

## CONSERVATION OF THE MUDDY BROOK VALLEY: The Zander Tract

*By Cynthia Henshaw*

The Muddy Brook valley is a special place. The brook begins in the northern reaches of Hardwick, in wooded wetlands along the Barre border. Flowing southerly the brook eventually reaches the Ware River south of Ware town center, after flowing in and out of Hardwick Pond and then Snow Pond, under Route 9 (West Main Street) and Route 32 (Palmer Road). Driving on the state roads it's understandable if you miss Muddy Brook, but further upstream where the water meanders a bit, and rich wetlands edge the hillslopes, Muddy Brook is hard to miss.

Water is essential to life. And life is teeming in Muddy Brook, at the edge of Muddy Brook, and in the woods and fields in the valley. This area was part of a larger pitch pine – scrub oak barren that spanned parts of Hardwick, Ware and Palmer on the sandplains left after the last glacier receded. In prior issues of the EQLT newsletter we've discussed the conservation value of pitch pine, rare moths in the area, and related stewardship activities at the Frohloff Farm. Because of the significant natural resources, conservation in the Muddy Brook valley is a priority of the East Quabbin Land Trust and conservation partners, with some recent successes to highlight.

The second Zander Tract (100 acres) was recently purchased by the Commonwealth's Dept. of Fish and Game. This land sweeps down the eastern slope to Muddy Brook from Turkey Street in Hardwick. At the water's edge is a glacial landform called an esker, one of those wavy linear sand-ridge deposits that formed as meltwater filled giant cracks in the underside of the receding glacier. Eskers are usually steep-sided, often host different plants than the surrounding landscape, and can block drainage forming wetlands behind them. In this case, a large shrub-swamp breaks the wooded slope from the esker. Numerous rare species are found on the Zander Tract including a rare moth, American bittern, state-list orchid and a red maple-black ash natural community that is also rare. Many common wildlife also finds food and shelter there because of the extensive floodplain shrub wetlands, marshes, and beaver ponds

that provide habitat for waterfowl, wading birds, muskrats, otters, and other wetland-dependant wildlife. In addition, this new acquisition includes a 50-acre barren with remnant pitch pines, scrub oaks and other plant indicator species, that fits into the larger barren habitat currently being restored by the Commonwealth along Muddy Brook.



*Looking along the shores of Muddy Brook*

The first Zander Tract was conserved in 2005. The land trust and Commonwealth knew that this land was special. Originally the 200-acre property was under agreement to be sold for a gravel operation and then residential housing. When the purchase and sales agreement was presented to the Hardwick Selectboard asking for disposition of the Chapter 61 right of first refusal, the

land trust asked the town to exercise its right to match the signed purchase and sales agreement, and assign it to the land trust. Towns rarely act on their right of first refusal, but this ability is an important feature allowed by state law. The Selectboard agreed, and the land trust moved quickly to see the property conserved.

Working through a Chapter 61 right of first refusal process takes fast, decisive action to meet the specific deadlines and conserve the land. That's precisely the role that a land trust can undertake. Though things do get more complicated and take longer with an unhappy developer trying to stymie the process. In this case, the tremendous natural resources and opportunity for public use of the land countered any difficulties, leaving a biologically rich area intact in the middle of the 11-mile Muddy Brook corridor.

The East Quabbin Land Trust continues this work to accomplish important parts of its mission in the Muddy Brook corridor, including the conservation of open space and key wildlife habitats, maintaining public access, and preserving recreational opportunities such as the existing trail network. It's with the extraordinary dedication of the region's landowners, land trust members and agency commitment to unique areas that make conservation of the Muddy Brook valley possible. ■

## MESSAGE FROM THE Executive Director

*Cynthia Henshaw*



As members of two regional partnerships in central Massachusetts, the North Quabbin Regional Landscape Partnership and MassConn Sustainable Forest Partnership, we a part of the organizing team to expand the number of landowners sharing their stories of action and supporting others as they move further along their stewardship paths. There are many diverse opportunities, both indoor and outdoor, for landowners to attend. The scheduled programs are funded by the US Forest Service Landscape Scale Restoration program grant. More details about these and future offerings can be found at our website, [www.EQLT.org](http://www.EQLT.org).

On January 28th we are hosting a Women in the Woods session. This is an opportunity for women landowners to meet others and share an informal exchange of questions, problems, and strategies for owning, managing and planning for their land. We will take a short walk focused on wildlife habitat improvements followed by a light lunch. This is a great opportunity for women to share their unique perspective on caring for the natural world.

In February Attorney George Dresser will spend an evening with landowners thinking about long-term planning. Often the land is one's most valuable asset. How the land is owned or transferred at death has big impacts on families. Conservation of property can be an important tool, and general strategies will be shared with attendees.

People own land for a variety of reasons. By sharing stories, we gain insight and new perspectives on how to care for our own land moving forward. In March we are hosting a story night, led by people from the East Quabbin region. We'll also take the opportunity to contemplate the writings of influential authors, like Aldo Leopold, "When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect."

Additionally, a \$7.6 million USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service grant through the Regional Conservation Partnership Program was awarded to the Southern New England Heritage Forest partnership. Starting this year, these funds will be available for landowners wanting to complete eligible forest stewardship practices and long-term conservation. The over-arching goal is to keep our forests as forests, maintaining as much unfragmented, core forest as possible. This work will unfold over the next five years.

## 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.

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](mailto:EQLT@comcast.net)

Visit our website at [www.EQLT.org](http://www.EQLT.org)  
 or "Like" us on Facebook!

## EAST QUABBIN LAND TRUST BOARD & STAFF

- Judith Jones ..... NEW BRAINTREE, *President*
- Mark Mattson..... OAKHAM, *Vice-President*
- Jerry Reilly..... HARDWICK, *Treasurer*
- Stan White..... HARDWICK, *Clerk*
- Stephen Brewer ..... BARRE
- Ann Hicks ..... NORTH BROOKFIELD
- Mick Huppert..... PETERSHAM
- Martha Klassanos ..... WARE
- Ginny Rich .....BARRE
- Rick Romano ..... HARDWICK
- Harry Webb..... HARDWICK
- Cynthia Henshaw ..... Executive Director
- Richard Cavanaugh ..... Development Coordinator
- Pattie Rich ..... Bookkeeper
- Terry Briggs..... Board Emeritus
- Chris Buelow ..... Board Emeritus
- Lucinda Childs ..... Board Emeritus

# BILL ZINNI: Helping Others When I can

By Cynthia Henshaw

Within a week of Bill's December 1996 arrival in Hardwick a winter storm dropped a foot and a half of snow. "I grew up shoveling snow, but after getting about 30 feet from the house, that was enough. I was looking in the phone book, trying to find a plowing service when the ground started to shake and rumbling noises came from the driveway." Looking out the window Bill could see a guy in a red truck plowing with a little blond-headed boy in the passenger seat. "I'm your neighbor and thought you might need a hand". That was Bill's introduction to the neighborhood, where everyone looks after each other.

It's the sense of community, "being able to help others, where I can and when I can" that makes Hardwick a special place for Bill. Even though Bill works full-time, he makes time to share his passions with others around town. Bill has served on the Conservation Commission for ten years, actively engaged in land trust committees and activities for over fifteen years, and shared his musical talents throughout.

During the day Bill is a biologist with the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). He successfully transformed his childhood passion for playing in the farm ponds near his home in Rhode Island into a full-time career working to identify and protect critical wildlife habitat across the northeast. There are times when Bill gets to check out wetlands and wildlife areas along the Chesapeake Bay (VA), or Lake Umbagog (NH), or the Ohio River (WV) as he assists in the planning and stewarding of the National Wildlife Refuge system.

Recently a new refuge was announced, the Great Thicket National Wildlife Refuge. This is a special refuge because it's focused on building partnerships with other stakeholders to provide critical shrub and young forest habitat across six states. The targeted areas are known to support the New England cottontail, our native rabbit species that's declining and under consideration for being listed as "Threatened or Endangered." The goal is to support and contribute to the efforts of private landowners, state wildlife agencies, land trusts, Natural Resources Conservation Services, and others in protecting and promoting the dense woody growth where the New England Cottontail thrive.

That can mean cutting trees and making large openings, then letting the vegetation grow back for five to twenty years and cutting it again. This process is similar to the recent re-clearing at the Deer Park Preserve on Barre Road in Hardwick, only we don't have New

England Cottontail in Hardwick. But other species like the Blue-winged Warbler, Field Sparrow, Eastern Towhee and Whip-poor-wills also need the dense young woody growth. The new refuge can protect up to 15,000 acres in ten focus areas in the coming years. The first parcel was recently donated by The Nature Conservancy in Dutchess County, NY.



Bill with Mr. Stray Cat

In his early teens, Bill's uncle taught him how to play guitar. Those lessons and encouragement turned into a life-long gift of music, one that he passes on to others. Bill started out with guitar, but he plays lots of stringed instruments – ukelele, mandolin, banjo, fiddle, and keyboard. Playing music results in a natural network of friends and sense of community. Contributing live music with others at the Hardwick Farmer's Market or other

events, like the land trust dinner, gives Bill the opportunity to share his talent and bring joy to the listeners.

There's no doubt that his youthful wanderings led Bill to a wildlife degree at the University of Rhode Island, where he spent lots of time looking at aerial photographs through a stereoscope. A stereoscope turns two flat images into a three-dimensional view of the earth. Bill's main task was to identify wetlands and wildlife habitat features. All this undergraduate work led to jobs at various wildlife agencies, eventually landing at UMass working on the National Wetlands Inventory for the USFWS. After several years at UMass Bill joined USFWS as a biologist and continued focusing on wetland mapping, as the GIS (Geographic Information Systems) technology materialized.

When the USFWS built their headquarters in Amherst, it gave Bill a chance to get back into a rural setting that wasn't too far from his roots in Rhode Island. When a realtor suggested checking out several places in the East Quabbin area, Bill quickly looked them up on the aerial maps. The land, now his property, along the eastern shores of Hardwick Pond, include special wetland areas and an esker. The fact that the house wasn't finished didn't matter. The land felt right. This was a chance to invite his family and friends to share the beautiful land, help with projects and make memories together. Nieces and nephews call the place 'Uncle Bill's Camp' and friends say 'Camp Zinni'. That's just how Bill wants it... a place where people feel welcome and able to share themselves. Inviting people to Hardwick Pond is another way that Bill helps others. ■

# Thank You for Your Financial Support in 2016!

*Every gift is important to us and helps fulfill our mission together. We are only able to accomplish important conservation, stewardship and education efforts with your support. Thank you for your generosity! We apologize for any errors or omissions.*

Anonymous (5)  
Richard Abbott, CPA  
Harrison Achilles  
Horace Achilles  
Nancy Allen and Charles Crowley  
Candace Anderson  
Doug Anderson and Dan Salvucci  
Ellen Anderson  
Emily Anderson and Tyson Neukirch  
Emily Arnold  
Lollie Atkinson  
Michael and Gale Audette  
Brandon and Margaret Avery  
Ralph and Judith Baker  
Emily and Russ Bancroft  
Cathleen Barkoskie  
Jody and Whitney Barnard



Richard Barrett  
John and Linda Barringer  
Lydia Barter  
Beverly and Daniel Baxter  
Whitney Beals  
Stuart Beckley  
Susan and Stephen Begley  
Shaun Bennett  
Ronald and Lu Ann Benoit  
Stephanie Benoit  
Mark and Claudette Bishop  
Amanda Blakie  
Dee Blanton  
Kim Bleimann  
David and Islay Boeri  
Wendy and Bolo Bolognesi  
Samuel and Isabel Bonneau  
Kaye Boothman  
Chester and Melinda Boronski  
Jennifer Bothwell  
Judith and Sherwood Bothwell  
Bob and Becky Bottomley  
James and Neusa Bouchard  
Charles and Susanna Boxenbaum  
Martha and John Bowden  
Thomas Boyden  
Paul and Olivia Breault  
Steve and Valerie Brewer  
Terry and Sarah Briggs  
Gary Brigham and Lisa Brinkman  
David and Claudia Broschart

Nancy Brown, Kirsten Davis and Greg Davis  
Larry Buell and Katja Esser  
Sharyn Buelow  
John Burdick  
Bill Byrne  
Thomas and Kathleen Cahill  
Caren Caljouw  
Michael Caprioli  
Patrick Caron  
Matthew and Catherine Carr  
Kim Hunter Carruth  
Ray and Gloria Castriotta  
Richard and Annie Cavanaugh  
Elizabeth Charnley  
Harold and Laurel Chesson  
Lucinda Childs and Eric Vollheim  
Eric Chivian, MD and Constance Jacobson  
Pam Clark  
Robert Clark and Fifi Scoufopoulos  
Thomas Clough  
Elizabeth Coe  
William Cole and Chris Greene  
Sue Coles and Courtney Scholsser  
Al and Kathy Collings  
Cristen Comptois  
Nym Cooke and Daphne Slocombe  
Gail Coolidge  
Tremaine and Marion Cooper  
Barbara Corey  
William Cote  
Ric and Sonya Craig  
Julie Crowley  
Wally and Nancy Czabaj  
David and Karen Davis  
W. Neil and Paula Dawson  
Fred Day  
Martha Degnan  
Josef Dellagrotte  
Craig and Kathleen Della Penna  
Kathleen and Maurice Denner  
Ed DeVenne  
Anne Diaz  
John Dieckmann  
Elaine Dill  
James and Elisabeth DiMaio  
Jenni DiMauro  
Melvin and Linda Dorman  
Joyce Dossett  
Lee Dougan  
Linda and John Dowd  
Linda Drake  
George Dresser and Margaret McCandless  
Karen Dresser  
Robert and Carole Dupell  
Sarah Durham and Craig Winer  
Marcia and Wes Dwelley  
Don and Chris Eaton  
Mark and Judy Edington  
Regina Edmonds and Albert Navitski  
Rick and Mary Egan  
Warren and Rachel Ehrlich  
Aaron Ellison  
Philip and Jane Emery



Ellen Endter and Bill Braman  
Linda Everett  
Gerard Fallon  
Laura Fasano and Charles DiCapua  
Lois Fay  
Lynne and Max Feldman  
John and Linda Fiske  
David and Joan Fitzgerald  
Maureen Flannery  
David Foster and Marianne Jorgensen  
Susan Foster and John Baker  
Helen Foyle  
John Freeman and Jane Freeman  
Carolyn Fine Friedman and Jeremiah Friedman  
Douglas and Julieane Frost  
Gene Fry  
Dorothy Fullam  
Keith and Deb Gauley  
Gyano Gibson  
Julie Gittins  
Anne Gobi  
Alice and Rick Godfrey  
John Goodrich and Linda Young  
Loren Gould  
Alan Gray  
Heath Grimes  
Nancy Grimes  
Robert Grodzicki  
Judi Grupp and Mark Korzec  
Jennifer Hache  
M.J. Haesche  
Kimberly Haling  
Barbara and Philip Hanno  
Daniel and Sharon Hanson  
Clarisse Hart  
Joseph Haseltine  
Richard and Marcia Haas  
Howard and Jinx Hastings  
Henry Hauptmann  
Norman and Ann Hebert  
Rick and Clare Hendra  
Bayard Henry  
Cynthia and John Henshaw  
Roger Henshaw  
Ellen Herbert  
Carl Herrin  
Ann and Jeff Hicks  
Brian and Jane Higgins  
Paul and Janice Hills  
Alan and Harbour Fraser  
Hodder  
Ed Hood and Nan Wolverton  
Jennie Hope  
Bonnie Kay House  
Kenneth and Linda Housman

Deborah Houston and Lee McLaughlin  
Wendy Howes and Alan Rawle  
Philip Hubbard and Iva Kazda  
Gayellen Huntress  
Annie Huppert  
Mick and Louise Huppert  
Darrell and Elisabeth Hyder  
Patricia and Malcolm Ide  
Rebecca Ikehara  
Michael Jackson  
Catherine Jenkins  
Cynthia Jenkins  
Judith and Tim Jones  
Miriam Jones  
Mark and Jody Kablack  
Donald Kalischer  
Ann Kidd  
Dedie King



Ruth King  
Amanda Kirdulis  
David and Annemarie Kittredge  
Jack Kittredge  
Martha and Brian Klassanos  
Henry and Judy Kohn  
Christine Komenda  
Paul Koulouris and Susan Huettner  
Barbara and Raul Laborde  
Phyllis Lagomarsino  
Robert and Susan LaFlamme  
Francis Lamothe  
Pam Landry  
Jessica Laprel  
Joy Larrabee  
Maria Lasagna  
Jack and Kate Lathrop  
Matthew Lau  
Chris Laursen  
Daniel Leahy and Julia Rabin



Rod and Linda Leehy  
 Charles and Aline Lemaitre  
 Richard and Talitha Lent  
 Max Leroux  
 Suzanne and Thomas Lewandowski  
 Karen and Harry Lewis  
 Tom and Susan Libbos  
 Bruce Lockhart and Gus Block  
 John and Joyce Lofgren  
 Kristen Lofgren  
 Stephen Lofgren  
 Barbara Long  
 Hilary and Stephen Loring  
 Mary Anne and David Lougee  
 Robert Ludwig  
 Forest and Diane Lyford  
 David Maher  
 Ken and Diane Mamnone  
 Michael and Nina Marcinowski  
 Dr. Myron and Suri Maron  
 Margaret and George Marshall  
 Donna and Ray Matthews  
 Doris Matthews  
 Mark Mattson and Judy Lane  
 Teresa Mazik  
 Sarah McCue  
 Neil McManus  
 Bailey Metcalf  
 Glenn and Cynthia Mitchell  
 Daniel and Janet Moran  
 James and Denise Moran  
 Barrett Morgan  
 Michael and Karen Morrison  
 James Morrissey  
 John and Jennifer Mott  
 Angela Amer Moya  
 Margaret Munns  
 Brandy Murphy  
 James F. Naff, Jr.  
 Diane Nassif  
 Tim and Anne-Marie Nolan  
 Scott and Kate Norrie  
 Ida and Jim Nystrom  
 Susan O'Brien  
 Debra and Jordan O'Connor  
 Kathleen O'Connor



Russ and Haran Phaneuf  
 Carl and Anne Phillips  
 Roger and Serra May Plourde Jr.  
 David and Deborah Poppel  
 Chris Powell  
 Jessica Powers  
 Kenneth Prestwich and Catherine Langtimm  
 Ari and Jeanneane Pugliese  
 Caroline Raisler  
 Laura Rankin  
 Megan and Joe Raskett  
 Claire and Richard Reavey  
 Virginia Reed  
 George and Elizabeth Reilly  
 Calia, Carlee and Catelyn Rich  
 Don and Ginny Rich  
 Eugene and Patricia Rich  
 Nancy Riemer  
 Susan Riley  
 Raymond and Pamela Robinson  
 Meghan and Timothy Rodier  
 Cynthia Romanos  
 Richard Romano and Lisa Nash  
 Barbara and Dick Rossman  
 Ruth Rubin  
 Douglas and Maureen Sanderson  
 Michael and Mary Ellen Sanford  
 Evelyn Saunders  
 Peter Schmid  
 Tom and Judy Schmitz  
 Thomas and Donalyn Schofield  
 Charlene Schulman  
 Jessica Seem  
 Robert Shapiro  
 Fraser and Jean Sinclair  
 Nancy Skamarycz  
 Alysia Smith

Stephen and Octavia Taylor  
 John and Linda Tomasi  
 Suzie Townsend  
 Howard and Carlin Trietsch  
 Philip and Josephine Truesdell  
 Lynn Tupper  
 Barbara and Bill Turner  
 Matthew Twarog  
 Theodore and Susan Twarog  
 Will and Anne VanArsdell  
 Sylvia Varney  
 Diane and John Vayda  
 Priscilla Vincent  
 Catherine Walker  
 Randy and Joan Walker  
 Philip and Mary Warbasse  
 Eric and Sarah Ward  
 Doug and Marion Waugh  
 Ray and Cassie Waugh  
 Harold and Michelle Webb  
 Kimberly Wells-Dufresne  
 Patricia Wendler and Winnie Nazarko  
 Jochen and Mary Ann Welsch  
 Maureen Wesolaski  
 Bart Wendell and Sandra Whaley  
 Bill Wheatley and Jane Duderstadt  
 Carl and Peg White  
 Stanley and Abbie White  
 Morgan Whitney  
 Holly Wielsma  
 Sandra Williams  
 Eric Winn  
 Rodney Witkos  
 Glen and Sue Wojcik  
 Paul and Cheryl Wolfe  
 Annemarie Wood  
 Diana and David Wood  
 Dorothy Wood  
 Paula Wood  
 Sargent Wood and Bonnie Chen  
 Henry Woolsey  
 Mary Woolsey and Mark Peterson  
 John and Ann Woolsey, III  
 Edward and Grace Yaglou  
 Paul and Sheila Youd  
 Linda Young  
 Howard Ziff  
 Bill Zinni

Hardwick Sugar Shack  
 Healy Brothers Insurance Agency, Inc.  
 Highland Press  
 Motiva Enterprises, LLC  
 New Harbor Financial Group, LLC  
 North Brookfield Savings Bank  
 O'Keefe Towing and Storage  
 Pioneer Valley Environmental, LLC  
 Raitto Engineering and Manufacturing, Inc.  
 Reed's Country Store  
 R.N. Glidden Landscaping Services  
 Rose 32 Bread  
 Senator Stephen M. Brewer  
 Sherman Oil Co., Inc.  
 Spencer BANK  
 St. Mary's Monastery  
 St. Scholastica Priory  
 The Centered Place  
 The Cultural Center at Eagle Hill  
 Valley View School



**Gifts in Memory of**

Rick and Leo  
 Richard Bachtold  
 Walter W. Bortnick  
 Ray Buelow  
 Ann Carey  
 John Jenkins  
 Chuck Kidd  
 Peter King  
 Betty Morss  
 Kathleen and Danny Naff  
 Anne Perkins  
 Jeffrey Perkins  
 Newt Prouty  
 Barbara and Bill Rogers  
 Allen Rubin  
 Henry Scott  
 Francis Smith, Jr.  
 Hans Thoma  
 Janette Watson  
 Clarence E. Westall  
 Donald T. Williams  
 Robert M. Wood  
 Dede Zietlow  
 Magi Ziff

**Foundations**

Cardinal Brook Trust  
 J. Irving and Jane L. England Charitable Trust  
 Fleming Family Foundation  
 Plourde Family Charitable Trust  
 The Fine Fund

**Corporations**

Bay Path Pomona Grange #9  
 Berube Real Estate  
 Cherie Benoit Realty - Keller Williams  
 COMECC  
 Common Grow, LLC  
 Country Bank For Savings  
 Craig Della Penna, Realtor  
 Dresser and McGourthy, LLP  
 Hannaford Supermarket  
 Hardwick Girl Scouts  
 Hardwick Farmers Coop  
 Hardwick Kilns div. of Cersosimo Lumber Co.



John O'Keefe  
 Stephen Olivo and Sophie  
 Tracy and Paul Opalinski  
 Richard Orluk and Patricia Percival  
 Thomas and Julia Pettee  
 Denis and Janice Ouimette  
 Paula and Brett Ouimette  
 Quinn, Sadie Ouimette  
 Bob and Barbara Page  
 Clare Panni and Matthew Citriani  
 Dave and Theresa Parker  
 Jim and Elsa Partan  
 Sherry Patch  
 Lucy Pelland  
 Bill Pfeiffer and Kathy Pedevilano  
 Bruce and Betsy Pennino

Bertyne Smith  
 Ellen and Bob Smith  
 Jeffrey and Holly Smith  
 Joyce Smith  
 Audrey and Kenneth Snay  
 Jim and Linda Snider  
 Tom and Karen Steele  
 John Stelmokas  
 Martin Standrowicz  
 Amy Stukuls and Eli Barriearu  
 Jacob and Susan Stukuls  
 Sara Subik  
 Stephen Swingle and Pat Benjamin  
 Ann Townsend and Richard McCrae  
 Audrey and Kenneth Snay  
 Connor Snay

**Gifts in Honor of**

Judy Bothwell's 80th birthday  
 Charlie Burnham  
 Caren Caljouw  
 Bill Cole  
 Henry's Grove  
 Ann Kidd  
 Jerry and Liz Reilly  
 Wendemuth Meadow

# NONPROFIT LAND TRUSTS:

## Born in Mass. over 100 years ago and still relevant

By Richard Cavanaugh

The East Quabbin Land Trust is part of a long tradition of non-profit organizations dedicated to land protection, and its mission has become more relevant with time.

Simply put, non-profit organizations allow ordinary citizens to work together for purposes that benefit the public at large. They take many forms, small or large, such as food pantries, social service providers, art museums, colleges and universities, hospitals, and land trusts. They have played an important role in this country, starting more than a century before we even became a country. The first nonprofit corporation in America was Harvard College, which in 1636 was placed under the authority of a board of twelve overseers and which in 1650 was chartered as a corporation with an administrative body consisting of a president and fellows. This division of work, between an unpaid, oversight board and an accountable executive, continues to this day in most nonprofits, including the East Quabbin Land Trust.

Massachusetts is also the birthplace of the first private nonprofit land trust. By the end of the nineteenth century, efforts were underway to protect many of the natural wonders of the American West, but there were individuals who saw the need to take private action to help protect the more densely populated regions of the East, and they formed The Trustees of Reservations over 125 years ago.

Nonprofit land trusts are flourishing here in Massachusetts. Citizens are taking interest in farmland preservation, local food, urban green spaces, community gardens, smart growth, and resilience to climate change — all priorities that can be addressed through land conservation. As Andrew Bowman, president of the Land Trust Alliance, points out, land protection addresses some of our more pressing questions:

- How do we ensure clean and abundant water supplies?
- How do we foster healthy child development, physical vitality and learning?
- How do we stem a national health crisis and provide opportunities for people to exercise and recreate?
- How do we secure local, healthy, and sustainable food?
- How do we make sure that iconic American ways of life, such as hunting, fishing and forestry don't die out?
- How can we lessen climate change?

By supporting the East Quabbin Land Trust, you help:

- protect our pastures, wetlands, and forests, which in turn can protect our water supplies;
- provide outdoor experiential learning opportunities for our children;
- offer spaces for exercise and fresh air;
- keep agricultural land affordable;
- maintain habitats for hunting and fishing; and even
- collect and store carbon.

Scientific researchers at The Nature Conservancy have determined that more than 30% of the climate change goals that world leaders established at the 2015 Paris Climate Convention can be achieved through nature-based solutions. Such as stopping deforestation and restoring coastal ecosystems, can get us more than a third of the way to the emission reductions needed by 2030. If we protect nature, nature can protect us.

Land conservation also reaps economic benefits. In 2014, The Trust for Public Land conducted an economic analysis of the return on the Massachusetts' investment in land conservation through a variety of state funding programs and found that every \$1 invested in land conservation returned \$4 in natural goods and services to the commonwealth's economy. In addition, land conservation supports key industries that depend on the availability of high-quality protected land and water. According to MA Office of Travel and Tourism, investments in land and water are a major driver of Massachusetts' \$30 billion tourism industry. According to Farm Credit East's report, "The Overlooked Economic Engine: Northeast Agriculture," investments in protecting our prime agricultural lands support our \$13 billion agriculture industry. Hunting, fishing, and wildlife associated recreation provides \$1.8 billion from trip-related and equipment expenses. According to the Center for Agriculture, Research & Education at the University of Massachusetts, protection of timberlands maintains a \$1.64 billion forest products industry.

The East Quabbin Land Trust, like other tax-exempt nonprofit organizations that meet strict I.R.S. requirements, depends on tax-deductible donations to conduct its work. In recent months, reports surfaced of proposals to limit the amount of tax deductions available for charitable donations. As these proposals come before the U.S. Congress, we urge you to consider them carefully to see how they may affect our communities and our work together through the East Quabbin Land Trust. At a time when land trusts contribute so much to our communities, we don't want to see new tax policies discourage contributions to the East Quabbin Land Trust. There are few other opportunities where we can think so globally and act so locally. ■

# CARING FOR THE LAND:

## We have a Tractor! Now let's build a garage

By Cynthia Henshaw

Long-time East Quabbin Land Trust supporter, Howard Ziff, answered EQLT's prayers when he offered his Ford 1500 tractor with its bucket and mower. Thank you Howard for making this gift in memory of Magi Ziff!



*Ford 1500 tractor recently donated to the East Quabbin Land Trust*

The East Quabbin Land Trust now cares for 1,284 acres of fields and pastures, wetlands and wet meadows, streams and ponds, hardwoods and hemlock stands. These areas are part of our daily backdrop of beautiful views, special walking spots, and homes for many plants and animals. There are many benefits of keeping these acres in their "natural and open" condition (that's standard I.R.S. language), but that doesn't mean the East Quabbin Land Trust takes a hands-off approach to caring for the land. We're actively engaged and host monthly work days to tackle projects like clearing trails, cutting or burning brush piles, moving rocks, or building bridges. That work will get a lot easier with a tractor. Here are a just few ways that we plan on using it:

1. The East Quabbin Land Trust has over eight miles of trails, and at least ½ of them are possible to mow with a tractor. Mowing those sections, including the three miles of Mass Central Rail Trail, will be much faster with the tractor. Up to now, we've mostly used a walk-behind mower. That's a lot of steps to keep the grass down and trails open.
2. Maintaining the interior of the Coxhall Kitchen Garden means about 20 hours of weed-whacking, twice a year. The front half of the enclosure can be mowed, significantly reducing the amount of volunteer time needed to keep the Kitchen Garden looking good.
3. We live in New England where rocks are plentiful and trees reclaim fields in short order. Being able to move heavy rocks or push brush into piles is a real advantage as we work to improve the trail networks and field edges.

The stewardship team, especially Harrison Achilles(!), is excited to welcome the tractor to our small stable of tools and to increase our efficiency in caring for the land. Housing the tractor and tools is also important to make sure they last a good, long time. Building a garage at our office location on Ridge Road in Hardwick is a critical next step.

The East Quabbin Land Trust is exploring the possibility of working with carpentry and electrical students from Pathfinder Technical High School to build a garage. Construction is targeted for the 2017-18 academic year, and the cost is estimated to be \$40,000. We envision a 2-½ bay garage. That's enough space to store the tractor, walk-behind mower, brush cutter, loppers and extra project lumber. Plus, there is space to build a work bench and storage shelves for miscellaneous bolts, nuts, hand tools, trail markers, property boundary signs and much more.

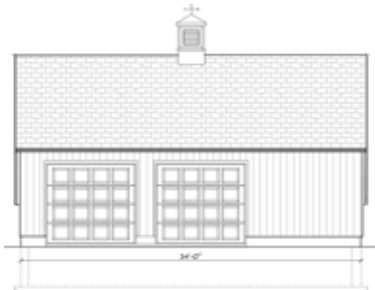


Help provide the foundation of our garage fundraising campaign with your gift towards the goal of \$5,000 to put in the foundation! We've enclosed an envelope with this newsletter for your convenience. Thank you for your commitment and dedication to caring for the land. ■

***Bluebird Houses for Sale! \$20 each***  
 Harrison Achilles made 20 bluebird houses in support of the garage construction effort. Get yours by contacting Cynthia at (413) 477-8229 or [chenshaw@EQLT.org](mailto:chenshaw@EQLT.org).

P.O. Box 5  
120 Ridge Road  
Hardwick, MA 01037  
Phone 413-477-8229  
[www.EQLT.org](http://www.EQLT.org)

## BUILDING A GARAGE TO SUPPORT OUR STEWARDSHIP TEAM



WINTER 2017 | VOLUME 14 | ISSUE 1

Non-Profit Org.  
US Postage  
PAID  
Permit No. 106  
Barre, MA

## UPCOMING EVENTS...

### JANUARY...

**Saturday, January 28th, 10 AM - 1 PM**

**Women In The Woods, Gilbertville:** From managing wildlife habitat to working with your family to determine the future of the land, women face an array of weighty issues concerning land ownership. A leisurely walk in the woods will be followed by a light lunch and informal exchange of your questions, problems, and strategies for owning, managing and planning for your land. Space is limited, pre-register by contacting Cynthia at (413) 477-8229 or at [chenshaw@EQLT.org](mailto:chenshaw@EQLT.org).

### FEBRUARY...

**Thursday, February 23rd, 6:30 PM - 8 PM**

**Love Your Woods, But What's Their Future?, Senior Center, North Brookfield:** Come learn about how to care for your land today and protect it in the future. Join us for this free workshop and hear from attorney and land conservation professional, George Dresser, about estate planning and land protection. Light refreshments will be provided.

### MARCH...

**Sunday, March 19th, 2 PM - 4 PM**

**Finding Native American Artifacts, Town Hall on the Common, Hardwick:** Evidence of human communities can be found in the fields and woods of our region. Join several neighbors as they show us items they've found, including arrowheads, pottery shards and much more.

### SAVE THE DATE...

**Saturday, April 29th, 5:30 PM - 9 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.