

Land Trusts: Facts not Fiction

Sportsman's Alliance of Maine, The Nature Conservancy, and Maine Coast Heritage Trust

Most Tax-Exempt Properties are Owned by Government

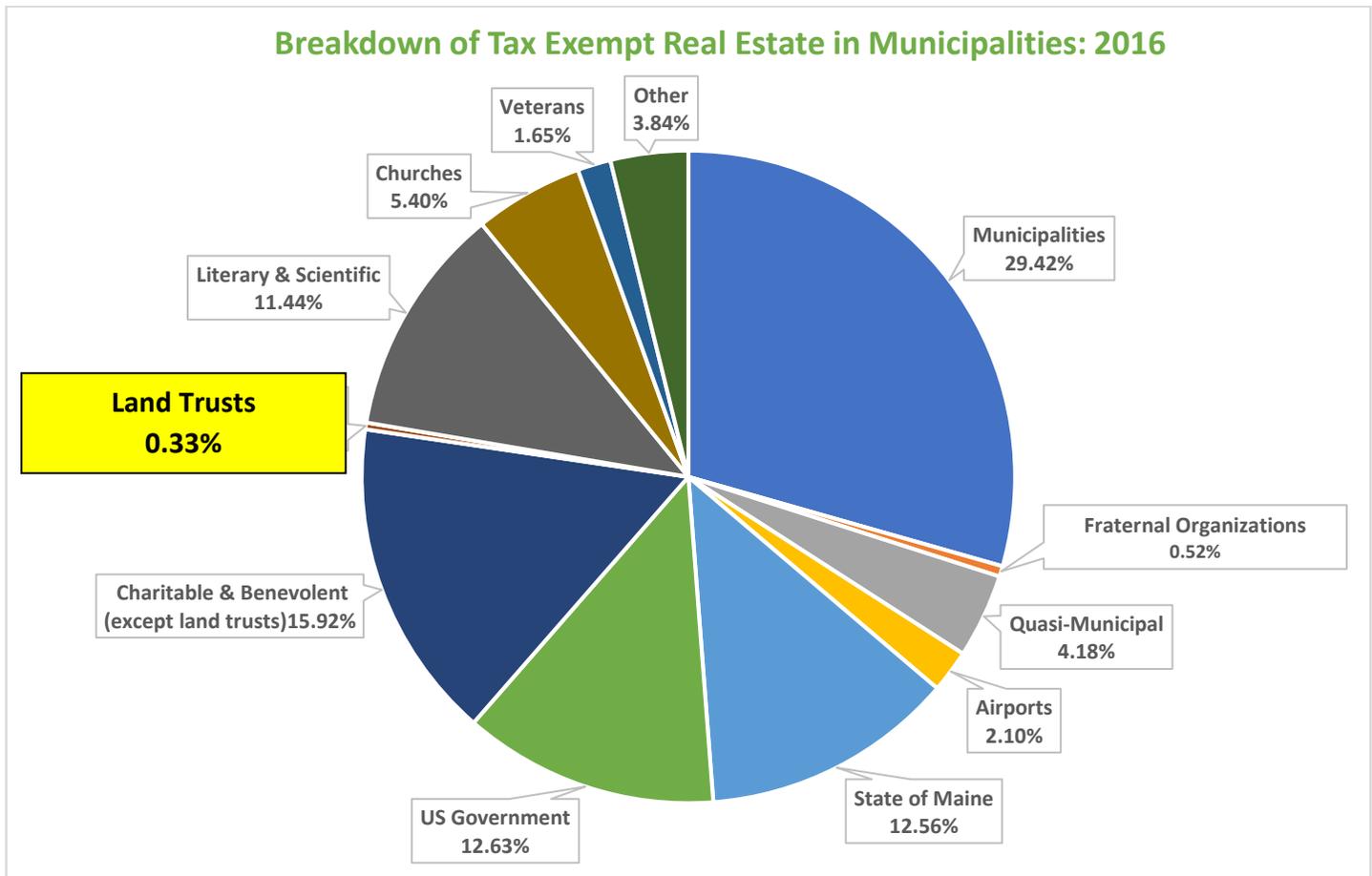
The Governor continues to suggest that Maine land trusts are responsible for taking more than \$18 billion off municipal tax rolls. Really? While tax-exempt real estate (land and buildings) in Maine's municipalities totaled \$18,558,146,476 in 2016, very little of this property value is owned by Maine's land trusts.

The Administration hired the Boulos Company in September of 2017 to estimate property values of conservation land. They concluded that the average value of land trust owned land in Maine is \$821.19/acre. Land trusts currently own roughly 75,000 acres of tax exempt

land in municipalities (this includes 45,000 acres of land where land trusts make payments in lieu of taxes). Based on the average value determined by the Boulos Company, land trust tax exempt lands have an estimated value of \$61,589,250 or 0.33% of all tax exempt real estate in municipalities (see chart below).

Land Trust Owned Lands in Maine Municipalities*	
Tax Exempt	30,000 acres
Tax Exempt (town receives payment in lieu of taxes)	45,000 acres
On the tax rolls	80,000 acres
Total Acreage	155,000 acres

** Data collected from 2017 Maine Land Trust Network survey of land trusts.*



Land Trust tax exempt land has an average annual estimated cost per Maine resident of \$0.74*

** Based on 75,000 acres with a tax rate of \$16/1000. In 2015, the most current figure available, Maine Revenue Services calculated an average statewide full value property tax rate of \$15.03/1000)*

Land Trusts: Facts not Fiction

Sportsman's Alliance of Maine, The Nature Conservancy, and Maine Coast Heritage Trust

Benefits Maine Residents Receive from Land Trusts

Recreational Access

- **Hunting:** More than 90% of land trust conserved lands are open for hunting.
- **Boating:** More than 200 launch sites in Maine (62 coastal and 141 freshwater)
- **Hiking:** More than 1,250 miles of hiking trails
- **Snowmobiling:** More than 570 miles of snowmobile trails
- **Mountain Biking:** More than 275 miles of mountain bike trails
- **ATV Riding:** More than 345 miles of ATV trails
- **Swimming:** More than 210 beaches and swimming areas open to the public

Working Lands

- **Forest Products Industry:** More than 85% of land trust conserved lands are working forestlands.
- **Farming:** Land trusts have conserved more than 36,000 acres of productive farmland.
- **Working Waterfront:** More than 60 access sites to the ocean for commercial fishermen.

Community Benefits

- **Education:** Roughly 30,000 students participate in land-trust sponsored educational events each year.
- **Activities:** More than 65,000 people attend land trust activities every year.

Property Taxes

- Property taxes or payments in lieu of taxes are paid on more than 98.5% of all land trust conserved lands, representing more than 2.46 million acres in Maine.

Conservation Land: Maine vs. New Hampshire

Maine continues to trail the rest of New England when it comes to conservation lands available to the public. Here is how Maine compares to our closest neighbor:

	Maine ¹	NH ²
Public Lands & Land Trust Preserves	1.9 million acres	1.33 million acres
% of State	9.2%	23.2%
Conservation Easements on Private Lands	2.3 million acres	520,000 acres
% of State	11.1%	9.0%
Total Conservation	4.2 million acres	1.85 million acres
% of State	20.3%	32.2%

¹ Based on information compiled by the LePage Administration in February 2018. Additional acreage was added based on 2017 survey done by the Maine Land Trust Network. Includes federal, state, and land trust lands (roughly 80% of these lands are in the state's unorganized territory and 20% in municipalities).

² New Hampshire data comes from New Hampshire Legislature's SB 388 Study Committee in 2014.