



MASSACHUSETTS LAND TRUST COALITION

## MassLand E-News

The Newsletter of the Massachusetts Land Conservation Community

February 18, 2021, Volume 19, Number 2

## Member Spotlight



### **McAvoy Pond Conserved in Wendell**

*Source: Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust*

Thanks to landowners Ray and Laurie DiDonato, 25 acres in Wendell are now protected in perpetuity. McAvoy Pond, across from Fiske Pond Conservation area, is an important wetland and upland habitat that lies in the heart of an area in which 19 species of special concern have been documented. Although not currently open to the public, McAvoy Pond can be viewed from Lockes Village Road. The DiDonatos purchased the land to prevent it from being developed, and the resulting Conservation Restriction undertaken with Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust accommodates potential future changes in the land and water such as the removal of the dam. Read the [full article](#).

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



Donate

## MassLand News



February has blessed much of the state with good snow cover. What a pleasure to enjoy outstanding ski conditions at The Trustees' Notchview Reservation in Windsor last week!

#OurMassLandTrusts

### **Registration is Open for the 2021 Massachusetts & Rhode Island Land Conservation Conference**

Friday & Saturday, March 19 & 20

[Register here](#). Early registration rates end on March 5<sup>th</sup>!

Choose from 29 sessions and 2 plenaries, as well as networking options and live chats with exhibitors. **Keynote speaker will be Carolyn Finney**, author of *Black Faces, White Spaces: Reimagining the Relationship of African Americans to the Great Outdoors*, and scholar-in-residence at Middlebury College.

### **Exhibitor & Sponsorship Opportunities still available**

at the 2021 Massachusetts & Rhode Island Land Conservation Conference

Friday & Saturday, March 19 & 20

[Exhibitor details](#). [Sponsor details](#).

Gain visibility and connect with hundreds of community and non-profit leaders who are passionate about land conservation. Consider exhibiting at or sponsoring.

A huge thanks to our current sponsors and exhibitors!

**Lead:** Audubon Society of Rhode Island, Mass Audubon, The Trustees; **Patron:** Caldwell Coastal Solutions, Conservation Stewardship Collaborative, Fields Pond Foundation, Land Trust Alliance, LandVest, The Nature Conservancy, USDA - NRCS; **Supporter:** American Farmland Trust, Beals and Thomas Inc., Berkshire Natural Resources Council, Conservation Fund, Epsilon Associates, Essex County Greenbelt Association, Green Energy Consumers Alliance, Land Stewardship, Inc., Nantucket Conservation Foundation, New England Forestry Foundation, Rhode Island Infrastructure Bank (RIIB), Sasaki, Sudbury Valley Trustees, UMass Forest Conservation Program, University of RI Coastal Institute, Vineyard Wind, Wildlands Trust; **Partner:** The Community Preservation Coalition at The Trust for Public Land, The Compact of Cape Cod Conservation Trusts, Durand & Anastas Environmental Strategies, Franklin Land Trust, Horsley Witten Group, Kestrel Land Trust, Landscape Land Conservation Software, Marcum LLP, Narragansett Bay Research Reserve, Rhode Island Sea Grant, Save The Bay, The Trust for Public Land, Woonasquatucket River Watershed Council

### **Land Conservation and Climate Adaptation**

Thursday, February 25, 4:00 pm – 5:00 pm

Co-hosted by MLTC and the Massachusetts Ecosystem Climate Adaptation Network (Mass ECAN) this Zoom discussion offers the opportunity for peer knowledge exchange about land conservation as a climate adaptation strategy. This is intended for land conservation practitioners with interest in climate change adaptation, to share your work, successes and challenges you may be encountering. Facilitated by Robb Johnson (MLTC) and Melissa Ocana (UMass). Advance [registration required here](#).

### **MLTC Steering Committee Meeting**

Friday, March 5, 10:00 a.m. - 12:15 p.m. via Zoom

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 this month's featured topic: pending revisions to the Massachusetts Division of Conservation Services Model Conservation Restriction. A detailed agenda will be sent in advance to all registrants. Advance registration is required [here](#).

### **Expanding Eligibility for Protection Funding through Farmland of Local Importance**

Wednesday, March 24, 6:00 - 7:00 p.m. via Zoom

To date, NRCS in Massachusetts has routinely recognized prime farmland, unique farmland, and farmland of statewide importance as eligible for agricultural easement programs, including those conducted in partnership with Massachusetts' APR program. If additional important soil types were recognized, more farms would be eligible for easement funding. In 2019, the first Massachusetts farmland of local importance (FLI) was recognized in Hatfield. Speaker Al Averill will share information on the potential to expand the designation of FLI throughout the Commonwealth, and discuss how land trusts could help identify tracts for such recognition. This **Stronger Together Training** is sponsored by MLTC. Advance registration is required [here](#).

## **In Memoriam**

Although President of The Trustees for less than a decade, **Barbara Erickson** continued into the 21st century Charles Elliot's 19th century vision to Preserve Important Places for People, recognizing that iconic places include those in cities, in neighborhoods, and in places which reflect our culture, climate and health, as well as natural habitats. Barbara inspired, energized and piloted The Trustees to provide conservation to all people, of every color, income and location. On behalf of our Coalition I note, and personally lament, the passing of Barbara Erickson, President of The Trustees, after a long illness. A woman of vision, passion, and consummate humanity, Barbara, in a life cut far too short, embraced conservation which includes gardens and museums, farms and forests, waterfronts and neighborhoods. The link to her obituary is [here](#), and The Trustees description of her awesome influence is in this [press announcement](#).

-- Buzz Constable, President, MLTC

## **Policy**

The 2030 Clean Energy and Climate Plan **comment period has been extended until March 22**. Chapter 6 of the plan is about protecting our natural and working lands. Find the plan and instructions on [how to comment here](#).

Both the Massachusetts House and Senate have released Leadership and Committee assignments, including some **changes in leadership and new committees**. Of note, Senator Rebecca Rausch and Representative Carolyn Dykema will now Chair the Joint Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture.

At the federal level, **Congresswoman Lori Trahan** was appointed to the House Committee on

Natural Resources, an important committee with direct oversight of federal agencies and programs governing conservation and outdoor recreational opportunities. In late January, MLTC Executive Director Robb Johnson and other conservation advocates joined Representative Trahan and Representative Katherine Clark (recently named Assistant Speaker of the House) for a socially distanced event at Minuteman National Park to celebrate passage of the Great American Outdoors Act.

After a veto at the end of the last session, the Massachusetts legislature quickly refiled and passed **An Act creating a next-generation roadmap for Massachusetts climate policy (S.9)** and sent it back to the Governor's desk. On February 7<sup>th</sup>, the Governor sent a [series of amendments](#) back to the legislature for consideration. The legislature can now accept each amendment, reject each, or further amend each. Each of those paths triggers a slightly different processes for moving forward. The timing for these next steps remains unclear.

## News

### **President Biden Signs "30x30" Executive Order**

On January 27, President Biden signed an executive order that, among other things, calls for conservation of 30% of the U.S. land base by 2030. It also recognizes that this goal cannot be achieved without the support of a variety of organizations outside the federal government. Read the [Fact Sheet](#) (section on Advance Conservation, Agriculture, and Reforestation). Read [the Executive Order](#). According to [Mass Audubon's Losing Ground 2020 Report](#), 27% of the land area of Massachusetts was permanently conserved as of 2019.

### **About the New Uniform Easement Relocation Act**

Source: *Land Trust Alliance*

Listen to a [recording of the call](#) describing the UERA. If you track or work on state conservation legislation, view the recording, and review the Alliance's [summary of the Act](#).

### **MVP (Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness) Toolkits**

A variety of toolkits has been developed by the MVP Program that dive into important topics for municipal climate resilience. These are working resources which will be updated over time. For details, see the new [MVP website](#), or click on the following links. [Nature-Based Solutions Toolkit](#). [Environmental Justice \(EJ\) & Equity Toolkit](#). [Public Health & Healthcare Toolkit](#). [Virtual & Remote Engagement Toolkit](#).

### **Form 8283 Changes**

Source: *Law Office of Robert H. Levin, Portland, ME*

The IRS released a new version of Form 8283 in December 2020. The new form and instructions can be found [here](#). There are no major changes for the typical land or conservation easement donation, but one detail to note: In Section B, Part I, some sort of "separate statement" must now be attached for bargain sales. For more details, and for tips on completing the form, [see here](#).

## Webinars and E-Learning



### **Are "Alien Plants" Bad?**

Tuesday, February 23, 7:00 p.m.

Doug Tallamy, a professor at the University of Delaware and author of *Bringing Nature Home: How You Can Sustain Wildlife with Native Plants*, will discuss the impact of "alien" ornamental plants that are introduced to an ecosystem. He will use data to show that the overall impact of introduced plants can be determined only by comparing what is gained from their use



with what is lost when they replace native plant communities. [Register here](#). Hosted by Sudbury, Assabet, and Concord watershed Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area.



### **Conservation Cemetery Project**

Thursday, February 25, 4:00 - 5:30 p.m.

Cost: Free

Hear about this unique effort to create the first conservation cemetery in Massachusetts by combining the permanent protection of a beautiful parcel of land with the establishment of a natural cemetery for green burial. Presented by Kestrel Land Trust, Green Burial Massachusetts and Land Matters, and co-sponsored by MLTC and others. Read more and [register here](#).



### **Land Conservation and Climate Adaptation**

Thursday, February 25, 4:00 pm – 5:00 pm

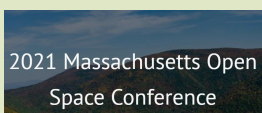
Co-hosted by MLTC and the Massachusetts Ecosystem Climate Adaptation Network (Mass ECAN) this Zoom discussion offers the opportunity for peer knowledge exchange about land conservation as a climate adaptation strategy. This is intended for land conservation practitioners with interest in climate change adaptation, to share your work, successes and challenges you may be encountering. Facilitated by Robb Johnson (MLTC) and Melissa Ocana (UMass). Advance [registration required here](#).



### **Massachusetts Urban Farming Conference**

March 5, 6, 9 & 11 (Friday, Saturday, Tuesday & Thursday, respectively)

This conference, designed to advance opportunities and address barriers involved in cultivating a resilient and thriving urban farming sector, will convene local and regional experts, advocates and innovators to support and promote urban farming enterprises across Massachusetts. Challenges will be addressed, successes highlighted, and resources shared. Keynote speakers: Jillian Hishaw, Emmanuel Pratt, Karen Washington. [Learn more and register](#).



### **2021 Mass Open Space Conference**

Every Thursday in March, 2:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.; networking 7:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

This free, peer-to-peer conference is for municipal Open Space Committees, volunteers, and others involved in the development and implementation of community-based conservation planning and projects. Hear from open space committees across the state and build partnerships and connections to increase your town's capacity for successful stewardship and conservation projects. [Register here](#).

**March 4** | Open Space: From Planning to Implementation

**March 11** | Protecting and Building Resilience in Local Green Spaces

**March 18** | Trail Building and Maintenance and Recreation in Open Space

**March 25** | Community Outreach, Networks, and Relationship Building

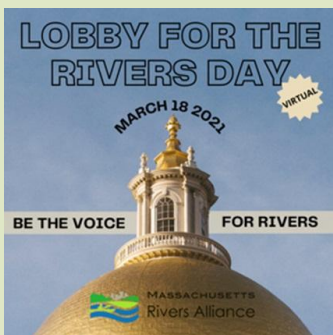
## Events and Outings

### **Catherine Coleman Flowers on Environmental Justice**

Thursday, February 18, 6:30 p.m.

Cost: Free

Acclaimed environmental activist, MacArthur grant recipient and founding director of the Center for Rural Enterprise and Environmental Justice, Catherine Coleman Flowers will share her journey in environmental activism, and how she broadens the scope of environmental justice to include issues specific to disenfranchised rural communities by galvanizing policy and research to redress failing infrastructure that perpetuates socioeconomic disparities across the United States. [Learn more and register here](#). This event is part of the Stone Social Impact Forum series of [the Edward M. Kennedy Institute for the United States Senate](#).



### **Lobby for the Rivers Day 2021**

*Registration deadline: Friday, March 5*

*Event date: Thursday, March 18*

Be the voice for the rivers. Join Mass Rivers in advocating for river protection and environmental quality by virtually meeting with your state legislators and telling them why rivers matter to you. Connect with legislators, water conservation organizations, and fellow river enthusiasts. [Details](#). [Register here](#). This event is co-hosted by Senator Anne Gobi and Representative Smitty Pignatelli

### **Land Trust Alliance Advocacy Days**

*Monday, April 19 - Wednesday, April 21*

*Cost: Free*

Take part in the Alliance's annual issue briefing and first timers' advocacy training. No advocacy experience is necessary to participate. Visit a virtual debrief room to get answers to your questions, share information about your meetings, and network with your peers. Hear live and pre-recorded remarks from key Capitol Hill figures. Participate in video or phone meetings with your members of Congress without leaving your home state. [Learn more and register](#) to make a difference and help influence policies that impact land trusts nationwide.

### **Greenbelt's 2021 Film & Lecture Series**

Theme: Coastal Resilience Climate

Funded by a Coastal Resilience grant from the Massachusetts Office of Coastal Zone Management, this [series](#) features a lineup of local experts and award-winning films that offers new perspectives on climate change resiliency for coastal communities. [Details and register here](#).

**Tuesday, February 23** | Barrier Beaches - A Talk with Bill Sargent

**Wednesday, March 3** | Equity in Climate Change Solutions

### **POCIE (Professionals of Color in the Environment)**

POCIE is a new, regional professional networking community for BIPOC environmentalists from all sectors in Massachusetts with the goal of gathering, mentoring, networking, and collaborating. Most importantly, POCIE promotes integrating justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion into the environmental sector through cross-sector partnerships and integrative strategy development. To join, fill out [this survey](#), join POCIE's [Facebook Group](#), or Google Group at [MassPOCIE@googlegroups.com](mailto:MassPOCIE@googlegroups.com). There is no cost associated with membership.

## **Grants**

### **Remote Monitoring Grant Program**

*Application deadline: Thursday, February 25*

These grants support land trusts exploring how remote monitoring technologies can help enhance their stewardship work. *Applicants must be accredited land trusts and Land Trust Alliance members.* View the [Remote Monitoring Grant Program Info Session](#) before applying, as it teaches how to apply for funding from the Alliance. See also the [eligibility requirements](#), which includes the

application link.

### **FY22 MVP (Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness) Action Grant Expression of Interest**

Deadline to submit the EOI: Friday, February 26

Eligible municipalities considering a FY22 MVP Action Grant application are strongly encouraged to complete the [Expression of Interest \(EOI\) form](#). Through this form, potential applicants provide information about their project idea. MVP staff will then set up a 30-minute call to discuss the idea prior to the Request for Responses release date in spring 2021. Submission of an EOI is not mandatory in order to submit an application, but it is encouraged.

### **2021 Land Trust Bird Conservation Initiative Grant Program**

Deadline: Monday, March 1

The [Cornell Land Trust Bird Conservation Initiative](#) Grant Program will award around \$300,000 to as many as 16 projects. To learn more and apply for a grant, visit [evaluation criteria](#), [grant expectations](#), and [example activities](#) on the [birdtrust.org](#) website. Funding is offered in two categories. **Capacity and Partnership Projects (up to 6 grants of \$5,000 each)** must build land trust capacity by teaching or demonstrating how birds can enhance strategic planning and mission fulfillment of land trusts and/or facilitate mutually beneficial collaborations and partnerships with the bird conservation community. Open to all land trusts in the U.S. **Management and Restoration Projects (7 grants of \$25,000 each)** should actively manage, restore, and/or steward land in a way that enhances habitat and promotes bird conservation. Special emphasis on priority species or those identified in [State Wildlife Action Plans](#) is desired. Applicants should be an *accredited land trust* in the U.S. or work with one as a partner.

### **USDA-NRCS Is Accepting Applications for the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP)**

Deadline: Monday, March 1

ACEP provides financial and technical assistance to help conserve agricultural lands and wetlands and their related benefits. Under the Agricultural Land Easements component, NRCS helps Indian tribes, state and local governments and non-governmental organizations protect working agricultural lands and limit non-agricultural uses of the land. Under the Wetlands Reserve Easements component, NRCS helps to restore, protect and enhance enrolled wetlands. To enroll land through **agricultural land easements**, eligible partners may **submit proposals to NRCS** to acquire conservation easements on eligible land. To enroll land through **wetland reserve easements**, landowners may apply at any time at the **local USDA Service Center**. For more about the ACEP, including a factsheet, application materials, and much more, [read here](#).

### **FY21 Off Highway Vehicle Conservation Grant**

Pre-bid informational meeting: Wednesday, March 24, 1 p.m. Email [Scott.Morrill@mass.gov](mailto:Scott.Morrill@mass.gov) by Tuesday, March 23 to receive the pre-bid meeting link.

Application deadline: Thursday, July 22

The Division of Conservation Services seeks applications from partnerships among land trusts, municipalities and Off Highway Vehicle organizations to protect land that will be used for safe and low impact riding, as well as conservation and other outdoor recreation. The program funds up to \$300,000 for purchase of fee or CR land, and up to \$75,000 for trail design and construction. The program is funded by the OHV Trust Fund and OHV registrations. Get the [application here](#).

### **2021 Restoration and Resilience COVID Recovery Fund through the National Environmental Education Foundation (NEEF)**

Application deadlines: April 1, June 1

Grants of up to \$2,500, to be spent over six months, are available to assist public lands impacted by increased use during the COVID-19 pandemic. For more information, eligibility, and application instructions, [read here](#). Certain restrictions apply.

### **Landscape Partnership Grant**

Info. session: Thursday, April 1, 2:00 p.m. Contact [nathaniel.thomas1@mass.gov](mailto:nathaniel.thomas1@mass.gov) to register by Monday, March 29.

Application deadline: Monday, May 10, 3:00 p.m.

Grants up to \$1,250,000 are available for the acquisition of property interests with a minimum of 500 acres in large, unique, unfragmented conservation and working lands, in single or multiple parcels, by two or more entities acting in cooperation. [Details here.](#)

### **Drinking Water Supply Protection Grant**

Application deadline: Monday, May 10, 3:00 p.m.

Grants of up to \$300,000 in reimbursable expenses are available to municipalities and water supply and fire districts looking for financial assistance for the purchase of land in existing Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)-approved drinking water supply protection areas, or land in estimated protection areas of identified and planned future water supply wells or reservoirs. [Details here.](#)

### **Neighborhood Outreach Grant Program**

Deadline: rolling. Proposals reviewed as they arrive until funding runs out.

[Proposals are being sought](#) for initiatives that further education and networking opportunities for conservation-based estate planning and land protection, and that encourage Open Space Committees, conservation organizations, and motivated community members interested in reaching more landowners. Proposals between \$500 and \$3,000 are encouraged. No match is required. This is a reimbursement grant program. This project is coordinated by UMass Extension and Mount Grace Regional Conservation Trust, with funding being provided by the MA DCR Service Forestry Program through the Working Forests Initiative. To apply, contact [Sarah Wells](#) at Mount Grace.

## **Notable**

### **Report: The Role of Land Protection in Mitigating Freshwater Flooding Hazard: Strategies to Increase Land Trust Engagement**

Source: OSI

[Read the report.](#)

### **Support Endangered Species While Filing Your State Tax Form**

Your donation on Line 33A for Endangered Wildlife Conservation makes a big difference for rare species. [Learn more.](#)

The **Environmental Youth Task Force** of Lowell, in partnership with the [Lowell National Historical Park](#), [Mass Audubon Drumlin Farm](#), [LP&CT](#), and the [Smithsonian](#), has developed a social media account on Instagram [@eytf2020](#) to help spread environmental awareness and optimism [#EarthOptimism](#) in their community. The Task Force will present their initiative to project affiliates at the Smithsonian Institute with the hope of receiving a grant towards future projects.

### **Book: "Grasses, Sedges, and Rushes: An Identification Guide" by Lauren Brown and Ted Elliman. Yale University Press, August 2020**

Devoid of technical jargon, and highlighting subtle differences in similar species to avoid confusion, this edition is a practical update of the 1979 original.

## **Jobs**

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



[Executive Director](#) - Opacum Land Trust

[Project Manager](#) - Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust

[Conservation Easement Steward](#) - Lakes Region Conservation Trust

[Farmland Preservation Specialist](#) - Mass Department of Agricultural Resources, APR Program

[Woodlawn Services Crew Member](#) - Long View Forest

[Ecological Horticulture Internships](#) - Norcross Wildlife Sanctuary

[Land Stewardship Intern](#) - Concord Land Conservation Trust

See the [MLTC Job Board](#) on our website for the latest openings.

Also navigate to [massland.org](https://massland.org) > Resources > Job Board.

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