



## Energy and Environmental Affairs

### Patrick-Murray Administration Awards \$3 Million in Grants to Protect 862 Acres of Land in 13 Communities

AMHERST – Wednesday, December 5, 2012 – Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) Secretary Rick Sullivan today announced 13 Massachusetts municipalities have been awarded land conservation grants totaling more than \$3 million that will help protect 862 acres of farms, wetlands, forests, and wildlife habitat.

The Local Acquisitions for Natural Diversity (LAND) grants will fund land conservation projects in **Amherst, Barre, Belchertown, Conway, Granby, Groton, Hopkinton, Middleton, Northampton, Southampton, Southwick, Sudbury and Townsend.**

Since 2007, the Patrick-Murray Administration has conserved more than 100,000 acres of land throughout the Commonwealth. Under this unprecedented effort, more than 16,000 acres in 10 habitat reserves – the most pristine habitats – have been preserved, and more than 150 parks have been created or restored.

The 13 grants announced today will help fund a variety of projects – including one in Amherst that will protect one of the few large remaining unprotected parcels along the Mt. Holyoke Range. Other grants will fund projects to connect open space and trail networks, and protect rare species habitat, viewsheds, key water resources, and working farms and forests.

“With Governor Patrick’s dedication and leadership to land conservation, we’ve achieved some significant results in partnership with municipal officials, private land owners, and land trusts,” said Secretary Sullivan. “Through partnering with communities, we are leveraging further investment in our local economies, preserving open space for public recreation, and protecting vital wetlands and wildlife habitat.”

The following communities have been selected to receive LAND grant funding:

- **Amherst – Ricci Acquisition: Protecting the Holyoke Range – \$353,500** to protect 20 acres, one of the largest remaining unprotected parcels along the Holyoke Range. Adjacent to town conservation land and the Mount Holyoke Range State Park, it will be open for passive recreation and includes a scenic overlook.
- **Barre – Patterson Farm – \$79,800** to acquire a 25-acre conservation restriction on Patterson Farm, located in an important block of protected land, including Mass Audubon’s Rutland Brook Sanctuary and several agriculture preservation restrictions. Agriculture will continue, but the restriction will allow public access for hunting, fishing, bird watching, and other passive activities.

- **Belchertown – Mead’s Corner Conservation Area – \$340,000** to acquire an 88-acre property adjacent to the UMass Cadwell Memorial Forest and the City of Springfield Water District's Knights Pond. The area will be open to the public and accessible from the adjacent New England National Scenic Trail and existing trails on the property.
- **Conway – Batchelder Property – \$1,054** to acquire a small riverfront parcel, which has been classified as BioMap2 Core and Critical Natural Landscape, on Main Street in historic Conway Center. The area will be maintained as a passive park with benches for water viewing and bike racks.
- **Granby – Emily Partyka Conservation Area – \$37,365** to preserve a large, 147 acre wooded property including most of the frontage around Forge Pond. It will provide a non-motorized boat launch, parking, and access to existing informal trails. The town plans to construct a footbridge that will allow foot access to the eastern portion of property.
- **Hopkinton – Elmwood Farm – \$400,000** to preserve an 85-acre historic farm in a scenic part of town that is the former site of the Brigham Hill Community Barn, which engages volunteers to grow food for the Worcester County Food Bank. Preservation will also protect a portion of the aquifer for the town's new well.
- **Middleton – East Street Land Acquisition – \$56,000** to protect 19 acres of open space adjacent to three newly planned major residential subdivisions. The property contains a hayfield, wet meadow and wooded wetland, and land classified as BioMap2 Core and Critical Natural Landscape.
- **Northampton – Broad Brook Gap – \$326,400** to protect 80 acres, which is the largest private holding in the 900+ acre Broad Brook/Fitzgerald Lake Greenway. The diverse property includes wetlands, forested uplands, open fields, frontage along Broad Brook, and important habitat. The property already has a historic trail system linking to the Fitzgerald Lake network.
- **Southwick – Kellogg property – \$356,400** to purchase three parcels – a total of 134 acres – which are part of a historic farm, owned by the Kellogg family since 1712. The area includes mature upland forest, streams, fields and wetlands.
- **Townsend – Genova/Tucker – \$35,547** to purchase a 35-acre inholding in the Old Meetinghouse Park. It will bring the total park area to nearly 300 acres, and connect with nearby Squannacook River Wildlife Management Area. The park trail network will be extended onto this parcel, to allow better public access for activities such as hiking, skiing, biking, and hunting.

#### **FY14 Awards**

- **Groton – Chicopee Row Woods – \$400,000** to purchase 109-acre mature forested property. The property is located adjacent to several existing conservation areas. Property includes numerous vernal pools, wetlands, and small fields. This property has narrowly missed development on multiple occasions, and will now be open to the public for passive recreation.
- **Southampton – Southampton Greenway – \$225,720** to purchase 26 acres of an unused railroad line that runs nearly the entire length of Southampton (4.25 miles), to be converted to a multi-use recreational trail to be called the Southampton Greenway. The

trail will connect to the Manhan Rail Trail at the Easthampton line, and will help connect more than 600 acres of protected land and working farms and forests.

- **Sudbury – Pantry Brook Farm – \$400,000** to acquire a conservation restriction on 94 acres of a large historic farm located inside Route 495. This property has been in agricultural use under a single family since the 1700s, and will continue to be farmed. Public access will be focused on the wooded area on the eastern portion of the property. The property connects to Great Meadows National Wildlife Refuge and includes 5,000 feet of shoreline on Pantry and Saw Mill brooks.

“I applaud the hard work of the East Quabbin Land Trust to protect the Patterson Farm property,” said Sen. Stephen M. Brewer. “This grant and their partnership with the state will ensure that many future generations will be able to enjoy the unique beauty and resources this area has to offer. Once open space is gone, it’s gone. This initiative will ensure that we continue to make conservation a priority.” “This is great news for Groton,” said Sen. Eileen Donoghue. “This money will go a long way in advancing the conservation efforts that they have already begun and I’m grateful that the state recognized the value of the project.”

"I am extremely pleased that the Patrick-Murray administration has provided a generous land grant of \$400,000 to protect 94 acres of public land in Sudbury," said Sen. Jamie Eldridge. "The town of Sudbury has always placed a priority on protecting open space and expanding recreational opportunities for its residents, while also working to maintain the biodiversity of all wildlife and plant life in the town."

"This grant is wonderful news for the Town of Hopkinton, which will now have the necessary resources to purchase and conserve Elmwood Farm, a beautiful, historic piece of land," said Sen. Karen Spilka. "This program is a collaborative effort among the Administration, Legislature, and Town officials and these LAND grants continue to be a priority for us. Today's investment will help Hopkinton's current and future taxpayers, increase access to open space, and improve the quality of life in this community well into the future."

“Middleton is a community focused on planning for the future, and preserving open space on East Street is a part of this plan,” said Sen. Bruce Tarr. "LAND grant funding will help make this important acquisition possible, turning the plan into positive action."

“The Elmwood Farm is a legacy of Hopkinton’s early years and its preservation is a credit to the efforts of the town and all its partners,” said Rep. Carolyn Dykema. "Hopkinton’s history is integral to what the community is today, and this property serves as an important connection to our past. It’s especially exciting that the land may be returned to agricultural use at a time when interest in local farming is growing. I’m so pleased that the Commonwealth’s LAND grant helped protect this wonderful piece of history for future generations.”

“I am pleased by the news that the necessary funding has been secured to aid in the preservation of the invaluable open space on East Street,” said Rep. Brad Jones. “With this LAND grant funding, the town of Middleton has ensured that future generations will be able to enjoy this fantastic natural resource.”

"I want to thank Secretary Sullivan and the Patrick administration for their commitment to

protecting open space and expanding recreational opportunities in Western Massachusetts," said Rep. Peter V. Kocot. "The Southamptton Greenway grant will lead to the construction of a bike path that links existing open inventories and connects to bike paths in the region. The Northampton grant continues the rich legacy of open space and wildlife habitat protection in the Fitzgerald Lake-Broad Brook area. This exciting effort supplements previous acquisitions that have created a unique and highly valued passive recreation destination."

"These grants are excellent news and will go a long way for both Amherst and Granby. Massachusetts continues to make progress on land conservation and I am pleased to see these communities benefit from this work," said Rep. Ellen Story.

Since 1961, EEA's LAND (formerly known as Self Help) awards have helped cities and towns acquire land for conservation and outdoor recreational uses such as hiking, wildlife watching, fishing, hunting, and cross-country skiing. Funding for the grants comes from the Energy and Environment Bond Bill signed by Governor Patrick in 2008. To qualify for the reimbursement grants, communities must fund projects upfront through local, federal, or private sources and the protected open space must be open to the public. Municipalities may use grant funds for outright land purchases or partial interests, such as conservation restrictions, and for associated acquisition costs.