2014 ANNUAL MEETING
Hollis Hills Farm in Fitchburg

NCLT’s 2014 Annual Meeting was an opportunity to celebrate the renewal of local agriculture in Fitchburg and our region. Hollis Hills (formerly Marshall) Farm hosted NCLT and various vendors in the first Fitchburg Harvest Fair. The morning was rainy, but that did not stop participants from enjoying the farmers’ market, live music, apple picking and hay rides.

NCLT’s Annual Meeting featured Jim Lattanzi, owner of Hollis Hills Farm. Jim talked about his decision to purchase the farm and the future of local agriculture in our region.

Marshall Farm (now known as Hollis Hills Farm) has been an agricultural landmark in the City of Fitchburg for over 200 years. Famous for its Marshall McIntosh apple, the farm has been revitalized since its purchase by the Lattanzi family in 2014, with an expansion into vegetable crops, cattle, pigs and chickens. NCLT’s AmeriCorps Member, Desiree Hamelin created a poster history of the farm, based on documents and artifacts provided by the Marshall Family and the Fitchburg Historical Society.

The founding of Marshall Farm in 1781 was commemorated with a coin issued for Fitchburg’s Bicentennial Celebration in 1992.

Jim Lattanzi (left), Desiree Hamelin (center) and her parents discuss farming matters in a field on Hollis Hills Farm overlooking the City.

NCLT Executive Director, Janet Morrison reviewed completed land conservation projects and the donation of several new conservation areas.
NCLT has long had a special relationship with Fitchburg and its riverfront parks. Starting with the creation of Riverfront Park in 2003 and more recently with Gateway Park, which opened in 2011, NCLT and the Fitchburg Greenway Committee, in partnership with the City of Fitchburg, have offered vision and provided leadership to transform urban “brownfields” into beautiful parks.

More than 200 people participated in the first “Egg Hunt” held at Fitchburg’s Gateway Park. In April, NCLT’s AmeriCorps Member, Charlotte Levy helped the Friends of Gateway Park organize this event, in partnership with the United Neighbors of Cloughorn.

Students learned about owl adaptations, including keen hearing, night vision and silent flight. On a later field trip to at NCLT’s Underwood Rd. Conservation Area, environmental educator, Laurie Nehring led an evening “Owl Prowl” for students and their families.

For the third consecutive year, North County Land Trust offered an environmental education program to public school students in Hubbardston. Funded by a generous donation from Tom and Mary Robinson of Hubbardston, this program served 65 3rd grade students at the Center School.

NCLT expanded the number and variety of our Nature Talks and Walks, holding 7 guided nature hikes on NCLT’s conservation areas in Fitchburg, Gardner, Hubbardston and Templeton. In addition, we offered 9 Nature Talks to Seniors and families in Fitchburg, Gardner, Hubbardston, Lancaster, Lunenburg and Templeton.

NCLT’s AmeriCorps Member, Charlotte Levy discusses wildlife tracks at our February Winter Wonders Hike on Rome Conservation Area in Gardner.

NCLT Director and MAS Certified Birder, Clay Hobart (far left) led a birding walk on NCLT’s Dwelly Farm in Templeton.
Land Donor, Leigh Zins (left) and friends gather for the public opening of Zins Conservation Area in Princeton.

North County Land Trust is working with our Q2W partners, Mass. DCR Division of Water Supply Protection and the Fitchburg Water Division to protect 9 tracts of land in 3 communities, totaling 1,113 acres:

- Hubbardston, 6 Tracts - 1,056 Ac.
- Westminster, 1 Tract - 15 Ac.
- Princeton, 2 Tracts - 42 Ac.

**Zins Conservation Area**

First Tract Completed in the Quabbin to Wachusett Forest Legacy Project

Land Donor, Leigh Zins (left) and NCLT staff gather for the public opening of Zins Conservation Area in Princeton.

Zins Conservation Area is a 7 acres property in Princeton, donated to NCLT in 2014. This property is strategically important, as it connects two large blocks of protected open space totaling more than 4,000 acres: Fitchburg watershed land around Bickford Pond Reservoir to the north and Mass. Audubon’s Wachusett Meadows Sanctuary and the Wachusett Mountain State Reservation to the south and east. Zins Conservation Area will protect West Wachusett Brook, a tributary to Bickford Pond Reservoir, part of the City of Fitchburg’s public water supply system. Zins CA is one of NCLT’s newest public access conservation areas.
With grant funding from the state Drinking Water Supply Protection Program, a landowner donation and a modest outlay of funds from the Fitchburg Water Enterprise Fund, NCLT helped the City to protect 163 acres of privately owned land in its northern water supply watershed. In a two part project, Helen Kirby donated a 53-acres parcel of land in Ashburnham to NCLT late in 2013. Then in 2014, she sold 110 acres located in Ashburnham and Ashby to the City of Fitchburg, retaining 10 acres around her house. NCLT conveyed a conservation restriction on our 53-acres parcel to the City. Kirby Conservation Area is NCLT’s first public access conservation land in Ashburnham.

**Supporting Local Agriculture**

CENTRAL MASS. GROWN. North County Land Trust is a partner in a new initiative to promote local agriculture in central Massachusetts. Central Mass. Grown connects local farmers and producers to stores and restaurants, and promotes the value of local food to consumers.

**FARMLAND INVENTORY PROJECT.** This year, we launched our North Central Mass. Farmland Inventory Project, to collect important information about farming in each town and city in our Focus Area, including the number of farms, farm acres in production and what is produced. We are working with Agricultural Commissions to map the farms and farmland in their communities, identifying not only where the farms are now, but also where productive farm soils have been reforested. Farmland that has been reforested can be protected and later reclaimed for future agricultural uses.
Our Conservation Areas

North County Land Trust manages 6 public access Conservation Areas within our 14 community Focus Area:

- Kirby Conservation Area 53 acres in Ashburnham
- Rome Conservation Area 175 acres in Gardner
- Crocker Conservation Area 150 acres in Fitchburg
- Dwelly Farm 69 acres in Templeton
- Underwood Road Conservation Area 65 acres in Hubbardston
- Zins Conservation Area 7 acres in Princeton

Our Conservation Restrictions

North County Land Trust holds Conservation Restrictions (CR’s) on 7 properties in four communities. The CR’s prohibit development, while allowing activities such as forestry, farming, recreation, and other uses that protect natural resources.

- Wiita Conservation Area 175 acres in Ashby
- Echo Hill 43 acres in Fitchburg
- Overlook Reservoir 30 acres in Fitchburg
- Gateway Park 12 acres in Fitchburg
- Hollis Road 61 acres in Lunenburg
- Northfield Road 21 acres in Lunenburg
- Norcross Hill 62 acres in Templeton

Underwood Road Conservation Area

The United Way Day of Caring is a great opportunity for volunteers and non-profits to work together to get important work done. On September 18th, a team of 8 volunteers worked with our AmeriCorps member, Desiree Hamelin and NCLT staff to clear trails on Underwood Road Conservation Area in Hubbardston.

Crocker Conservation Area

With the help of dedicated volunteers, we worked to prepare our most popular conservation area for the City of Fitchburg's 250th Anniversary. Trail clearing and marking are continuing, as we develop new trails made possible by our timber harvest in 2012. In April, we celebrated the restoration of Fitchburg's historic Town Pound, which is part of the conservation area. Members of the Crocker Family, donors of Crocker CA, were on hand for the dedication of the restoration to Bigelow Crocker, Jr. and Jeanne Crocker. We thank Fitchburg Boy Scout Troop 41, Philip Jordan of the Fitchburg Historical Society and master carpenter, Philip Cacioppo for their invaluable help in this restoration effort.
Membership and Financial Reports

Membership Report

Sponsors
Laila Michaud
Karen Tucker

Supporters
Lucilla Crocker
Marshall Dennis
Gardner Fish and Gun Club, Inc.
Joan Gould
John & Joyce Kemp
Jackie Leger
Maureen & Andy Nguyen

Benefactors
John Henshaw
Susanne Richey
Alan Rousseau
Lucy & Thomas Abisalih
Dr. Robert & Christina Babineau
Richard & Helen Brockelman
Brian & Lisa Cote
Martha Crocker & Thomas Leonard
Rollstone Bank & Trust
Can-Am Machinery, Inc.

Members
Clayton Hobart & Amanda Graham
Carrie Harris
Ashok Hingorany & Achla Madan
Paula Lanson
Edwin Howard
Dorcas Hurd
Brandon Kibbe
Helen Kirby
David & Barbara Krashes
Norman & Annette LeBlanc
William Marshall
William Millington
Dr. John Murphy M.D.
North Medford Club
Peter & Nancy Orni
Allen & Barbara Rome
Arlene Rome
Henri Sans Jr.
Meriwether Schmid
Kimball Simpson & Kathleen Donaghue
Marion Stoddart
Christopher & Peggy Williamson
Norman Wironen

Supporters
Roger & Sera May Plourde
Thomas & Mary Robinson
Wachusett Brewing Company
Carolyn & S.C. Winslow
Malcolm & Marie Wright

Supporters
Eric Alitalo
Marie Auger
Ralph & Judy Baker
Samuel Blair
Dr. John Bogdassarian M.D.
Trevor Bonilla
Christopher Bramley
Jassy & Tom Bratko
Philip Cacioppo
Deborah & Charles Cary
Larry Casassa
Lauretta Conlon
Todd & Caroline Lee Crocker
Ted & Diane Cushing
Paul & Jean DeMeo
Susan Edwards
Allan Foster
Dr. James Hammond Jr. & Annie Wiley

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Clayton Hobart & Amanda Graham
Carrie Harris
Ashok Hingorany & Achla Madan
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Kimball Simpson & Kathleen Donaghue
Marion Stoddart
Christopher & Peggy Williamson
Norman Wironen

Financial Report - (July 1, 2013-June 30, 2014*)

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<th>Expenses</th>
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<td>Programs &amp; Stewardship</td>
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<td><strong>$126,720</strong></td>
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Net Income                    $-23,600

*First fiscal year of transition from cash to accrual accounting.
Board of Directors

Alan N. Rousseau, President
Gardner
Richelle M. Brown, Treasurer
Westminster
Clayton Hobart, Clerk
Leominster
Jassy M. Bratko
Hubbardston
Paul N. DeMeo
Gardner
Jackie Leger
Gardner
Laila Michaud
Westminster
Dick O'Brien
Leominster
Don Ostrowski
Fitchburg
James Walsh
Fitchburg

Executive Director
Janet Morrison, Esq.
Ashburnham

Board of Advisors
Lucy Crocker Abisalih
Land Trust Founding Family
Robert V. Antonucci, Ed.D.,
President, Fitchburg State University
Philip Y. Brodeur
Venning & Jacques, P.C.
John Todd Crocker
Land Trust Founding Family
John C. Kemp
Land Trust Founding Family
Henri L. Sans, Jr., Esq.
LeBlanc & Sans, Attorneys
Marion Stoddart, Founder
Nashua River Watershed Association
Karen A. Tucker
Conservation Restriction Donor
Carolyn C. Winslow
Land Trust Founding Family

President's Message

North County Land Trust has had a very successful FY2014. We have been able to continue on a steady path in land conservation through our success in land conservation projects, stewardship of NCLT conservation areas, and educational/outreach programs.

In the first year of our transition from cash to accrual accounting, funds recognized in earlier years allowed us to complete conservation projects in FY2014. While revenues of $101,120 did not cover expenses totaling $126,519 for FY2014, we do not anticipate similar results in FY2015. The NCLT Board and Staff continue to focus on achieving financial sustainability for the organization.

Executive Director, Janet Morrison has continued to do an excellent job in leading our conservation efforts. Important conservation projects were initiated and some came to closure, including the 53 acre Kirby Conservation Area and the 7 acre Zins Conservation Area. The Kirby project also included an additional 110 acres in Ashburnham and Ashby water supply watershed land sold to the City of Fitchburg. We continued our work as a partner in the Quabbin Reservoir to Wachusett Mountain Project, the #2 ranked Forest Legacy conservation project in the United States. The NCLT has begun to expand our land conservation scope in the area of agriculture through our partnership in Central Mass Grown, a new initiative to promote a “buy local” food system in central Massachusetts. Our stewardship work on NCLT properties included major projects on the Underwood Road Conservation area in Hubbardston and Crocker Conservation Area in Fitchburg. Charlotte Levy, our AmeriCorps Member, expanded our Nature Walks and Talks program with 5 guided hikes in five communities and 7 nature talks on subjects ranging from wildflowers to the effects of climate change in our region. Our Environmental Educator, Laurie Nehring, led guided “Owl Prowl” nature hikes on two NCLT conservation areas and taught an environmental education program to 63 3rd Grade students at the Center School in Hubbardston. Ryan DeMeo, NCLT Office Manager, did an excellent job in keeping our administrative operations running smoothly throughout the entire year.

I want to recognize the important contributions of former board members, Jim Walsh and Dick O’Brien. A longtime AMC member and hike leader, Jim was active on our Land Committee during his tenure from 2011 to 2014, and he was especially helpful in leading volunteers in trail maintenance projects on Crocker Conservation Area in Fitchburg. During his year of service on the Board from January 2013 to January 2014, Dick provided invaluable expertise in both forestry and land management.

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

Alan Rousseau, President
March 2015