

INTRODUCTION OUR IMPACT THE POWER OF FRIENDS BY THE NUMBERS FINANCIALS DONATE

Dear Friends,

2024 was a year of meaningful progress and significant milestones for Friends of Acadia and our partners at Acadia National Park.

Together, we took major steps to address one of the park's most pressing needs: seasonal employee housing. We completed several much-needed new units that are already welcoming hardworking staff for the 2025 season—and broke ground on our largest project to date: a 56-bedroom facility at Harden for the 2025 season—and broke ground on our largest project to date, a so-bedrount lactuity at name in Farm. These milestones would not have been possible without generous donors like you who helped us reach our \$10 million Raise the Roof fundraising goal, unlocking an additional \$21 million in federal matching funds and a \$2 million gift from the National Park Foundation. This transformational investment will greatly expand access to affordable housing for the seasonal employees who are vital to Acadia's daily operations—strengthening the park for years to come.

We also marked two major anniversaries, each reflecting the strength of long-term commitment and collaboration. The Island Explorer bus system celebrated 25 years of service and its 10 millionth rider, and Acadia's invasive plant management program marked its 35th year, standing as a national model for successful, science-based conservation.

You'll find more about these accomplishments—and many others—throughout this 2024 Impact

None of this would be possible without the continued support of our community of "friends." Thank you for helping us make a difference for Acadia.

With gratitude, Bill Eacho Chair of the Board of Directors



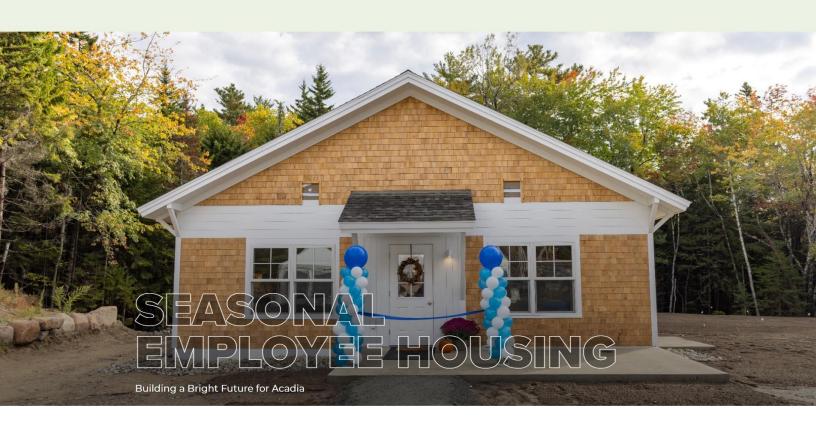


"Friends of Acadia's ability to respond to park needs for workforce housing, leverage additional federal funds through private philanthropy, and promote stewardship inevitably helps us fill in the holes of our jigsaw puzzle."

KEVIN SCHNEIDER ACADIA NATIONAL PARK SUPERINTENDENT

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.



Celebrating Progress: A Landmark Year for Seasonal Housing

Each summer, Acadia receives nearly four million visits, placing heavy demands on park operations and natural resource protection. To meet these needs, the park depends on a large seasonal workforce. In recent years, however, a shortage of affordable housing in the area has made it increasingly difficult for the park and its partners to recruit and retain the skilled staff essential for maintaining trails and facilities, restoring habitats, and supporting visitor services.

To help address this growing challenge, Friends of Acadia partnered with the park on a multi-faceted housing initiative that includes new construction, acquisitions, and renovations. Thanks to work completed last year, seasonal employees now have access to much-needed housing at four newly added locations for the 2025 season:

- Dane Farm: Friends of Acadia completed construction on this eight-bedroom, two-building complex in Seal Harbor last fall. The four-acre plot was previously used as a gravel pit for materials and equipment storage.
- Jordan River Road: Purchased by Friends of Acadia in July 2024, this 18-acre property in Trenton
 includes six two-bedroom townhomes. Renovated over the winter, these single or double
 occupancy units now house seasonal staff working in the park, with priority given to Island
 Explorer bus drivers. Over time, this new housing will help support the Island Explorer's growth,
 as new buses are added to the fleet starting as early as 2027.
- White Birches Camp: Recognizing the diverse housing needs of Acadia's seasonal staff, 13 RV
 pads were created at White Birches Camp in Southwest Harbor and equipped with water,
 electric, and septic. The former commercial campground now serves seasonal employees and
 volunteers who bring their recreational vehicles during their tenure at Acadia.
- Park Housing Renovation: Friends of Acadia also helped fund the rehabilitation of three bedrooms in existing park housing in Seal Cove and Bar Harbor.

These new housing options add to the 10-bedroom ${\bf Kingsleigh\ House}$, a former bed-and-breakfast purchased by Friends of Acadia in 2023 and opened to seasonal staff last year.

Building on this momentum, Acadia National Park broke ground last October on the most ambitious housing initiative yet: a 56-bedroom facility at **Harden Farm** in Bar Harbor. This project, supported by the National Park Service's Housing Improvement Program and Centennial Challenge Program, Friends of Acadia donors, and the National Park Foundation, will add 28 new bedrooms by next spring, with a second phase adding an additional 28 bedrooms as early as 2027.

Together, these projects represent significant progress toward Friends of Acadia's long-term goal of creating 130 new beds over the next decade.

Read more about Friends of Acadia's efforts to help solve the seasonal employee housing crisis.



"I would not have been able to work in Acadia this summer if housing had not been available. Moving cross-country seasonally for work with the National Park Service, housing is a tremendous source of stress. Even when housing is guaranteed, there are so many unknowns... Moving into Dane Farm has been the best housing experience of my NPS career. The house is clean, bright, and welcoming. It feels like it was designed with care."

EMILY FRANCO

ACADIA NATIONAL PARK PREVENTATIVE SEARCH AND RESCUE (PSAR) RANGER



Over 35 years of Successful Invasive Plant Management

Invasive plants can spread quickly, elbowing out native plants and reemerging, year after year, despite being cut, dug up, or treated with herbicide. Their persistence would be admirable, were they not so detrimental to the ecosystems they overtake. Invasive plants can outcompete native species, altering habitats, disrupting food webs for wildlife, and reducing biodiversity.

As it happens, Acadia National Park's Invasive Plant Management Team—comprised of a cadre of biologists, researchers, and technicians—are decidedly tenacious, too.

Their collective dedication over the last 35-plus years to early detection and rapid response, as well as science-based experimentation, has resulted in tangible success.

Thanks to continued monitoring and maintenance, sustained funding from partners like Friends of Acadia, and research support from Schoodic Institute, invasive plants now cover less than one percent of Acadia National Park. In contrast, other eastern national parks have an average invasive plant cover of nearly 14 percent—and in some parks, it can reach up to 40 percent, according to the National Park Service Inventory and Monitoring Program.

Acadia currently manages 29 invasive plant species, including glossy buckthorn, Japanese barberry, Asiatic bittersweet, Japanese knotweed, and honeysuckle. Last year, the Invasive Plant Management Team surveyed 736 acres of the park for invasive plant species and treated 0.25 acres of infested acres.

Read more about this ongoing effort to protect Acadia's native vegetation.



WILD ACADIA HIGHLIGHTS

What Member Support Made Possible in 2024:

- Vegetation Restoration on Mountain Summits: With the help of 245
 volunteers, more than 4,432 pounds of soil were carried by hand to the
 summits of Sargent and Penobscot Mountains to support vegetation
 restoration. In collaboration with the Schoodic Institute and Acadia's
 vegetation team, 35 new restoration plots were established, totaling 55.2 square
 meters.
- Biodiversity Monitoring and Invasive Species Research: Member funding supported scientific research at the Great Meadow and Bass Harbor Marsh. The Schoodic Institute added six experimental plots to test how native plants can help prevent the return of invasive shrubs after removal.
- Wild Gardens of Acadia: Member support funded a staff supervisory gardener
 and a seasonal intern, as well as enabled the contributions of 52 dedicated
 volunteers who gave over 1,175 hours to care for and interpret more than 400
 native plant species. The Wild Gardens serves as a living field guide and unique
 educational resource, helping visitors explore and understand the plants and
 habitats of Acadia.
- Collaborative Projects with Wabanaki Experts: Friends of Acadia helped support the work of the National Park Service to advance projects and initiatives with Wabanaki experts supporting co-stewardship of Tribal homelands and resources that are now part of Acadia National Park.
- Water Quality Monitoring at Jordan Pond: Funding supported a partnership between the University of Maine and the National Park Service to deploy a water quality monitoring buoy that collects real-time data every 15 minutes on dissolved oxygen, pH, conductivity, organic matter, salinity, chlorophyll, temperature, and light attenuation. Jordan Pond is a vital source of drinking water for the town of Mount Desert and a popular tourist destination. The data collected by the buoy helps scientists and park managers track changes and potential threats to the pond's water quality and ecosystems.
- Streamflow Monitoring at Otter Creek: Friends of Acadia co-funded the continued operation of the Otter Creek streamflow gauge, a vital reference point for hydrology research throughout the region.

"That sustained support allows us to have the crews we need. We can do early detection and rapid response... Most of our larger-scale sites are at maintenance levels, which allows our teams to respond to new sites."

JESSE WHEELER

ACADIA NATIONAL PARK VEGETATION PROGRAM MANAGER AND BIOLOGIST



The Island Explorer Celebrates 25 Years and 10 Million Riders

In its 25th operating season, the Island Explorer bus service achieved a major milestone—serving its 10 millionth passenger last September.

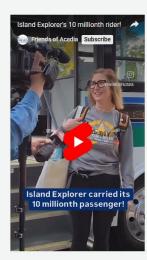
The fare-free, propane-powered bus system carries passengers through Acadia National Park and the surrounding gateway communities, helping to alleviate crowded roads and parking lots. Since its launch in 1999, the bus system has eliminated an estimated 3.8 million private vehicle trips within the park. In doing so, it has prevented the release of more than 35,000 tons of greenhouse gases and 53 tons of smog-causing pollutants.

The bus system is supported by many partners, including the National Park Service, L.L.Bean, Friends of Acadia, the U.S. and Maine Departments of Transportation, local municipalities, and maine businesses, and rider donations. L.L.Bean and Friends of Acadia have been long-time partners in funding Island Explorer operations and in encouraging visitors to be good stewards of the park through messaging on the buses. Since 2002, L.L.Bean's contributions and pledges to the bus system have totaled \$5.5 million.

Last year, the Island Explorer carried 497,170 passengers, a 10% increase over 2023, as ridership numbers continue to rebound following the pandemic.



ACADIA EXPERIENCE HIGHLIGHTS



What Member Support Made Possible in 2024

- A New Roof for the Bass Harbor Head Light Station: Member contributions funded a new roof for the historic lighthouse, originally built in 1858. This work is part of a larger restoration effort to transform the site into a permanent cultural and educational resource.
- Hulls Cove Visitor Center Transit Area Design Concept: Support helped complete a conceptual redesign of the parking and transit areas at the Hulls Cove Visitor Center, part of the park's multi-year Transportation Plan to improve visitor safety and reduce traffic congestion within the park.
- Earth Day Roadside Cleanup: 259 volunteers participated in Friends of Acadia's annual Earth Day Roadside Cleanup, collecting more than 300 bags of trash along over 40 miles of roads in communities surrounding the park.
- Summit Steward Engagement: Friends of Acadia's seasonal Summit Steward staff connected with 18,888 visitors and directly engaged 6,066 people with important messages about minimizing recreational impact and practicing Leave No Trace principles. Summit Stewards also spent 40.5 hours assisting with search and rescues.
- Visitor Experience Research: Member funding supported vital visitor research
 on topics such as fee compliance, dark sky lighting, pet use, and carriage road
 behavior—informing park decisions and planning.
- Trail Safety and Navigation: To protect trail integrity and visitor safety, stewards dismantled 379 misleading rock stacks and repaired 987 cairns that mark safe hiking routes throughout Acadia.

"I don't know what this park will look like in 50 years, but public transportation is going to have to play a bigger role. And so, I've been thrilled with the investment that we've made throughout our current history and sure hope those who follow will do even more. It's all about the future."

STEPHANIE CLEMENT FRIENDS OF ACADIA VICE PRESIDENT OF CONSERVATION



Rebuilding After the Storms

Acadia National Park still bears scars from severe winter weather in early 2024. Back-to-back mid-January storms brought intense winds and extremely high tides (the highest water levels recorded in Bar Harbor since the tide gauge was installed in 1947). Several park locations experienced significant damage-severe erosion, downed trees, and scattered rocks and debris. Along the coast, waves washed way more than 1,000 feet of Ocean Path, tore out access stairs at Sand Beach and Little Hunters Beach, and broke apart bog walks on Ship Harbor Trail. High winds blew down hundreds of trees at campgrounds and picnic areas, and flooding damaged roads and historic buildings.

While those storms packed an extraordinary punch, park managers were quick to respond. Crews assessed and shored up areas for safety, then began the detailed process of surveying and tracking the impact and prioritizing repairs. Trail crews, with support from volunteers and donor funds, were able to get the park's most beloved trails patched up and safe for use last summer.

"We're so grateful to Friends of Acadia," said Amanda Pollock, public affairs officer at Acadia National Park. "Without those donor funds, much of last year's work would not have happened."

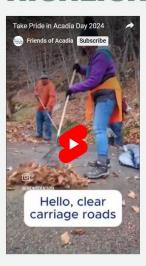
Significant damage remains throughout the park, and repairs are ongoing. Congress passed a supplemental appropriation this winter that allocates funding to the National Park Service for damage from extreme storms and natural disasters. Friends of Acadia worked closely with Maine's delegation to secure a portion of that funding for Acadia National Park. This will enable the park to tackle the remaining damage in the coming years.

Read more about the progress being made following 2024's intense winter storms.

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



TRAILS AND CARRIAGE ROADS HIGHLIGHTS



What Member Support Made Possible in 2024:

- Bubbles Divide Trail Rehabilitation: Member support helped Acadia's trail
 crew improve the Bubbles Divide Trail by constructing new stone steps, timber
 staircases, and coping walls—creating a safer and more clearly defined path for
 bilitere
- Great Meadow Loop Improvements: Crews from Acadia and the Appalachian Mountain Club enhanced sections of the Great Meadow Loop, which crosses the park boundary, making it more resilient to extreme weather and accessible to a wider range of visitors.
- Carriage Road Maintenance: Acadia's carriage road crew, with support from Friends of Acadia's endowment, removed downed trees, repaired washouts, spread 300 tons of crushed stone, and graded 15 miles of carriage roads to maintain safe, high-quality surfaces.
- New Equipment for Trail and Carriage Road Crews: Funding enabled the purchase of essential heavy equipment, including an excavator, two dump trucks, and a diesel tractor—boosting the efficiency and capacity of trail and carriage road maintenance teams.
- Trail and Carriage Road Volunteers: Over 691 drop-in and service group
 volunteers donated a remarkable 4,592 hours of time to maintaining and
 improving Acadia's trails and carriage roads over the summer season. In
 addition, 330 volunteers joined Friends of Acadia's annual fall Take Pride in
 Acadia Day, contributing another 990 hours to raking leaves from 10 miles of
 carriage road ditches to prevent erosion and protect the crushed stone
 roadheds.

"It wouldn't be an overstatement to say the employees at the park have transformed my life. What a gracious bunch doing all the hard work so the rest of us can enjoy a seamless vacation in a breathtaking spot."

TERESE MILLER FRIENDS OF ACADIA MEMBER



Helping Careers Take Flight

Friends of Acadia supports a variety of programs that create learning and job opportunities for youth and young adults. These roles give students and early-career professionals the chance to work alongside park staff, contribute to the care of Acadia, and gain valuable hands-on experience in conservation and natural resource management.

One unique and long-standing role is the Raptor Intern, a six-month seasonal position established through a partnership between Acadia National Park, the Student Conservation Association, and Friends of Acadia. For over a decade, this internship has combined scientific fieldwork with public outreach, helping to monitor Acadia's bird populations while educating visitors about the importance of raptor conservation.

Last year's Raptor Intern, Sara York, helped summer visitors spot and learn about peregrine falcons at Champlain Mountain, where the birds have nested since 1991. Once endangered, peregrines have made a remarkable comeback in Acadia, thanks to careful park management, including seasonal trail closures that protect nesting sites during critical periods.

In late summer and fall, Sara assisted with the park's annual Hawk Watch from atop Cadillac Mountain, collecting data on migratory birds and leading interpretive programs for the public. This vantage point along the coastal route of the Atlantic Flyway offers visitors and bird researchers prime views of species like sharp-shinned hawks, ospreys, American kestrels, bald eagles, and other raptors as they travel south.

Over the course of the season, Sara engaged more than 4,500 visitors, sharing insights about the park's diverse bird life—from raptors to seabirds and loons—and fostering a deeper appreciation for Acadia's role in their survival.

Read more about Sara's experience on her blog, *Riding the Wind*, on Acadia National Park's website.



TOMORROW'S STEWARDS HIGHLIGHTS

What Member Support Made Possible in 2024:

- Schoodic Education Adventure (SEA) Programs for Maine Students: Friends of Acadia member support helped 659 middle school students from eight Maine counties participate in immersive, multi-day, field-based programs offered by the Schoodic Institute in collaboration with Acadia National Park educators. Thirty-one schools took part, including four new to SEA: Indian Island School, Vinalhaven School, Community Roots Charter School, and Durham Community School.
- Virtual Learning Across the Nation: Education Rangers, supported by Friends
 of Acadia, led or assisted 270 virtual programs, engaging 14,797 students and
 teachers across the United States with educational content about Acadia and
 national parks.
- Outdoor Classrooms for Maine Schools: Funding helped establish nine outdoor classrooms, giving K-12 educators tools to bring science and conservation lessons to life in nature-based settings right on their school campuses.
- Support for Teachers: Friends of Acadia funded six Acadia Teacher Fellows
 from across the U.S. who spent the summer developing and sharing outdoor
 learning strategies and lesson plans connected to national park themes. An
 additional 15 local teachers participated in the Outdoor Teacher Collaborative,
 designed specifically for schools near Acadia.
- Youth Conservation Corps Employment: Eleven high school students
 participated in the Acadia Youth Conservation Corps (AYCC), working alongside
 park staff on trail restoration, vegetation projects, visitor surveys, invasive plant
 monitoring, and masonry work on carriage roads. Friends of Acadia also
 purchased an additional van to help transport AYCC crews to their project sites
 across the park.

"I had the opportunity to go out with the park's vegetation crew; we sprayed herbicide on glossy buckthorn, one of the most problematic invasive shrubs we have in the park. That really stuck with me. I think something similar, field-research-wise, is what I'd like to pursue in the future... something that's a blend of field research and still interacting with visitors."

LUKE FIERMONTI FRIENDS OF ACADIA 2024 SUMMIT STEWARD



Removing Barriers

Acadia National Park is a remarkable treasure belonging to all Americans. Through grants and programs, Friends of Acadia is working to lower barriers to better welcome visitors from all backgrounds and to improve accessibility within the park.

In 2024, Friends of Acadia supported 13 organized trips and events that brought groups from across Maine and around the country to explore Acadia. We also issued nine new Outdoor Classroom Grants, enabling educators to create hands-on learning spaces where students can engage with science and conservation directly on their school grounds.

Through grants and endowments, Friends of Acadia also continues to support the park in making trails and carriage roads more accessible to visitors with mobility challenges. Last year, trail rehabilitation work included regrading and widening the Great Meadow Loop to improve accessibility and access to the Great Meadow Wetland, one of the park's great birding locations.

Additionally, Friends of Acadia worked to increase visitor awareness and access to the wheelchair-accessible horse-drawn carriage, available by reservation through Acadia By Carriage at Wildwood Stables, located inside the park. Thanks to a generous grant from the Diana Davis Spencer Foundation, Friends of Acadia supported 11 rides at no cost to the wheelchair user, making this unique opportunity available to more people.



"Acadia is one of my favorite national parks, because there is so much to enjoy as a wheelchair user. I love rolling on the accessible trails and taking in the views from Cadillac Mountain... I have never seen a wheelchair-accessible horse-drawn carriage throughout my travels, so this is very exciting!"

ACCESSIBILITY ADVOCATE AND INFLUENCER, CURB FREE WITH CORY LEE



Strengthening Our Voice for Acadia

The changes impacting Acadia today have led Friends of Acadia to expand our advocacy approach. Last year, Friends of Acadia developed our first-ever advocacy strategic plan and made the critical decision to hire a dedicated government affairs lead—one of the first such positions among Friends groups in the nation. This new investment in our team has strengthened our relationships with policymakers, raised awareness of Acadia's pressing needs, and helped us bring important federal funding and resources to Acadia to ensure the park's future.

In 2024, our advocacy focused on several key priorities. Our work helped secure disaster recovery funding to repair infrastructure damaged by severe storms, federal grants to complement philanthropic investments in workforce housing, and resources for critical transportation projects. We also advocated for the renewal of the Great American Outdoors Act to obtain resources for much-needed infrastructure improvements at Acadia and supported co-stewardship initiatives with the Wabanaki Nations, including sweetgrass harvesting.

In addition, Friends of Acadia joined national park advocates in urging Congress to provide strong staffing and operational funding for the National Park Service to ensure their long-term preservation and protection.



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.



Thank you for Helping Us Raise the Roof

Reaching our ambitious \$10 million fundraising goal to support seasonal employee housing was a significant achievement—one made possible by generous contributions led by the Cornelia Cogswell Rossi Foundation in early 2023 and completed this spring by Kate and Andrew Davis, who matched \$1 million in donations.

These gifts and matching funds helped catalyze a groundswell of support from over 321 total donors, many of whom gave for the first time

Thank you to each and every one of you who contributed to our *Raise the Roof* campaign! Your philanthropic investment unlocked an additional \$21 million in federal matching funds and an additional \$2 million from the National Park Foundation, helping Friends of Acadia and Acadia National Park secure a total of \$33 million for housing. Your support will help Acadia recruit and retain skilled seasonal staff, making a lasting impact on every aspect of park operations for decades to come.

Volunteers Helped Acadia Recover After the Storm

After powerful winter storms struck Acadia in early 2024, volunteers stepped up in a big way to help the park recover. At the Seawall Picnic Area and Campground, more than 700 trees were toppled and had to be cleared. Over at Ship Harbor Trail, crashing waves destroyed sections of the bog walk, and high winds scattered signs.

In partnership with the National Park Service and Friends of Acadia, volunteers quickly mobilized—removing downed trees, clearing debris, repairing damaged bog walks, and replacing broken picnic tables.

The effort was supported by Kay and Bill Koplovitz who provided \$100,000 in matching funds for the Acadia Storm Damage Giving Challenge. Members responded generously and funds were secured to start the recovery immediately, allowing the park to open in a safe and on-time fashion.

A huge and heartfelt thank you to everyone who showed up or supported these recovery efforts!



















FINANCIAL STATEMENTS



2024 Financial Overview

REVENUE	
Unrestricted contributions, grants, and events	\$2,764,163
Donor-restricted funds raised in prior years used for intended purposes	\$12,367,382
TOTAL	\$15,131,545
OPERATING EXPENSES	
Programs	
Education & Outreach	\$9,228,518
Programs - General	\$4,240,081
TOTAL PROGRAM EXPENSES	\$13,468,599
Supporting Services	
Development	\$1,434,287
Management & General	\$431,580
TOTAL SUPPORTING SERVICES	\$1,865,867
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	\$15,334,466
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS FROM OPERATIONS	(\$202,921)
COMPOSITION OF NET ASSETS	
Unrestricted (available for general support)	\$18,524,701
Restricted for a Specific Purpose	\$45,353,744
Permanently Restricted Endowments	\$32,459,248
TOTAL NET ASSETS	\$96,337,693

^{*}Unaudited results



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 2024!

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