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2020
IMPACT
REPORT



For Schoodic Institute, this was a time to apply the skills we are developing with the next generation of learners and leaders - being forward-looking, identifying and understanding uncertainties, and communicating science...

Dear Friends,

The past year was full of uncertainty, challenges, and sorrow. We have much to learn as we reflect. For Schoodic Institute, this was a time to apply the skills we are developing with the next generation of learners and leaders - being forward-looking, identifying and understanding uncertainties, and communicating science. We recognize with greater conviction than ever, that science literacy, data literacy, critical thinking, and sincere communication are essential skills that apply far beyond the response to climate change and are needed for society's response to every major challenge we face as we attempt to steward a planet for eight billion people and millions of species.

At Schoodic Institute we engage with learners of all ages - we fondly say it's not K-to-12 but rather K-to-gray. Learning must be a life-long pursuit. The world is ever changing and we must develop the knowledge, skills, and abilities to adapt to this dynamism.

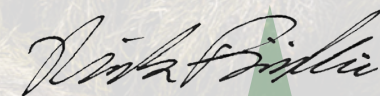
We have the great privilege to work with citizen scientists of all ages who visit campus, and to work closely with the next generation of conservation professionals. During the pandemic, a small team of college interns lived and worked on campus, wearing their masks and social distancing in the office, intertidal zone, forest, and while cataloging biodiversity across Acadia. They adjusted to the realities of the pandemic rapidly, efficiently, consistently, and with grace – in many ways that made us pause and reassess our own abilities to adapt.

We are proud of the science we are leading, the opportunities we are fostering, and the tremendous support of donors who make our work possible. Thank you for being there with us, navigating great uncertainties and challenges, and pursuing the opportunities. You are inspiring science, learning, and community for a changing world.

Sincerely,



David Ellwood, PhD
Board Chair



Nicholas Fisichelli, PhD
President & CEO



At Schoodic Institute, our mission is inspiring science, learning, and community for a changing world. We know the world is changing, often in quick and surprising ways. We focus on understanding environmental change taking place in Acadia and beyond, as well as helping those charged with managing protected areas respond and adapt to change. Our work is methodical and patient and it happens through rigorous research and strong partnerships with people of all ages. Below are some ways we made a difference in 2020 with your support.

Maine's Climate Future

In 2020, we released the latest update to the “Maine’s Climate Future” series of statewide climate change assessments produced in partnership with University of Maine and Maine Sea Grant. New analyses show that change in every climate-related parameter measured in Maine is accelerating. The rate of air and sea warming is increasing. Precipitation is increasing in intensity and volume, and sea level is not only rising, but rising faster than in the previous century. The report points to the growing evidence of impacts of climate change on Maine’s farms, fields, forests, marine resources, and aspects of culture and economy. The report also points to opportunities to address the climate challenge, and actions that Maine people are taking.

Second Century Stewardship

For over a century, the past has served as a baseline for conservation and restoration efforts. But the past is no longer the guide it used to be. Today, climate change is rapidly altering environmental cycles and processes, reshaping ecosystems in national parks and other protected areas. Managers at national parks and other public lands face rapidly changing conditions that demand new approaches to caring for and protecting nature and culture.



For example:

- the climate is expected to become unsuitable for the most common tree species in Acadia National Park;
- extreme storms and rising sea levels threaten shell mounds and other coastal cultural sites of Indigenous peoples on Atlantic and Pacific shores;
- drought and fires are impacting forests across the National Park System.

Through our Second Century Stewardship work, we are helping early-career scientists develop strong research projects and provide guidance as they address challenging questions about the changes taking place within Acadia National Park. At the end of 2020, twelve Second Century science fellows had spent at least one year working with us on park research that will in part shape the rest of their careers.

*Our Mission is inspiring science, learning,
and community for a changing world.*



Through Second Century Stewardship, we are also working across the National Park System to support the next generation of science leaders by equipping conservation and resource management professionals with science communication and citizen science tools and skills to work with the public and policy makers.

We Are Taking a RAD Approach

Schoodic Institute, the National Park Service, and several federal agency partners released the report “Resist-Accept Direct (RAD) — A Decision Framework for the 21st-century Natural Resource Manager.” The framework is designed to help park managers decide when, where, and how to resist the changes that lead to undesirable conditions; accept new conditions; or direct towards a desired future. “We want to encourage managers to consider strategic, forward looking actions rather than structure goals based on past conditions,” said Schoodic Institute President and CEO Nicholas Fisichelli, who co-authored the report.

In Acadia, managers anticipate a shift in forest habitat from spruce and fir to oak and other warm-climate deciduous trees. They are actively resisting the ecological trajectory that leads to forest loss by controlling invasive shrubs and vines and identifying areas of climate refugia (places more protected from change), while accepting the arrival of new tree species into the forest, and evaluating options for further directing forest transitions through tree planting experiments.

“Our conservation goals have to be realistic and sustainable,” said Rebecca Cole-Will, Program Manager for Cultural and Natural Resources at Acadia National Park and St Croix Island International Historic Site. “Trying to ‘hold the line’ in the face of change is getting harder and more expensive. The framework in this report helps us make informed, purposeful choices about how to respond to the accelerating trajectory of change.”

A Research Community: Bringing Science and People Together

Schoodic Institute is Acadia National Park’s primary partner in science and education. Together, we manage the largest of 18 National Park Service Research Learning Centers. Our 100-acre campus hosts 150 guests, and offers classrooms, research labs, housing, dining, auditorium, and other conference facilities that have helped us bring thousands of people together over the years. In 2020, we continued bringing people together to do science in support of the park and contribute to several important monitoring projects so that we can track changes over time. While much of the learning was done remotely, some small teams followed strict COVID-19 protocols and worked together to collect and analyze data. On the next two pages, you’ll read more about what we accomplished with Acadia National Park, our nonprofit partners, schools, and the public, who all make important contributions to our work.

2020 By the Numbers

59 PERMITS

granted for research projects in Acadia. The pandemic postponed some projects, modified most, and created some new research opportunities.

Studies included:

- A survey of red pine populations in severe decline due to invasive red pine scale;
- How the public values water resources in Acadia;
- Wabanaki archaeology;
- Vegetation restoration on Cadillac Mountain;
- Impact of COVID-19 on visitor behaviors and experiences;
- Winter behaviors of river otters in Witch Hole Pond area;
- and many more!

Schoodic Institute staff work in partnership with Acadia National Park to manage research permits in the park. We also assist researchers through the permitting process, provide opportunities for researchers to present their work during our annual symposium, and share stories of science on Schoodic Institute and Acadia National Park websites.



53,116 WATERBIRDS

observed by 2 volunteers over 75 days and 275 hours during Sea Watch at Schoodic Point. Our incredible volunteers counted up to 193 birds per hour. Additionally, Hawk Watch at Cadillac Mountain garnered 2,973 observations by 7 counters over 54 days and 257 hours.



322 PARTICIPANTS

came together virtually for the Acadia National Park Science Symposium to learn about topics such as climate change science, traditional ecological knowledge, park management, visitor engagement, and education in Acadia.



62 STUDENTS

worked on shellfish resilience including analyzing data on green crabs and clam growth and survival. Schoodic Institute is working together with the town of Gouldsboro, Sumner Memorial High School students, clambers, and the local shellfish warden to research and invest in new methods for restoring clam populations to confront climate change impacts.



85 PARKS AND PARTNERS

participated in science communication and citizen science trainings through Second Century Stewardship, an initiative led by Schoodic Institute to foster the next generation of leaders in science through research fellowships and workshops.



760 LBS OF ROCKWEED

weighed from 28 sites throughout the Maine coast by Schoodic science staff, research partners, and citizen scientists, all part of our work to understand the role this ubiquitous algal species plays in intertidal ecology.



130 OBSERVATIONS

of sea stars made by 60 participants at 46 locations during our remote #WeSeaStars citizen science project. Sea stars are keystone predators with populations that tend to boom-and-bust; monitoring sea stars helps us understand the health of the intertidal zone and beyond.



5,661 PLANTS

and 96 species counted on the summit of Cadillac Mountain by Schoodic science staff. We are monitoring important plants like boreal blueberry, three-toothed cinquefoil, and green alder that are part of efforts in partnership with Acadia National Park, Friends of Acadia, and the Native Plant Trust to restore the land and to bring vegetation back to eroded areas impacted by 150 years of heavy human use.





Donations and Support

\$100,000+

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Many thanks go to our caring, thoughtful, and dedicated supporters. Below, are the individuals, businesses, and foundations who make our work possible. Schoodic Institute at Acadia National Park is helping national parks, communities, and society adapt to change by promoting environmental stewardship and engaging people in science. To learn more about how you can help please visit www.schoodicinstitute.org/support or call Susi Acord at 207-288-1360 or email sacord@schoodicinstitute.org

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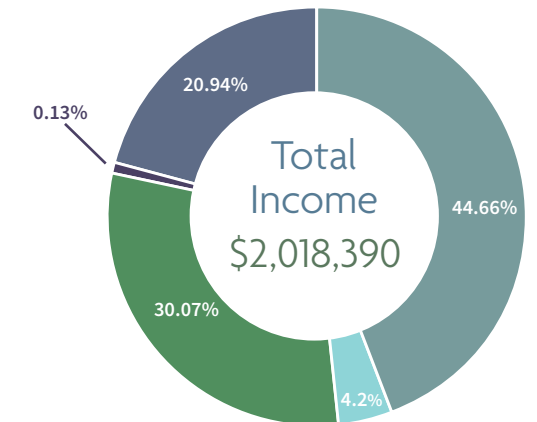
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Finances at a Glance

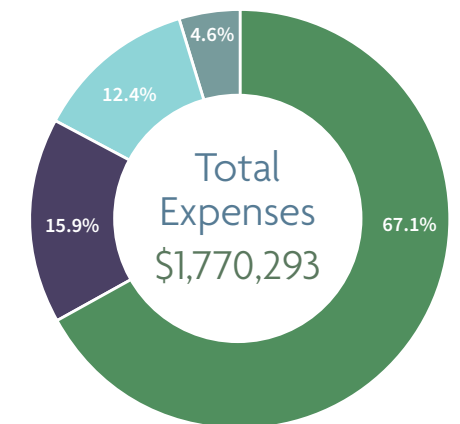
Support and Revenue

Contributions.....	\$901,477
Program Fees.....	\$84,687
Federal and State Grants.....	\$606,839
Other Income.....	\$2,637
Investment Income.....	\$422,750



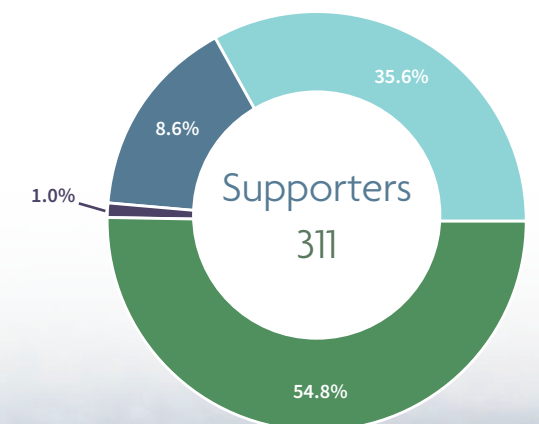
Expenses

Ecosystem Science and Education	\$1,190,073
Management and General.....	\$280,749
Networks and Other.....	\$218,870
Fundraising.....	\$80,610



Sources of Funds

- 28 Partners
- 10 Corporations
- 17 Foundations
- 259 Individuals



To review the complete 2020 audited financial report, please visit schoodicinstitute.org/about-us

