



Martha's Vineyard Land Bank Commission

2025 ANNUAL REPORT

4238 acres, representing 7% 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; and at the land bank office in Edgartown.

Acquisitions

More about patience. At one of its inaugural meetings after the land bank's 1986 inception, the Edgartown land bank advisory board prioritized the 24.5-acre Gerald Jeffers, Sr. property, vintage farmland along the shores of the Cape Poge Bay. In 2025, four decades later, it purchased half of the acreage from Gerald Jeffers, Jr. and his sisters Geraldine Jeffers and Lolita Jeffers Beauboeuf — and is contracted to purchase the other half in 2026. The long-term vision is a revived farm, for crops and livestock and named for the family's forebears: the **Moses and Sarah Jeffers Farm**. The aggregate price will total out at \$7,000,000.

Christopher Brooks and Mary-Louise Williams allowed the land bank to expand the **John Presbury Norton Farm**. So that the institution could afford them, they advantageously priced their two vacant abutting building lots — totaling 3.3 acres — at a total figure of \$800,000. The land bank is always honored to be the recipient of such generosity.

As it likewise was when Rachel Baumrin and her family conveyed 11.7 acres for \$1,900,000. The family's favorable pricing permitted the land bank to unite, neatly and surgically, the cleaved halves of the **Christiantown Woods Preserve**.

Generosity also arrived in the form of an outright gift of land, for which the land bank is most appreciative: not far from Lagoon Pond a sloped 1.2-acre lot that long belonged to Nembhard and Vivian Culin was donated by their heirs. By this gift the **Old Oklahoma Preserve** was created.

Land management

Ecological inventories and studies continued at many land bank properties: Aquinnah Headlands Preserve, Black Brook Preserve, Chilmark Pond Preserve, Cove Meadow Preserve, Eachpoquassit Hill Preserve, Elder Jeffers Pond Preserve, Felix Neck Preserve, Fulling Mill Brook Preserve, Moses Jeffers Farm, Ocean View Farm Preserve, Pecoy Point Preserve, Pennywise Preserve, Priestess Pond Preserve, Quammox Preserve, Quenonica Preserve, Ripley's Field Preserve, Sepiessa Point Reservation, Southern Woodlands Reservation, Three Ponds Reservation, Trentfield Farm, Tisbury Meadow Preserve, Toad Rock Reservation, Toms Neck Preserve, Trade Wind Fields Preserve and Waskosim's Rock Reservation. The work is manifold: (1.) general avian surveys; (2.) shorebird surveys (one American oystercatcher fledged at the Squibnocket Pond Reservation as did one piping plover on Moshup Beach at the Aquinnah Headlands Preserve, but there were multiple aborted nest attempts at the Edgartown Great Pond Beach, Squibnocket Pond Reservation and Tisbury Great Pond Beach); (3.) butterfly and moth surveys; (4.) American woodcock, bat and wetland wildlife surveys via acoustic monitors and/or camera traps; and (5.) vegetation surveys (including 15 rare species).

After much industry, the Squibnocket Pond Reservation opened. Even though it was just phase one, a full half-mile of boardwalk was installed, as was a quarter-mile of dune-ladder and three sets of beach-stairs. Phase two is coming.

Public saltwater access on the Vineyard increased as a result of the Squibnocket Pond Reservation's opening, but also at the opening of a new stretch of the Tashmoo Preserve.

The final new property is the Quenomica Preserve South. Hikers park at the land bank office at 40-44 Meetinghouse Way and follow the trail, through field and woodland and neighborhood, to the far reach of Quenomica Point — at the concourse where several of the Edgartown Great Pond's coves meet. It's in the running as the most remote spot on Martha's Vineyard Island.

An ancient way was restored. The renaissance of the Old Road to James Cleveland's, occasioned by the land bank's purchase of a property possessing an easement in it, cinches the link between Arrowhead Farm and the Vineyard Sound. Hikers will pass through the land bank's Christiantown Woods Preserve and the Sheriff's Meadow Foundation's Cedar Tree Neck Sanctuary. *Note bene:* Milepost 100 has been reached; trails maintained by the land bank island-wide now number five-score.

Two up-island management plans advanced. The Gay Head Moraine Reservation management plan received local approval and the Toad Rock Reservation management plan is being drafted.

Awaiting the day when their winter pasture at the Wapatequa Woods Reservation is parasite-free — which two years of fallowness will deliver — the land bank goat herd will return. In the meantime a herd of six cows and four calves substitutes and, in 2025, grazed eight properties and managed 28 acres of grassland.

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

XIH

The 33rd annual XIH took place on National Trails Day (every first Saturday in June), ranging 19.2 miles from Chilmark Pond Preserve to Eastville Point Beach. Approximately 85 people participated; 75 started and 34 finished the entire cross-island trek. About half

of the finishers had participated in a previous hike and some were completing their fifth, eighth, and thirteenth consecutive XIHs.

Budget and related matters

The following chart synthesizes the land bank's annual finances. Anyone wishing to review the budget in its entirety, which includes a narrative describing the purpose of each line item expenditure, is encouraged to read it on the land bank website:

	fiscal year 2025 budgeted	fiscal year 2025 actual	fiscal year 2026 budgeted
	cash amount and percentage of total	cash amount and percentage of total	cash amount and percentage of total
revenues	\$13,000,000	\$15,382,094	\$14,000,000 *
administrative expenses	(\$ 752,137) 6%	(\$ 723,102) 5%	(\$ 812,955) 6%
land management expenses	(\$ 3,120,099) 24%	(\$ 2,463,506) 16%	(\$ 3,121,265) 22%
debt service expenses	(\$ 8,390,487) 64%	(\$ 8,240,175) 54%	(\$ 9,616,988) 69%
reserve expenses	(\$ 50,000) 0%		(\$ 50,000) 0%
unencumbered new receipts	\$ 787,275 6%	\$ 3,955,311 26%	\$ 498,792 3%

As of December 1, 2025 the land bank treasury contained some \$9,500,000 in cash, to fund all expenses including new acquisitions and the payment of debt service for existing properties.

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

Per statute, first-time homebuyers paid no land bank fee on purchase prices at or below \$900,000. This is called the "m" exemption and 39 transactions qualified for it in 2025. The 2026 threshold will be \$1,000,000.

Gifts

The land bank gratefully accepted the following gifts: (1.) \$1,530 in honor of Malcolm Watson; and (2.) \$100 from Tammy Kallman, in memory of Wayne Kallman.

Transfer fee revenues

Fiscal Year 2025 transfer fee revenues were:

	transfer fee revenues received July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025	percent of total
Aquinnah fund	\$ 250,894	2 %
Chilmark fund	\$ 671,693	4 %
Edgartown fund	\$ 3,838,611	25 %
Oak Bluffs fund	\$ 1,260,613	8 %
Tisbury fund	\$ 879,739	6 %
West Tisbury fund	\$ 789,497	5 %
<i>central fund</i>	<i>\$ 7,691,047</i>	<i>50%</i>
	\$ 15,382,094	100%

This represented a 9% increase over the previous year.

Commissioners and staff

The land bank commission currently comprises the following members: Steven Ewing,

Edgartown; Frederick Khedouri, Chilmark; Wesley Mott, commonwealth; Kristen Reimann, Oak Bluffs; Sarah Thulin, Aquinnah; Nancy Weaver, Tisbury; and Peter Wells, West Tisbury. The year-round land bank staff comprises the following individuals: Janette Andrews, fiscal officer; Winston Bell, livestock manager; Jean-Marc Dupon, conservation land assistant; Maureen Hill, office manager; Harrison Kisiel, land superintendent; Jeffrey Komarinetz, conservation land assistant; James Lengyel, executive director; Antone Lima, crew manager; Julie Russell, ecologist; Timothy Sheran, conservation land assistant; Blake Wasson, conservation land assistant; and Bryn Willingham, ecology assistant.

Respectfully submitted,

James Lengyel
Executive Director