

Environmental Strategy Report

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1. Introduction

In 2021, the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation (NHCF) hired the Southern Maine Conservation Collaborative (SMCC) to conduct a research project to illuminate needs and giving opportunities in the environmental and land and water conservation sector of NH. SMCC's mission is to work collectively to create mutually beneficial relationships with the earth, communities, and people through the conservation movement. In 2019, SMCC conducted a similar research project in Maine for the Maine Community Foundation to inform a new environmental grant making fund of a similar size to the scope of NHCF giving.

SMCC focused its research on areas that fulfill both the purpose language of NHCF's environmental field of interest funds and the new NHCF strategic plan, "Together We Thrive." SMCC's comprehensive exploration included:

- a review of relevant documents and reports prepared by NHCF;
- targeted interviews with many individuals involved in conservation and environmental work across the state (see Appendix I for full list of individuals);
- administration of a broadly distributed email-based survey of New Hampshire conservation and environmental organizations with a 59% response rate (see Appendix II);
- a survey of and interviews with social service organizations from around New Hampshire (see Appendix III); and
- Interviews with donor-advised funds advisors.

This report summarizes needs and giving opportunities in NH's land and water conservation sector. The report recommends a framework to help inform NHCF in its funding decisions with existing environmental funds, and its guidance of donor-advised fund holders, aligned with the Foundation's commitment to advancing equity, racial justice, and economic security. The report also highlights emerging issues or high impact opportunities in the environmental sector outside of land and water conservation, and future areas of research.

2. Project Background

The New Hampshire Charitable Foundation grants an average of \$7M per year (2017 - 2021) to environmental organizations through a combination of application grants, donor-advised funds, and designated funds. Donor advised funds make up just over half of the total support to environmental organizations each year. Application grants include the Foundation's [Community Grants](#) program and other programs with specific geographic and thematic purposes such as the [Upper Connecticut River Mitigation and Enhancement Fund](#), the [Neil and Louise Tillotson Fund](#), the [Wellborn Ecology Fund](#), and three environmental field of interest funds. While the other application grant programs have supported a number of different environmental organizations around the state, the environmental field of interest funds have primarily supported five organizations (The New Hampshire Chapter of the Nature Conservancy, Conservation Law Foundation, New Hampshire Audubon, New England Grassroots Fund, and the Forest Society of New Hampshire) with multi-year general operating support grants as well as a multi-stakeholder collaborative working on the Great Bay Estuary.

NHCF is committed to reviewing and refreshing its approach to grantmaking in this field. Prior to SMCC becoming engaged, NHCF undertook the following research steps:

- Landscape scan – In 2019 Foundation staff and leadership spoke to six environmental leaders and five donors about emerging issues in the field.
- Environmental Opportunity Grants – In 2020 Foundation staff launched a mini-grant program for grants up to \$5,000 for projects in the emerging issues elevated in the 2019 landscape scan. Thirty-six grant applications were received, nine of which were funded for a total of \$45,000. These applications provided new information about community engagement and racial justice and equity in NH’s environmental organizations.
- NHCF Non-Profit Research Synthesis – In 2021, as part of its Foundation-wide strategic planning work, NHCF engaged with a consultant to conduct a research synthesis of needs assessments and other reports centered on the needs and obstacles to opportunity experienced by New Hampshire’s BIPOC communities and strategies and promising practices to address the identified needs and obstacles.

In 2020 NHCF began a Foundation-wide strategic planning process to evolve its operations and grantmaking. This process concluded in May 2022. One major outcome was an explicit organizational commitment to equity, racial justice, and economic security. NHCF has affirmed that this commitment will guide its work in all areas, including a new approach to environmental grantmaking.

The NHCF hired Southern Maine Conservation Collaborative to build upon internal work and solicit deeper engagement and input from people within and outside of the conservation field. The results of this research are not intended as an environmental strategy; rather, it is intended to inform a new approach to grantmaking from the environmental field of interest funds, as well as providing guidance to donor advised fund holders. This approach is both responsive to the needs of the environmental community and aligned with the values of the strategic plan.

3. Review of NHCF related documents, reports

Together We Thrive Strategic Plan 2022-2027: This plan focuses on integrating and centering equity and racial justice in all of its programs and activities. In the strategic plan, NHCF commits to expanding its longstanding approach to protecting NH’s natural resources to include equity and addressing climate change and its detrimental impacts on communities.

The McCabe Fund Purpose Language: This fund states that the fund supports New Hampshire nonprofits dedicated to all programs and projects related to land conservation and environmental education.

Summary and Notes of 2019 Landscape Scan: Through staff sessions and meetings with six environmental leaders and five donors, it was proposed that NHCF’s environmental program adopt the following priority themes for decision-making:

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- Climate change: reduce greenhouse gas, mitigate effects, help natural and human communities adapt.
- Environmental justice: serve and empower communities that are disproportionately impacted by environmental problems due to economic, racial, geographic, or other factors.

Environmental Opportunity Grant Program: This program was a one-time initiative providing small grants to organizations in New Hampshire doing work at the intersection of community and the environment. Proposals were solicited for work in three areas: 1) Renewable energy and energy efficiency, either policy or practice; 2) Community action and education on priority issues determined by the local community, such as pollution, solid waste disposal, and food access; 3) Strategic land and fresh water conservation that provides equitable public access and/or advances public health goals. The funding opportunity was open to any related non-profit organization; 36 applications were received and 9 were awarded grants for a total of \$45,000.

New Hampshire Charitable Foundation Non-Profit Research Synthesis: The NHCF contracted with Anthony S. Poore in 2021 to conduct a literature review and synthesize existing state and national data sources (needs assessments, policy briefs, articles, etc.) assessing the needs and obstacles to opportunity experienced by New Hampshire's BIPOC communities and the strategies and promising practices to address the identified needs and obstacles. Particularly relevant are its "Themes across Domains" (pg. 2)

- *The perception that New Hampshire is ethnically and racially homogenous is a barrier, and increasingly a distortion of New Hampshire's true demographic profile.*
- *Public and private sector allies need to respect the voice of those most affected by issues of race and equity by centering their voices, respecting their goals for their communities, and stepping aside and allowing them to serve as spokespeople for their own causes.*
- *People of color often feel dismissed or unwelcomed when attempting to participate in public meetings, processes, and events.*
- *Funders and other community-based organizations need to build trust with stakeholders and reflect the communities they serve.*
- *The ability to break down and report data by race, ethnicity, and language is lacking across domains and sub-domains and should be strengthened.*
- *Clear and concise definitions of terminology and outcomes are important to ensuring that all stakeholders across sectors are aligned and focused.*
- *Organizations across sectors need to examine and change internal practices and procedures that serve as barriers to those who need access to services.*
- *Existing best practice models across domains should be researched, modified, and used.*
- *Additional training for people in all sectors is necessary to better understand issues related to equity, inclusion, diversity, and race in New Hampshire.*
- *New Hampshire needs culturally and linguistically competent services for all.*

4. Interviews

SMCC interviewed staff and volunteer representatives from 28 environmental and conservation organizations doing work in NH (full list of organizations can be found in Appendix I). SMCC's Executive Director conducted these one-on-one interviews and provided the assurance that findings would be shared in aggregate such that individual interviewees' comments could not be attributed.

The first phase of the project involved in depth interviews with the six environmental organizations that have been receiving funding through NHCF's environmental field of interest funds. The questions asked of these organizations were:

- How can nonprofits in New Hampshire's environmental sector advance equity, racial justice, and economic security through their work?
- What does diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice mean to you and your organization?
- What are your organization's overall challenges?
- What are your organization's overall challenges specific to diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice work?
- What might be an interesting new approach to conservation funding?
- What is coming down the pike for you that will need funding?
- Are there any projects out there that you are following/hearing about that you think particularly illustrate the intersection between land and justice?
- Any region that might need particular support or attention?
- Are there any communities/individuals I should talk with who are not associated with a land conservation org?

All of the organizations interviewed in this first phase were established organizations that focus on large geography, have worked in NH for a long time, have large staff and established boards of directors, and are able to stand up and manage multiple programs. These organizations are sophisticated in their community-based work, have identified a variety of ways to start addressing climate change, and work in partnership with many other organizations. Given this suite of attributes, these organizations have successfully overcome various barriers and challenges that many smaller organizations in the state have not.

Notwithstanding these advantages, these well-established organizations still noted certain challenges:

- the scarcity of operational funding opportunities beyond the funding they received from NHCF every year;
- managing younger staff members' drive to integrate justice before the older staff and board are prepared to do so;
- the need for a deeper understanding and definition of equity that clearly articulates economic inclusion and security.

The second phase of interviews took place during and after the online survey was distributed, and included organizations that specifically requested to speak with the consultant. One of the last survey

questions asked if the respondent wanted to have a confidential conversation with the consultant; 22 people said yes. These conversations were not scripted with a list of questions other than following up on either what people wrote in as a question or allowing the respondent the opportunity to choose their topic. Some people wanted to know more about the foundation, others wanted to expand on one of their survey answers, and others had questions about how to begin to center equity and justice in their work.

5. Environmental Strategy Survey

SMCC conducted a comprehensive survey of 54 NH environmental organizations. It was sent to 92 organizations and had a 59% response rate. The survey sought to solicit feedback on:

- their greatest needs and funding challenges;
- the degree to which they're advancing equity, racial justice and economic security;
- their approaches to community engagement;
- their focus on climate change mitigation and resilience;
- their work on environmental justice;
- how they are listening to communities and incorporating those voices in their decision making; and
- other opportunities outside the boundaries of NHCF's environmental funds.

In an effort to increase the response rate, SMCC offered the chance to win one of four \$500 grants which likely increased responses. Even still, the issues specific to all-volunteer and/or very small organizations are not as heavily represented in the aggregate data.

The full survey results and further analysis are contained in Appendix II. Included here are high level takeaways from the most pertinent questions:

- Q2: The majority of respondents were Executive Directors, with some Board and Staff members also replying.
- Q3: Every NH county was represented in the responses, with Carroll Co. garnering the greatest percentage.
- Q4: The overwhelming majority of respondents have paid staff, most between 1 and 5 employees.
- Q10: The majority of responding organizations do not collect diversity data on their board and senior leadership.
- Q14: The majority of respondents have a budget between \$250K – 500K.
- Q15: The greatest need for funding for most respondents is general operating support.
- Q19: Major donors provide the most funding to respondents followed by Membership and then Foundation and Corporate Grants.

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- Q21: Almost all respondents would rather receive unrestricted funding than restricted funding, and (Q23) also would prefer multi-year grants to single year grants.
- Q25: Most respondents would like NHCF to provide, in addition to funding, training in areas that are identified by nonprofits as common needs and to convene organizations around shared issues.
- Q28: For most respondents, the most common form of community participation is through board service.
- Q29: Respondents learn what their communities want through surveys, evaluations of programs, and community listening sessions.
- Q30: However, an overwhelming majority know that they are not reaching everyone in their communities.
- Q32: To address this gap, respondents stated that they need capacity and a deeper understanding of how to reach different people.
- Q33: A majority of organizations are doing work focused on equity, racial justice, and economic security.
- Q34: A majority of respondents indicated that they need more learning and more funding to do work centering equity, racial justice, and economic security.
- Q38: The top barriers to work focused on equity, racial justice, and economic security are time, board resistance, and connections to new communities.
- Q39: All respondents agree that it is very important to promote resiliency and connectivity in the face of climate change.
- Q41: Most respondents do not have enough funding to do this work to promote resiliency and connectivity in the face of climate change.
- Q42: Many respondents, but not all, indicated that it is important to integrate principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion into their work.
- Q44: Most respondents do not have enough funding to integrate principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion in their work.
- Q45: Many respondents, but not all, indicated that it is important to be engaged with the local community.
- Q47: About half of the organizations do not have enough funding to be engaged with the local community.
- Q48: All respondents said that it is important to be in partnerships with other organizations.
- Q50: About half of the organizations do not have enough funding to be in partnerships with other organizations.

6. Potential Partner Organizations

SMCC surveyed and interviewed select NH organizations in the social services sector whose primary focus is not environmental but whose mission could be said to intersect with environmental concerns. The premise behind this exercise was that in order for environmental organizations to be more effective in engaging their community, broadening their reach, and centering equity, racial justice, and economic security, they will need partners beyond those in the conservation and environmental sector. Surveying a selection of social service organizations also provided an opportunity to potentially identify other lines of NHCF giving.

Organizations were identified by NHCF program staff with knowledge of different counties. A shorter survey was developed that asked about:

- general challenges;
- the biggest barriers to partnering with other organizations;
- where they saw overlap between their work and environmental/conservation organizations;
- what help land trusts or other environmental/conservation organizations might give them; and
- how the NHCF might help support, foster, and facilitate these connections.

Organizations were offered an opportunity to enter a drawing for one of four \$500 grants as a means of positively influencing the response rate, and they were asked if they would like to speak with the consultant. The survey was sent to 25 organizations, 13 of which (52%) responded (see Appendix III).

Survey respondents noted that the biggest barrier to partnering with conservation/environmental organizations is not having existing personal connections to build upon. Respondents also noted that they are so focused on providing direct services, they neither have the time nor the capacity to look beyond what they are already doing. Many of them, however, do recognize the connection to environmental and conservation work, both in terms of what they might offer to environmental organizations and how environmental organizations might help them.

The consultant interviewed JerriAnne Boggis of the New Hampshire Black Heritage Trail. Opportunities for partnership with conservation organizations were identified including historical interpretation, stewardship, and shared community outreach. However, there were also many barriers noted. These included the common ones of time and funding as well as the honest acknowledgement that many of the white-led organizations lack cultural competency and historical knowledge which can result in harmful conversations and distrust. JerriAnne encourages organizations to bring the NH Black Heritage Trail into a project at the beginning stages. She said, "If we are not at the table, it is not for us."

The consultant also spoke with Robert Goodby, author of [A Deep Presence: 13,000 years of Abenaki History](#). What is now called New Hampshire is the unceded lands of the Abenaki people who have lived in the area for thousands of years. Colonization had and continues to have destructive and oppressive impacts on the Abenaki that still live in the area. Addressing these impacts will take time and be difficult, and it should still be a part of the work. Staff at NHCF have started the process to learn more about

these communities. Mr. Goody has developed a good working relationship with Abenaki individuals across the state and spoke of the need for flexibility, commitment, and relationships.

7. Donor-Advised Fund Conversations

SMCC, with NHCF staff member Rosalind Erwin, interviewed the advisors of two donor-advised funds that give to environmental and conservation organizations. This step was intended to ensure relevance to the donor-advised fund advisors who recommend grant funding each year and with whom this report will be shared. In both cases, the individuals were very knowledgeable of conservation issues and actively participate as board members and/or volunteers to many different organizations.

8. Summary of Findings on Priority Needs and Giving Opportunities in Land and Water Conservation, with a Special Focus on Equity

There is an incredible variety of approaches being utilized by conservation organizations in New Hampshire to fulfill their missions. So too, organizations are in many different stages of maturity and understanding of the environmental sector's relationship to broader community issues. There are small organizations that are just starting to see how their work needs to expand. Meanwhile, other organizations are already engaged deeply in their communities and are looking to replicate successes, share their stories, and find new partners. With this in mind, below are a range of suggestions, based on the findings, that could serve the breadth of needs of this diverse group of organizations.

Expand the number of organizations funded by these grant programs. There is a gap between the work of organizations that have been receiving operational funding from NHCF environmental funds through the years and those that have not. Funded organizations have been able to more effectively and efficiently address the most pressing issues of the time – climate, equity, and Covid. Many organizations are also working on these issues, but they need more help to do that. Consider developing programs geared toward different starting points to better track the things that are working and those that are not. Additionally, these different groupings could feed into cohorts or other opportunities for relationship building and support. An additional benefit to providing funding more broadly is that it will help organizations begin to de-center the voices and preferences of wealthy individuals who have historically had an outsized impact on the organizations' priorities and focus. This suggestion is based on the survey results indicating that major donors provide the most funding to a majority of survey respondents, as well as on the number of interviewees who highlighted this inherent conflict as organizations dependent on wealthy individuals donating their land and money.

Champion the idea that conservation work has to be different to achieve different impacts. There is a real need for greater understanding of what it will take to integrate and achieve equity, racial justice, and economic security in conservation and environmental work in New Hampshire. As an example, TNC's Manchester Cedar Swamp Trail was designed specifically to attract a broad diversity of visitors: it has lights, is paved, has signs and benches and more. It was an expensive undertaking, took a long time to develop, and involved many different people and organizations. From an equity standpoint, it is achieving high standards by creating the conditions to allow many different types of people to feel

welcome. While the survey revealed that engaging new communities is a goal for many land trusts, doing so means they will need to come to terms with the need to change some of the key ways in which they do their work. Land trusts that pride themselves in managing hard to find, less well known, and less traveled “hidden gems” will need to rethink their approach to trail development and access more generally if they hope to engage new communities (recognizing that for easement properties, public access is still at the pleasure of the landowner). The requirements to manage remote parcels vs ADA trails are remarkably different economically, culturally, and environmentally. NHCF should be prepared to both encourage organizations to think more comprehensively about the changes they need to make and support these organizations financially and with extended timelines to accomplish their work.

Clearly define the terms within the context of this work - Many people and organizations we heard from do not yet understand the connections between the environmental and conservation work and equity, racial justice, and economic security. A common first response is, “But we don’t have Black, Indigenous, People of Color individuals in our community so what are we supposed to do?” That might be followed with, “We do offer programming for free” which is an example of equitable programming geared at reducing economic barriers. Organizations do not seem to identify the offering of free programming as helping to advance equity. Respondents to the survey and interview questions focused primarily on the goal of racial justice even though this is only one of the three tenants of NHCF’s focus. It is unfortunate because it both diminishes the importance of economic inclusion and all other forms of difference, and it sets organizations into positions of defensiveness or weakness. To overcome this, there is a need for the foundation to more clearly define what these words mean in a tangible and relatable way so that organizations may better see themselves in the work and therein understand why and how these concepts are connected to conservation and environmental work.

Integrate a climate change narrative and focus. Most organizations surveyed and interviewed are engaged in at least some level of climate change work. NHCF can both support this ongoing work and encourage more impact by incorporating a climate narrative throughout its communication avenues. At this time, there is very little about New Hampshire’s natural environment in general on the website.

Showcase and fund case studies of exemplary projects in the state. The survey and interviews have uncovered a number of projects that could serve as case studies for the purpose of education and inspiration as well as to further explain the foundation’s vision for impact. Here are a few examples – there are more to be found in the survey results.

Equity, Racial Justice, Economic Security

- The Manchester Cedar Swamp All Persons Trail, Manchester NH, The Nature Conservancy: A 1.2-mile universally accessible trail through the urban preserve that was developed with deep community involvement and has resulted in city-wide initiatives to reduce barriers. (Guidebook attached as Appendix IV.i.)
- Winchester Learning Center, Winchester NH, Monadnock Conservancy: The land trust built a nature park on land owned by the Learning Center in the center of Winchester to provide outdoor opportunities to children, adults, and families.

- New Hampshire Black Heritage Trail, Forest Society of New Hampshire: A marker and plaque is on a FSNH property in Hancock which describes the Due family and Jack, a once-enslaved African who gained his freedom and lived in Hancock in the late 1700s and early 1800s.
- New Hampshire Jobs for America's Graduates (NH-JAG), Appalachian Mountain Club: In concert with NH-JAG's mission, AMC's Teen Trail Crew Program helps young people develop teamwork, leadership, community service, and workplace skills through a unique seven-week, summer paid trail crew experience on local public lands in northern New Hampshire.

Climate Change

- Conservation Planning, Harris Center for Conservation Education: Through their land conservation efforts, Harris Center prioritizes connectivity, resiliency, and adaptation in the properties they preserve.
- Agricultural Mitigation, Grafton County Conservation District: involved in an initiative with the 9 other NH conservation districts to develop a grant program (funding for a one-year pilot program) for agricultural producers to mitigate and improve their resilience to climate change.
- Advocacy, Conservation Law Foundation (CLF): CLF is preparing to advocate for the adoption of aggressive, enforceable statewide greenhouse gas emission goals (e.g., net zero emissions by 2050) when the political climate is conducive.
- Public Education Program, Hanover Conservancy: The Conservancy is developing a public education program on how land conservation can address the effects of climate change in communities.
- Guided Property Hikes, Ausbon Sargent Land Preservation Trust: The Trust is centering climate change impacts in the interpretive hikes it offers on certain properties, highlighting ecological and other impacts.

Address the tendency to use NH's racial demographics as an excuse. The Manchester Cedar Swamp All Persons Trail provides another example in the discussion on impacts especially as it relates to economic inclusion. In nearly all interviews, the fact that New Hampshire is not racially diverse was cited as one of the biggest barriers to getting involved in the work toward more inclusive and just organizations. While there is some level of truth to this, using it as an excuse for inaction illustrates a lack of understanding of the impacts of the work towards justice. At the Manchester Swamp Trail, so many more types of people have been accessing this resource beyond those the creators of this trail were centering in their design. Lights make it better for those afraid of the dark; paved trails make it better for kids and strollers; clear signage makes it better for people not accustomed to going outside. The concept of Targeted Universalism applies here: it suggests setting universal goals for the whole and then employing targeted approaches to achieve these goals. Rather than framing the issue as addressing an injustice impacting a marginalized group, organizations focus on community improvements that all people benefit from and in so doing, the issue affecting the marginalized group is solved too. Additionally, the NHCF Non-Profit Research Synthesis found that the perception that New Hampshire is ethnically and racially homogenous is a barrier, and increasingly a distortion of New Hampshire's true demographic profile.

Address the incomplete nature of the commonly used statement, “We permanently protect land, which is available for all.” A number of organizations view this phrase as their equity statement in full, and yet why aren’t diverse users visiting their properties? The conversation needs to shift toward identifying the barriers that prevent people from accessing properties. Another way to look at the concept of Targeted Universalism referenced previously is as a process to uncover all of the barriers faced by specific groups within the community in accessing a universal goal. This will help organizations do their own assessment of access and further consider the range of individuals that make up their communities. This approach could help organizations to break out of their natural connections to find new people and groups that were previously overlooked or underserved. It could also form the basis of one or more grant application questions that helps organizations identify barriers to use.

Give the organizations time to do this work. The number one barrier for organizations to addressing new projects and making changes in the way they work is the lack of time. Operational funding that is unrestricted to a project or a program is a time saver and allows an organization to decompartmentalize their work and work more effectively, essential elements to thinking broadly about organizational culture and the large-scale transformation needed to accomplish the work. The tasks at the center of integrating equity, racial justice, and economic security into our work take a lot of time – re-evaluating core values, assessing organizational culture, developing relationships, changing communications. These actions that are difficult to quantify or accurately plan for. Time and again in conversation about exciting projects or relationship building with new partners, people said they needed more time than they had.

Draw conceptual links between broader community needs and environmental work. Often in the case of hard work, until it becomes a priority, we can claim to have no time to deal with it. This barrier of not having enough time might also be reduced if the foundation’s narratives made connections between environmental work and broader community needs such as housing, public health, education outcomes, food insecurity, and inclusion. One example of that work is the Winchester Learning Center and Monadnock Conservancy – a mutually supportive partnership that extends the impact beyond the specific mission-based work or the individual organizations. Doing this would also support more developed programming for environmental justice projects and opportunities that center interdisciplinary solutions.

Prioritize food insecurity and agriculture for conservation organizations. The Non-Profit Research Synthesis includes a section on food systems and food insecurity (pg. 3). A number of the findings and recommendations directly relate to land conservation, land access, and equity:

- Farmland is vanishing across the country.
- White landowners currently control between 95-98% of the farmland in the United States and nearly 100% in the Northeast.
- Access to land is the number one barrier for people of color to feed their communities healthy, fresh food.
- Food insecurity levels are higher among households in poverty, households headed by single parents, and black and brown households.

Consider adding housing as a strategy to address environmental justice. Based on the Non-Profit Research Synthesis, the section titled “Environment & Natural Resources” references issues related to housing, workforce safety, and public health (page 19.) Housing can be addressed by conservation organizations either through partnerships with housing organizations or as part of the mission of the land trust. Community land trusts’ missions often aspire to addressing the basic housing needs of its community members. To become more relevant and equitable, organizations must work to address the issues that people have identified; in the case of the Research Synthesis, this focused on responses from BIPOC individuals in NH. One way NHCF could help address the housing issue is by making the connection through narrative. This can serve to verify what some already know, and educate those who still learning. Additionally, a number of organizations talked about how hard it was for their staff to find affordable housing near to work. The impacts of a tourist economy on cost of living make it difficult for those in the service industry to live locally. This is an issue across the northeast.

Support regionally specific and sector-wide networks. Shifting the work is hard and is best done in relationship with other organizations trying to do similar things. There do not appear to be many networks or collaborations of organizations banded together with the focus of addressing equity and justice, or climate. The New Hampshire Coalition of Land Trusts’ conference this year featured the topic of equity and hosted knowledgeable speakers and a wide variety of webinars showcasing great work. But based on survey responses and interviews, there does not seem to be a culture of cross organization relationships on these topics.

Intentionally target the smallest organizations. There are organizations in New Hampshire that are very small and are seeing their relevance changing in a way that their current board is unable to address. This inability derives from a few factors: people have less time to volunteer; a board may not accurately reflect the changing demographics of a community; increasing expenses and stewardship needs due to overuse and climate change have stretched an organization beyond its organizational capacity. A distinct capacity-building program could be developed that offers small grants to cover costs associated with strategic planning, partnership development, and mergers. Consider different forms of support: funding for certain criteria, or for consultants or other forms of technical assistance.

Commit time and resources to the Abenaki. Support initiatives that are already going on, particularly to expand and protect Abenaki culture such as basket making or language lessons. Prioritize relationship building with individuals first – which requires time and flexibility. Survey respondents and interviewees are interested in engaging with the Abenaki but acknowledge their need for education and awareness – how might NHCF play a role in an education initiative? It is complicated but vital work.

Lead by example. Continue to be on the leading edge of relationship building, internal change, and creative funding. Developing new approaches – including finding and funding marginalized organizations and initiatives, which takes extra time to build trusting relationships. Continue to support NHCF staff to spend that time externally. Focus internally on the staff and governance culture – what is the dominant culture in your organization? Does that allow for everyone to thrive in their jobs? Many foundations around the country are beginning this internal work. Additionally, address the question – where does

NHCF invest its money? Are those investments in alignment with the strategic goals? Share that information with others who might learn from NHCF's process of responsible investing.

9. Recommended Framework for NHCF Environmental Grantmaking

Foundations around the country are reviewing their policies and practices in order to be more impactful and relevant. The framework presented here is specifically applicable to the environmental funding programs. Additionally, many of the suggestions could be implemented in all NHCF grant programs.

1. Develop a narrative around producing outcomes informed by Together We Thrive, particularly Goal 1, Strategy 2: "Increase focus on equity, racial justice and economic security in grant making, scholarships and strategic initiatives."
2. Additionally, develop a narrative around producing outcomes that address climate change and its detrimental impacts on communities. Use the grant application process as a way to expand thinking about conservation's role to ameliorate the changes and develop adaptations.
3. Clearly identify grant programs for the environment on the website; where possible name the fund by the purpose not by the name of the donor.
4. Recommended Funding Principles for equity and justice that will reduce barriers for all applicants and result in greater impact and change.
 - a. Provide general operations funding – it reduces time spent on the application and in grant management, and empowers organizations to take risks and feel trusted. These organizations know how to allocate resources wisely.
 - b. Promote the funds by traveling the state to tell people about it, focusing on outreach to organizations you want to target especially if they have not received funding from NHCF before.
 - c. Consider multi-year funding. Very few good ideas take only one year to complete.
 - d. Commit to awarding the amount requested. Partially funded projects present a unique challenge to project efforts.
 - e. Be transparent about the changes to the program, the processes, and decision-making matrix to build trust with the grantees and to empower them to offer honest feedback to benefit all.
 - f. Be explicit about the fund's priorities- this enables grantees to make the best use of their time. Clarify what NHCF means by equity, racial justice, and economic security in the framework of environmental and conservation work. Be clear in your definition of success.
 - g. Publicize the amount of annual funding available, the likely size of grants, and therefore the likely number of grants to be awarded each year.
 - h. Make the grant application as simple and concise as possible. Such as:
 - i. avoid requiring unnecessarily complex legal documents;
 - ii. consider making the application forms available in major immigrant languages;
 - iii. establish general word count suggestions rather than limits which can save applicants a lot of time;
 - iv. do not require applicants to provide their immigrant status;
 - i. Provide options for in person or virtual meetings; in-person meetings require significant time and lost pay.

- j. Create an evaluation and reporting process that prioritizes the soundness of an idea over the polish of an application recognizing that many organizations, particularly those lead by marginalized communities and BIPOC individuals lack financial resources to hire grant writers.
- k. Give constructive feedback on why an organization wasn't funded so that they might improve future requests.
- l. After some time, consider studying the grant requests to identify common needs and themes to present back to the community.

10. Emerging Issues and High Impact Environmental Opportunities Beyond Land and Water Conservation

There is a growing awareness in the conservation sector of the intersectional nature of environmental issues. Conservation activities don't occur in isolation. They impact and are impacted by other aspects of society. On one hand this makes conservation work more complex than formerly conceived, yet on the other it creates an opportunity and pathway to more equitable and just social outcomes. It demands that we no longer view the sector in isolation, but rather as one component of a larger system. It requires more nuanced thinking. Several issues live in this intersectional space, and are worthy of being viewed as logical investments of both time and resources that are integral to achieving lasting environmental outcomes. These include:

- Affordable Housing:
 - availability of affordable housing is an essential element of a diverse community
 - proximity to home, work and services has direct climate implications directly impacts
 - degraded housing stock is an environmental justice issue
- Local Food Access
 - inequitable access to farmland for Indigenous and farmers of color (Non-Profit Synthesis Report pg. 3)
 - inequitable access to healthy, affordable, culturally appropriate food
 - regenerative agricultural practices that sequester carbon
 - PFAS resulting from sludge spreading on agricultural land is a growing environmental disaster
- Renewable Energy
 - energy conservation measures across sectors, including housing
 - community-level transition to renewable energy
 - planning associated with appropriate siting of renewal energy installations
- Waste Management:
 - waste stream management efforts through reduce, reuse, recirculate, recycle
 - waste management facility siting and inequitable social and environmental impacts
 - conflict in out of state waste as an income generator vs. its environmental impact

- Community Health and Wellness:
 - ensuring access to nature as a means of supporting physical and mental health
 - integrating childcare access and offerings into
 - conservation initiatives
 - addressing climate-related threats to local communities through targeted projects

11. Future Areas of Research

Follow up: The survey that was sent out to the conservation and environmental community offers an opportunity for follow up. Sending a similar version out in 3-5 years would be an opportunity for NHCF to determine the impacts of their grant funding, and would give the environmental community a snapshot of what it has accomplished, what has worked, and what has not. The impacts of climate are rapidly changing many aspects of our lives and so it is very important that we have opportunity to assess and evaluate our actions to capture lessons. A follow up survey could be informative.

How to talk about Economic Security: Many people and organizations in the conservation and environmental field need help talking across class – a majority of the field is peopled with white, upper middle-class people. The inability to talk across class makes it hard to recruit representatives from less advantaged backgrounds to engage in conversations. There is a cultural block that keeps the sector from talking about poverty and it is very hard to find frameworks to help with this communication. These frameworks, curricula, trainings, etc. exist to support people to talk about and across race; it is much harder to find these same types of resources to learn and talk about class. Such resources would help people and organizations working in rural and poor areas of the state – and will help conservation and environmental work become more relevant to more people.

Intergenerational Movement Building: For the most part, younger people in nonprofits center justice in their work. Whether it is the result of growing up with the climate emergency at their doors, or through their academic studies which now increasingly provide intersectional approaches to systems analysis and study, young people in the conservation and environmental sector are ready to implement equity, racial justice, and economic security. That is not the case for older people – staff or volunteers. So how do we make this work? Older folks who are now in power and positions of leadership have much to offer based on their experience, their knowledge, their perspectives that young people don't. How do we prevent two separate movements? How might this work in NH?

Climate Impacts: Understanding that the political climate in NH has prevented large scale governmental support of climate initiatives, as it has in Maine, there still is great need for a statewide report on the impacts of climate and what can be done about it. A cross cutting study to understand what the communities and the sectors in the state are facing so that there can be a collective response and coordinated action is essential. Within that, there has to be a recognition that many impacts will be felt more severely by marginalized and disadvantaged communities. (See Initial Recommendations of the Equity Subcommittee, Appendix IV.ii.)

Abenaki History: There is a great need for the non-native population of New Hampshire to more deeply know the Indigenous history of the land. There seem to exist resources and information that are accessible to all, yet most people who the consultant spoke with did not know where to turn. These resources are primarily authored by non-native people which inevitably is incomplete. Might there be an opportunity to support local Indigenous people to tell these stories? How might NHCF support, but not lead, such an initiative/project? (See [First Light Learning Journey](#) as an example and/or model.)

12. Conclusion

Land and water conservation efforts have a vital role to play in addressing the broader social and environmental challenges facing NH today, including the work towards equity, racial justice and economic security. Culturally we are at a reckoning point, acknowledging the integral role that people currently play - and have played for millennia - in natural systems. For too long people have been left out of the conservation equation; the sector lacks tools, resources, and skills to thoughtfully address this reality. The New Hampshire Charitable Foundation is in a unique and powerful position to illuminate this connection and support a wide scale movement of change.

NHCF has clearly articulated the focus of its strategic plan as advancing equity and racial justice. Two of its five core values focus on equity and justice as well. These can form the underpinnings of a new approach to the environmental and conservation fund strategy and impact. With refocused support from NHCF, the conservation/environmental community can achieve highly equitable and just community outcomes. NHCF's bold leadership in this work has the potential to be transformational.

Report to the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation
Southern Maine Conservation Collaborative
Final December 21, 2022

Appendices

1. List of Interviewees
2. Environmental Strategy Survey Results
 - I. Spreadsheet of all responses
 - II. Environmental Strategy Survey Report
3. Partner Survey Results
 - I. Spreadsheet of all responses
4. References
 - I. The New Hampshire All Persons Trail Guidebook, 2022
 - II. Initial Recommendations of the Equity Subcommittee, Feb 2022

Acknowledgements

Thank you to the following people for their help:

Doreen Johnston, Program Manager, SMCC
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And to all of the people who took the time to talk with us, answer our surveys, and prepare and send summaries and materials for the different projects.

ENVIRONMENTAL STRATEGY SURVEY REPORT

Southern Maine Conservation Collaborative conducted a comprehensive survey of 54 NH environmental organizations. It was sent to 92 organizations on or around March 29, 2022, and had a 59% response rate. A summary of response data is presented below.

Question 1 - Contact Information

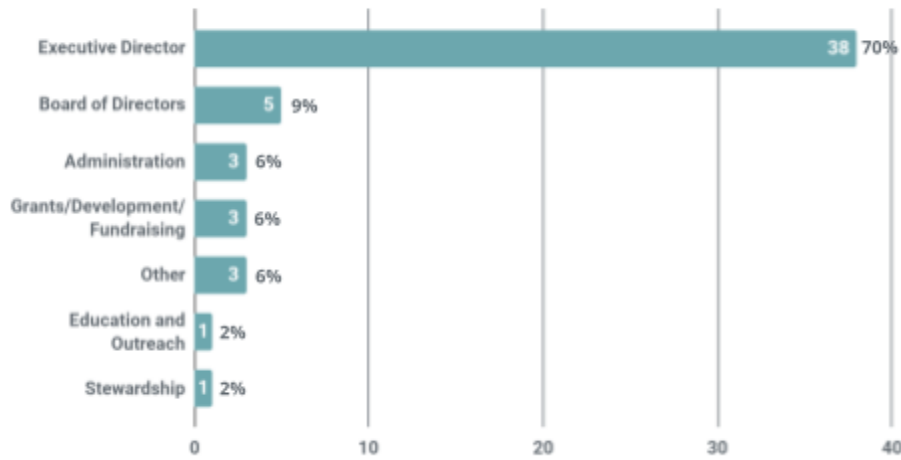
Respondents were asked to share contact information for their organization including: survey respondent's name, name of organization, organization's address, email address, and phone number. Below is a breakdown of the responding organization's locations. (N=52)

Town	# of Responses	Town	# of Responses
New Hampshire		New Hampshire	
Albany	1	Montpelier	1
Bristol	1	New Boston	1
Chocorua	1	New London	1
Concord	9	Newbury	1
Conway	1	Newmarket	1
Dover	1	Orford	1
Durham	1	Portsmouth	3
Effingham	1	Randolph	1
Epping	1	Rye	1
Epsom	1	Sunapee	1
Francestown	1	Union	2
Franconia	1	Walpole	1
Greenland	1	Wolfeboro	1
Hampton	1	Woodstock	1
Hancock	1	Other States	
Hanover	1	Boston, MA	1
Holderness	3	Greenfield, MA	1
Keene	1	Lawrence, MA	1
Lyme	1	Norwich, VT	1
Meredith	1	Washington, D.C.	1

Question 2 - Role in Organization

Respondents were asked to share their role at their organization. The majority of respondents were Executive Directors, with some Board and Staff members also replying. (N=54)

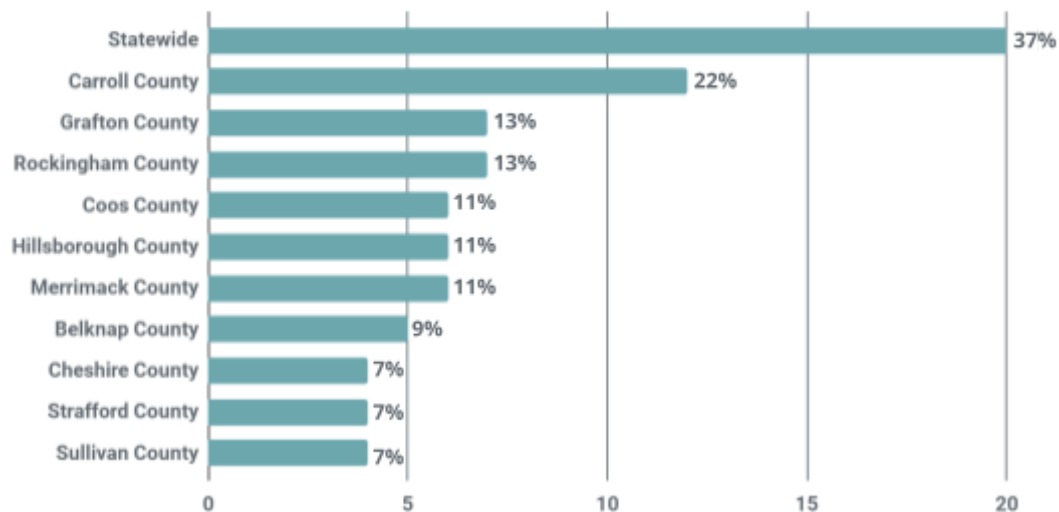
Role in Organization



Question 3 - Please identify the county (or counties) where the organization works.

Respondents were asked to share where in New Hampshire their organization works. Every NH county was represented in the responses, with Carroll Co. garnering the greatest percentage following organizations working statewide. (N=54)

Counties Served By Organization



Question 4 + 5 + 6 - Paid Staff

Respondents were asked if their organization has paid staff, and if so, the breakdown of part-time to full-time employees.

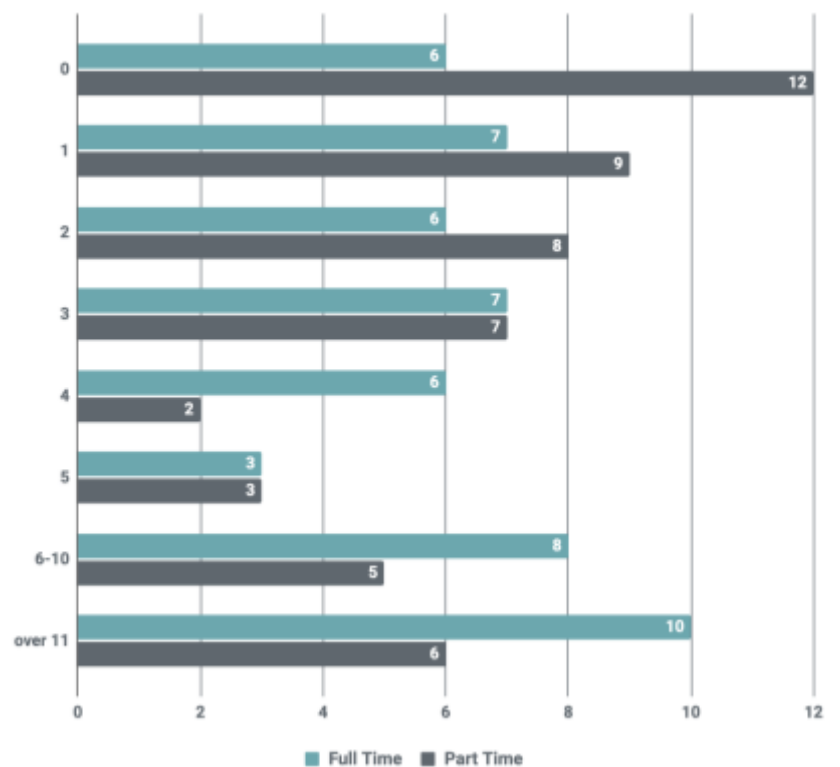
The overwhelming majority of respondents answered that they have paid staff.

Answer Choices	Responses (N=54)
Yes	94% (51)
No	6% (3)

Most respondents reported having between 1 and 5 paid employees.

Answer Choices (# of employees)	Part Time (N=52)	Full Time (N=53)
0	12	6
1	9	7
2	8	6
3	7	7
4	2	6
5	3	3
6-10	5	8
11 or more	6	10

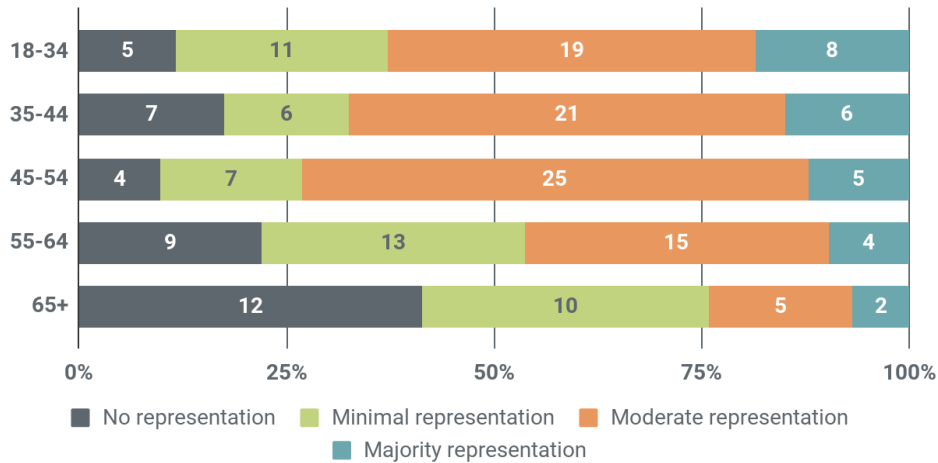
Number of Employees (Full Time & Part Time)



Question 8 - What age range(s) are represented within your organization's (paid) staff?

Respondents were asked to report which age ranges they had no representation, minimal representation, moderate representation or majority representation within their paid staff. (N=51)

Age Ranges Represented within Paid Staff

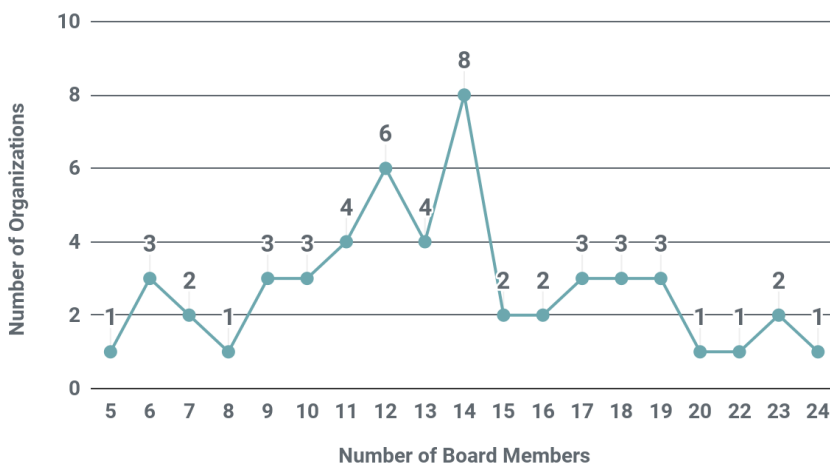


38 of 51 organizations have at least 1 staff member between 18-34 years old.
 33 of 51 organizations have at least 1 staff member between 35-44 years old.
 37 of 51 organizations have at least 1 staff member between 45-54 years old.
 32 of 51 organizations have at least 1 staff member between 55-64 years old.
 17 of 51 organizations have at least 1 staff member over 65 years old.

Question 7 - How many people serve on your Board of Directors? (N=53)

Average: 14 board members
Smallest: 5 board members
Largest: 24 board members

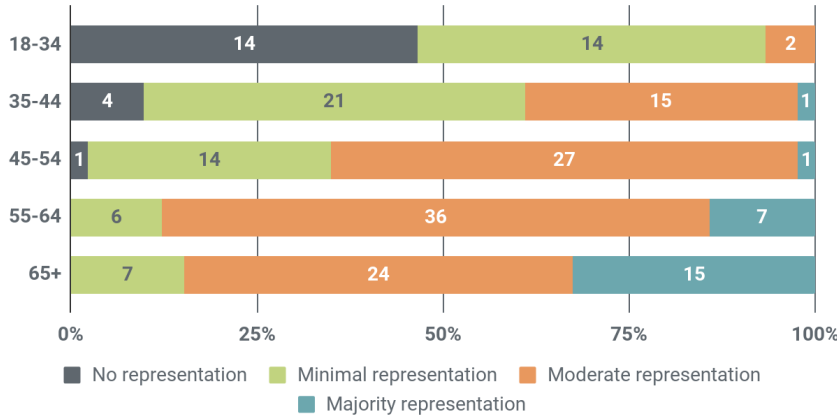
Number of Board Members



Question 9 - What age range(s) are represented on your organization's Board of Directors?

Respondents were asked to report which age ranges they had no representation, minimal representation, moderate representation or majority representation within their Board of Directors. (N=52)

Age Ranges Represented on Board of Directors



16 of 52 organizations have at least 1 board member between 18-34 years old.
 37 of 52 organizations have at least 1 board member between 35-44 years old.
 42 of 52 organizations have at least 1 board member between 45-54 years old.
 49 of 52 organizations have at least 1 board member between 55-64 years old.
 46 of 52 organizations have at least 1 board member over 65 years old.

Question 10 - Does your organization collect data on the diversity of your board and senior leadership?

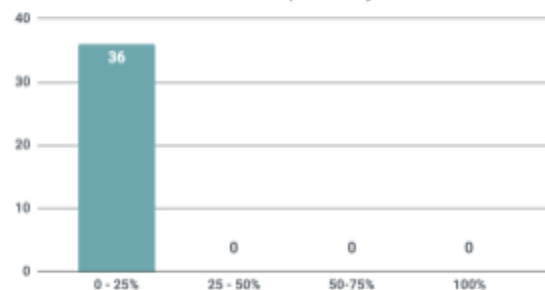
The majority of responding organizations do not collect diversity data on their board and senior leadership. (N=53)

Answer Choices	Responses
Yes	47% (25)
No	53% (28)

Question 11 - If yes, what percentage of your board and senior leadership identify as nonwhite?

All responding organizations reported that less than 25% of their board and senior leadership identify as nonwhite. (N=36)

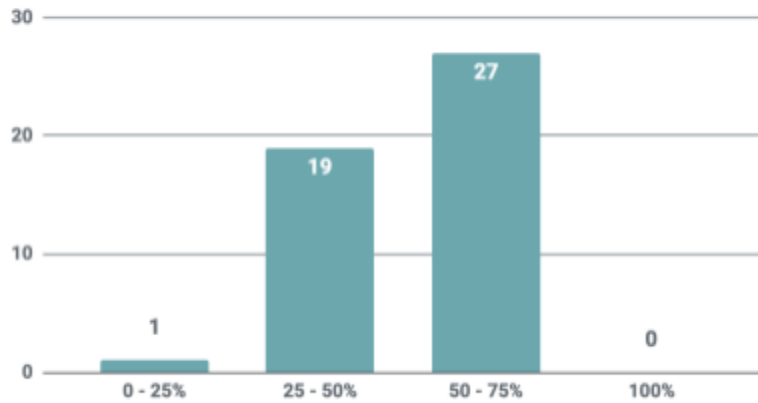
% of Board & Senior Leadership Identify as Nonwhite



Question 12 - What percentage of your board and senior leadership identify as female?

The majority of responding organizations reported that over 50% of their board and senior leadership identify as female. (N=47)

% of Board & Senior Leadership Identify as Female



Question 13 - Are there other diversity metrics of your leadership, staff, or stakeholders that you'd like to share?

Respondents were invited to offer their thoughts in a written, open-ended format to this question. 19 chose to do so; their responses revealed 5 additional diversity metrics tracked across the responding organizations:

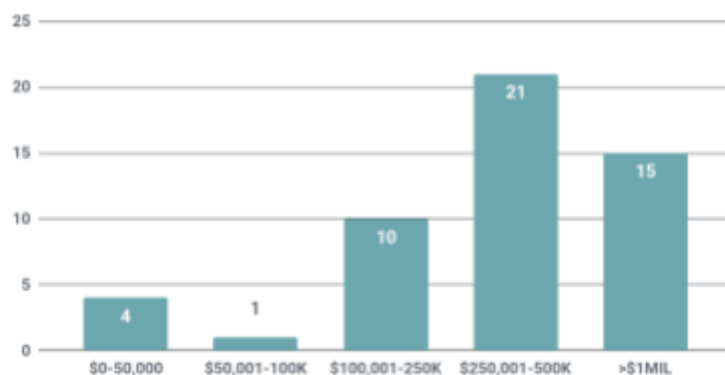
- LGBTQ+ representation (6 comments)
- Gender Diversity (5 comments)
- Geographic Diversity (4 comments)
- Economic Diversity (3 comments)
- Diversity of Skills (1 comment)

Question 14 - What is your organization's Annual Operating Budget?

The majority of respondents have a budget between \$250K – 500K. (N=51)

Range	Organizations (#)
\$0-50,000	4 (8%)
\$50,001-100K	1 (2%)
\$100,001-250K	10 (20%)
\$250,001-500K	21 (41%)
>\$1MIL	15 (29%)

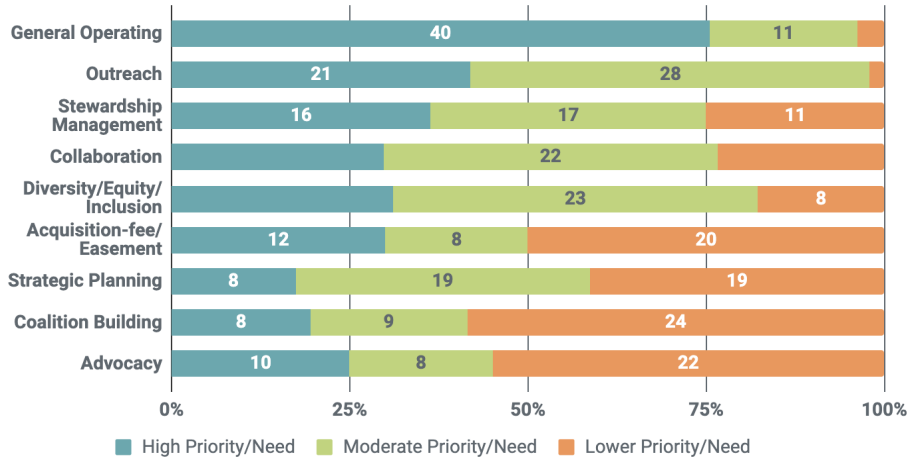
Distribution of Organizational Budgets



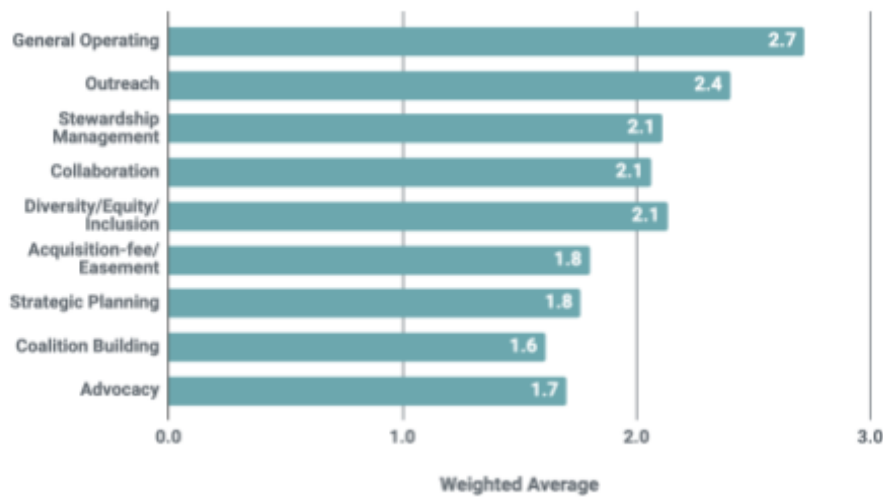
Question 15 - Right now, where is the greatest need for funding in your work? (in terms of immediate financial need and priority)

Respondents were asked to rank 9 funding areas by most immediate financial need and priority. The majority of respondents reported their greatest need for funding is general operating support. (N=53)

Immediate Funding Needs (Ranked by Priority/Need)



Immediate Funding Needs (Ranked by Priority/Need)

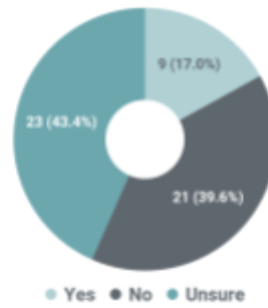


*Please note that answer choice Outreach and Collaboration were shortened from Outreach (Community Engagement/Education/Marketing) and Collaboration/Partnerships/Relationship Building

Question 16 - Do you see this changing in the future? (N=53)

Answer Choices	Responses
Unsure	43% (23)
No	40% (21)
Yes	17% (9)

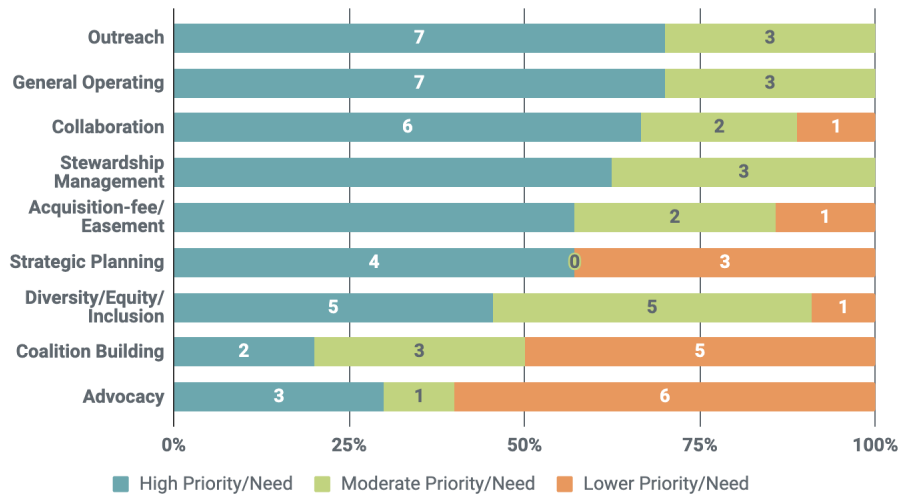
Will greatest funding needs change in the future?



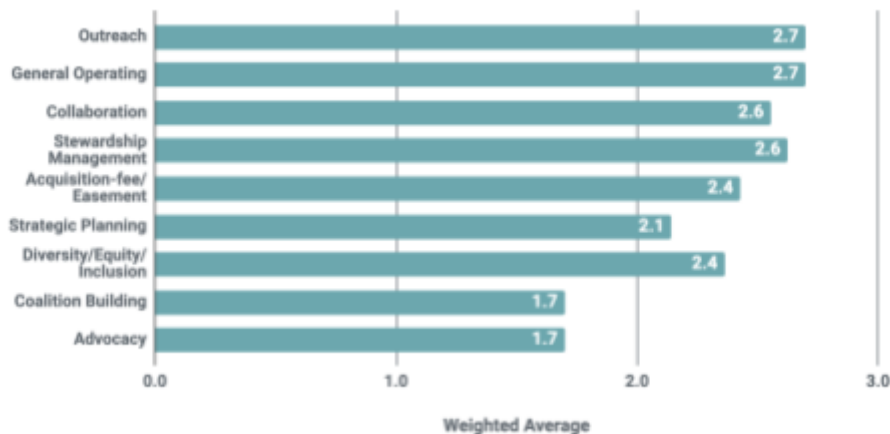
Question 17 - If yes, how will your priorities change?

Respondents were asked to rank 9 funding areas (same as Q15) by anticipated need and priority in the future. The majority of respondents anticipated their greatest future need for funding being Outreach (Community Engagement/Education/Marketing) and general operating support. (N=14)

Future Priorities (Ranked by Priority/Need)



Future Priorities (Ranked by Priority/Need)



*Please note that answer choice Outreach and Collaboration were shortened from Outreach (Community Engagement/Education/Marketing) and Collaboration/Partnerships/Relationship Building

Question 18 - Why or why not?

Respondents were invited to offer their thoughts in a written, open-ended format to this question. 32 chose to do so; their responses are grouped based on how they responded to question 16 (yes, no, unsure) about if respondents foresee their immediate funding needs changing in the future.

Yes, anticipate funding needs changing - 9 responses

- New opportunities & priorities coming soon (5 comments)
- Current capacity building work (strategic planning, conservation planning, ongoing evaluation) may impact priorities & funding needs (4 comments)
- Staff & leadership transitions (2 comments)

No, do not anticipate current funding needs to change - 10 responses

- Expect mission and funding priorities to remain consistent (7 comments)
- At the beginning of a multi-year strategic plan (1 comment)
- Current funding approach is meeting needs (1 comment)
- Multi-year, unrestricted general operations funding will remain most impactful (1 comment)

Unsure if funding needs will change - 13 responses

- Strategic planning may impact priorities & funding needs (3 comments)
- Funding needs may change as our organizations grows (new programs/exhibits, maintenance needs, capacity building) (3 comments)
- Funding needs may shift after the completion of a current project (1 comment)

Question 19 - Generally, where does your funding come from? (rank in order of importance)

Respondents ranked funding sources in order of importance on a scale of 1 to 8. Major donors provide the most funding to respondents followed by Membership and then Foundation and Corporate Grants. (N=52)

Funding Sources (Ranked by Importance)

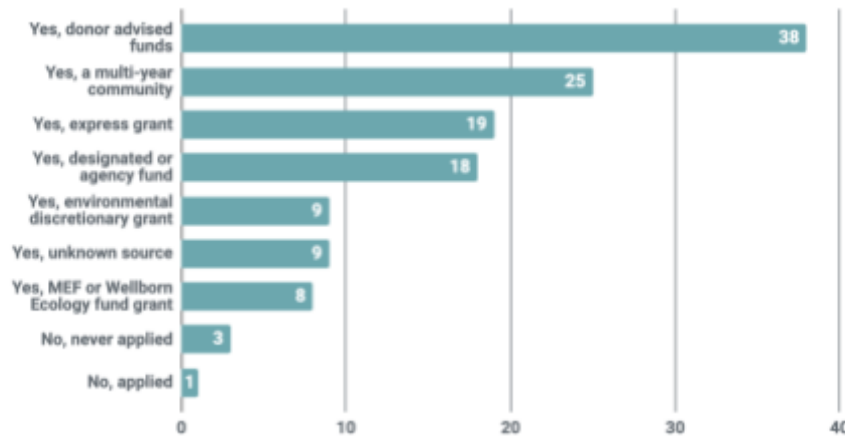


*Please note that the answer choice Earned Income was shortened from Earned Income (products and services)

Question 20 - Have you received funding from NHCF in the past? (choose all that apply)

Respondents were asked if they received New Hampshire Charity Fund (NHCF) funding in the past and if so, what category of funding. The overwhelming majority of responding organizations has been funded by NHCF in the past, most frequently through a donor advised fund. (N=53)

NHCF Past Funding

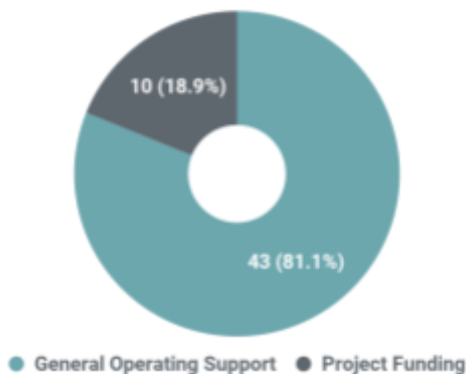


**Please note that answer choices were shortened from: Yes, from donor advised funds; Yes, a multi-year unrestricted community grant; Yes, an express grant; Yes, from a designated or agency fund; Yes, an environmental discretionary grant; Yes, but I'm not sure from which source; Yes, an MEF or Wellborn Ecology fund grant; No, and my organization never applied; No, but my organization has applied*

Question 21 - Would you rather have? (choose one)

Respondents were asked if they would rather receive general operating support (unrestricted) or project funding (restricted). Almost all respondents would rather receive unrestricted funding. (N=53)

Which would you rather have?



Question 22 - Why?

Respondents were invited to offer their thoughts in a written, open-ended format to this question. 51 chose to do so; their responses are grouped based on how they responded to question 21 about if respondents prefer general operating support or project funding.

General operating support (unrestricted) - 42 responses

- Ongoing; sustains the organization; makes it possible to run and fund projects (12 comments)
- Redirect/use funds where they are most needed; more responsive (11 comments)
- Harder to fundraise; less opportunities (10 comments)
- Also support projects & programs; broad, flexible funding; most impactful (8 comments)
- Capacity building (7 comments)
- Easier application and reporting (4 comments)
- People most proximate to the work determine funding priorities instead of donors (1 comment)

Project funding (restricted) - 9 responses

- Apply for joint funding with other organizations (1 comment)
- Operating expenses are covered by other means (1 comment)
- Operating expenses are built into programs (1 comment)
- Ensure projects are fully funded (1 comment)
- Need both project and operating funding or project funding that covers adequate overhead expenses (1 comment)
- Have a well funded endowment that covers operations (1 comment)
- Project costs far outweigh operating costs (1 comment)

Question 23 - Larger grants (as the result of multi year funding for one organization or just larger one year grants) use more of the available funding, leaving fewer funding opportunities. More opportunities for funding would necessitate smaller grants and/or single-year grants. Given that, please let us know how you would prioritize the following

Respondents were asked to rank in order of priority: multi-year grants, single-year grants, small grants, and large grants. The majority of respondents prefer multi-year grants to single year grants. (N=50)

Prioritization of Funding (Ranked by Preference)



Question 24 - Please explain your answer

Respondents were invited to offer their thoughts in a written, open-ended format to this question. 50 chose to do so; their responses are grouped based on what they ranked as the highest priority on question 23: multi-year grants, single-year grants, small grants, and large grants.

Highest priority multi-year grants - 39 responses

- Increased stability and opportunity for year over year impact; plan for the future & grow (19 comments)
- Makes planning easier (multi-year projects, staffing, budgeting, strategic planning) (18 comments)
- Less time spent on administration (writing grants, reporting, managing grants); less cost to the organization (15 comments)
- Exception: land conservation requires a large sum of money in the year its is procured (3 comments)

Highest priority single-year grants - 3 responses

- Smaller, single year grants help us reach our goals; completed short-term projects (2 comments)
- More organizations receive funding (1 comment)

Highest priority small grants - 5 responses

- Many of our projects are small and can be accomplished in one year (2 comments)
- Small grants would help supplement other funding sources (1 comment)
- Priorities may shift over the period of a larger/multi-year grant (1 comment)
- Difficult to answer; "all of the above" - organizations should be helped along a cyclical growth path from larger multi year awards to spur growth to smaller supporting grants and around again (1 comment)

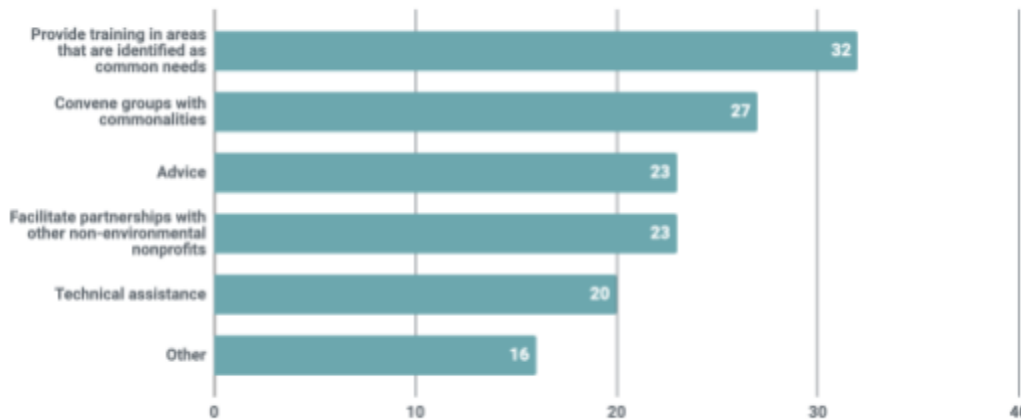
Highest priority large grants - 3 responses

- More cost effective given staff time needed to apply and report on grants (1 comment)
- If single year, may be hard to reach goals in the tight time frame (1 comment)

Question 25 - Are there other ways that NHCF could help in addition to providing funds? (choose all that apply)

Most respondents would like NHCF to provide, in addition to funding, training in areas that are identified by nonprofits as common needs and convenings of organizations around shared issues. (N=50)

Other Ways NHCF Can Help in Addition to Funding



Respondents were invited to offer their thoughts in a written, open-ended format if they chose the answer option “other (please specify).” 16 provided written response; their responses revealed 4 additional ways respondents thought NHCF could help in addition to providing funds:

- Provide professional capacity building services and learning opportunities for organizations (8 comments)
 - *Suggested topics included: succession planning, DEIJ (2 mentions), human resources (2 mentions), board development, fundraising, legal (2 mentions), advocacy, IT (2 mentions), and strategic planning*
- Make connections between nonprofits and funders (3 comments)
- Support organizations to think bigger and develop longer-term visions and strategies (1 comment)
- Provide more guidance, especially for prospective grantees, from fund managers about what they are looking for in applications (1 comment)

Question 26 - Please describe the community you serve touching on geography, demography, shared issues, and values.

Respondents were invited to offer their thoughts in a written, open-ended format to this question. 53 chose to do so; their responses revealed 18 broad categories related to geography and demography. Of those 18 categories, the top 5 comprised more than half of all comments.

The top 5 geography and demography categories are:

- Residents geographically located in the communities served by the organization (31 comments)
- Visitors & tourists (18 comments)
- Year-Round residents of the communities served by the organization (9 comments)

- Students & educators (K-12, undergraduate, graduate) (9 comments)
- Seasonal residents of the communities served by the organization (8 comments)

Responses also included 16 broad categories related to shared issues and values.

The top 6 shared issues and values categories are:

- Protecting/improving the health, viability, and uses of lakes/estuaries/watershed (12 comments)
- Conserving open space, time outdoors, recreation, nature, etc. (9 comments)
Within this category, some sub-themes included:
 - Creating and maintaining places that are free and open to the public (2 mentions)
 - Deepening understanding, connection and respect for the natural world (3 mentions)
 - The outdoors is for everyone (3 mentions)
- Stewardship & Conservation (8 comments)
- Caring deeply about the lake and surrounding community (7 comments)
- Conserving the sense of place and rural character that makes this region a great place to live, work, and play (ex. open spaces, smaller population, simpler lifestyle, clean air and water, scenic beauty, healthy ecosystems, thriving land-based economies, etc) (6 comments)
- Using natural and agricultural resources responsibly (5 comments)

Question 27 - How do you know who is in your community?

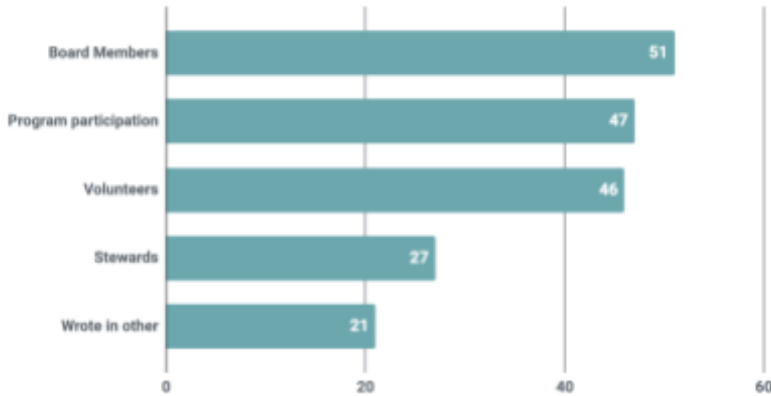
Respondents were invited to offer their thoughts in a written, open-ended format to this question. 52 chose to do so; their responses revealed 14 broad categories related to how responding organizations know who makes up their community. Of those 14 categories, the top 7 comprised more than half of all comments. The top 7 categories are:

- Event, workshop & program participation (19 comments)
- Partnerships (organizations, businesses, libraries, municipalities, schools, etc) (16 comments)
- Community collaboration & outreach (14 comments)
- Surveying (12 comments)
- Membership (11 comments)
- Volunteers (9 comments)
- Geographic residency or land ownership (8 comments)

Question 28 - What are the different ways that your community members are engaged in your work? (choose all that apply)

For most respondents, the most common form of community participation is through board service. (N=52)

Different Ways Community Members Are Engaged With Org's Work



Respondents were invited to offer their thoughts in a written, open-ended format if they chose the answer option "other (please specify)." 21 provided written response; their responses revealed 8 ways respondents' community members are engaged in their work:

- Visitors; participants in events & programs (13 comments)
- Members (4 comments)
- Fundraising & donating (4 comments)
- Recreation - hiking, boating, hunting (3 comments)
- Community outreach (3 comments)
- Advocates (3 comments)
- Interactions with social media & newsletter content (2 comments)
- Seasonal employees (1 comment)

Question 29 - How do you know what your community wants or needs? What tactics do you employ to gather this information and feedback?

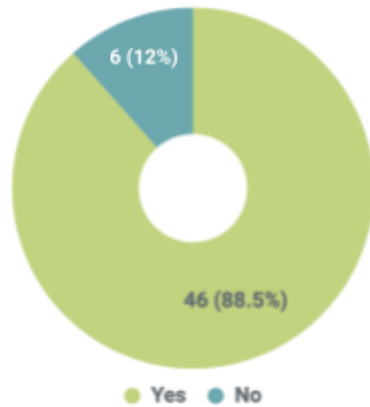
Respondents were invited to offer their thoughts in a written, open-ended format to this question. 51 chose to do so; their responses revealed 15 broad categories related to how responding organizations know what their community wants or needs. Of those 15 categories, the top 8 comprised more than half of all comments. The top 8 categories are:

- Surveying community & membership (21 comments)
- 1:1 conversations & emailing (12 comments)
- Program & event evaluations (11 comments)
- Community listening sessions & focus groups (11 comments)
- Outreach & partnership (10 comments)
- Community meetings (membership, partners, community) (9 comments)
- Engagement in programs & projects (9 comments)
- Social media engagement & newsletter interactions (9 comments)

Question 30 - Do you feel you are missing anyone?

An overwhelming majority of respondents know that they are not reaching everyone in their communities. (N=52)

Do you feel you are missing anyone?



Question 31 - If yes, explain

Respondents were invited to offer their thoughts in a written, open-ended format to this question. 47 chose to do so; their responses revealed 18 broad categories related to if responding organizations felt they were missing anyone in their community. Of those 18 categories, the top 8 comprised more than half of all comments.

The top 8 categories are:

- Community members less directly connected or with limited access (due to mobility, transportation, economic, etc) to the lake/watershed/outdoors (8 comments)
- Younger community members (20-40) (8 comments)
- People of Color & indigenous populations (6 comments)
- Historically underrepresented groups & populations who have faced and continue to face barriers accessing the outdoors (5 comments)
- Schools, classroom teachers, college students, and teens (4 comments)
- Residents in communities served that do not respond to surveys and/or join as members (4 comments)
- Families with school-aged children (4 comments)
- People with more limited means (4 comments)

Question 32 - What would help you address this gap? What do you need to reach these people?

Respondents were invited to offer their thoughts in a written, open-ended format to this question. 43 chose to do so; their responses revealed 17 broad categories related to how responding organizations know what their community wants or needs. Of those 17 categories, the top 9 received 3 or more related comments from respondents. The top 9 categories are:

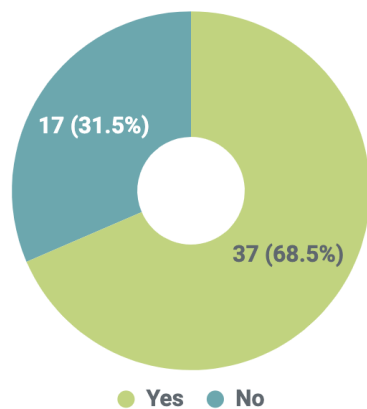
- More time & staffing/volunteer capacity (9 comments)
- Training & education (8 comments)

- Community outreach (2 mentions)
- Soliciting feedback (1 mention)
- DEIJ (1 mention)
- Support building new relationships/making new connections (6 comments)
- Partnerships with peer organizations to share knowledge and reach new constituents (4 comments)
- Social media presence & email (4 comments)
- Unsure what is needed to address the gaps (4 comments)
- Funding to create and implement strategies for addressing gaps (4 comments)
 - External contract capacity for targeted survey and listening (more accurate data) (2 mentions)
 - Consultant support to evaluation and identify gaps in creating an inclusive organization (1 mention)
- More staff/volunteers todo outreach/tabling in less represented areas (3 comments)
- More communication with school administration/faculty and parent groups (3 comments)

Question 33 - Is your organization doing any work focused on equity, racial justice, and/or economic security?

A majority of organizations are doing work focused on equity, racial justice, and economic security. (N=54)

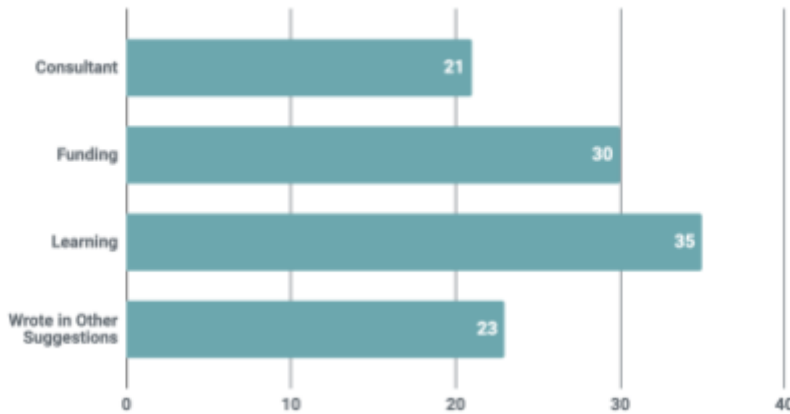
Organization is Doing Work Focused on Equity, Racial Justice, and/or Economic Security



Question 34 - What suggestions, information and resources would be most helpful to your organization to start and/or further the work of equity, racial justice, and/or economic security work effectively? (choose all that apply)

A majority of respondents indicated that they need more learning and more funding to do work centering equity, racial justice, and economic security. (N=54)

Helpful Suggestions, Information & Resources to Start/Further Equity, Racial Justice, and/or Economic Security Work

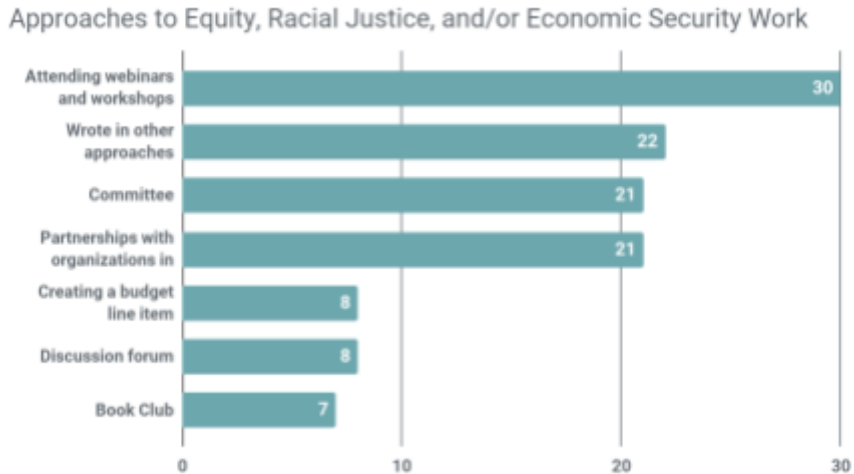


Respondents were invited to offer additional thoughts in a written, open-ended format. 23 provided written response; their responses revealed 7 additional resources that would be most helpful to their organizations to start and/or further the work of equity, racial justice, and/or economic security work effectively:

- Additional funding (8 comments)
Respondents gave examples of what they might use this funding for: BIPOC speaker/workshop facilitator compensation, language interpreters for the deaf and hard of hearing, marketing images to make visitors feel represented, quiet/nursing space, purchase equipment for auditory learners, free programming, DEIJ staff person, DEIJ learning/strategy implementation, training and consultant support to build a strategy for this work, and staff time and capacity.
- Guidance on incorporating equity, racial justice, and/or economic security work effectively in communities with little racial diversity (4 comments)
- Support building relationships/making connections with communities, groups and organizations outside current membership/constituent base (3 comments)
- Support on how to get started (2 comments)
- A pipeline of potential board members from underrepresented communities; training opportunities (1 comment)
- Better understanding of funder expectations around this work (1 comment)
- Advocacy and education about the importance of this work (1 comment)

Question 35 - If you are engaged in equity, racial justice, and/or economic security work, how are you doing it? (choose all that apply)

A majority of respondents indicated that they attend webinars and workshops as a part of their work centering equity, racial justice, and economic security. (N=44)



Respondents were invited to offer their thoughts in a written, open-ended format if they chose the answer option “other (please specify).” 22 provided written response; their responses revealed 15 additional ways organizations are doing equity, racial justice, and/or economic security work:

- Training & education (11 comments)
- Bringing in outside expertise (consultants, etc) (4 comments)
- Reviewing and revising internal policies and practices (ex. pay equity, actively recruiting for diversity, etc) (5 comments)
- Holding affinity spaces (2 comments)
- Creating a DEIJ strategy & KPIs for organization (2 comments)
- Diversifying board membership (2 comments)
- DEIJ staff position (1 comment)
- DEIJ committee (1 comment)
- Partnership with BIPOC led orgs (1 comment)
- Outreach to low-to-moderate income populations (1 comment)
- Steering work toward communities that have not traditionally been served by conservation organizations (1 comment)
- Making the outdoors more accessible (1 comment)
- Diversify creative contributors and the topics we cover (1 comment)
- Offering scholarships or waiving fees based on need (1 comment)
- Pursuing funding for equity, racial justice, and/or economic security work (1 comment)

Question 37 - How can equity, racial justice, and/or economic security work benefit conservation and environmental organizations and your current/future work?

Respondents were invited to offer their thoughts in a written, open-ended format to this question. 46 chose to do so; their responses revealed 14 broad categories related to how equity, racial justice, and/or economic security work benefits conservation and environmental organizations. Of those 14 categories, the top 6 received 4 or more related comments from respondents. The top 6 categories are:

- Will lead to stronger programs & greater sustained impact in our communities (10 comments)
- It is important for everyone to have access to the outdoors/natural areas (8 comments)
- More people with positive experiences in nature leads to more people inspired to help preserve nature and the environment; We benefit from having a wide spectrum of people and communities care about our mission (5 comments)
- Richer discussions, with varying perspectives, create more innovative approaches to challenges & more meaningful opportunities to learn from one another (5 comments)
- Educate about and learn from the troubling history of environmental movement in the US & honor and inform the public about the indigenous experience (4 comments)
- Our work benefits everyone, and so should involve everyone (4 comments)

Question 38 - What is holding you back from achieving that?

Respondents were invited to offer their thoughts in a written, open-ended format to this question. 42 chose to do so; their responses revealed 8 broad categories related to what was holding responding organizations back from achieving equity, racial justice, and/or economic security work. Of those 8 categories, the top 5 comprised more than half of all comments with the majority of respondents noting time and staff capacity as the most evident barrier.

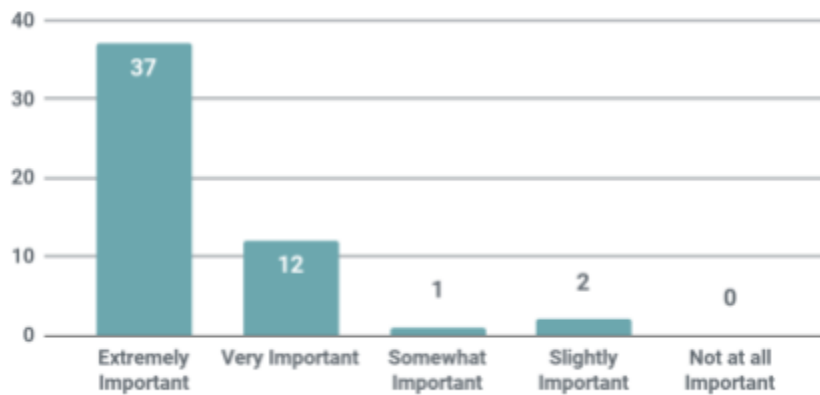
The top 5 categories are:

- Time & staff capacity (25 comments)
- Limited financial resources (14 comments)
- Trust & relationship-building (7 comments)
- Unsure where this work fits into current work/mission (6 comments)
- Education (5 comments)

Question 39 - How important is it to your organization to promote resiliency and connectivity and help NH's natural ecosystems, wildlife and natural resource-based economies adapt to a changing climate?

The majority of respondents agree that it is extremely important to promote resiliency and connectivity in the face of climate change. At minimum, all respondents believe that it is important. (N=52)

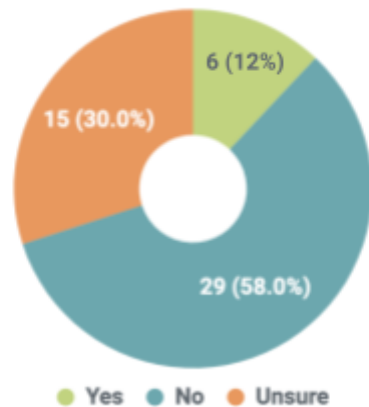
Importance of Promoting Resiliency and Connectivity & Helping to Adapt to a Changing Climate?



Question 41 - Do you feel you have the adequate capacity and funding to achieve this?

Most respondents do not have enough funding to do this work to promote resiliency and connectivity in the face of climate change. (N=50)

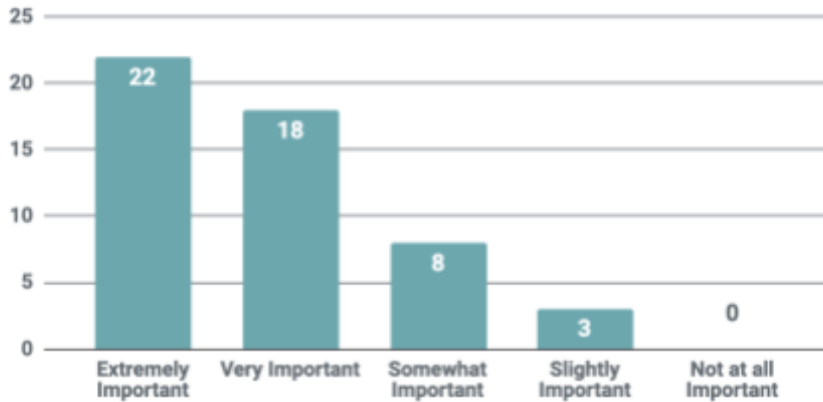
Have adequate capacity & funding to promote resiliency & connectivity, and help adapt to climate change?



Question 42 - How important is it to your organization to integrate principles and practices that promote equity, racial justice, and economic security?

The majority of respondents agree that it is extremely important to integrate principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion into their work. At minimum, all respondents believe it is important. (N=51)

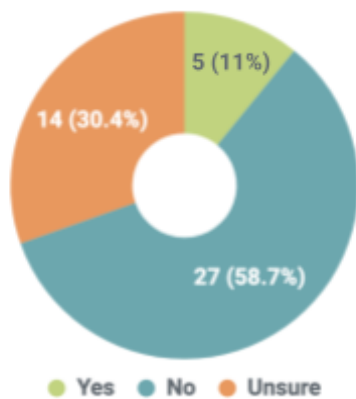
Importance of Promoting Equity, Racial Justice & Economic Security



Question 44 - Do you feel you have the adequate capacity and funding to achieve this?

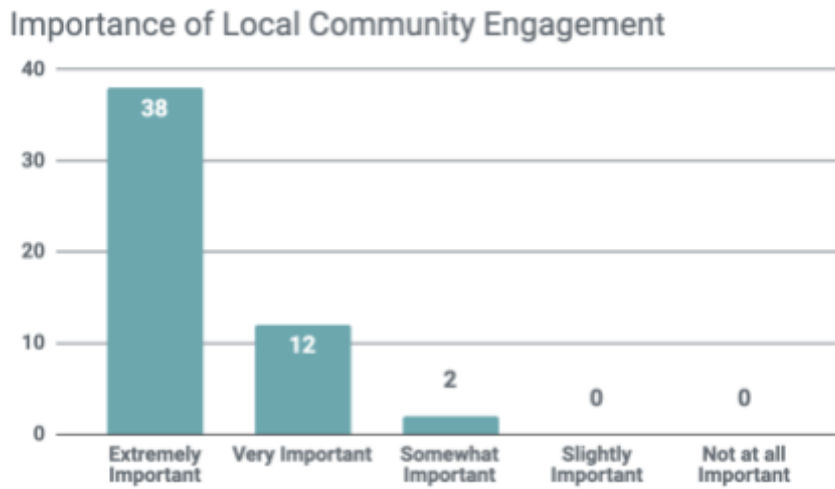
Most respondents do not have enough funding to integrate principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion in their work. (N=46)

Have adequate capacity & funding to promote equity, racial justice & economic security?



Question 45 - How important is it to your organization to be engaged with the local community?

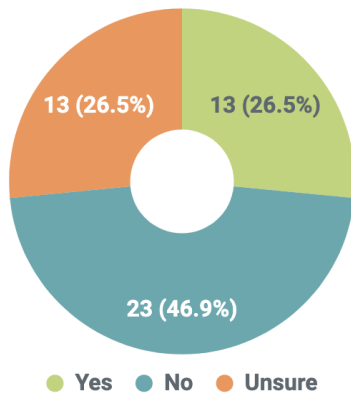
The majority of respondents agree that it is extremely important to be engaged with the local community. At minimum, all respondents believe it is important. (N=52)



Question 47 - Do you feel you have the adequate capacity and funding to achieve this?

Nearly half of the organizations reported not having enough funding to be engaged with the local community. (N=49)

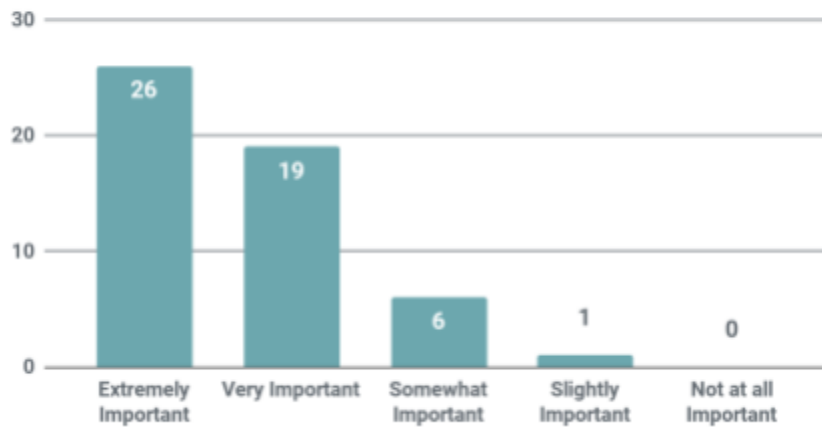
Have adequate capacity & funding for community engagement?



Question 48 - How important is it to your organization to be in partnerships with other organizations to further your work?

The majority of respondents agree that it is extremely important to be in partnerships with other organizations. At minimum, all respondents believe it is important. (N=52)

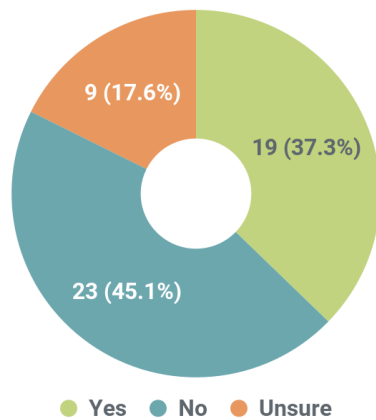
Importance of Partnerships



Question 50 - Do you feel you have the adequate capacity and funding to achieve this?

About half of the organizations do not have enough funding to be in partnerships with other organizations. (N=51)

Have adequate capacity & funding for partnerships?



Question 52 - Is there anything else that you would like the NHCF to know?

Respondents were invited to offer their thoughts in a written, open-ended format to this question. 37 chose to do so. Many respondents took this opportunity to offer thanks to the NHCF for asking for feedback, for example: "Thank you for all you do for NH. Our non-profit community is much stronger and better prepared to face emerging issues because of the work of NHCF," and "Thank you for asking for our input and for your commitment to supporting groups in their efforts to protect New Hampshire's natural environment." Other responses included:

- Great questions but 30 minutes was slightly misleading; spent several hours developing answers because I could not provide in depth answers in 30 minutes; desire to engage with this content but this survey format felt like too heavy a lift (2 comments)
- It would be helpful if the foundation was clearer about what they are looking to fund and how they will make their decisions; simplify the process for applying and for reporting.
- Interested in engaging deeply in these conversations with like minded colleagues.
- "Equity, racial justice, and/or economic security" are good terms and I like the choice of them for this survey. I also like to use "environmental justice" as an aspirational concept for our organization.
- Would like to see more proactive opportunities for new Americans and Asian Americans to be included in efforts to promote diverse representation in environmental work. These are both often overlooked populations in our state.
- We greatly appreciate the request for feedback and the value of looking at these issues more deeply. We hope that, as we do so together, there is an understanding of and appreciation for our demographic realities and the importance of working on all kinds of diversity and equity issues -- not only racial and economic inclusion but also ongoing work on gender equity. We absolutely want to be part of the ongoing effort and solutions, but with the recognition that we are only a small piece of a complex and challenging puzzle. We hope that organizations like ours - with programs in regions that currently have little racial diversity - will not be penalized for data that inevitably reflects our demographic reality. We also hope that NHCF will continue to appreciate the importance of valuing and supporting nonprofits of all sizes and at many stages of development. Ambitious initiative and data-driven work is generally positive, but also often requires bigger staffs and bigger budgets. In this respect, these kinds of initiatives and measurements could lead to the rich getting even richer and newer and smaller organizations struggling even more.
- We're very pleased that NHCF is bringing this new equity and racial justice focus to its work across the organization, and to its work in the environmental field. Providing support for historically underfunded / marginalized members of our communities is critical to building power at the local, community level, informed by people who are experiencing disproportionate environmental harm and/or inequitable access to environmental benefits. In addition to making this support available, making it accessible, through application processes that are easier for groups lacking professional development staff, will be very important.

Appendix A: All Participating Organizations

1. 350 New Hampshire
2. Acton Wakefield Watersheds Alliance
3. American Rivers
4. Ammonoosuc Conservation Trust
5. Appalachian Mountain Club
6. Ausbon Sargent Land Preservation Trust
7. Bear-Paw Regional Greenways
8. Blue Ocean Society for Marine Conservation
9. Center for Northern Woodlands Education
10. Cheshire County Conservation District
11. Chocorua Lake Conservancy
12. Conservation Law Foundation, NH Advocacy Center
13. CT River Conservancy
14. Five Rivers Conservation Trust
15. Frankestown Land Trust
16. Grafton County Conservation District
17. Great Bay Resource Protection Partnership
18. Great Bay Stewards
19. Green Mountain Conservation Group
20. Gundalow Company
21. Hanover Conservancy
22. Harris Center for Conservation Education
23. Hubbard Brook Research Foundation
24. John Hay Estate at The Fells
25. Lake Sunapee Protective Assn
26. Lake Winnepesaukee Association
27. Merrimack River Watershed Council
28. Monadnock Conservancy
29. Moose Mountains Regional Greenways
30. National Forest Foundation
31. New Hampshire Audubon
32. New Hampshire Energy Education Project / Vermont Energy Education Program
33. New Hampshire Environmental Educators
34. Newfound Lake Region Association

35. NH Assoc. of Conservation Commissions
36. NH Businesses for Social Responsibility
37. NH LAKES
38. NHACD
39. Northeast Resource Recovery Association
40. Northern Forest Center
41. Piscataquog Land Conservancy
42. Plan NH
43. Randolph Mountain Club
44. Seabrook-Hamptons Estuary Alliance
45. Seacoast Science Center
46. SELT (Southeast Land Trust of NH)
47. Society for the Protection of NH Forests
48. Squam Lakes Conservation Society
49. Squam Lakes Natural Science Center
50. Tin Mountain Conservation Center
51. Trout Unlimited - NH
52. Upper Saco Valley Land Trust
53. Upper Valley Trails Alliance
54. Wentworth Watershed Association