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**Stocking Stuffer Anyone?**

Looking for that rare holiday gift that looks great and does good? Head on over to our Store – [cacapon.org/shop](http://cacapon.org/shop) – and while you're there, be sure to check out our brand-new website!



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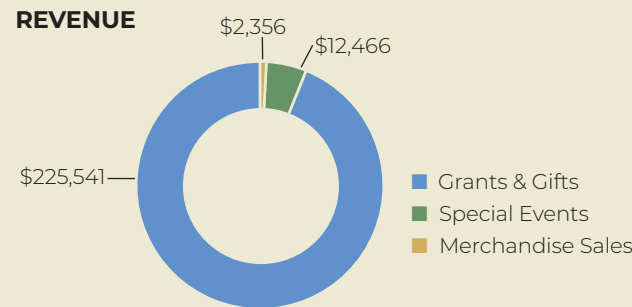


**2022 FINANCIALS**

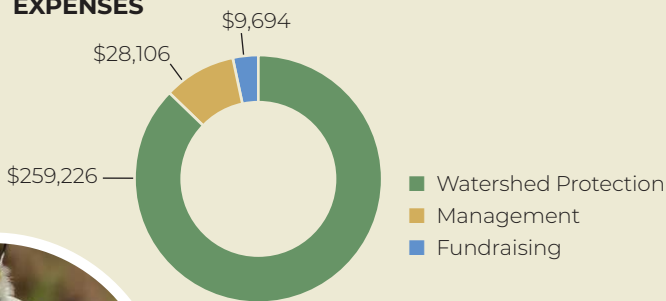
Thank you, dear Land Trust supporters! Grants and charitable gifts made up 94% of our 2022 revenue, and our *Cacapon Celebration* event brought in 5%. Altogether, 2022 revenue exceeded 2021 income by \$62,800 despite 2022 investment losses.

We spent 87% of our 2022 expenditures on land protection programs, 10% on management, and 3% on fundraising.

**REVENUE**



**EXPENSES**



**PROTECTING A BEAUTIFUL BUTTERFLY**

Bright white with streaks of green and flecks of yellow, the Olympia Marble (*Euchloe Olympia*) is a beguiling butterfly that lives in pine-oak rocky woodlands, shale barrens, and openings on sunny, wooded shale slopes. It feeds mostly on rockcresses, chickweed, phlox, and bluets. A property we're working to protect is home to this herald of springtime, which is imperiled in some regions. You too can help safeguard the Olympia Marble by avoiding use of diflubenzuron (Adept, Dimilin, Micromite, Vigilante) and BTK-based (Foray, DiPel) insecticides, especially in early spring when the caterpillars are most at risk; planting (and not mowing) wildflowers on your property; combating invasive plants; and supporting organizations like CLRLT!

Support our work: [cacapon.org/donate](http://cacapon.org/donate)

Photo: Brett Whaley

**Species of Concern**

Scores of species need our land stewardship to survive. Here are just a few:



Broad-winged Hawk  
*Buteo platypterus*



Harperella  
*Ptilimnium fluviatile*



Yellow-bellied Sapsucker  
*Sphyrapicus varius*



Meadow Jumping Mouse  
*Zapus hudsonius*



Eastern Box Turtle  
*Terrapene carolina*

**GUIDESTAR**

The Trust is now on GuideStar and has earned a Gold Seal of Transparency! You can donate to us directly from their site:

[www.guidestar.org/profile/55-0700086](http://www.guidestar.org/profile/55-0700086)



CACAPON & LOST RIVERS LAND TRUST



Protecting the forests, farms, rural heritage, and waters of the Cacapon and Lost Rivers Watershed

**SEE INSIDE:**

1 Gun Barrel Hunt Club Partnership



2 CWC Wins Grants to Advance Watershed Plan



3 Species of Concern  
Cerulean Warbler (*Setophaga cerulea*)



**A SEASON OF THANKS**

Dear watershed friends,  
In this season of Thanksgiving, we are thankful for our unique watershed and for you. Watershed protection occurs person by person, field by field, and forest by forest. Neighbors talk to neighbors, spreading the word about land protection and farm and forest enhancement programs. Landowners make wise land use decisions and protect the land in their care with conservation easements. Cacapon & Lost Rivers Land Trust helps landowners protect their lands. Donors give the resources necessary to do this work. Finally, the 15-plus organizational partners of the Cacapon Watershed Collaborative (CWC) bolster one another's efforts to support agriculture, conserve land, and protect clean water and wildlife.

You are one of these invaluable partners. We are grateful for you.

*Emily*  
Emily Warner, Executive Director



**A Celebration of Champions**

Cacapon Celebration 2023 reminded us of the joy and value of in-person connection. Blue skies and breathtaking vistas formed the backdrop to a day of friendship and shared commitment to protecting our beautiful watershed. The gathering took place on September 16 at the scenic Sunset Lodge at Capon Springs & Farms and featured excellent speakers, the auctioneering chops of Mike Rudolph, Appalachian tall tales, and plenty of delicious down-home fare. We were proud to name Tim Reese, then-president of Friends of the Cacapon River, as our 2023 Cacapon Conservation Champion and to recognize the many easement landowners and supporters who make our work possible.

In every respect it was a day of fun with a purpose. Thanks to everyone who contributed to the fabulous event and helped us meet our fundraising goals.

The bonds of friendship we forge not only enhance our capacity to protect the heritage and ecological vitality of our home—they make this important work a genuine pleasure.





# Partnership with GunBarrel Hunt Club will Preserve 850 Acres



A highlight of 2023 is Cacapon & Lost Rivers Land Trust's partnership with GunBarrel Valley Wild Life Preserve to protect 850 acres of vital hunting grounds in Hampshire County.

At this year's Cacapon Celebration, GunBarrel president George Sempeles underscored the profound meaning this partnership holds for his hunt club, which was founded in 1972.

"Let me emphasize the significance of this undertaking," he said. "Our hunting club has a rich history spanning over five decades. It has been a place where generations of hunters have bonded with the land, cultivated camaraderie, and developed a profound respect



for the outdoors. The decision to join the Cacapon & Lost Rivers Land Trust ensures that our legacy will endure, providing future generations with the same opportunities to connect with the land and foster a love for the great outdoors."

*“It's about recognizing that we are custodians of this land for future generations.”*

Sempeles hailed the “synergy” between GunBarrel and the Land Trust, emphasizing that it’s “about embracing the responsibility of stewardship” and “recognizing that we are custodians of this land for future generations.” He called the creation of the Trust back in 1990 “a watershed moment for conservation, a beacon of hope for preserving the natural beauty and wildlife

habitats we hold dear,” and highlighted the importance of conserving adjoining lands across the region.

“The Trust has embarked on a mission that will . . . contribute to the preservation of thousands of acres of land, including those held by our neighboring clubs, the Butch Mills Hunt Club, the Millbrook Hunt Club, and the valuable land owned by our dear friend and club member, Ralph Spaid.”

## NRCS Has Special Funding for Landowners

**Farmers, ranchers, and forest landowners:** The USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has special funding for the Cacapon and Lost Rivers Watershed.

Through fiscal year 2024, NRCS has special funding in its Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) for our watershed. EQIP is very broad, so funding can be spent on stream restoration, grazing systems, pasture management, forestry, and wildlife habitat activities. Stream projects get precedence.

Sign-up for the program is open and rolling, but March 15, 2024 is the next deadline for review of applications.

For more information, contact **Becky Royal at the Romney NRCS office at 304-822-3020, ext. 116.**



## CWC WINS PAIR OF GRANTS TO ADVANCE WATERSHED PLAN

The Cacapon Watershed Collaborative (CWC), a partnership of more than a dozen groups convened by the Cacapon & Lost Rivers Land Trust, has received two new grants to support its work protecting the region's essential habitat and heritage.

The CWC includes conservation non-profits, local government agencies, West Virginia University, and representatives of the local agricultural community. Since August 2022, members have held regular meetings to set the foundation for a comprehensive Cacapon Watershed Plan aimed at enhancing the capacity of partner organizations to protect the watershed's valuable ecology and way of life.

New grants from the Network for Landscape Conservation and the Chesapeake Land and Water Initiative will enable the CWC to implement the plan in 2024. A National Fish & Wildlife grant has funded the plan's development through 2023.

*“The Watershed is renowned as the great “lungs” of the East ... providing important habitat and high levels of resiliency against a warming climate.”*

The Cacapon and Lost Rivers Watershed is renowned as the great “lungs” of the East and one of the most ecologically beneficial tributaries to the Chesapeake Bay, providing important habitat and high levels of resiliency against a warming climate.

He concluded by expressing his optimism about the historic new chapter in the story of GunBarrel Valley Wild Life Preserve and surrounding lands. “It’s a chapter that exemplifies the spirit of community, conservation, and responsible stewardship. As we move forward in this exciting journey with the Cacapon & Lost Rivers Land Trust, let us remember the profound impact our actions today will have on the world we leave for tomorrow.”

## MOTIVATIONS & BARRIERS: A LANDOWNER SURVEY

*This past summer, we conducted a mail survey to better understand watershed landowners' motivations or barriers for protecting land through conservation easements and engaging in beneficial land management practices such as rotational grazing, fencing livestock out of streams, and forest management. We wanted to understand what works well for landowners and what hurdles they face.*

*Response rates were terrific at 29%. Preliminary results show that many landowners have taken active land management and land protection steps such as controlling invasive species and growing tree-lined streams or rivers. Many have active forest management plans; fewer have conservation easements. When asked to define threats to the continued management and protection of their land, respondents cited unsustainable land development and invasive plants and animals as leading concerns.*

# CELEBRATING THE OAK

By Henry T. Ireys



The watershed's extraordinary diversity of trees is one of the reasons it's a special place. Although I'm particularly fond of the sassafras (the only tree with three different leaves) and the red maple (can't beat its autumn flamboyance), I love the oaks best of all.

As most everyone knows, there are various kinds of oaks—about 90 native types in the United States. Our watershed contains many of them. That's the good news. . . and the bad. When my six-year-old grandson asked me what kind of oak tree was growing in the back field, I was stumped. Red oak? White oak? Scarlet oak? “I don't know,” I said.

“You don't?” he replied, seemingly in shock. To him, my credibility as a naturalist disappeared instantly.

I tried to regain his confidence by telling him about the importance of all oak trees to caterpillars. “Some species of caterpillar,” I said, “shelter only in the bark of oak trees; without oaks, they wouldn't have a home.” He nodded wisely, replying that oaks are also important for deer because of their acorns.

Our conversation stuck with me. If we're going to preserve the diversity of animal life in this Watershed, our oak trees must thrive. The huge ones that were here when Native Americans hunted in this area are long gone, but our current crop still supports many insects, birds, and mammals. Some experts argue that planting oaks—and keeping them from being cut down—is one of the most effective strategies for conserving local ecosystems.

This year, I've decided to plant some oak saplings out back. Red oaks. I know because the nurserymen told me so. Now I'll learn exactly how to tell a red oak from a scarlet oak. My credibility is on the line.

*“Some species of caterpillar shelter only in the bark of oak trees; without oaks, they wouldn't have a home.”*