



LIVING LANDS

TRUST

MISSION REPORT 2025



Executive Director's Note

2025 marked 25 years of practice and mission impact for Living Lands Trust. If the organization were a tree, then these first two-and-a-half decades represent germination and tentative growth from a seedling into a sturdy member of the forest understory. Following 20 years of growing and evolving through the efforts of a committed and talented volunteer Board of Trustees, Living Lands welcomed its first employee and Director in 2020. 25 years yet only one staff member? This may seem like rather slow growth when contrasted with our “speed of business”, 24-7 world. And indeed it is. Land-centric work calls for a measured pace and longer arc of time, particularly when that work does not follow convention. Our mission impact lies *not* in the rapid treatment of the symptoms of our social and ecological crises but patient work toward helping to remedy the underlying causes. This report is more than an “annual report”. It is a contextualizing, as well as an informing, of recent progress and activities. Finally, this report is also an invitation; an invitation to help shape Living Lands’ next 25 years!

The Founding Impulse

We wanted to help create more such places on Earth where people can engage their creativity with enthusiasm—caring for nature and human beings in cooperation with nature instead of working against her laws—so that new socially and economically healthy enterprises can emerge.

Martina Mann, *Living Lands Trust Co-founder*



A Simple Approach:

Land is a Gift to be Shared, not One's Property

- ❖ By holding land (including buildings) in perpetuity, Living Lands Trust permanently removes it from Real Estate markets and prevents further fragmentation; thus, decommodifying and protecting the land forever.
- ❖ Once protected, Living Lands Trust partners with eco-farmers, nature-based educators, and social entrepreneurs through long-term agreements to provide active use and care of the land for common good and the benefit of future generations.
- ❖ Living Lands places are not only sanctuaries for wildlife but community hubs and places for people to live, work, and play for good—with respect and care for nature.

Matter & Spirit in Numbers ...

2,700+

Acres of farmland,
forest, and fields
held and protected

23

Houses held
and homes
provided

16

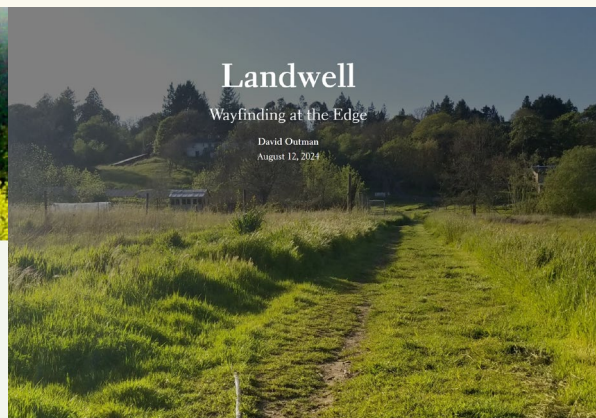
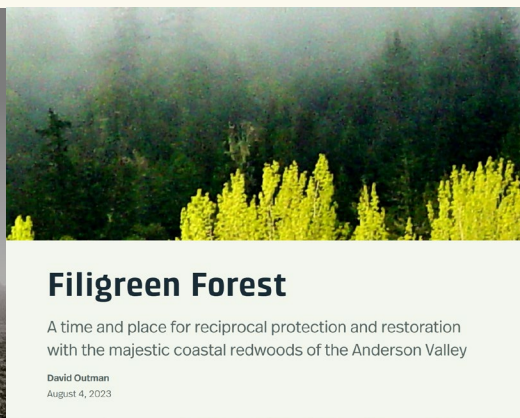
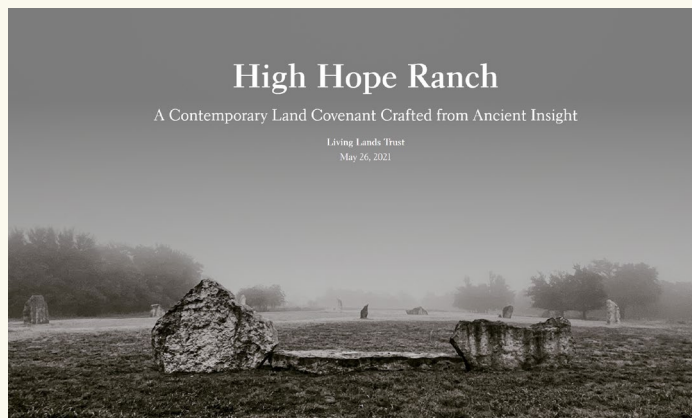
Active land-
partnership
agreements

32

Place-based
livelihoods
supported

Growing, Evolving, Protecting—*Living Lands*

With the gift of High Hope Ranch (900 acres & 10 houses), the purchase of Filigreen Forest (320 acres), and the ongoing collaboration to protect Landwell (22 acres & a housing cooperative), the past five years have been a period of extraordinary activity, growth, and service to land.



Land Protection Not an End But a *Beginning*

Once land is protected as a Living Lands place, the Trust begins the perpetual work of partnering with eco-farmers, nature-based educators, and social entrepreneurs to provide for active use and care of the land and buildings. Living Lands partners with nine different stewards across 2,700+ acres and 4 states. The average length of tenure of Living Lands' current partners is 9 years, with the briefest tenure being less than a year and the longest at 24 years.

2026 marked the start of our newest partnership, with Kiva Carman-Frank and Cole Freeman stepping into the stewardship of North Farm in WI. Providing land access to young farmers like Kiva and Cole, along with start-up support for their fledgling enterprises, is a critical part of Living Lands' mission impact.



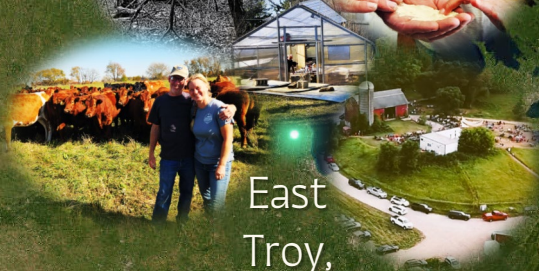
Kiva and Cole pictured above, with photo of their greenhouse restoration project at North Farm

Living Lands Places & Partners

Boonville, CA



East
Troy, WI



Glen Rose, TX



Wilton, NH



Stewardship Partners List

- ❖ All Grass Farms, WI
- ❖ Filigreen Farm, CA
- ❖ Grassway Organics, WI
- ❖ High Hope Ranch, TX
- ❖ Humble Oak Learning & Arts Collective, WI
- ❖ Long Winter Farm, WI
- ❖ Mandaamin Institute, WI
- ❖ North Farm, WI
- ❖ Temple-Wilton Community Farm, NH



A Mutualistic Model

Like the mycorrhizal networks and lichen of the forest, Living Lands Trust relies on a mutually beneficial relationship with its land partners. Stewardship agreements (i.e. various forms of lease, license, etc.) are not crafted based on “market rates” and laced with language of conflicting interests. Instead, they are crafted to encourage small regenerative farms and social enterprises to flourish, which in turn, provide mission impact for Living Lands. This mutualistic approach to land partnerships fosters community-centered businesses and regional economy by reducing debt pressure, supporting capital renewal, and assuring long-term tenure for those who are able to work in harmony with the land.

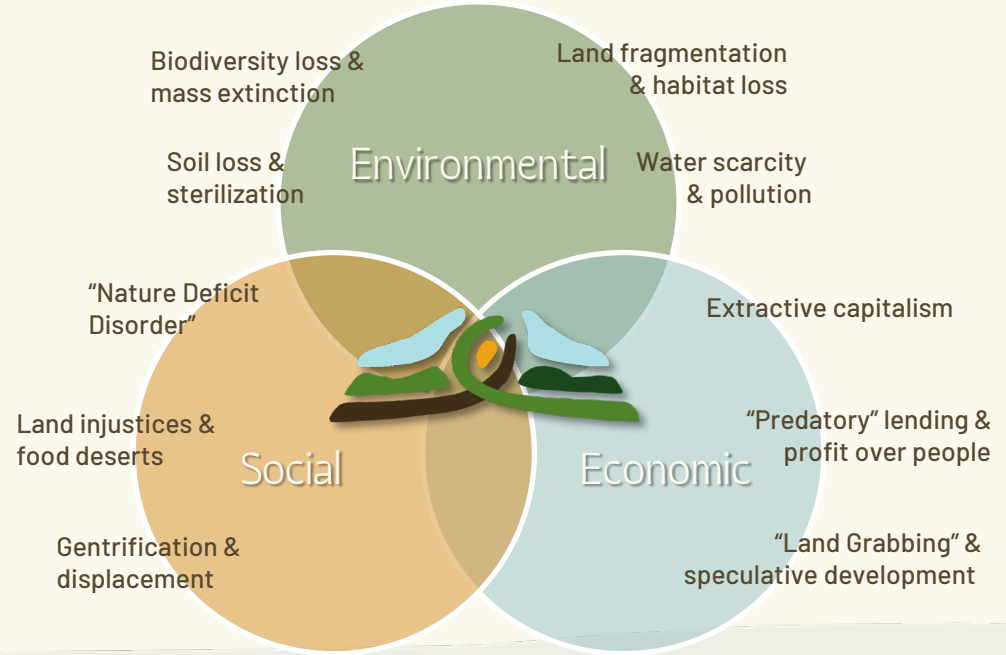


Mission in Context... Why it matters!

Living Lands' places and partnerships

- ✓ Maintain and build the biological health of soil through regenerative farming of over 1,000 acres designated as "prime" farmland with the highest quality soils
- ✓ Protect over 4 miles of rivers and streams
- ✓ Protect and steward four endangered species: *Piperia candida*, *Lilium rubescens*, *Yucca necopina*, and *Setophaga chrysoparia*
- ✓ Provide meaningful outdoor experiences and nature-based learning for people in the community
- ✓ Offer regenerative farmers and social entrepreneurs the opportunity to build and control their own unique businesses and brand equity
- ✓ Host 5 "Live Exchange Hubs"; farm stores and regular events/markets that bring people face-to-face, fostering community and local economy
- ✓ Protect the integrity of the landscape and prevent fragmentation amid rapidly growing and developing enclaves and exurbs

...< >... Today's Many Challenges



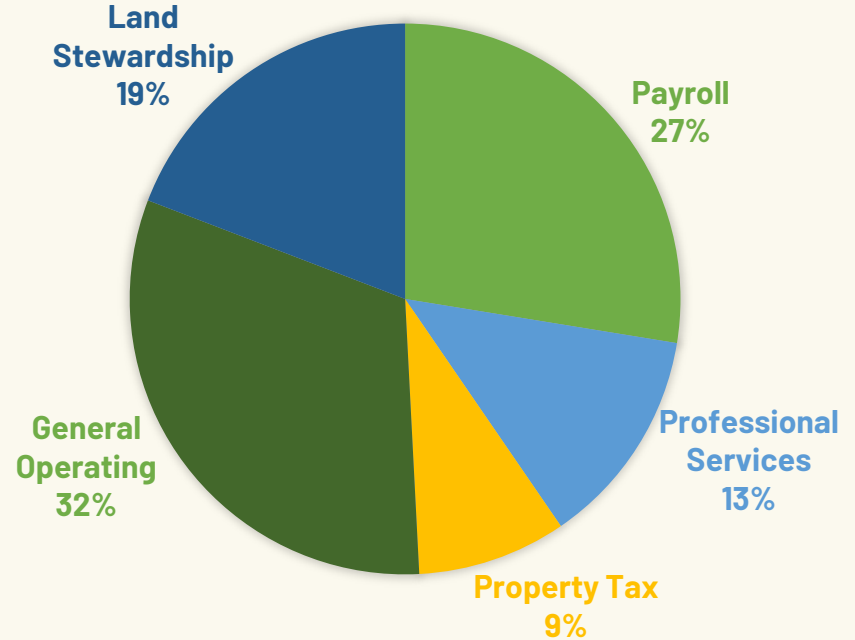
Mission Impact on the Horizon

- ❖ Fledgling the eco-hospitality and biodynamic ranching enterprise that has been under an incubation phase at *High Hope Ranch (TX)* → supporting and empowering young social entrepreneurs
- ❖ Completing the transfer of the land at *Landwell (CA)* → fulfilling a decade-long vision of intentional living, rooted in place and in service to land and community
- ❖ Establishing the next generation of eco-farmers at *North Farm (WI)* → adding yet another dynamic farm to the innovative and thriving hub in the Till Plains of Wisconsin
- ❖ Continue to deepen conversations with kindred landowners and land-seekers across bioregions throughout the U.S.—from the Bodega Hills of CA to the Acadian Forests of VT



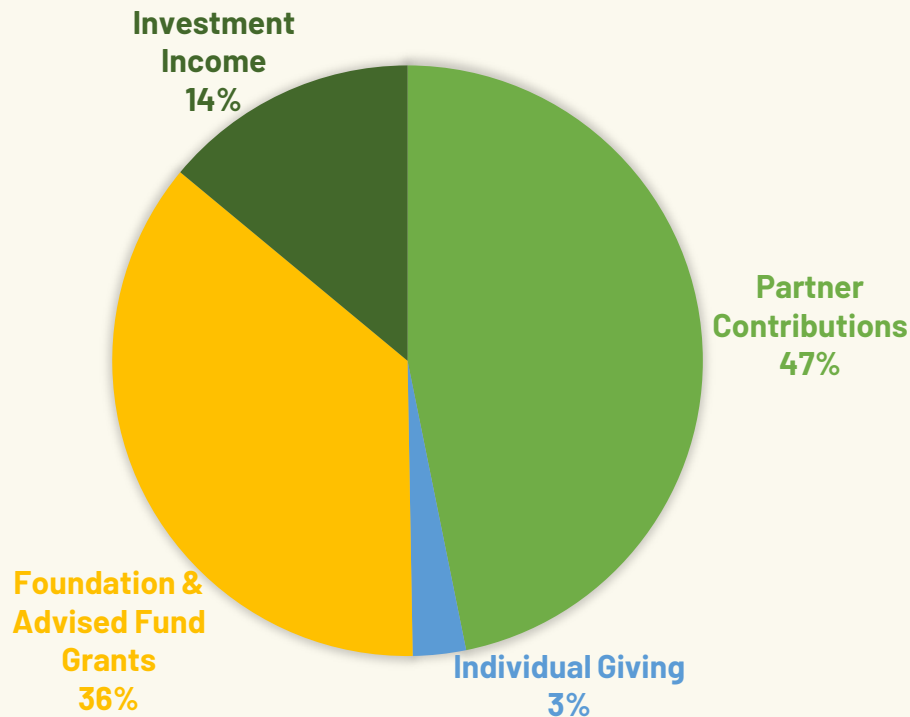
2025 Budget Detail: Expenses

Living Lands' Operating Budget for 2025 was \$322,000 (rounded). Operating Expenses are consolidated into five primary categories: *general operating* (insurance, IT/computer, travel and meetings, communications and development activities, dues and subscriptions, etc.), *payroll* (Director's salary and taxes), *land stewardship* (land and building care and land stewardship/agronomic consulting for WI), *professional services* (outsourced legal, accounting, and administrative services), and *property tax*. The chart shows the percentage breakdown between these categories in the 2025 Budget.



2025 Budget Detail: Income

Living Lands' Operating Budget for 2025 was \$322,000 (rounded). Operating Income comes primarily from four sources: *partner contributions* (funds paid into Living Lands Trust under our land partnership agreements, leases, licenses, etc), *investment income* (annual 4% draw from responsibly invested long-term funds), *individual giving* (online donations), *foundation and advised fund grants*. Living Lands' efficient operating model is heavily reliant on the generosity of grantmakers and the quality of its land partnerships. The chart shows the percentage breakdown between these sources in the 2025 Budget.



The Work of Generations

If your life's work can be accomplished in your lifetime, you're not thinking big enough.

Wes Jackson, *Land Institute Co-founder*



The Promise of Living Lands

Those whose life's work belongs to the Earth and restoring ecological health and the lost connection between humans and nature, know well that it is generational work extending beyond their lifetime. Cultivating ecological health in the soil, in the pasture, in the forest, or in the wetland, is joyous but tireless work—season to season, year to year, lifetime to lifetime. Gains made are too easily lost; suddenly cleared, subdivided, and sold on the open market. Living Lands Trust serves the land and those who understand that lasting change lies in our relationship to land and the patient work of restoration, renewal, and connection with nature—generation to generation.



High Hope Ranch

Living Lands Trust would like to express our deepest gratitude to the many partners, supporters, and allies, past and present, who have generously contributed to our mission and make our work possible.

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