

Patrick-Murray Administration Awards Conservation Partnership Grants to Help Land Trusts Protect 136 Acres Across the Commonwealth

BOSTON - June 30, 2011 - As part of the Patrick-Murray Administration's continuing commitment to land conservation, Lieutenant Governor Timothy Murray today announced \$602,525 in Conservation Partnership Grants that will enable nine nonprofit organizations to preserve 136 acres of open space throughout the state -- including 57 acres of working forest.

"I'm pleased to announce these grants, and I want to applaud the efforts by the awarded nonprofit organizations who have partnered with our administration to support our mission of protecting the Commonwealth's most precious natural resources," said Lieutenant Governor Murray.

Conservation Partnership grants are designed to help nonprofit organizations purchase land or interests in land for conservation or recreation. Proposed projects are evaluated and selected based on their ability to conserve biodiversity, protect water quality, promote recreation, and preserve working farms and forests. Projects this year include properties that enlarge or connect to other conservation land, increase opportunity for hiking and other outdoor recreation, or contain prime agricultural soils or important fish and wildlife habitats.

"Preserving more than 75,000 acres of land over the last four years, the Patrick-Murray Administration continues its dedication to protecting vital forests, waterways and agricultural lands throughout the Commonwealth," said Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) Secretary Sullivan. "These grants, along with the partnerships with community groups and land trusts, are important in securing the future of Massachusetts open spaces for generations to come."

The awards will fund projects in Brewster, Concord, Falmouth, Fitchburg, Mendon, Wellfleet, Westhampton, Westport and Worcester.

"This is great news," said Sen. Marc Pacheco, Co-Chair of the Joint Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture. "Every acre of land we protect today is another acre of important habitat, wetlands, or forest that we preserve for future generations. This not only provides the public with additional recreation opportunities, but also helps to protect our environmental and public health. I applaud the Patrick-Murray Administration for their continued commitment to land conservation."

"The Patrick-Murray administration continues to show its support for our local communities," said Rep. Anne Gobi, Co-Chair of the Joint Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture. "These grants are necessary to provide additional open space for passive recreation and assist our land trusts in their mission of being good stewards of our natural resources."

The nine awards announced today are:

- Greater Worcester Land Trust (Worcester) - \$85,000 for 13.4 acres of wooded upland and wetland to provide water resource protection, habitat conservation, and public recreational access. This project will fill in the last gap in a 3.5 mile long urban trail corridor from downtown Worcester to Green Hill Park, Lake Quinsigamond and other conserved land. The project also helps protect the site of Worcester's coal mine, used in the early industrial revolution.
 - [Map](#)
- The Kestrel Trust (Westhampton and Northampton) - \$49,000 for 57 acres of forested land in

Westhampton that links to several hundred acres at Northampton's Mineral Hills Conservation Land. This conservation effort will create one of the largest blocks of intact forest in the area and protect a habitat for fish, plants and wildlife.

- [Map](#)

- Westport Land Conservation Trust (Westport) - \$57,500 for 30 acres along the east branch of the Westport River, this project will protect core habitat for rare species and scenic outdoor resources.

- [Map](#)

- Brewster Conservation Trust (Brewster) - \$60,900 for 9.6 acres of forested hilltop located between Baker's Pond and Nickerson State Park, expanding hiking opportunities from the state park.

- [Map](#)

- Wellfleet Conservation Trust (Wellfleet) - \$85,000 for 1.24 acres of land and salt marsh providing a buffer for the delicate Duck Creek tidal marshes.

- [Map](#)

- Concord Land Conservation Trust (Concord) - \$85,000 for 4.7 acres of fields and woods located along the Assabet River, a popular waterway known for canoeing and fishing and will provide land for community gardens in an area currently under-served.

- [Map](#)

- North County Land Trust (Fitchburg) - \$70,125 for 6.7 acres of wooded hillside overlooking the recently completed Gateway Park along Nashua River in Fitchburg. This project connects the 5-acre Gateway Park currently under construction along the Nashua River to several thousand acres of conservation land and hiking trails. The parcel will provide a short hike from the park to a hilltop with extensive views of downtown Fitchburg.

- [Map](#)

- The 300 Committee Land Trust (Falmouth) - \$25,000 for 2.24 acres of freshwater shrub swamp, brackish marsh, and freshwater habitats in Buzzards Bay.

- [Map](#)

- The Trustees of Reservation (Mendon) - \$85,000 for 11 acres of freshwater habitats including the Wigwam and Meadow brooks, Inman Pond and Uxbridge municipal water supply.

- [Map](#)

Since 2005, the Conservation Partnership Program has completed 85 projects protecting more than 2,600 acres with an investment of \$4.2 million in EEA funding. Funding for Conservation Partnership grants comes from the Energy and Environment Bond Bill signed by Governor Patrick in 2008.

Worcester:

"This grant will further enhance and protect an environmentally sensitive area and complete an urban trail corridor that many in Worcester have worked very hard to complete," said Senator Harriette Chandler.

"I am very pleased to see this investment being made in Worcester. This funding will help maintain the unique character of Worcester's urban core while preserving an historic treasure," said Senator Michael O. Moore.

"I commend the Patrick/Murray Administration for its continued leadership in preserving open spaces in our

Commonwealth. This administration has committed itself to improving the quality of life in every city and town in the state, and this is one more way in which Worcester has benefited," said Representative John Mahoney.

Westhampton:

"The preservation of open space for residents of Massachusetts to enjoy - today, and in the future - is a key component of our environmental policy. This award will link 57 acres of forested land in Westhampton with the established Mineral Hills conservation area, thereby creating one of the largest blocks of intact forest land in our region. This conservation project will go far in protecting our wildlife habitat and woodlands, and I am thankful for the Patrick Administration's support in this endeavor," said Senator Benjamin B. Downing.

Westport:

"The Commonwealth's commitment to partnering with local land trusts continues with this announcement," said Senator Rodrigues, "This funding now allows the Westport Land Conservation Trust to preserve one of Westport's many precious natural resources."

"For a community like Westport that prides itself on the use and preservation of the Westport River, this money will be spent wisely for those efforts. Thank you and good job to those on the state level and to the Westport Land Conservation Trust for their effort and hard work to protect and preserve the river," said Representative Paul Schmid.

Wellfleet (Cape Cod):

"State support for conservation on Cape Cod is an investment not just in our environment, but in our future. These two projects - one wooded inland, one along Cape Cod Bay - help ensure that the Cape will remain a place people love, celebrate, and visit for generations to come," said Senator Dan Wolf.

"This funding will certainly be helpful in the 300 Committee's ongoing efforts relative sensitive habitats," said Representative Timothy Madden.

"I thank the Wellfleet Conservation Trust for their efforts in setting aside this land, and thank the Governor for providing the underlying funding to help make this happen. Protection provided by the buffer zone is critical to ensure the ongoing health essential to the tidal marsh habitat," said Representative Sarah Peake.

Concord:

"Since the time of Henry David Thoreau, Concord has been a leader in conservation. I am delighted that the Concord Land Conservation Trust will be able to continue this proud tradition by preserving land for generations to come," said Representative Cory Atkins.