



# Voluntary Public Access Landowner Application

The Voluntary Public Access Program (VPA) is a new program led by the Franklin Land Trust, in partnership with the MA Department of Conservation and Recreation, Berkshire Natural Resources Council, and the Massachusetts Forest Alliance, funded by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. The goal of the program is to increase public access on privately-owned lands for hunting, fishing, wildlife viewing, and hiking by providing financial incentives to landowners.

## Eligibility

- ✓ Must be in the 28 town region (visit [www.franklinlandtrust.org/vpa](http://www.franklinlandtrust.org/vpa) for towns in region)
- ✓ Must verify ownership of property
- ✓ Must be willing to publicize public access land on the Franklin Land Trust and the MA DCR websites
- ✓ Must provide public access for hunting, fishing, wildlife viewing and hiking on your property.
- ✓ Trail easements will only be considered for existing trails contained within one ownership, or for trails that make important connections to trails on permanently protected lands that are open to the public.

## Landowner Information (please list all owners)

Name/Names \_\_\_\_\_ Property Address \_\_\_\_\_

Form of Ownership \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

County \_\_\_\_\_

Total Acres of Property \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have a mortgage or a home equity line of credit? (check)  Yes  No

Town Tax Map and Lot# \_\_\_\_\_ Deed Book and Page# \_\_\_\_\_

*You will find tax map and lot # and deed book and page # on your tax bill*

Name of Forester \_\_\_\_\_

## Voluntary Public Access Compensation Rates (Rates determined by regional market value appraisal.)

### Full Access Easement

*All full access easements must allow wildlife viewing, fishing (if applicable), and hiking. Landowners can choose to exclude hunting from a full access easement, but will be compensated at a reduced rate per acre.*

Temporary Full Access Easement (10 years) with hunting	\$50/acre
Temporary Full Access Easement (10 years) without hunting	\$35/acre
Permanent Full Access Easement with hunting	\$75/acre
Full Access Easement without hunting	\$52/acre

### Trail Easement

*All trail easements must allow wildlife viewing, and hiking.*

Temporary Trail Easement (10 years) without hunting	\$5.00/linear foot
Permanent Trail Easement without hunting	\$10.00/linear foot

All payments will be capped at \$35,000. Low income landowners who meet income requirements as determined by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development will qualify for a \$5000 bonus. To learn more visit <https://affordablehousingonline.com/housing-search/Massachusetts/Franklin-County#census>.



## Property Information

Check if present on your property:

- Existing Hiking Trails
- Rivers, streams or ponds
- Parking area or safe pull off on side of the road
- Abuts existing conserved land
- Abuts existing hiking trails

- Stone Walls/Cellar Holes/Wells
- Scenic Views

Describe: \_\_\_\_\_

- Other Points of Interest

Describe: \_\_\_\_\_

- Has your property been surveyed?  Y  N
- Are there boundary disputes with abutters?  Y  N
- Are your boundaries marked?  Y  N
- Do you have a DCR Forest Stewardship Plan, Forest Management Plan, or a Conservation Plan?  Y  N
- Have you managed your forestland for wildlife habitat as prescribed by your forest management plan?  Y  N
- Have you ever received state or federal funds for wildlife habitat improvement work on your land?  Y  N
- Do you already allow public access on your property?  Y  N
- For what purpose? \_\_\_\_\_

## Land Programs Enrolled

- Chapter 61     Chapter 61A     Chapter 61B
- NRCS Cost Share Program
- Farm Viability
- Agricultural Preservation Restriction (APR)

Please name the organization that holds your APR: \_\_\_\_\_

Please provide the book and page number of your APR: \_\_\_\_\_

- Conservation Restriction (CR)

Please name the organization that holds your CR: \_\_\_\_\_

Please provide the book and page number of your CR: \_\_\_\_\_

- Other \_\_\_\_\_

## VPA Application Summary

Estimated number of acres requested for temporary full access easement \_\_\_\_\_ acres Allow Hunting  Y  N

Estimated number of acres requested for permanent full access easement \_\_\_\_\_ acres Allow Hunting  Y  N

Estimated number of linear feet requested for temporary trail easement \_\_\_\_\_ feet

Estimated number of linear feet requested for permanent trail easement \_\_\_\_\_ feet

- Franklin Land Trust and/or Berkshire Natural Resources Council have permission to visit my property to conduct a Massachusetts VPA site visit

All VPA applications will be evaluated using criteria developed to assess suitability for the VPA program.

**Email or send completed applications to:**

*If possible, please include copies of your deed, survey map, or a map of your property.*

mpatterson@franklinlandtrust.org



Melissa Patterson  
VPA Program Coordinator  
mpatterson@franklinlandtrust.org  
Franklin Land Trust  
P.O. Box 450  
Shelburne Falls, MA 01370

For more information visit [www.franklinlandtrust.org/vpa](http://www.franklinlandtrust.org/vpa) or call (413) 625 - 9151

