2021 Friends of Acadia

# IMPACT REPORT

## A HISTORIC YEAR

Dear Friends,

2021 was a historic year. Friends of Acadia teamed with Acadia National Park to address record visitation, a global pandemic, erratic weather events caused by climate change, the lack of housing for employees, and the potential of an industrial-scale aquaculture operation in our front yard. Our members and friends have been with us every step of the way, providing critical resources to address park needs.

Friends of Acadia raised significant money for the Greening Acadia Fund to help purchase electric vehicles and equipment to reduce the park's carbon footprint. We provided critical support to the creation of the Cadillac Summit Road reservation system and funded an accessibility study to help remove barriers for those with disabilities. We also celebrated the long-awaited restoration of Acadia's historic carriage roads and helped to host Interior Secretary Deb Haaland in her inaugural trip to Acadia.

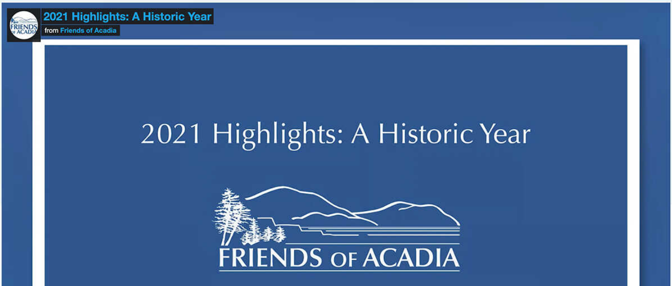
In the fall, we launched a nationwide search for our next President and CEO, Eric Stiles, who will "take over the helm" after a decade of David MacDonald's outstanding leadership.

This all took hard work, but it was good work and was well done. The 2021 Impact Report is a tribute to the power of friends coming together to preserve and protect our Acadia today and for future generations.

Sincerely,

Jack Kelley

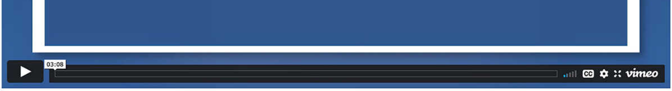
Jack Kelley,
Chair of Board of Directors



2021 Highlights: A Historic Year

from Friends of Acadia

2021 Highlights: A Historic Year



> *"Acadia National Park is the place that I call home, my sanctuary. The spectacular scenery, the sounds, the smells, and the uniqueness of this exceptional place fills my heart. I am grateful and happy to support Friends of Acadia as they work thoughtfully to maintain this pristine national treasure."*
>
> MARYANNE MATTSON
> NEW FRIENDS OF ACADIA MEMBER

# OUR IMPACT

Friends of Acadia works with Acadia National Park to identify places and projects where our effective mix of private philanthropy, volunteerism, innovative leadership, and strong partnerships most benefit the park's critical needs.

## WILD ACADIA

Protecting Acadia's Natural Resources and Preparing for Climate Change

## Rapid, Unpredictable, and Extreme Change–There's No Map for That

By Rebecca Cole-Will, Chief of Resource Management at Acadia National Park

2021 was a year of unpredictable, extreme change. The June 9th storm event that caused catastrophic damage to the carriage roads and surrounding natural resources was a call to action. We responded immediately to repair the carriage roads. Resource managers, with great assistance from Friends of Acadia stewardship volunteers, worked to mitigate short-term damages. The enthusiastic team deployed erosion control wattles to protect fragile wetlands. We're now conducting experiments and monitoring to see how the landscape heals.

But what is the longer-term call to action? There are few models of how to respond to rapid environmental change that is outside the range of historical normal. Through Wild Acadia, Friends of Acadia, the National Park Service, and Schoodic Institute are collaborating to implement forward-thinking, adaptive management based on leading-edge scientific research.

Projects at **Cadillac Mountain**, the **Great Meadow Wetland**, and **Bass Harbor Marsh** are applying novel thinking to this work. The Resist-Accept-Direct (RAD) framework provides a vastly different approach to natural resource management than the traditional "restoration" approach. With RAD we consider whether to resist the effects of climate change, accept them, or actively manage to direct them toward desired future conditions. [**Read more on RAD**.]

With support and leadership from Friends of Acadia, we can make good management decisions that are not business as usual, but rather opportunities for novel solutions to novel problems.

**Learn how Friends of Acadia helps protect Acadia's lands and resources.**

2021

## WILD ACADIA
## HIGHLIGHTS

**Friends of Acadia Member Support Helped:**

- **Model water flow in the Great Meadow in preparation for restoration of the wetland.**
- **Survey Park land for 25 high-priority invasive plants.**
- **Fund biodiversity surveys at the Great Meadow and Bass Harbor Marsh.**
- **Test plant and soil restoration techniques on Cadillac Mountain to learn how to best restore Acadia's fragile summit vegetation.**
- **Monitor water quality in Jordan Pond.**
- **Remove significant invasive plant infestation at the Bass Harbor Marsh and research and develop experimental approaches to suppress reinfestation.**

> *"Acadia played a foundational role in shaping my love for the outdoors and appreciation of our incredible National Park System. As a member of Friends of Acadia's Board of Directors, I'm honored to carry on the important stewardship to maintain the health of this amazing but fragile part of the world. I'm grateful for the opportunity to help Friends of Acadia ensure that future generations of tidepool explorers, hikers, sunrise seekers and all others will be able to experience Acadia's vitality in all the ways the park's founders intended and hoped."*
>
> DAVE KATONA
> BOARD MEMBER FRIENDS OF ACADIA

# TOMORROW'S STEWARDS

Inspiring the Next Generation of Stewards

## More Reach, More Learning, More Future Stewards

By Kate Petrie, Supervisory Education Coordinator at Acadia National Park

Things changed dramatically during the pandemic for park rangers delivering educational programming to teachers and schools. Suddenly, in-person programming came to a halt, and we shifted to creatively designing and delivering virtual programming.

We had a captive audience in 2020-21 as schools were clamoring for virtual programming, even reaching out and asking us to create programs such as Marine Chemistry for sixth graders. Our rangers have become experts in engaging and interacting with students of all ages via the screen. In 2021, they delivered 632 virtual programs, serving 13,581 students all over the country.

While virtual learning is important, getting kids to experience nature up close is far more effective at creating future stewards. That's why we brought back in-person programs in 2021 and piloted a series of self-guided activities where teachers could take their classrooms into the park on their own. These tours were a hit and we're expanding them in 2022.

None of this would have been possible without Friends of Acadia's steadfast support. From the paddle raise proceeds that helped buy new technology and equipment, to continued investments in the **outdoor teacher collaborative**, the **Schoodic Education Adventure**, and **outdoor classroom grants** to area schools, Friends of Acadia is a critical partner in bringing Acadia to students and teachers and creating tomorrow's stewards.

**Learn more about how Friends of Acadia supports building Tomorrow's Stewards.**

2021

## TOMORROW'S STEWARDS HIGHLIGHTS

**FOA Member Support Helped:**

- **Park rangers reach 13,581 students and teachers in 632 virtual programs.**
- **Fund field trips to Acadia for 237 students from eight schools surrounding the park.**
- **Purchase 16 iPads for the park to deliver virtual programming and for students to use in data collection in Acadia.**
- **Engage 153 Acadia Quest teams as they explored destinations in the park using the Acadia Quest app.**
- **Expand the Outdoor Teacher Collaborative to 10 teachers from three school districts who shared outdoor teaching skills and lesson plans.**

> *“Being a Summit Steward gave me a chance to be involved in different aspects of Acadia National Park such as visitor education, search and rescues, and trails. I gained valuable insight into career opportunities, which led me to a position on Acadia National Park’s trail crew for the upcoming season!”*
>
> NATHANIAL BURKE
> SUMMIT STEWARD (2019-2021)

# ACADIA EXPERIENCE

Enhancing the Visitor Experience While Protecting Our Resources

## What Does 4 million Visits Mean to Acadia?

By Stephanie Clement & Becca Stanley, Friends of Acadia

Acadia National Park set a record of 4.1 million estimated visits in 2021—an increase of about 15 percent over the previous record. Ninety-eight percent of visitors arrived in the park in a personal vehicle last year, which led to traffic congestion and parking scarcity in many areas of the park.

The National Park Service implemented the first full year of the Cadillac Summit Road vehicle reservation system in 2021, and it was successful in improving the visitor experience and traffic safety.

While National Park Service budgets have in essence decreased over the last 10 years when accounting for inflation, Friends of Acadia has helped improve the Acadia experience by supporting the Island Explorer bus service, funding infrastructure needed for the Cadillac Summit Road reservation system, and fielding teams of Recreation Technicians and Summit Stewards who help monitor visitation statistics and educate visitors in the field about how to be good park stewards. [**Read more here**.]

**Learn how Friends of Acadia works to enhance the visitor experience, while protecting our resources.**

## ACADIA EXPERIENCE
# HIGHLIGHTS

**FOA Member Support Helped:**

- **Enhance the success of the Cadillac Summit Road vehicle reservation system through improvements to infrastructure, employee facilities, and traffic safety at the base of the mountain, as well as monitoring on the summit.**
- **Share information with the public about the reservation system and track vehicular turnaround at reservation booths.**
- **Conduct parking surveys at key destinations in the park.**
- **Count visitors and types of recreational use on the carriage roads.**
- **Rebuild 1,220 cairns and destroy 1,159 other rock stacks that might confuse hikers.**

> *“Living and working within the boundaries of Acadia National Park brings a wealth of pride and ownership. The strength of the protection of ecological resources, conservation research, and ongoing stewardship of our beautiful park through Friends of Acadia is second to none.”*
>
> NANCY O'BRIEN
> FIORE ARTISAN OLIVE OILS AND VINEGARS, BUSINESS MEMBER

# TRAILS AND CARRIAGE ROADS

Preserving and Protecting Acadia’s Most Beloved Cultural Resources

# 2021 Marked Another Milestone for Acadia's Carriage Roads

By Steve Allison and Merle Cousins

In October 2021, we swung the gate to reopen the Eagle Lake Carriage Road Loop to park visitors. This completed the restoration of Acadia National Park's historic carriage roads—an initiative three decades in the making!

In the 1990s, Friends of Acadia began a partnership with the park to restore and maintain the carriage roads. The National Park Service provided funding for the rehabilitation, while Friends of Acadia raised money to create an endowment to care for the roads in perpetuity.

The carriage roads were in terrible shape prior to the restoration due to limited funding. Rehabilitating them was far more complicated than just filling washouts with gravel and removing unwanted vegetation. The system features numerous stonework structures, including culverts and retaining walls, 16 unique granite bridges, and two gatehouses. The road surface was designed to incorporate intricate layers of successively smaller stone, and a final surface comprised of finely ground granite, clay, and other components. Finding the proper equipment, sourcing unique materials, and tapping long-dormant expertise was not easy.

The roads are considerably better now thanks to the commitment of all who worked on the restoration over decades. The 45-mile carriage road system will remain one of the best in the country for current and future generations to enjoy.

*Steve Allison is Acadia National Park's Roads Foreman today. Merle Cousins was the Carriage Roads Foreman at Acadia National Park for 36 years, including when the carriage road restoration work began.*

**Learn more about Friends of Acadia's support for Acadia's trails and carriage roads.**

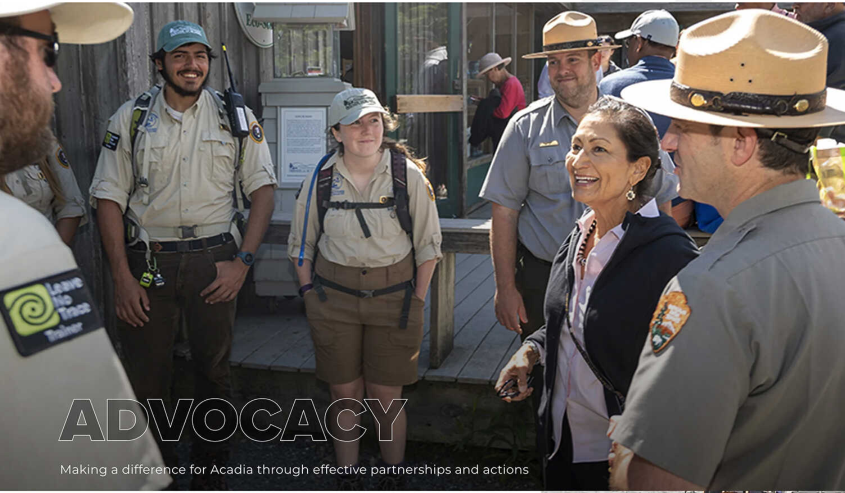
2021

## ACADIA EXPERIENCE HIGHLIGHTS

**FOA Member Support Helped:**

- **Repair storm damage on the carriage roads and Schooner Head and Gorge Paths from significant rainfall events.**
- **Protect sensitive habitats around storm-damaged carriage roads by installing straw wattles to hold gravel and materials in place.**
- **Rehabilitate sections of the Canon Brook, Razorback, Hadlock Brook, Long Pond, Compass Harbor, Orange & Black, and Sieur de Monts-area trails.**
- **Donate a bucket truck to the park for trimming trees around the historic carriage road bridges.**

> *"Since 2015, I have volunteered on Acadia's trails and carriage roads to help maintain and improve the park. In 2021, I became a Volunteer Crew Leader and look forward to leading groups of volunteers who will also steward Acadia."*
>
> JIM LEMMON
> VOLUNTEER CREW LEADER



# ADVOCACY

Making a difference for Acadia through effective partnerships and actions

## Defending Acadia in 2021

By Stephanie Clement, Interim President and Conservation Director, Friends of Acadia

Support for national parks is one of the most bipartisan issues in the United States. Friends of Acadia works with partners to highlight Acadia's funding needs with the Maine Congressional delegation and other national leaders. In 2021, as President of the National Parks Friends Alliance Steering Committee, FOA President David MacDonald was well positioned to draw attention to emerging issues in national parks, such as climate change, crowding/traffic congestion, and insufficient park housing.

In addition to national issues, Friends of Acadia worked with local and national partners to fight local threats facing Acadia. Chief among these was the proposal from American Aquafarms to lease two sixty-acre sites in Frenchman Bay for industrial-sized salmon farms.

We collaborated with partners on strategy, held a member briefing on the issue, and commented during the regulatory process. In April 2022, Maine state agencies halted consideration of American Aquafarms' lease applications, and Friends of Acadia stands ready to re-engage should the company apply for new leases.

FRENCHMAN BAY IS NOT FOR SALE
Outcast

2021

## ADVOCACY HIGHLIGHTS

**FOA Member Support Helped:**

- **Prepare official comments, letters, and editorials sharing Friends of Acadia's concerns regarding American Aquafarms' proposal to lease 120 acres of Frenchman Bay for industrial-sized salmon farms.**
- **Support Frenchman Bay United's work with scientists to model water circulation in Frenchman Bay. This modeling work demonstrated that nutrient pollution would accumulate in the Bay over time from the salmon farms, likely causing harmful algal blooms.**
- **Network with key decisionmakers, such as the Secretary of the Interior, Maine Congressional delegation, and other members of Congress.**

> *"I grew up spending summers and creating memories in Acadia. This instilled a deep appreciation for Acadia's beauty and uniqueness. Now, as a half-year resident of Downeast Maine, I gladly volunteer with Friends of Acadia to help instill in others the wonder and beauty of our magical park."*
>
> BONNIE TRIGG
> FRIENDS OF ACADIA OFFICE VOLUNTEER

# POWER OF FRIENDS

## THANK YOU FRIENDS!

Acadia National today is protected and enriched by the members, donors, and volunteers of Friends of Acadia. THANK YOU for all you give to this place we love so much.

*Diana Davis Spencer & Abby Moffat*

### Diana Davis Spencer Foundation

Diana Davis Spencer, Executive Chairman of the Diana Davis Spencer Foundation, and Abby Moffat, Chief Executive Officer and President, have been long-time supporters of Friends of Acadia. In 2021, the Foundation played an outstanding leadership role by funding an accessibility assessment study that lays out findings and recommendations for improvements at 27 sites in Acadia ranging from the Bass Harbor Head Light to Wildwood Stables and the carriage roads.

Wildwood Stables is a particular interest area for the Foundation, which has also supported acquisition of an accessible carriage for public enjoyment of the carriage roads through tours reserved for a fee with park concessionaire Carriages of Acadia.

"There is a sense of exhilaration, being in a carriage with a pair of horses, meandering within Acadia's parkland with its dense forests, mosses, ferns, and vistas. My late husband John, who had MS, relished sharing this experience with others. The Diana Davis Spencer Foundation is delighted to help make Acadia National Park accessible to more visitors, in a way that allows those with differing abilities to enjoy the park together." Diana added, "We hope Acadia will become a model for other National Parks to emulate."

### Acadia Corporation: 2% for the Park

What's better than a constant, supportive friend? Friends of Acadia is fortunate in that many donors support us annually. Some donors stand out for their longevity.

Acadia Corporation, the parent company of the Acadia Park Company, the Acadia Shops, and other stores across the island, made their first gift to Friends of Acadia in 1989, just three years after our founding. And they've supported Friends of Acadia every year since.

This year's gift—proceeds from their 2% for the Park program—was their largest gift to date and will support trail building and volunteer programs in Acadia. For Acadia Corporation, they know their success is directly tied to Acadia visitors shopping in their stores, and they feel strongly that their gifts to Friends of Acadia be used to improve the visitors' experience in the park.

Friends of Acadia's Lisa Horsch Clark recently visited The Acadia Corporation President David Woodside and Vice President & General Manager Todd Graham to discuss their monumental gift to benefit the park. The good news? Acadia Corporation plans to continue 2% for the Park far into the future.

*Todd Graham & Lisa Horsch Clark*

## Excellence in Volunteerism

## Wild Gardens Co-Chairs Anne Kozak and Helen Koch

Friends of Acadia is grateful for the many hours that Wild Gardens of Acadia Committee Co-Chairs Anne Kozak and Helen Koch donate annually to the management and upkeep of the gardens. In addition to their regular activities supporting staff and volunteers, growing plants, and opening/closing the gardens, they helped Friends of Acadia raise essential funds to sustain garden operations in 2021. Helen organized a record-breaking plant sale, and Anne shepherded a successful end-of-year fundraising initiative for the Wild Gardens endowment. Thank you!

*Anne Kozak & Helen Koch*

## The 2021 Stewardship Volunteer Crew

While the Trails and Carriage Roads Stewardship Volunteer Program was closed to the public in 2021, Volunteer Crew Leaders and other trained helpers continued maintaining the trails. This small but mighty team completed more than 1,400 hours of work on 40 different trails, including the Gorge Path. After the massive rainstorm in June 2021, they also aided the park in implementing erosion control measures. The team worked diligently on administrative updates to support volunteer recruitment and retention as the stewardship volunteer program re-opened to the public in 2022. Thank you!

> *"For many summers, the beauty and peace of Acadia National Park recharged my teacher batteries and filled my soul. In retirement, I am honored to give back and recharge in Acadia as a Volunteer Crew Leader stewarding the trails and carriage roads."*
>
> BARB NEALON
> VOLUNTEER CREW LEADER

## BY THE NUMBERS

**4,607**
MEMBERS

**4,921**
DEDICATED VOLUNTEER HOURS

**$1.7 / $35.7**
MILLION IN 2021 / MILLION SINCE 1986
GRANTS TO THE PARK & COMMUNITIES

**18,467**
LEAVE NO TRACE CONTACTS
BY THE SUMMIT STEWARDS

**1,220**
CAIRNS REPAIRED
BY THE SUMMIT STEWARDS

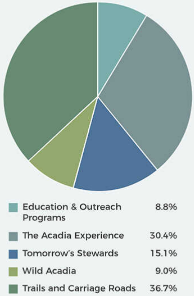
**42,949**
TOTAL VISITOR CONTACTS
BY THE SUMMIT STEWARDS

> *“The breadth of Acadia’s community and the depth of people’s relationship with this amazing place continue to strengthen Friends of Acadia at a time when the park needs its partnership more than ever.”*

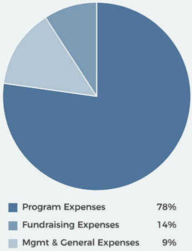
DAVID MACDONALD
FORMER PRESIDENT & CEO (2012-2022)

# FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

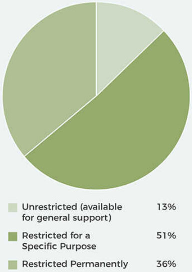
### Total Program Expenses
**3,492,301**



### Total Operating Expenses
**$4,493,463**

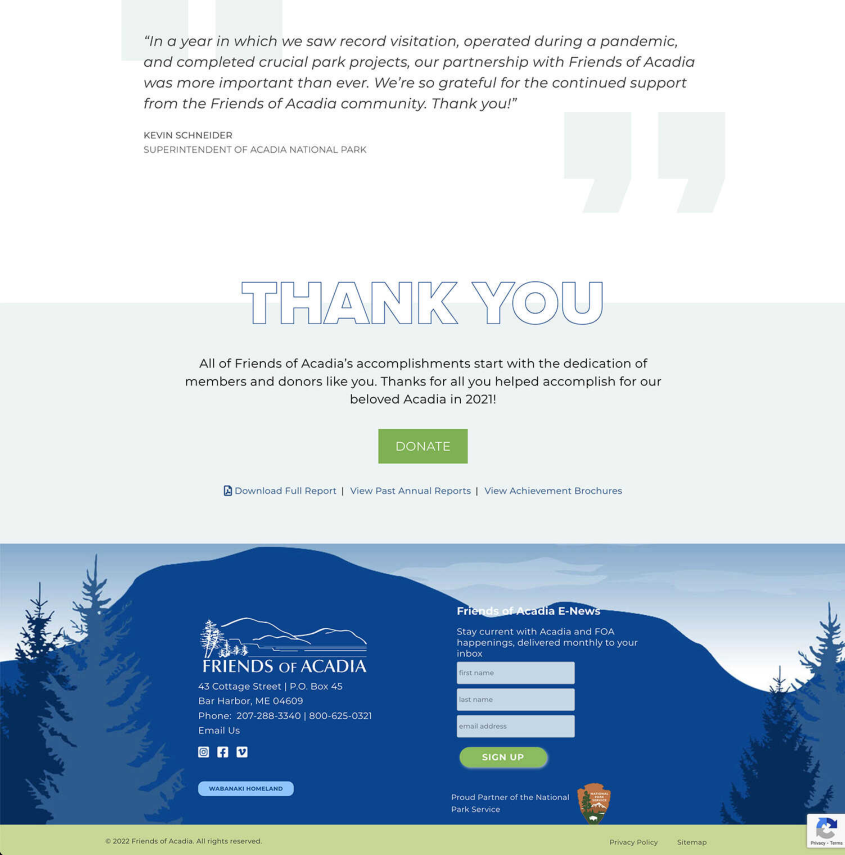


### Composition of Net Assets
**$82,230,721**



### 2021 Financial Overview

| | |
|---|---|
| **REVENUE** | |
| Unrestricted contributions, grants, and events | $3,284,347 |
| Donor-restricted funds raised in prior years used for intended purposes | $3,321,985 |
| **TOTAL** | **$6,606,332** |
| **OPERATING EXPENSES** | |
| **Programs** | |
| Education & Outreach | $308,464 |
| Programs - General | $3,183,837 |
| **TOTAL PROGRAM EXPENSES** | **$3,492,301** |
| **Supporting Services** | |
| Development | $616,758 |
| Management & General | $384,404 |
| **TOTAL SUPPORTING SERVICES** | **$1,001,162** |
| **TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES** | **$4,493,463** |
| **CHANGE IN NET ASSETS FROM OPERATIONS** | **$2,112,869** |
| **COMPOSITION OF NET ASSETS** | |
| Unrestricted (available for general support) | $10,519,739 |
| Restricted for a Specific Purpose | $42,061,163 |
| Permanently Restricted Endowments | $29,649,819 |
| **TOTAL NET ASSETS** | **$82,230,721** |



> *"In a year in which we saw record visitation, operated during a pandemic, and completed crucial park projects, our partnership with Friends of Acadia was more important than ever. We're so grateful for the continued support from the Friends of Acadia community. Thank you!"*

KEVIN SCHNEIDER
SUPERINTENDENT OF ACADIA NATIONAL PARK

# THANK YOU

All of Friends of Acadia's accomplishments start with the dedication of members and donors like you. Thanks for all you helped accomplish for our beloved Acadia in 2021!

Download Full Report | View Past Annual Reports | View Achievement Brochures

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**Friends of Acadia E-News**

Stay current with Acadia and FOA happenings, delivered monthly to your inbox

Proud Partner of the National Park Service

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