne Riccitelli
Land Protection Director

Michael Bontecou
Land Operations Coordinator

Doug McGovern
GIS Manager

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

Website: www.skl.org

Email: info@sklt.org

Site Lines Design: Lauren Lawder

The mission of the South Kingstown Land Trust is to protect and steward the natural resources, open spaces and cultural landscapes for the benefit of our communities now and forever.



So Much to Celebrate



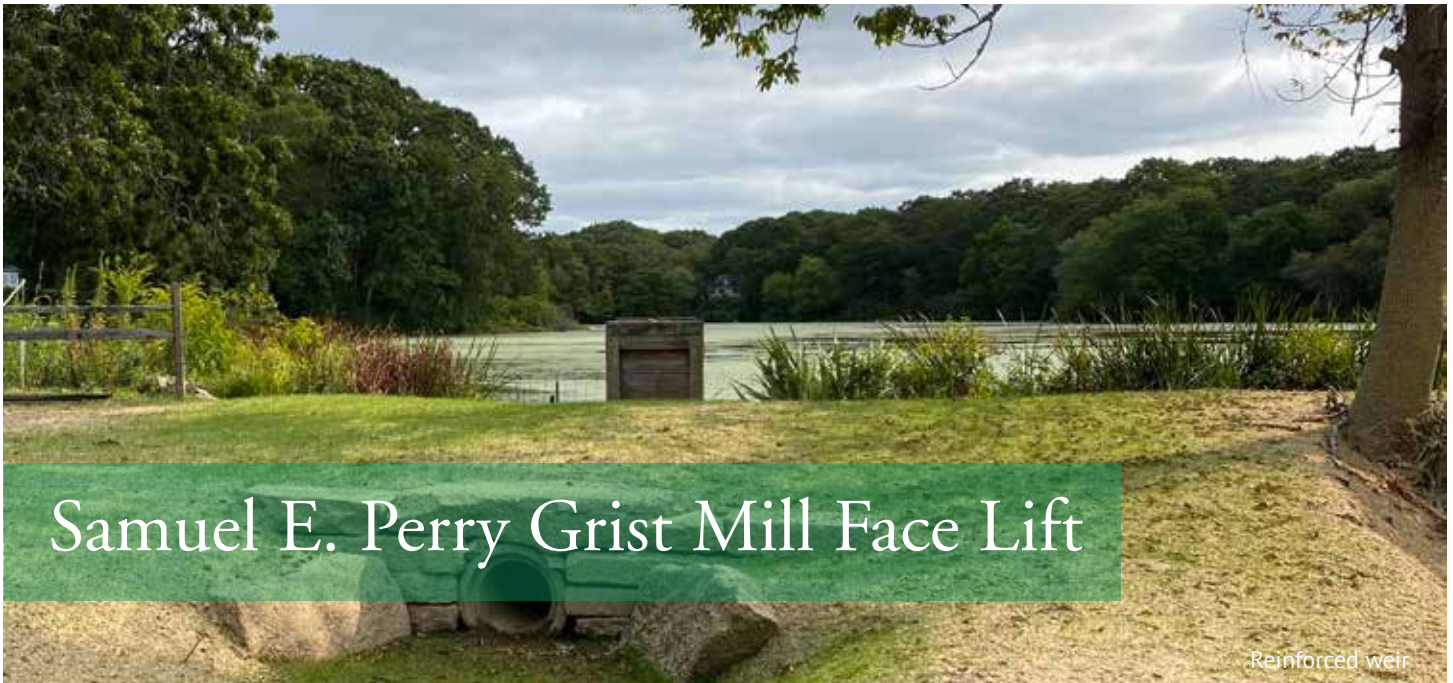
It almost didn't feel like a true South Kingstown summer without the SKLT Auction this year. Yet the pandemic has reminded us there is still so much to appreciate, how to be creative, and to persevere through adversity. And so, with your help, we did indeed #celebratethegreatoutdoors all summer long. The trails were full, our local farmers kept very busy, and many shared photos on social media.

The culmination of a sunny warm summer was the *Great Outdoors Celebration* on Sunday, August 9. While we unfortunately did not get to see and thank the 300+ attendees we would typically have the pleasure of hosting at our event, we were thrilled so many still attended our drive-through affair at Weeden Farm. These enjoyable collages are some of the faces who joined in the celebration.



The most exciting news is that YOU all rose to the occasion. We may not have been able to make up the revenue from the sale of auction items, but we had a record number of sponsorships this year- 115! To put that into perspective, last year was a record-breaking 90 sponsorships. Kudos to you, friends. We are proud to be part of a community that values open space and steps up to help when there are challenges. Thank you all. While we don't yet know what the *Great Outdoors Celebration* will look like next year, know that we miss you and wish you all good health and spirits. In the meantime, happy trails! *Angela Brunetti*

“The land trust properties are wonderful! They have been such an incredible resource for outdoor recreation during COVID (and in general). Thank you!!” - Mark



Samuel E. Perry Grist Mill Face Lift

Reinforced weir



Before



After



Clearing sluceway

Have you driven down Moonstone Beach Road lately and noticed how beautiful the Samuel E. Perry Grist Mill is looking? If not, make a point to pass by. Thanks to a generous anonymous donor and corporate community support the historic mill, situated alongside picturesque Mill Pond, just underwent critical repairs to the mill building, sluceway, and weir.

Jeff Sweenor of Sweenor Builders provided labor, staging, and general contracting services to re-shingle the sides and roof as well as the repair of a sluice gate. An anonymous donor has contributed to the cost of the materials offered at a discounted rate thanks to Liberty Cedar. The sluceway, which runs between the pond and the mill, had become overgrown with damaging vegetation which crumbled after fierce storms over the past few years. Jon Zeyl of Landscape Creations provided materials and labor to complete restoration of the sluceway and weir. Roland Fiore of South County Sand and Gravel donated gravel for the weir restoration to complete the work Superior Septic Service started. And last but certainly not least, a huge shout out to board member Kevin McCloskey for his invaluable assistance with this project and stewardship of the mill. The project is an incredible show of a supportive local community.



As many of you know, for more than 30 years the mill had been in the loving care of Bob and Diane Smith. They gifted the mill and its surrounding 3.3 acres to SKLT in 2012. Protecting this entire complex is an example of whole-place preservation, which is the preservation of the land as well as associated agricultural and cultural elements.

With the repairs now in place, we will begin to offer more educational programming at the Mill. Be sure to keep an eye on our event calendar at sklt.org! Angela Brunetti

#TakeItOutside

After a very warm summer, we now are experiencing the cooler temperatures of fall and the cold of winter. The changing seasons are an important part of the southern New England landscape and each brings unique and interesting activities as we continue to piggyback on Governor Raimondo's initiative to #takeitoutside.

By mid-November our seasonal feathered friends will have migrated away until next spring and the colorful foliage fallen, but we can always enjoy a walk in the woods. Through the winter we often see chickadees, titmice, and kinglets. Some winter finch species that breed very far north, like crossbills, siskins, redpolls who normally don't migrate may make a winter appearance in our woods in what is known as an "irruption"

If we end up with a snowy winter, get outside, maybe visit a trail, and see what kind of animal tracks you can find. While we commonly think mammals hibernate all winter, it isn't the case. As long as there isn't a deep freeze and a thick snowpack, squirrels, mice and chipmunks and other mammals will continue to forage so they don't deplete the stores they put up for the winter. Land Trust woods and fields are also home to fisher, bobcat, white-tailed deer and so much more.

As weather and COVID permits SKLT will be offering guided walks and an owl prowl this winter to be announced via MailChimp or social media. Please continue to #takeitoutside and enjoy the outdoors while practicing COVID-19 safety precautions. Remember to wear some blaze orange on any trail you are walking on, just in case.



SKLT Reaccreditation Renewal

The South Kingstown Land Trust is pleased to announce it is applying for renewal of accreditation by The Land Trust Accreditation Commission, an independent program of the Land Trust Alliance. The Commission recognizes through accreditation the land conservation organizations that meet national quality standards for protecting important natural places and working lands forever.

The Commission invites public input and accepts signed, written comments on pending applications. Comments must relate to how the South Kingstown Land Trust complies with national quality standards. These standards address the ethical and technical operation of a land trust. For the full list of standards see <http://www.landtrustaccreditation.org/help-and-resources/indicator-practices>.

To learn more about the accreditation program and to submit a comment, visit www.landtrustaccreditation.org, or email your comment to info@landtrustaccreditation.org.

Comments on SKLT's application will be most useful by Sunday, January 3.



Alewife Brook Trail Opens!

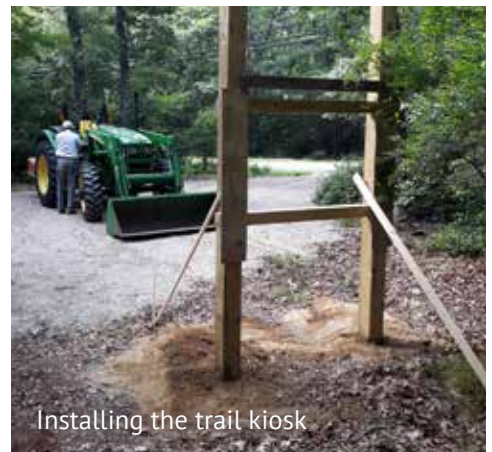
Staff blazing the trail

Looking for a new scenic one mile trail to get you out of the house? SKLT has you covered with the Alewife Brook Trail. SKLT acquired the 43 acre Alewife property in 2018 from the Rhode Island Boy Scouts, fulfilling our goal to strategically connect parcels in areas of special significance and protect green corridors for wildlife. Another important goal was to make this fine example of typical wetland and upland southern Rhode Island forest accessible for the public to enjoy, and this takes time and hard work.

The work began in fall of 2019 with an enthusiastic, well equipped, and able bodied volunteer group from DiStefano Brothers Construction Inc. who helped rid the property of rusting metal and bottles dumped long ago in addition to roadside litter of more recent vintage. The crew also helped take down one of the many abandoned deer hunting stands scattered through the woods. Other individual volunteers cleaned up the remains of an old farm dump and helped remove fallen trees.

The next step fell to our master trail designer, Michael Bontecou, who carefully laid out a trail route with survey tape. The route shows off the diverse assemblage of plant life and habitats in both wetland and upland areas of the property. With clippers, loppers and chainsaw he opened the route for the gas powered brush hog, which makes short work of bullbriars and other hindrances to hikers. Before long it looked like the trails had been there for decades.

Bontecou completed the trail by blazing trees and placing directional arrows to guide visitors and clearing an area for a gravel parking lot later constructed by Brian Ennis. A kiosk was constructed and installed at the trailhead which will soon house an informational sign with a map and details on the wildlife and other features found here. Directions to the Alewife Preserve Trail are on our website www.skl.org under trailmaps. Enjoy! *Doug McGovern*



Installing the trail kiosk



Mike Bontecou clearing trees to create the route

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

- Individual..... \$30 Family..... \$50
- Steward..... \$100-\$249
- Guardian..... \$250-\$499
- Conservationist..... \$500-\$999
- Benefactor..... \$1,000-\$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

Name _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

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

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 _____

OTHER SUPPORT

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

We're Saving Trees and Saving Paper!

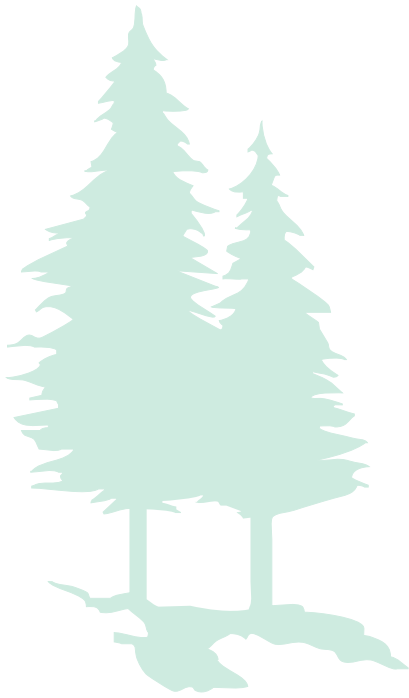
SKLT has recently implemented and enhanced a donor management system for the database of our members and supporters. Thanks to this technology, we are now able to offer both our newsletter, *Site Lines*, and gift acknowledgements digitally! We are excited to do our small part in conserving earth's natural resources. If you are interested in going paperless, you can sign up for either or both by visiting our membership page at sklt.org and completing the form "going digital."





SOUTH KINGSTOWN LAND TRUST
 227 ROBINSON STREET
 WAKEFIELD, RI 02879

Non-Profit
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 Permit No. 132



Save the Date!

Keep an eye on sklt.org for additional hikes and programs!

Thursday, November 19	8:30am	3rd Thursday Hike, DuVal Trail
Friday, November 27	9:00am	Cultural Landscape Hike, Biscuit City Preserve
Thursday, December 17	8:30am	3rd Thursday Hike, Alewife Brook Trail
Monday, January 11	4:30pm	Owl Prowl, Alewife Brook Trail
Thursday, January 21	8:30am	3rd Thursday Hike, Yawgoo Pond
Friday, February 8	8:30am	Mid-Winter Woodland & Wildlife, Browning Woods Trail
Thursday, February 18	8:30am	3rd Thursday Hike, Thewlis Wood

REMINDER: PLEASE WEAR BLAZE ORANGE WHEN HIKING!

***Registration required for all programs** and will be capped. Register at <http://sklt.org/events-calendar/>
 Subject to change with current CDC guidelines.

Find us on



@South Kingstown
 Land Trust



@SKLandTrust



@SKLandTrust



Not on the SKLT email list?

Contact Angie at angela.brunetti@sklt.org
 She'll take care of you!