

HISTORIC AREA BECOMES NEWEST EQLT PRESERVE Official Opening Planned for 2014

The Sucker Brook valley in West Brookfield played an important role in the lives of Native Americans and settlers back in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Remains of the roads and two dams are prominent features of the 42 acres off Wickaboag Valley Road recently purchased by the East Quabbin Land Trust, which will be called Pynchon's Grist Mill Preserve. Modern events have largely left the valley behind, leaving the artifacts of that era intact except for natural influences of weather, water, wild-life and vegetation.

Native Americans traveled this way as they moved between the Winimusset in New Braintree and the Quaboag River in Warren and beyond. This trail, as in other locations, aided European settlers as they moved into the area.

Currently, this trail is known as the Old Baypath Indian Trail and Historical Commissions in the region are working to identify and conserve the Trail. Future plans at the Preserve include interpretive signs that elaborate on the historical uses of the land.

Fur trader John Pynchon was instrumental in getting the original thirteen families from Ipswich to settle "Quaboag Plantation" in 1665. In 1669 Pynchon financed the building of a dam and gristmill on Sucker Brook, assuring the success of the Plantation. Account books kept by John Pynchon at Springfield offer a precise record of the mill's construction. Before this mill and because of this isolated location, grain raised here had to be taken all the way to Springfield to be ground into flour or meal.

The Mill continued operation until both the Quaboag settlement and the mill were destroyed in August 1675 during King Philip's war. A quote in "Quaboag Plantation alias Brookefield" by Dr. Louis E. Roy indicates "The remains of this millsite and the artifacts found there are probably the oldest relics in existence of Quaboag Plantation and of its most important mercantile structure."

Historical records show that John Ayres, William Prichard and Daniel Hovey built the millhouse. The dam to create the millpond was built by Rev. John Younglove, Nathaniel, Samuel and John Warner Jr., James Hovey, Judah Trumble, Samuel Kent and Thomas Parsons. The principal investors were Richard Coy, John Ayres and William Prichard. Both William Prichard and John Ayers served as millers until the

mill was destroyed. Many of their descendants attended the 350th Celebration several years ago and supported conservation of this landmark.

Pynchon's Grist Mill Preserve is entirely wooded beyond the pond and stream banks. The woods are white pine and mixed hardwoods that slope steeply away from the brook on either side. Soils are well-drained, sandy loam

left over from the glaciers. In addition to the Old Baypath Indian Trail, there are informal trails heavily used and damaged by all terrain vehicles. Initial stewardship practices will be focused on encouraging appropriate trail uses, rebuilding some trails and closing others. The principal dam site was



Looking out over the pond at the Pynchon's Grist Mill Preserve

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The Country Store Initiative in Petersham

The East Quabbin Land Trust and the Petersham Community are working together to re-open The Country Store, which has long been the heart of Petersham. Purchase of the building is expected in late August with store opening before year-end.

Renovations are needed and a special **'Restore the Store'** event is scheduled for July 27th. More details in the Executive Director's message and events sections of this newsletter, and at www.EQLT.org.

MESSAGE FROM THE Executive Director

Cynthia Henshaw



Dear Friends,

The Land Trust’s mission highlights both the natural and historic resources of our region for conservation. We typically focus on the ‘natural’ side of things, figuring that the stone walls and cellar holes come along for the conservation ride. Rarely have we gotten the opportunity to engage in meaty historical conservation efforts, but lately that trend has been bucked with the restoration of the Frohloff farmhouse in Ware, conservation of the Pynchon’s Grist Mill site in West Brookfield, and most recently with the pending purchase of The Country Store in Petersham, slated for late August.

The Country Store has long been at the heart of Petersham, serving as its main store and gathering place located at the center of the community, catering to residents and visitors alike. Shuttering of the store in 2012 was deeply felt throughout town and the region. Reopening this historic building in a way that supports our communities through use of local foods and products when possible, is a guiding vision of this initiative.

The East Quabbin Land Trust has partnered with community residents to purchase the building, complete essential renovations and reopen The Country Store. Vibrant, experienced and well-known proprietors, Ari and Jeanneane Pugliese, the owners of Picasso’s Restaurant in Barre, will lease the store space and run the business. Their prior experience running The Country Store, excellent food and energetic personalities are essential ingredients to this initiative.

You, your neighbors and community members are also integral parts to making sure The Country Store is a success. Before The Country Store can officially open later this year renovations including installation of an accessible restroom, water filtration, and more efficient cooling must be completed. Funding for purchase of the building is secured, but an additional \$75,000 for renovations must be raised.

Come to the Petersham Common on July 27th for the **Restore the Store** community event to raise funds to support these improvements. Everyone is welcome to this community potluck supper and auction fundraiser. There will be music by the region’s talented musicians, along with both a live and silent auction filled with terrific items, and special events. We look forward to seeing you under the tent on the Petersham Common on Saturday July 27th starting at 4pm.



The Country Store
*An initiative of the
 East Quabbin Land Trust
 and the
 Petersham community*

THE EAST QUABBIN LAND TRUST

works to foster the sustainable use of our natural and historic resources for the benefit of all generations through the conservation and stewardship of the farmlands, woodlands and waters in our region of Massachusetts.

As a non-profit organization the East Quabbin Land Trust envisions a regional community that continues to care for its natural environment and supports a sustainable local economy, ensuring a high quality of life for generations to come.

We welcome your thoughts, articles, and photographs on events in our area. For more information about the land trust, to become a member, or request a change of address, please contact us at:

East Quabbin Land Trust

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 email: eqlt@comcast.net

Visit our website at www.eqlt.org

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STAN, THE WHEAT MAN

By Judith Jones

I sat down early one morning with Stan White, of Hardwick, one of the founders of the East Quabbin Land Trust and local farmer. Stan has a long history of farming starting with a degree in agriculture from the University of Wisconsin. Followed by running the Codman Community Farm for seven years in Lincoln, Mass. before starting his own farm here. He currently has sheep, llamas, goats, rabbits and chickens. His wife, Abbie, grows herbs, vegetables and fruit. Both scientists at heart, Abbie is a biologist, they enjoy making things grow and living off the land. Their two sons, Simon, a pharmacist and Evan, an engineering student, share their passions. At their house there is always a project in the back yard. Currently, there is a maple-sugaring outfit that will one day, soon, be a Sugar House and machinery for processing wheat—Stan's newest crop and scientific endeavor.

We talked about how he got started on growing wheat, a rare crop these days in New England. He explained: "Four or five years ago, on a lark, I thought wouldn't it be great to make '1,000-yard beer'? Everything in it would come from within a thousand yards of your house. We had most of the ingredients—good water, Abbie was growing hops; all I needed was some barley." So, as he tells it, one spring he tried growing a little barley. "I brought it in," he said "and the beer sucked. Turns out I can't make beer." But what he found he could do is prove a concept, in true scientific fashion. His challenge, he said, with the wheat, was to prove that he could grow it, harvest it, dry it, sell it and get some cash back.

He became interested in growing wheat instead of barley, because, as he puts it, "We have no food security here, we're dependent on other parts of the country for our wheat. Here we have people growing real food: meat, potatoes, vegetables, and fruits, but no grains. The knowledge and the equipment are not here." His belief is that we need to grow staple foods to get one through the winter. "This is strategically important. The economics are getting there. We're now getting normal people talking about food, not just the fringe. Normal people are questioning their food supply and recognizing the need for local sources."

Stan started doing a little research and found that the last time people were growing grains in New England was in the 1850's. "There are no grandfathers around to pass down the knowledge and the keys," says he. "There is no equipment; we're forced to reinvent the wheel." When he started his enquiry he discovered very few people in this region know how to grow grains, he was told to go to North Dakota.

"I said 'no' to that, Scotland does it. I can do it here." He went on to explain that one reason he has the ability to

grow wheat, is that he has what he terms "a tri-ad". Says he, "I have fields, I have sheep, and I have a lot of manure." He works on pasture renovation with intended and unintended results. Because of the prevalence of coyotes, he pens his sheep at night, they all poop up at the barn, and then he puts the manure back on the fields. During the second half of the summer he will till it in, and then plant wheat inter-seeded with clover in the fall.

"The clover provides additional nitrogen to the soil, and after I harvest the wheat, then I've got a great paddock for the animals who will then eat the weeds. The interplay of the animals with a grain crop has excellent benefits."

As he boot-strapped his operation, Stan joined some organizations. He attended seminars in Vermont with Abbie

and visited other farms attempting similar endeavors. He did what he could by hand, and then sought out equipment suitable to his land and his goals for it. "First," he said, "I needed a combine. I have small fields and the only equipment available was from the mid-west and anywhere from 15-20 ft wide. My bar-way is only 10-12 ft. wide and made of stone! The equipment I found was too big, too old, and too rusty." The upshot of his search was that he found the only small, suitable combine was available new from China. He imported the first one of its kind to America and put it together with instructions

that were written only in Chinese. As he got further along he needed more equipment. He sows his seed by hand and drags birch boughs behind his tractor to press it into the soil. Ideally, he'd have a grain drill off his tractor, but that's for another year.

As Stan said, "As a start-up you have to improvise."

He has added a rotary drum cleaner to his arsenal to separate the wheat from the chaff and then, he found on Ebay, in Kansas, a machine called a Clipper with two screens and a fan to separate things by density. This Clipper was built in 1917 and used until five or six years ago. With his son Evan's help, Stan has gotten this running, and is ready for his next harvest. Once the grains are separated, Stan dries the wheat with fans in his green house. His final step before market is to get a Certificate of Analysis, which certifies the protein content.

Stan currently is growing wheat on just under three acres. He's hoping to get 20-30 bushels an acre which translates to 1,500 to 2,000 lbs. per acre. He supplies his Hardwick-grown wheat to a grain CSA and several bakeries. His output, he says, "is miniscule. But I'm proving that 'yes we can grow this stuff here.' It's just as good, if not better. People know it's grown locally and they recognize it has a certain pedigree." Now, at the White house, they're serving 1,000-yard pizza!



Stan in his wheat field in Hardwick Mass.

MUDDY BROOK PROTECTIONS IN PLACE

Conservation along the Dougal Range in Ware and Hardwick took another step forward recently with the permanent protection of the Klassanos property along Muddy Brook. The East Quabbin Land Trust and the Town of Ware purchased the conservation restriction on 48 acres at a bargain price. The Klassanos' donated half the appraised development value and will receive a Massachusetts state tax credit for their gift. This financial arrangement made conservation of the land possible for both the land trust and the family.

Martha and Brian Klassanos moved to their land in 1979 with the intention of raising their family in the country and starting their own landscaping business. The combination of open area, woods and brook was attractive. More recently the Klassanos' have implemented a Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program grant that expanded the early successional habitat and enhanced their cold-water tributary. The family has even discovered a state-designated rare plant called Spring Beauty, *Claytonia virginica*. Brian is in the midst of repopulating the sandy flats with native lupine and other plants of interest.

The land lies along Muddy Brook in Ware, which is a significant Town water supply source and corridor for wildlife. The brook was used for early industry, but more recently is viewed as a natural area and beautiful vista for residents and passersby alike. Muddy Brook defines the western edge of the Dougal Range, which is a series of wooded hilltops connecting Ware and Hardwick.



Muddy Brook as it winds towards the Ware River after leaving Hardwick Pond

The landscape of the Dougal Range has long been considered a regional conservation priority. This large block of mostly unfragmented upland forest is unusual for unprotected land in central Massachusetts. Only one paved road cuts diagonally across the area and another abandoned (and no-longer passable) dirt road is present. The Important Bird Area project designated the Dougal Range as a landscape important to global bird conservation because it supports documented high density of interior nesting species otherwise experiencing sharp population declines. Much of the Dougal Range was identified by the BioMap2 project as Critical Natural Landscape based upon the integrity of the Range's unfragmented forests and direct association with other ecologically important landscapes.

Populations of four terrestrial state-listed rare species are documented to be dependent upon the Range. Surveys have also found several examples of unusual Natural Plant Communities associated with the Range, including Rich Mesic Forests, Circumneutral Talus Slopes and Hickory Hop-hornbeam Communities. These communities are expressions of unusual geology and soil chemistry for our region, and often harbor rare species themselves. A third major component important to the Range's biodiversity is the large concentration of vernal pools found throughout its entirety. The conservation and stewardship of private landowners will continue to keep the Dougal Range a wonderfully diverse and important natural area in our region. ■



Spring beauties are rare wildflowers in Massachusetts

FARMLAND CONSERVED IN BARRE

The Patterson family moved to Barre in the late 1800's and ran a successful diverse New England farm for decades on their land nestled near the Petersham town line. Barre residents, Frank Patterson and Ruth Coutu and their siblings, grew up on the farm raising most of their own food. The dairy cows were sold in the late 1950's when larger economic forces shifted farming towards larger dairy herds. Since then the fields produce corn, hay, and vegetables. There is still a stand of evergreens left over from an experiment growing Christmas trees.

Mrs. Patterson passed away a few years ago leaving questions about what would happen to the farmhouse and land. Before Mr. and Mrs. Patterson passed away they expressed their interest in seeing the farm stay a farm. After all, they successfully raised six children on the land and hoped that others could do the same. Fortunately, family members agreed and approached the East Quabbin Land Trust to talk about their options. Through these discussions a multi-faceted strategy was agreed on that would conserve most of the land and provide the heirs with an inheritance.

The first step was to sell the remaining wooded parts of the Patterson farm, over 50 acres, to Mass Audubon for addition to the Rutland Brook Sanctuary. The second step involved finding a buyer for the house and nine acres. With that accomplished, that left the remaining 25 acres along Old Stage and Mill Roads which include the productive agricultural fields with prime agricultural soils and diverse wetlands.

After exploring the possibility of an Agricultural Preservation Restriction, it was arranged for the Town of Barre to purchase a conservation restriction over the remaining 25 acres. The East Quabbin Land Trust assisted family

members through these steps, and supported the Town of Barre through the Massachusetts L.A.N.D. grant process and local fundraising. Insight Meditation Society provided a challenge grant which spurred on support from individuals towards conservation of the farm. In addition, The 1772 Foundation through the Land Trust Alliance provided essential grant funds to complete the purchase.

The Patterson farm is proposed to remain a vital farm raising crops that are locally relevant. The farm fields have dark, rich soils capable of growing tons of vegetables, grains and hay. The conservation restriction will allow agriculturally related structures, such as bee houses, portable chicken pens, standing sheds and greenhouses. Permanent agricultural structures are permitted within a building envelope around the former barn site. Last year, the Patterson family rented the fields to Landworks Farm of Petersham that focuses on diverse vegetable production including carrots, potatoes, squash, tomatoes, beans and peas. Future plans for larger vegetable harvests are to work with local institutions, restaurants and markets to supply local organically grown vegetables.

The conservation restriction will allow for diffuse recreational uses for the public while protecting the integrity of the scenic views from the roads. It is possible that an observation platform might be installed looking out over the wetland area to encourage birding and nature appreciation. The landowner and Barre Conservation Commission will discuss this possibility along with other stewardship changes over the years.

The permanent conservation of the farm is a tribute to the memory of Harold and Hazel Patterson. ■

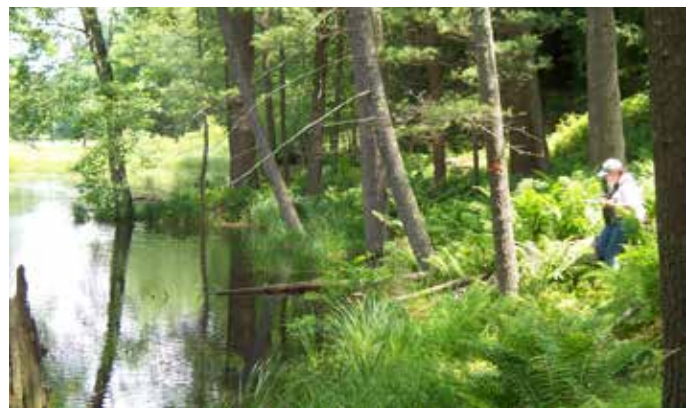


A hay field at the Patterson farm with wetland in background

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breached long ago, but beavers have built a dam to keep water levels up. The recent rains have partially washed out the beaver dam so the water level is down a few feet. Eventually we expect the beavers to recolonize the area and rebuild the dam.

The East Quabbin Land Trust partnered with the West Brookfield Historical Commission and Conservation Commission to purchase this land. In addition to receiving a grant from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts' Conservation Partnership grant program, the Historical Commission and a number of private individuals made financial contributions. Grant requests are still pending. Thank you to all who have supported this initiative to date. Additional funding is necessary to officially open the property with historical markers along a public walking trail that



A lush section of the riparian area along Sucker Brook this summer during preparation of the Conservation Restriction Baseline Monitoring Report.

will include information about the history of the area and those involved in building and operating the mill. ■

PARTING THOUGHTS ON HER SERVICE EXPERIENCE

By Kelly Wheeler

As my service in Americorps draws to a close, I am thankful for all I have received during my two years of service at the East Quabbin Land Trust. This experience has given me the opportunity to teach the community about growing their own food, which is a great passion of mine. Also, I have gained the confidence to work with others in a wide variety of service-related tasks and know that I don't need to have all the answers.

When I finished school with a degree in Sustainable Agriculture from the University of Massachusetts, I was overwhelmed with the realization that our current food system is making us sick. The way we grow food today is based on large amounts of chemicals and fossil fuels to maintain monocrops that ultimately degrade soil fertility, decimate diverse ecosystems, and take more energy to produce than we receive in caloric energy.

What could I do as an individual? I felt passionate about creating change in the food system but I didn't have a strong voice. I decided to start small. I already grew my own food but I felt that in order to achieve real change I needed to educate others. Surely they would want my help to get better foods in the cafeteria and create a student run garden. It turned out that the seemingly simple act of starting a garden and eating the locally grown food was too far out of the box for many schools, with MCAS teachers who were overwhelmed and couldn't afford to take on another project. There was no time, no funds, and difficulty changing lesson plans to include hands on activities around growing food. I felt helpless yet again. How could I help to improve the local school's food system within an education system that has so many constraints? Fortunately, when I felt the most powerless in the face of these huge societal problems, I learned about the Americorps MassLIFT Service Learning Coordinator position. Here was a way to affect some positive changes and challenge myself around teaching, growing and learning.

The highlights of my two years of service at the East Quabbin Land Trust were to build several gardens with youth and teach them about our natural world. I was able to help them experience not only how to grow their own food, but how to cook it and preserve it. I met wonderfully passionate teachers who have spent their own time and money to get garden projects off the ground because they truly believe it to be incredibly meaningful to their students. I worked with kids who have struggled behaviorally in the classroom who blossomed in the garden. And I have seen with my own eyes that kids will eat vegetables from the garden that they grew

themselves with enthusiasm and pride.

Youth have the power and ability to make a real difference. In addition to the vegetable garden service projects that youth participated in, we accomplished a lot for our community and the natural world, including:

- The Quabbin Regional High School Envirothon students planted a rain garden to slow the flow of water run-off at the Frohloff Farm,
- Tiger Scouts participated in the Great Backyard Bird Count which monitors winter populations of birds across the country,
- Walking trails at the Mass Central Rail Trail, Patrill Hollow Preserve and Deer Park Preserve were created or maintained,
- Herb spirals and worm bins were made by Green-

house students at Quabbin Regional High School,

- Pine cone bird feeders through after school programs at local libraries, and

- Making food to share with the community, such as the polish dinner for the Hardwick Community Supper.

In school, we learned about the introduction of Genetically Modified Organisms (GMO's) into the food system. Concerns are raised because this was done without any meaningful human health or

environmental impact studies. Conveniently, the majority of GMO's grown in the U.S are the crops that also receive the most government subsidies. The subsidies make the processed food less expensive, replacing real grown food with factory made food-like substances. Because of this we are losing our native food traditions and along with that the rich diversity of indigenous crops that once made our agricultural systems resilient. My experience as an Americorps volunteer has given me the confidence to eloquently present my understanding of the importance of growing, cooking and eating our own food to a wide audience. I have found my voice. Recently I testified at a state-wide hearing to create legislation to label GMO's. What a powerful experience.

Now I realize that the biggest crime is for people who see injustice and wrongdoing to stay silent. Margaret Mead said, "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has." I am one of 20 Americorps MassLIFT members working all across the state to create positive change in the communities we serve. But we are not special; you, too, can save the world. Just start small, find your voice and don't be afraid to use it! Thank you to the East Quabbin Land Trust community for all your support. ■



Kelly and KidStop kids hamming it up for the camera after planting more pollinator plants and weeding the Frohloff Farm Youth Garden

HEALTHY FOOD REQUIRES HEALTHY ECOSYSTEMS

Stewardship to Improve Biodiversity on Farms

By Caren Caljouw

This is the second of a two-part discussion of stewardship practices on local farms.

Utilize crop rotations, companion plantings, and plant a winter cover crop. Planting crops on rotation and using companion plantings helps to control pests. Techniques such as growing carrots and onions together helps reduce insect damage to carrots and there is little competition for space since carrots are deep rooted and onions shallow. Winter rye, clover, and nonaggressive annual grasses are often planted between rotations of row crops, in fallow areas, and on former equipment trails to minimize erosion, suppress weeds, and trap nutrients that might otherwise be leached away by rain. Clover is a good nitrogen fixer and will increase soil fertility. It's also a good nectar source for bumblebees and Monarch butterflies.

Remove invasive plants. Spring and late summer are great times of year to make headway in ridding the farm of invasive plants. We have several ambitious projects underway at Frohloff Farm and Mandell Hill to rid stone walls, fields and woods of aggressive non-native plants such as Japanese barberry, multiflora rose, Oriental bittersweet, and glossy buckthorn. We use a variety of options to control invasives including mechanical removal, cutting followed by intensive grazing, and chemical control for especially troublesome populations. Each method requires vigilance, persistence, and patience but the yields are great.

Maintain orchards and wild fruiting trees. We are restoring the historic orchard at Mandell Hill and will soon release apple, oak, serviceberry, and cherry trees from encroaching white pine and tall buckthorn at Frohloff Farm. Orchards and wild fruiting trees provide valuable wildlife habitat, including food and shelter for birds, mammals, and insects. Over 75 species of native bees are known to visit orchards during the bloom period. This is especially important now that honey bees are in decline in North America. To provide the ideal environment for native bees (including bumblebees), it's important to ensure a variety of native flowering plants throughout the flowering season from March to August. We are expanding the pollinator garden at Frohloff Farm this year and hope to give more native plants a jump start in areas where invasives are being removed.

Establish hedgerows. Planting hedgerows or allowing peripheral areas around fields to re-vegetate with a variety of native shrubs and perennials such as viburnum, blueberry, winterberry, elderberry, and asters helps reduce erosion, improve water quality, lessen damage from wind, and encourage nesting birds and native pollinators. Nectar-rich plants attract bees, wasps, and flies that are helpful to farmers. With nectar as their energy source, parasitic wasps will hunt all day for insect pests like grubs and beetle larvae that destroy the roots of pasture grasses and row crops. Avoid trimming hedgerows in late-April through mid-July, the main nesting season for birds.

Install nest boxes and reserve natural habitats for insectivorous birds, bats and other wildlife. The nest box project at Mandell Hill will encourage Eastern Bluebirds, Tree Swallows, and Kestrels. These birds are excellent predators and will eat all types of insect pests. An average pair of bluebirds may consume as many as 15,000 caterpillars for every brood they raise. We now have over fifty nest boxes installed. Bats are also great insect predators. A single eastern pipistrelle can catch over 3,000 flying insects in a night. Bats also utilize the spaces under the bark of certain trees like shagbark hickory. Leaving large wolf trees or snags also provides important habitat for wildlife, including barred and great-horned owls.

Maintain vegetated buffers around ponds, streams, and drainage areas. It is a good idea to monitor water quality in ponds and streams. Thanks to an Americorps and Quabbin High School Summer School project, we have good baseline data for the pond, stream, and river at Frohloff Farm. We intend to monitor those waterways periodically. We also maintain vegetated buffers around the pond and stream to capture and infiltrate any pollutants and absorb rainwater during flood events. We fence cattle out of ponds and streams and provide alternative water sources at Frohloff Farm and Mandell Hill. We are working to remove invasives such as Japanese barberry and bush honeysuckle from stream courses to keep invasives from traveling downstream to other nearby lands and improve understory plant diversity in affected areas. Planting native grasses, sedges, and rushes helps reduce erosion. These plantings require very little maintenance once in place.

Minimize run-off from animal waste and storm water. Run-off causes erosion, picks up pollutants and carries them into the farm and nearby waterways. The USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service assists landowners in developing animal waste systems for farms and provides technical assistance in designing lagoons and storage structures. Rotational grazing practices eliminated our need for such structures at Mandell Hill as manure is spread evenly across pastures during the year. At Frohloff Farm we grapple with ways to capture storm water run-off from Upper Church Street. We are excited to continue the rain garden project initiated with the help of the Quabbin High School Envirothon Team. The rain garden planted with a variety of native perennials and shrubs captures storm water run-off from the road, filters pollutants, and improves water quality and drainage. The garden also attracts native pollinators and beneficial insects like butterflies, bees, and wasps.

Maintain wet-meadow, marshes, and other unusual wetland habitats. These wetlands have the capacity to absorb water during heavy rain events and floods. They are often found along the periphery of farms and are high in wildlife and plant diversity. Native pollinators use these areas throughout the growing season. Some areas are threatened by invasive plants such as purple loosestrife, multiflora rose, or common reed. We are working to remove invasives from these habitats and manage them for wildlife diversity.

Maintain and restore forested riparian buffers and corridors for wildlife movement along the Ware River. Healthy well-managed riparian areas have a variety of trees, shrubs, and herbs growing on them. The soil surface has a layer of dead leaves and humus that contribute to the soil's ability to hold water and minimize stream bank erosion. These forests are not only important to control floods and maintain water quality, they are valuable wildlife habitats supporting many migratory songbirds, American woodcock, and rare species tracked by the Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program. Forested habitats along the Ware River include floodplain forest and a unique pitch pine woodland. We currently have a grant from the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service to improve habitat for wildlife on the Farm. We are working to restore the pitch pine woodland, remove aggressive invasives such as buckthorn, improve habitat for woodcock and other declining birds, and protect sensitive rare species habitat along the river corridor. ■

East Quabbin LAND TRUST



Conserving the land, Preserving our heritage

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EQLT News | INSIDE...

The Country Store

*An initiative of the
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and the
Petersham community*



Restore the Store

Community Potluck and Fundraiser

July 27, starting at 4pm

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UPCOMING EVENTS

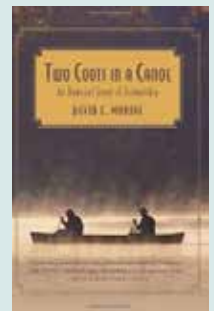
JULY...

Saturday, July 20, 6:30 PM

Book discussion of *Two Coots in a Canoe* by David E. Morine, 120 Ridge Road, Hardwick – This is a wild ride down the Connecticut River, powered by gravity, cold beer, and insight to the state of the largest river in New England. The two coots learn a lot and share their adventures as they rely on the kindness of strangers. Refreshments will be available. Please RSVP to Cynthia at chenshaw@eqlt.org.

Saturday, July 27, starting at 4:00 PM

Restore the Store - Community Auction and Potluck, Petersham Common and Town Hall, Petersham – The historic Country Store in Petersham, Mass., first opened in 1840 but shuttered in 2012, will be the focus of a regional community event on July 27. The “Restore the Store” benefit will begin on the town Common at 4:00 p.m. and include a potluck supper, silent and live auctions, family activities, and live music from area bands — all to raise funds to re-open the Store later this year. Attendance is free, with a \$5 suggested donation, and all are encouraged to attend. The “Restore the Store” event will be held rain or shine under tents on the Petersham Common and in the Petersham Town Hall. Visitors are encouraged to bring a potluck item to add to the community supper. More information about the July 27 event and The Country Store project can be found at the East Quabbin Land Trust website: www.eqlt.org.



AUGUST...

Friday and Saturday, August 16 and 17

Hardwick Community Fair, Hardwick Common – Come to the Common to explore local agriculture and community. The EQLT booth and dunk tank will be set up ready to greet you. Purchase your 2013 poster, hat or t-shirt. Youth can tie die their own!

COMING IN OCTOBER...

Sunday, October 13, starting gun at 10:00 AM

Second Annual Station Loop Ramble 5-miler - A hilly road and trail race with a flat fast finish on the Mass Central Rail Trail. Entry fee: \$20 for adults and \$10 for children age 13 and under if received before September 13, 2013. For full details and to register go to www.EQLT.org under the Events tab or contact Cynthia at chenshaw@eqlt.org or 413-477-8229.