

A landscape-scale  
conservation partnership



**Chadbourne  
Tree  
Farm** + **CROOKED  
RIVER  
HEADWATERS**



An aerial photograph of a dense forest, likely spruce or fir, with a dirt road winding through it. The trees are a vibrant green, and the road is a light brown color. The text "25,000 acres" is overlaid in large white letters.

# 25,000 acres

**of working  
forests in  
western Maine**



# Working to conserve the forests in and around Chadbourne Tree Farm for water quality, wildlife habitat, outdoor recreation, traditional working forests, and vibrant communities

## OUR STORY

The Chadbourne Tree Farm Partnership is four conservation organizations—[The Conservation Fund](#), [Inland Woods + Trails](#), [Mahoosuc Land Trust](#), and [Western Foothills Land Trust](#)—conserving 25,000 acres of working forests in western Maine, including the white pine forests managed by the Chadbourne Family for generations. With development pressures fragmenting open lands and forest habitats across Maine and New England, the Partnership was formed to protect the Chadbourne Tree Farm and adjacent lands for the waters, the wildlife, and the people who share this stunning landscape of western Maine.

Known for rugged mountains, crystal clear lakes, scenic hiking trails, and forest-placed communities rich in history and culture, western Maine is wild, rustic, and beautiful. In the fall, leaf-peepers make their way inland with cameras. In winter, skiers, snowboarders, and snowmobilers turn the mountains into a playground. In the summer, pristine cool waters draw anglers, swimmers, and recreational boaters to the lakes and rivers. And year-round, hikers, climbers, birders, bicyclists, hunters, and outdoor enthusiasts take to the woods.

### CHADBOURNE TREE FARM A prized American Forest

In the heart of this landscape is Chadbourne Tree Farm—over 15,000 acres primarily in Oxford County. Multiple tracts together comprised the iconic white pine forest which was listed for sale as a single lot in 2019. None of the three local organizations could undertake such an expansive effort independently given the scale and complexity of the project.

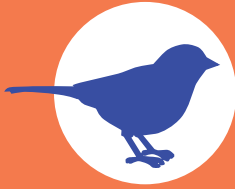
Joining forces with The Conservation Fund in 2019 successfully provided the capacity to acquire the lands temporarily, allowing all the partners time to identify, fund, and secure permanent conservation mechanisms. As a result of the partnership, a larger landscape will be protected including a more critical habitat, with protected recreational access and resources, benefiting our wild and human communities.

### CROOKED RIVER HEADWATERS Conserved with hope to inspire others

Inspired by the Chadbourne Tree Farm Partnership, abutting landowners, Mary McFadden and Larry Stifler conveyed a conservation easement on 12,300 acres spanning the towns of Albany Township, Greenwood, Norway, and Waterford in December 2021. “Our family wants to protect the Sebago watershed for generations to come. We are excited to share this beautiful land with the public and hope to inspire other landowners and donors.”

All three local partners are involved: Inland Woods + Trails (IWT) will maintain a trail system on the land, Mahoosuc Land Trust (MLT) will hold the easement, and Western Foothills Land Trust (WFLT) will serve as the backup holder. Other conservation partners rose to the occasion to make this transaction possible including the Natural Resource Conservation Service, The Nature Conservancy, Portland Water District, Sebago Clean Waters, and private donors.

# What makes this opportunity so unique?



## Protect critical wildlife corridors

The effects of climate change on temperature, rainfall, pest infestations, and plant growth are impacting wildlife. Animal species that require defined plant communities or stable rainfall and temperature ranges are losing critical habitats and may face significant population declines. The intact and connected nature of the Chadbourne Tree Farm parcels provides corridors for the safe movement of wildlife to necessary habitats.



## Protect open space

Access to the outdoors and open space is critical to individual health and provides significant benefits to youth in our schools. Through Maine West, a cross-sector partnership that our conservation partners participate in, we better understand the direct value of this project on our communities' well-being and education outcomes. Countless studies have documented the benefit of time outdoors; our health and education partners are looking to conservation leaders to ensure access to open spaces.



## Support ecosystem resilience

With much of the country experiencing the impacts of climate change—destructive forest fires, diminished snowpack, and extreme weather events—saving mature and intact forests is critical for resiliency and carbon storage.



## Preserve vital watersheds

With forests in and around Chadbourne Tree Farm acting as a sponge to filter water, this landscape is vitally important for water quality in lakes, rivers, streams, and drinking water for Maine residents. Chadbourne Tree Farm includes 3,000 acres in the Sebago Lake Watershed—the drinking water source for 200,000 residents in the greater Portland area. This is one of only 50 water supplies in the country where the water is so naturally clean, it doesn't require filtration.



## **Promote diverse economic growth**

Protecting this land allows for the protection of a diverse, natural-resource based economy that has evolved over the course of hundreds of years. What will the next generation of recreation and forest management look like? With the permanent conservation of Chadbourne Tree Farms land, locals can work together to plan for a long-term future. Ensuring that the land base exists for four seasons of recreation isn't just for fun—it supports better year-round jobs and therefore the economy as a whole.



## **Expand year- round outdoor opportunities**

Western Maine's elevation and geography make for snowy winters, enabling thriving winter sports such as Alpine and Nordic ski areas of all sizes, as well as snowmobiling that requires miles of connected trail maintained by local clubs across Chadbourne's and other private lands. The same mountains make for excellent hiking, boating, fishing, camping, bird-watching, hunting, leaf-peeping, and more—with mountain biking especially exploding in popularity. Chadbourne Tree Farm lands can help meet the nearly unlimited demand for these activities, as well as ensure their perpetual availability and connectivity.



## **Keep working lands working**

The Chadbourne Tree Farm lands have been managed for forest products by the same family for over 200 years. Their white pine stands garnered regional recognition for their outstanding stewardship. In addition to providing ecological benefits such as wildlife habitat and water filtration, selective harvesting and milling created jobs and other economic opportunities. This tradition of cultivating healthy forests that provide economic benefits to local economies and the environment is central to the Chadbourne stewardship ethic and will continue to be part of the land's history into the future.

## OUR STRATEGY

When the Chadbourne Family sold the 15,000-acre Tree Farm, The Conservation Fund (through its subsidiary, White Pine Forest LLC) used bridge financing to swiftly purchase the property, providing time for the local partners to secure funding to permanently protect the land from division and development, and to work with neighboring landowners to protect even more land. Over the next three to five years, The Conservation Fund will own and manage Chadbourne Tree Farm while the Partnership works to conserve nearly 13,000 acres and an additional 12,300-acres of forestland next door.

Much of the property will be open for public recreation for the first time in years. A new trail system will be designed and built on the property to enhance and extend the existing network of skiing, hiking, biking and snowmobiling trails, as well as horseback riding and rock climbing. Much of the property will also continue to operate as a sustainable forest, helping to serve as green endowments to local land trusts while providing sustainable and needed forest products.

### COMPLETED IN 2021

# 494

**acres acquired**

in October 2021 by Western Foothills Land Trust

# 12,300

**acres conserved**

in December 2021 via conservation easement bargain sale donation by Mary McFadden and Larry Stifler to Mahoosuc Land Trust—includes 1,400 acres of the Chadbourne Tree Farm

### TO BE COMPLETED IN 2022/2023

# 532

**acres to be conserved**

by Inland Woods + Trails

# 805

**acres to be conserved**

by Western Foothills Land Trust

# 978

**acres to be conserved**

by Mahoosuc Land Trust and U.S. Forest Legacy Program

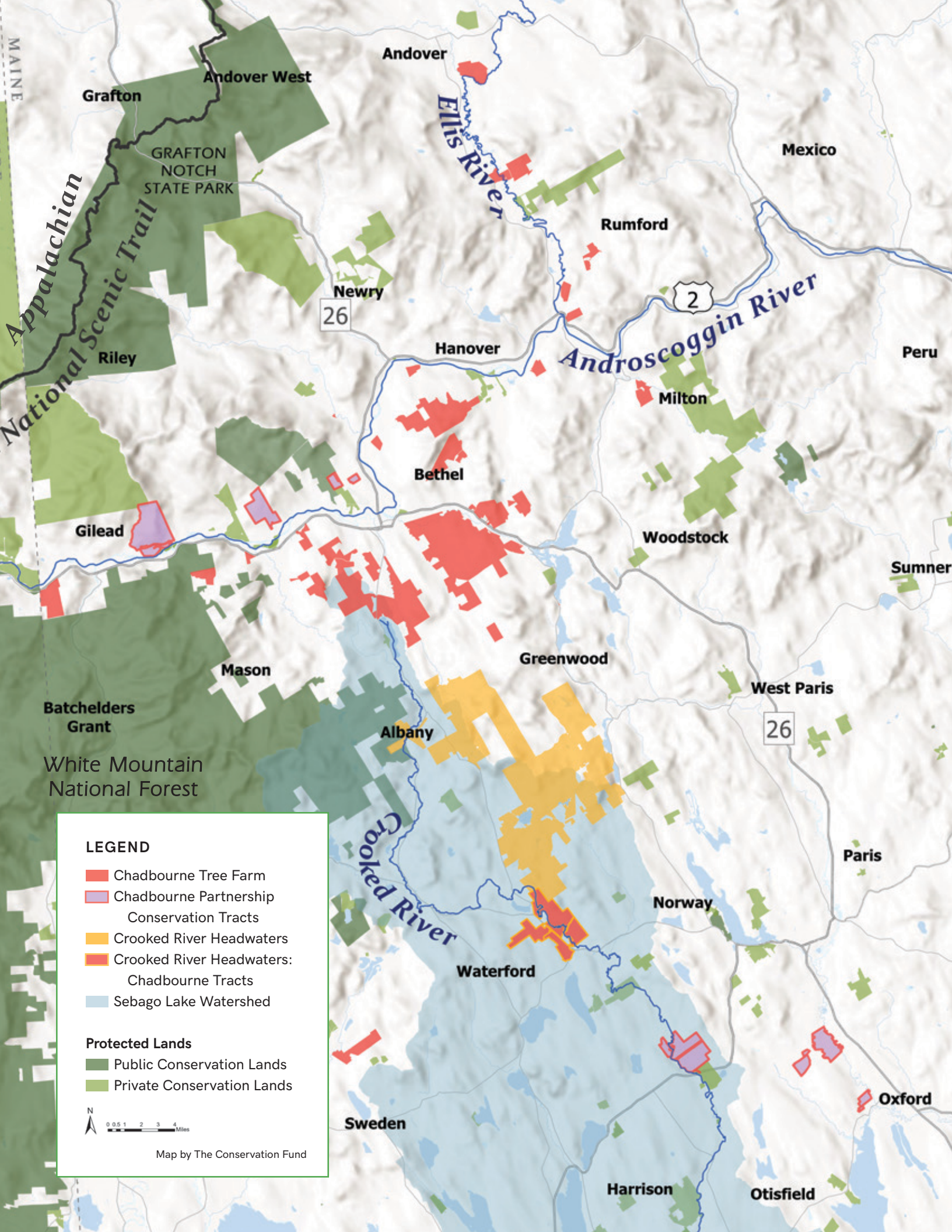
# 10,700\*

**acres to be conserved under a conservation easement**

by The Conservation Fund, ME Bureau of Parks & Lands and the U.S. Forest Legacy Program

\* inclusive of 978 acres to be conserved by Mahoosuc Land Trust





#### LEGEND

- Chadbourne Tree Farm
- Chadbourne Partnership Conservation Tracts
- Crooked River Headwaters
- Crooked River Headwaters: Chadbourne Tracts
- Sebago Lake Watershed

#### Protected Lands

- Public Conservation Lands
- Private Conservation Lands



Map by The Conservation Fund

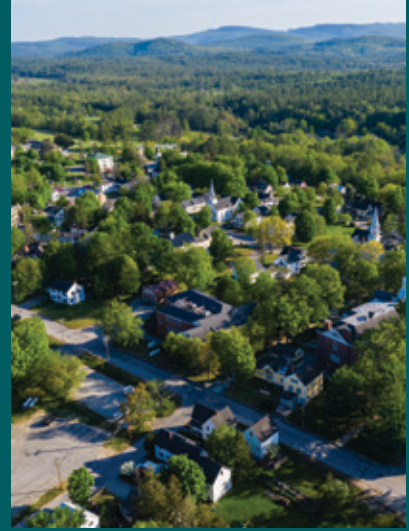


## Bethel Community Forest

**PARTNER** Inland Woods + Trails

**TOTAL COST** \$1,550,000

The new trail system on Chadbourne Tree Farm lands will connect the Bethel Village multi-use trails network from Sunday River Resort to Mt. Abram Resort—through downtown Bethel, and near the local schools. Additionally, Inland Woods + Trails will acquire 532-acres to benefit the existing 987-acre Community Forest. The scale and realization of this network and Community Forest expansion will fundamentally change the community and bolster a year-round economy.



PHOTOS: Jerry Monkman/EcoPhotography





## Tumbledown Dick Mountain

**PARTNER** Mahoosuc Land Trust

**TOTAL COST** \$2,250,000

Just west of Bethel, in Gilead, Tumbledown Dick Mountain is one of western Maine's favorite rock-climbing areas and its mile of Androscoggin riverfront offers important water access. This 978-acre parcel of Chadbourne Tree Farm also features dramatic cliffs, two mountain summits, and exemplary natural communities and wildlife habitat. Mahoosuc Land Trust, in partnership with the U.S. Forest Legacy Program, will purchase this parcel for long term stewardship of both its public recreation and ecological features.





## Ann Thurlow, Edward Mills, Staples Parcels

**PARTNER** Western Foothills Land Trust  
**TOTAL COST** \$2,900,000

In 2021 the Western Foothills Land Trust purchased the first of three Chadbourne Tree Farm parcels known as Ann Thurlow. The 494-acre forest in Oxford protects 185 acres of wetlands and 4 miles of frontage on the Little Androscoggin River. Management of the preserve will include a wildlife refuge, a small working forest, and low-impact recreational trails. The second Chadbourne Tree Farm parcel to be purchased by WFLT will be the 721-acre Edward Mills parcel in Norway, Otisfield, and Harrison, which is adjacent to the Trust's Twin Bridges Preserve. The Edward Mills parcel

includes 44 acres of wetlands, 1 mile of stream habitat, and 3 miles of frontage along the Crooked River. The largest tributary to Sebago Lake, the drinking water reservoir for 1/6th of Maine, the Crooked River provides essential spawning habitat for brook trout and landlocked salmon. The third parcel to be purchased for long-term stewardship is the 84-acre Staples Forest. Adjacent to the Oxford Elementary School, the forest will provide opportunities for trails, nature-based education programs, and outdoor space for students to simply explore.



PHOTO: Andy March

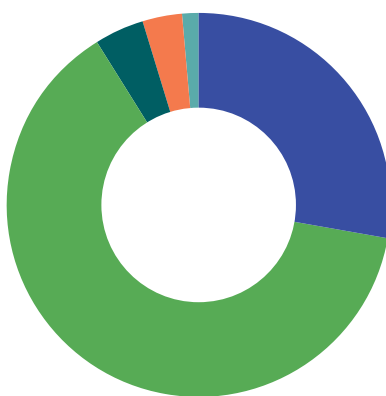


What will it take?

# \$3 Million

## partnership fundraising goal

**Protecting the 25,000 acres** of forestland in and around Chadbourne Tree Farm is a \$17M investment, of which \$14M has been committed.



- **\$4.8M**  
Land Acquisition
- **\$10.8M**  
Easement Acquisition
- **\$730K**  
Stewardship Expenses
- **\$570K**  
Project Management
- **\$213K**  
Transactional Costs

**TOGETHER,** we have an opportunity to preserve the character of western Maine, protect water quality, safeguard wildlife habitat, create outdoor recreation opportunities, continue a working forest tradition, and support vibrant communities in an iconic Maine landscape.



## Partners in Conservation

### THE CONSERVATION FUND

#### The Conservation Fund

TCF works nationally with public, private and nonprofit partners, to protect America's legacy of land and water resources through land acquisition, sustainable community and economic development, and leadership training, emphasizing the integration of economic and environmental goals.



#### Inland Woods + Trails

Based in Bethel, Maine, IWT has conserved nearly 1,000 acres, maintains 80 miles of trails, and is dedicated to creating permanent protection for recreational trail corridors for economic growth and prosperity by connecting communities through the development, maintenance, and promotion of a multi-use recreational trail network.



#### Mahoosuc Land Trust

Founded in 1989, MLT has conserved over 21,000 acres, working with other leading conservation organizations, individuals, and agencies. MLT's mission is to conserve and share the Mahoosuc region's important natural lands with our communities, in roughly twenty towns and townships in central Oxford County (ME) and eastern Coos County (NH).



#### Western Foothills Land Trust

WFLT is dedicated to the conservation and protection of native ecosystems, farm and forestlands, watersheds, and scenic landscapes for the benefit of wild and human communities in western Maine. Founded in 1987, WFLT currently protects over 8,000 acres of farm, working forestlands, and wildlands in the greater Oxford Hills area of western Maine.

