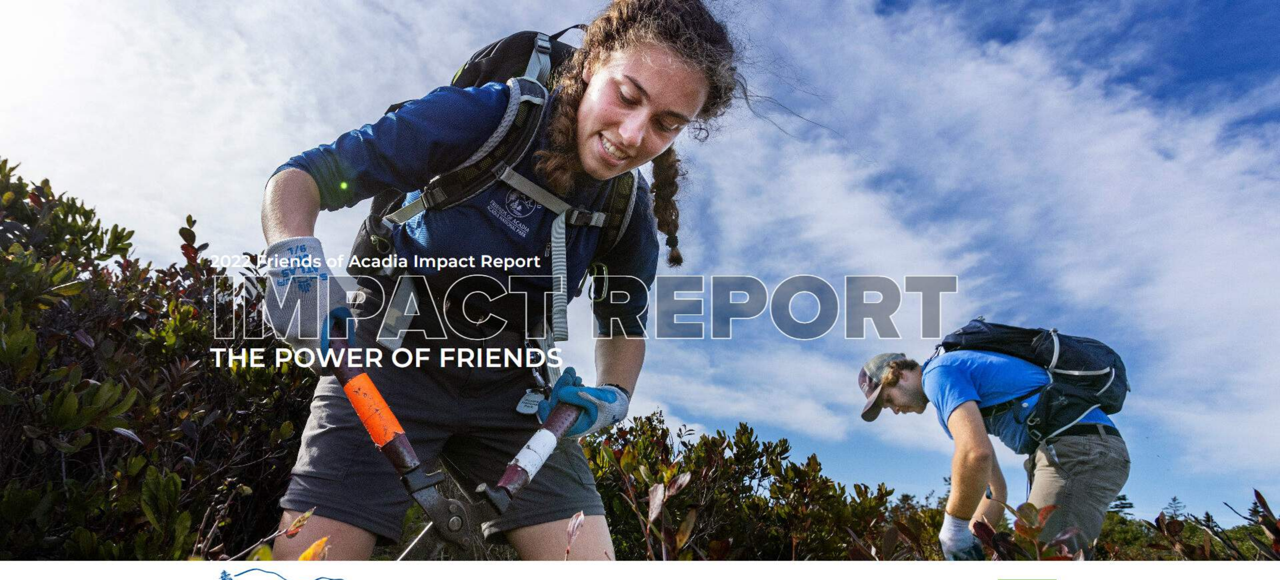


2022 Friends of Acadia Impact Report

IMPACT REPORT

THE POWER OF FRIENDS

Dear Friends,

2022 is yet another year to remember for Acadia National Park and Friends of Acadia. At least two signal events make the year "one for the books."

The memorable visits by National Park Service Director Charles "Chuck" Sams and the Board of Directors of the National Park Foundation were opportunities to highlight the important partnership between Friends of Acadia and the park. And we welcomed and effectively onboarded Friends of Acadia's new President and CEO Eric Stiles.

Under Eric's leadership, and with the guidance of former President David MacDonald, Friends of Acadia has focused increasingly on its partnership role with Acadia National Park aimed at addressing the workforce housing shortage on Mount Desert Island (MDI). The enthusiasm and dedication with which the park and Friends of Acadia are addressing this issue did not go unnoticed by NPS Director Sams. We understand that he is carrying this message with him as he travels across the country.

We could not do this work without the support of this entire community of "friends." We should all be proud. It is truly a "labor of love."

Sincerely,

Jack Kelley
Chair of the Board of Directors

"My family and I have experienced decades of joy visiting Acadia National Park, so I committed myself and my business to being socially responsible by helping Friends of Acadia preserve and protect it for future generations, specifically through the Wild Acadia project."

PAT SANDEFUR
OWNER OF BASS HARBOR GROUP & FOA BUSINESS MEMBER
PAT RAN A 50K THROUGH ACADIA TO SUPPORT THE WILD ACADIA INITIATIVE

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

NPS Director Recognizes Acadia as Leader on Climate-Smart Restoration

National Park Service Director Chuck Sams spent a week at Acadia National Park in July 2022, and a key stop on his tour was the Great Meadow Wetland. There, Sams highlighted the $500,000 of federal funding that Acadia received to help improve the health and function of the Great Meadow Wetland, while improving its climate resiliency.

Funds will help improve water flow and quality, reduce flooding, expand wildlife passage, remove invasive plants, restore native plants for future climate conditions, and enhance recreational opportunities in the wetland. It builds on six years of work in the Great Meadow by the park, Friends of Acadia, and Schoodic Institute.

"This is a great example of climate resiliency and climate adaptation and bringing back ecosystem function into the wetlands," Sams said, suggesting that Acadia's leadership will lay a foundation for the entire National Park System.

The federal funding leverages significant investments by Friends of Acadia and the NPS in forward-thinking adaptive management. "Without these types of public-private partnerships," Sams said, "we wouldn't be able to do nearly everything we need to do to be the good stewards we want to be and are charged to be."

Read more about the NPS Director's visit.

Learn more about the Great Meadow Wetland climate-smart restoration work.

2022

WILD ACADIA HIGHLIGHTS

Friends of Acadia Member Support Helped:

- **Leverage federal funding for the climate-focused restoration projects and experiments at the Great Meadow and Bass Harbor Marsh.**
- **Support the park's Invasive Plant Management Team, which surveyed over 978 acres of the park for invasive plant species.**
- **Maintain the long-term stream flow gauge at Otter Creek, an important reference for predicting stream flows throughout Acadia.**
- **Share the work being done at Acadia with key community and affinity groups, as well as members of the public through social media, websites, and media outreach.**
- **Support 39 volunteers who contributed more than 1,708 hours to maintaining the Wild Gardens of Acadia.**

"Without these types of public-private partnerships [referring to Friends of Acadia and National Park Service], we wouldn't be able to do nearly everything we need to do to be the good stewards that we want to be, and we're charged to be."

CHUCK SAMS
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE DIRECTOR

TOMORROW'S STEWARDS

Inspiring the Next Generation of Stewards

A More Diverse Work Experience for Reimagined Youth Conservation Corps

The Acadia Youth Conservation Corps (AYCC) has played a key role in maintaining Acadia National Park's historic trails and carriage roads for five decades.

Friends of Acadia has supported AYCC for many of those years, but the program took a hiatus the summers of 2020-2021 due to the COVID pandemic. During that period, park staff and Friends of Acadia used the time to reimagine the program to give participants more diverse experiences with broader educational opportunities and exposure to other park programs.

In the summer of 2022, the program welcomed seven participants ranging in age from 15 to 18. The industrious group worked all over the park and in multiple divisions—from replacing 250 feet of bogwalk on the Giant Slide Trail and collecting garbage from 100 yards of beachfront on Isle au Haut, to painting carriage road gates, clearing back drains, and pulling invasive glossy buckthorn at Kebo Brook Trail and Great Meadow.

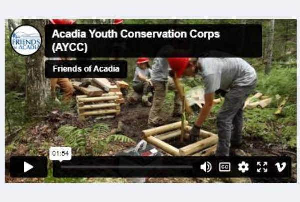
Youth Conservation Corps participants ended their summers with a deeper experience and appreciation for Acadia. And we ended our year with a greater appreciation for them!

Read more about the Acadia Youth Conservation Corps of 2022.

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

2022

TOMORROW'S STEWARDS HIGHLIGHTS



FOA Member Support Helped:

- **Enable 461 students and 69 teachers to participate in the Schoodic Education Adventure—a field-based outdoor education program at the Schoodic Education and Research Center.**
- **Organize exploration of the park for 96 family teams participating in Acadia Quest.**
- **Fund five outdoor classrooms for schools across Maine and New Hampshire.**
- **Fund park experiences for four urban and diverse youth groups who came to Acadia from cities across the country.**
- **Support six Acadia Teacher fellows who came to Acadia to learn and share outdoor teaching techniques and lesson plans tied to national parks.**

"The two months I spent as a member of the Acadia Youth Conservation Corps truly changed my perspective of all the hard work that goes into maintaining the park. The experience I gained also came with a greater appreciation for not only Acadia National Park but the national park system as a whole."

AIDAN PEPPERD
2022 AYCC MEMBER

ACADIA EXPERIENCE

Enhancing the Visitor Experience While Protecting Our Resources

L.L.Bean Expands Support for Island Explorer

Since it began operating in 1999, the Island Explorer has carried more than 9.1 million passengers to and from destinations in and around Acadia National Park. Those rides mean fewer private vehicle trips through the park, reduced emissions, and reduced traffic congestion.

In 2022, L.L.Bean pledged $1.5 million to support operations of the Island Explorer bus service over the next five years—an increase of 50% over their previous annual contributions. This pledge is the fifth time the outdoor retailer has committed funding to the bus system.

Integral to the success of the service are the Island Explorer drivers who are the well-trained employees of Downeast Transportation. The Island Explorer also returned to service on all routes in 2022 after having reduced routes in 2021. However, they were only able to hire 92 of 120 needed drivers due to the shortage of affordable workforce housing and other factors so service was reduced to the fall schedule earlier than planned.

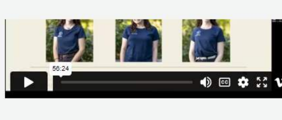
An early start to recruitment began in the fall of 2022 for the following season, with Downeast Transportation expecting to hire around 20 new drivers. Turnover resulting from the seasonal workforce housing shortage in the area is a significant challenge, but recruitment packages include higher hourly rates, bonuses, weekly commitment options, flexible time off, and paid training.

Read more about possible car-free itineraries using the Island Explorer bus service.

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

2022

ACADIA EXPERIENCE HIGHLIGHTS

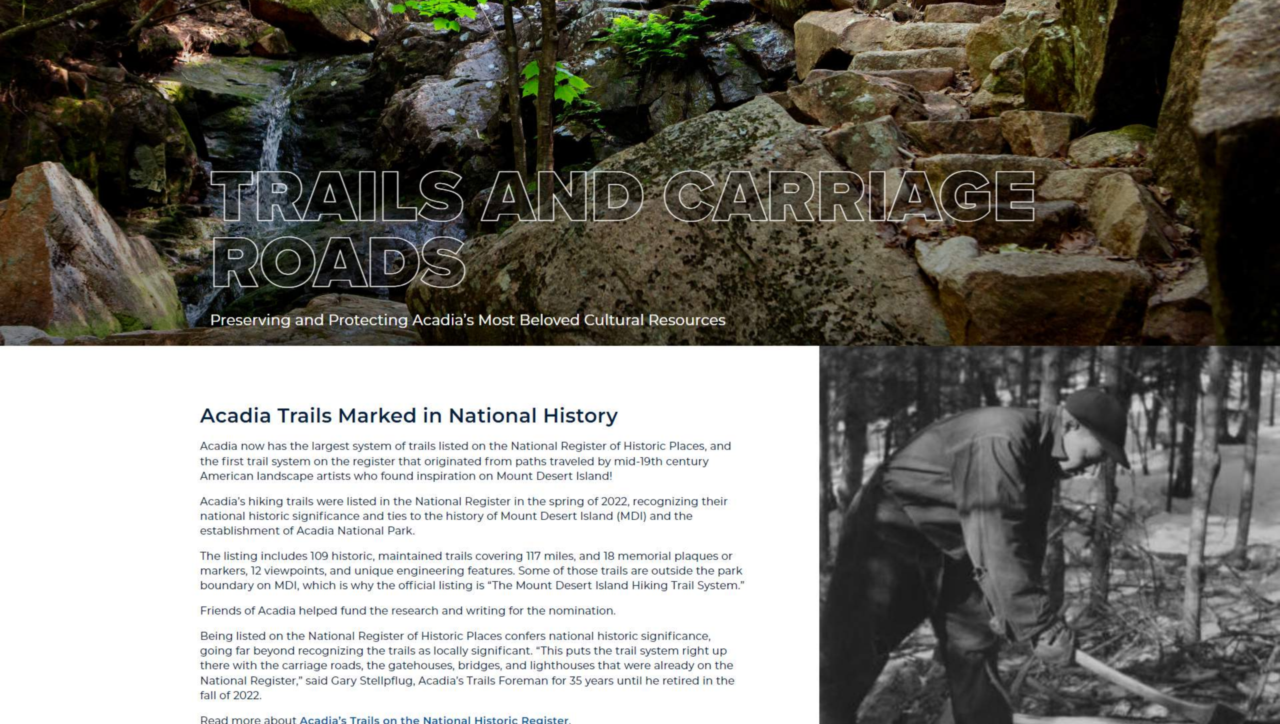


FOA Member Support Helped:

- **Return Island Explorer bus service to full operations, carrying 414,808 passengers and reducing smog-causing pollutants by approximately 11.3 tons and greenhouse gases by an estimated 1,452 tons.**
- **Enable the Summit Stewards to contact 41,863 visitors to Acadia and engage 17,805 visitors with messages about how to minimize recreational impact by practicing Leave No Trace.**
- **Research visitation patterns and length of stay at the Bass Harbor Head Light and conduct parking surveys and capacity studies at the Jordan Pond North parking lot.**
- **Purchase a wheelchair accessible carriage for use by Wildwood Stables to provide greater opportunities for visitors using wheelchairs to enjoy the carriage roads.**

"Growing up around Acadia gave me the ins and outs of the trail systems, but as a Summit Steward, I gained many new perspectives about Acadia I was unable to see before. These included important search-and-rescue principles, visitor interpretation and viewpoints, and valuable leave no trace practices. I hope to use skills learned while being a Summit Steward to work within the parks that I love!"

LUKE FIERMONTI
2022 SUMMIT STEWARD



TRAILS AND CARRIAGE ROADS

Preserving and Protecting Acadia's Most Beloved Cultural Resources

Acadia Trails Marked in National History

Acadia now has the largest system of trails listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and the first trail system on the register that originated from paths traveled by mid-19th century American landscape artists who found inspiration on Mount Desert Island!

Acadia's hiking trails were listed in the National Register in the spring of 2022, recognizing their national historic significance and ties to the history of Mount Desert Island (MDI) and the establishment of Acadia National Park.

The listing includes 109 historic, maintained trails covering 117 miles, and 18 memorial plaques or markers, 12 viewpoints, and unique engineering features. Some of those trails are outside the park boundary on MDI, which is why the official listing is "The Mount Desert Island Hiking Trail System."

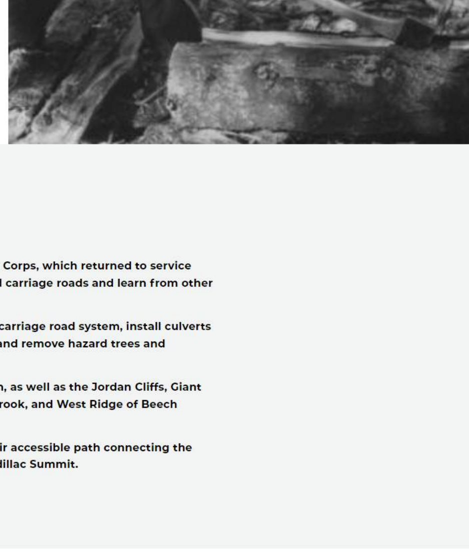
Friends of Acadia helped fund the research and writing for the nomination.

Being listed on the National Register of Historic Places confers national historic significance, going far beyond recognizing the trails as locally significant. "This puts the trail system right up there with the carriage roads, the gatehouses, bridges, and lighthouses that were already on the National Register," said Gary Stellpflug, Acadia's Trails Foreman for 35 years until he retired in the fall of 2022.

Read more about Acadia's Trails on the National Historic Register.

Read more about the retirement of longtime Trail Crew Foreman Gary Stellpflug.

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



2022

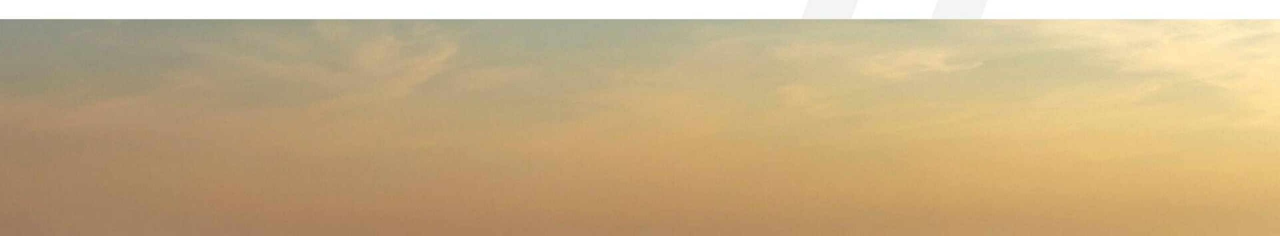
TRAILS AND CARRIAGE ROADS HIGHLIGHTS

FOA Member Support Helped:

- **Sustain the Acadia Youth Conservation Corps, which returned to service last year to help maintain the trails and carriage roads and learn from other park experts.**
- **Repair spring damage throughout the carriage road system, install culverts on the Eagle Lake Loop, clear ditches, and remove hazard trees and overhanging limbs.**
- **Rehabilitate sections of the Ocean Path, as well as the Jordan Cliffs, Giant Slide, Long Pond, Jordan Pond, Kebo Brook, and West Ridge of Beech Mountain trails.**
- **Develop a concept plan for a wheelchair accessible path connecting the East and West parking areas at the Cadillac Summit.**

"There is something therapeutic about hiking the trails or biking the carriage roads in Acadia. It's a place to make space for conversations and thoughts, to marvel and to wonder. It's too special to not preserve for generations to come—so that all may find a moment of peace and connection in our bustling, digital world. This is why I support and am privileged to serve of the Board of Directors of Friends of Acadia."

LAURA PIERCE
FRIENDS OF ACADIA BOARD MEMBER



ADVOCACY

Making a difference for Acadia through effective partnerships and actions

Defending Acadia Against Industrial Size Aquaculture

Friends of Acadia, local businesses, fishermen, conservation groups, municipalities, recreational boaters, and concerned citizens worked together last year in opposition to the proposal by American Aquafarms to lease two sixty-acre sites in Frenchman Bay for industrial-scale salmon farms.

The farms would have been located near Bald Rock and Long Porcupine Island, which is part of Acadia National Park. Concerns included nutrient-rich effluent and poor circulation in the bay, noise from the continuously running generators and water pumps, the potential for fish spills from the five 500-by-diesel generators at each site, and scenic viewshed impacts from the carriage roads, trails and Park Loop Road.

After many public meetings, the Maine Department of Marine Resources finally stopped processing the application in 2021 and the company withdrew its request for a lease for its approved brood stock. The Maine Department of Environmental Protection also then ceased consideration. Friends of Acadia is now pursuing legislation to prevent future applications for immense salmon farms.

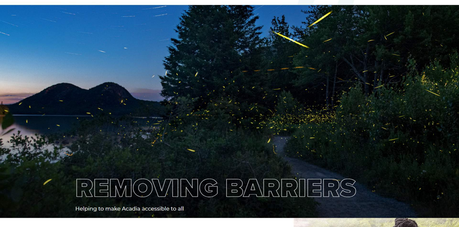
2021

ADVOCACY HIGHLIGHTS

FOA Member Support Helped:

- **Enable Friends of Acadia to work with partners in the fight against American Aquafarms.**
- **Brief the Maine Congressional delegation about funding needs and opportunities tied to Acadia.**
- **Support passage of federal legislation to demonstrate use of native plants in national parks and Bureau of Land Management sites.**
- **Support passage of federal legislation to designate a 55-acre parcel of land scheduled for transfer to the Town of Bar Harbor to be used for workforce housing rather than a solid waste transfer station.**

> *"[As an Acadia Teacher Fellow], we were able to see the other side of so many things; not just walking trails, but working the trails. Not just looking at vegetation, but cutting it back. We didn't realize just how much we would be able to see and learn."*
>
> LEAH GUENTHER
> 2022 ACADIA TEACHER FELLOW



REMOVING BARRIERS

Helping to make Acadia accessible to all

ACADIA FOR ALL

Chicago Youth Visit Acadia and Get Inspired

Teens Take on Climate, a Chicago-based nonprofit that connects diverse teens with climate leaders and outdoor experiences to inspire them to become climate leaders and pursue green pathways, was one of four youth organizations that Friends of Acadia helped visit the park this summer with an Urban and Diverse Youth Grant.

The grants help defray the costs of transportation, gear, and recreation in the park, and support Friends of Acadia's mission to provide opportunities for youth to experience Acadia and to engage them to become tomorrow's stewards of conserved lands. Once the youth return home, they share their experience with the community through art, music, presentation, mentorship, and more.

While in Acadia, the Chicago teens learned about the geological history and future of Acadia, explored tidepools and intertidal zones, hiked trails, identified invasive species, observed green crabs and Asian shore crabs from coastal waters. They also beautifully captured their experiences **in writing and video.**

Learn more about **Friends of Acadia's efforts to expand equitable programming and accessible visitor experiences** to new communities exploring Acadia National Park.

WORKFORCE HOUSING

Addressing the Seasonal Workforce Housing Challenge

In 2022, Acadia National Park attempted to hire 165 seasonal positions and could only fill 116, including only about half of the needed trail crew. This was in large part due to lack of affordable housing, which has now become a crisis on Mount Desert Island.

Friends of Acadia is working with the National Park Service and other partners to provide affordable seasonal workforce housing by developing a seasonal workforce housing strategy with a goal to provide the 130 new beds needed for the park and partners.

This will help advance our strategic priorities and ensure that the park is able to protect park resources and provide for visitor enjoyment. It also helps make jobs in Acadia accessible to all. Without a place to live, seasonal workers are commuting long distances, or paying unaffordable housing costs as they enter the workforce. Providing safe, affordable seasonal housing will reduce this barrier.

The ways in which Friends of Acadia has been asked to help support the park have grown and evolved over the years. We are encouraged by how Friends of Acadia members and partners are already responding with support and ideas to address the housing crisis. Thank you!

Learn more about the **housing challenges faces by seasonal staff.**

POWER OF FRIENDS

THANK YOU FRIENDS!

Acadia National Park 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.

2022 George B. Dorr Society Meeting

The George B. Dorr Society for Planned & Estate Gifts

A planned or estate gift is one of the most impactful ways to support Friends of Acadia's work to preserve and protect Acadia National Park now and for generations to come.

Members and friends who have documented provisions for Friends of Acadia in their estate plans are recognized through the George B. Dorr Society. And we're pleased to share the annual report that in 2022 that number grew by 11 to a total of 132 member families!

In July 2022, George B. Dorr Society members came together for the 18th annual gathering of the society, which was a celebration to recognize society members and a chance to hike Acadia's trails and induction of the Acadia trail system into the National Register of Historic Places.

Long-time Trail Foreman Gary Stolzfoog (now retired) and Cultural Resource Specialist Jesse Wheeler presented on the history of the trails and the process for recognition, along with fun facts about Acadia's trail system. Superintendent Kevin Schneider also joined the gathering to share the good news on the state of the park and thank society members for their contributions to Acadia's success. THANK YOU!

Volunteer Crew Leader Barb Nealon

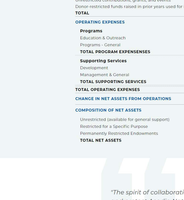
A superb leader and a ray of sunshine combined, Friends of Acadia is incredibly grateful to Volunteer Crew Leader Barb Nealon.

Barb is always ready to help, whether it's leading a complicated trail project or planning a meeting, and she's keen to make sure all her crew members feel like the valuable members of the team they are. Barb has been leading crews for Friends of Acadia just by talking to her " said Stewardship Coordinator Nikki Burtis. "She is a dedicated volunteer who not only leads projects on the carriage roads but has helped with recreation technician surveys and marched in parades."

We are so incredibly glad to have her on the Friends of Acadia team!

Volunteer Crew Leader Barb Nealon

> *"I care so much about Acadia National Park – it's awesome beauty, the well-maintained trails and carriage roads. And who is doing to most to protect and preserve this park? Friends of Acadia."*
>
> GEORGIA MUSSELL
> VOLUNTEER



BY THE NUMBERS

4,562 MEMBERS

10,008 DEDICATED VOLUNTEER HOURS

$1.6 / $37.3 MILLION MILLION

TOTAL LIFETIME GRANTS TO THE PARK & COMMUNITIES

17,805 LEAST NO-TIMELY CONTACTS BY THE SUMMIT STEWARDS

1,058 CARING DEPARTED BY THE SUMMIT STEWARDS

41,863 TOTAL VISITOR CONTACTS BY THE SUMMIT STEWARDS

> *"I support Friends of Acadia because of all the great work they do to help maintain Acadia National Park's trails, carriage roads, and inspiring scenic beauty. The many projects it funds helps provide future generations with a guarantee of perpetual enjoyment in this wonderful public Park. What a gift to us all!"*
>
> MARY CALFEEN
> LONGTIME MEMBER AND VOLUNTEER

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Total Program Expenses
$3,744,257

Total Operating Expenses
$5,266,373

Composition of Net Assets
$76,558,245

2022 Financial Overview

REVENUE	
Unrestricted contributions, grants, and events	$2,139,616
Donor-restricted funds raised in prior years used for intended purposes	$1,381,322
TOTAL	**$6,324,938**
OPERATING EXPENSES	
Programs	
Education & Outreach	$621,495
Programs - General	$2,122,762
TOTAL PROGRAM EXPENSES	**$3,744,257**
Supporting Services	
Development	$1,056,967
Management & General	$445,149
TOTAL SUPPORTING SERVICES	**$1,522,116**
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	**$5,266,373**
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS FROM OPERATIONS	**$1,258,565**
COMPOSITION OF NET ASSETS	
Unrestricted (available for general support)	$10,874,802
Restricted for a Specific Purpose	$31,392,896
Permanently Restricted Endowments	$32,289,545
TOTAL NET ASSETS	**$ 74,558,245**

> *"The spirit of collaboration continues to inspire the work we do to preserve and protect Acadia National Park. The work Friends of Acadia does to leverage federal funding advocate for the park, and build community shows what is possible through partnership. We are grateful to the Friends of Acadia community for their hard work and support!"*
>
> 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 2022!

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FRIENDS OF ACADIA

43 Cottage Street (PO) Box 45
Bar Harbor, ME 04609
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