



# Martha's Vineyard Land Bank Commission

## 2016 ANNUAL REPORT

3358 acres, representing 5.8% of Martha's Vineyard, have been conserved by the land bank since voters created it in 1986. Please visit them; maps are available at town halls and libraries; online at [www.mvlandbank.com](http://www.mvlandbank.com); and at the land bank office in Edgartown.

### Acquisitions

The town of Tisbury, as far back as the 1980s, recognized the need to protect the lands around its public drinking water wells. The water department and selectmen enlisted the land bank's participation and a number of strategic acquisitions was made. Inspired by the open space reservation that resulted, the land bank aimed to consolidate and expand it. An additional seven acres were added to the **Wapatequa Woods Reservation** in 2016, via a \$500,000 purchase from the Ellis Manter Trust.

Odd, small pieces sometimes fit into a larger puzzleboard. A \$4,000 purchase of a 3-acre landlocked lot was added to the **Toad Rock Preserve**; the seller was George Brush.

Accretion motivated the land bank's purchase of property on the flank of the hilltop **Middle Ridge Preserve**. The crest — with its views out to Tuckernuck Island — was acquired in 1994 but the lands on its slopes remained buildable. Fielding Lewis's sale of 19.8 acres here, for \$1,200,000, has now conserved them.

One of the land bank's first acquisitions, in 1986, was the land in West Tisbury located behind the venerable and plain Mayhew Chapel in Christiantown; the purpose was to prevent the historic site from being dulled by rearward suburban development. In 2016 the land bank applied the same logic to the lorn **Sailors Burying Ground** in Tisbury, purchasing 2.9 acres behind it so that the graves would never be de-solemnized by any beetling houses behind them. The seller was Christopher Dias and the price was \$382,000.

In addition, the land bank continued to pursue and purchase partial interests in properties across the island.

### Land management

Ecological inventories and studies continued at many land bank properties: Aquinnah Headlands Preserve, Cove Meadow Preserve, Doug's Cove Preserve, Edgartown Great Pond Beach, Fulling Mill Brook Preserve, Great Rock Bight Preserve, Manaquayak

Preserve, Middle Line Woods Preserve, Middle Ridge Preserve, Paint Mill Brook Preserve, Pecoy Point Preserve, Poucha Pond Reservation, Quammox Preserve, Sepiessa Point Reservation, Tisbury Great Pond Beach, Waskosim's Rock Reservation and the Wilfrid's Pond Preserve.

The commonwealth approved management plans for the Toms Neck Preserve, Wapatequa Woods Reservation and the Manaquayak Preserve. The latter approval attained a long-sought goal — direct access to the preserve from the Lamberts Cove Road. Shortly thereafter staff installed a four-space roadside trailhead and cut a new 1-mile sylvan path from the trailhead to the pond. Staff, at Toms Neck, also completed a 5-acre meadow restoration adjacent to the Pease Pond and Cape Poge Pond.

Rot was attacked. Boardwalks and footbridges were rebuilt or maintained at the Aquinnah Headlands Preserve, Fulling Mill Brook Preserve, Tea Lane Farm and Wompesket Preserve.

The land bank expanded the island's bluestem stock by planting the beautiful native grass — both varieties, big blue and little blue — at multiple preserves: Aquinnah Headlands, Chilmark Pond, Cove Meadow, Felix Neck, Gay Head Moraine, Ocean View Farm and Pennywise.

The goat herd, now 200 strong, spent a good deal of the summer at the valley bottom on the Waskosim's Rock Reservation. They overwinter at the Wapatequa Woods Reservation; staff erected a shelter/hay barn there for them this year.

As usual, the land bank field crew continued ongoing general maintenance on various land bank properties across the island.

#### Cross-island hike

The land bank's twenty-fourth annual cross-island hike celebrating National Trails Day — the first Saturday in June — ranged from Pecoy Point Preserve in Oak Bluffs to south beach in Edgartown ... via Chappaquiddick Island and its Norton Point Beach. In total, 19 conservation properties were crossed. Sixty-five hikers started in the morning, 70 were present at the launch of the afternoon session and about 45 lurched across the finish line at left fork. 32 hikers completed the entire 21-mile, 9-hour hike, marking the third consecutive year that more than 30 have done so..

#### Budget and related matters

The following chart synthesizes the land bank's annual finances. Anyone wishing to read the budget in its entirety, which includes a narrative describing the purpose of each line item expenditure, is welcome to obtain a copy at the land bank office:

	fiscal year 2016 budgeted	fiscal year 2016 actual	fiscal year 2017 budgeted
	cash amount and percentage of total	cash amount and percentage of total	cash amount and percentage of total
revenues	\$9,500,000	\$13,295,337	\$11,075,000 *
administrative expenses	(\$ 523,949) 5%	(\$ 523,929) 4%	(\$ 539,605) 5%
land management expenses	(\$ 978,458) 10%	(\$ 995,003) 7%	(\$ 1,173,898) 11%
debt service expenses	(\$5,884,461) 62%	(\$ 5,884,461) 44%	(\$ 6,127,000) 55%
reserve expenses	(\$ 30,000) 0%		(\$ 30,000) 0%
unencumbered new receipts	\$2,158,132 23%	\$ 5,891,944 44%	\$ 3,179,497 29%

As of December 1, 2016 the land bank treasury contained some \$12.0 million in unencumbered funds.

The asterisk (\*) indicates the land bank's revenue projection.

#### Gifts

The land bank gratefully accepted several gifts of cash: \$50 from Stacy Malecki ; and \$100 in memory of Wayne Kallman.

#### Transfer fee revenues

Fiscal Year 2016 transfer fee revenues were:

	transfer fee revenues received July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2016	percent of total
Aquinnah Fund	\$ 135,521	1 %
Chilmark Fund	\$ 765,354	6 %
Edgartown Fund	\$ 3,024,799	23 %
Oak Bluffs Fund	\$ 1,000,331	8 %
Tisbury Fund	\$ 775,691	6 %
West Tisbury Fund	\$ 945,973	7 %
<i>central fund</i>	\$ 6,647,668	50%
	\$ 13,295,337	100%

This represented a 23% increase over the previous year.

#### Commissioners and staff

The land bank commission comprises the following members: Pamela Goff, Chilmark; April Hamel (resigned), commonwealth; Glenn Hearn, West Tisbury; John Anthony Nevin, Tisbury; Priscilla Sylvia, Oak Bluffs; Sarah Thulin, Aquinnah; and Edward Vincent, Jr., Edgartown. The year-round land bank staff comprises the following individuals: Matthew Dix, foreman; James Dropick, conservation land assistant; Jean-Marc Dupon, conservation land assistant; Maureen Hill, administrative assistant; Jeffrey Komarinetz, conservation land assistant; Cynthia Krauss, fiscal officer; James Lengyel, executive director; and Julie Russell, ecologist.

Respectfully submitted,

James Lengyel  
Executive Director