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Healey-Driscoll Administration Awards \$7.5 Million for Landscape Conservation Projects

BOSTON – The Healey-Driscoll Administration today awarded \$7.5 million in grant funding to enhance and protect large acreages of land throughout Massachusetts. Through the Landscape Partnership Program, the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) is supporting six projects to improve and expand public recreational opportunities, water supply, ecosystems, and habitats. The program will also support the ["Forests as Climate Solutions Initiative"](#) to protect high-quality forested land.

“We’re investing to protect our forests and agricultural land while strengthening our communities. This program is just one example of how we’re taking a whole-of-government approach to making Massachusetts more resilient,” **said Governor Maura Healey**. “Our Administration is proud to assist these communities in acquiring land and creating vibrant, accessible green space that will boost the quality of life in Massachusetts.”

“As a former mayor, I know the importance of cross-sector collaboration and the success that comes from those partnerships,” **said Lieutenant Governor Kim Driscoll**. “These grants will build connections between communities and the nearby natural spaces. Increasing access to open space will help connect residents to the outdoors and give our residents – especially young people – a stake in stewarding the environment for generations to come.”

The Landscape Partnership Grant Program was created in 2011 to facilitate large-scale projects that sustain the integrity and resilience of ecosystems, protect the viability of farm and forest economies, and expand public outdoor recreational opportunities while enhancing partnerships among state, municipal, and non-profit entities. This year’s awards will conserve over 2,000 acres from Hampshire County to Martha’s Vineyard and are part of the administration’s efforts toward building climate change resilience and protecting critical natural landscapes.

“Land conservation is a significant part of our climate strategy. Our natural lands are the original carbon capturers and will serve as an important tool as we ramp up our efforts to reduce emissions,” **said EEA Secretary Rebecca Tepper**. “The projects being awarded are tremendous examples of ways agencies and organizations can work together to protect properties from the impacts of climate change.”

“By preserving our land and making our outdoor public spaces more accessible, we are creating a Commonwealth that builds communities, is environmentally friendly, is climate resilient, and is more welcoming for all of our residents,” **said Senate President Karen E. Spilka**. “I’m thrilled to see these grants go to these deserving public spaces, and I’m thankful to the Healey-Driscoll Administration for prioritizing our environment and publicly accessible outdoor space.”

“Wilderness conservation and access to green spaces are critical to the balance of life for both the Commonwealth's environment and that of its residents,” said **State Representative Ann-Margaret Ferrante**. “Preservation of these areas helps to maintain the natural wonder and ecological impact of Massachusetts and its native wildlife. At the same time, maintaining access for residents to be able to respectfully use these places as areas of respite and recreation provides improved quality of life for our residents. Thank you to the Healey-Driscoll Administration for this investment into our communities.”

Landscape Partnership Grant Program awardees are:

- **Town of Middleborough and Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) – Fort Hill Conservation Project:** \$1.25 million to protect 278 acres that extend protection to 2.25 miles of the Taunton River in Middleborough. In addition to conserving important agricultural lands, mitigating future flood impacts, and creating new opportunities for recreation, these lands are of important archaeological and cultural significance.
- **DCR and Sudbury Valley Trustees – Nobscot Hill Project:** \$1.25 million to purchase a conservation restriction on 134 acres in Framingham currently owned and managed by the Mayflower Council of Boy Scouts of America. This property, which provides trail connections and recreational opportunities to members of the public, and is adjacent to Callahan State Park, will be permanently protected for conservation and recreational values.
- **Essex County Greenbelt Association, City of Gloucester and Manchester Essex Conservation Trust – DeNormandie Woods Project:** \$1.25 million to protect 290 acres that are part of a 1,462-acre expanse of protected forestland spanning Manchester, Essex, and Gloucester. The property offers a well-established trail network that adjoins water supply protection lands and is presently enjoyed by hikers as well as trail bikers.
- **Kestrel Land Trust, Town of Southampton, Mass Audubon, Holyoke Water Works and Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (MDAR)—Mountain Waters Conservation Project:** \$1.25 million to purchase conservation restrictions and property totaling 1,025 acres of wild and working land in a region notable for its ecological integrity and climate resilience. The regions forestland feeds waterways such as the Manhan and Connecticut Rivers and provides clean drinking water to several urban and rural communities including Holyoke, via the Tighe-Carmody Reservoir and Barnes Aquifer.
- **Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust, Mass Audubon, DCR – Division of Water Supply Protection, Town of Barre and East Quabbin Land Trust – Hawes Hill Conservation Corridor:** \$1.25 million to protect nine properties that will continue to be sustainably managed by private landowners for forestry, agriculture, and recreation. Conserving these properties will protect drinking water, promote climate resilience, enhance connectivity, support the local economy, and bolster conservation east of the Quabbin Reservoir a half hour from Worcester.
- **Sheriff’s Meadow Foundation and Martha’s Vineyard Land Bank Commission – Pimpneymouse Farm:** \$1.25 million for protection of 166 acres at Pimpneymouse Farm on the island of Chappaquiddick, Edgartown. The Project directly abuts 612 acres of protected open space and makes many significant trail connections feasible.

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