



The Newsletter of the Massachusetts Land Conservation Community

August 4, 2008

Volume 8, Number 12

Items of interest to the Massachusetts land protection community.

For more news and information, go to <http://www.MassLand.org>

Please send items of interest to Info@MassLand.org

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" The major problems in the world are the result of the difference between how nature works and the way people think."

-- Gregory Bateson (1904-1980), British anthropologist and cyberneticist --

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Action Alerts

ACTION ALERT! ENVIRONMENTAL BOND PASSES LEGISLATURE!

CALL GOV. PATRICK TO SIGN IT WITH CONSERVATION TAX CREDIT

The \$1.61 billion Environmental Bond has passed the Legislature and awaits the Governor's signature!

Late Thursday night the Environmental Bond Bill passed both the House and Senate, sending the bill to Governor Patrick for his signature. The bond provides a minimum of \$50M per year for state land protection programs and fulfills a pledge Governor Patrick made early in his campaign!

In an important development, the Land Conservation Tax Incentive legislation that we have been working on for several years was attached to the Environmental Bond! While we fully expect that the Governor will sign the Bond bill, we are concerned that he might veto the Land Conservation Tax Incentive.

We Need You to Take Action on Monday, August 4! It is crucial that the Governor hear from as many people as possible on the Environmental Bond and Land Conservation Tax Incentive!

* Call the Governor on Monday, August 4th at 617-725-4005

* Tell the following to the staff member who answers:

Your name and town

That you thank Governor Patrick for his strong commitment to land protection

That you are asking him to sign the environmental bond (House Bill 5054) into law with the Land Conservation Tax Incentive (Section 8 of House Bill 5054) included!

If you don't get this until Monday night, call Tuesday!

Background on the Land Conservation Tax Incentives Act

The Environmental Bond, which provides the capital funding for the Commonwealth's land conservation programs, contains a significant incentive for private land protection - the Land Conservation Tax Incentives Act.

* What would the conservation tax incentive do? It is designed to encourage private land owners to donate certified conservation land to non-profits, the state or a municipality by providing a state income tax credit on qualified land up to \$50k in value, no more than your annual tax liability, and can be carried forward for 10 years. This will help land rich/cash poor citizens, by giving them a compelling option to protect our natural heritage instead of giving up their land for development. It will also provide capital to farmers and foresters, as agricultural and forestry land may be included. The tax incentive is a complement to state land protection programs.

* Why is a tax incentive needed to protect land? We use tax credits to encourage investment in what we feel is important - there are tax credits for the motion picture industry, a state sales tax holiday, renewable energy development tax breaks, etc. Nearly 60% of undeveloped land is privately owned and unprotected and more than 40 acres are lost daily to poorly planned development. To ensure the preservation of our most critical natural resources, including agricultural land and land in forestry, the state must employ a variety of tools, from improved local zoning and increased capital investments in land protection, to enhanced tax incentives for voluntary land donations by private land owners.

For more information, contact Jen Ryan at Mass Audubon, 617.759.0227 or Steve Long at The Nature Conservancy, 617.312.5932.

News



2) NEW "LAND & WATER" PLATE SUPPORTS LAND PROTECTION - ORDER TODAY!

The Massachusetts Land Trust Coalition has been working with the Massachusetts Environmental Trust to establish a new "Land and Water Conservation" license plate program. The Trust's experience with license plate programs has demonstrated that this can be a stable and sustainable source of funding for land protection.

The Registry of Motor Vehicles requires that 3,000 plates be pre-ordered and held with checks sent in advance, before they will put this plate into production. Once the 3,000 checks are received, they will ship the plates to the vehicle owner. If the 3,000 plates are not sold in a year, they return the checks.

Please contact Bill Hinkley at MET for additional information about the plate or the program in general. He can be reached at 617.626.1177 or william.hinkley@state.ma.us

ORDER FORM & MORE INFO:

<http://www.masslandandwater.info/>

3) 2009 COMMONWEALTH CAPITAL POLICY RELEASED

Governor Deval Patrick has released the 2009 edition of the Commonwealth Capital Policy. This Policy has helped to inspire hundreds of improvements to local land use regulations and greatly enhanced awareness of smart growth/smart energy techniques. A press release has been issued and a mailing containing a letter from the Governor, a summary of the 2009 Commonwealth Capital Policy, and a copy of the 2009 application has been sent to the Chief Elected Official (Mayor or Chair of the Select Board), Planning Board, Conservation

Commission, and City/Town Manager or Administrator of each community. These materials are also available on-line on the Governor's Commonwealth Capital webpage at www.mass.gov/commcap. Questions and comments in regard to Commonwealth Capital can be directed to commcap@massmail.state.ma.us or (617) 626-4949

4) OVER 6,100 ACRES WILDLIFE LANDS PROTECTED IN FY 2008 BY DFG

- from MassWildlife News -

6,197 acres of key fish and wildlife habitat in 41 towns were protected in the past fiscal year (July 1, 2007 - June 30, 2008) through the efforts of the Department of Fish and Game and MassWildlife. These protected properties ranged in size from an 0.5-acre public recreation access point in Orange, to a 2,300-acre conservation easement (CE) in Montgomery and Westfield. These lands will be added to the list over 164,000 acres currently under the care and control of MassWildlife, most of which are Wildlife Management Areas (WMA). Most properties were purchased outright (in fee) but, on some properties, the agency purchased conservation easements (development rights), with the land held by the original landowner. A listing of the newly acquired FY 2008 properties is on the web at:

www.mass.gov/dfwele/dfw/habitat/land/land_acquisitions.htm. With the exception of a gifted CE, all lands are open to fishing, hunting, trapping, wildlife observation, hiking, and other passive wildlife related recreation.

"Conservation easements played a major role in our FY 2008 habitat protection efforts," said Bill Minior, MassWildlife's Realty Chief. "Seven CEs, including the 610-acre East Brookfield gift and the 2,300 acre Westfield Watershed CE, provided protection to over 3,650 acres at a cost of only 2.9 million dollars. CEs accounted for 59% of this years protected land but only 26% of the total cost. Although not DFG and MassWildlife's preferred method of protection, CEs are a useful tool when circumstances do not allow for fee acquisition."

The primary mission of the Department of Fish and Game and MassWildlife land acquisition program is to protect the ecological integrity of the Commonwealth. The agency seeks to ensure biological diversity by acquiring the most important fish and wildlife habitat and natural communities and to provide public access to the lands and waters of the Commonwealth. State WMAs include river corridors, wetlands, various type of forested upland, habitat for state listed endangered and threatened species and species of special concern, and high quality examples of other important habitat types. Maps for many state WMAs are posted on the agency website at: www.mass.gov/dfwele/dfw/habitat/habitat_home.htm. Fishing and boating access information is found at: www.mass.gov/dfwele/pab/index.htm

Support for the land acquisition program comes from several sources. The primary funding mechanism is the Commonwealth's open space bond authorization. Fishing, hunting and trapping license buyers also contribute a \$5 fee to the Wildlands Fund for wildlife habitat acquisition as an additional revenue source. Some individuals and organizations make direct donations to the Wildlands Fund. A significant amount of funding is also leveraged or received through non-profit conservation organizations. Other organizations provided assistance with surveys, title searches, negotiations, and other administrative support activities.

"Together with our partners, DFG and MassWildlife permanently protected more acres of land in FY 2008 than it has in any of the last five years," said DFG Commissioner Mary Griffin. "Our success can largely be attributed to Governor Deval Patrick and Secretary Ian Bowles's commitment to land conservation and the hard work and dedication of our land acquisition team. The Governor and Secretary's increased investment in land conservation today will benefit fish and wildlife communities and the people of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for generations to come."

Wildlife News

5) ROAD FENCING PARTNERSHIP PROTECTS RARE TURTLES

- from MassWildlife News -

A partnership among MassWildlife, the US Fish & Wildlife Service, MassHighways and Bristol-Myers Squibb Co. to help restore the Commonwealth's population of rare Blanding's turtles got a boost with reported results of recent turtle surveys conducted by MassWildlife. Lori Erb, MassWildlife Turtle Conservation Biologist, found that as a result of fencing and fence repairs along a busy state road in central Massachusetts bisecting Blanding's turtle habitat, there was a drastic reduction in the number of rare and common turtles killed by cars. In 2007, before any fencing was erected, surveys by Erb during the turtle nesting season showed 43 turtles had been killed by cars, 5 of them Blanding's turtles. In 2008, along the same stretch of highway, where fencing was erected and fence repairs made by Bristol-Myers Squibb employee volunteers, a total of 4 turtles were found killed, none of which were Blanding's turtles.

Native to areas of eastern and central Massachusetts, Blanding's turtles are imperiled by roads and vehicles across their range. The turtles typically travel to several wetlands throughout a single year - including migration by females crossing roads to nesting sites. Essential to the protection of the Blanding's turtle are the creation and improvement of wildlife corridors, protection of nesting habitat, and public education about the species' conservation needs.

"Blanding's turtles are particularly vulnerable because they travel long distances during their active season and do not reproduce until late in life (14-20 years). They also have low nest survival", said Lori Erb. "These traits make them sensitive to even a 1 to 2 percent increase in adult mortality. I think it's clear that this fencing has been a huge success. I would like to thank everyone who was involved in informing us of the problem on this roadway, working to come up with a solution, installing fencing and patching fencing holes."

The fence project was part of a growing partnership between Bristol Myers-Squibb Co. and wildlife agencies to protect and restore Blanding's turtles, listed in the

Massachusetts Endangered Species Act. Other restoration efforts included Bristol Myers-Squibb employees working with their partners in May to create new nesting habitat for Blanding's turtles in Devens, where the company has recently relocated.

6) RARE PIPING PLOVERS NEST IN WINTHROP & REVERE BEACH

Chicks Fledge from First Recorded Piping Plover Nests at DCR's Winthrop Shore Reservation

Rare shorebirds also nest for second straight year at DCR's Revere Beach

BOSTON - Signaling continued renewal of the Commonwealth's urban beaches, piping plovers - a threatened species usually associated with seashores off the beaten path - nested successfully this year at the Department of Conservation and Recreation's (DCR) Winthrop Shore Reservation, and returned for a second year to raise young at DCR's Revere Beach. The two pairs at Winthrop Shore represent the state's first recorded piping plover nests at that location.

"We were thrilled last year when a pair of piping plovers chose Revere Beach to raise their brood," said Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Ian Bowles. "This year, we are doubly excited that these rare and engaging shorebirds not only returned to Revere, but also nested at Winthrop Shore. For two years in a row, one of America's most popular urban beaches has played host to a species ranked as threatened on both the Massachusetts and the federal Endangered Species Lists - this is positive news for renewal of our historic coasts."

Bowles thanked the DCR employees, and Mass Audubon and New England Aquarium staff who have been keeping watch over the nests - two at Winthrop Shore and one at Revere Beach - for the past several weeks.

In Winthrop, three chicks recently fledged from one nest, and three more chicks are expected to fledge from a second nest soon. The Revere Beach nest also produced three chicks, which have not yet fledged. Symbolic (twine) fencing helped to protect the nests from foot traffic before eggs hatched and provides an area of refuge for chicks until they are flying well.

The Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife and Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program - in concert with the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and conservation organizations such as Mass Audubon - have worked cooperatively to restore the state's once dwindling piping plover population. Thanks to a coordinated statewide conservation effort, population monitoring programs, and protection of vital coastal nesting sites, the Massachusetts piping plover population grew from 139 breeding pairs 20 years ago to 557 pairs in 2007. A final tally of 2008 nesting pairs in Massachusetts will be available this fall. Along the entire Atlantic Coast, the species went from 722 breeding pairs in 1985 to 1,887 last year, according to a preliminary count by the USFWS.

DCR Commissioner Rick Sullivan noted that DCR has taken steps to protect piping plovers and other endangered birds at a number of coastal properties this year, working with Mass Audubon's Coastal Waterbird Program, which protects and monitors approximately half of the state's piping plover population. DCR protects numerous other species at several inland properties as well. "We are absolutely delighted that the plovers have returned to our beaches," Sullivan said. "The residents and beach users of Revere and Winthrop deserve enormous thanks for the care and caution they have exercised around the nests. The presence and protection

of these threatened birds on our shores is evidence of the renewal of our urban beaches, and the public's interest in bringing nature back."

Massachusetts supports nearly 15 percent of the world's population of piping plovers - small, sand-colored shorebirds that nest on sandy coastal beaches and dunes from Newfoundland to North Carolina. Other nest sites in Massachusetts include Chatham's South Beach and South Monomoy Island, Sampson's Island and Sandy Neck in Barnstable, Crane Beach in Ipswich, Duxbury Beach, Eastham's Coast Guard Beach, and Race Point in Provincetown.

"Massachusetts has the largest breeding population of piping plovers on the Atlantic coast," said Mary Griffin, Commissioner of the Department of Fish and Game. "The restoration effort in Massachusetts is coordinated by the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife's Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program, and our success is largely due to the vigilant efforts of volunteers and collaboration of federal, state, county, municipal, and private partners."

"I'm very pleased to see the plovers return," said State Representative Robert A. DeLeo. "It's a clear indication that we are on the right track when it comes to restoring the environmental integrity and historic beauty of Winthrop and Revere beaches."

Added Senator Anthony Petrucci, "I am very pleased to see the piping plovers have returned to Revere Beach and have also begun to branch out to neighboring Winthrop Shore Reservation. I believe this is a true testament to the Commonwealth's efforts to maintain the habitat of the piping plover and the natural beauty of our local beaches."

Events

7) "POLLINATORS CONFERENCE", OCT. 3-4, AMHERST

Pollinators are in trouble! They provide important services for agriculture and they help sustain native populations of plants and animals - including people. So, join us to learn more at:

"Pollinators Conference: Information for Action"

Friday and Saturday, October 3 & 4, 2008

University of Massachusetts in Amherst, MA.

Researchers from around the country will share information on:

*Pollinator status, threats, and research methods

*Information for landowners and managers on practices that sustain pollinators

*Existing outreach efforts, including partnerships, citizen science, and education

Scientists and naturalists, concerned citizens and educators, farmers and gardeners and local, state and national agencies and non-governmental organizations that manage lands will find this information valuable. Open to the public with registration.

Conference Details: available at www.millersriver.net/pollen

Conference Registration: available at:

<https://www.aux.umass.edu/forms/conferenceservices/pollinator/index.htm>

Resources

8) ECOLOGICAL INTEGRITY & IMPORTANT HABITAT MAPS ON-LINE

Massachusetts Ecological Integrity Maps and MassDEP Important Habitat Maps Now Available On-Line

MassDEP and the University of Massachusetts in Amherst announce the release of 'Massachusetts Ecological Integrity Maps' and 'MassDEP Important Habitat Maps' for 112 cities and towns in Western Massachusetts.

The Massachusetts Ecological Integrity Maps (IEI) are based on a computer software program and a method to prioritize land for conservation based on the assessment of ecological integrity for various ecological communities (e.g. forest, shrub swamp, headwater stream) within a particular landscape. The computer software program is known as the Conservation Assessment and Prioritization System (CAPS) and has been under development by UMass researchers over the past several years. The results of the CAPS assessment are available as GIS data and IEI maps depicting an IEI score for each point in the undeveloped landscape.

Using the IEI values, the MassDEP Important Habitat Maps depict polygons representing 40% of the landscape with the highest wildlife habitat value. Activities subject to the Wetlands Protection regulations that are in areas mapped as important wildlife habitat require a detailed wildlife habitat evaluation. Some of the new maps replace the June 2006 preliminary version previously posted for the Highlands Communities Region and Housatonic River Watershed and therefore, Applicants and Conservation Commissions should be sure that they are using the most recent maps in these areas. Additional information on how to use these maps can be found in the "Massachusetts Wildlife Habitat Protection Guidance for Inland Wetlands" published in March 2006, <http://www.mass.gov/dep/water/laws/wldhab.pdf>

The IEI Maps and the Important Habitat Maps are available for download from the Mass CAPS web site (www.masscaps.org). Funding for these maps is provided in part by the U.S. EPA Clean Water Act grants, MassDEP and UMass Amherst. Maps for the rest of the cities and towns in Massachusetts are scheduled to be available in early 2010. Questions should be directed to Lisa Rhodes at MassDEP (617-292-5512) or Scott Jackson at the University of Massachusetts (413-545-4743; sjackson@umext.umass.edu)

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9) NEW MODEL CR & APPLICATION NOW AVAILABLE

The new 2008 Model Conservation Restriction and the updated Conservation Restrictions Application from the Division of Conservation Services at EEA are now available on the MassLand website.

Links for Model CR:

PDF version -

www.massland.org/pages/tools/documents/ModelCRMarch08.pdf

Word version -

www.massland.org/pages/tools/ModelCRMarch08.rtf

Links for CR Application:

PDF version -

www.massland.org/pages/tools/documents/CRapplicationformrevisedMay08.pdf

Word version -

www.massland.org/pages/tools/CRapplicationformrevisedMay08.rtf

NOTE: ALL CONSERVATION RESTRICTIONS SUBMITTED SHOULD USE THIS MODEL!

The Conservation Restriction Handbook is being revised and updated to reflect the changes, so Land Trusts and Conservation Commissions should NOT use the CR model and application in the Handbook. Please use the new Model CR and Application rather than the one in the Handbook.

10) CONSERVATION TAX INCENTIVE BROCHURE FROM LTA

The Land Trust Alliance has published a new brochure, Using the Conservation Tax Incentive, to help your land trust tell potential easement donors about the tax incentive now renewed through December 31, 2009. All land trusts with more than one easement as of the 2005 census will receive 25 free copies. Additional copies are available from LTA at www.LTA.org

Grants

11) 2010 FOREST LEGACY RFP NOW AVAILABLE

The MA Forest Legacy Program FY 2010 Request For Proposal announcement is posted at:

<http://www.mass.gov/dcr/stewardship/forestry/other/>

The due date for Forest Legacy proposals is September 17, 2008.

Important: all project proposals must be entered into the "Forest Legacy Information System" (FLIS) by September 19, 2008 for project proposals to be considered complete and eligible for ranking by the Forest Legacy Committee. Project proponents should work with the appropriate Forest Legacy Area Sponsor to complete the data entry into FLIS.

For additional information or questions please contact:

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Regional Planner

DCR / Bureau of Forest Fire Control & Forestry

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web: <http://www.mass.gov/dcr/stewardship/forestry/index.htm>

12) RECREATIONAL TRAILS GRANTS INFO ON-LINE

It is not too early to start thinking about applying for a 2008-2009 Recreational Trails Grant (even though we have not yet awarded last year's grants). Guidelines for the 2008-2009 Recreational Trails Grants are available and on-line at <http://www.mass.gov/dcr/stewardship/greenway/regionalGrants.htm>. The deadline for applications will be October 1, 2008.

Job Openings

13) NEFF SEEKS COMMUNITY FOREST PROGRAMS COORDINATOR

The New England Forestry Foundation is seeking applicants for its Community Forest Programs Coordinator.

The Community Forest Programs Coordinator is an enthusiastic team player who focuses on outreach and partnership-building centered on NEFF Community Forests, landowners, forest conservation and stewardship professionals, and volunteers. This position promotes and implements adult-oriented forest education, outreach, and stewardship activities in support of NEFF's mission of promoting sustainable forest management on private lands throughout New England. It also incorporates various communications activities.

This position is based at NEFF's headquarters in Littleton, MA. Compensation is commensurate with experience. NEFF provides a generous benefit package, including health coverage and 401(K).

To apply send resume and cover letter in confidence to Maria Garcia at mgarcia@newenglandforestry.org or by mail to NEFF, 32 Foster Street, PO Box 1346, Littleton, MA 01460. For information, call (978) 952 6856 or fax (978) 952 6356. Electronic submission of credentials is encouraged.

14) LAND CONSERVATION ASSOCIATE, MOUNT GRACE LCT

The LCA is an entry-level position in Land Protection and is responsible for communicating, reviewing, and managing project data and providing project and departmental support. The LCA processes landowner inquiries and project leads, assists with conservation project assessment, coordinates diligence tasks, maintains project documentation to departmental standards, and provides general administrative and project support. The position requires strong interpersonal skills and knowledgeable interaction with landowners, attorneys, government officials, appraisers, surveyors, foresters and other consultants. The LCA is supervised by the Conservation Director and may supervise volunteers. Applicants will have, at minimum, a college degree in a natural resources, regional planning, or paralegal related field, with a minimum of two years experience in an office environment, preferably in a non-profit or land conservation related field, and a genuine enthusiasm for conservation, familiarity with land conservation techniques and conservation laws, and ability to work independently. Strong database management (MS Access) GIS software (ArcGIS 9.x) skills required. Salary Mid 30's. Send cover letter, resume and references to: apply@mountgrace.org or 1461 Old Keene Rd, Athol MA 01331. No phone calls, please. Resumes accepted until Aug 31. Mount Grace will be reviewing resumes and scheduling interviews on an ongoing basis.

15) OFFICE MANAGER, SUDBURY VALLEY TRUSTEES

Sudbury Valley Trustees, a dynamic regional conservation organization headquartered in Sudbury, has an immediate opening for Office Manager. The successful applicant must be excellent with details, technology, and have strong interpersonal skills. See www.svtweb.org for complete job description. Salary and benefit package commensurate with experience. EOE. Send resume, cover letter and salary requirements to Office Manager Search, Sudbury Valley Trustees, 18 Wolbach Road, Sudbury, MA 01776 or e-mail to svt@svtweb.org

16) OFFICE MANAGER, MERRIMACK VALLEY WATERSHED COUNCIL

The Office Manager assists the executive director in accomplishing the daytoday functions of running the office including office administration, membership and advocacy. The Office Manager assists in completing paperwork, coordinating volunteers and developing the membership department, which funds our programs. S/he will also be responsible for maintaining consistent contact with our members and watershed constituents through press releases, newsletters and website updates.

For a full job description, see:

www.merrimack.org

Merrimack River Watershed Council, Inc.
600 Suffolk St., 5th Floor
Lowell, MA 01854
Tel: (978) 275-0120
Fax: (978) 275-0125

People

17) FRANCIS W. SARGENT CONSERVATION AWARD PRESENTED TO MIKE YACINO

- from MassWildlife News -

Michael Yacino, a long-time champion of Massachusetts sportsmen and women, recently received the Governor Francis W. Sargent Conservation Award from the Fisheries and Wildlife Board for his contributions to conserving the Commonwealth's natural resources. Yacino, of Douglas, is the seventh recipient of the award established in 2000, by the Board to honor the former governor and noted conservationist who directed the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife (DFW) in 1963 and '64.

"Mike Yacino has been a tremendous supporter of Massachusetts's conservation and land protection efforts, as well as an effective leader in protecting sportsmen's interests and educating young people regarding wildlife conservation and outdoor skills," said Department of Fish and Game Commissioner Mary Griffin.

Yacino received the award - a hand-carved wooden loon decoy by Geoff Walker of Hank Walker Decoys of Newbury - at a ceremony held at the Asa Waters Mansion in Millbury. In attendance was MassWildlife Director Wayne MacCallum and members of the Fisheries and Wildlife Board, who selected Yacino after reviewing nominations from a selection committee. Representatives from sporting clubs, land trusts and Douglas town officials were also present. "Mike Yacino has been a life-long advocate

for wildlife conservation and sportsmen's activities," said Fisheries and Wildlife Board Chairman George Darey. "He has been one of the principal voices in ensuring that sportsmen's license fees support professional wildlife management and protect valuable wildlife habitat."

An avid hunter and fisherman, Yacino served as executive director of the Gun Owners' Action League from 1977 to 2005. During that time, he supported a range of conservation initiatives in Massachusetts, including funding for open space preservation, legislation to create the Wildlands Conservation Stamp, and the Rivers Protection Act of 1996, many times working with other sporting groups and environmental organizations. Yacino is also an outdoor writer, a supporter of youth outdoor recreational opportunities, and was a leader in the 1998 Lead Shot Initiative - a program designed to educate shooting range owners and operators about environmentally responsible management of spent ammunition. A Douglas Conservation Commission member since 1997 and its vice-chairman for the past three years, Yacino has actively pursued land protection efforts in town. He recently organized and conducted an informational meeting for town residents who are on private wells and is currently working with town officials on stormwater management issues.

18) REMEMBERING DENNIS MCNAMARA

- from MassWildlife News -

The land conservation community in northeastern Massachusetts lost a valuable resource with the recent death of Dennis McNamara, Land Protection Specialist for the Department of Fish and Game and MassWildlife. In 2006, McNamara was diagnosed with ALS, also known as Lou Gehrig's disease. Hired in the summer of 1989, McNamara worked for the Commonwealth for 19 years overseeing land protection efforts in MassWildlife's Northeast District, a region that comprises Essex, Middlesex, Suffolk and Norfolk counties and has some of the highest land values in the state. During his tenure, nearly 5,000 acres of valuable wildlife habitat in the region were protected and are now open to recreation such as fishing, hunting, hiking, and wildlife viewing.

"He was a wonderful colleague who contributed a lasting legacy of protected open space for the benefit of wildlife and public recreation," said Mary Griffin, Commissioner of the Department of Fish and Game. Fellow staff from the Department of Fish & Game and MassWildlife noted McNamara's quick wit and easy smile as well as his effective grant writing skills. He successfully applied for funding to protect significant salt marsh habitats in Salisbury.

A member of the Essex County Greenbelt Association, McNamara was recognized in 2007 by that organization at their annual meeting for his outstanding work in land conservation. A lifelong resident of Dracut, McNamara was also active in Dracut town government, elected to the Planning Board and School Committee and at one time had been employed by Dracut as the Selectmen's Executive Secretary. He was recently honored by the Town of Dracut when a wooded handicapped accessible trail on town property was named in his honor.

From the Editor of MassLand E-News

I'm personally very saddened by Dennis McNamara's passing. When I first got involved in land conservation work some 10 years ago, I knew nothing - I mean absolutely nothing - about the crucial land protection work of the Dept. of Fish & Game, MassWildlife and the Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program. It

was Dennis who, along with Huck Truesdell, was patient enough to answer the most basic (okay, let's face it, dumbest) questions about the Dept. from a complete ignoramus and non-sportsman. And answer me not just cheerfully, but enthusiastically - as someone who really enjoyed spreading the gospel about the importance of land protection to wildlife conservation and management. It's not just that the Commonwealth has lost a great public servant or that landowners have lost a patient, knowledgeable resource, or even that everyone in the land protection community has lost a valued colleague and very good friend. But the wildlife of Massachusetts has lost an irreplaceable advocate, champion and defender.

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