

**NORTH COUNTY**  
**Land Trust, Inc.**



## **2010 Annual Report**

*A Celebration of Local Conservation Success*

# North County Land Trust in 2010: Building on our Past Successes

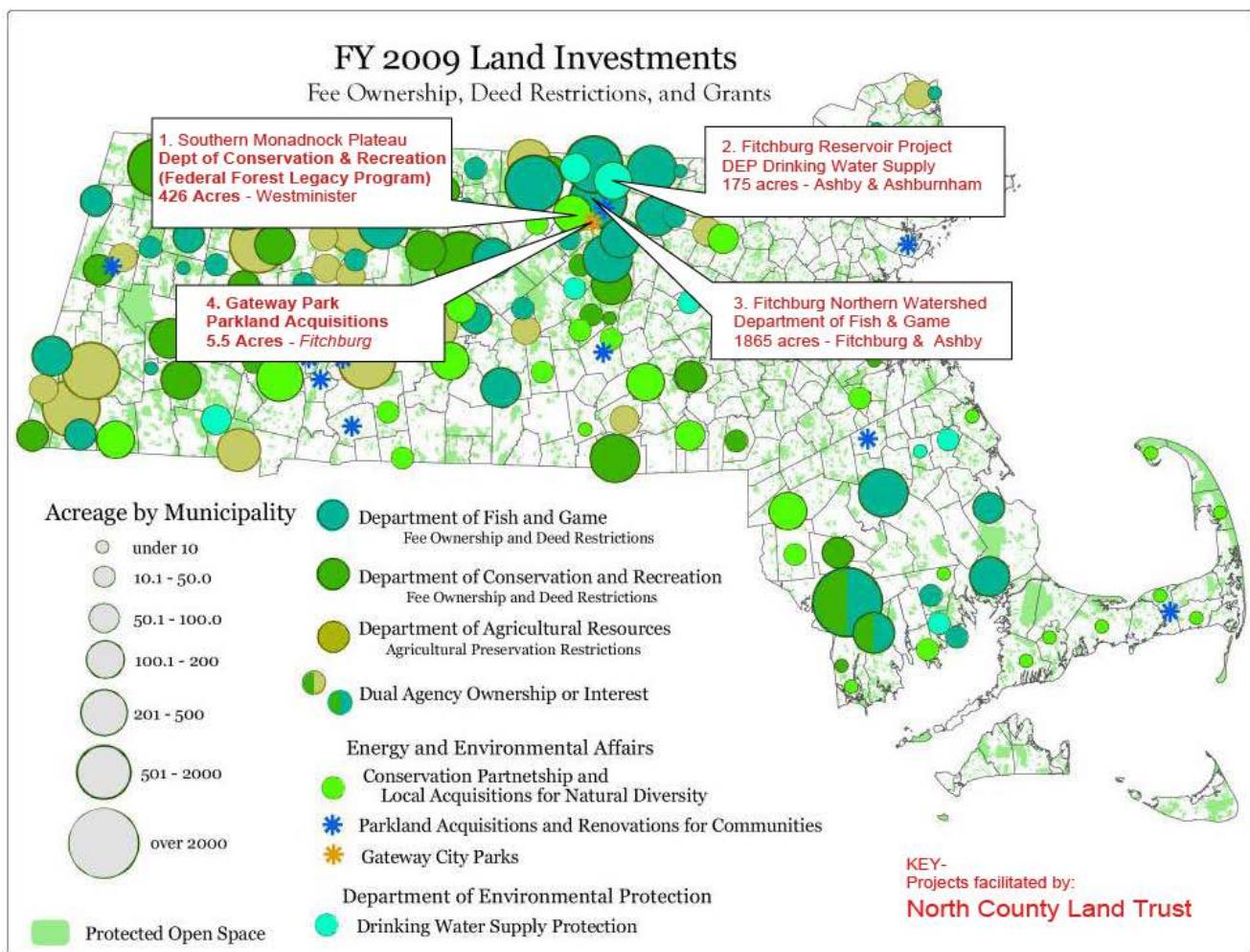
Four NCLT facilitated projects were featured in Massachusetts State Land Report:

**1. SOUTHERN MONADNOCK PLATEAU.** Working with the Town of Westminster, NCLT facilitated the conservation of the largest single-owner land holding in Westminster, comprised of 426 acres of farmland, forests, streams and wetlands, as part of a 2,000 acre landscape scale project in Westminster and Ashburnham funded through the federal Forest Legacy Program.

**2. FITCHBURG RESERVOIR PROJECT.** Working with the City of Fitchburg and The Trustees of Reservations, NCLT obtained a DEP water supply protection grant which was supplemented by funds from a private foundation and the City to purchase conservation restrictions on 175 acres of privately owned land in Fitchburg's northern watershed, protecting a pond and tributaries which flow to Fitchburg's reservoirs.

**3. FITCHBURG WATERSHED CONSERVATION RESTRICTION.** Working with the Fitchburg Greenway Committee, NCLT helped to protect Fitchburg's northern watershed, comprising 1865 acres in Fitchburg and Ashby, through a conservation restriction which has also opened this land to public access for the first time. The City of Fitchburg received \$954,000 for the conservation restriction which was purchased by Mass. Dept. of Fish & Game.

**4. FITCHBURG'S GATEWAY PARK.** Working with the Fitchburg Greenway Committee and The Trustees of Reservations, NCLT helped the City of Fitchburg obtain state "Gateway Cities Park" funds to purchase a 5.5 acre former industrial site on a beautiful stretch of the Nashua River. NCLT and The Trustees of Reservations hold a conservation restriction on the parkland, to secure the land as a future park and to help the City of Fitchburg manage and maintain the park..



## **2010 Land Conservation Project Successes:**

**1. SOUTHERN MONADNOCK PLATEAU FOREST LEGACY PROJECT.** SMP is a multi-year, multi-phase landscape scale conservation project in which NCLT and its partners have twice been awarded federal Forest Legacy grant funds in a national competition. To date, these projects have resulted in grant funding of nearly \$6 million to protect over 3,168 acres of open and forested land of high ecological, hydrological, recreational and economic value. NCLT and its partners, the Nashua River Watershed Association and North Quabbin Regional Landscape Partnership have completed and closed all land tracts funded in Southern Monadnock Plateau, Phase I (SMP I), resulting in the expenditure of \$2,644,338 of Forest Legacy funds and the protection of 1,162 acres of land in Ashburnham, Ashby, Fitchburg, Westminster and Winchendon. NCLT and its partners are now working to close the remaining tracts funded through Southern Monadnock Plateau, Phase II (SMP II).

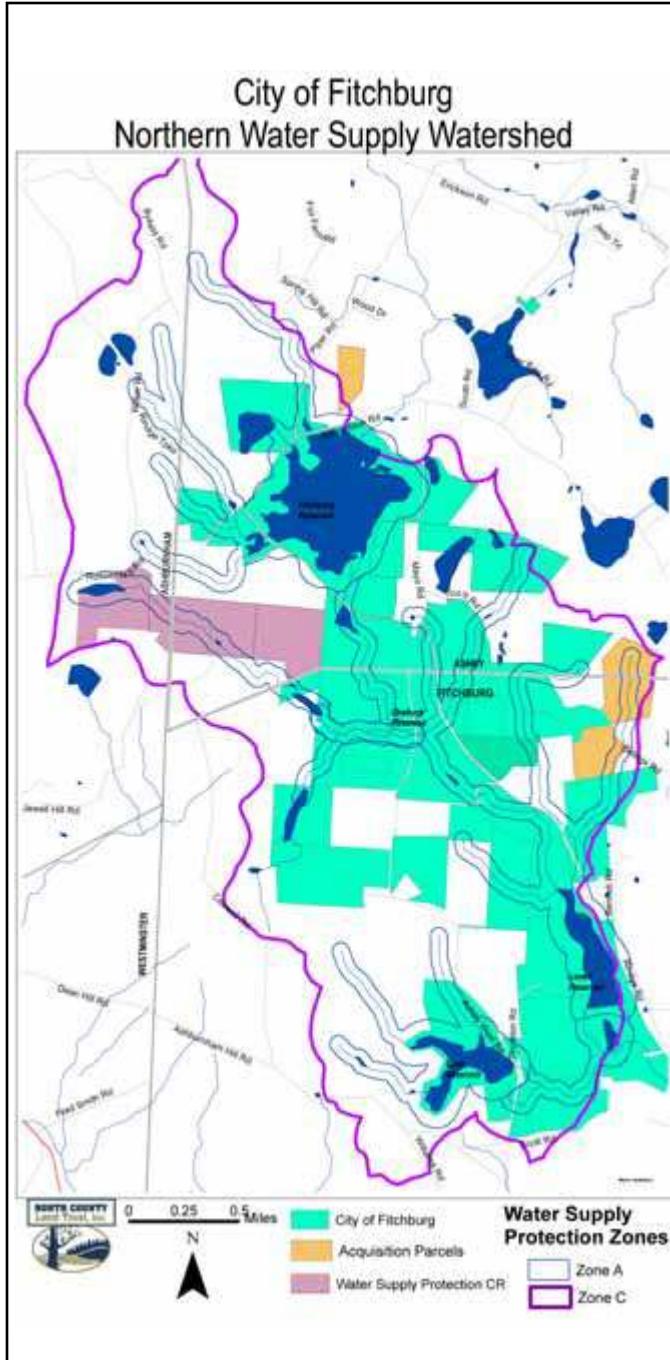
In 2010: NCLT and its partners submitted a grant application for Phase III of the Southern Monadnock Plateau Forest Legacy Project, to protect 2,300 acres of strategically important open space in Ashburnham, Ashby, Gardner, Princeton, Westminster and Winchendon MA, as well as Mason NH.



**Fitchburg Reservoir and the Surrounding Landscape**

**2. SOUTHERN MONADNOCK PLATEAU & FITCHBURG RESERVOIR PROJECT.** In 2010: Working with its partners in the Southern Monadnock Plateau Project, NCLT facilitated the purchase of 3 parcels of land in Fitchburg's northern watershed, totaling 94 acres in Fitchburg and Ashby, for the Fitchburg Water Department. The land was purchased entirely with federal Forest Legacy funds. The City of Fitchburg paid no acquisition cost for the land.

**3. FITCHBURG WATERSHED CONSERVATION RESTRICTION** In addition to the permanent protection of 1865 acres of land in Fitchburg's northern watershed, the conservation restriction purchased by the Mass. Department of Fish & Game opened the watershed to public access for the first time, for passive recreation, hunting and fishing.



Fitchburg Reservoir

In 2010: NCLT worked with the Fitchburg Greenway Committee to improve and promote public access on recreational trails in the watershed. An ad-hoc management committee, formed with the participation of the Department of Fish & Game and the Fitchburg Water Department, has organized roadside clean-ups, trail work days and the construction of bridges by the Student Conservation Association.



**4. FITCHBURG'S GATEWAY PARK.** In 2010, working with The Trustees of Reservations and the Fitchburg Greenway Committee helped the City of Fitchburg obtain state funding for construction of Gateway Park. After many meetings with City Boards and Commissions, a design for the park was approved. Construction of Gateway Park is expected to begin in the spring of 2011.



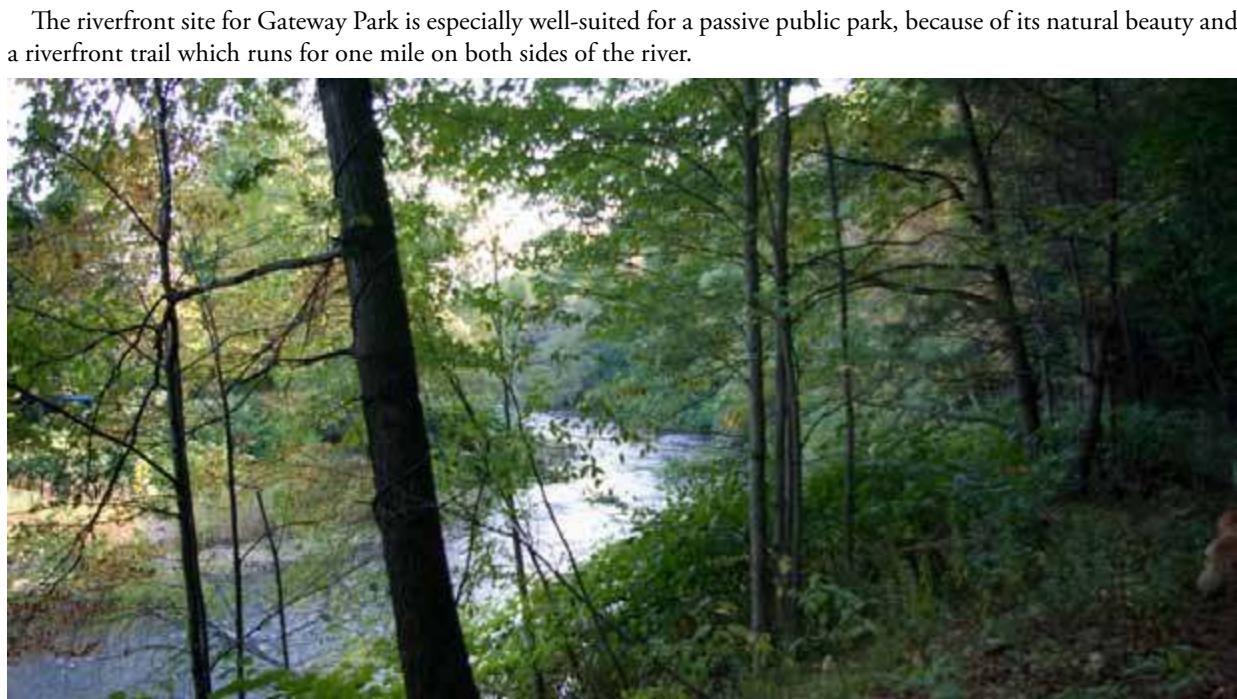
Gateway Cities Parks Program  
Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs  
Brown, Richardson, Rowan, Inc.  
Landscape Architects and Planners  
Boston MA 02108

## GATEWAY PARK

Fitchburg, Massachusetts

CONSERVATION COMMISSION MEETING #2  
FEBRUARY 23, 2010

### FUTURE PROGRAM IDEAS - FINAL ALTERNATIVE



# NCLT's role as "Facilitator" in Land Conservation Projects

Our land conservation successes are achieved by leading and facilitating conservation projects. Our success is based on the partnerships we create and the strategies we articulate and implement to complete conservation projects. At the heart of each conservation project are the landowner and his/her community. We work with municipal officials and committees, citizens groups and other conservation groups to outline conservation goals; we work with key landowners in the community to understand their needs and priorities; we match this information to state and federal grant programs and the availability of other funds and incentives. NCLT is experienced in taking land conservation projects from start to finish, from writing grant applications and working with government and other grantors, to mapping and field work, to working with appraisers, surveyors and other professionals, to closing the conservation project (a job which is aided by our in-house legal skills). In the end, the land is permanently conserved, either through a conservation restriction (which keeps the land in private ownership) or by transfer to a government entity which owns the land for conservation purposes. Because land conservation is the goal, NCLT facilitates projects in which NCLT does not end up owning the land or holding a conservation restriction.

## *Successful Conservation Partnerships*

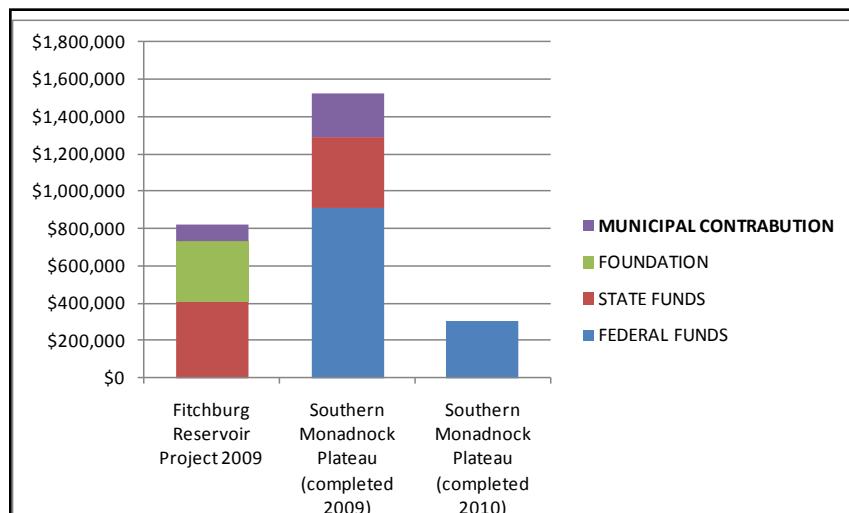
The key to successful conservation projects is successful partnerships. NCLT's work is the result of many different kinds of partnerships, with municipal governments, state agencies, schools, ad-hoc groups and other conservation organizations. Some of NCLT's 2010 partners are listed below:



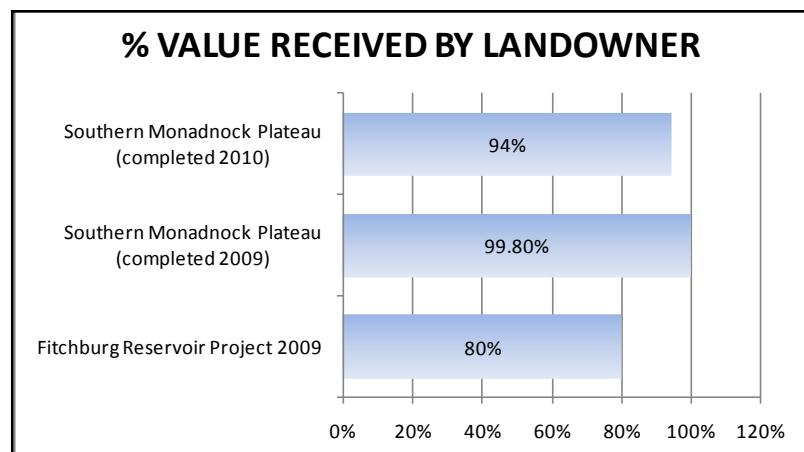
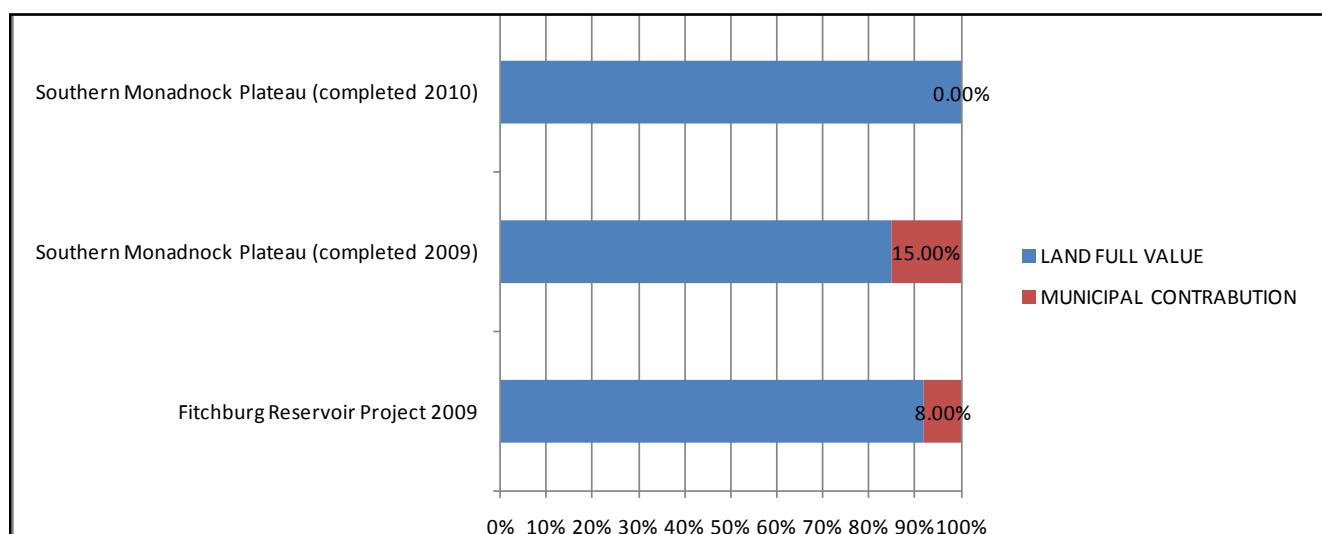
Ashburnham Conservation Commission  
Ashburnham Land Conservation Trust  
Ashby Conservation Commission  
Ashby Land Trust  
Fitchburg Greenway Committee  
FSC, Crocker Center for Civic Engagement  
Fitchburg Water Department  
Gardner Conservation Commission  
Massachusetts Audubon Society  
Massachusetts Department of Fish & Game  
Montachusett Regional Planning Commission  
Nashua River Watershed Association  
North Quabbin Regional Landscape Partnership  
The Trustees of Reservations  
Westminster Conservation Commission  
Westminster Open Space Committee

# Leveraging Grant Funds for the Landowner and Community

NCLT has an impressive record of obtaining and leveraging grant funds, to bring the best land conservation value to the landowner and his community. In the past 2 years, NCLT has helped communities access grant funds to purchase land and conservation restrictions on land valued at nearly \$2.9 million, with an average net cost to the community of less than 10% of the full value of the land, per acre. In each case, the landowner received 80% to 100% of the land's value, as determined by an appraisal.



Municipal contributions to land conservation projects facilitated by NCLT have an average cost /benefit ratio of more than 1 to 10. For each of the 3 projects graphed, the municipal contribution to acquisition cost was 15%, 8% and 0%



## **Community Outreach and Education on our Conservation Land**

*Public access and good stewardship have always been part of NCLT's public conservation areas:*

**UNDERWOOD ROAD CONSERVATION** in Hubbardston: We are preparing for the public opening of our newest conservation area, which was donated in 2009 by Thomas and Mary Robinson of Hubbardston.

**ROME CONSERVATION AREA** in Gardner: Our Board President, Alan Rousseau led a group of Boy Scouts in a day of trail clearing and maintenance.



**CROCKER CONSERVATION AREA** in Fitchburg: NCLT's naturalist and environmental educator, Laurie Nehring has helped us to dramatically increase our outreach efforts and programs to engage the communities served by our conservation areas. In Fitchburg, NCLT has partnered with Massachusetts Audubon Society (MAS), whose Flat Rock Sanctuary is adjacent to NCLT's Crocker Conservation Area. Since last spring, Laurie has coordinated 6 guided nature hikes on Crocker Conservation Area and Flat Rock Sanctuary, including a very popular "Owl Prowl" and a "Bird-a-thon" with NCLT director, Clay Hobart. We are planning 8 nature hikes for the upcoming winter and spring seasons, with our partner MAS and our new partner, the Nashua River Watershed Association (NRWA).



## NCLT Ends the Year with Awards

We are Pleased to announce NCLT's receipt of a \$20,000 grant from the Community Foundation of North Central Massachusetts for an Environmental Education Program in Fitchburg. This grant provides funding for a series of outdoor environmental education programs for elementary and middle school students from the Longsjo Middle School and Crocker Elementary School. We have partnered with the Nashua River Watershed Association and Massachusetts Audubon Society for staffing and support.



NCLT's Environmental Education Program began this fall with a field trip for 140 Fitchburg fifth graders to the "River Classroom"



Executive Director Janet Morrison and Environmental Educator, Laurie Nehring accept the grant award

As Co-Chair of the Fitchburg Greenway Committee , North County Land Trust's Executive Director, Janet Morrison accepted an award from the Trustees of Reservations at TTOR's Annual meeting this fall. The Fitchburg Greenway Committee and Fitchburg's Mayor Lisa Wong were honored as "Conservationists of the Year, for their vision and leadership in creating a green future for Fitchburg".



FRONT ROW FROM LEFT: Marion Stoddart, Al Futterman, Dan Nigrosh, Mayor Lisa Wong, Janet Morrison  
BACK ROW FROM LEFT: Carolyn Sellars, Ralph Baker, Dave Outman, Chris Williamson  
Photo: J. Beller / Courtesy of The Trustees of Reservations.

North County Land Trust  
325 Lindell Avenue  
Leominster, MA 01453  
978 466-3900  
[www.northcountylandtrust.org](http://www.northcountylandtrust.org)

## President's Message

NCLT has continued to be a driving force in land conservation in north central Massachusetts. FY 2010 has presented both great challenges and opportunities for us. While the continuing economic down turn has created some budgetary challenges, NCLT has accomplished a great deal in land protection, community outreach and land stewardship and we have set the stage for new initiatives in FY2011.

From a financial perspective, we were able to achieve revenues of \$56,647 (88% of our revenue budget of \$64,650). While grants related to land protection projects came in slightly over budget, stewardship donations and member donations fell short. On the expense side, we were able to hold expenses to \$55,238 (86% of our expense budget of \$64,300). The result yielded a net income of \$1,409, positioning us for a level start to FY2011. As we go forward, growth of membership and further community outreach will be priorities.

In 2010, NCLT facilitated the protection of 94 acres of land in Fitchburg's northern watershed and we prepared for future land conservation projects in the region. We acquired a new 65-acre conservation property in Hubbardston; we continued our community outreach efforts with a series of guided nature hikes; and we welcomed an AmeriCorps land steward whose services will be focused on NCLT properties and conservation restrictions. Because conservation is about the future, NCLT applied for and received a major grant to provide environmental education to Fitchburg school children in FY2011.

In closing, I would like thank our Members, Contributors, Staff, and Board of Directors who continue to be generous in donating both their time and money to ensuring the success of our land trust.

Alan Rousseau, President  
October, 2010

## *Board of Directors:*

*Alan Rousseau, President*

*Elaine Mroz, Treasurer*

*Clayton Hobart, Clerk*

*Paul DeMeo*

*Jackie Leger*

*Laila Michaud*

*Paula Packard*

*James Walsh*

*Janet Morrison, Esq.  
Executive Director*

## *Financial Report (July 1, 2009 – June 30, 2010)*

### *Revenues*

Member Contributions	\$9,006
Grants	\$26,000
Project Cost Reimbursement	\$14,910
Stewardship Contributions	\$6,500
Other	\$231
Total	\$56,647

### *Expenses*

Payroll	\$50,021
Office	\$1,255
Insurance	\$1,838
Postage & Delivery	\$354
Professional Fees	\$500
Memberships & Conferences	\$1,024
Other	\$246
Total	\$55,238

### *Net Income*

\$1,409