

# SACO VALLEY LAND TRUST

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9 educational programs

2 trail work days

1 Earth Day Celebration

127 people at events

22 active volunteers

3 miles of trails

## Looking back and ahead

BY RICHARD RHAMES

Going out to play in the 1950s was what we children did. Much of the play was in the woods. We hung our "Tarzan swings" from handy tree branches and spent hours trying to gain altitude in youthful exertion. It was fun, and the branch only broke once. No serious injury. We took the woods for granted back then, and the fields - they were just Home as much as the house where we ate and slept. These days "homes" are advertised as commodities or 'investments' - just part of a portfolio held by homo-economicus.

Or so I understand.

But the emotional investment that many of we (increasingly few) "vintage" Americans feel for our home places is not easily shed. Many of the donors to Saco Valley Land Trust have historically been motivated by commitment to A Place and a desire to protect it from churning "market forces" - the lure of speculative potential as land in the Saco Valley gets swallowed by what used to be called the Boston Megalopolis.

As we work toward our 40th anniversary the Directors of SVLT are still motivated by the power that a sense-of-place holds and are happy to work with others of like-mind.







# Meet our new intern!

BY KALEB BURNS

Hello, my name is Kaleb Burns and I am a senior at the University of New England studying Environmental Science with minors in both Anthropology and Political Science. I am currently an intern for the Saco Valley Land Trust and am very excited to begin working with them on their various projects!

Through Professor Thomas Klak, I was able to work with the American Chestnut Foundation (ACF). ACF works to find a way to bring the functionally extinct American Chestnut back into its native range. During the early 1900s a fungus referred to as the "chestnut blight" began to spread across North America. This foreign fungus, originating in South Asia, was likely brought in through timber exports. The chestnut was not adapted to its presence and wasn't ready to combat it and was soon wiped from its historic range.



Photo courtesy of Linda Brown



**Board of Directors**

Richard Rhames  
Sue Littlefield  
Chris DiMatteo  
Denis Rioux  
Linda Brown



**Staff**

Abby Wilson  
Event and Outreach  
Organizer

The SVLT Board meets at 7 pm on the First Thursday of most months at the Saco Train Station Conference Room. Interested persons are welcome to attend.

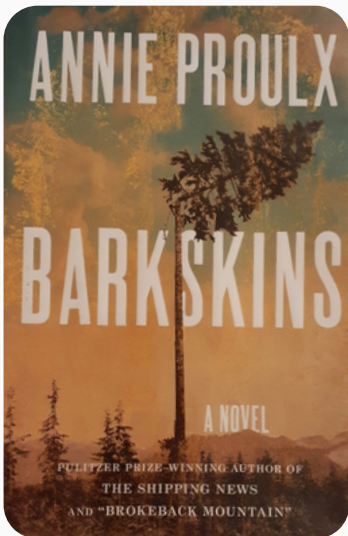
**I hope to help protect the various wild places under the Saco Valley Land Trust's stewardship and help find ways for people to live in harmony with nature without causing harm.**

## Conservation book club

BY ABBY WILSON

SVLT and the Dyer Library have teamed up to offer a series of book discussions. Designed for people to gather and talk about climate change on a global and local level, these book club meetings have been well attended. We've discussed *The Overstory* by Richard Powers and *Barkskins* by Annie Proulx.

This book club meets every other month on the first Thursday. Another discussion is scheduled for June 6th at 5:30 PM. All meetings take place in the periodical room at the Dyer Library. Books are provided by the library and participants can sign up and grab a copy of the current read at the front desk. The next meetings are April 4 & June 6.



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Saco Valley Land Trust



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## Some like it hot (apparently)

BY RICHARD RHAMES, SVLT PRESIDENT



So far, January has produced two record-breaking storms, with the Portland Press Herald headlining "FLOODING AT HISTORIC LEVELS" and lamenting "a winter onslaught" and "widespread devastation." If the ever-increasing evidence is to be believed, this is perhaps merely a preview of a new climate regime being born. There have been warmer climate systems on Earth before, but there weren't any people around to experience them---much less the human infrastructure built up over centuries, perched precariously close to the ocean and river's edge. Saco and Biddeford were both built to take advantage of such water resources - power generation, transport, and resource harvesting.

But that was in a "Goldilocks" (interglacial) period when the climate was "just right." As NASA scientist James Hansen warned decades ago, "If humanity wishes to preserve a planet similar to that on which civilization developed and to which life on Earth is adapted...(atmospheric) CO2 will need to be reduced... to at most 350ppm."

In May of 2023 NOAA reported a CO2 level of 424 ppm. Sequestering carbon in healthy soil and forests, re-localizing food production, and putting the brakes on car-centric sprawl development may not be the total answer to our climate problem, but it's hard to see a solution without such changes to "business-as-usual."

SVLT's mission is to be part of that solution. Won't you join us?

### 2024 EVENTS

Sunday, April 14th, 1 to 4 PM:  
Spring Clean Up at Moses  
Woodman. Email Abby to sign up  
(awilson@sacovalleylandtrust.org)



Partners

- People's Choice Credit Union
- RLT Trucking
- Saco & Biddeford Savings Institution
- Ripple Wellness



- Davis Foundation
- LL Bean
- Copy-It



Supporters

MISSION: to protect for future generations land of agricultural, silvicultural, recreational or biological significance, and to promote a more general understanding of the value of such conservation efforts.

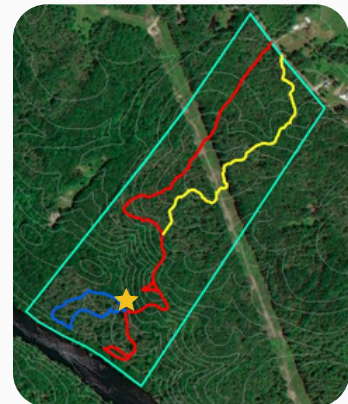


## New Bridge at Moses Woodman

BY ABBY WILSON

Eagle Scout, Zavier Lemieux of Buxton, and Troop 371 have reconstructed a bridge at the Moses Woodman Preserve! Lemieux wrote a detailed proposal, organized volunteers, collected materials, and completed the project in the fall of 2023.

Thanks to their successful efforts, a loop trail is now open to the public and allows access to another scenic vista overlooking the Saco River.







All photos in newsletter taken by Abby Wilson (unless otherwise noted)



YES! I want to join Saco Valley Land Trust and support conservation.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Join as a MEMBER \$30 \$50 \$100 \$250 \$500 Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Join as a BUSINESS or INDIVIDUAL SUSTAINING MEMBER \$100 \$200 \$250 \$500 Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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Donations by debit/credit card can be made online

