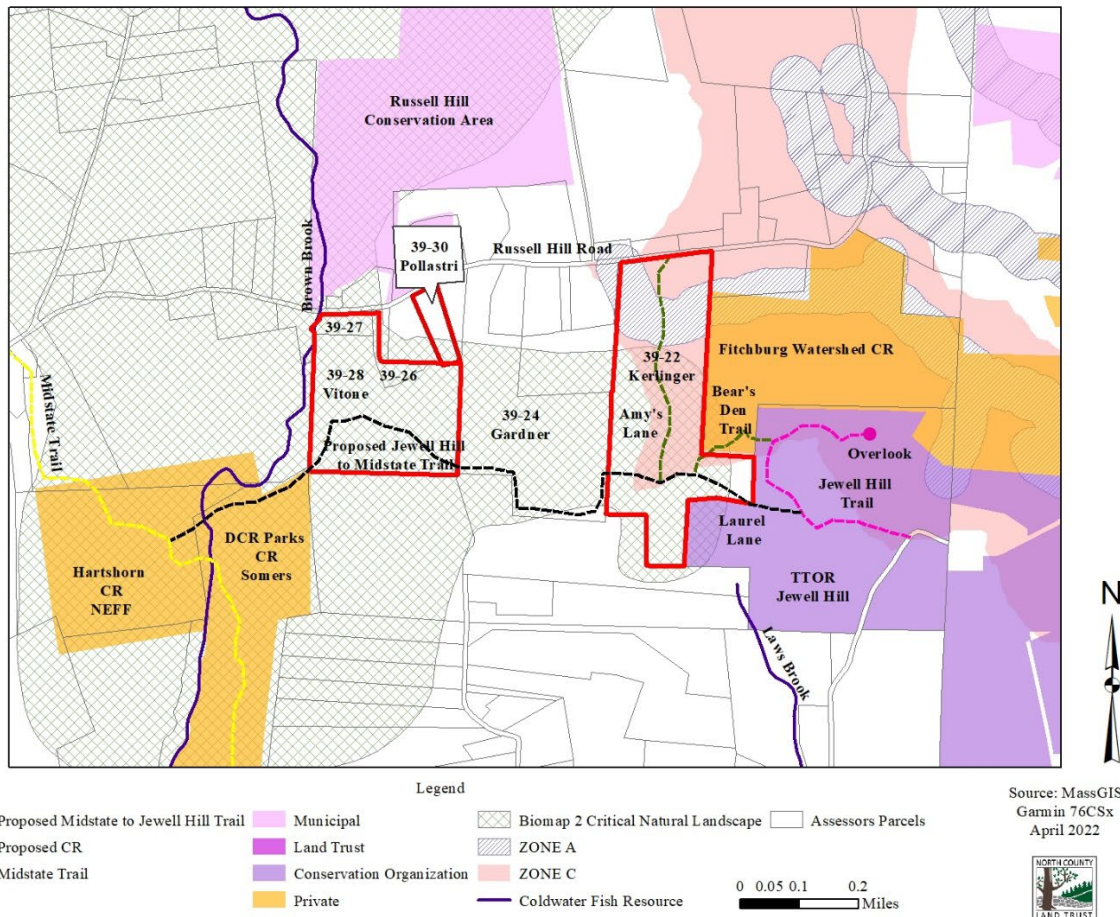


Ashburnham Town Meeting Warrant Article # 23

ACQUISITION OF TWO CONSERVATION RESTRICTIONS

Jewell Hill to Midstate Conservation Values with Proposed and Existing Trails



Ashburnham Conservation Commission is requesting approval to purchase a Conservation Restriction (development rights) on Vitone (36 acres) and Pollastri (2.7 acres) properties with a Local Acquisition and Natural Diversity (LAND) Grant.

NO Cost to the town or taxpayers

- Landowners have agreed to accept 66% of value as sale price of CR. Their donation of value will be gifted to the town as the 34% required match.
- Appraisals and surveys will be financed via private funding sources through NCLT at no cost to the town.
- North County Land Trust (NCLT) will provide **0% interest loan** to the town for the **full warrant article amount**.
- NCLT will contribute, through private funds, \$5,000 stewardship fee to the Conservation Commission for their conservation stewardship funds.
- Landowners will continue to pay property tax at current levels.

Why is conservation of this land important?

These parcels:

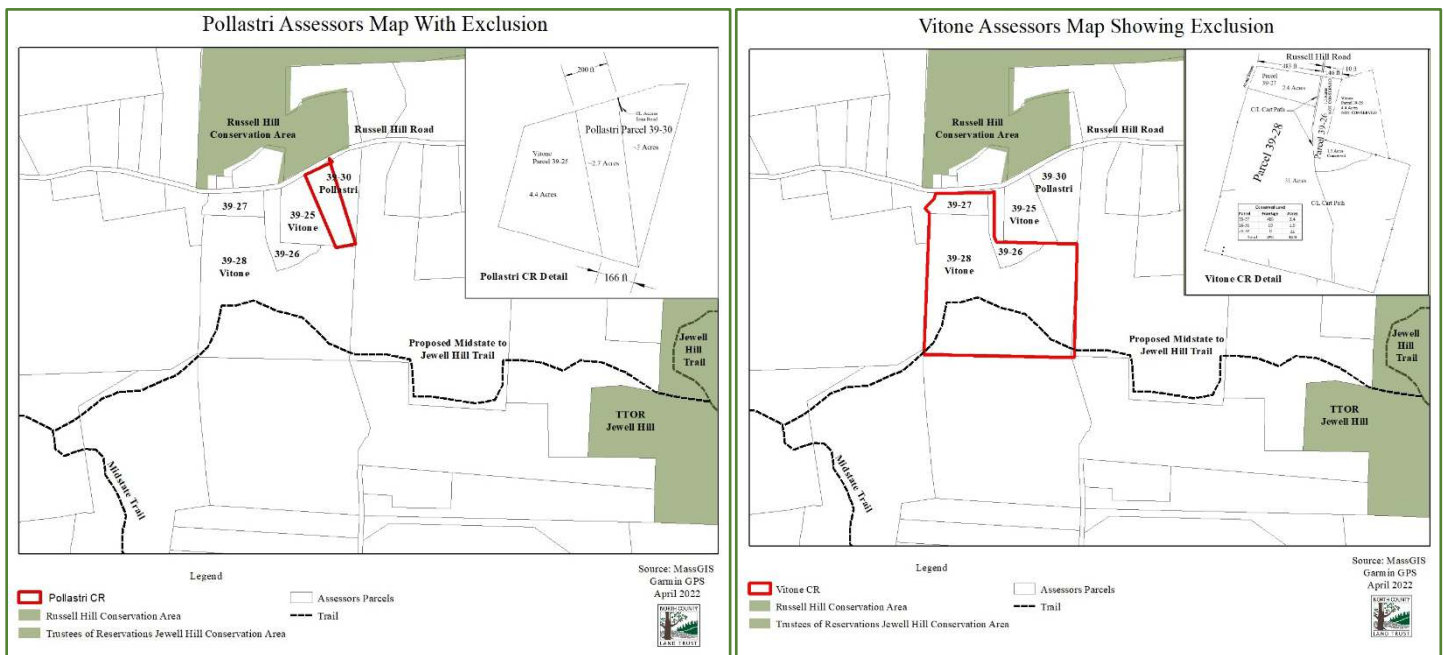
- Provide critical wildlife habitat and connectivity to other protected lands,
- Preserve the rural character of Russell Hill Road and the area around the Cambridge Land Grant,
- Protect the headwaters of Philips Brook (Nashua River watershed),
- Provide public trail access and connections,
- Contribute to Open Space and Recreation Plan goal to "Find and protect links and wildlife corridors between protected parcels".

How does a LAND grant work?

- Town holds the primary interest in monitoring and defending the CR and NCLT will hold secondary (back up) interest.
- Pays 66% of appraised CR value.
- Reimbursement grant – **town must vote at town meeting to raise and appropriate the funds**, then (if the grant is awarded) the State will reimburse the Town through the LAND grant program. The Town will then pay the 0% interest loan back to NCLT.

Part of Jewell to Midstate Trail project that will:

- Create trail from Jewell Hill Conservation Area to the Midstate Trail. Landowners have agreed to allow public access on a trail across their land.
- Trail license has been obtained.
- Permanently conserve land along the trail. North County Land Trust working with City of Fitchburg to protect Kerlinger property.
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CONTACT US

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