



# **Grassland Bird Trust, Inc.**

**- 2018 Annual Report -**

[www.grasslandbirdtrust.org](http://www.grasslandbirdtrust.org)



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## ANNUAL REPORT - 2018

**Grassland Bird Trust (GBT)**, formerly Friends of the IBA, successfully completed our fundraising campaign to acquire 64 acres of critical grassland bird habitat in the heart of the Washington County Grasslands Important Bird Area (IBA) in 2018. The parcel, located in the viewshed of our Alfred Z. Solomon Grassland Bird Viewing Area (AZS) in Fort Edward, supports 8 of 11 of NY's most imperiled grassland birds. It also provides habitat for dozens of other bird and animal species, including hundreds of pollinators.

### CONSERVATION

NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation awarded GBT a Regional Economic and Community Development grant of \$63,191 for our acquisition of the 64 acres. The grant program is funded through New York's Environmental Protection Fund (EPF). The parcel lies just over the Fort Edward town line in the Town of Argyle.

GBT assisted the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) with the acquisition of another 180 acres of critical habitat. The lands were added to the state's nearby Washington County Grasslands Wildlife Management Area (WMA) in the summer.

After a three-year advocacy campaign, GBT secured passage of legislation requiring NYS to pay taxes on lands it owns in the Washington County IBA towns of Fort Edward, Argyle, and Kingsbury. Governor Andrew Cuomo signed the "Washington County Grassland Bill" (S.1672 (Little) / A.6759 (Woerner) into law on August 17, 2018.

These successes have increased local support for grassland bird conservation.

### EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

**Winter Raptor Fest 2018** returned to the Washington County Fair on May 19 & 20. Wet weather didn't deter more than 1700 visitors who came to see and learn about live birds of prey. People of all ages raved about our NEW Wild Encounter, where they could follow a trail to meet native owls, hawks and falcons in the "natural" habitats they depend on for their survival.

**Field Trips & Walks** – GBT's field trip leaders led a total of seven walks and tours in 2018, including a private tour for a birding group from the United Kingdom. Our Winter Owl Watch & Raptor Tours filled up quickly, and the Snowy owls did not disappoint! We saw plenty of activity on our breeding bird walks on the 64 acres, including dozens of Bobolinks and Eastern meadowlarks, American kestrels, Savannah sparrows, flycatchers and dozens more species!

## ORGANIZATIONAL GROWTH

Grassland Bird Trust received a \$40,000 Capacity Grant from the New York State Conservation Partnership Program (NYSCPP)\* in May of 2018. We're using this grant to rebrand and market our organization as we transition from a small, local nonprofit (Friends of the Washington County Grasslands IBA) to a larger land trust (Grassland Bird Trust) working to expand grassland bird conservation across and eventually beyond New York State. The increased capacity will help us prepare for large land acquisitions in the coming years.

Outreach/ Volunteer Coordinator Keith Swensen joined the Board of Directors this year, replacing retiring Board Member Sandra Scroggins.

**GBT saw another year of rapid growth, with Total Revenues up 38% over 2017.** We also were awarded a grant of \$63,191 from NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation for the acquisition of the 64-acre parcel in our AZS Viewshed. The grant, funded through NY's Environmental Protection Fund, will reimburse GBT up to 50% of the costs of acquiring the parcel. Since it is a reimbursement grant it is not included in the totals below.

## FINANCIAL STATEMENT - FY 2018

### Revenues

|                               |                  |
|-------------------------------|------------------|
| Contributions, Gifts & Grants | \$113,751        |
| Programs                      | \$37,353         |
|                               |                  |
| <b>2018 Total Revenues</b>    | <b>\$151,104</b> |

**Special Thanks to:** New York State Conservation Partnership Program (NYSCPP)\*, Open Space Institute, Stewarts Shops, GlensFalls.com and all of our members and supporters!

### Expenses

|                            |                  |
|----------------------------|------------------|
| Programs & Program Support | \$121,156.67     |
| Fundraising                | \$4,725.33       |
|                            |                  |
| <b>2018 Total Expenses</b> | <b>\$125,882</b> |

**Balance**      **\$25,222**

*\*NYSCPP grants are funded through NY's Environmental Protection Fund. They are administered by the Land Trust Alliance (LTA) and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC)*

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS:**

- Mark Dilanni, President
- Ron Renoni, Vice President
- Scott Pulver, Secretary
- Margaret Baldwin, Treasurer
- Ken Beckley
- Keith Swensen

**NON-VOTING MEMBERS:**

- Laurie LaFond, Executive Director

**Special Thanks to Land Trust Alliance, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), International Paper, Makowski Trust, Southern Adirondack Audubon Society, Odd Duck Farm, Stewarts Shops, Mark Dilanni, Terry Griffen, Kathy & Hugh Roome, GBT Board and Committee members and all of our members, supporters and hard-working volunteers!**