

2017 Massachusetts Land Conservation Conference Workshop Descriptions

First-Timers Session (8:15 – 8:45)

Location: Faculty Dining Room (adjacent to the cafeteria)

First time at the conference? Or new to land conservation? Meet and mingle with others who have never attended before or are new to the community. Get tips on how to navigate the event and get the most out of your conference experience. Ask questions in a casual setting. Hear from conservation professionals who started out as students, volunteers or interns and successfully landed a job at a conservation organization.

- Andrew Bentley, *The Trustees*

Session I: 8:45 – 10-15

IA. New Solutions to Address Erosion in a Changing Climate

Location: Room

With the changing intensity and frequency of storm events, protected lands located in areas of steep slopes (and other areas as well) are beginning to experience increased erosion, gully formation, and sedimentation. This workshop will describe these issues at several Trustees' properties and the methods that we are taking to prevent damage as well as restore areas previously damaged by severe erosion. I will present case studies from the past as well as describe a project that we are just beginning to undertake at two properties in the Berkshires with funding from a storm water management grant program.

- Julie Richberg, *The Trustees*

IB. How to Enhance Your Effectiveness as an Advocate

Location: Room

You are passionate about conservation. So, how can you effectively translate that passion into advocacy that gets results? Come explore how to build relationships with other organizations and government officials to advance the issues that are important to you.

- Erica Mattison, *Environmental League*

IC. Enhancing the Edibility of Conserved Lands with Native Species

Location: Room

Edible wild plants offer opportunities for people to connect to nature via their taste buds, thereby building their enthusiasm and public support for conserving lands that offer foraging opportunities. Adding native edible plants to a landscape can boost biodiversity as well as "spice it up" (literally as well as figuratively – we can have our acorn cake and eat it too). Learn about the comestible and other virtues of more than two-dozen tasty species native to Massachusetts, and actual examples of how land trusts, municipalities and others have planted these and other edible native species on their properties and/or as part of ecological restoration projects.

- Russ Cohen, *Naturalist*

ID. Increasing Forest Resiliency

Location: Room

Local evidence of change abounds: flash flooding from brief but torrential rains; trees damaged from unseasonable and extreme storms; vulnerability to threats from pests and disease; longer growing seasons and extended drought. All forests and the landscapes they lie within have some characteristics that make them resilient and others that make them vulnerable to these and other stressors. This session will provide participants the ability to evaluate the resiliency of a forest and determine actions to increase its resiliency using a new framework developed by the Universities of Massachusetts and Vermont, in collaboration with the USDA Forest Service. A representative from the New England Forestry Foundation will then share science-based tools they developed with the American Forest Foundation and the Northern Institute of Applied Climate Science to conduct parcel-level climate adaptation assessments by trained foresters in Massachusetts & Connecticut. Social marketing tactics to promote follow-up action by private landowners will also be discussed. Learn how land trusts can increase forest resiliency on their own land and support landowners to manage woodlands for their many benefits, including wildlife habitat and sustainable wood products, for the long term.

- *Paul Catanzaro, University of Massachusetts, Amherst*
- *Lisa Hayden, New England Forestry Foundation*

IE. Land Conservation 101

Location: Room

If you are new to land conservation, or are not quite sure where to begin, this session will provide a basic overview of conservation techniques and resources. You will learn about conservation real estate tools and techniques, strategies for engaging landowners, funding projects, and moving conservation efforts successfully from start to finish. This course will set you on the right path and keep you learning with confidence!

- *Chris LaPointe, Greenbelt*
- *Kate Buttolph, Mass Audubon*
- *David Santomenna, The Trustees*

IF. Giving Yourself An Out: Knowing When To Say No

Location: Room

In the exuberance of completing projects, it is easy to say "Yes!" to a project that perhaps the organization should say "No!" to. Maybe you said "Yes!" to a great project, but at some point along the line, negotiations took a turn, and the project wound up being not as strong as it should or could be. How do you avoid these pitfalls? This interactive session will help participants sharpen their focus on key parts of the acquisition process that may have significant implications on the permanence of the conservation.

- *Reggie Hall, The Conservation Fund*

I.G. Accounting & Financial Reporting for MA Land Trusts

Location: Room

This session will cover basic accounting and financial management concepts, and the financial and informational reporting requirements for Massachusetts Land Trusts. Topics covered will include:

- Financial Record Keeping – Information that should be tracked in the accounting records
- Budgeting – How to develop a budget and how budgets help you manage an organization
- Internal Controls – Effective internal controls and why internal controls are important
- Accounting Software – Available products, Computer vs. Online
- Basis of Accounting – The different types and the differences between each
- Accounting for contributions – When to record contributions, Restricted vs. Unrestricted
- Form 990 / 990-EZ / 990-N – Filing requirements, the information contained in the different forms
- Massachusetts Form PC – Filing requirements, the information contained in the form
- Financial Statements – Information included and how to understand them

- *Brendan Toolin, Anstiss & Company*

I.H. Land Trusts and Conservation Restriction Enforcement

Location: Room

We will address questions about legal issues land trusts have confronted and resolved in land protection. We will provide brief case studies with a focus on lessons learned. There will also be time to address legal questions or concerns your land trust is facing.

- *Buzz Constable, Lincoln Land Conservation Trust*

- *Rebecca Washburn, Land Trust Alliance*

II. Creating Sustainable & Engaging Internships

Location: Room

This interactive workshop will provide Land Trust professionals with an overview of how to develop and manage an effective internship program. Learn how to leverage staff resources by partnering with academic institutions, students and future professionals. The session will include a combination of lecture and group discussion. Participants will receive key resources related to best practices, legal considerations, and the nuts and bolts of designing an internship program that meets academic standards. Tips on how to recruit, effectively supervise, train and evaluate student interns in the context of their academic program needs will be covered. Special emphasis on how land trust professionals can find the best interns and provide an outstanding experience for both the agency/organization and the student will be featured.

- *Tom Mullin, Unity College*

IJ. Developing a Trail Guide to Promote Conserved Lands

Location: Room

Between 2013 - 2014 Sudbury Valley Trustees (SVT) and Essex County Greenbelt each undertook the task of producing new trail guides. SVT created a guide for the first time, generating the maps in house and working with their printing house on the design.

Greenbelt redesigned their existing property guidebook, which was produced completely in house. In the first half of this session we will walk the audience through the planning, design, and mapping required to complete the project. We will include information on the monetary costs, the demand on staff time and resources, and the lessons learned. The second half of the session will detail how the resulting product has been used as an effective outreach tool to increase membership and deepen existing support.

- Abby Hardy-Moss, Essex County Greenbelt
- Mary Williamson, Essex County Greenbelt
- Dan Stimson, Sudbury Valley Trustees

IK. Land Trusts as Catalysts for Community-Based Land Conservation

Location: Room

Conservation Commissions, Open Space Committees, and local trail & conservation groups have essential on-the-ground knowledge and a passion for protecting open space, but often lack the training in or awareness of the resources available to help with local land protection, from the nuts & bolts of how land is preserved, to free mapping programs for identifying critical resources, to ecological expertise, stewardship, and grant-writing. Three regional land trusts will discuss how they are arming local conservation advocates & officials with the information and expertise they need to effectively identify, advocate for, protect, and steward municipal open space in their communities.

- Vanessa Johnson-Hall, Essex County Greenbelt
- Sarah Wells, Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust
- Mark Robinson, The Compact of Cape Cod Conservation Trusts

IL. Mystic Greenways: Restoring and Revitalizing Urban Waterway

Location: Room

The Mystic River Watershed Association has launched a new effort to restore and connect parklands along the Mystic River and its tributaries. The Mystic Greenways Initiative is a multi-year, multi-stakeholder project to elevate the quality and status of this urban natural resource. This panel will discuss the challenges and opportunities of revitalizing parklands and restoring public access along the river. Panelists will discuss specific projects including building new waterfront paths to create an active transportation network and the first steps of large-scale revitalization of a 60+ acre waterfront park that is underutilized and overgrown with invasive species. More broadly, this panel will provide context and a platform to discuss how conservation principles translate to a dense urban environment.

- Amber Christoffersen, Mystic River Watershed Association
- Andy Hrycyna, Mystic River Watershed Association

Session 2: 12:45 – 2-15PM

2A. Ecological Restoration: Helping Nature and Expanding Horizons for Conservation

Location: Room

Massachusetts is the third most densely populated state in the nation. Given that, we are fortunate to have many areas of intact natural landscape, and a very effective land conservation community working diligently to protect them. E.O. Wilson and many other experts have concluded that we will ultimately need to conserve 50% of the Commonwealth and beyond for human and other forms of life to be sustainable over the long-term. We also know that for conserved lands, and the life that resides within them, to be resilient to the impacts of climate change they will need to both be more connected and have greater habitat (and micro-climate) diversity. We will not achieve either of those overarching goals solely by protecting pristine areas. This workshop will help the audience gain a broader understanding of the important role of ecological restoration in current and future conservation efforts in Massachusetts.

- *Bob Wilbur, Mass Audubon*
- *David Gould, Town of Plymouth, MA*
- *Alex Hackman, MA Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs*

2B. Conserving a Network of Resilient Landscapes

Location: Room

This workshop will provide an understanding of The Nature Conservancy's 2016 "Resilient and Connected Landscapes" analysis, defining an integrated, resilient and connected conservation network across eastern North America. The results allow land trusts, agencies and others to define conservation priorities that provide options for species and connections necessary to support the movement of species in response to change. We will review recent enhancements to the data and discuss land conservation applications, and we'll take a deep dive on the strategies to enhance resilience at The Nature Conservancy's 2,000-acre Schenob Brook Preserve. We'll discuss management strategies to maintain the quality of the underlying geophysical environment and increase options for species to move and find suitable habitat.

- *Andy Finton, The Nature Conservancy*
- *Karen Lombard, The Nature Conservancy*
- *Jessica Dyson, The Nature Conservancy*

2C. Early Detection & Rapid Response to Invasive Terrestrial Plants

Location: Room

We will bring the concept of early detection alive to land managers and stewards seeking to effectively prevent new invasive plants from entering the landscape. Come and learn to identify several new invasive plants entering our region, where to look for them, how to report them, how to devise successful strategies and partnerships, and most importantly, how to effectively manage them. We will look closely at real Massachusetts case studies dealing with hardy kiwi (*Actinidia arguta*) in the Berkshires and Japanese stiltgrass (*Microstegium vimineum*) in the Pioneer Valley.

- *Jane Winn, Berkshire Environmental Action Team*
- *Chris Polatin, Land Stewardship, Inc.*

2D. Kiosks and Waysides: Going Beyond the Bulletin Board

Location: Room

The average visitor spends less than thirty seconds looking at the kiosks and waysides that are ubiquitous at trailheads in every land trust preserve in the country. This session will focus on the dynamics of encouraging folks to read the messages posted, as well design, fabrication and installation challenges. Pros and cons of various materials will be discussed.

- *Tim Mullin, Unity College*

2E. Making Mapping Simple: Three Clicks

Location: Room

This workshop introduces attendees to an easy to use a web-based tool called MAPPR (Mapping and Prioritizing Parcels for Resilience) to identify conservation priorities at the parcel level and identify ownership. The tool was successfully showcased at the 2016 MLC conference and will now allow users to easily identify parcels for conservation with updated data sets based on biodiversity (BioMap2), climate change resilience (based on The Nature Conservancy's modeling), and wildlife connectivity. New features will be shown and demonstrated, including agricultural land value and drinking water protection value. MAPPR also allows users to analyze parcel values within not only a town, county, or watershed, but also land trust regions to prioritize and channel constrained resources.

- *Stefanie Covino, Mass Audubon*

2F. EEA Grant Programs, Open Space Plans & New Funding Sources

Location: Room

Participants will receive general information on grant programs and funding opportunities offered by MA Division of Conservation Services (DCS) for conservation and recreations projects, including the Local Acquisitions for Natural Diversity (LAND), Parkland Acquisitions and Renovations for Communities (PARC), Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), Drinking Water Supply Protection, Landscape Partnership, and Conservation Partnership programs. Topics include eligibility requirements, application processes, answers to common questions, and identification of common pitfalls for the programs. There will be a short introduction to Open Space and Recreation Plans, which are a grant eligibility requirement for most DCS grant programs. A land trust partner will present the grantee perspective on applying for and administering these grants.

- *Melissa Cryan, Division of Conservation Services, MA Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs*

- *Emmanuel Owusu, Division of Conservation Services, MA Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs*

- *Sarah Wells, Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust*

2G. What is a Closing? Intro to Real Estate Law

Location: Room

Attorneys who represent land trusts will explain the process of closing from purchase and sale agreement through recording, including ordering title exams, surveys, and environmental assessments. Session will include preparation of a closing checklist and discussion of special circumstances such as options on chapter lands, abatement of real estate taxes, and community preservation act requirements.

- *Kathleen O'Donnell, Attorney*

- *Douglas Muir, Attorney,*

2H. Understanding Landowner Estate Planning to Increase Land Conservation

Location: Room

The future of our landscapes is in the hands of tens of thousands of landowners, yet little is known about the formal estate planning they have done to plan the future ownership and use of their land. We conducted two mail surveys and thirty-two interviews of landowners in Massachusetts, Maine, Vermont, and New York to find out the types of estate planning landowners have undertaken regarding their land, the goals of their plans, the challenges they face in formalizing their wishes, and the conservation-based estate planning tools they prefer. Results from this research, their implications for land conservation, and recommended strategies to increase the pace of land conservation will be presented.

- Paul Catanzaro, University of Massachusetts, Amherst
- Marla Markowski-Lindsay, Family Forest Research Center

2I. Land Trust Standards & Practices 2017: What's New

Location: Room

In 2016, the Land Trust Alliance led a collaborative process to revise Land Trust Standards and Practices to reflect changes in the legal and operational environment of the land trust community and to provide closer alignment with the Land Trust Accreditation Program, TerraFirma and the wide array of resources supporting best practices for land trusts. Come hear about the results of the community input process and discuss a summary of the revised Standards. Learn about what's new and the implications for land trust accreditation.

- Sylvia Bates, Land Trust Alliance
- Jessica Whitaker, LTA Accreditation Commission

2J. Grooming the Next Generation of Leaders: Succession Planning

Location: Room

Many land trusts are not prepared for what is truly inevitable – a passing of the guard. As the old saying goes “stuff happens” – and often when you least expect it. Will you be prepared? Succession planning provides stability when leadership is lost unexpectedly and contributes to the sustainability of your organization in perpetuity. It ensures a transfer of critical knowledge and organizational history and in doing so, protects the legacy of current leaders. In this session, we'll unpack planning - discuss why succession planning is so important for any land trust, explore different types of succession, and offer planning models to keep your organization moving smartly forward, whatever the circumstances.

- Nancy Moore, Conservation Consulting Group

2K. Trees are the Answer: From City Neighborhoods to Rural Landscapes

Location: Room

This workshop will begin in small urban yards and travel through suburbs to our most rural landscapes with the common theme of what we can do to expand vibrant forests. State programs for urban tree planting, tree retention during development and forest stewardship for wildlife habitat are also geared to connect people to trees. In so many ways, our future is linked to expanded forests. If every Massachusetts resident "adopted" one tree, it would collectively conserve 100,000 acres of urban, suburban and rural forest!

- Bob O'Connor, Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs (EEA)
- Mat Cahill, MA Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs (EEA)
- Jennifer Fish, MA Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs (EEA)
- Jeff Ritterson, Mass Audubon

2L. Applied Community Conservation in Land Trust Work

Location: Room

Community Conservation, including education, community involvement and programming, is an increasingly important part of land trust operation. This session will share what land trusts are learning about the benefits of a community approach to conservation, after which two land trusts will talk about their experience with community conservation practices. The Trustees will describe how agricultural properties may host educational, recreational and food producing activities, including the challenges that accompany them. The Wellesley Conservation Council will describe how it mobilized its community to ensure 40 acres of important land in the town could be preserved. Opportunity will be provided to share additional community conservation concepts among the participants.

- Rebecca Washburn, Land Trust Alliance
- Matthew Homung, Wellesley Conservation Council
- Peter Jones, Wellesley Conservation Council
- Desiree Robertson-DuBois, The Trustees
- Cathy Wirth, The Trustees

Session 3: 2:30 – 4PM

3A. How You Can Make the Economic Case for Your Work

Location: Room

In this session, we will help attendees develop a strong tool kit of economic arguments that can be used to support their work across the country from rural to urban communities. We will introduce the existing tools and resources that are currently available and can be used to help make the economic case for land conservation to all audiences. This includes facts and figures related to economic development, tourism, outdoor recreation, agriculture, forest products, health, property values, jobs, cost of community services, and ecosystem services. We will also explore specific economic talking points that can be used in response to common misconceptions about land conservation.

- Jessica Sargent, Trust for Public Land
- Nick Moreau, Trust for Public Land

3B. Conservation, Forestry & the Wood Products Industry: A dialogue about the critical common ground we share

Location: Room

A panel discussion by stakeholders sharing the common goal of protecting Massachusetts' forestland from development and managing it for multiple goods and services. Harvard Forest's "Wildlands and Woodlands" has provided a vision for conserving our region's forested landscape – where only 10% of it would be protected as forever "wildland." The majority of the forested landscape would be protected from development and much of it under long term active management as "working" woodlands. Yet the region's forestry industry continues to struggle, often not able to provide cost-effective forestry to small landowners or conservation organizations managing their properties. A strong and growing wood products market will strengthen society's ability to benefit from our region's forests.

Continued...

This panel will specifically explore some of the immediate opportunities to strengthen the local and regional wood products market, addressing the concerns and trade-offs that conservationists must consider. Topics to be addressed will specifically include the low-grade wood market, thermal biomass and the importance of exemplary forestry.

Moderators:

- *Ed Hood, Opacum Land Trust, and MassConn Sustainable Forest Partnership*
- *Robert Perschel, New England Forestry Foundation*

Panel:

- *Charlie Carey, Biomass Combustion Systems, Inc,*
- *Bill Labich, Highstead Foundation, Harvard Forest, Reg'l Conservation Partnership Network*
- *Robert O'Connor, Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs*
- *Jeffrey Ritterson, Mass Audubon*
- *Charles H. Thompson, Massachusetts Forest Alliance*

3C. CR Stewardship Technology Roundtable

Location: *Room*

Are you drowning in stacks of paper from field notes, monitoring reports and more? Do you have more excel spreadsheets than you can count? Come join this workshop if you are looking for new ideas on how you can make your CR Stewardship program more efficient and organized. After a brief introduction, participants will break into small, facilitated groups to discuss what types of hardware and software their organizations use and what types of potential options exist. Groups will then report back what they discussed to the whole workshop. Feel free to bring your field tech to share with the group.

- *Nick Rossi, Mass Audubon*
- *Andrew Bentley, Trustees of Reservation*
- *Matt Cannon, Harwich Conservation Trust*

3D. Land Stewardship for Climate Change

Location: *Room*

This session will begin with a brief overview of Gov. Baker's "Integrated Climate Strategy for the Commonwealth" Executive Order and what it means for land conservation and stewardship. Next, there are recent developments in the areas of land management, invasive species risk assessment and response, land protection prioritization, and other conservation activities at the intersection of land stewardship and climate change. The workshop will outline state and Mass Audubon efforts as examples of how attendees might improve resistance to, accommodate, or intentionally advance change on the land. In sum, this session will discuss how those who buy and protect land for various conservation purposes can select strategies, approaches, and tactics to manage their holdings to prepare for the variety of changes & challenges that come with more frequent and intense storms, warmer temperatures, and other impacts of climate change.

- *Kurt Gaertner, MA Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs*
- *Kathleen Theoharides, MA Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs*
- *Tom Lautzenheiser, Mass Audubon*

3E. Troubleshooting Land Negotiations

Location: Room

Session leaders will present negotiation fundamentals, landowner motivations, and common obstacles in land negotiations. Most of the session time will be used to hear from participants on deal issues they face, with presenters offering ideas and leading a group discussion to get broader input from all participants.

- Rob Warren, *The Trustees*
- Bob Wilbur, *Mass Audubon*

3F. Land Conservation Funding from USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

Location: Room

Overview of available land conservation easement programs from the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. NRCS offers easement programs to landowners who want to maintain or enhance their land in a way beneficial to agriculture and/or the environment. All NRCS easement programs are voluntary. We provide technical help and financial assistance, but local landowners and organizations are needed to make NRCS easement programs successful.

- Dan Wright, *USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service*

3G. Hot Legal Topics in Conservation

Location: Room

Leading conservation attorneys will discuss cases, issues and best legal practices involving land conservation and the operations of land trusts. Particularly timely topics will be introduced and discussed by the panel members, followed by discussion. Ample opportunity will be afforded for questions to be raised by attendees. Topics tend to range from elementary to profound, and the panelists endeavor to make all digestible by the audience. Particular topics likely for this year include CR amendments, enforcement of violations, inurement & private benefit, along with other issues that may be suggested by registrants or others.

- Buzz Constable, *Lincoln Land Conservation Trust*
- Jonathan Bockian, *Law Office of Jonathan Bockian*
- Irene DelBono, *Attorney*
- Mary Feeney, *Bowditch & Dewey*
- Elizabeth Wroblecka, *Attorney*

3H. Keepers & Chuckers: Keys to Good Record Management

Location: Room

Do you know what land records you should keep and which you should chuck? Can you put your hands on critical property records when you need them? Do you know what's in your property files? While it may not have all the excitement of acquisition, record keeping is essential for protecting your conserved lands. Leave the session understanding the importance of good record keeping, how to identify your critical records and how to plan for getting your records organized and protected for perpetuity. This workshop is designed for board or staff interested in getting their property records organized and protected from loss or damage.

- Rebecca Washburn, *Land Trust Alliance*

3I. Energizing Land Trusts for The Next Phase

Location: Room

In today's dramatically changed political environment land trusts are finding they are the front line of defense for the environment. As such, they have a unique ability to engage more people in the fight to protect open space and critical resources. However, it has never been easy to run an effective, impactful land trust, especially when it is reliant on volunteers to do the majority of the work. There are always budget cuts, economic challenges, staff and volunteer shortages, apathy, lack of awareness and more. Yet, amid these perennial challenges, there are those land trusts that do soar and scale new heights. What are their secrets? And how do they continually adapt so that they are on the cutting edge and reaching ever higher toward their vision? Learn the three key elements it takes to move from an underperforming land trust to one that soars.

- Sharon Danosky, Danosky & Associates

3J. 4 Towns, 3 Land Trusts, 2 Decades, 1 Greenway

Location: Room

From an unlikely beginning of 2 disconnected City parks to a 4 town greenway that navigates both developed neighborhoods with public transit bus stops, to managed tracts of forest land with vernal pools and reservoirs. See the partnerships, planning efforts, funding sources, and protection methods used by a community of land trusts and their municipal partners to build the Four Town Greenway in Holden, Paxton, Leicester, and Worcester.

- Colin Novick, Greater Worcester Land Trust

3K. Tell Us What You Need: Scaling Up MassLIFT AmeriCorps

Location: Room

MassLIFT AmeriCorps is an innovative national service program that is measurably increasing the impacts of community-based land trusts (including urban conservation/agriculture non-profits) across Massachusetts. Begun as a local pilot program in 2008, Mount Grace successfully scaled MassLIFT to support 20 Massachusetts land trusts with 36 AmeriCorps members annually in 2016. Through the service of its more than one hundred alumni and the nearly 10,000 volunteers they organized, MassLIFT has contributed over 230,000 hours of conservation service to Massachusetts valued at over \$5 million and has become a game changer for local and regional land trusts and the communities they serve.

Mount Grace is in the process of spinning off MassLIFT to found an independent non-profit called TerraCorps, and we want your input to help us make the program accessible to more organizations. Join us for this roundtable style visioning workshop, ask peer land trust staff about their experiences with MassLIFT, and tell us how we can help your organization succeed.

- David Graham Wolf, Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust

- Sean Pollock, Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust

- Ben Carver, MassLIFT AmeriCorps