



MASSACHUSETTS LAND TRUST COALITION

MassLand E-News

The Newsletter of the Massachusetts Land Conservation Community

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Member Spotlight



245 Acres of Fieldstone Farm Conserved in Hubbardston

Fieldstone Farm is a history book that tells the story of Hubbardston's agrarian and logging heritage. The property, which sits on both sides of Lombard Road, adjacent to East Quabbin Land Trust's 94-acre Henry's Grove Preserve, is comprised of 245 acres of woodland, wetland and old fields. It bridges the east-west gap between the East Branch of the Ware River and Bickford Pond, connecting existing conservation lands and trails in Hubbardston and Princeton. The Mass. Department of Fish and Game identified the entire property as Critical Natural Landscape because of its vital location connecting woodland areas and unique habitats in the region. The land west of Lombard Road is especially important, including Priority Habitat of Rare Species and several vernal

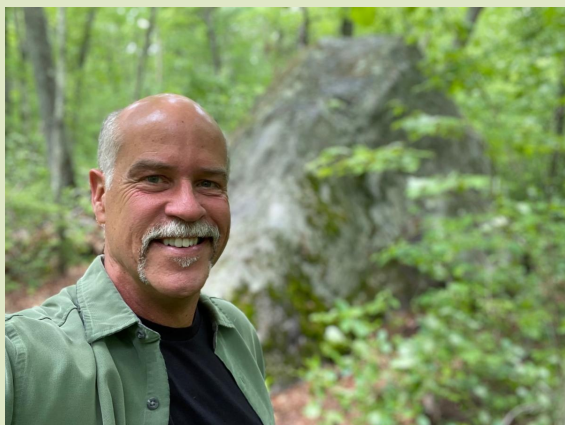
pools. The streams and wetlands on the property, which form part of the greater Boston public water supply, are identified as an Outstanding Resource Water in Massachusetts. East Quabbin Land Trust now owns 150 acres of the former Fieldstone Farm and the CR is held by the DCR. The remaining acreage was sold to the DCR. Thank you to the many partners who made it possible to protect Fieldstone Farm from development!

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

MassLand News



Summer rains have made for particularly lush woods on Attleboro Land Trust's Colman Reservation.
#OurMassLandTrusts

Advancing Racial Justice, Equity and Inclusion for Land Trusts

Wednesdays September 15, September 29 and October 20, 4:00 - 5:30 pm, via Zoom.

This interactive three-part learning collaborative is for leaders of land trusts exploring ways to advance equity and inclusion initiatives. Led by [Dr. Neenah Estrella-Luna](#), the series will help you examine opportunities, clarify challenges, and set concrete objectives specific to your organization. Read more [here](#). To foster a supportive peer cohort, participants are asked to commit to attend all three sessions and set aside adequate time to read materials and participate in exercises before and between sessions. Participating organizations are asked to register at least two representatives to attend. Cost: \$20 per attendee for MLTC members, \$40 per attendee for non-members. (Please contact robb@massland.org regarding scholarship assistance). Register [here](#).

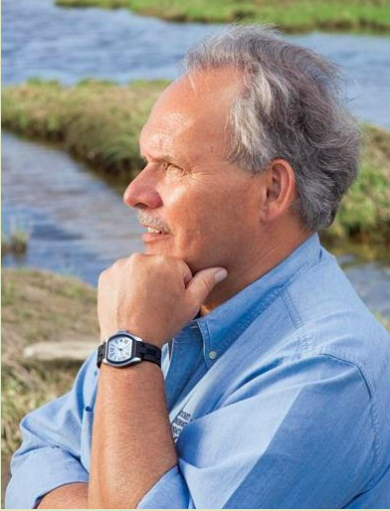
Membership Season is Here!

Despite the pandemic, generous support from MLTC members like you not only sustained us in the past year but enabled us to significantly expand programming. We rely heavily on member dues to maintain and broaden our services for the land conservation community, Please renew your membership [here](#), as you are able, so we can continue to bring you the information and programs you count on.

Untimely Loss of Two Massachusetts Land Trust Icons

With appreciation for their lives and deep regret for their too-early passing, MLTC notes the loss of Peggy Stevens and Jim Lentowski. Each of them provided distinguished service to their home regions as well as the broader land trust community, providing guidance, counsel and friendship to many of us.

Jim Lentowski of Nantucket was a legend in life and will remain one long after his untimely death on July 6. As a friend to all, mentor, historian, teacher, visionary and the occasional



conscience, Jim regularly shared kind words of encouragement and offered patient and wise counsel. He was an unabashed believer in community – including our Massachusetts Land Conservation Community – regularly making the trek off "the Rock" to "America" to take part in Steering Committee meetings, the annual Land Trust/State Agency Retreat, and the MA Land Conservation Conference. He brought a smile to everyone's face, not only in recognition for his work, but also for how he built a community of friends, colleagues and landowners all joined together in the common goal of protecting land that needed to be protected. His passion for protecting Nantucket's open space was amazing. In over a half-century he left a conservation legacy that helped protect fully one half of the island. Jim was perhaps the best conservation storyteller on the

island. He was true to his Polish heritage wherever he went, sharing his background in the form of a Kielbasa sandwich, made from Blue Seal Kielbasa from Chicopee (the land of Jim's youth) with those lucky enough to be there.

His [obituary](#) appeared in the Nantucket *Inquirer and Mirror* on July 8. A fitting description of Jim and his work, written upon his retirement in 2018, appeared in ACK.net on July 8 at <https://www.ack.net/stories/mr-conservation-jim-lentowski,25100>. A funeral mass was held on his Rock on July 20. Memorial gifts to the Nantucket Conservation Foundation would be appreciated.



Peggy Stevens, a founding board member of MLTC while serving as Executive Director of the Westport Land Trust, succumbed to illness on June 24 in Virginia. Following an extensive career in health care, she embarked on a decade's work in land protection, creating landmark shifts in the work of the WLT and the Northern Virginia Land Trust. With her unique blend of passion, patience and soft-spoken persuasion, she made an outsized impact on the conservation community in two states, and a personal impact on many of us. She did much to move MLTC

forward in its formative years, especially in the governance realm. Relocating to Virginia, she led NVCT through a challenging transition by providing clear and focused leadership to create a dynamic, unified staff that laid the foundation for the organization's current successes. She then returned to the role of assisting land trusts statewide as Executive Director of Virginia's United Land Trusts.

Peggy had an active volunteer leadership life outside conservation. Her life-long passion was the Girl Scouts, where she held Board and Officer positions in three Councils and served most recently as Vice President of the World Foundation for Girl Guides and Girl Scouts. She also held volunteer non-profit leadership positions in several performing arts organizations, with women's leadership initiatives, and as Board Chair of Hostelling International USA.

Her obituary [is here](#). A celebration of Peggy's life will be held in the spring of 2022 at a Girl Scout conference facility in eastern Massachusetts. Remembrances in Peggy's name may be made to Girl Scouts of Eastern Massachusetts, 265 Beaver Street, Waltham, MA 02452, website: www.gsema.org, (select: Donate; Designation: Peggy Stevens Memorial Fund).

Policy

Huge opportunity to invest in the environment!

The \$5.3 billion in American Rescue Plan Act funding coming to Massachusetts presents a once-in-a-generation opportunity to invest in environmental infrastructure and the green economy, **but we need your help to make sure it happens!** The Joint Ways and Means Committee began a series of hearings on July 20 to gather input on how to allocate these funds. By the end of July, please reach out to [your state legislators](#) urging them to invest a significant share of those funds in the environmental programs you care most about! [See this letter](#) submitted by MLTC and key partners for our priorities and examples of language you could use.

Charitable Conservation Easement Program Integrity Act reintroduced

A bi-partisan group of federal legislators recently reintroduced the [Charitable Conservation Easement Program Integrity Act](#) (S. 2256 / H.R. 4164). This bill will put a stop to fraudulent tax deductions claimed by bad actors, costing the federal government billions in tax revenue -- \$9.2 billion in 2018 alone! As importantly, stopping this fraud will protect the integrity of legitimate deductions that help incentivize landowners to donate conservation restrictions. Please [call your members of Congress](#) today and urge them to cosponsor and support this bill. Your voice is critical to the process, and phone calls are an easy and effective way to be heard. The Land Trust Alliance provides more information and a [sample script here](#).

Conservation Land Tax Credit update

Thank you to everyone who reached out to legislators to encourage passage of a budget amendment that would have expanded the Conservation Land Tax Credit. Unfortunately, the legislature did not adopt the amendment, so we'll continue to advocate for passage of a bill to raise the annual cap for this important program from \$2 million to \$5 million to address the significant backlog in eligible projects that many of you are working on. Stay tuned for ways you can help!

News

New Model CR and Submission Form Available

The state's new Model Conservation Restriction (CR), dated June 2021, is now posted on EEA's Division of Conservation Services' (DCS') [Conservation Restriction Review Program webpage](#). The webpage has also been updated to reflect the current review process, and to answer many of the most common questions DCS receives. Some points to note: 1) The intake and review process is now entirely via email; 2) Using the commenting feature of MS Word is encouraged in initial drafts to explain changes/additions to the Model CR, and helpful in moving the review process along; and 3) If your organization plans to continue using your own unique Model CR, please update it according to the 2021 Model CR while retaining, as you believe necessary, the unique aspects of your templates. [Access the New Model CR and Submission Form here](#). Many thanks to Rob Warren, John Gioia, and all the members of the ad hoc committee that made this new model and submission form possible!

New Report on Mapping Lands to Save Plant Diversity as the Climate Changes

Source: Press Release

Native Plant Trust and The Nature Conservancy recently released *Conserving Plant Diversity in New England*, a comprehensive report that provides a scientific framework and detailed roadmap for conservation action and land protection at the species, habitat, and parcel scales to save plant diversity—and thus overall biodiversity—in New England as the climate changes. The report and its interactive mapping tool give policy makers, federal and state agencies, and land trusts the benchmarks and data to most effectively spend conservation dollars by protecting climate-resilient sites that capture plant and habitat diversity. [Access the report](#) and mapping tool.

New Environmental Justice Webpage on Mass.gov

This [new webpage](#) updates the definition of Environmental Justice Populations and implements it through easily usable maps. Also included are the updated EJ Policy, a Language Map which

provides the percentage (by census block group and language) of neighborhoods with limited English proficiency speakers, the current and older versions of the EJ maps, and the historical red-lining maps of some towns. There are also links to contact EJ Task Force members, as well as more resources. [To the webpage.](#)

MassWildlife Urges the Public to Remove Bird Feeders and Report Dead Birds

The [advisory](#) comes after an unknown disease among birds has been reported in some states outside of New England along the eastern seaboard and into the midwest.

Can Land Conservation and Dual-Use Solar on Farms Coexist?

Source: *Civil Eats*, June 29

While some believe Massachusetts is blazing a trail for much-needed renewable energy infrastructure, others worry that the construction of new solar arrays throughout the state is accelerating the destruction of forests and farmland. This article includes background and examples, and features Heidi Ricci, MassAudubon's Director of Policy and Advocacy, and Emily Cole, American Farmland Trust's New England Deputy Director among others. [Read the article.](#)

CPA Statewide Revenue Projected to Top \$250 Million in Coming Year

Source: *CPA Update* (newsletter)

Six months into 2021, the [total Community Preservation Act \(CPA\) Trust Fund revenue](#) is up by almost 100% compared to the same six months in 2020. Local CPA surcharge collections remain strong in each of the 187 CPA communities. The combination of local surcharge collections and the state distribution funds should easily break \$250 million in the coming year. [View a year-by-year history](#) of statewide CPA revenue.

Webinars and E-Learning



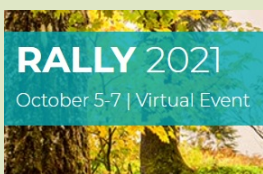
New Land Conservation Tools Launched by UMass Extension

[Land Conservation Tools](#) is a recently launched website by UMass Extension that summarizes and links to various information sources and tools that can help conservation practitioners guide their decisions on land protection and stewardship. The portal was developed based on survey and focus group research with consulting foresters, and with practitioners from land trusts, municipalities, regional planning authorities, and State government agencies. Users can filter the tools to their interests, and view a standardized profile for each. The website also includes direct links to the various tool products.



Farm Succession Training for Attorneys & Financial Advisors

September 20 - 30, 16 hours. See [website](#) for exact dates and times. Over 10,000 New England farmers are likely to exit farming in the next decade. They need knowledgeable technical advisors to support and guide the complex planning process. These virtual sessions will focus on the legal and financial components of farm succession plans. They will be a unique opportunity for peer-to-peer learning and network-building, with presentations by experts, small-group case and problem-solving clinics, and round-table "best practice" discussions. [Learn more.](#)



Registration is Open for 2021 Virtual Rally

October 5 - 7 (Tuesday - Thursday)

Rally is the annual gathering of land conservation practitioners from across the country where diverse interests and perspectives inform a shared interest in protecting special places. [Learn more](#) about this year's Rally.

Highlights include group pricing, over 60 workshops including access to recordings post-conference, networking, and Rock & Roll Trivia(!). [Register here](#).

Events and Outings



Celebrate Latino Conservation Week with a Guided Hike and Family Activities at Anniversary Hill / Scott Tower, Holyoke

Saturday, July 24, 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Sponsored by [Latino Outdoors](#) of Western Mass in collaboration with Kestrel Land Trust and other local partners, this guided walk and talk will highlight the history of the park and conservation plans for the future. Hikes start at 10 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. from Community Fields and are about 45 minutes round trip. There will also be picnic tables, free snacks, and fun activities for families and those who aren't able to join the hikes. [Learn more](#). OneHolyoke's monthly food pantry distribution will be on site after 12:30 p.m. with 300 boxes of non-perishable food items available for free with no restrictions, while they last.



Boston GreenFest - Exhibitors Wanted

Friday - Sunday, August 20 - 22, Rose Kennedy Greenway, Boston

GreenFest is a multi-cultural environmental musical festival which showcases sustainable solutions offered by businesses, vendors, and nonprofits while also offering opportunities to network and exchange ideas. In the past it has drawn crowds of thousands of all ages and backgrounds. This year's theme is #EnvironmentEqualityNOW. Non-profit environmental organization exhibitors are wanted. [Apply here](#). [Learn more](#).



Mass Rivers Annual Celebration - Outside!

Sunday, September 12 (rain date: Sunday, September 19)

Join Mass Rivers' community of river advocates and supporters for a fun, informal afternoon at Hale Reservation in Westwood. There'll be food and drinks, a live band, awards, boating, and a raffle for a new stand-up paddleboard, courtesy of Paddle Boston. [Register here](#).

Grants

Land and Climate Grant Program

Letter of Inquiry deadline: Friday, July 23

Sponsored by the Land Trust Alliance and Open Space Institute, this program seeks to build the capacity of land trusts' strategic planning projects that promote habitat resilience, carbon mitigation, or adaptation to flood, drought, fire or extreme heat by integrating climate science into strategic land protection, management and / or communications plans. [Learn more](#).

Regional Restoration Partnerships Program through the Dept of Ecological Restoration (DER)

Application deadline: Friday, July 23, 4 p.m.

This new program supports regional partnerships working to restore aquatic ecosystems throughout Massachusetts. The RFR (Request for Responses) solicits proposals from eligible nonprofit organizations and regional planning agencies to become Pilot Partners in the program. DER will provide funding and technical assistance to support selected Pilot Partners over a 3-5 year

period. [FAQs](#). [Learn more](#). [Submission portal](#).

USDA Grants for Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production

Application deadline: Friday, July 30, 11:59 p.m.

Up to \$4 million is available to support the development of urban agriculture and innovative production in two categories: Planning and Implementation. Planning projects initiate or expand efforts of farmers, gardeners, citizens, government officials, schools and other stakeholders in urban and suburban areas, and / or develop policies related to zoning and other needs of urban production. Implementation projects accelerate existing and emerging models of urban, indoor and other agricultural practices that serve multiple farmers. [Learn more](#).

Merrimack Conservation Partnership: Two Grants

Application deadline: Wednesday, September 15, 5:00 p.m.

Eligible towns: [see list](#); [Learn more](#).

- [Land Conservation Grant Program](#) underwrites transaction costs—appraisals, surveys, title research, staff time, etc.—on conservation transactions that protect land identified as a priority in the 2014 Merrimack Valley Regional Conservation Plan.
- [Environmental Science, Education and Outreach Grant Program](#) provides funding for environmental science, education and outreach activities related directly to the Merrimack River or its watershed. Funds can be used for activities such as youth or public environmental educational activities, development of outreach and educational materials, river clean ups, water quality testing and monitoring activities, and other related activities.

Quabbin-to-Cardigan Partnership (Q2C) Land Conservation Grant Program

Application deadline: Wednesday, September 15, 5:00 p.m.

Eligible towns: [see list](#)

The Q2C Land Conservation Grant Program underwrites transaction costs—appraisals, surveys, title research, staff time, etc.—on conservation transactions that protect land identified in the Q2C conservation plan. Non-profit land trusts, municipalities, and state agencies that have land conservation as a primary function are eligible to apply. [Learn more](#).

Resources and Opportunities

Pro-Bono Legal Services

Environmental Law Institute's (ELI) new pro-bono program will help connect communities and organizations in need of environmental legal services with legal professionals who are looking for opportunities to do pro-bono work. Matters will be posted with contact information for ELI attorney members to connect the source of the queries directly. To post a matter, perform environmental pro-bono work, or to become a partner to help grown the program, email probono@eli.org. [Learn more](#) about the program.

Resources for Forest Landowners and Municipalities from MassAudubon and DCR

[Forest Carbon Market Solutions Guide](#) - helps municipalities understand different opportunities for forest carbon projects

[Managing for Forest Carbon](#) - how to manage forests for carbon benefits

[Adapting to Changing Conditions](#) - how to promote healthy forests long-term in a changing climate

[Setting Goals](#) - for forest landowners obtaining a 10-year Forest Stewardship Plan

FEMA's Building Community Resilience with Nature-Based Solutions

This [guide](#) helps communities engage staff and resources needed to implement nature-based solutions to build resilience to natural hazards and climate change.

Calling All Shutterbugs

Deadline: Thursday, September 30

MassAudubon's 2021 Photo Contest is officially open. Submit your photos of wildlife, landscapes, and people enjoying the nature of Massachusetts. Each month through September some entries will be highlighted on MassAudubon's Facebook page. [Contest guidelines and rules](#). [Submit photos](#).

Firefly Watch Community Science Project

For a fun summertime family activity, join a network of community scientists around the country by observing your own backyard, and help scientists map fireflies. [Get involved](#).

Article: [Forest Carbon in Vermont](#), by Jim Shallow, TNC

Appropriate for a wider geography than Vermont, Jim thoughtfully discusses the value of carbon projects on conserved lands.

Jobs

Got jobs to fill? Post them on the MLTC self-serve [Job Board](#)! Add one anytime.

[Director, Division of Conservation Services](#) - MA Exec. Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs

[Executive Director, Otsego Land Trust](#) - Otsego Land Trust via Eos Transition Partners

[Director of Conservation Strategy](#) - The Nature Conservancy in New Hampshire

[Forest and Land Program Manager](#) - MA Exec. Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs

[Restoration Project Manager](#) - Merrimack River Watershed Council

[Conservation Coordinator](#) - The Nature Conservancy in Massachusetts

[Development Coordinator](#) - Connecticut Farmland Trust

[Land Steward](#) - Salt Pond Areas Bird Sanctuaries, Inc.

[GIS Analyst - Seasonal](#) - Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources