



MASSACHUSETTS LAND TRUST COALITION

MassLand eNews

The Newsletter of the Massachusetts Land Conservation Community

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Member Spotlight



Wildlands Trust Expands a Critical Conservation Area in Plymouth

Wildlands Trust has added a longtime conservation priority to its 550-acre [Halfway Pond Conservation Area](#). The Advaita Meditation Center had purchased the land and its accompanying 11,000-square-foot building as a retreat center in the 1980s, but in 2015 its aging membership was rethinking the organization's future. In July 2022, Wildlands Trust purchased the 30-acre property, the largest privately owned parcel remaining on the west bank of the pond. The Meditation Center will retain rights to use the retreat center several times a year. Halfway Pond Conservation Area is a significant holding within the Atlantic Coastal Woodland (ACW), a 20,000-acre forested corridor in Southeastern Massachusetts. Wildlands Trust has focused much of its work over the last 50 years on protecting this landscape, recognized as the largest contiguous forest in one of the fastest-growing regions in the Northeast. In addition to iconic features like cranberry bog complexes and scrub oak, ACW has the second-largest remaining tract of Coastal Pine Barrens worldwide. It also includes

globally rare plant species which help glacial deposits filter and protect the largest drinking water aquifer in Massachusetts. Plans are underway to expand trail systems and establish a stewardship training center on the property. [Read more.](#)

Consider supporting MLTC's efforts to inform, connect, and advocate for the Massachusetts land conservation community. Your monthly or one-time tax-deductible donation of any amount is appreciated. Thank you! [Donate here.](#)



Donate

Remember to support MLTC on [AmazonSmile](#) when you make a purchase. Thank you!

MassLand News & Programs



I enjoyed meeting with Executive Director Joy Gary at Boston Farms Community Land Trusts' new Westville Farm in Dorchester. With site preparation on the donated parcel now complete, the organization will soon be accepting applications from those interested in farming the site.

#OurMassLandTrusts

MLTC Steering Committee Meeting

Friday, September 23, 10:00 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.

Hybrid: In person and via Zoom

In-person: Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary Auditorium (127 Combs Road, Easthampton, MA. Use [these directions.](#)) Masks currently optional.

Pre- & post-meeting walk (at [this location](#)) hosted by Pascommuck Conservation Trust

Zoom: [Register here.](#) (Thanks in advance for your patience with any technical difficulties we may experience during our first hybrid event.)

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, announcements, and a featured topic. This month we'll be soliciting input on policy priorities for the next state legislative session and administration. View the [Agenda.](#)

Being Prepared for "What If": Ensuring Conservation Permanence

October 4 - November 1, series of five consecutive Tuesdays from 4:00 p.m. - 5:15 p.m.

This new program is designed to help land trusts understand and identify risks, and assess current risk management strategies through a series of online training sessions and consultant-supported risk assessments. The program will cover risks such as the risk of someone hurting themselves on a trail or while volunteering, insufficient funding, lack of board member involvement, and conservation easement violations, among others. [Learn more and register.](#) [View info session video.](#)

Register Now for the 19th Annual Land Trust / State Agency Retreat!

Wednesday and Thursday, November 9 and 10

Join land trust and state agency conservation colleagues for this annual opportunity for networking and collective problem-solving. This year features both in-person and virtual programming. Attend one or both! View the [agenda here.](#)

If you're **interested in briefly sharing a case study** for one of the "lightning round" presentations that will kick off each day, submit your proposal [here.](#)

- **Wednesday, November 9th, 1:00 p.m. - 4:45 p.m. Virtual** via Zoom. Free. **Theme:** Innovative

Land Management Projects. Advance [registration required here](#).

- **Thursday, November 10th, 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., in-person** at Harvard Forest, Fisher Museum, Petersham. Cost: \$10. Limited to 75 attendees. Advance [registration required](#) via Eventbrite. Registration will close at noon, Monday, November 7. **Theme:** Strengthening conservation collaborations between municipalities, land trusts and state agencies. The agenda includes social networking time and fun activities. Note: Upon registration, attendees must attest to taking a COVID-19 test the day prior to the event.

Membership Thanks

Thank you to all who have already sent in your MLTC membership dues for the July 2022-June 2023 year! Member dues are essential to everything we do. If you haven't yet, please renew your support — or [join](#) for the first time! We've made it easier than ever to do that online. (Check your organization's membership status [here](#).)

Policy

PLPA Not Dead Yet

Though the formal legislative session ended without passage of *An Act Preserving Open Space in the Commonwealth* (also known as the Public Land Preservation Act, or “PLPA”), the Conference Committee has resumed meetings in hopes of resolving differences between House and Senate versions and passing the bill in informal session this fall. MLTC joined 10 other partners to [call on the Committee](#) to continue working towards an agreement and provide input on outstanding issues.

Economic Development Bill

MLTC and a coalition of partners advocated for an economic development bill that would invest a significant amount of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) dollars in conservation, outdoor recreation, restoration and climate resiliency. Though both House and Senate passed versions of the bill that did just that, no consensus was achieved before the formal session ended. The Legislature recently resumed talks that will hopefully lead to final passage this fall, and partners continue to encourage significant funding for conservation and climate priorities. Read a statement to the Joint Committee on Ways & Means [here](#).

Solar Energy Siting

The Department of Energy Resources is conducting a [Technical Potential of Solar Study](#) at the urging of TNC, Mass Audubon, AMC, MLTC and other organizations. The goal of the study is to provide a statewide hierarchical spatial analysis of solar siting suitability and to make policy recommendations designed to deploy solar to meet our decarbonization goals while minimizing impacts to important and sensitive natural resources. All are invited to complete a brief [stakeholder survey](#) that is part of this process. The study will also include a greenhouse gas analysis and policy recommendations. Meanwhile Massachusetts' Supreme Judicial Court issued a [decision](#) on a case (SJC-13195) in Waltham, ruling against the City and finding that municipalities must firmly ground any solar siting restrictions in the protection of public health, safety and welfare under the zoning exemption codified in M.G.L. Ch. 40A S.3.

Preparing for the Next Administration

This November 8th, a new governor will be elected to lead Massachusetts. MLTC joined 27 other 501(c)(3) charitable organizations focused on energy, environment, and justice to produce a *Massachusetts Climate and Environmental Policy Briefing Book* to educate candidates about our issues. Before the primary, the briefing book was provided to all candidates for governor, lieutenant governor and attorney general, with follow-up meetings held with all interested campaign staff. The book may be adapted as a transition document for the incoming administration after the election.

News

Massachusetts Land Trust Receives National Recognition

At its recent national land conservation conference in New Orleans, The Land Trust Alliance shared [this video](#) announcing **Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust** as the winner of its **2022 National Land Trust Excellence Award**. Mount Grace was recognized for its work in multiple areas, including ensuring access to affordable farmland through its “whole farm forever” approach that ensures future generations of farmers will have access to both farmland and farm infrastructure, and collaborating with local Nipmuc partners to co-manage land and assist with cultural revitalization. “When we protect land, we protect the wildlife connectivity, biodiversity and good soils,” said Emma Ellsworth, Executive Director at Mount Grace. “We also protect generational relationships with the land. That’s at the core of Mount Grace’s mission. It’s at the core of very urgent work ahead of us all. Not to protect the land from people, but to restore our relationships with the land and each other for a more just and equitable future.”

Congratulations to Mount Grace on this much deserved award!

Latest Round of MVP Grant Funding Supports Multiple Land Projects

On August 30th, the State announced recipients of \$32.8 million in Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness grants to municipalities. Among MVP Action Grants awarded in 2022, five projects helped towns and their partners acquire land: **Berlin** received \$874,268 for its Horseshoe Pond Acquisition Project, which includes the purchase of three properties that add 100 acres of woodlands to Mt. Pisgah conservation area, preserving a variety of habitats including wetlands and upland forest. Sudbury Valley Trustees is a partner on the project. A regional partnership involving **Mattapoisett, Fairhaven, Marion, Rochester and Acushnet** was awarded \$4,500,000 to protect 240+ acres spanning Mattapoisett, Acushnet, and Rochester to protect the aquifer which supplies water to the five towns. Buzzards Bay Coalition is a partner on that project. **Middleborough** received \$1,364,325 for the purchase of 96 acres of Picone Farm, which will enable the remaining 93 acres of the property to be protected via funding from partners, including Wildlands Trust. The protection of the farm will create climate resiliency by creating flood storage, water quality, and food security. **Plympton** received \$502,500 to preserve nearly 300 acres of Turkey Swamp, maintaining critical ecosystem and passive recreation connections and buffering impacts of flooding and drought. **Stow** received \$1,135,000 to preserve 111 acres of Stow Acres North for conservation and recreation purposes, and for a plan to guide restoration and development of the site. Stow Conservation Trust is a partner on the project. For all awards and details, [see here](#).

SCORP Requests Input from Land Trusts, Municipalities, Outdoor Enthusiasts

Deadline: Saturday, October 1

The National Park Service requires the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to complete a Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) every five years to remain eligible for funding from the Land and Water Conservation Fund grant program. The Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs is asking for opinions on outdoor recreation and open space from municipal employees, land trusts, and all users of Massachusetts’ outdoor recreational facilities. The survey should take five to ten minutes to complete. It's critical to hear from as many residents as possible to know how best to distribute LWCF funding over the next five years. Access the surveys here: [Land Trusts](#). [Municipal Offices](#). [Recreational Users](#). Questions? Contact [Melissa Cryan](#), LWCF Stateside Coordinator.

NRCS Requests Input to Determine Natural Resources Priorities

Thursday, September 29, noon - 2:00 p.m. via Zoom and via [survey here](#)

To receive the Zoom link, email Austin Miles at amilesmacd@gmail.com

Agricultural producers, owners/operators of non-industrial private forest land, professionals representing agricultural and natural resource interests, and individuals representing a variety of disciplines in the soil, water, wetland, plant, forestry, and wildlife sciences are invited to attend the Local Working Group (LWG) meeting and/or complete [this survey](#) to help Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) identify natural resources priorities. Make your voice heard! [Definitions](#) of resources referred to in the survey. Answers to this survey will not only

structure the LWG meeting, but will guide NRCS's work going forward.

Land Trust Leaders Envision the Future

Source: Land Trust Alliance

In honor of the its 40th anniversary, Land Trust Alliance asked land trust leaders to share their visions for the future of conservation and the land trust movement. [Here](#) is what these leaders — from land trusts big and small — said about the challenges we face and how we can tackle them.

Webinars and eLearning



Occupying Massachusetts: Layers of History on Indigenous Land

Thursday, September 22, 6:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

Cost: sliding scale donation

The occupation of land today—and throughout history—is a theme that's gaining renewed focus. Through images and discussion, local photographer Sandra Matthews and Indigenous activist David Brule will guide attendees through their newly published photobook, [Occupying Massachusetts: Layers of History on Indigenous Land](#), looking at the human occupation of land with an emphasis on the long presence of Indigenous people and the waves of settlement by people from other countries that began during the early 1600s and continues today. [Learn more and register.](#)



Increasing the Diversity of Trail Users and Supporters

September 22, 1:00-2:00 pm

This webinar will examine nearby trail residents' needs, interests, and apprehensions in their daily lives and how that connects to their awareness, impressions, and experiences with nearby trails and outdoor public spaces. Sponsored by American Trails. Free registration [here](#).



Being Prepared for "What If": Ensuring Conservation Permanence

October 4 - November 1, series of five consecutive Tuesdays from 4:00 p.m. - 5:15 p.m.

Details above under "MLTC News and Programs".



Reenergizing Your Board

Thursday, October 13, 2:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Cost: \$70 for LTA members, \$100 for non-members. One fee is valid for your whole team.

Explore and co-develop strategies to help maintain board momentum. This session will evaluate the stages of non-profit organization lifecycles; discuss and share strategies for moving from a disengaged board to a high performing board; and chart next steps for implementing lessons learned. Though open to all, the content will be most relevant to those currently serving on a board and for executive directors. [Learn more and register.](#)



Conservation Restriction Baselines 101 Workshop

Wednesday, November 9, 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

Cost: \$40 MACC members / \$60 non-members / \$35 full-time students

This class covers a step-by-step process on how to do everything from fieldwork, report contents, and document storage. Special attention will be paid to how to catch up. This is a great class for those new to doing CR baselines or who just need a refresher. [Learn more and register.](#)

Events and Outings



Climate Preparedness Week

September 24 - 30 (Saturday - Friday)

Massachusetts libraries will collaborate with Communities Responding to Extreme Weather (CREW) on Climate Preparedness Week to prepare communities for extreme weather by offering programs about emergency preparedness and the intersection of climate change and social justice. [Learn more and register.](#)



Managing for Old Growth Forest Characteristics: Field Workshop for Professional Foresters

Monday, September 27, 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Merck Forest and Farm Center, Rupert, VT

This full-day session will train professional foresters in managing for old growth forest characteristics. The day will begin indoors with a review of concepts, then move in the field, where strategies for potential assessment and management will be discussed. SAF CE credits will be available to qualifying participants. [Details and register.](#)



MassWildlife Habitat Walks

Habitat biologists will host guided walks in September and October across Massachusetts that feature a variety of habitat types. [Details here.](#)



2022 MA Food System Forum: Reconnecting, Celebrating, and Moving Forward

Wednesday, October 12, 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Sturbridge Host Hotel & Conference Center, Sturbridge, MA

Workshops and discussions will include Massachusetts farmland: protecting the resource, ensuring access for all; sustaining local food system businesses; identifying and addressing inequity in agriculture; inputs and outputs: enhancing natural resources in the food system; and more. [Details and register.](#)



Historic New England Summit 2022

October 13 and 14 (Thursday and Friday)

Mechanics Hall, Worcester and livestream

This year's Historic New England Summit will explore topics such as agricultural preservation, preservation and affordable housing, activating landscapes, climate change and resiliency, and more with local and national leaders, and will address how to create livable, resilient communities.

[Learn more and register.](#)



Yale Center for Environmental Justice: Global Environmental Justice Conference

October 13 and 14 (Thursday and Friday)

Hybrid: Yale University, New Haven, CT and online via Cvent

The Fourth Annual Global Environmental Justice Conference will focus on the intersection of equitable climate action and sustainable development.

[Schedule.](#) [Learn more.](#) [Register.](#)

MACC Fall Conference — Climate Challenges and Solutions for



Conservation

Saturday, October 15, 8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Devens Common Center, Devens

Workshops will cover these topics: running a more efficient commission meeting; managing invasive plants during climate change; engaging youth; green infrastructure; storm water management; case studies from New England communities; and updating wetland bylaws and regulations.

Featuring guest speaker Bob Wilber, Director of Conservation Services, Commonwealth of Massachusetts and until recently, MLTC Board member.

[Schedule at a glance.](#) [Details here.](#)



Resource Roundup: Finding Farmland in Berkshire County

Wednesday, October 19, 5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Pleasant Valley Wildlife Sanctuary, Lenox

Free, but advance registration is required. Limited to 30 people.

This workshop will include talks from agricultural service providers about land access and financing resources and services that their organizations provide to farmers. There will be plenty of time for questions and to mingle. [Learn more and register.](#)



National (Climate) Adaptation Forum

October 25 - 27 (Tuesday - Thursday)

Baltimore, MD

Registration deadline: Tuesday, October 19

The [National Adaptation Forum](#) brings together the climate adaptation community to foster knowledge exchange, innovation, and mutual support for a better tomorrow by moving beyond adaptation awareness and planning and into adaptation *action*. [Learn more.](#) [Register.](#) Limited attendance support is available; [apply here.](#)



2022 Regional Conservation Partnership (RCP) Network Gathering

Thursday, November 17, 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m., online

The RCP Network Gathering is a free, one-day virtual conference that brings together conservation practitioners to support their work in advancing collaborative landscape protection in the Northeast. This year's focus is 'How to Advance Climate Justice and Resilience'. [Learn more and register.](#)



Save the Date! 2023 Massachusetts Land Conservation Conference

Saturday, March 25, 2023, in person

More in next month's eNews.

Grants

TechSoup GrantStation Limited Offer

Application deadline: Wednesday, September 21

TechSoup, which provides technical support and technological tools to other non-profits, is offering a one year GrantStation membership for \$99. GrantStation helps non-profits find funders to support non-profits. [Sign up here.](#)

Buzzards Bay Watershed Municipal Mini-grant Program

Deadline: Tuesday, September 27

The Buzzards Bay National Estuary Program has \$211,605 in grant funds available to municipalities

for projects that help meet the National Estuary Program's (NEP) goals to protect and restore water quality and living resources in Buzzards Bay and its surrounding watershed, and to implement a recommendation or recommendations in the Buzzards Bay Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan. [Learn more and apply here.](#)

Harvard Forest's 2023-2024 Bullard Fellowship Program

Application deadline: Saturday, October 1

These paid fellowships are for mid-career professionals in ecology, forestry, land conservation, law and policy, and more to pursue a research project for 6-12 months in community with other researchers and practitioners at the Forest. Here is a list of [past projects](#). [Learn more and apply.](#)

Massachusetts Urban and Community Forestry Challenge Grants

Intent to Apply deadline: Saturday, October 1

Application deadline: Tuesday, November 1

This program consists of 50-50 matching grants (projects serving environmental justice neighborhoods are 75-25 grant match) offered to municipalities and non-profit groups in Massachusetts communities of all sizes for the purpose of building local capacity for excellent urban and community forestry at the local and regional level. [Learn more and apply here.](#)

Freedom's Way 2023 Partnership Grant Program

Applications accepted and awarded on a rolling basis starting Saturday, October 1

This program awards reimbursable matching grants up to \$5000 to non-profits and state and local governments within the 45 communities of the Heritage Area. Funding is available for a variety of projects, including community planning for resource conservation, special events, and more. Priorities include projects that promote access and cultivates connections to the natural world, and that reach new and/or underserved audiences. [Learn more and apply.](#)

Coastal Habitat Restoration and Resilience Grants for Underserved Communities

Application deadline: Wednesday, October 5

NOAA is providing \$10 million in grants to engage underserved communities in habitat restoration activities that promote resilience. The grants provide capacity for these communities to more fully participate in developing future transformational habitat projects. This engagement is intended to ensure that affected communities are integral to the visioning and decision-making for coastal habitat restoration projects affecting their communities, and that the benefits of such projects flow back to underserved communities. [Learn more.](#)

FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP)

Application deadline: Sunday, October 9

The HMGP program provides funding to state, local, tribal, and territorial governments to rebuild in a way that reduces or mitigates future disaster losses in their communities. There is currently \$110,760,576 available statewide. Under this program, the federal cost share has been increased to no less than 90%. [Learn more and apply.](#)

USDA - State Forest Service Landscape Scale Restoration

Application deadline: Thursday, November 10

This program funds collaborative, science-based restoration of priority rural forest landscapes for fish and wildlife habitat, water quality and watershed function, invasive plant mitigation, etc. State agencies, Federally Recognized Tribes, non-profit organizations, universities, and units of local government are eligible. [Learn more.](#)

NOAA Funding Opportunities

Up to \$2.96 billion in Bipartisan Infrastructure Law funds are available through several NOAA programs over the next five years to make investments in habitat restoration, coastal resilience, and climate data and services. [Details here.](#) Selected projects will support three major initiatives:

- [Climate Ready Coasts](#) to help coastal communities invest in natural infrastructure projects that build coastal resilience, create jobs, store carbon, remove marine debris, and restore habitat.
- [Climate Data and Services](#) to support government efforts to address the climate crisis by providing information and tools for decision-makers to address floods, wildfire, drought, and ocean health.
- [Fisheries and Protected Resources](#) to support efforts to restore important fisheries habitat and promote community economic development.

Resources & Opportunities

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion at New England Land Trusts

This report discusses findings from interviews conducted in 2021 with key experts at 15 land trusts in New England about the role land trusts have in making open space and farmland accessible to groups from marginalized backgrounds. [This report](#) comes from a larger study investigating inequality and environmental justice in the context of farm and open space conservation.

New Publication: Black Land Stewardship

To gain a better understanding of the unique experiences of Black landowners, it is important to listen to their stories in their own words. Some of these stories are voiced in [Black Land Stewardship](#), and can help provide an opportunity for the land conservation community to partner with Black forest owners to address common challenges they face in acquiring, stewarding, and passing on land.

Freedom's Way National Heritage Area Interactive Farms & Farmers Markets Mapping Tool

In addition to a directory of over 100 farms and farmers markets on the website, the interactive mapping tool allows visitors to create agritourism itineraries in concert with other FWNH events. Check it out [here](#).

Form 990-N Login Changes

Source: *National Council of Nonprofits*

This September the IRS changed the login process for [Form 990-N](#) (e-Postcard), which smaller nonprofits – those that regularly have annual gross receipts of \$50,000 or less – can use for their annual tax filing. Most smaller nonprofits opt to use Form 990-N because it is much simpler than the full Form 990 or even the Form 990-EZ. Under the new process, small nonprofits filing the 990-N must sign into the IRS modernized authentication platform using either their active IRS username or create an account with ID.me, which requires an email address and multifactor authentication. Form 990-N filers that have an existing IRS username and register for an ID.me account must use the same email address.

2022/2023 Season Hunting and Fishing Dates

Share the woods, be aware, make yourself seen. [View the dates](#).

Why Save the Bees?

[This article](#) from EcoWatch provides clear reasons why it's important to save the bees, and steps to take to help the process along.

Downed Wood is Good in Waterbodies

Downed trees and fallen branches that settle in streams provide nutrients, increase dissolved oxygen, and add complexity to the stream channel. Woody habitat also makes an excellent hiding place for trout and other fish. [Learn more](#).

Post your job openings on the MassLand **self-serve [Job Board](#)**! Add one anytime.
View more jobs on our [Job Board](#).

[Executive Director](#) - Friends of Herring River

[Director of Land Protection](#) - Sudbury Valley Trustees

[Cranberry Bog Restoration Program Manager](#) - MA Division of Ecological Restoration

[Landscape Conservation Program Manager](#) - Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife

[Endangered Species Review Biologist](#) - Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife

[Conservation Data Specialist](#) - Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife

[BioMap Outreach Specialist - Contractor](#) - Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife

[Stewardship Coordinator](#) - Wildlands Trust

[Marketing and Communications Associate](#) - Barnstable Land Trust

[Fall Outreach and Stewardship Internship](#) - Westport Land Conservation Trust, Inc.

Massachusetts Land Trust Coalition | 18 Wolbach Rd., Sudbury, MA 01776 | <https://massland.org>