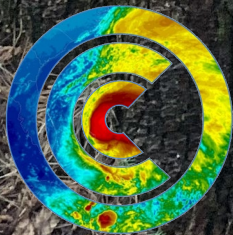




ANNUAL
REPORT
2023



OUR CLIMATE COMMON

Our Climate Common
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Our Climate Common Board



Dr. Jessica Reilly-Moman
Round Pond, Maine



Amy Doering Smith
Sandwich, Massachusetts
Secretary



Dr. Michael Reed
Concord, Massachusetts
Treasurer



Ruisha (ShaSha) Kingston
Boise, Idaho



John Hagan
Georgetown, Maine

Cover Photo

Ben Shamgochian measures ancient white pine in Big Reed old-growth forest, northern Maine (photo by J. Hagan)

Letter from the President

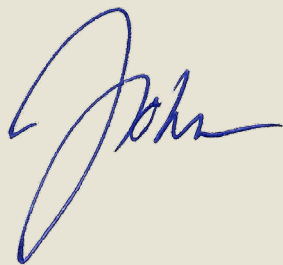
I'm pleased to present this Annual Report for Our Climate Common's second full year of operation. We might be small, but we do quality work, and interesting work. Our continued reason for being is to show how people with diverse values and perspectives can work together for the common good.

In 2023, we focused on fewer, but larger projects. We completed the "30-year Bird Study" in collaboration with the timber industry in Maine. We did not expect the good news that resulted from the study. Over two-thirds of bird species had increased over the past 30 years in Maine, whereas in most parts of the U.S. they had declined. Something "different" is going on in Maine. Maine seems to be functioning like a 10-million-acre bird sanctuary for the nation. We don't often get good news about biodiversity.

Our work on mapping late-successional and old-growth forest using LiDAR (light detection and ranging) ramped up in 2023, with an ambitious (and very rainy) summer field season. We showed that LiDAR can accurately and precisely map old forest for the vast expanse of unorganized townships of Maine. The next step is to work with commercial timberland owners to put this new tool to use for conserving this important, but declining, forest age class.

Finally, we transferred our Youth On Boards / Action On Climate project to The Climate Initiative, which will serve as a stronger and larger home for this important project going forward. See more in this report.

We thank all our generous funders, our field crew, and Our Climate Common's faithful and dedicated board, for making our work possible.



1 The “30-Year Bird Study”

In 2023 we completed a massive replication of a study John Hagan conducted on birds and forestry in Maine in the early 1990s.

At present, Maine’s commercial forest is the largest contiguous tract of intact (non-developed) forest east of the Mississippi and is in the heart of the largest globally significant Important Bird Area in the contiguous U.S.

Given the national-scale changes in bird populations and changes in forest management in Maine, Our Climate Common and partners replicated Hagan’s early 1990s study.

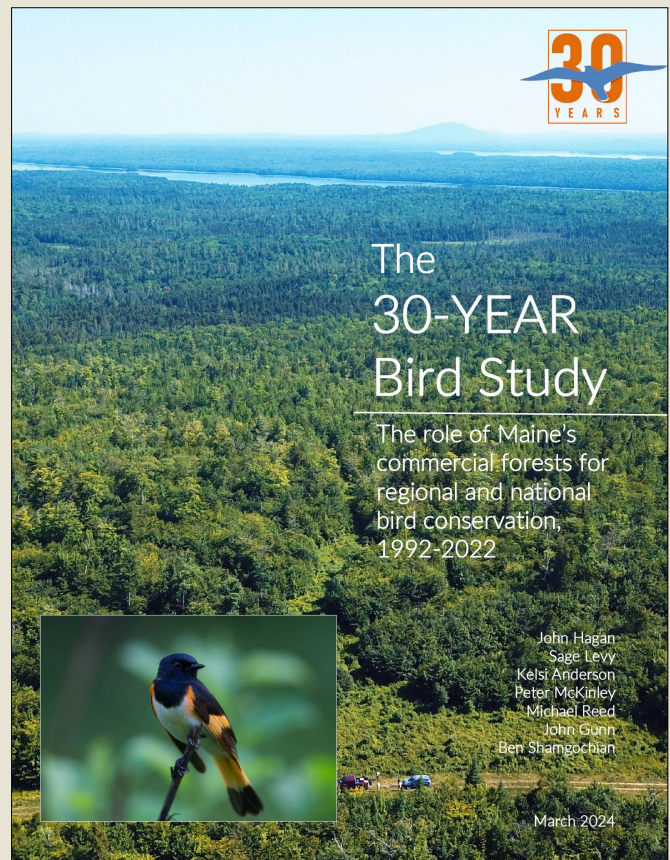
The study is now complete. Given all the bird declines reported by others, both regionally and nationally, we were surprised to find about 70% of the species in our 600,000-acre study area increasing rather than decreasing. But we do not yet understand ‘why.’ This is what science often does—surprises you with very unexpected results.

Rarely do we get “good news” about biodiversity. But this is good news.

It appears that the 10-million-acre unpopulated (by humans) area of Maine is functioning like a “bird sanctuary” for the nation.

There are a few species that declined, such as Winter Wren, Canada Warbler, and Blackburnian Warbler. We need to better understand what’s causing these declines,

But still, overall, this is a surprising good-news story. Let’s take a few moments to celebrate, before we get back to work.



Read the full report here: <https://ourclimatecommon.org/project-30yr-bird-project/>

2 Late-successional & Old-growth Forest Mapping

Late-successional (100-200 years old) and old-growth (>200+ years old) forest can be challenging to conserve in a commercial forest landscape where the optimum financial age of forest is 40-60 years old.

While conducting the “30-YR Bird Study” in the summer of 2022, we discovered that LiDAR (light detection and ranging), a remote sensing technology, is almost foolproof at locating LSOG (late-successional and old-growth) forest from the air. It appeared we might have a new tool for mapping and managing LSOG forest.

In 2023, we ground-truthed 102 sites across the width and height of Maine’s 10-million acres of unorganized townships that appeared to be LSOG forest based on LiDAR. LiDAR correctly identified the forest stand as late-successional or old-growth 95% of the time. This provided the verification that we needed to map LSOG forest for the entire 10-million acres of unorganized townships of Maine (the part where nobody lives).

We have now generated an LSOG map that we are sharing with commercial forest landowners. Now that landowners know where LSOG forest is, we hope they will develop plans and policies that conserve this diminishing, but ecologically important, forest age class. In 2024 we will be working side-by-side with foresters from the various commercial landowners to develop these new LSOG policies and practices.

Ben Shamgochian (left) and Molly Lynch (right). Field team for 2023 forest



3 Youth On Boards / Action on Climate



The screenshot shows the top portion of a web article. At the top left is the logo for 'Stanford SOCIAL INNOVATION Review' with the tagline 'Informing and inspiring leaders of social change'. To the right is a 'SIGN IN' link. Below the logo is a navigation bar with links for 'SOCIAL ISSUES', 'SECTORS', 'SOLUTIONS', 'MAGAZINE', and 'GLOBAL EDITIONS'. The article is categorized under 'Nonprofits & NGOs'. The title is 'Learning From an Intergenerational Blowup Over Social Justice'. Below the title is a sub-headline: 'Like so many organizations, our environmental nonprofit was rocked by internal conflict. What happened and what did we learn?'. There are links for 'CITE', 'SHARE', 'COMMENT', 'PRINT', and 'ORDER REPRINTS'. The byline reads 'By Steve Kaagan & John Hagan | Jan. 4, 2024'. Below the byline is a blue illustration of a jagged, sawtooth-like shape that appears to be tearing through a surface. Below the illustration is a caption: '(Illustration by iStock/filo)'. The main text of the article begins with: 'Disparate, strongly held views on how to attain social justice and overcome inequitable systems of power are ripping many nonprofit organizations apart. Instead of aligning our aims, assets, and values, we in the nonprofit sector are thwarted by internal indictments of hierarchy; sincere but superficial attempts to address diversity, equity, and inclusion; assaults on patriarchy; and an obsession with creating "safe spaces" that are anything but safe for a dissenter. Those of us who seek a just, equitable, healthy society and planet have become our own worst enemy. The common future we imagine is being undermined by... ourselves. Debilitating polarization is not solely the province of political

Read about what we learned from intergenerational work in our Stanford Social Innovation Review [article](#) titled "Learning from an intergenerational blowup over social justice." Published Jan. 4, 2024.

In 2022, the Intergen Climate Group formed a project called Youth On Boards / Action on Climate (YOB). Our Climate Common "inherited" the Intergen Climate Group from the Maine Climate Table, which "sunset" in 2022.

YOB has a goal of placing young people (18-30) on boards so they can begin to participate at a leadership level in decisions that will affect their future, especially their climate future. YOB seated three young people on boards in 2023, its inaugural year.

Although OCC served as the "home" for YOB, it became clear in mid-2023 that some of the younger members wanted YOB to be as much about social justice as about seating young people on boards.

Although social justice is important, OCC felt like this new emphasis was beyond the scope of the original goals of YOB. And, social justice is not Our Climate Common's primary mission.

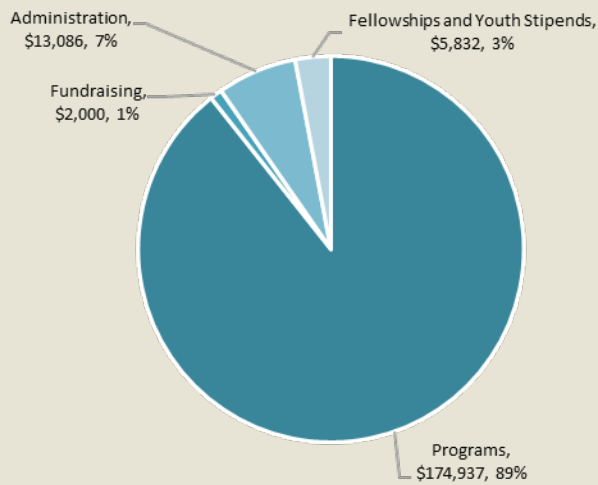
Respecting the spirit of YOB for making sure young people can lead in today's decision-making, OCC transferred YOB to [The Climate Initiative](#), which has a broader mission of empowering young people and their values.

Steve Kagan, elder co-lead of YOB, and John Hagan, who helped with strategic direction as well as project finances, published an article (left) about what they learned from their experience with YOB in the online edition of Stanford Social Innovation review. Their hope was that documenting their experience might help other intergenerational efforts better navigate inherent differences in values and priorities between generations. Follow YOB's success at its new home, The Climate Initiative.

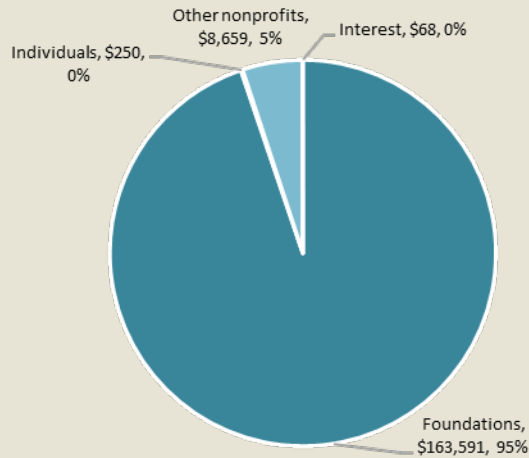
2023 Revenue and Expenses

The work described in the previous pages reflects another successful year for Our Climate Common. We received \$172,487 in grants. We will go into 2024 with about 75% of our funds already in-hand.

2023 Uses of Revenue



2023 Sources of Revenue



2023 Statement of Financial Activity

	Total
Revenue	
Interest Income	\$68
Restricted Contributions	\$146,091
Individuals	\$250
Nonprofit donations	\$7,045
Unrestricted Contributions	\$19,033
Total Revenue	\$172,487
Gross Profit	\$172,487
Expenses	
Contract & professional fees	\$83,644
Salaries and Wages	\$35,745
Events	\$224
Fellowships	\$1,000
Field Supplies	\$6,662
Grant Transfers	\$26,194
Insurance	\$1,076
Meals & Meetings	\$1,536
Workers Compensation	\$878
Payroll Administration	\$261
Travel (field ops)	\$15,499
Reimbursements for Expenses	\$834
Youth Stipends	\$5,332
Office expenses	\$10,648
Supplies and Materials	\$1,219
Travel	\$509
Website	\$272
Total Expenditures	\$191,533
Net Operating Revenue	-\$19,046
Net Revenue	-\$19,046
Cash Carryover from 2022	\$125,190
Net Cash Assets Dec. 31, 2023	\$144,236

FUNDERS

Emily J. Knobloch Foundation
Horizon Foundation
Maine Timberlands Charitable Trust
National Council for Air and Stream Improvement, Inc.
National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
The Arboretum Fund of the Maine Community Foundation
The Betterment Fund
The Climate Initiative
The Dorr Foundation
UMaine Cooperative Forest Research Unit

VOLUNTEERS

Ariel Hagan Ann Tartre
Rebecca Hagan Kayla King
Steve Kaagan Sara Freshley
Cathy Lee

YOUTH FELLOWSHIPS

ShaSha Kingston

YOUTH on BOARDS

Laura Bither
Sara Freshley
Raechale Sage

PARTNERS

Appalachian Mountain Club
Baskahegan Co.
Forest Society of Maine
Huber Forest Management
Irving Woodlands
Landvest
Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands
Maine Environmental Education Association
Maine Natural Areas Program
Manomet
Northeast Wilderness Trust
New England Forestry Foundation
Seven Islands Land Co.
Spatial Informatics – Natural Capital Lab
The Climate Initiative
The Nature Conservancy
The Wilderness Society
Trust for Public Land
Tufts University
UMaine Cooperative Forest Research Unit
University of New Hampshire
Weyerhaeuser
Wheatland Geospatial Lab

