



MASSACHUSETTS LAND TRUST COALITION

MassLand eNews

The Newsletter of the Massachusetts Land Conservation Community

August 23, 2022, Volume 20, Number 8

Member Spotlight



Iconic Landscape Protected After 20-Year Attempt

[Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust](#) has reached an agreement with local landowners Paul and Jill Vento and the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) to permanently conserve nearly 200 acres of land comprising the southeastern bank of Tully Lake. DCR now owns the land and will steward the property. Tens of thousands of annual visitors Tully Lake see the Vento property, a forested lot that rises along the steep southeast bank of the lake. For over twenty years, prior owners had floated development proposals for the property including a 55-lot subdivision and a massive commercial solar array. As neighbor Johanna Lawlor Moore says: "It has been a long uphill challenge to safeguard such an important natural resource. It is a relief to know the views

from Tully Lake and Tully Mountain will be conserved and the Tully Lake watershed and the immense variety of wildlife it harbors has been protected". After transferring 187-acres to DCR via Mount Grace, Paul and Jill Vento will live on the remaining lot, which cannot be developed further. "Jill and I are so happy to have moved to such a gorgeous part of Massachusetts," Paul Vento explains, "and we are honored to be part of this community's long effort to protect the beauty of Tully Lake. We are thrilled that these acres will be conserved for perpetuity". [Read more](#). Photo Credit: Emma Ellsworth

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



Nice to see Waltham Land Trust's Smith Point Conservation Area at Hardy Pond, an oasis for its many neighbors.
#OurMassLandTrusts

Being Prepared for "What If"

Free info session Tuesday, August 30, 4:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. via Zoom. [Register here](#).

MLTC is collaborating with the [Land Trust Alliance](#) and Maine Land Trust Network to help you ensure the permanence of your land trust and its conserved lands. Identify risks and assess current risk management strategies through a series of online training sessions and consultant-supported risk assessment. 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. The program includes five consecutive virtual training sessions on Tuesdays from 4:00 to 5:15 p.m. starting October 4. To hear more about the program, join us August 30th at 4:00 p.m. for an information session. The info session is free, but registration is required [here](#).

Building Community Connections to Advance DEI

Monday, September 12, 3:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. via Zoom. [Register here](#).

This Stronger Together networking discussion provides an opportunity for land trust staff and board members to exchange ideas on efforts to advance racial justice, equity and inclusion initiatives within their organizations. This session will focus on sharing ideas on how to build and strengthen relationships with communities that have been historically underserved by conservation organizations. This informal discussion will feature no experts—just your questions and ideas. It will not be recorded. Sponsored by MLTC and facilitated by Robb Johnson, Executive Director. Free, but advance [registration required here](#).

Massachusetts State Dinner at Rally

Friday, September 16, 7:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m., location TBD.

The tradition resumes! With Rally back in person, all with Massachusetts connections are invited to

join our traditional Massachusetts Dinner. If interested in attending, please [answer a few questions](#) to help us book an appropriate venue.

The Family Forest Carbon Program Info Session: Climate-Smart Forestry Guidance and Incentives for Small Family Forests

Thursday, September 21, 10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. via Zoom. [Register here.](#)

As of July 2022, the American Forest Foundation and The Nature Conservancy have expanded the [Family Forest Carbon Program](#) into western and central Massachusetts (as well as Vermont and 4 counties in eastern New York). This program provides landowners who are interested in managing their forests for carbon with technical assistance and annual payments if they commit to either delaying harvest, or doing climate-smart harvests, for 20 years. Patti Ruby, Northeast Director for the Family Forest Carbon Program (AFF), and Laura Marx, Climate Solutions Scientist (TNC) will walk through the program and explain continuing roles for consulting foresters and land trusts. There will be plenty of time for questions, both about how to work with the program, and how the program is different from existing carbon market programs. Free, but advance [registration required here](#).

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 will be required inside.

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.

Have You Renewed Your Membership?

Member dues are essential to all our offerings - including expanded programming set forth in our new [Strategic Plan](#). So if you find value in our work, please renew your support — or join for the first time! We've made it easier to do that [online](#). (You can check your organization's membership status [here](#).) Thanks!

Policy

Work Continues on PLPA

The Massachusetts' formal legislative session ended on August 1st without passage of An Act Preserving Open Space in the Commonwealth, also known as the Public Lands Preservation Act (PLPA). A Conference Committee was unfortunately unable to resolve differences between House and Senate versions before the formal session ended. Joined by several other leading conservation organizations, MLTC called on members of the Conference Committee to continue working towards an agreement that can pass the Legislature during an informal session later this year, and [has been assured they intend to do so](#). It appears that the bill will not pass without a provision allowing cash to be set aside for future conservation in lieu of contemporaneous designation of replacement conservation land in at least some circumstances. Though we strongly prefer contemporaneous designation of appropriate replacement land, MLTC and several leading environmental advocates have developed and [shared input with negotiators](#) regarding strong and specific constraints that could enable us to support such a provision. We believe we can find language that would represent a significant improvement to the status quo. If you have questions, please contact Robb Johnson at robb@massland.org.

Major Economic Development Bill Still Pending

The state legislature also ended its formal session without passing a \$4.1 billion economic development package that proposed tapping state surplus funds and a second tranche of the state's America Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds for a wide array of priorities, including many investments in conservation. Some observers believe the legislature will resume efforts to pass the bill in an informal session before the November elections.

Inflation Reduction Act Includes Major Investments in Natural Climate Solutions

On August 16, President Biden signed a long-pending \$739 billion dollar budget reconciliation bill titled the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022. This law includes \$370 billion to address climate change, with the potential to reduce emissions by 40% by 2030. The bill benefits private land conservation by increasing funding to federal grant programs for which land trusts or their government and landowner partners will be eligible.

- \$20 billion in additional funding for Farm Bill conservation programs to be allocated over four years, including \$1.4 billion for the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program, \$6.75 billion for the Regional Conservation Partnership Program, \$3.25 billion for the Conservation Stewardship Program, and \$8.45 billion for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program.
- \$700 million for the Forest Legacy Program.
- \$1.5 billion for the Urban and Community Forestry program to plant trees in underserved areas.
- \$2.6 billion to NOAA for coastal zone management grants for the conservation, restoration and protection of coastal and marine habitats.
- \$450 million in competitive grants for underserved or small private forest landowners to carry out climate mitigation practices and participate in emerging private markets.
- \$3 billion to EPA for environmental and climate justice block grants to help reduce greenhouse gas pollution and/or mitigate climate risks in disadvantaged communities.

DCR Requests Public Feedback Regarding Classification of Forest Lands

As part of a 10-year review, DCR is updating its Landscape Designations and Management Guidelines, and holding a series of virtual and in person public meetings to gather feedback on whether changes are needed. As part of a visioning process more than a decade ago, DCR classified its forestland into three categories: Parklands (park-like facilities designed for heavy recreation use), Woodlands (where active forest management could be used), and Reserves (with no active forest management except in limited circumstances). Slightly less than 40% of state forestland was classified as Woodlands, while 60% was classified as Parklands or Reserves. Read the 163-page document outlining the designations [here](#). The listening sessions are:

- Tuesday, August 23, 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. | virtual | [register](#)
- Monday, August 29, 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. | virtual | [register](#)
- Thursday, September 8, 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. | in person | at MassWildlife Headquarters, 1 Rabbit Hill Rd, Westborough | no registration necessary
- Monday, September 12, 4:00 p.m. | field tour at Otter River State Forest in Baldwinville | [register](#)
- Tuesday, September 13, 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. | in person | at Pittsfield Athenaeum, 1 Wendell Ave, Pittsfield | no registration necessary
- Wednesday, September 14, 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. | virtual | [register](#)

News

Land Trust Salary Survey Is Now Open

Responses due by Friday, September 23

How much should you pay your hard-working land trust staff? The Land Trust Alliance's Land Trust Salaries and Benefits Survey is the only comprehensive source of staff compensation data exclusively for the land trust community. Many land trusts say it is one of the most valuable resources LTA provides. The more trusts that participate, the more useful the data will be, so share your land trust's data [here](#). The deadline is Friday, September 23. Results will be released in November.

Family Forest Carbon Program Launched

The American Forest Foundation and The Nature Conservancy have launched their Family Forest Carbon Program. Eligibility is limited to owners of 30 acres or more of natural forestland (not a plantation) in Berkshire, Franklin, Hampden, Hampshire, or Worcester counties. The contract runs for 20 years, and participants will receive annual payments by enrolling in one of two practices: Enhance Your Woodland, which includes a sustainable harvest to increase the forest's diversity and stand quality, or Grow Older Forests, in which they agree to refrain from harvesting for the 20-year period. In both, forest owners are allowed to cut firewood for personal use. Note that enrolling in any carbon credit/credit-like program like this one will prevent enrollment in a different carbon credit program later. [Learn more and enroll](#). [Register here](#) for a free information webinar to be held on Wednesday, September 21, 10:00 - 11:00 a.m.

New Accounting Requirements for Long-Term Leases

If your non-profit is leasing space or equipment for a term longer than 12 months, you are required to comply with a new method for accounting for these leases (reference ASU 2016-2 & ASC 842). In brief, the entire amount of your lease now needs to be booked as a liability, with a corresponding "right of use" asset shown. This is a significant change in practice, and could have a dramatic effect on your financial statements. Whether you are a non-profit bookkeeper, a CPA or do the books yourself, you are now required to implement this change to comply with generally accepted accounting principles. Consider consulting an experienced accountant for more information.

New Spotted Lanternfly Alert: Report Any Sightings

An infestation of the invasive spotted lanternfly (SLF) was found in the City of Springfield in early August, according to the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (MDAR). Says John Lebeaux, MDAR's Commissioner: "Anyone who sees this pest is asked to report it promptly. Early detection will help limit the spread of spotted lanternfly, and give orchards, farms, and other growers time to prepare". Spotted lanternflies may be found on sides of buildings, in or on vehicles, or on host plants, including tree of heaven, grape, maple and walnut, as well as on items received from states where SLF is known to have been introduced. If you find a spotted lanternfly, take a photo or collect the specimen, and report the sighting using MDAR's online [reporting form](#). [SLF info sheet and best practices](#).



Photo: Spotted lanternfly adult (left) and late-stage nymph (right) (Credit: USDA)

Stockbridge-Munsee Community Band of Mohican Indians Seeks to Reclaim Ancient Burial Grounds

Source: Berkshire Eagle, July 26, 2022, by Clarence Fanto

The [Stockbridge-Munsee Community Band of Mohican Indians](#) (descendants of Stockbridge's first settlers) is seeking to reclaim the "Indian Burial Ground" site on a quiet, forested nook overlooking the Stockbridge Golf Course, which dates back nearly 300 years. In a letter to the Stockbridge Select Board, Bonney Hartley, historic preservation manager for the Stockbridge-Munsee Mohican Nation, cites the "official and sacred responsibility for our Nation to preserve our ancestral burial grounds and other cultural sites such as these in our Mohican homelands". [Read more](#).

Webinars and eLearning

African American Genealogy Reveals a Community Enslaved by Massachusetts Owners



Thursday, August 25, 5:00 p.m.

Nicka Smith, a documentarian and genealogist with expertise in genealogical research of northeastern Louisiana and enslaved communities, will talk about the connection of nearly 6,000 people from an enslaved community in Mississippi and Louisiana who have ties to the Trask family in Massachusetts, which owned plantations in those two states. This defined enslaved community has ties to the origins of Amherst College and the University of Mississippi in the south. [Learn more and register.](#)



Being Prepared for "What If"

Program info session: Tuesday, August 30 from 4:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Free, but registration is required [here](#). More details above under "MLTC News and Programs".



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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.](#)

Events and Outings



Universally Accessible Hiking Trails (and More) in Massachusetts

From boston.com, [this list](#) includes trails in metro Boston, Cape Cod, and as far as the Berkshires. Also learn about [DCR's accessible programs](#), and additional accessible recreation opportunities (like sailing) [here](#).



MassTrails Conference

Deadline for proposals: Friday, August 26

Conference: Saturday, November 12 at Great Wolf Lodge, Fitchburg
Save the date! This year's theme is "Building Trails - Creating Community".
[Learn more and submit a proposal.](#)

Mass ECAN Climate Adaptation Field Trip Series



Hosted by Mass ECAN (Mass Ecosystem Climate Adaptation Network), the MA Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Program, the MA Division of Ecological Restoration, and local project partners.

Lyman Pond Dam Removal — Southampton | Wednesday, September 7, 11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. (rain date Thursday, September 8) [Learn more and register](#).

Coonamessett River Restoration — Falmouth | Thursday, September 22, 11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. (rain date Friday, September 23) [Learn more and register](#).

Sucker Brook Restoration — Pepperell | Thursday, October 13, 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. (rain date Friday, October 14) [Learn more and register](#).



Mass Rivers End of Summer Celebration

Sunday, September 11, 3:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Hale Reservation, Westwood

Join Mass Rivers for an afternoon outdoors with food, boating, and a live band. Plus, there's a raffle for a chance to win a 2-person kayak. Come celebrate our collective successes, and enjoy our community! [Buy tickets](#).



EBC 4th Annual New England Climate Change and Resiliency Summit

Tuesday, September 13, 9:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m., virtual

This event brings together representatives from the New England states to share updates on climate change plans, program priorities, and implementation strategies. [Learn more. 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](#).



Historic New England Summit 2022

Thursday and Friday, October 13 and 14

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](#).



Save the Date: MACCFall Conference — Climate Challenges and Solutions for Conservation

Saturday, October 15, 8:00 a.m. - 3:30 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.



Save the Date: 2022 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 designed to bring 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'. Check the [event page](#) for registration information coming in September.

Grants

Restoring Tribal Priority Fish Passage through Barrier Removal Grants

Application deadline: Monday, August 29

In collaboration with NOAA, selected Indian tribes and tribal commission or consortia partners can apply for funding to implement barrier removal efforts that benefit tribally-important migratory fish, and to build tribal organizational capacity to participate in developing current and future fish passage projects. Funding will support coastal fisheries and protected resources, while also enhancing community resilience to climate hazards by removing or improving aging infrastructure.

[Learn more.](#)

Habitat Management Grants

Application deadline: Wednesday, August 31

This MassWildlife program provides financial assistance to private and municipal owners of conserved lands to enhance wildlife habitat (notably game and State Wildlife Action Plan species), enhance ecological communities disproportionately susceptible to climate change, and promote public access for wildlife-related recreational opportunities. [Learn more.](#)

In-Lieu Fee Program

Application deadline: Wednesday, August 31

The Massachusetts Department of Fish and Game's In-Lieu Fee Program offers funding for land conservation or aquatic resource restoration projects in the Connecticut River watershed and central Massachusetts. Land conservation projects that permanently protect wetland and stream habitats are particularly encouraged in the Connecticut River watershed. This [online map](#) identifies where funds are available. Municipalities, non-governmental organizations, and state agencies are eligible to apply. [Learn more.](#) [RFP](#). Contact [Aisling O'Shea](#) with questions.

Transformational Habitat Restoration and Coastal Resilience Grants

Application deadline: Tuesday, September 6

NOAA is providing \$85 million in grants to habitat restoration actions that rebuild productive and sustainable fisheries, contribute to the recovery and conservation of threatened and endangered species, use natural infrastructure to reduce damage from flooding and storms, promote resilient ecosystems and communities, and yield socioeconomic benefits. [Learn more.](#)

Merrimack Conservation Partnership: Two Grants

Application deadline: Thursday, 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: Thursday, 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](#).

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](#).

Tribal Funding Resources

In partnership with First Light and Maine Coast Heritage Trust, the Highstead Conservation Finance team has compiled the funding opportunities from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law that are most relevant to the needs of Tribal Governments and Entities. The Law provides funding for approximately 380 new and existing programs across transportation, water, resilience, energy, environment, and broadband. [Learn more and access the materials here](#).

Resources & Opportunities

Better Selves Fellowship

The Better Selves Fellowship is a week of care and support for BIPOC leaders and their allies working for environmental and social change. It's a chance to rest, replenish, network with others, take risks, and go deeper. Although the 2022 program is now closed, [learn more](#).

Renewal Weeks at Knoll Farm

Renewal Week is a free retreat for small organizations in New England doing essential work in their communities who would greatly benefit from the chance to pause, re-energize, regroup, come together to reflect, and to propel their work forward. Although the 2022 program is now closed, [learn more](#).

Land Trusts and Water Quality

August is [National Water Quality Month](#) and the Land Trust Alliance has released a new guide, [Taking the Plunge: Guidance and Inspiration to Help Land Trusts Protect and Restore Water Quality](#), that will help land trusts learn about local water quality challenges, design ways to address them, and communicate about the land-based solutions they can offer. Land trusts are perfectly positioned to lead water quality initiatives that benefit health, communities and economy, and many land trusts are finding water work to be critically important to their growth and longevity. Combined with [Advancing Watershed Protection through Land Conservation: A Guide for Land Trusts](#), a new resource released by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, land trusts will have the information they need to take on water projects.

Of Interest

Planned Burns Help Wildlife

Fire is not new on the landscape; for thousands of years indigenous peoples burned the same lands MassWildlife now targets for prescribed fire. Fire suppression became common beginning in the 1920s. By the 1980s, fire exclusion had begun to fundamentally alter many natural landscapes in Massachusetts. The first prescribed burn on a MassWildlife Wildlife Management Area (WMA) was in 1989 at Hiram Fox WMA in Chester. The steady, purposeful expansion of the prescribed fire program has had a direct impact the wildlife of Massachusetts by improving habitat for more common wildlife and many rare and declining plants and animals. [Learn more.](#)

You Can Help Rare Species

Citizen scientists play a vital role in conservation, and you can contribute. Use MassWildlife's interactive map to learn what rare plants and animals may be living in your town and how to report your observations. [Learn more.](#)

On the Bookshelf

[Photovoice/Fotovoz Report](#) - GreenRoots and the Boston University School of Public Health brought residents together to document and share their experiences of urban heat and climate change in Chelsea and East Boston.

[Analysis of Ecosystem-Based Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience Enhancements](#) - This new research from UMass Amherst assesses the efficiency and equity of nature-based solutions focused on ecosystem restoration, conservation, and sustainable management.

Jobs

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

[Executive Director](#) - Land For Good

NEW! [Executive Director](#) - Nashua River Watershed Association

NEW! [North Shore Region Director](#) - Mass Audubon

NEW! [Director of Philanthropy](#) - Northwest Connecticut Land Conservancy

[Assistant General Counsel - Lands](#) - Department of Fish and Game

NEW! [Watershed Resilience Planner](#) - Neponset River Watershed Association

NEW! [Conservation Project Manager](#) - Upper Valley Land Trust, Inc.

NEW! [Conservation Manager](#) - Kestrel Land Trust

NEW! [Conservation Transaction Specialist](#) - The Nature Conservancy in Massachusetts

NEW! [Land Protection Specialist](#) - Northwest Connecticut Land Conservancy

NEW! [Public Lands Manager](#) - Northwest Connecticut Land Conservancy

NEW! [Land Steward](#) - Kestrel Land Trust

NEW! [Property Steward](#) - Mass Audubon

NEW! [Environmental Educator - Afterschool](#) - Lowell Parks and Conservation Trust

NEW! [Outreach Coordinator and Office Manager](#) - Orleans Conservation Trust

NEW! [Executive Assistant/Trustee Liaison](#) - The Nature Conservancy in Massachusetts

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