

CELEBRATING OUR 60<sup>TH</sup> YEAR PROTECTING LAND IN NORTHEASTERN CONNECTICUT

# JOSHUA'S TRUST

2025–2026 ANNUAL REPORT

JOSHUA'S TRACT CONSERVATION AND HISTORIC TRUST, INC.



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## PRESIDENT'S WELCOME

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This year marks the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Joshua's Trust. Many of you are familiar with Rudy Favretti's book about the history of this organization, *50 Years of Trust, 1966-2016*.

Joshua's Trust has grown and changed in many ways since our 50<sup>th</sup> birthday. We've acquired over 1,000 additional acres of fee-owned land, seen the full tenure of our first Executive Director, Michael Hveem (2015–2024), and marked the first decade using the historic Atwood Farm as our headquarters in Mansfield. Although Rudy's book encompasses an era now ten years in our rear-view mirror, it also reminds us that sixty years ago, Joshua's Tract Conservation & Historic Trust was founded by a group of determined individuals with a shared vision who believed they could make a difference. Because of generous individuals like you who continue their legacy, Joshua's Trust can reflect on six decades of conservation successes and move forward as a leading conservation force in Northeastern Connecticut.

Every acre of land protected is living proof of our organization's importance—natural land preserved forever to save it from development. But our work isn't done. Let's enter this new decade of conservation with fresh perspectives and renewed dedication to accomplish another decade of conservation achievements together.

**John Hankins**  
President, Joshua's Trust





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The accreditation seal is awarded to land trusts meeting the highest national standards for excellence and conservation permanence.



Joshua's Tract Conservation and Historic Trust is an accredited land trust protecting over 5,500 acres of land across sixteen towns in Northeastern Connecticut.



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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### OFFICERS

**John Hankins**, President (Mansfield)

**Jim Cole**, Vice President (Andover)

**Marie Cantino**, Secretary (Mansfield)

**Mike Willenborg**, Treasurer (Mansfield)

**Rob Beach**, Trustee at Large (Mansfield)

### TRUSTEES

**Erin King** (Mansfield)

**Chris Kueffner** (Mansfield)

**Scott Matthies** (Chaplin)

**Chris McKleroy** (Hampton)

**Debbie Pallatto** (Mansfield)

**Bill Penn** (Andover)

**Terry Wollen** (Mansfield)

## STAFF

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### Interim Executive Director/Business & Administration Manager

Dawn Brandriff

### Stewardship Manager

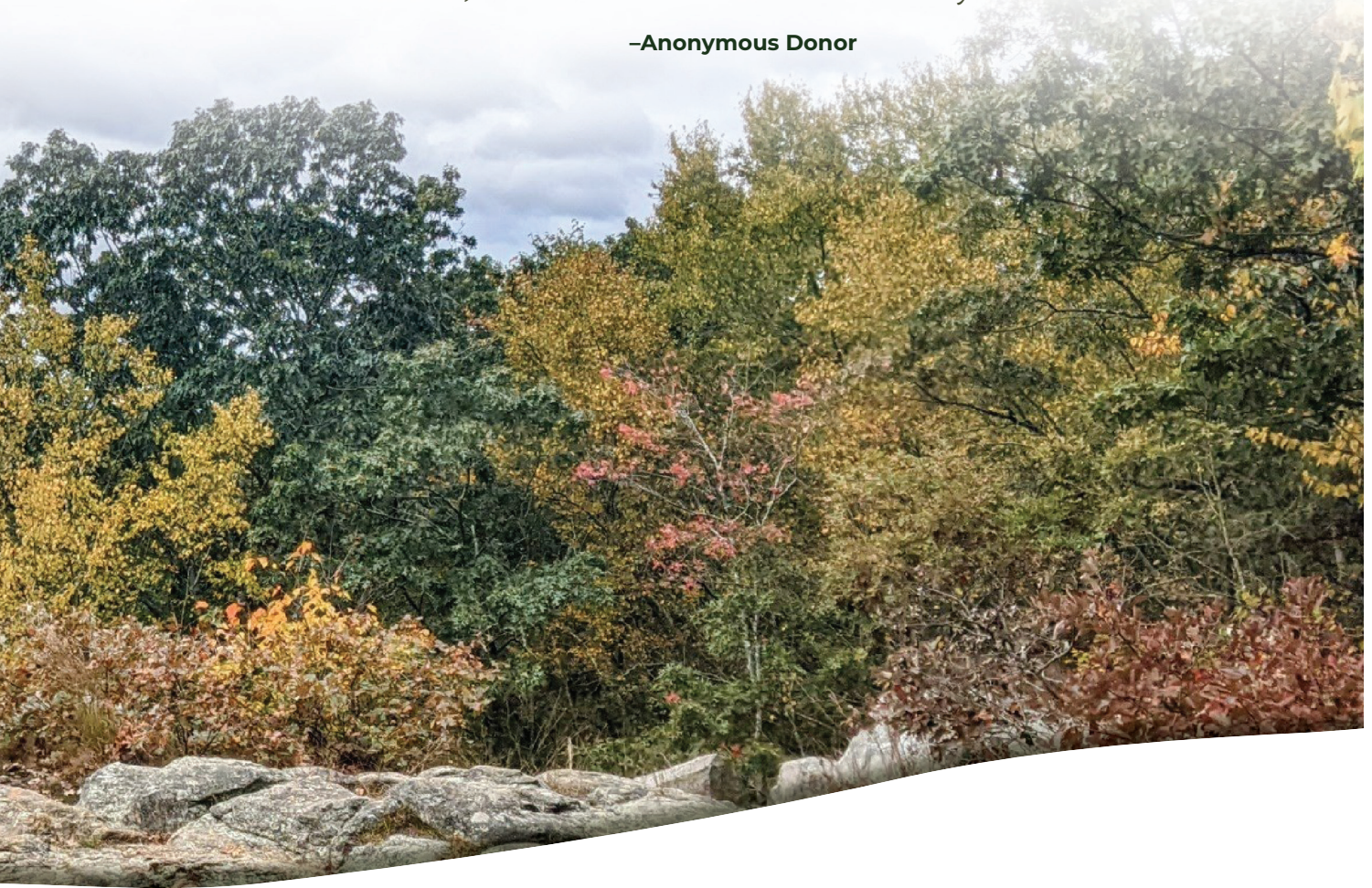
Alex DiMauro-D'Amico

### Development & Communications Coordinator

Melica Stinnett

*"I can think of no better legacy than to contribute to the conservation of land and to the values served by conservation. Joshua's Trust fulfills that mission locally."*

**-Anonymous Donor**



## TREASURER'S REPORT

JULY 1, 2024–JUNE 30, 2025

For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025, operating revenues were below the prior year due to lower cash distributions from the Ada Wolf Trust, a decrease in grants for land acquisition, and fewer gifts of land. Overall, this resulted in net cash provided by operating activities of approximately \$138,000 for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2025 versus net cash provided by operating activities of approximately \$206,000 for the year ended June 30, 2024.

Through appreciation and bequests, our invested assets increased by approximately \$824,000 from the prior year end to approximately \$9,575,000. These invested assets are managed by Mercer (previously Vanguard) in low-cost diversified funds. At fiscal year-end June 30, 2025, our cash balance was approximately \$230,000, of which \$50,000 was restricted for land acquisition. Joshua's Trust has no debt.

The 2025 financial statement audit was reviewed and approved by the Finance Committee in January 2026. The auditor's opinion was unqualified, which is the best opinion that can be issued. The Trust's Form 990 was filed electronically in February 2026 after review by the Finance Committee and distributed to the Board in March 2026. Both documents are available for review at our offices.

The fiscal 2026-2027 budget is currently being prepared and will be ready for review by the Finance Committee before being presented to the Board for approval in June 2026. The budget is being planned based on a 3.0%–3.5% release from the investment portfolio.

**Mike Willenborg**

Treasurer, Joshua's Trust



## JOSHUA'S TRUST PRESIDENT'S CIRCLE

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Anna F & David W Clark Fund  
Anita Baldwin & Dennis Seretny  
Ann & Scott Dunnack  
Anne & Michael Willenborg  
Anonymous (2)  
Bill Loehr  
Carol & Robert Hassett  
Chance Beauchesne  
Chris Kueffner & Lynn Stoddard  
David Knecht & Lori Smolin  
Donald & Ruth Shankweiler  
Gail & Tom Bruhn  
Greg & Mona Anderson  
Gregory Padick and Patricia Swords  
Jim & Abby Cole  
Jennifer Jepsen  
Joe & Liz Charron

John Hankins  
John Manfred  
Karen Provoncha  
Karen Zimmer  
Kenneth Dardick & Judith Stein  
Kieran Parsons  
Lyle Lilie & Elizabeth McCosh-Lilie  
Marie Cantino & Peter Millman  
Marietta Johnson  
Matthew Coolbeth  
Michael & Peg Curtis  
Mr. Gail Nelson Smith  
Nancy & John Silander  
Patricia & Joseph Neafsey  
Penny & Ronald Dionne  
Quentin & Margaret Kessel  
Robert & Jane Moskowitz

Robert & Kristine Thorson  
Robert & Susan Beach  
Ruth Buczynski  
Terry & Judy Wollen  
The Estate of Richard W. Packenham  
The Roberta Smith Trust  
Valerie B. Oliver  
Virginia Adams & Doug Hutchinson

**We extend our gratitude  
to the generous members  
of the Joshua's Trust  
President's Circle who have  
donated \$1,000 or more in  
the past year.**

# TRUSTEE CANDIDATES

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## First Three-Year Term

### Hank Gruner

Hank is a herpetologist and retired Vice president of Programs for the Connecticut Science Center. He has extensive experience coordinating wildlife conservation and education projects in partnership with state agencies, nonprofit organizations, municipal commissions, educators, and the private sector. Over the last 40 years he has scoured the forests, fields and wetlands of New England studying and promoting the conservation of amphibians and reptiles. He is co-author of the book *Conservation of Amphibians and Reptiles in Connecticut*. His volunteer work includes serving on the Andover Conservation Commission and the Board of the Connecticut State Museum of Natural History. He and his wife are residents of Andover and are the stewards for the Polomski Parcel in Andover. In addition to his appreciation of nature, Hank is an active grandfather and avid music fan.

### Steve Ferrigno

Steve Ferrigno is a lifelong resident of Mansfield, having attended Goodwin Elementary, Mansfield Middle School, and E.O. Smith High School before returning to earn his M.B.A. from the UConn School of Business. He spent 25 years as a Realtor with Ferrigno-Storrs, Realtors LLC, building deep relationships across the community and gaining extensive knowledge of local land use and development. Steve now serves as the Executive Director of the Mansfield Downtown Partnership, where he works to support local businesses, strengthen community connections, and enhance the vibrancy of Mansfield's downtown and business environment. He lives in Mansfield with his wife and their two children, and in his free time enjoys woodworking and skiing, fishing, and hiking with his family.

### Barbara Scott

Barbara Scott was so impressed by Joshua's Trust when she first learned about it that she became a member even before she and her husband moved to Storrs in 2020. Holding an M.A. in Latin American Studies and certified as an Occupational Therapist, her background also includes training as a volunteer watershed steward and collaborating with her adult son to develop trail maps and guides for a rainforest preserve in Costa Rica. With life-long interests in both conservation and plants, Barbara's gardening/landscaping focus for the last 25 years has been on managing invasive plants and restoring native habitats, an interest which in recent years she has brought to hands-on volunteer projects on Joshua's Trust lands.

## Second Three-Year Term

### Chris Kueffner

Chris Kueffner is a retired teacher and longtime resident of Mansfield, where he has served on a wide variety of town committees and boards. Regionally, he has served on the boards of WAIM and the Eastern Connecticut Forest Landowners Association/Wolf Den Land Trust. He is currently on the board of the Center for Northern Woodlands Education. Among other hobbies, Chris enjoys woodworking, walking, bicycling, and cross country skiing as well as learning about and practicing forestry on woodland property he shares with his wife.

## Third Three-Year Term

### John Hankins

John lives in Mansfield. He has had experience for many years with Joshua's Trust, as a Trustee, a long-time steward of Wolf Rock and Jacob's Hill Preserves and recently as Vice President and now President. He has volunteered with easements and on the Acquisition Committee. John has a MS degree in Geology and retired recently after many years as an environmental consultant. He is an energetic and avid hiker, biker, and runner.

### Chris McKleroy

Chris McKleroy recently moved to Hampton from Chaplin. He is a retired mechanical engineer and has experience in education for Junior Achievement. Chris has worked with the Acquisitions Committee at Joshua's Trust and is interested in implementing our Strategic Landscape Conservation Plan as well as helping with Education and Outreach. He enjoys astronomy, skiing, gardening, biking and brewing beer.

After six years of conscientious service, Terry Wollen will be stepping down as a Trustee. The Board of Directors remains grateful for Terry's wise counsel, calm demeanor, and dependable character during his tenure on the board. Terry has chosen to spend more time stewarding the land he loves, and we take heart in the realization that he is neither gone nor forgotten. We thank Terry for his service to Joshua's Trust and commitment to conservation.

*"Since donating my land to Joshua's Trust, I have never looked back. It was the right decision to make."*

—David Storrs Chapin, Joshua's Trust Land Donor



## LAND ACQUISITIONS

### **Fish-Freeman Woods | 5.3 acres | Mansfield**

Gift of Art and JoAnn Freeman

This property is across the road from the Joshua's Trust Gurley-Mason Mill Site and contains the stone foundation of a former blacksmith shop once operated in association to the Gurley-Mason Mill. This beautiful parcel, which abuts the Fenton River, contains a large field and a section of mature upland forest.

### **Forest Road Parcel | 15 acres | Mansfield**

Gift of Chris Kueffner, Joshua's Trust Board Member

Prior to the donation of this property on Forest Road, Chris successfully removed invasive barberry and implemented a site-wide patch cut, both efforts assisted by a grant provided by the National Resource Conservation Service (NRCS). Going forward Joshua's Trust will manage the property as early successional habitat. We are hoping by this time next year to be able to report on the acquisition of additional forested land in the area.

### **Scarpino Parcel | 6 acres | Hampton**

Gift of Brothers Ralph and Paul Scarpino

This property has been in the Scarpino family since 1959. Although relatively small, the parcel provides an important access to Hampton's 160 acres of forested open space to the south, which in turn abuts the aforementioned Andrews parcel further to the south. The Andrews and Scarpino properties, together with another nearby 47 acres donated to us by Robert Inman in 2024, have significantly increased our conservation impact in Hampton.

### **White Parcel | 68 acres | Coventry**

Gift of the Frederick S. White Trust

This property on Cooper Lane is the final block of land connecting open space owned by the Town of Coventry and Joshua's Trust's existing Couch Preserve. The parcel contains valuable habitat on the shore of Eagleville Lake, an impoundment of the Willimantic River. Existing forest roads that criss-cross the property will be the backbone of future hiking trails that will connect to existing trails on Joshua's Trust and town-owned land to the north.

### **Andrews Parcel | 138 acres | Hampton**

Gift of Elisabeth (Betsy) Andrews of Columbia

Elisabeth's family purchased this property on Pudding Hill Road in 1975 and used it for several decades as a summer retreat. The plot is rectangular with about 1000 feet of frontage on Route 97 and extending 6000 feet westward. A highlight of the parcel is a large hayfield at the apex of a topographic feature known as Shaw Hill, which affords great views to the east. With the donor's blessing, we will refer to this parcel as the "Shaw Hill Preserve" and we look forward to establishing access for the public.

**Because of the generosity of land donors like these, Joshua's Trust now protects over 5,500 acres of land across Northeastern Connecticut.**

# MINUTES OF THE 59TH ANNUAL MEETING

APRIL 26TH, 2025, KNOWLTON HALL, ASHFORD, CT

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Approximately 60 people attended. The program began with a reception, during which guests chatted and enjoyed refreshments. At 4:33 PM President Hankins convened the formal portion of the meeting by welcoming the guests. He observed that this has been a year of transition for Joshua's Trust, with the departures of Executive Director Michael Hveem and Land Protection Manager Bryan Avery, and the arrival of our new ED, David McCarthy. He noted the loss this year of two dedicated JT volunteers, Terry Wakeman and Shoshana Levinson. Hankins acknowledged the staff and reviewed their accomplishments during the past year. He mentioned some of the land protection projects currently in the pipeline and then offered thanks to our board members and volunteers, with special thanks to Ann Dunnack for her work with the Grist Mill docent program and to Karen Zimmer, for her 10 years of board service. He also expressed appreciation to our corporate sponsors. He then introduced Executive Director David McCarthy.

McCarthy thanked the audience, expressed his excitement about joining Joshua's Trust, and briefly shared his vision of the future of the Trust and the things he hopes to accomplish. He noted how excited he is to work with the Joshua's Trust staff and volunteers, and also emphasized that he has an open-door policy and looks forward to meeting more of our members.

Hankins returned to the podium and referred the audience to the minutes from 2024 included in the Annual Report, reminding the audience that only members in attendance at the 2024 meeting are permitted to vote. Ann Dunnack proposed and Roger Ingraham seconded a motion to approve the 2024 minutes of the Annual Meeting as presented in the Annual Report. The motion passed with none opposed.

Hankins turned the meeting over to Nominations and Governance Chair Chris Kueffner, who began by noting that we are always on the lookout for prospective board members. Kueffner then introduced the slate of Board of Trustee candidates, consisting of Erin King, Rob Beach, and Marie Cantino. Judy Wollen proposed and Karen Zimmer seconded a motion to elect Rob Beach for his third three-year term. Ann Dunnack proposed and Deb Field seconded a motion to elect Erin King for her second three-year term. Greg Anderson proposed and Peter Millman seconded a motion to elect Marie Cantino for her second three-year term. All three motions passed with none opposed.

Hankins, filling in for Treasurer Willenborg, summarized the Treasurer's Report (included in the written Annual Report), noting that we ended the last fiscal year with income in excess of expenses, and no debt. As expected, our investment total has dropped somewhat in response to market losses. He also noted that our financial audits are available to the public. He ended by explaining that we typically take a draw each year of 3.0 to 3.5% from our invested funds, which on average is small enough that the

principal is maintained. However, this draw does not cover all of our expenses and donations still play an essential role in our budget.

He then turned to the awards portion of the program, beginning with the presentation of the Individual Conservation Award to Greg Anderson. Trustee Marie Cantino enumerated the many important roles Anderson has played over many years in promoting conservation locally and beyond. Development and Communications Manager Michelle Poudrette presented the Group Conservation Award to the Friends of Goodwin Forest in recognition of their enormous impact in promoting conservation at the Goodwin Conservation Center and in their sponsored programs. The award was accepted by FGF Vice President Lynn Kochiss. Stewardship Coordinator Alex D'Amico presented the Mighty Oak Award to Scott Matthies, noting that Scott not only serves on the board, but co-chairs the Stewardship Committee, works on the boundary committee and devotes numerous hours to stewardship activities. Finally, Peggy Church presented the Madge Manford Volunteer Award to Mona Anderson. She noted that Mona was a Joshua's Trust vice president for 25 years, under 5 presidents. During that time she helped recruit numerous board members and organized many events. She played a critical role in developing the Atwood museum and office and still chairs the Atwood Committee, helping with Atwood related events.

Hankins then introduced the featured speaker, Michael Soares. Soares spoke about his work as a wetland and soils scientist at Fuss and O'Neill, and the role beavers can play as partners in creating long term sustainable wetland restorations. The increase in the wetland area that beavers are creating in New England has enormous ecological benefits, but this activity also results in conflicts with human development. He reviewed some beaver ecology and behavior, then described several situations where beavers had caused flooding of infrastructure and the management tools, devices and solutions that were used to reduce conflicts, without the use of lethal trapping.

President Hankins thanked everyone for coming and adjourned the meeting at 6:08 PM.

**Drafted: April 28, 2025**

**Approved:**



Marie Cantino  
Secretary, Joshua's Trust



Thank you to our incredible community of volunteers, donors, stewards, supporters, advocates, and friends! Our conservation accomplishments are possible because of

**YOU!**

## PROPERTY STEWARDS

Alex D'Amico  
Andy Smith  
Andy Woodcock  
Ann Dunnack  
Ben Collins  
Bill Ingalls  
Bill Penn  
Brian Folker  
Careen Jennings  
Charley McCaughtry  
Chip Jordan  
Chris Juhl  
Craig Madsen  
Dan Donahue  
Dan Francis  
Dave Sherman

Deb Field  
Eric Thomas  
Erin King  
Fiona Leek  
Gary Grab  
George Rosenberg  
Greg Anderson  
Gwen & Roald Haaland  
Henry Bowers  
Jack Fulton  
Jim Cole  
Joe Charron  
John & Jenna Aldrich  
John Hankins  
John Morey  
John Pagini

John Sievel  
Jon Sgro  
Juan Sanchez  
Julie Victoria & Hank Gruner  
Karen Christianson  
Kathy Holt  
Kevin Donohue  
Margaret 'Peg' Rux  
Marian Matthews  
Matthew Coolbeth  
Melissa Sheardwright  
Mona Anderson  
Noah Reid  
Nord Yakoleff  
Paul Pribula  
Penelope Pelizzon

Phil Dooley  
Randy Schleicher  
Rob Beach  
Ryan McMenemy  
Scott Lehman  
Scott Matthies  
Scott Rhoades  
Steve Bacon  
Steve Laume  
Terry Wollen  
Tim Reilly  
Tony Deaton

### *In Memoriam*



**Lawrence Barr Goodheart**

June 29, 1944 – February 10, 2026

The Joshua's Trust 2025-2026 Annual Report is dedicated to Lawrence (Larry) Barr Goodheart, who passed away in February of this year. Larry and his wife Ellen Embardo were long-time supporters of Joshua's Trust and in 2013 they donated a fifteen-acre conservation easement to Joshua's Trust to help preserve his beloved local woods. Larry will be remembered as a passionate orator and writer, working most recently as a Professor of History at the

University of Connecticut. He was dedicated to our community, particularly the Willimantic Food Co-op. He enjoyed gardening and was known for his expansive and productive gardens and orchard. He also enjoyed hiking, birdwatching, and continually expanding his knowledge through reading. His favorite Joshua's Trust preserve was the 100-acre H.E. Preston Nature Sanctuary in Hampton, on which he often wandered.

# COMMITTEES

Chair      Staff Liason      Board Liaison

## STANDING

### Executive

**John Hankins**, Rob Beach, Jim Cole, Marie Cantino, Michael Willenborg

### Finance

**Michael Willenborg**, Dawn Brandriff, Paul Aho, Rob Beach, Gail Bruhn, Chris Kueffner, John Hankins, Karen Zimmer

### Nominations & Governance

(Including Succession Planning)

**Rob Beach**, Marie Cantino, Jim Cole, John Hankins, Chris Kueffner, Debbie Pallatto

## ADVISORY

### Development

**Vacant**, Melica Stinnett, John Hankins, Lilli Rhodes, Nancy Silander, Judy Wollen, Karen Zimmer

### Education & Outreach

**Marie Cantino**, Melica Stinnett, Mona Anderson, Mary Brescia, Peggy Church, Kathy Demers, Deb Field, Laurie Gypson, Dawn Heasley, Deb Hultgren, Debbie Pallatto, Barbara Scott, Catherine Shea, Nancy Silander, Cindy Weiss

### Gurleyville Gristmill

**Joan Sinder**, Christine Acebo, Peter Baldwin, Kathy Chowanec, Joanne Douda, Scott MacDonald, Bill Peterson, Rachel Rosen, Pam Skelly, Kate Terrio, Bill Thorne, Bill Tomecko, Virginia Walton

### Land Protection

**Jim Cole**, Rob Beach, John Hankins, Erin King, Chris Kueffner, Scott Matthies, Chris McKleroy, Bill Penn

### Stewardship

**Vacant**, Alex DiMauro-D'Amico, **Scott Matthies**, Deb Field, John Hankins, Bill Penn, Erin King, Terry Wollen

## SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR COMMUNITY SPONSORS!



Become a Community Sponsor and your company's logo could be here, too! Support land preservation & gain positive exposure with our constituency across 16-towns!



### Want to learn more?

Contact Melica Stinnett at [melica.stinnett@joshuastrust.org](mailto:melica.stinnett@joshuastrust.org)

**Joshua's Tract Conservation and Historic Trust is a non-profit 501(c)(3) land trust operating in Northeast Connecticut incorporated in 1966 to help conserve property of significant natural or historic interest.**



Joshua's Tract Conservation & Historic Trust, Inc. | PO Box 4 | Mansfield Center, CT, 06250

860-429-9023

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