

HALF-EARTH: Our Planet's Fight for Life

By Edward O. Wilson

E.O. Wilson is a Research Emeritus Professor at Harvard who spent his career initially focused on ants, learning about social insect patterns and discovering new ant species. E.O. Wilson's research took him all over the world, and his passion for the natural world led to a broader scope of influence on the world. E.O. Wilson wrote numerous books for lay readers including *Biophilia*, *The Diversity of Life*, and in 2016, *Half-Earth*. Wilson's life's work is centered around expanding our understanding of all the species of organisms that inhabit this planet, discovering them and studying their natural history, before we make such drastic changes to our planet that those species go extinct. Following are selected excerpts from *Half Earth* that build the case for conserving biodiversity on Earth and our role in it:

"For the first time in history a conviction has developed among those who can actually think more than a decade ahead that we are playing a global endgame. Humanity's grasp on the planet is not strong. It is growing weaker. Our population is too large for safety and comfort. Fresh water is growing short, the atmosphere and the seas are increasingly polluted as a result of what has transpired on the land. The climate is changing in ways unfavorable to life, except for microbes, jellyfish, and fungi. For many species it is already fatal.

We need a much deeper understanding of ourselves and the rest of life than the humanities and science have yet offered. Unless humanity learns a great deal more about global biodiversity and moves quickly to protect it, we will soon lose most of the species composing life on Earth. The Half-Earth proposal offers a first, emergency solution commensurate with the magnitude of the problem: I am convinced that only by setting aside half the planet in reserve, or more, can we save the living part of the environment and achieve the stabilization required for our own survival.

Biodiversity as a whole forms a shield protecting each of the species that together compose it, ourselves included. What will happen if, in addition to the species already extinguished by human activity, say, 10 percent of those remaining are taken away? Or 50 percent? Or 90 percent? As more and more species vanish or

drop to near extinction, the rate of extinction of the survivors accelerates. In some cases the effect is felt almost immediately. When a century ago the American chestnut, once a dominant tree over much of eastern North America, was reduced to near extinction by an Asian fungal blight, seven moth species whose caterpillars depended on its vegetation vanished, and the last of the passenger pigeons plunged to extinction. As extinction mounts, biodiversity reaches a tipping point at which the ecosystem collapses. Scientists have only begun to study under what conditions and when this catastrophe is most likely to occur.

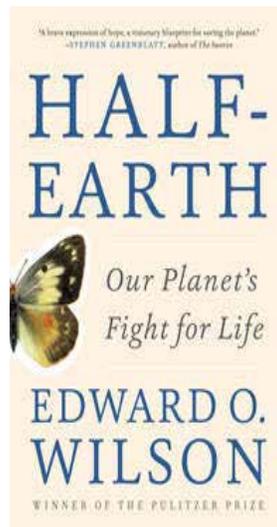
...how can we understand the deep principles of sustainability of a forest or river if we still do not know even the identity of most of the insects, nematodes, and other small animals that run the finely-tuned engines of the energy and materials cycles?

To save biodiversity, it is necessary to obey the precautionary principle in the treatment of Earth's natural ecosystems, and to do so strictly. Hold fast until we,

scientists and the public alike, know much more about them. Proceed carefully – study, discuss, plan. Give the rest of Earth's life a chance.

To those who think nature consists primarily of plants and large vertebrate animals, I say look about you at the little things that run the earth. To those who believe they can fathom the workings of ecosystems with mathematical models of a handful of species, I say you live in a dream world. And to those who believe that a damaged ecosystem will heal itself or can be safely restored by replacing original native species with functional alien equivalents, I say think again before you cause damage. Just as successful medicine depends upon a knowledge of anatomy and physiology, conservation science depends upon a knowledge of taxonomy and natural history.

Over five hundred such species of bacteria live in the mouth and esophagus of the average human. By forming a well-adapted microbial rain forest, they protect this part of the body from harmful, parasitic species of bacteria. The price of failure in the symbiosis



MESSAGE FROM THE Executive Director

Cynthia Henshaw



On March 25th over 500 people participated in the annual Massachusetts Land Conservation Conference. This year seven members of the East Quabbin Land Trust team attended. On page 6 you can read insights from Kane Hardaker after his first Conference.

In the morning I attended a Russ Cohen session about expanding native edible plants on land trust lands as a way to engage the public through our taste buds. Sounds yummy doesn't it? First, Russ laid out the ground rules to not overharvest, take only one or two leaves or flowers from a clump or small shrub to not stress the plants. Here are few of Russ's suggestions for native plants to encourage. Fiddleheads from Ostrich ferns are available in the spring before the fronds open up. Common milkweed has four edible stages, all of which are best after boiling in water for 7 minutes. Bee balm is a savory mint, so the leaves can be used fresh as a spice, like sage or thyme. Several nuts were also mentioned, hazelnut, shagbark hickory and black walnut for fall collecting and eating. Russ shared a huge amount of information for ways we can increase the "edibility" of our preserves, and I look forward to reading his book Wild Plants I have known...and Eaten.

During a workshop on Waysides and Kiosks we focused on the best ways to engage property visitors. Signage is most engaging when there are color images and text tiered by font size, recognizing that most visitors will only spend 30 seconds at the wayside sign. Being clear and concise is essential. Also, finding interactive displays helps. Using QR codes, or tactile exhibits, or auditory stops are some examples discussed. As opportunity allows, we will build these ideas into our wayside stops and kiosks.

Record-keeping is one of those "boring" topics, but essential for organizational stability and resiliency over time. This workshop was a good reminder to revisit our filing system, check on archives and ensure duplicates of our archives are off-site just in case they are ever needed.

The Conference plenary speaker was E.O. Wilson, who left us with two key messages. First, keep doing what we're doing. We need to work faster if we are going to meet the vision of Half-Earth which is essential for conserving the world's biodiversity. Secondly, we need more people engaged to explore and study nature. Young people can be fired up about learning and exploring nature when given the opportunity to participate in citizen science, explore their environment and have adventures of discovery.

Spending the day indoors was well worth it to get inspired and reinvigorated about conserving and stewarding the natural world that sustains us! ■

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 farms, woods 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 the natural environment and supports a sustainable and adaptable local economy, ensuring a high quality of life for generations to come.

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
 P.O. Box 5, 120 Ridge Road
 Hardwick, MA 01037-0005
 413-477-8229 (tel)
 email: EQLT@comcast.net

Visit our website at www.EQLT.org
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SENATOR STEVE BREWER: Caring for Our Region

By Richard Cavanaugh

Since retiring from the Massachusetts State Senate, Steve Brewer has stopped commuting to Boston from Barre, but he hasn't slowed down or stopped caring and working for the people and communities he represented for over forty years. "When I retired, I said that there were three things I intended to do right away: one was to teach, another was to begin playing the banjo, and the third was to join a land trust," remarked Brewer.

Steve Brewer has accomplished all three and then some. He is teaching at the newly-dedicated Senator Stephen M. Brewer Center for Civic Learning and Community Engagement at Mount Wachusett Community College. He is mastering the three-finger banjo picking style of Earl Scruggs on a beautiful five-string banjo given to him as a retirement gift by his former constituents in Charlton, and he is a valued and fully-engaged member of the board of directors for the East Quabbin Land Trust.

When asked what prompted his interest in joining a land trust, Steve explained, "In representing the East Quabbin communities, I learned how central land protection is to maintain our region for agricultural use, wildlife management, and for water quality – all issues vitally important to the people I represented and to the welfare of the entire Commonwealth. Also, it didn't hurt that I had [State Senator] Bob Wetmore as a mentor in environmental issues." Sen. Wetmore was, among other things, instrumental in drafting and ratifying Article 97 of the Massachusetts State Constitution, which sets strict limits on the Commonwealth's ability to change its agreements concerning the preservation, protection, and enhancement of its natural resources, recognizing the economic activities dependent on those resources (such as agriculture, forest products and important segments of the tourist industry) and the quality of life that clean water and undeveloped open space can provide.

"From my vantage point in the legislature, I had the privilege of getting to know Cynthia [Henshaw, EQLT's Executive Director] and others at EQLT. I am very impressed with and grateful for the work they have done in my hometown and in the surrounding communities over the years, so I knew where I wanted to land. With the environmental challenges facing us globally, I'm glad to be a part of this organization that's making an important and positive difference locally."

Steve's career in public service began with his election to the Barre Board of Selectman when he was 29 years old – the youngest person ever to hold that

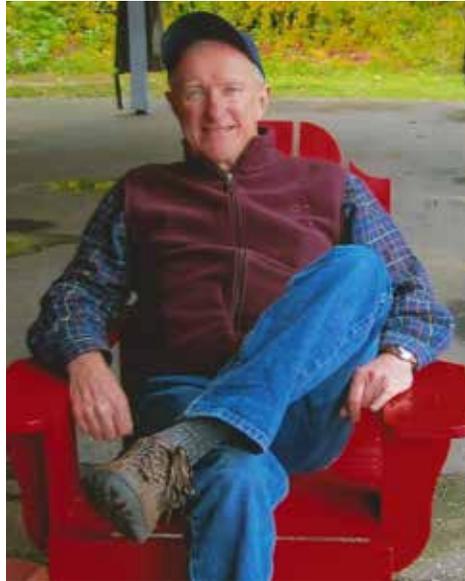
office. Soon after becoming a Selectman, he was asked to join the staff of Sen. Wetmore. Then in 1988, he ran for State Representative. He was elected and served in that capacity for eight years. When Sen. Wetmore retired, Steve ran for that seat and served in the Senate for nine terms (18 years), becoming Chair of the powerful Senate Committee on Ways and Means, the financial gatekeeper for the Senate.

All one needs to do is to visit his office on Barre Common or the Brewer Center at MWCC to see that many groups and individuals have expressed their thanks for all that Steve has done for them in his years of public service. However, it's clear from the cherished position it holds on the wall of his "dog house" – a private office over their new garage where he can practice his banjo out of ear shot from his wife, Valerie – that there's one award that stands out from the rest. It is the Champion of Justice award given by the Equal Justice Coalition of Massachusetts.

Working for social justice remains a strong driving force in Steve's life. In addition to his work at the Brewer Center and volunteering as an East Quabbin Land Trust director, Steve serves as president of the Barre Savings Charitable Foundation, which was established when Fidelity Bank merged with Barre Savings Bank in 2016. He has also been very active in supporting Heywood Hospital's Quabbin Retreat, a facility in Petersham to address the critical need for behavioral health and substance abuse services in the region.

When asked how social justice became so central to his work, Steve explained, "When I first went to Boston, I vowed that all of my decisions would be informed by the memory of those who lost their homes when the towns of Dana, Enfield, Greenwich, Prescott were flooded to create the Quabbin Reservoir. As a student of history, that state action had a profound effect on me, and I think that perspective served me and those I represented well over the years. I was acutely aware of how actions taken in Boston can permanently affect the lives of people in every corner of the state. Another important lesson, of course, is that people must be engaged. Democracy is not a spectator sport."

At the East Quabbin Land Trust, we are extremely honored and grateful for the benefit of the lessons and perspective that Senator Steve Brewer so generously offers. ■





sustain (sə-ˈstān) *tr. v.* -tained, -taining, -tains. To keep in existence; maintain; nourish.

sustained (sə-ˈstānd) *adj.* Continuing for an extended period or without interruption.

Become a Sustainer.

Help sustain East Quabbin Land Trust and protect your natural resources and foster your community.

- Sustainers play an all important role in East Quabbin Land Trust by making a monthly gift with a credit card or Electronic Fund Transfer (EFT).
- For example, a gift of \$10/month supports summer camp at Wendemeth Meadow Preserve for three campers. A gift of \$20/month maintains a mile of recreational trails.
- A monthly gift of your choice is the easiest and most efficient way to support EQLT.
- A gift of \$500 or more per person annually (\$42/month) brings recognition as a member of The Leadership Circle along with other benefits.
- You can become a Sustainer today by going online at www.EQLT.org.
- Your sustained support will allow EQLT to focus resources on timely opportunities to protect the best in the East Quabbin communities for generations to come.
- Simply start, change, or stop your gift at any time online. (Monthly gifts will be processed securely by PayPal.)

“Being a sustainer allows me to easily budget my support of the East Quabbin Land Trust. With the payment plan in place, I love not having to give it another thought while still knowing I’m doing my part for an organization I care deeply about.”
-- an EQLT Sustainer from Ware, MA

“I enjoy being a Sustainer of the East Quabbin Land Trust, because I know that Sustainer contributions provide the funds that are most important to the day-to-day operations of the organization and in a way the land trust can rely on them throughout the year.” -- an EQLT Sustainer from Hardwick, MA

“It seems only natural for me to support EQLT as a “Sustainer” because of all of the land trust’s work and success in forging a sustainable future for the region’s environmental and agricultural resources.” -- an EQLT Sustainer from Petersham, MA

Half-Earth, by E.O. Wilson continued from page 1...

is an invasion of aliens, the buildup of dental plaque, tooth decay, and gum disease.

Further down in each successive part of the gastrointestinal tract, colonies of other specialized bacteria play crucial roles in digestion and waste disposal. The average number of human cells in the body runs at least into the tens of trillions – one number calculated from multiple estimates is forty trillion. The average number of bacteria in our microbiome, as it has come to be called, is at least ten times higher. To make the point, microbiologist joke that if biological taxonomy were to be based exclusively on the preponderance of DNA within each organism, human beings would be classified as bacteria.

Because it is clear that a healthy biosphere is good for the economy, we trust that the public and business and political leaders among them will join us and come to value the living world as an independent moral imperative that also happens to be vital for human welfare.

The crucial factor in the life and death of species is the amount of suitable habitat left to them... with the relation of sustainable species to the area of their habitat at the fourth root (the approximate median value), the fraction protected in one-half the global surface is about 85 percent. That fraction can be increased by including within the one-half Earth “hot spots,” where the largest numbers of endangered species exist.

Today every sovereign nation in the world has a protected-area system of some kind. All together the reserves number about a hundred sixty-one thousand on land and sixty-five hundred over marine waters... they occupied by 2015 a little less than 15 percent of Earth’s land area and 2.8 percent of Earth’s ocean area. The coverage is increasing gradually. This trend is encouraging... Unfortunately, it is in fact nowhere close to enough... The only hope for the species still living is a human effort commensurate with the magnitude of the problem. The ongoing mass extinction of species, and with it the extinction of genes and ecosystems, ranks with pandemics, world war, and climate change as among the deadliest threats that humanity has imposed on itself.

The spearhead of intensive economic evolution, and with it hope for biodiversity, is contained in the linkage of biology, nanotechnology, and robotics. Two ongoing enterprises within it, the creation of artificial life and artificial minds, seem destined to preoccupy a large part of science and high technology for the rest of the present century. They are also by happenstance well on track to help reduce the ecological footprint, providing a better quality of life with less energy and resources. This result should yield an unintended consequence of entrepreneurial innovation, in this case participating in the protection of Earth’s biodiversity for future generations.

The explosive growth of digital technologies, by transforming every aspect of our lives and changing our

self-perception, has made the “bnr” industries (biology, nanotechnology, robotics) the spearhead of the modern economy. These three have the potential either to favor biodiversity or to destroy it. I believe they will favor it, by moving the economy away from fossil fuels to energy sources that are clean and sustainable, by radically improving agriculture with new crop species and ways to grow them, and by reducing the need or even the desire for distant travel... Through them the size of the ecological footprint will also be reduced.

We and the rest of life with us are in the middle of a bottleneck of rising population, shrinking resources, and disappearing species. As its stewards we need to think of our species as being in a race to save the living environment.

The living world is in desperate condition. It is suffering steep declines in all the levels of its diversity. It will be helped but not saved by economic measures of its ecological services and potential products. Nor will the perception of God’s holy will suffice: traditional religions are pivoted on the salvation of human beings, here and in the afterlife, above all other purposes that can be conceived.

Only a major shift in moral reasoning, with greater commitment given to the rest of life, can meet this greatest challenge of the century. Wildlands are our birthplace. Our civilizations were built from them. Our food and most of our dwellings and vehicles were derived from them. Our gods lived in their midst. Nature in the wildlands is the birthright of everyone on Earth. The millions of species we have allowed to survive there, but continue to threaten, are our phylogenetic kin. Their long-term history is our long-term history. Despite all of our pretenses and fantasies, we always have been and will remain a biological species tied to this particular biological world. Millions of years of evolution are indelibly encoded in our genes. History without the wildlands is no history at all.

We should forever bear in mind that the beautiful world our species inherited took the biosphere 3.8 billion years to build. The intricacy of its species we know only in part, and the way they work together to create a sustainable balance we have only recently begun to grasp. Like it or not, and prepared or not, we are the mind and stewards of the living world. Our own ultimate future depends upon that understanding. We have come a very long way through the barbaric period in which we still live, and now I believe we’ve learned enough to adopt a transcendent moral precept concerning the rest of life. It is simple and easy to say: Do no further harm to the biosphere.

Half-Earth is a goal. People understand and prefer goals. They need a victory, not just news that progress is being made. It is human nature to yearn for finality, something achieved by which their anxieties and fears are put to rest. It is further our nature to choose large goals that while difficult are potentially game-changing and universal in benefit. To strive against odds on behalf of all of life would be humanity at its most noble.” ■

SCALING UP: Meeting new challenges

By Kane Hardaker

On Saturday, March 25th I attended the 27th Annual Massachusetts Land Conservation Conference along with 570 other people passionate about land conservation in the Commonwealth. I've come back home to New Braintree after graduating from Westfield State University last May with degrees in Environmental Science and Regional Planning. My passions lie in agriculture, sustainable resource management, and land conservation. Right now I'm assisting the East Quabbin Land Trust with its Conservation Restriction program, and I can apply information from the Conference immediately.

The first workshop was entitled Land Trusts Conservation Restriction Enforcement. The panelists included: Buzz Constable a conservation attorney and president of the volunteer-run Lincoln Land Trust, Rob Warren who is the acting director of conservation for the Trustees of the Reservations, and Ray Lyons another conservation attorney. The first topic covered was the importance of having an Enforcement Policy to avoid litigation and come to a successful resolution after a violation occurs. The key takeaway is that a set policy increases consistency addressing violations.

The next topic focused on incidental violations. In Rob Warren's view all violations need to be treated as accidental. Buzz Constable did not openly disagree but he indicated that sometimes intent may influence the punishment; Rob responded saying "let the punishment fit the crime. What will the next landowner think if there is an overreaction?" Ray Lyon walked the line and said, "Stay rational and stay consistent. Do not be vengeful or bury your head in the sand". This heightened my awareness of public perception on Land Trusts and their effectiveness. Land Trusts shouldn't overreact, though an under-reaction may fail to deter future violations. That's possibly a fine line to walk. The panelists ended by stressing the importance of three forms of documentation: a written policy for Conservation Restriction violations, signed baseline data reports, and annual monitoring reports. I'm happy to know the East Quabbin Land Trust does all three.

The world-renowned author and biologist Dr. E.O. Wilson was plenary speaker. The conversation with Dr. Wilson covered a broad range of topics related to biodiversity protection and land conservation in general. A useful acronym on the causes of species extinction was HIPPO: Habitat Loss, Invasive Species, Pollution, Population Capacity, and Overharvesting. Dr. Wilson ended with a critique of the strict STEM entrance into the biological sciences as backwards, citing the apparent

need for students to learn chemistry and therefore physics and therefore higher math. Dr. Wilson explained that students should be encouraged to follow their passion of the natural world and then when hooked explain that some chemistry and physics are vital if they really want to "go for it!"

After lunch was a two-part presentation on early detection of terrestrial invasive plants. Chris Polatin, owner of Polatin Ecological Inc., focused on the importance of early detection of invasive species. Polatin maintains that invasive control strategies may not always be effective because some are just so dug-in and require huge effort to eradicate. Detecting invasives early, before they get established is much more effective for long-term control on conservation land.

Part two highlighted a project to classify the hardy kiwi plant as an invasive species. The hardy kiwi is a cold-hardy vine, which produces tasty grape sized fruits. Because of fruit and its perennial nature, permaculturists and other farmers started growing hardy kiwi in the Berkshires. The problem is that hardy kiwi has jumped spatial gaps in the Lenox State Forest and now there is an infestation. Invasive species, whether plants, insects, fungus or others, can disrupt our native habitats. The most cost-effective way to

conserve our lands is to monitor our conservation areas regularly to detect new invasions and begin control immediately.

My third and final workshop was a technology roundtable discussion. Typically, Conservation Restriction monitoring is done by walking the land with a GPS, camera, and notebook. Then the reports are compiled back at the office. There are I-Pad or mobile applications that can perform two of the three tasks. Several applications work with ArcGIS including: GeoJot, ArcGIS Collector, or Canvas. Each has drawbacks and positives, but none could accommodate the need for GPS, camera and note taking functions. However, the workshop facilitators and a number of audience members spent a good amount of time talking about another technology called Landscape that was currently being beta tested. I look forward to learning more about all these technologies.

The 27th Annual Massachusetts Land Conservation Conference had a very positive feel and was brimming with passionate, motivated people who really believe in land conservation. The exchanges of experiences and knowledge were incredible. Overall I walked away from the conference enthusiastic and informed. ■



PLANNING FOR THE LONG-TERM: Gaining a State-Wide Perspective

By *Cynthia Henshaw*

In early February, Judith hosted our annual board retreat. The discussion revolved around updating our strategic plan for the next five years, beginning in 2018. With the essential guidance of John Goodrich, we dove back through what was accomplished in the past five years, evaluated our mission statement and confirmed our vision for the communities in which we work. Thinking long-range was part of our days' plan: twenty-five years ago and twenty-five years in the future.

We invited Bob O'Connor, Director of Conservation Services at the Mass. Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, to share his perspective about our region. Back in the mid-'80s Bob was the superintendent of the Quabbin Reservoir, so he has first-hand knowledge of the East Quabbin area and a broad state-wide perspective. Back in the early '80s the Commonwealth wasn't actively pursuing land conservation, but that was about to change. Here are some key points he shared with the board of directors.

- Creation of the Quabbin Reservoir and Ware River Watershed lands had a profound impact in our region. With these two large forested blocks to build from, our eight town region now has 33% of the land protected from future development. The state-wide average is 25%. "It takes perseverance and persistence to buy land. You have to jump on the opportunities."

- Effective land trusts make things happen, and their leaders are critical to their successes. We need a new crop of inspirational leaders to keep up the momentum. That's why it's important to work with interns, even though it can take a lot of time and effort in training. Making sure these young people are prepared is essential because they are the future of the conservation movement. Back in 2014, the Commonwealth's "Land Report" highlighted six or seven young conservationists, including Nate Grady, who was EQLT's MassLIFT Americorps member that year.

- Poor neighborhoods can be located by looking at the tree canopy, or more precisely the lack of a tree canopy. Ware is too small to be counted as a Gateway City, but it has many of the same economic and population challenges. Over the past decade, the urban tree planting program has planted 6,500 trees and hired 100 local residents to plant those trees. The Commonwealth is exploring ways to expand the program to smaller cities like Ware because of the big benefits of planting 8' – 10' tall trees in less affluent neighborhoods.

- Land trusts are successful because of our willingness to partner with other organizations and funders to make dramatic changes in our communities. Right now MassConn Sustainable Forest Partnership (EQLT is a member) is working with groups in Rhode Island and Connecticut on a \$6 million federal forestry grant to

encourage more stewardship and conservation.

- Over the last two decades the state developed grant and other funding programs for land trusts. The Conservation Land Tax Credit (CLTC) is a good example. Statewide over 400 landowners have applied in four years, many with assistance from a land trust. EQLT currently has three landowners enrolled in the CLTC process and already conserved four parcels totaling 200 acres through CLTC.

- The local agricultural movement has transformed the way we view farmland. As you enter New Braintree it's striking the amount of open farmland. The Rural 11 planning process found over 500 farms in the East Quabbin region.

- EQLT works effectively because it's a grass-roots organization with a regional focus. Having both is unique in Massachusetts.

- Since the land conservation database started in 1999, there are 118 properties purchased, totaling 8,100 acres protected and with a \$15 million state investment. That's less than \$2,000/acre. Only 23 of them were over 100 acres. Plus, an additional 6,700 acres of conservation restrictions in the region. Together, nearly 15,000 acres of land was protected in the East Quabbin region in the last 18 years. No wonder the percent of protected land is higher than the state average.

So what does the future hold? Here are a few insights from Bob:

- **Continue building on efforts to engage people on the land.** We need to keep getting people onto the land and make the case for why we need to conserve more.

- **Conserving land in the East Quabbin region now is important** because there will be more development pressure in years to come. The climate change models predict that by 2070 in Boston there will 90 days a year hotter than 90° F. Climate change is going to push people away from the urban area to cooler, rural areas.

- **The sustainable forest management movement needs to copy the local farming movement.** If we make people more aware of the benefits to local forestry that can benefit water quality, wildlife habitat and provide local wood. One possibility is to create a timber building movement using structural laminated wood instead of imported steel beams. Besides the natural resource benefits, the local economy could be enhanced and landowners paid a fair return for improving their woods.

- **Keep up the important work** of engaging the community, partnering with the state on conservation, be a grass-roots force in our communities, work with farmers and demonstrate good forest management on our own lands. ■

HALF-EARTH & PLANNING FOR OUR FUTURE



Board members during strategic planning session with Bob O'Connor

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UPCOMING EVENTS...

Saturday, April 22nd, 9 AM - 1 PM

Earth Day Road-side Clean-up, throughout the East Quabbin region: Celebrate Earth Day with friends and neighbors by cleaning up along our well-travelled roads. We are coordinating with local leaders in New Braintree and North Brookfield. Trash bags and water available at EQLT offices, 120 Ridge Road, Hardwick.

Saturday, April 29th, beginning at 5:30 PM

Sixteenth Annual Dinner and Silent Auction, at Eagle Hill School, Petersham Road, Hardwick: This is our signature fundraising event with a silent auction that benefits more land conservation and stewardship in the East Quabbin region. Tickets on sale at EQLT.org.

Sunday, May 21st, 10 AM

Annual Membership Meeting and Pancake Brunch, 120 Ridge Road, Hardwick: Spend your morning with fellow EQLT supporters sharing pancakes and homemade syrup. Then Debra Taylor will share her experiences on Hiking the Pacific Crest Trail.

JUNE 1 - 30: Raffle winners announced. 30 days of prizes to support our new garage!

Saturday and Sunday, June 10th and 11th

Work day and Camp Out at Coxhall Kitchen Garden, Simpson Road, Hardwick: Bring the whole family for a day and a half adventure in our own back woods. We will have a communal fire with s'mores, kid's crafts, story time and night hike. Bring your own food and camping equipment. Register with Cynthia at chenshaw@EQLT.org.

Don't forget to PURCHASE YOUR \$20 RAFFLE TICKET to get 30 chances to win fabulous prizes at the HARDWICK FARMER'S COOP during the month of June! Go to www.EQLT.org for details. Prize list enclosed!