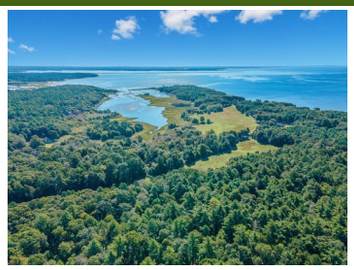
MASSACHUSETTS LAND TRUST COALITION

eNews

The Newsletter of the Massachusetts Land Conservation Community

February 22, 2024, Volume 22, Number 2

Member Spotlight



Neighbors and Buzzards Bay Coalition Save Coastal Forest from Development
The 12-acre Birch Family lot on the on the Indian Neck peninsula in Wareham will soon be covered by a conservation restriction (CR) which will protect it from development in perpetuity. When the property went on the market in October 2023, neighbors contacted Buzzards Bay Coalition (BBC). The upland forest and open meadow were at risk of being developed into at least two house lots and associated road with septic infrastructure. Such a development would have broken up a large block of forested open space that provides vital wildlife habitat and water quality protection for the Bourne Cove area of Buzzards Bay. Once the CR is in place, the land will be owned by the neighborhood association. Inspired by the opportunity to further protect what is so special about that part of the Bay, two nearby landowners have also decided to donate CRs on their land to BBC – ensuring that they will remain natural forever. With these additional 10 acres, combined with the Birch property purchase, 22 acres will be preserved on Indian Neck, thus proving one good deed can spark others.

Consider supporting MLTC's efforts to inform, connect, and advocate for the Massachusetts land conservation community. Your donation of any amount is appreciated!

Donate

MLTC News and Programs

I enjoyed a beautiful winter walk at Chatham Conservation Foundation's Frost Fish Creek.

#OurMassLandTrusts

Pre-Conference Sponsor Talks March 13 – March 20
Even if you're not attending the conference on Saturday, March 23 (see below), you're welcome to attend free online presentations from some of our lead sponsors. This feature was well attended in 2023. More information on each talk is available on the Conference Portal. In short:

> **Wednesday, March 13** | noon – 1:00 p.m. | Managing New England Forests Threatened By Emerald Ash Borer | UMass Extension. Free registration here.
>
> **Thursday, March 14** | noon – 1:00 p.m. | Stewardship Strategies – How We Prioritize, Plan For, and Resource Our Property Care | The Trustees. Free registration here.
>
> **Tuesday, March 19** | 4:00 – 5:00 p.m. | An Integrated Approach to Land Use, Conservation & Climate | EOEEA. Free registration here.
>
> **Wednesday, March 20** | 4:00 – 5:00 p.m. | Conserving Healthy Rivers & Lands in Massachusetts: TNC Goals for 2030 | The Nature Conservancy. Free registration here.

Deadlines Approaching: Massachusetts Land Conservation Conference
The conference takes place Saturday, March 23 at UMass Amherst Campus Center, and on Fridays, April 26 and May 17. With 25 sessions, lots of time for networking, a keynote address by Dr. Darren Ranco on his work with the Wabanaki Commission on Land and Stewardship, and a closing reception – new this year – there are lots of reasons to join us!

Early-bird registration ends **March 1**. Conference Portal | Register | Schedule

Last date for discounted Hotel UMass reservations is **Friday, Feb. 23** for the night of March 22. Sign up here.

VOLUNTEER at the conference for **free admission**. We depend heavily on volunteers the day of the conference – and are very grateful for their help. A variety of jobs is available, each 1.25 to 1.75 hours: Room Managers, registration desk and info desk helpers, ticket takers / wrap up, and general helpers. Sign up here (lunch is not included). Please only sign up if you can commit to attending. Contact admin@massland.org with questions. Sign up **by March 3** highly appreciated.

Optional informal lunchtime networking will be available in dedicated rooms for these groups: Development Staff, Small-Staffed Land Trusts, All Volunteer Land Trusts, Stewardship, Early Conservation Career Network.

Forester CEUs will be available. See conference portal to download the sheet.

Endowments and Board-Designated Funds: Does Your Land Trust Need One?
Thursday, February 29, 3:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
This free educational webinar presented by Matt Goward CFP, UBS Wealth Management, will address how to create, fund and appropriately manage an endowment, and how endowments and other board-restricted funds may fit into managing your organization's financial sustainability. Hosted by MLTC. Register.

Topics of Interest to All Volunteer Land Trusts
Tuesday, March 5, 4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.
The focus of this call will be "Membership Programs: Yes? No? Alternatives?". Some organizations have membership programs, others don't. Some are moving away from a membership model. Why? What alternatives are there? Come share your experiences, questions, and suggestions. Part of MLTC's Stronger Together networking series. This discussion will not be recorded. Register.

MLTC Conservation Partners Meeting (formerly known as "Steering Committee")
Friday, March 8, 10:00 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.
Land trust staff and board members as well as conservation partners are welcome to this quarterly meeting, featuring relevant news from state agencies, a timely update on state and federal policy matters, and announcements. Katie Theoharides, new President and CEO of The Trustees, will be the featured speaker, discussing her vision for The Trustees. Register.

ECCN Pre-Conference Gathering
Friday, March 22, 4:30 p.m., MacLeish Field Station, Whately
Are you in the first 10 years of your conservation career? Join other Early Conservation Career Network members for an evening of learning and networking before the annual Land Conservation Conference. We'll hear from interdisciplinary artist, designer, and woodworker Gina Siepel about their ongoing work To Understand a Tree, which they have created while an artist in residence at the MacLeish Field Station. We will have an opportunity to hike the trails together afterwards, before gathering at a nearby brewery for networking, food, and beverages. Parking is limited; please carpool if possible. Register.

Topics of Special Interest to Small Staffed Land Trusts
Wednesday, April 10, noon - 1:00 p.m. via Zoom
The topic of this quarterly networking call will be determined based on discussions at the conference Saturday, March 23. Visit us at our lunchtime networking room. Come with your questions, and feel free to share your experiences, so we can learn and support each other. Register for the April 10th call. Part of MLTC's Stronger Together networking series. This call will not be recorded.

Development Staff Quarterly Networking Call
Thursday, May 23, 2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.
The topic of this call will be determined based on discussions at the conference Saturday, March 23. Visit us at our lunchtime networking room. Register for the May 23rd call. Share your success stories and questions with your development colleagues from across the state. Part of MLTC's Stronger Together networking series. This call will not be recorded.

Thank you to the generous sponsors who have joined us so far!

Lead

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Berkshire Natural Resources Council | BSC Group, Inc. | Buzzards Bay Coalition | Franklin Land Trust | Essex County Greenbelt | Kestrel Land Trust | Land Trust Alliance | MA 401(k) CORE Plan for small nonprofits | New England Forestry Foundation | Norcross Wildlife Foundation | Sheriff's Meadow Foundation | Sudbury Valley Trustees | SWCA Environmental Consultants | Tighe & Bond | USDA/NRCS

Contributor

Community Preservation Coalition | The Compact of Cape Cod Conservation Trusts | Horsley Witten Group | Law Office of Stephen J. Small | The Trust for Public Land

Policy

Work Begins on FY25 State Budget
On January 24, Governor Healey released her proposed FY25 operating budget, initiating a multi-step process that will lead to adoption of a final budget in the summer. All environmental agencies fared well in her proposal, which seeks to continue last year's precedent of spending at least one percent of total state revenue on environmental programs. Earlier in January, the Governor announced mid-year cuts to balance the current operating budget in response to an unexpected shortfall in tax collections. The Administration essentially held environmental agencies harmless, though it cut some special project earmarks totaling $722,500.

The House Ways & Means Committee will unveil its own FY25 budget proposal on April 10, with debate ensuing the following week. Under Environmental League of Massachusetts (ELM) leadership, a broad coalition of partners is advocating for "Green Budget Priorities " in the FY25 budget. This year the coalition has developed priorities that include a mix of targeted increases for some programs and level funding for others to ensure continued progress toward climate and conservation goals in the current challenging budget environment. The coalition is advocating for increases in funding for the Department of Environmental Protection, DCR State Parks and Recreation, the Department of Public Utilities Administration, the Department of Fish and Game, and DCR Watershed Management. Level funding is requested for the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, EEA Climate Adaptation and Preparedness, Office of Environmental Justice, Division of Ecological Restoration, and Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program.

Administration releases Environmental Justice Strategy
On February 15, the Executive Office of Energy of Environmental Affairs (EEA) unveiled Massachusetts' first Environmental Justice (EJ) Strategy, a roadmap for embedding environmental justice and equity into the programs and policies of EEA and its agencies. It includes universal themes across agencies and offices, such as meaningful community engagement, analysis of project benefits and burdens, language access plans, staff training, and metrics and tracking.

Land Trust Alliance Advocacy Days
Optional training session: Friday, April 5, 3:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m., virtual
April 15 – 18 (Monday – Thursday), Washington, D.C.
The Alliance invites land trust staff, board members, and volunteers to join its annual advocacy event in Washington D.C., where participants will hear remarks from key Capitol Hill figures and take part in meetings with their members of Congress to educate them about land conservation issues of local and national importance. On April 5, The Alliance will provide an online briefing on key issues and advocacy training for first-timers. Learn more and register. Alliance members can apply for travel stipends to defray attendance costs. Stipend applications are due by February 26.

News

Land Trusts Receive Habitat Management Grants
In late January the Healey-Driscoll Administration announced the award of $365,000 in funding from MassWildlife's Habitat Management Grant Program. Among grantees were Berkshire Natural Resources Council, for treating invasive species at Rising Pond Conservation Area in Great Barrington; Nantucket Conservation Foundation, for removal and safe disposal of pine-beetle- infested pitch pine at Ram Pasture; Nantucket Island Land Bank, to enhance heathland/sandplain- grassland understory in areas of dense pitch pine forest; and Sheriff's Meadow Foundation, to manage pine-beetle-infested pitch pine at the Phillips Preserve in Tisbury. Southern pine beetle is a southern species that has been expanding its range north, threatening our pitch pine forests. Learn more.

Million-Dollar Grant Awarded for Nantucket Restoration Project
The Massachusetts Department of Fish and Game's Division of Ecological Restoration, in partnership with the Nantucket Conservation Foundation, has been awarded $1 million from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for the Windswept Bog Wetland Restoration Project, which will restore and enhance a 231-acre property containing 39 acres of former cranberry bog and 111 acres of natural wetlands. The project was one of 12 coastal projects funded through the National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program.

Urban Farming Institute Purchases Historic Farm
In January, the Urban Farming Institute (UFI) purchased the 1786 Fowler Clark Epstein Farm in Mattapan from Historic Boston, Inc. Historic Boston will hold a preservation easement to protect the property's historic buildings and features in perpetuity. Historic Boston had purchased the vacant and distressed property in 2015, and, in partnership with UFI, the Trust for Public Land, and North Bennet Street School, completed a $3.8 million restoration of the original farmhouse and barn, and built farm beds on the surrounding land. The space now serves as the UFI's headquarters and teaching center, complete with a greenhouse, farm stand, classrooms, and demonstration kitchen. Learn more.

Environmental Service Awards Celebration
Thursday, February 29, 6:00 p.m., via Zoom
All are welcome to attend MACC's 2024 Environmental Service Award Ceremony . Melissa Hoffer, Massachusetts' Climate Chief, will present the keynote address, where she will outline the Administration's climate goals, with emphasis on the importance of how wetlands and open space build climate resilience. The Awards Celebration follows immediately. Register.

Important Terrafirma Announcement
Terrafirma members' current Terrafirma policies end March 1, 2024. Coverage continues only if you reconfirm eligibility and pay for a 2024 policy on the Terrafirma website. File a claim for any possible problems that you discovered this policy year, even if you're unsure about the issues. Email Terrafirma with any question.

Webinars and eLearning

Dam Busters 101: Monthly Lunchtime Webinar Series
First Wednesday of each month starting November 1, noon – 1:00 p.m.
Sponsored by DER, Massachusetts Rivers Alliance and CRWA, each webinar focuses on a dam removal topic, features an expert, and offers time for questions and discussion. The goal is to give municipal and NGO dam removal project managers the knowledge they need to successfully manage and carry out a dam removal projects. Attend one or all. An in-person site visit is planned at the end of the series in the fall of 2024. Register. View previous sessions.

Tribal Forestry: Understanding Current Issues and Challenges
Thursdays, January 18 – April 25, noon – 12:55 p.m. (not March 14 and 21)
T his series will focus on the current state of tribal forest management and Indigenous stewardship, with speakers from different tribes, universities, non-profits, and agencies. Topics will include: the history of forest stewardship on tribal lands in North America, federal laws and tribal forestry, contemporary uses of plants and w ildlife stewardship, fire, conclusions from the Indian Forest Management Assessment (IFMAT), tribal co-management, and the future of tribal forestry in the face of climate change. Free. CEUs available for attending foresters. Co-developed and co-hosted by The Forest School and the Yale Center for Environmental Justice at Yale School of the Environment, and Salish Kootenai College. Learn more and register.

Making Land Available for Farming
Thursdays, February 22 and 29, noon – 1:30 p.m.
These two webinars are intended to help farmland owners and their representatives explore motivations, strategies, and mechanics for making any amount of land available to a farmer. Learn more and register.

Understanding Watershed Forestry Management
Sunday, February 25, 2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m., virtual via Zoom and in-person at the Quabbin Reservoir Visitor Center

DCR Quabbin-Ware Region Chief Forester Ken Canfield will explain the benefits of a managed forest, and the objectives and conditions that dictate when, where, and how trees are harvested. In-person seating is limited. Free, but registration is required for both Zoom and in-person attendance.

Northeast Regional Invasive Species & Climate Change Symposium
February 27 & 28 (Tuesday & Wednesday)
Learn about and discuss challenges and solutions to dually managing invasive species and a changing climate. Details forthcoming here.

NEW! **Natural and Working Lands: Natural Climate Solutions and Municipal Opportunities**
Wednesday, February 28, 10:00 a.m. – noon
Offered by EEA's Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Program. Link: https://zoom.us/j/98259435437 Meeting ID: 982 5943 5437

NEW! **Easements for Food Producers**
Thursday, February 29, noon – 1:15 p.m.
Easements on a property significantly influence how land can be used. Attorneys Andrew Marchev, Christina Reiter, and Veronica Gassert will present different types of easements and common conditions found in each. Hosted by Legal Food Hub. Details and register.

NEW! **Managing the River Commons: History, Fisheries Conservation, and Dam Removal in New England**
Wednesday, March 6, noon
This webinar, hosted by the Joint Committee on Fisheries Engineering and Science, will explore ways historical conservation efforts can help guide current campaigns to remove dams and allow diadromous fish to reclaim their historic position in freshwater environments. Zoom link (no registration required).

NEW! **Remote Monitoring Toolkit Webinar**
Thursday, March 7, 2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.
Learn about the Land Trust Alliance's new Remote Monitoring online toolkit, and understand how remote sensing technology can benefit the land trust community. This demonstration will describe all sections of the toolkit, and show how to assess this technology for practical application. Learn more and register.

NEW! **Managing for Biodiversity Webinar**
Thursday, March 7, 6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.
The "little things that run the world" are in big trouble: insect populations are plummeting, and many species are headed for extinction. Heidi Dollard of the Massachusetts Pollinator Network will talk about what we can do to restore vital insect populations, such as protecting native plants, controlling invasive plants, and leaving deadwood. Learn more and register.

NEW! **NRCS Statewide Local Working Group Meeting**
Tuesday, March 19, 9:30 a.m. – noon
Local Working Groups are key to NRCS' (Natural Resources Conservation Service's) locally-led conservation process. They provide essential input to the USDA NRCS and Conservation Districts (CDs). This meeting offers attendees the opportunity to contribute to natural resource priorities and management strategies specific to their regions. Input will help both NRCS and the Districts shape their programming to better serve all regions of Massachusetts. Learn more. Register.

ACEP-ALE Program Sub-Committee Spring Meeting
Wednesday, April 10, 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.
At this spring meeting of the ACEP-ALE Program Sub-committee of the MA NRCS State Technical Committee, learn about ACEP-ALE and WRE programs as tools for farmland protection, participate in making recommendations to the State Technical Committee, and help shape the role and scope of this sub-committee to advance farmland protection efforts across the state. This group will plan to meet quarterly. All interested parties welcome. Register. Contact Jamie Pottern jpottern@farmland.org with questions.

In-Person Events and Outings

NEW! **MACC's 2024 Annual Environmental Conference**
Saturday, March 2, The College of the Holy Cross, Worcester (4 sessions will be livestreamed for virtual attendees)
Connect with people from across New England working to protect wetlands and open space at the largest annual environmental conference of its kind in New England. This year's all-day conference features 30 workshops, as well as two Fundamentals units, 40 exhibitors, the popular President's closing reception, and more. Conference portal. Schedule. Register (in-person). Register (virtual only).

NEW! **Growing Solar & Protecting Nature in Massachusetts**
Tuesday, March 5, 6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m., Fisher Museum at Harvard Forest, Petersham
Jonathan Thompson, Research Director at Harvard Forest, and Michelle Manion, Mass Audubon Vice President of Policy and Advocacy, will discuss recently published research on solar development in Massachusetts, specifically: whether Massachusetts can meet its solar goals while protecting its most valuable natural and working lands, with a particular focus on how this relates to policy and implementation in rural Massachusetts. Details. Register.

NEW! **Wildlands Tier 1 Volunteer Training Series**
Wildlands Stewardship Training Center, Plymouth
The intent of this pilot program – in addition to skill-building – is to offer an avenue for physical activity, scaled to individual ability, and to introduce trainees to a tight-knit community of like-minded peers and new ways to get involved with local conservation efforts. Free to all current and prospective volunteers (except the First Aid & CPR session). No experience is required. Volunteers are strongly encouraged to attend all four modules and receive Tier 1 certification. Learn more about the series. Learn more about the Stewardship Training Center. These modules will be offered again in the future.
Saturday, February 24 | Basic First Aid & CPR – sold out
Thursday, March 7 | 5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. | Public Advocacy & Challenges - Register
Thursday, April 18 | 5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. | Hand Tool Use & Maintenance - Register
Thursday, May 9 | Trail Monitoring & Maintenance – sold out

NEW! Rhode Island Land & Water Conservation Conference 20th Anniversary
Saturday, March 9, University of Rhode Island Memorial Union, Kingston, RI
This year's Rhode Island Land & Water Conservation Summit – organized by the Rhode Island Land Trust Council – focuses on critical strategies to conserve important landscapes and waterways. The program will cover contemporary environmental challenges and opportunities for collaboration. Learn more and register.

NEW! Forests, Climate, and Innovations Forum
Thursday, March 21, 8:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., UMass Amherst, Oliver Design Building
The Forum will focus on how Massachusetts forest landowners and forest-based businesses can provide needed wood products in economically and environmentally sustainable ways. Learn more.

NEW! The Initiative on Land, Housing, & Property Rights Conference
March 21 & 22 (Thursday & Friday), Hybrid: at Boston College and via Zoom
Over $32 billion in real property in the U.S. is estimated to be heirs' property, a highly unstable form of ownership most prevalent in low-income communities. Loss of heirs' property that lacks clear title increases the racial wealth gap. Learn about the problem and existing and potential solutions. Learn more and register.

2024 Massachusetts Land Conservation Conference
Saturday, March 23, 2023 in person at UMass Amherst and Friday, April 26, field trips around the state. See more above, under MLTC News and Programs.

NEW! Basic Chainsaw Skills for Trails
March 30 & 31 (Saturday & Sunday), 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. each day
Location: Stewardship Training Center, Plymouth
Training will include basic chainsaw safety, use, and equipment maintenance. Participants will gain basic skills for addressing tree issues on trails. Cost: $250. Breakfast and lunch are provided each day. Details and registration. Organized by Wildlands Trust.

Grants

Inclusive and Accessible Outdoor Recreation Events Support Grants
Application deadline: Friday, February 23
This program, the first offered by the new Massachusetts Office of Outdoor Recreation (MOOR), aims to make outdoor recreational activities more accessible to low-income residents, communities of color, and people living with disabilities. Grants of up to $10,000 will support events that encourage new and returning audiences to the great outdoors. Learn more.

Resilient and Connected Appalachians Grants
Application deadline: Saturday, February 24
This new program funded by The Nature Conservancy awards up to $50,000 to support projects that result in the permanent protection of resilient and connected lands in pivotal landscapes. Projects should focus on the intersection of connectivity, climate resilience, and community engagement, especially with vulnerable or affected groups. Learn more.

NEW! Landscape Partnership Grants
Info sessions: Monday, February 26, 1:00 p.m., MassWildlife headquarters, Westborough (in-person) and Wednesday, February 28, 2:00 p.m. (virtual)
Application deadline: Thursday, April 18, 3:00 p.m.
The goal of these grants is to protect large blocks of conservation land. Local, state and federal government agencies, and non-profit groups can use this grant to work together to protect properties that meet the minimum acreage required based on county. Grants up to $1,250,000 are available in this round. Potential applicants are strongly encouraged to attend one of the info sessions. Email Vanessa Farny at vanessa.farny@mass.gov to register. Learn more and apply.

NEW! America the Beautiful Challenge Info Webinar
Info webinar: Thursday, February 29, 2:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Pre-Proposals Due: Thursday, April 4
Full Proposals Due (by invitation only): Tuesday, July 16
Approximately $119 million will be awarded in nationwide funding to conserve, connect, and restore lands, waters, and wildlife. It's highly recommended that potential applicants attend. Learn more. Register.

NEW! Clif Family Foundation Operational Support Grants
Application deadline: Friday, March 1
These grants support daily operating costs and specific projects. Priority will be given to proposals that address two or more of its funding priorities simultaneously: strengthening the food system, enhancing equitable community health outcomes, and safeguarding the environment and natural resources; applicants that demonstrate strong community ties; and those that operate within viable and clearly defined plans for positive change. Learn more.

2024 Conservation and Outdoor Recreation Technical Assistance Opportunity
Application deadline: Friday, March 1
The National Parks Service Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program (NPS-RTC) helps communities and public land managers evolve climate resiliency strategies, develop or restore parks, conservation areas, rivers, and wildlife habitats, as well as create recreation opportunities and programs that engage future generations in the outdoors. Learn more and apply.

Cornell Land Trust Small Grants
Application deadline: Friday, March 1
Cornell Lab's Land Trust Bird Conservation Initiative grant program will award around $230,000 to as many as 14 projects in two categories: Capacity and Partnership Projects – up to 6 grants of $5,000 each, and Management and Restoration Projects – 8 grants of $25,000 each. Funds to be dispersed in late May. Learn more.

NEW! MVP Action Grant Info Sessions (Pre-Release)

March 6 & 7 (Wednesday & Thursday), 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
EOEEA (Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs) is increasing funding to help communities address inland flooding. To prepare for the release of these grants, the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) team is hosting two info sessions to give an overview of the program, review anticipated changes to this round's application, and answer questions. Choose only one session – they will cover the same information. Register for Wednesday, March 6. Register for Thursday, March 7.

Funding for MA Forest Landowners to Improve Native Wildlife Habitat
Application deadline: Friday, March 8 (also May 10)
Offered through the Massachusetts Collaborative for Private Forestland – Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP), these funds support improving and protecting wildlife habitat on private forest land in Massachusetts. Eligible landowners must own forestland in Massachusetts that is at least 10 acres. Applications received by March 8 (or May 10) will be ranked and considered for funding in fiscal year 2024. Learn more.

Drinking Water Supply Protection Grants
Application deadline: Friday, March 8, 3:00 p.m.
This program provides financial assistance for the purchase of land in existing Department of Environmental Protection approved drinking water supply protection areas, or land in estimated protection areas of identified and planned future water supply wells or reservoirs. Grants of up to $350,000 are available. Learn more.

NEW! Culvert Replacement Municipal Assistance Grants
Opening in late February . These grants are for Massachusetts municipalities to replace undersized, perched, and/or degraded culverts in areas with high ecological value with new structures that meet environmental design and structural standards along with flood resiliency criteria. Check the DER website for the RFR (Request for Responses) opening, recorded grant briefings, and other technical resources on these grants.

NEW! Ocean Hour Farm Inaugural Grants
Application deadline: rolling, between Friday, March 1 and Friday, May 31
The purpose of these inaugural grants from Ocean Hour Farm – a center for education, scientific research, and demonstrations of regenerative agriculture based in Newport, RI – is to help fill knowledge and infrastructure gaps in order to accelerate and support an inclusive transition to regenerative land management. Proposals should focus on one or more of these: skills development and transition mentoring; redesigning food and fiber systems; redistribution of resources; and/or data collection. Awards range between $10,000 and $75,000. Projects must offer a direct benefit to food and fibershed within an approximately 100-mile radius from Newport, RI. Learn more.

Innovation and Capacity-Building Grants
Application deadline: rolling through Wednesday, April 3
These grants, part of the EmPower Program of the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center, provide seed funding for the exploration of innovative ideas for potential program models or projects that will provide access to the benefits of clean energy, or reduce energy burden for previously underserved or vulnerable populations in the state. RFP. Learn more.

Environmental and Climate Justice Community Change Grants
Awarded on a *rolling basis through November 21, 2024* , these U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) grants will award up to approximately $2 billion to benefit disadvantaged communities through projects that reduce pollution, increase community climate resilience, and build community capacity to address environmental and climate justice challenges. Eligible applicants are partnerships between two community-based non-profit organizations, and partnerships between such organizations and local governments or higher education institutions. Learn more and apply.

List of Federal Funding Opportunities
Compiled by Land Trust Alliance (LTA), this list of current federal conservation program funding opportunities for land trusts is organized by deadline date. For a complete list of funding, visit grants.gov.

Solar Moonshot Program
This program helps non-profits afford the switch to clean energy. Grant priority is given to solar projects that have additional funding sources and community support. Grants are typically awarded up to $25,000, with amounts dependent on various factors. The program is managed by Hammond Climate Solutions Foundation, and grants are funded by generous philanthropists and foundations. Questions? Contact solarmoonshot@hcs.foundation. Learn more and apply.

Freedom's Way National Heritage Area Partnership Grants
Application deadline: accepted on a rolling basis starting October 1 until funding is exhausted
This program serves as a catalyst for new, creative programs and projects within 45 communities of the Heritage Area. Reimbursable matching grants are offered in support of the goals and objectives outlined in the Freedom's Way National Heritage Area Management Plan and summarized as: Inclusive Storytelling; Education, Interpretation & Curation; Community Planning & Resource Conservation; Historic Preservation; and Regional Cultural Events. Funding ranges from $1000 to $7500. Discussion of your proposal with a grant specialist before applying is highly recommended. Learn more here and here.

Land Conservation Networking Mini Grants
Applications accepted on a rolling basis, but applying in the fall is recommended
Projects must be complete by April 15, 2024
Recognizing that many land conservation projects require partnerships among community leaders and other conservation partners, this mini grant program focuses on creating intentional opportunities for networking and relationship building. The ideal proposal will bring together people from a shared geography to build or strengthen relationships in service of community conservation. Learn more.

Neighborhood Outreach Project
Applications accepted on a rolling basis, but applying in the fall is recommended
Landowner decisions are often informed by advice and stories of friends and neighbors. The goal of this grant is to use neighborhood-scale social networks to help inform landowner decisions about the future of their land. Past projects include direct mailings to high-priority landowners, videos, workshops, potlucks, site visits, and individualized follow-up with interested landowners. Learn more and apply.

Supporting Underserved and Small-Acreage Forest Landowner Participation
Application deadline: reviewed quarterly, with final deadline Wednesday, August 21
These grants, funded by the US Forest Service, support the participation of underserved or small-acreage forest landowners in emerging private markets for climate mitigation or forest resilience. Learn more and apply.

Resources and Opportunities

Need Help Building a 5-Year Conservation Plan?
Application deadline: Friday, March 8
This service of the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Services' (NRCS) Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), assists private forest landowners, land trusts, farmers, sportsmen clubs, and others by designing a 5-year conservation plan that provides financial assistance for active conservation measures already being conducted on the land units enrolled such as forest thinning, invasive species control, installing wildlife structures, etc. Minimum annual payments to participants start at $4,000/year ($20,000 over the 5-year contract). Learn more.
Contact John Doyle, Forestry and Wildlife Implementation Specialist, or your local NRCS Field Office for more information.

DCR Seeking Partners for Programming and Concessions
The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation is requesting expressions of interest from partners with ideas for enhancing preservation and access to facilities at Stearns Reservoir in Framingham, Beartown State Forest in Monterrey, and Lake Wyola State Park in Shutesbury.

Massachusetts Geospatial Strategy - Your Feedback Needed
The State updated its geospatial strategy, which hasn't been done since 2007. MassGIS is asking for input from geospatial data and technology users in the non-profit, and public and private sectors to complete this survey to capture feedback. See MassGIS' strategic planning website for more information.

Explaining the Massachusetts Division of Conservation Services (DCS)
This webinar by Bob Wilber (Director of Conservation Services), Melissa Cryan (Grants Programs Supervisor) and Sheri Widdis (Conservation Restriction Reviewer) outlines DCS' programs and priorities, describes what CRs are and how they're reviewed, and explains OSRPs (Open Space and Recreation Plans) and DCS grants. This webinar was hosted by the Massachusetts Society of Municipal Conservation Professionals. View.

Coastal Flood Exposure Mapper
This online tool creates user-defined maps of the people, places, and natural resources exposed to coastal flooding to support assessment of coastal and inland hazards risks.

Dam Busters Recording: Getting Community Support for Dam Removal
View Mass Rivers Alliance's January 10th webinar, which covers effective outreach and stakeholder involvement in dam removal, as well as makes compelling economic and public safety appeals. Case studies are included.

Restoring Old Growth Characteristics Podcast
Old growth forests were once the predominant natural condition across our New England landscape prior to European settlement. Now they are one of the rarest habitats in our region. Listen to Paul Catanzaro, Professor, Forest Ecology and Conservation, UMass Amherst, discuss the range of opportunities and techniques to restore old growth characteristics to our forests.

Heirs' Property Toolkit
The Land Trust Alliance, with support from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), created the Heirs' Property Toolkit to help land trusts understand the heirs' property issue, and provide resources to use when working on heirs' property projects. Heirs' property refers to family land passed down from generation to generation through inheritance, often without a deed or clear documentation, resulting in disputes over land ownership and difficulty accessing conservation funding and other resources.

Forest Carbon Series
This four-part series covers An Introduction to Forest Carbon (read), Understanding Forest Soil Carbon (read), Managing Forests for Carbon (read), and Payments for Forest Carbon (read). Brought to you by Northern Woodlands.

First Detailed Assessment of Invasive Plant Risks
Researchers at UMass Amherst and the NE Climate Adaptation Science Center have identified the potential northeast movement of invasive species and changes in habitat suitability. Their study, which analyzed 144 species, highlights invasion 'hotspots', and predicts range shifts with a 2°C climate warming. This research offers resources for land trusts to strategically manage invasive threats and prioritize native species restoration in areas expected to become less susceptible to invasions. Learn more.

What Are Those Animal Tracks?
Learn the basics of animal track identification from these resources.

Coyote Control
Coyotes are in every mainland Massachusetts town. Late January through early March is their mating season, so you may see and hear more of them. Learn how to prevent conflict by protecting your pets, removing food sources, and hazing.

Earth Night 2024
Wednesday, May 29, 5:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m., Fenway Park
This annual event, which attracts over 400 policymakers, environmental advocates, and business and civic leaders, celebrates ongoing work to secure the health and wellbeing of the environment and future generations. As well, three honorees will receive the 2024 Commonwealth Environmental Leadership Awards. Festivities include an open bar, heavy hors d'oeuvres, and ample time for conversation. Register.

Jobs

Post your job openings on the MLTC self-serve Job Board! Add one anytime.

NEW! Executive Director
Ipswich River Watershed Association (IRWA)

NEW! Director of Development
Boston Food Forest Coalition

NEW! Operations Manager
Lowell Parks & Conservation Trust

NEW! Land Acquisition & Farm Development Manager
Boston Farms Community Land Trust

NEW! Land Use Planner
Boston Parks and Recreation Department

Ecological Restoration Grants Manager - Division of Ecological Restoration

Conservation Science Program Manager -MassWildlife

Outreach Manager for Climate-Smart Forestry - New England Forestry Foundation

NEW! eBird Outreach Contractor
Highstead

NEW! Ecological Restoration Planner
Division of Ecological Restoration

NEW! Ecological Restoration Engineer
Division of Ecological Restoration

NEW! Regional Property Manager
Mass Audubon Metro West

NEW! Field Ecology Coordinator
Nantucket Islands Land Bank

NEW! Stewardship Team Leader
The Trustees of Reservations

NEW! APR Stewardship Supervisor - MDAR APR

NEW! Land Steward - Dartmouth Natural Resources Trust

NEW! Land Steward - Kestrel Land Trust

NEW! Land Stewardship - Summer Internship - Brewster Conservation Trust

NEW! Seasonal Stewardship Technician - Essex County Greenbelt

NEW! Seasonal Conservation Field Assistants - Town of Lincoln & the Lincoln Land Conservation Trust

NEW! Seasonal Shorebird & Ecology Technician - Nantucket Land Bank

NEW! Seasonal Trail Crew - Berkshire Natural Resources Council

NEW! Seasonal Land Steward - Wildlands Trust

NEW! Vegetation Technician - Seasonal - Duxbury Beach Reservation

Our Contact Information
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