

2020 Speaker Biographies

Have you thanked a speaker today?

Today's presenters volunteered their time and expertise to help further conservation in the Commonwealth. The Massachusetts Land Trust Coalition appreciates their invaluable contributions.

Keynote Speaker

Jad Daley is President and CEO at American Forests, the nation's first forest organization founded in 1875. Jad joined American Forests in 2017 as Vice President of Conservation Programs and was named President & CEO in 2018 after a year of leading the organization forward on issues like climate change and social equity. From 2008 to 2017, Jad launched the Climate Conservation Program at The Trust for Public Land and eventually served as Vice President for Program Development. Jad is a widely published writer on conservation topics, including an active presence on Medium, and has played a leading role in authoring and enacting federal legislation to establish forest programs such as the U.S. Forest Service Community Forest Program. (Plenary Session)

Plenary Speakers

William “Buzz” Constable provides land counsel to conservation and development projects, utilizing a few decades' experience in real estate conservation, law, development and investment. Buzz currently serves on several conservation, business and civic boards and committees, including the Land Trust Alliance Conservation Defense Network, the Environmental League of Massachusetts, Metropolitan Area Planning Commission, Mass Land Trust Coalition Board of Trustees and Attorney Advisory Panel, Lincoln Land Conservation Trust, and The Trustees of Reservations. (Plenary Session, 2G, 3F)

Robb Johnson is the Executive Director of the Massachusetts Land Trust Coalition. He has masters degrees in public administration and public health as well as over 30 years of non-profit experience in health care, human services, and environmental organizations in Massachusetts, including The Nature Conservancy, Sudbury Valley Trustees and the Bay Circuit Alliance. Robb has also served as an officer of two non-profit boards. Much of his prior conservation experience was in land protection projects, and he takes enduring satisfaction in projects completed in Gill, Sunderland, Framingham, Middleborough, Plymouth and Barnstable, among others. (Plenary Session, 1i)

Secretary Kathleen A. Theoharides oversees the Commonwealth's six environmental, natural resource and energy regulatory agencies, which include the Departments of Environmental Protection, Public Utilities, Energy Resources, Conservation & Recreation, Agricultural Resources, and Fish & Game. Secretary Theoharides also serves as Chairman of the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority, the Energy Facilities Siting Board, and the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center.

Trained as a field biologist, Secretary Theoharides began her policy career working in Washington, D.C. at the National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition and Defenders of Wildlife. During her time in D.C., Secretary Theoharides worked on the federal farm bill and conservation policy, and helped establish a national program that partnered with federal and state agencies to incorporate climate change adaptation into policy, budgets, and planning. After returning to Massachusetts, she served as the Executive Director of the Hilltown Land Trust, and founded Theoharides Consulting which provided climate and environmental policy analysis, strategic planning, and facilitation to universities, government agencies and non-profits.

Secretary Theoharides joined the Baker-Polito Administration in 2016 as Director of Climate and Global Warming Solutions in the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs. As Director and later Assistant Secretary, Secretary Theoharides guided the development and implementation of the Administration's efforts to safeguard Massachusetts from the impacts of climate change, support cities and towns, and coordinate efforts across state government to reduce emissions and adapt to the impacts of climate change. She worked to implement Executive Order 569, led the development of the State Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Plan and created the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness program, working to grow the program to reach 50 percent of cities and towns in the Commonwealth in less than 3 years. Secretary Theoharides was promoted to Undersecretary in 2019, and continued to lead the Commonwealth's efforts on climate change, including working to strengthen regional and national coalitions focused on bipartisan state climate leadership including the United States Climate Alliance and the Transportation Climate Initiative.

Secretary Theoharides received a B.A. in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology from Dartmouth College and Masters of Science in Ecology and Environmental Biology from University of Massachusetts-Boston. Originally from western Massachusetts, Secretary Theoharides lives with her husband, three young children, and dog in Arlington, Massachusetts. (Plenary Session)

Workshop Presenters

Alivia Acosta is a member of the Appalachian Trail Conservancy Stewardship Council. Growing up in Yonkers, NY Alivia wasn't really raised doing much outdoors. In her sophomore year of high school she had the opportunity to enjoy the outdoors for the first time working with the non-profit organization Groundwork USA. She's gone from learning about the Department of Interior to shaking hands with Sally Jewell; from setting up a tent for the first time, to living in the northern woods of Maine constructing trails with the Appalachian Mountain Club; from visiting a state park for the first time to living and working in Yellowstone National Park with the Youth Conservation Corps. Since her start with Groundwork all of Alivia's experiences have enabled

her to enjoy working in the field of conservation. Alivia is currently working with the Student Conservation Association in their Excelsior Corps program learning about New York's environmental opportunities. (2H)

Mariah Auman is Volunteer and Outreach Coordinator at Berkshire Natural Resources Council, and regularly presents to groups between 5-50 people in this position. Mariah was part of the team that developed the outreach strategy and programs for Berkshire Natural Resource Council's recent engagement, and is also the Vice President of MassLand's Young Land Professionals. (1J)

Greg Berman is the Coastal Processes Specialist for Barnstable County through the Cape Cod Cooperative Extension and the Woods Hole Sea Grant Program. He is a certified Professional Geologist and Geographic Information Systems Professional with a Master's degree in Geological Oceanography from the University of South Florida. Greg has 20+ years of experience with surveying, interpreting, and reporting on coastal geology. Prior to joining Cape Cod Cooperative Extension, Greg worked for a private consulting company and the United States Geological Survey. He is originally from Maryland, but has lived in Florida, Hawaii, and Rhode Island before moving to Cape Cod. (2B)

Jonas Bruggeman is a Mass Audubon staff member for Broadmoor Wildlife Sanctuary in Natick, MA and regularly presents to the public the best practices in multi-use trail maintenance and construction, including high-quality and sustainable trail stewardship. (3C)

Sara Burns is a water resource scientist with the Massachusetts Chapter of The Nature Conservancy. Sara works with a range of partners and technical experts around Massachusetts to plan, fund, and construct nature based solutions to improve water quality, reconnect aquatic ecosystems, and reduce natural hazard impacts. Sara is a certified MVP service provider, and has a Master Degree in Environmental Science from Indiana University. Before joining The Nature Conservancy, Sara planned emergency tree work around power lines in Chicago and managed an organic vegetable farm in Michigan. (2A)

Kevin Case is the Eastern Division Director of the Land Trust Alliance. He has worked for, and with, land trusts for over a decade. Kevin is based in Connecticut and provides overall leadership for the Alliance's on-the-ground work in the Eastern half of the United States. He provides specific program delivery related to land and climate, community conservation and small and all-volunteer land trusts. In 2019, Kevin is leading the Community Conservation Assessment Pilot in the Northeast, connecting small land trusts with experienced consultants to incorporate community conservation as a working philosophy. We will also be bringing on land trust staff, to be identified, who have gone through this process, to speak about lessons learned, experiences, and offer a perspective on what it means to adopt community conservation into a land trust's mission and vision. (1I, 2J)

Paul Catanzaro is Co-director of the Family Forest Research Center, a partnership between UMass Amherst and USDA Forest Service. As extension faculty, my work integrates research and outreach to family forest owners. The goal of this integrated approach is to learn about family forest owners in order to better inform their decisions. A main focus of my work is to help

landowners decide the future of their land through conservation based estate planning. My outreach methods include peer learning, social networks, and internet based tools. (2L)

Alex Chuman is the Stewardship Director at Aquidneck Land Trust, the largest land trust in Rhode Island. In addition to typical easement stewardship and land management duties of ALT's 81 conservation properties and 12 miles of trails, Alex works on conservation planning, land acquisition, farm access, and outreach. Alex also serves on the Board of the RI Land Trust Council. (1K)

Brian Colleran is a Certified Ecological Restoration Practitioner (CERP) and Professional Wetland Scientist (PWS), with a Master's degree in Natural Resource Management. He has also acquired both the basic and advanced Field Botany certificates from the Native Plant Trust. His career has focused on the restoration and conservation of freshwater habitats, primarily through invasive species and riparian area management. Currently, he is a Principal with Ecological Land Management, and recently returned from Patagonia where he discovered what are currently the southernmost documented Japanese knotweed in the world. (1C)

Christa Collins joined the Sudbury Valley Trustees (SVT) in 2002. She currently serves as Director of Land Protection. Christa represents SVT on matters regarding land protection, leads their Land Protection team, and manages a portion of their land protection projects, primarily involving assistance to landowners. Previously, Christa was the Director of Land Protection for the Nashua River Watershed Association. She holds a Bachelor's degree from Middlebury College and a Master's degree in Landscape Architecture from the University of Michigan. She lives in Concord with her husband and two children. (2A)

Jeff Collins is Director of Mass Audubon's Conservation Science Department. He has led Mass Audubon's efforts to assess options for managing deer and worked with internal and external partners and hunters to implement deer management at several Mass Audubon sites. (1D)

Melissa Cryan is the Grant Programs Supervisor for the Massachusetts Division of Conservation Services, where she directly administers the PARC, Conservation Partnership, and Land and Water Conservation Fund Grant Programs. She also reviews and approves all Open Space and Recreation Plans. She has a BS in Ecology and Evolution from the University of Rochester and an MA in Urban and Environmental Planning and Policy from Tufts University. (3H)

Becky Cushing is Director of Mass Audubon's Berkshire Wildlife Sanctuaries, oversees six wildlife sanctuaries, 12 miles of hiking trails and the countywide Berkshire Environmental Literacy program. She's a trained field biologist and environmental educator with a passion for cross disciplinary collaboration, environmental problem-solving and connecting people to nature. Some recent collaborations include an international broadcast of live concert music and nature sounds with the BBC, BSO and WGBH, and the Nature and Mindfulness program at Kripalu. Becky has worked in the conservation field for 15 years in science, education, and administrative roles at other Mass Audubon sanctuaries across the state, the University of Vermont and The Nature Conservancy. She earned an MS in Plant Biology from the University of Vermont Field Naturalist program and a BA in Conservation Biology from Middlebury College. She's a graduate of the National Outdoor Leadership School (NOLS) and Sea Education

Association (SEA), a Switzer Environmental Fellow and author of the journal article, "Exploring the Role of Ospreys in Education." (2K)

Irene Del Bono is an attorney with an extensive background in property and environmental law. She was an Assistant Attorney General for eleven years handling most of the state's property issues. After that, she was Director of Land Acquisition and later Chief of Encroachments at the MA Department of Conservation and Recreation. Prior to her retirement in 2015, Irene was the statewide Conservation Restriction Reviewer at the MA Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs. Irene has represented numerous private clients and assisted other attorneys in clearing-up and establishing complicated title issues regarding boundaries, easements, roads, adverse possession, tax titles, coastal issues, tree rights, and public and private rights in property. (3F)

Jessica Dietrich is GIS Manager for The Nature Conservancy in Massachusetts. Over the past decade, her work has centered around developing conservation plans and integrating geospatial data into decision making frameworks to prioritize investments in conservation. Her projects have included mapping resilient and connected landscapes, identifying connectivity corridors for wildlife, participating in the development of Mass Audubon's MAPPR land protection prioritization tool, and BioMap2. She holds a Master of Environmental Management from Duke University with a focus in landscape ecology. (2A)

Jill Allen Dixon, AICP, is an Associate Principal and planner at Sasaki with a focus on nature-based resilience, community engagement, and expanding equitable access to outdoor recreation and nature experiences. Jill's work spans a range of scales and includes conservation, greenway, and outdoor recreation planning; regional planning; and park, waterfront, and park system master plans. Jill has a particular emphasis on resilient design and coastal communities, with work in places like Boston, Newport, Coastal Alabama, and Florida, as well as developing national tools for promoting nature-based solutions to flooding through the Naturally Resilient Communities Partnership. Her passion for integrating authentic community engagement into the process translates into planning work that is well-known for bringing together diverse constituents to identify shared visions for open space in their communities. For example, she was project manager and lead planner for the High Line Canal Community Vision Plan, a 71 mile greenway in Denver, which was the Gold Winner of the 2018 APA National Planning Achievement Award for Public Outreach. (1K)

Paige Dolci is the Central/MetroWest Regional Coordinator for Mass Audubon's Shaping the Future of Your Community Program. Her primary role is performing outreach to communities on sustainable land use, low impact development, and nature-based solutions for climate resilience. Paige joined Mass Audubon after she spent a year serving with TerraCorps at Sudbury Valley Trustees, a non-profit land conservation organization, and graduated from Boston University with a Bachelor's in Environmental Science and a minor in Environmental Analysis and Policy. As an undergrad, Paige interned in Mass Audubon's Legislative Affairs office and assisted with research on the carbon sequestration capacity of ecosystems. She has since become increasingly passionate about climate change, access to green space, and encouraging a more sustainable use of nature's many services. (3D)

Zara Dowling is a field ecologist who recently completed a PhD at UMass Amherst in Wildlife Biology, researching ways to mitigate the effects of renewable energy development on the

environment. She continues to work on these issues as a postdoctoral research fellow at UMass, and also serve as a member of the Conservation Commission and Energy Committee in her town. (3B)

Kate Durkin is the Lowell Parks & Conservation Trust's Stewardship and Education Manager. Kate is passionate about sharing how land trusts and youth education programs can go hand-in-hand in encouraging meaningful action to address climate change. Katie's prior experience includes work with the Lakes Region Conservation Trust in NH. Kate received her bachelor's degree from UMass Amherst in Wildlife Multimedia Journalism. She's happy to be back in her hometown working to open people's eyes to Lowell's special and wild places. (3J)

Eric Eckl founded Water Words That Work, LLC and oversees all the company's client projects. Eric has more than 20 years experience planning and executing environmental outreach and communications programs. Eric is a sought-after conference speaker and has appeared on CNN and been quoted in the New York Times. Before starting the firm, Eric worked for Beaconfire Consulting, American Rivers, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Environmental Law Institute. (1B)

Deborah A. Eliason is principal and founder of Eliason Law Office, LLC. Ms. Eliason advises residential, commercial, retail, municipal and non-profit clients with regard to project development matters and real estate transactions. She represents land trusts, large and small, in relation to land acquisition and conservation restrictions. Most recently, Ms. Eliason was Of Counsel to a national firm based in Washington, D.C., where she handled the real estate aspects of the firm's land use development practices. Prior to that, Ms. Eliason was a principal with a Boston law firm where she represented municipalities throughout the Commonwealth developing an in-depth knowledge of municipal practices and procedures. With more than thirty years of legal experience, she has been involved in many transactions, both commercial and residential. Ms. Eliason is a magna cum laude graduate of Salve Regina College and received her law degree cum laude from Suffolk University School of Law. (3G)

Paul-William Gagnon holds an M.R.P. in regional planning with a focus on land conservation. He practiced conservation easement stewardship and enforcement for the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests for seven years, and now works for Kestrel Land Trust as a land protection specialist and stewardship specialist, with a focus on conservation restriction drafting and long term stewardship considerations. He is one of the founding members of the annual "Stewardship Summit"—a semi-annual gathering of land trust stewardship staff in the northeast United States. (3G)

Caleb Garone is a Habitat Specialist for The Trustees, and is a member of the Open Space Committee in Ipswich, MA. He graduated with a Journalism degree from UMASS Amherst. (2C)

Bill Giezentanner is a natural resources planner and management specialist. He is a nationally respected expert in the planning, design, and management of conservation, environmental education, and recreation facilities. His thirty-plus years of planning and design experience includes projects involving open space, recreation, natural resources interpretation, trails development, ecological management, public education, international eco-tourism, conservation, master planning, historic preservation, and non-profit facility development. Bill and his associates have worked with governments, non-governmental organizations, and private

and corporate property owners to inventory, assess, design, and plan for the sustainable management of both urban and rural natural areas. (3C)

John Gioia is the Conservation Restriction Reviewer at EEA's Division of Conservation Services, where he also assists DCS staff in other areas, including with grant review and the coordination of the Resilient Lands Initiative. Previously, he worked for Coastal Mountains Land Trust in the mid-coast region of Maine as the land protection coordinator. He has a BA in Environmental Science from Colorado College and a Master in Environmental Management from Western Colorado University, where his work focused on social vulnerability to climate change on public lands. John is also a member of MassLand's Young Land Professionals Committee. (1G)

Mackenzie Greer is Director of Public Programs at Berkshire Natural Resources Council, and recently presented at the National Land Trust Alliance Rally., and was part of the team that developed the outreach strategy and programs for Berkshire Natural Resource Council's recent engagement. Mackenzie also sits on the Board of Directors for Roots Rising. (1J)

Abby Hardy-Moss is the conservation planner and GIS Manager for Greenbelt. She manages all aspects of Greenbelt's geo-spatial program, which includes interactive mapping, data analysis, database design and management, and kiosk and trail map design. In addition to her work at Greenbelt, Abby also serves as an adjunct professor for Salem State University's Geography and Sustainability Department. (1F)

Lisa Hayden has managed a landowner communications initiative with numerous partners in the MassConn Woods region since 2014 as Landowner Outreach Coordinator at the New England Forestry Foundation, where she also works with volunteer Forest Stewards. A former journalist and a Keystone cooperator, she has worked on strategic communications and climate change policy for The Nature Conservancy, including a blog on forest carbon and adaptation planning. She received an MA in Urban & Environmental Policy & Planning from Tufts University. A Connecticut landowner, she enjoys working with other landowners to achieve their conservation and forestry goals. (1A)

David Heacock is the Geographic Analyst and Trails Coordinator for Greenbelt. Dave played a key role in the prioritization project. He creates specialized maps both for internal planning and for distribution in Greenbelt publications, and develops story maps to communicate our work, using custom cartographic visuals. He has also developed custom software systems for the Stewardship Department to aid in data collection and reporting. (1F)

Richard Hubbard is a member of the MassLand Board, and was the Executive Director of the Franklin Land Trust for many years. Rich, who is recognized nationally as an authority on conserving farmland and open space, has negotiated the conservation of over 400 properties totaling close to 38,000 acres. Prior to joining FLT, he served in a number of capacities with the MA Department of Agricultural Resources, including Assistant Commissioner, Chief of the Bureau of Land Use, and for 15 years as Program Manager of the Agricultural Preservation Restriction (APR) Program - one of the most successful farmland conservation programs in the country. He began his professional career as a Community Planner for the Montgomery County Planning Commission in Pennsylvania, and later served as the Town Planner for Killingly, Connecticut and the Assistant Director of the Northeast Office of the American Farmland Trust.

(2G)

Vanessa Johnson-Hall brings 15 years of experience in land acquisition, conservation restrictions to her position as Assistant Director of Land Conservation at Greenbelt. Vanessa works with landowners to help them achieve their conservation goals, including grant writing, coordinating partnerships and negotiating achievable conservation outcomes. Vanessa also develops and delivers educational programs for landowners, municipalities, and farmers. Vanessa previously worked as a Land Protection Specialist for the Massachusetts Department of Conservation & Recreation, and for The Land Trust of Napa County, California. Vanessa received her Master's of Environmental Management from the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies. (3H)

Marianne Jorgensen is the coordinator for Academics for Land Protection in New England (ALPINE). ALPINE seeks to expand the role that New England academic institutions play in conserving the natural heritage of the region. This network grew out of a partnership between the Harvard Forest, Harvard University, the Highstead Foundation, and the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy. ALPINE helps academics connect, collaborate, and conserve through knowledge exchange and targeted activities that catalyze the pace and scale of land conservation. Prior to her work with ALPINE, Marianne worked for 16 years in the field of international education; from sending undergraduate students from US colleges and universities on study abroad programs to working with the University of the Arctic, a consortium of 120 international colleges and universities across 8 countries to promote study in the Arctic. Marianne has an MBA from Boston University and a B.A. in Botany from Connecticut College. (2H)

Nicole Keleher is the Forest Health Director for the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation. She works state wide on projects investigating the impact of insects and disease on Massachusetts forests. (3K)

Hillary King is Central Regional Coordinator for the MA EEA Municipal Vulnerability Program. A New England native – born and raised in NH, studied at UConn/Storrs, earning a BS in Landscape Architecture, has lived and worked throughout MA over the last 17 years. Before starting as the Central Regional Coordinator for the Commonwealth's Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Program in October, Hillary was a planner with nationally recognized design firms assisting project teams with site analysis, community planning, and environmental documentation. Whether working on public transportation and water/wastewater infrastructure projects or conservation development and regional landscape plans, Hillary strives to create environmentally sustainable, socially equitable, vibrant communities. (2A)

Tom Lautzenheiser is Mass Audubon's Central/Western Regional Scientist and is responsible for guiding ecological management planning for the organization's 35,000-acre wildlife sanctuary network. He received his bachelor's degrees in biology and environmental studies from Tufts University and his master's degree in natural resource planning/ecological planning from the University of Vermont. (1A)

Lucy Lee is a research assistant at Harvard Forest working on the New England Landscape Futures scenarios project. She focuses on supporting users of the project's online mapping tool, the NELF Explorer, and is available to answer questions and facilitate workshops. Lucy has an MS in Geographic Information Science from Clark University. (2E)

Evan Marshall is responsible for monitoring all of the boundaries across Mass Audubon sanctuary system, along with determining where those boundaries are. I also work with abutters, municipalities, and landowners to resolve encroachments, which includes coordinating with surveyors and lawyers, managing staff time and response, and prioritizing and scheduling the resolution to those issues. I am also responsible for the GIS system here at Mass Audubon and for training volunteers and staff on using technology to make their work more efficient; including setting up an Arc Collector system, upgrading our hardware, and setting up a GIS server to host our data for our land protection planning. (1C)

Laura Mattei is the Stewardship Director at Sudbury Valley Trustees. Over the past 19 years, Laura has managed the myriad challenges of stewarding lands, including dealing with unhappy neighbors, errant visitors, trials & tribulations with dog walkers, trail planning and relocation, biological monitoring, habitat restoration, and management planning. Laura has a Master of Science degree in Natural Resources Management with a specialty in Landscape Ecology. (1D, 2C)

Joyce Meader is an extension dairy/livestock educator, providing individual counseling and workshops on dairy/livestock business management, as well as coordinating livestock farm tours and discussion groups focusing on nutrition, manure management, housing and forage production. Prior to working for the University of Connecticut, Joyce completed PhD coursework in ruminant nutrition at the University of Nebraska. (1L)

Janet Milkman is Director of the BarnstableLand Trust. Nature is literally in her DNA, her father was a marine biologist and her mother a botanist. As a child, she loved wandering in the woods and watching birds. As an adult, she enjoys running, mountain biking and any other connection with nature. She is a graduate of Wesleyan and Princeton universities and a Fulbright scholar who spent a year in Germany. Janet is a mindfulness practitioner and teacher, and 2019 graduate of the Kripalu School of Mindful Outdoor Leadership. (2K)

Micah Mortali is Founder and Director of the Kripalu School of Mindful Outdoor Leadership, a former Wilderness Therapy leader and Nature's Classroom teacher. (2K)

Thomas Mullin is Associate Professor of Parks and Forest Resources at Unity College in Maine. A founder and fellow of the National Association for Interpretation, he has served on the Stewardship Council of the Appalachian Trail Conservancy and is currently the President of the Maine Woods Forever Roundtable, Board member for the Northern Forest Canoe Trail and chair of the Waldo County Trails Coalition steering committee. Past professional experience has included work as Executive Director of two land trusts and park manager for a county park agency outside D. C. (2H)

Emily Myron is government relations specialist for The Nature Conservancy, where she works with both the state and federal legislatures, agencies, and partners to advance land and water conservation policy. She holds a Masters of Environmental Management from Duke University's Nicholas School of the Environment and a BA in Biology from St. Mary's College of Maryland. (2F)

Dick O'Brien is an Environmental Consultant with Conservation Works. Prior to joining Conservation Works, Dick worked as the Regional Director for The Trustees of Reservations,

and as the Director of the Buck Hill Conservation Education Center. He has extensive experience as a conservation land manager with a broad range of hands-on skills and knowledge in the design and construction of sustainable and ADA accessible trails, development and implementation of land management plans, and visitor impact assessment and management. Dick has a M.S. in Forestry, and is experienced in arboriculture, landscape construction, grounds maintenance, and tree and shrub pruning. He is an avid hiker and snowshoer, gardener, and woodworker. (3C)

Melissa Ocana - As Climate Adaptation Coordinator at UMass Amherst, Melissa builds partnerships and encourages climate adaptation with natural resource conservation in mind. Current projects include the Massachusetts Ecosystem Climate Adaptation Network (Mass ECAN) and affiliated expert work groups. She also engages in national climate efforts, such as the Climate Adaptation Fund Advisory Council and National Adaptation Forum Steering Committee. Previously, Melissa ran a capacity building and grants program for NJ environmental nonprofits, and worked in D.C. as Asst. to the Climate Change Policy Advisor at the US Fish & Wildlife Service and as a Fellow with the House Natural Resources Committee. Melissa has a BA from Vassar College and MS in Wildlife Science from Oregon State University. (1B)

Bob O'Connor is the Director of the Division of Conservation Services at MA Executive Office of Environmental Affairs. He coordinates land conservation efforts among land trusts, municipalities and state divisions. He also coordinates the forestry and forest conservation efforts among environmental agencies and private landowners. Previously, he was Director of the Watershed Initiative and Natural Resources for the agency that supplies drinking water to the Boston Metro area. Prior to this, he was the Superintendent of Quabbin Reservoir. He has a B.S. in Forestry from S.U.N.Y. Syracuse and an M.B.A. from the University of Massachusetts and will soon complete his Masters in Conflict Resolution at the University of Massachusetts. (1E)

Thomas O'Shea is Director of Stewardship and Natural Resources at The Trustees. Over the past year and a half, Tom has been leading The Trustees' coastal vulnerability assessment project and coastal adaptation strategies. He currently oversees four teams focused on trails, ecology, structures and landscapes, and stewardship excellence. Tom has over 20 years of experience and accomplishments in natural resource conservation and stewardship in Massachusetts and previously served as the Assistant Director of Wildlife for the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife. Tom has taught natural resource management as adjunct faculty at Clark University and holds a Masters of Public Administration from Harvard's Kennedy School of Government and a Masters of Forestry from the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies. (2B, 3A)

Jennifer Plowden is Senior Conservation Economist at The Trust for Public Land. Jennifer has a managing role in the Conservation Economics program where she leads economic research on the economic benefits of parks, trails, and land conservation. She has conducted economic analyses in over 40 U.S. communities—including municipalities, park districts, counties, and states in all four regions of the country—as well as nationwide. A consistent theme in her portfolio is how to use economic talking points to expand support for conservation and parks through coalitions, partnerships, and engagement with nontraditional advocates, such as health, tourism, and economic development professionals. (3D)

Gabby Queenan is the Policy Director at the Massachusetts River Alliance where she is an advocate for state environmental policies that protect and promote healthy rivers and clean water throughout the Commonwealth. (2F)

Leslie Reed Evans is Executive Director at the Williamstown Rural Lands Foundation, a non-profit land conservation trust. (1I)

E. Heidi Ricci is the Assistant Director of Advocacy at Mass Audubon. She created and oversees the *Shaping the Future of Your Community* program, which assists communities in building resilience through low-impact development and targeted conservation. (1E)

David Rimmer is Director of Land Stewardship at Essex County Greenbelt Association, and has set as a goal to ensure that Greenbelt land is managed with a balanced approach that allows public access while protecting natural resources. Since 2001, Dave has guided the organization through a period of significant growth of protected land and infrastructure. He is currently responsible for overseeing the management of approximately 6,500 acres owned by Greenbelt and 7,200 acres under conservation restrictions held by Greenbelt. Rimmer has overseen the construction of the stewardship barn, the expansion, and renovation of Greenbelt headquarters and many other improvements at the Cox Reservation in Essex. He has managed the opening of all new Greenbelt reservations, including the 270-acre Donovan Reservation in Hamilton in 2017. He developed and implemented a new conservation restriction monitoring program, as well as working on Greenbelt mapping and database projects. Dave's education in wildlife biology and particular interest in ornithology has resulted in Greenbelt's involvement in raptor and shorebird conservation efforts, most notably with breeding Piping Plovers and Osprey, where Greenbelt has become the leader in Osprey conservation and management in Essex County. An avid outdoorsman, Dave is a licensed US Coast Guard captain who guides fishermen on the coastal waters of Essex County in his personal time. He is also a member of numerous local, state and national conservation groups. (1C)

Karen Schwalbe is Executive Director of the Southeastern Massachusetts Agricultural Partnership, Inc. (SEMAP) SEMAP preserves and expands access to local food and sustainable farming in Southeastern Massachusetts. Founded in 1998 to connect local food producers and consumers in Massachusetts' Norfolk, Bristol, and Plymouth Counties, an area of 2200 square miles made up of 75 cities and towns. The organization works to strengthen the region's farms by facilitating educational workshops and conferences, hosting networking events, and offering business technical assistance and grant funding for local food producers, in addition to providing local consumers with opportunities to find and connect with their local farms. (3E)

Kris Scopinich is Director of Education at Mass Audubon. (3J)

Fredrick (Bud) C. Sechler, Jr. is currently the Ecological Programs Coordinator with Native Plant Trust. Prior to joining Native Plant Trust, he worked with Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Program as an Ecological Information Specialist and County Inventory Ecologist, and with New York Natural Heritage Program as an Ecologist specializing in Natural Community Ecology and Vegetation Mapping. He has 10 plus years working for a Natural Heritage Program and NatureServe as an Ecologist, and has also worked with Manomet and the Trustees of Reservations on Martha's Vineyard. He holds a M.S. degree in Conservation Biology from Antioch New England University where he studied habitat modeling of Louisiana Waterthrush in

southern New Hampshire, and a pre-medicine degree from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. His professional interests include avian ecology, natural community and landscape ecology, rare plant conservation, and also enjoys hiking, birding, staying fit by running and the gym, and traveling in his personal time. (2C)

Stephen J. Small is a tax attorney at his own firm, the Law Office of Stephen J. Small, Esq., P.C. He is the author of five books in the private land conservation field. More than 150,000 copies of Steve's Preserving Family Lands books have been sold. Before going into private practice, Steve was an attorney-advisor in the Office of Chief Counsel of the Internal Revenue Service in Washington, D.C., where he wrote the federal income tax regulations on conservation easements. Steve has worked on matters that have resulted in the protection of more than 1.5 million acres around the country. He has given more than 400 speeches, seminars, and workshops around the country on tax planning for landowners, succession planning for family lands, and tax incentives for land conservation. (1G, 3F)

David Stainbrook is the Deer and Moose biologist for the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife (MassWildlife). He is based out of the division headquarters in Westborough and has been in the position for 8 years. His graduate work focused on estimating and managing wildlife populations. David is responsible for the management of white-tailed deer and moose throughout the commonwealth, but much of his time has been devoted to working with communities in the eastern parts of the state where there are increased challenges with managing deer populations at ecologically sustainable levels. (1D)

Guy Steucek has farmed for more than two decades in Massachusetts and New Hampshire with his wife Helen Dunlap. They produce mostly hay, Aberdeen Angus cows, eggs, and some asparagus. He has formal education in agronomy, forestry and plant physiology. As a member of the Dracut Land Trust board he has wrestled with conservation restrictions, etc. For more than a decade he has been a correspondent for Lancaster Farming, a weekly newspaper devoted to agriculture in the Eastern US. (1L)

Kristen Sykes is Director of Conservation Strategies for the Appalachian Mountain Club, and is based in Boston, MA. She has been with the AMC for 14+ years and is charged with protecting the lands, waters and trails of the Mid-Atlantic and Northeast, increasing the breadth and diversity of AMC's supporters - particularly through e-communications/social media and helping to get kids outside through the promotion of trails like the Bay Circuit Trail. Prior to joining AMC she worked for Friends of the Earth in Washington, D.C. Her work there, investigating ethics violations by top Bush Administration environmental officials, was profiled on the PBS program, "Now with Bill Moyers." In 2011 Kristen helped organize the 2nd ELP Women's Retreat in Racine, WI. She currently lives on an organic farm on the South Shore of Boston with her farmer husband and many farm animals and she has a great affinity for craft beer. (3B)

Nathaniel Thomas is a Regional Planner for the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs. He oversees the LAND, Drinking Water Supply Protection, and Landscape Partnership grants in the Division of Conservation Services. He has an MS in Urban Planning and Policy from Northeastern University and a BA in International Studies from the University of Washington. (3H)

Michael Tobin has been a volunteer officer and a board member of the Wellesley Conservation Council, Wellesley's non-profit land trust, since 2015. He serves on the membership, social media, and fundraising committees and enjoys getting his hands dirty working on sanctuary maintenance and cleanups. Michael has been applying his interests in photography and drone (quadcopter) flying to support the land management and promotions of the Council. He also enjoys the outdoors including gardening at the Weston Road Community Gardens, fishing, and hiking. Michael serves as an elected Town Meeting member since 2015 following his active involvement in the Save the North 40 campaign. When not outdoors, Michael is Vice President of Technology Platforms at Foundation Medicine which provides personalized genomic testing to help cure patients' cancers. He has held leadership roles in high tech entrepreneurial high growth companies including Cambridge Technology Partners, StorageNetworks, GlassHouse Technologies, and Mobiquity. He is active in Temple Beth Elohim's social action initiatives and a frequent guest lecturer at Babson College. Michael is an 18 year resident of Wellesley; married to Danna Greenberg, professor of organizational behavior at Babson College; and has 3 children across college and WHS. (2I)

Hillary Truslow is Director of Communications and Digital Strategy at Mass Audubon. (2I)

Alexandra Vecchio is Climate Change Program Director at Mass Audubon. (3J)

Mark Wamsley coordinates the Forever Farmland Initiative (FFI), which is a collaborative effort to accelerate the pace of farmland conservation in the CT River Valley through strategic planning, raising public awareness, and stimulating charitable investments to leverage state and federal funding for farmland conservation. Recently, the Initiative has focused on increasing the number of farms eligible for the MA APR program, and engaging land trust expertise in addressing farmland access issues for disadvantaged communities. Mark's position at FFI is part of his broader work as a Conservation & Stewardship Manager at Kestrel Land Trust, where he is involved in farmland, forest and community land projects. (3E)

Rob Warren is Managing Director of Conservation at The Trustees. This role includes land protection planning, building partnerships, overseeing the Conservation Restriction Program of The Trustees, and working directly with landowners to conserve their lands. Rob returned to his conservation roots in 1990, after a decade as a cabinet and furniture maker. Following a brief internship with the state Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program, he accepted a position with the MA Dept. of Fish & Game land protection program where he served as Habitat Protection Coordinator. Prior to joining The Trustees, he was Director of Protection & Policy for the MA Chapter of The Nature Conservancy. (2G, 3A)

Jessica Whritenour is the Executive Director of The 300 Committee Land Trust in Falmouth, Massachusetts (2010 – present). Prior to joining The 300 Committee, Jessica was the Assistant Town Planner/Community Preservation for the Town of Falmouth. Jessica holds a Master's degree in Urban and Environmental Policy and Planning from Tufts University and is a certified planner with the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP). She serves on the Board of Directors for AmeriCorps Cape Cod and the Falmouth Housing Corporation. (3E)

Bob Wilber has been the Director of Land Conservation for Mass Audubon since 2000. Previously, he worked in similar capacities for Massachusetts State Forests & Parks, and the Massachusetts Chapter of The Nature Conservancy. Bob is a past president of the

Massachusetts Land Trust Coalition (MLTC), and currently serves on the MLTC Board of Trustees. He lives in Stow, where he is a director of the Stow Conservation Trust, and a member of the Town of Stow Open Space Committee. During his 30+ year career, Bob has been directly involved in the protection of more than 40,000 acres in Massachusetts. (1E, 3I)