



BLUEGRASS
LAND CONSERVANCY

CULTIVATING CONNECTIONS

2023 Annual Impact Report



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OUR TEAM

Jessie Hancock | Executive Director
jhancock@bluegrassconservancy.org

Ashley Greathouse | Counsel, Director of Conservation
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Nicole Armstrong | Conservation Manager
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Emmanuel Fields | Stewardship Coordinator
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Molly Dunigan | Development & Events Manager
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Rosalind Streeter | Communications Manager
rstreeter@bluegrassconservancy.org

Visit BluegrassLandConservancy.org for more information about our team and board.

From the EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Supporters,

The turning of the seasons from summer to fall always feels like a homecoming to me. It is a turning inward from the abundance and busyness of summer towards a time of more quiet introspection in the winter. Fall is also a time when we are reminded of the striking beauty of nature. With the weather turning slightly cooler, we return to taking more walks or hikes, enjoying the fall colors, and finding places to explore.

If organizations were to also experience seasons, the past year at Bluegrass Land Conservancy (BLC) has felt a bit like a fall season. While continuing to meet our land conservation goals and stewardship obligations, BLC began the process of looking inward – noting our successes while simultaneously assessing where we are headed in the future.

In 2022-2023, BLC embarked on creating a new 5-year Strategic Plan. At a Board of Directors Retreat in May, we reflected on our accomplishments over the last 28 years, including over 33,000 acres directly conserved and over 64,000 acres conserved with our assistance. We also learned that, of the nearly 500 accredited land trusts in the country, BLC ranks #3 for land conserved per year based on our size! With this in mind, we looked ahead and envisioned where BLC could be in the year 2050. The BLC Board set an exciting vision for the future, and we will be working over the next year to create a roadmap to get there – including science-based analysis tools, community input, and conversations with our supporters.

Over the past year, BLC also began our second round of national re-accreditation with the Land Trust Alliance. Even though this was our third time through the process, re-accreditation is always a moment to look at our internal systems and ensure we are operating at the highest standards. As the first accredited land trust in Kentucky, we strongly believe in the value of national accreditation and want to thank the Snowy Owl Foundation for their generous support of our efforts in this re-accreditation process.

The turning inward, personal reflection, and deepening perspective that comes with Autumn also represents a time of profound inspiration. We are dreaming big dreams, including applying for over \$50 million in federal funding for local landowners, exploring new tools for conservation and stewardship, and broadening our conservation conversations. In the fall, plants shed their upper leaves and begin to grow their roots deep into the ground. This year BLC has done just that – we have started to put our energy towards our roots, so we can grow stronger and deepen our community and conservation impact.

We hope that you enjoy this organizational update and 2023 Annual Impact Report. Thank you for your commitment to protecting this unique place that many of us call home. Your donations and continued support allow BLC to meet our dynamic conservation goals through all seasons of existence – making sure future generations have access to clean water, healthy soils, fresh air, and open spaces.

Warmly,
Jessie (Wilder) Hancock

"To enrich the earth I have sowed clover and grass to grow and die. I have plowed in the seeds of winter grains and of various legumes, their growth to be plowed in to enrich the earth. I have stirred into the ground the offal and decay of the growth of past seasons and so mended the Earth and made its yield increase."

- Wendell Berry



MISSION

To protect land in Kentucky's Bluegrass region through permanent conservation easements.

VISION

A thriving community where land is protected to sustain our identity, economy, and quality of life.

GOALS



LAND PROTECTION

Permanently protect and steward lands critical to agricultural viability and community character in the Bluegrass region.



ORGANIZATIONAL SUSTAINABILITY

Grow our financial and organizational capacity to ensure our commitment to perpetuity and to meet dynamic conservation goals.



EDUCATION & OUTREACH

Elevate the importance of land as part of our regional identity, and land conservation as a priority for maintaining a high quality of life and a vibrant economy.

FOCUS AREAS



Farmland &
Fresh Food



Clean
Waterways



Working
Family Farms



Iconic
Landscapes



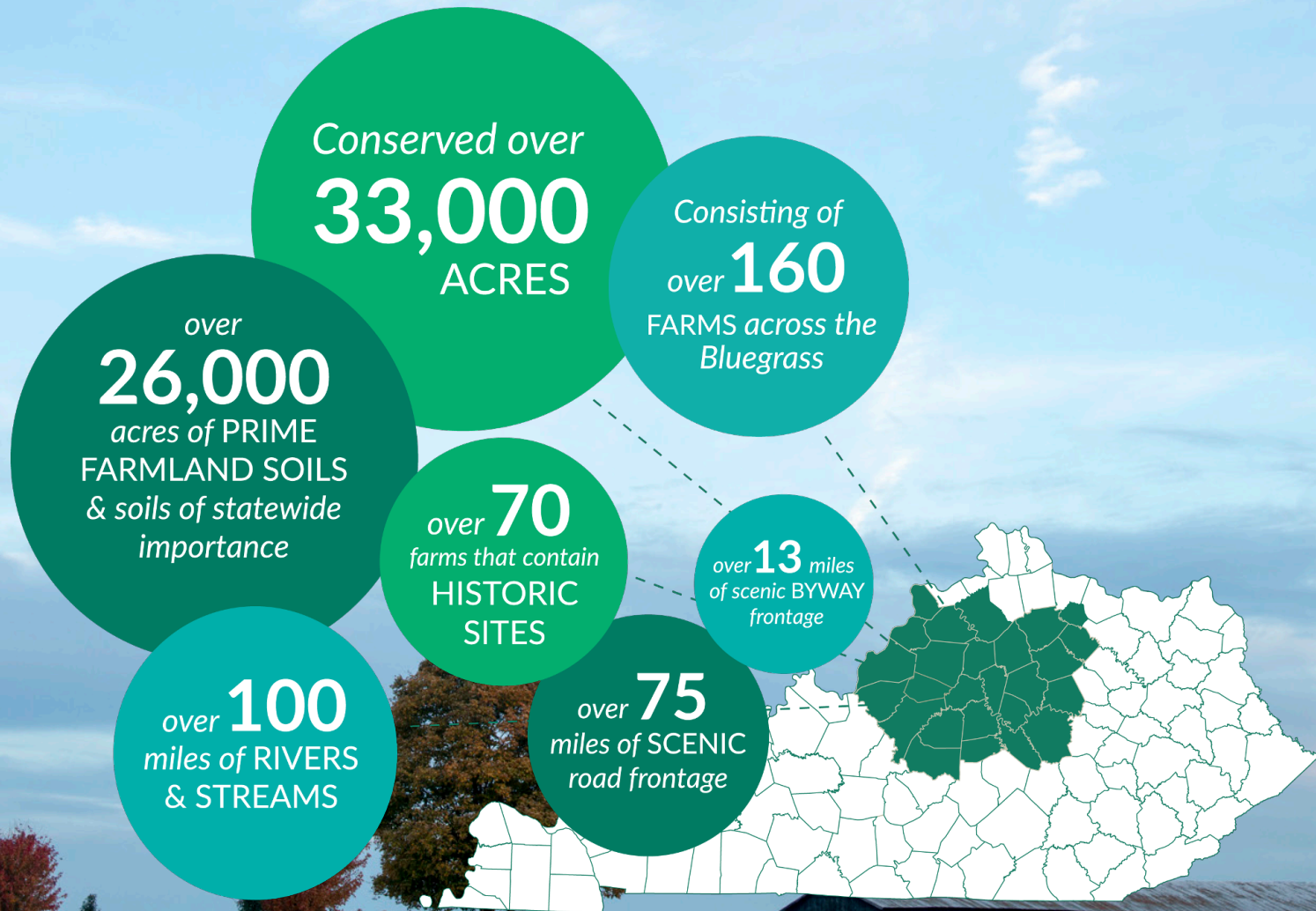
Wildlife Habitat &
Natural Resources



Cultural, Scenic, &
Historic Resources

CONSERVATION SNAPSHOT

Since 1995 we have...



LAND PROTECTION

With a goal to **permanently protect and steward lands critical to agricultural viability and community character in the Bluegrass region**, Bluegrass Land Conservancy is beginning the process of creating a Strategic Conservation Plan to guide our decision-making process and allow staff to work more efficiently on priority projects. With this plan in mind, we will continue to work on a daily basis with landowners across the region to conserve land through voluntary conservation easements. For the past 28 years, Bluegrass Land Conservancy has saved over 33,000 of our most critical acres from future development. These lands will remain open for agricultural use and natural habitat in perpetuity. We still have plenty of work to do to combat the rapid pace of development.

In 2022 BLC added a new tool to our conservation toolbox by completing our first easement using federal funding to purchase development rights. In 2023, we requested nearly \$50 million through an NRCS program, the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP), and hope to receive funding for that grant request in 2024. Funding from RCPP will conserve contiguous blocks of farmland and natural lands to create a meaningful impact for communities across the Bluegrass. With this funding, we hope to conserve an additional 20,000 acres of our best soils, wildlife corridors, waterways, and scenic open space.

This new work comes with significant additional requirements for Bluegrass Land Conservancy, from increases in staff time to added transactional costs. Whether you are a partner organization, landowner, or supporter, we need your help to increase the pace of conservation before it is too late!

Is a conservation easement right for you and your family? Every family is unique and so are their conservation plans.

We welcome all inquiries, and all conversations are confidential. To discuss the benefits associated with protecting your land and what will work best for you and your family, contact:

Ashley Greathouse
agreathouse@bluegrassconservancy.org



Taking Care of the Land, Every Day...

We are grateful to all those who have conserved or own protected land. We are inspired by your stewardship and commitment. Thank you for all you do for the land, every day. Family Farms are the backbone of Kentucky, and your partnership represents the future of our community and Commonwealth.

**conserved property with new ownership*

Anderson County

Ann and Darrell Gabhart
Panther Rock

Patricia and Dennis Monohan
Monohan Farm

Bourbon County

Mary Clay and John Berry
Auvergne Farm

Sara Clay and George Branch
Canefield Farm

Felicia and Doug Branham
Hurricane Hills
Hurricane Hills North*
Hurricane Hills West
Flying High

Lendy and Darrell Brown
Stonereath Farm*

Brenda and R. Berle Clay
Auvergne Farm

Isabel McHenry Clay
The Larches*

Rhonda Cornum and Kory Cornum
Munroc Farm

Patricia and Johnny Elkins
Chestnut Hill Farm

Seth Hancock
Cherry Valley Farm

Seth, Clay, and Dell Hancock
Claiborne Farm

Staci and Arthur Hancock
Stone Farm

Hinkle Brothers, LLC
Hinkle Farm

Michael Kalinyak and Sannie Overly
Stone Castle

Gayle and Jim Kane
Kane Angus*

Margaret A. Lake
Lake Farm*

Lary Farm, LLC
Glenlary

Nicholas M. Lotz
Briarbrooke

Pam and Bart McFarland
Resting Acres

Beatrice Clay Moran
Canefield Farm
Pamela and Charles Parker
The Parker Farm

Kristina and John Penn
Pennland

Jeff and Melanie Ramey
Stone Columns Stables at
Rosemont Farm

Katie Sutphin
Victory Haven*

Boyle County

Anonymous

Bright Family, LLC
Bright Family Farm

Drs. Katherine L. Bright
and Daniel J. Moran
Katherine Bright Farm

Louise and Fred Dearborn
Fieldstone Farm

Mary Pat and Scott Hankla,
Faye and Ren Hankla
Hankla Farm

Martha and Angereau McConnell
Springhouse Farm

Clark County

Anonymous

Linda and Nelson Barnes
Barnes Stoner Bend Farm

Ben C. Kaufmann and Janet
Zusman
CallieCash Farm

Carolyn King
The Richard Hunt Smith Nature
and Wildlife Sanctuary

Leesa and Keith Moorman
Bow Wood Farm

Katie Sutphin
Sutphin Farm*

Dr. and Mrs. John van Nagell
Boone Valley Farm
Brookfield Farm

Fayette County

Helen C. Alexander
Middlebrook Farm

Estate of Hilary J. Boone, Jr.
Wimbledon Farm

Susanna and Leon Creek
and Ann J. Parker
Polohunt Farm*

Patricia and Johnny Elkins
Chestnut Hill Farm

Clay Hancock
EIEIO Farm*

Betty and Jim Kenan
Kenan Farm

Alston and Johnny Kerr
Greenfields

Lori Kirk-Wagner
Lori Kirk-Wagner Farm*

Bonnie and Dick Maynard
Maynard Farm*

Dede McGehee
Heaven Trees

Newtownanner Stud Farm
Newtownanner Stud Farm

Michael and Jeanne Owens
Cornerstone Farm

Beth and Dan Pride
Oxford Farm*

Dr. and Mrs. John van Nagell
Brookfield Farm
Boone Valley Farm

Franklin County

Blue Crosses LLC
Blue Crosses Farm

Frances P. Canty
Arrowhead Farm*

Dr. Joseph J. and
Beverly V. Dobner
Dobner Family Farm

Dr. and Mrs. Eric Headley
Knoll Creek

Dorothy Meador Wilson
Wilson Farm

EASEMENT DONORS

Harrison County

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Gray's Run Farm

Susan and R.M. Richards
Chicory Ridge

Henry County

Donna and Jim Ludwig
Springstone Farm

Jessamine County

Estate of Richard J. Corman
R. J. Corman Farm

Marijo and Tom Foster
La Fontaine

Dave and Jennifer Harris
Seven Stones Farm

Estate of Barbara Hunter
Brownwood Farm*

Phil and Jan Meyer, Barbara Groves,
Sarah and John Mutziger
Blue Gate Farm, LTD*

Ann and James Robert Wilson
The Judge Place
Pleasant Grove

Madison County

Lois Combs-Richards Farm
Combs-Richards Farm

Marion County

Linda and Parker Beam
SonBeam Farms

Sisters of Loretto
Loretto Motherhouse

Mercer County

Rose Cooper and Allen Bush

Leigh Andrea DeLair
Running Fox Farm

John D. Stuart
High Peak Farm-Mercer Co.*

Nelson County

Anonymous

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The Meadows

Lida Oxnard
Post Oak Farm

Susan Perkins
Hard Times Farm

Oldham County

Julia L. Fields
Annewood Farms

Jane Newton
The Wetlands

W. Allen Northcutt III
Flying Cross Farm

Robertson County

Troy and Darrin Martin
Martin Farm

Scott County

Mr. and Mrs. David Greathouse
Cockaigne*

Anna and Paul Isaacs
Shagbark Farm

Laura D. and Robert L. Riddle
Riddle Farm

Erin and Bill Rouse
Rouse Farm*

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Sarah and Paul Keith
Pine Grove Farm

Peter E. Leonhardt
Lakeview Farms

Washington County

Linda and Parker Beam
SonBeams Farms

Dominican Sisters of Peace
St. Catharine's Farm

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Anonymous (2)

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Spring Station Farm*

Gay and Michael Barnett
Blackburn Farm

Mina Berger
Woodstock Farm*

Frances P. Canty
Ridge Farm*

Mary and Joseph Carter Family
Carter Farms

Dr. and Mrs. John Caton
Hillside Farm

Mr. and Mrs. Robert N. Clay
Three Chimneys Farm*

Pam and Roger Conley
Wildflower Farm

Susanna and Leon Creek and
Ann J. Parker
Polohunt Farm*

Mr. and Mrs. William Curlin
Dunvegan

Dr. and Mrs. Mike Daugherty
Three Springs Farm

Drs. Claire and Rolf Embertson
Chancey Mill Farm

William Davis Fishback, Jr.
Trackside Farm

Drs. Laurie and David Haas
Lookout Farm

Gloria and Jack Halter
The Halter Farm

Dave and Jennifer Harris
Seven Stones Farm

Hoppy Henton
Diamond A Farms*
Henton Farms

Dr. Stephen and Debbie Jackson
Jackson Purchase

Margaret and David Jeffiers
Trailside Farm

Libby and Brereton Jones
Airdrie Stud
Airdrie: Gratz Place & Home Place
Woodburn Farm

Captain and Mrs. Richard Kane
Horseshoe Bend Farm*

Alice Carneal Kinkad
Braestone Farm

Dorothy and William Matthews V
Hanlen Farm

Newtownanner Stud Farm
Newtownanner Stud Farm

Dr. Gary and Kathy Priest
Woodspring Farm

Randle Properties, LLC
Ashley House Farm*

Allison and Danny Richardson
Buckhead Farm

Suzi Shoemaker
Lantern Hill Farm

Steve South and Sue Van Patten
Locust Hill Farm

John D. Stuart
High Peak Farms*

Jan and Ben Taylor
Taylor Farms

Andrea and Bernard V. Tew
Chanteclair*

Elaine and Ben Walden
Paul's Mill*

Judy Wells
Shadewell

Dr. and Mrs. Smiser West
Waterford Farm*

Sheryl Wood and Craig Wood
Millwood Springs Farm*



ORGANIZATIONAL SUSTAINABILITY

Bluegrass Land Conservancy is committed to our promise of conserving land in perpetuity through the sustainable and measurable management of our financial resources. With a goal to **grow our financial and organizational capacity to meet our dynamic conservation goals**, we perform our work with a community and growth-oriented mindset. We know that every conservation easement is a promise for future generations, and therefore we are driven every day to ensure the funds and organizational structure needed to fulfill that pledge. In addition to annual operating funds, BLC works to grow a robust Operating Endowment and Stewardship Fund to safeguard our conservation easements forever.

With over 28 years of experience and over 33,000 acres of land permanently protected, BLC is a highly accomplished regional, nonprofit land trust. The collective experience on our Board and staff represents the majority of land conserved in Kentucky. Protecting an average of over 1,200 acres per year, **BLC ranks as #3 accredited land trusts in the country in land conserved per year by staff size!** We need your help to continue to grow our organization and staff in order to maintain and increase the pace of land conservation in the Bluegrass.

As a community-supported land trust, we rely upon the generous contributions of individuals, businesses, and grantors as we work to preserve our Bluegrass lands. Every dollar donated to BLC helps to further our mission-directed programming. There are multiple opportunities to support BLC through direct gifts of cash, stock, real estate, auction items, workplace matching funds, planned gifts, and corporate partnerships. With your continued support, our conservation work will continue to play a vital role in our region's quality of life, economic growth, and healthy environment.

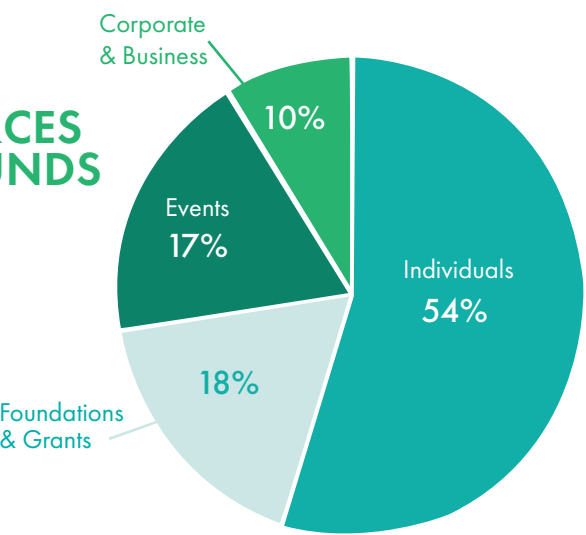
Monthly Contributions Providing Impact at all Levels

For many BLC supporters, a monthly gift of \$10 or \$25 to Bluegrass Land Conservancy might be more financially doable than a single gift of \$120-\$300. Monthly giving is an incredibly helpful way to support BLC's growth and stability, and ensures that BLC will continue to protect and always care for the Bluegrass. For more information on monthly giving or other options for support, please contact:

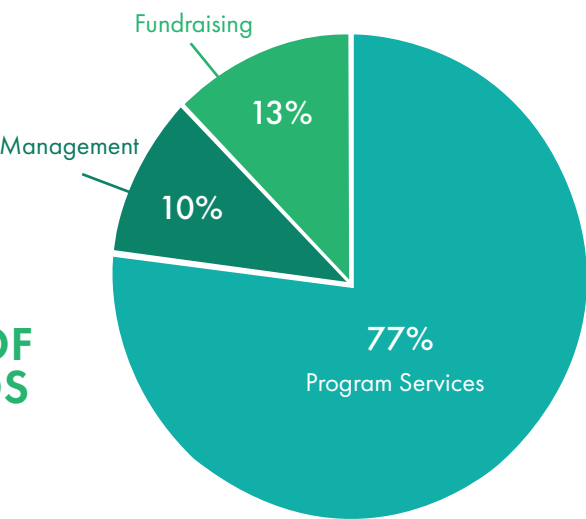
Molly Dunigan
mdunigan@bluegrassconservancy.org

2022-2023 Financial Summary

SOURCES OF FUNDS



USE OF FUNDS



\$1,191,719

Operating Endowment



\$1,000,577

Funds Raised for General Operating

\$179,313

Donor-restricted Project Funds



\$2,217,262

Stewardship & Defense Fund

553

Unique Donors



Conservation Partner \$25,000+

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Bonnie Family Foundation
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Ms. Sandra Frazier
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Blackbaud Giving Fund / YourCause
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Mr. and Mrs. Will Adams
Dr. and Mrs. Jay D. Addison
Mr. and Mrs. Jeff Alexander
Mr. Robert H. Allen
Anonymous
Mr. and Mrs. Kevin Ausbrook

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These gifts were received between July 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023. We sincerely apologize of any errors or omissions. Please contact Molly if you have any corrections. Thank you.

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 Ms. Rachel Barber
 Mr. and Mrs. Michael Barnett
 Ms. Bethany Baxter
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 C. Bird
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A Special Thank You

As a community-supported land trust, our mission-critical land conservation work relies on the support of generous donors.



2023 Signing Ceremony at Sisters of Loretto

In early 2023, BLC staff joined the Loretto Community in poetry and song for a conservation easement signing ceremony at the Loretto Motherhouse in Nerinx, KY. For years, the Loretto Community had been steadily working to protect and honor their land permanently. At the signing ceremony, Loretto President Sister Barbara Nicholas SL expressed the Community's purpose, "It is our responsibility to protect our sacred Motherhouse lands; doing so ensures that these waters, forests, and grasslands will be protected into perpetuity, providing cleaner water and air for all . . . we committed ourselves to choosing life. This land that has provided sustenance for generations, because of this commitment today, will continue to be able to do so in perpetuity. These pastures and cropland will continue to bring forth food. The forests and waters will continue to stand and flow. This land



2023 Annual Auction

Under the guidance of co-Chairs, Andrea and Thomas Birkman, this year's Auction was a successful and stylish event at Fasig-Tipton. Electria Strings provided upbeat tunes while our guests browsed the auction and sampled delicious fare from Chef Ouita Michel. With over 70 unique live and silent auction items ranging from birding, fishing, and skiing trips to native trees and a carnivorous-plant terrarium, the evening raised over \$150,000 for land conservation. Special thanks to our event sponsors, in-kind auction item donors, and our patrons!



2023 Conservation Dinner

On a picture-perfect evening in Oldham County, we honored two outstanding leaders in land conservation, Nana Lampton and Bob Griffith, with a beautiful farm-to-table dinner at Foxhollow Farm featuring locally-sourced ingredients and a surprise musical guest, Ben Sollee. Bob Griffith was given the Mary Louise Allen Memorial Award, which recognizes individuals who have devoted their professional careers to further land protection and natural resource conservation in Kentucky. Nana Lampton was awarded The Kentucky Land Conservationist and Lifetime Achievement Award for her deep connection to land protection and her significant contribution to Kentucky land trusts across the state.

EVENTS

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EDUCATION & OUTREACH

“Agriculture is the greatest and fundamentally the most important of our industries. The cities are but the branches of the tree of national life, the roots of which go deeply into the land. We all flourish or decline with the farmer.”

Bernard Baruch

The great and small experiences in our lives are made and enhanced by our surroundings. Our work at Bluegrass Land Conservancy can go largely unseen by most people, yet it ensures the future of many amenities we care about and love. Land conservation helps to ensure less polluted air, healthy soils, clean waterways, and available farmland for ourselves as well as future generations. Many of the family farms, beautiful scenic drives, and outdoor recreational spaces that form the backdrop of our lives have been permanently protected through conservation easements.

At BLC, we ***seek to elevate the importance of land as a part of our regional identity, and land conservation as a priority for maintaining a high quality of life and a vibrant economy.*** As astounding as 33,000 acres sounds, we know that many landowners and community members still don't know about the importance of conservation and the efforts of Bluegrass Land Conservancy. One of the ways we are working to combat this is through education and outreach – by attending community events, hosting landowner cultivation meetings, and being present in more areas throughout the Bluegrass region. In the past year we've increased our efforts and will continue to grow these areas in future years!

CONNECT

Visit our new website at BluegrassLandConservancy.org
to sign up for our eNews and Newsletter



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EDUCATION & OUTREACH EVENTS



Landowner Cultivation Events

To reach our goal of protecting an additional 1,000 acres a year, we partner with local friends and easement donors throughout our service area on cultivation gatherings that increase landowners' knowledge of conservation. In the last year, we've met new landowners by hosting several cultivation events in Bourbon and Woodford counties. We also know that growing community awareness will help us educate more people about the importance and benefits of land conservation, so we've also spoken at community events in Jefferson, Oldham, Shelby, and Trimble counties, where we've worked with Kentucky Women in Agriculture, conservation districts, and cooperative extension services.



Bourbon Country Burn Bicycle Ride

In the fall of 2023, BLC participated as volunteers and cyclists in the Bourbon Country Burn, a three-day bicycle tour of central Kentucky's bourbon distilleries and horse farms. With nearly 1,500 cyclists from all 50 states and beyond, participants not only cycled through protected landscapes, they also were able to observe historic protected farms and other "points of interest" throughout the course, showcasing the importance of conserving our iconic landscapes.



Friends of BLC

The social arm of Bluegrass Land Conservancy has seen some changes recently and now is under new leadership! Several events are planned to build camaraderie and enthusiasm for BLC during the 2023 Fall and Winter including monthly Pint Nights at The Elkhorn Tavern, a Social Clay Shoot at Bluegrass Sportsmen's League, guided hikes, and the ever-popular JingleBell Bash!

Visit www.friendsofbhc.org
to stay in the know!





CULTIVATING CONNECTIONS

2023 Annual Impact Report

Bluegrass Land Conservancy protects land in Kentucky's Bluegrass region through permanent conservation easements. We seek to ensure a future where the region's distinctive soils, cultural heritage, scenic vistas, natural resources, and farms are preserved forever.

We depend on an engaged and passionate community to support our commitment to Kentucky's future. A diverse and interested group of people can make a difference in how we reach landowners, talk about conservation, and make decisions. We are always looking for new members to swell our committee ranks, plan social gatherings with Friends of BLC, or represent us at local fairs and events. If you are interested in helping us cultivate connections, please contact info@bluegrassconservancy.org or give us a call at 859-255-4552.



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LAND CONSERVANCY

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