



Sustainability Starts Here

ANNUAL REPORT 2012

The Year in Review

A Stormy Start

Fiscal year 2012 started off with FLT weathering a storm—literally. Just hours ahead of Hurricane Irene's arrival in late August, FLT was wrapping up its largest fundraising event of the year, the Deerfield Dirt Road Randonnee (D2R2). The event is headquartered in the fields that run beside the river south of Old Deerfield, and as the last tents came down and the remaining riders packed up, FLT staffers breathed a sigh of relief that Irene's rain and high winds had not yet arrived. Sadly, a day later, those farm fields were flooded.

FLT waited anxiously as news began to circulate about extensive flood damage in Shelburne Falls. We soon learned that the building where FLT's office was located had been badly compromised and declared unsafe.

On Monday morning after the storm, when the National Guard allowed access to the building, FLT staff scrambled to rescue files, computers and office furniture, and managed to save most of our belongings from extensive damage. FLT has relocated to temporary office space on the Mohawk Trail, just outside Shelburne Falls. Planning for a permanent home is underway.

Celebrate: 25 in 25!

Founded in 1987, FLT turned 25 in February 2012. To celebrate, we embarked on a year-long schedule of public programs. From farm days, to vernal pool exploration and wild edibles, FLT hosted a wide range of events for all ages aimed at raising awareness about land conservation and support for FLT's work. The program was supported by the Community Foundation of Western MA Franklin Fund and local Cultural Councils, along with several community partners.

FLT also closed in on another milestone: 25,000 acres of conserved land. Together, these acres form an area roughly the size of the Quabbin Reservoir, and include some of the region's most cherished and iconic landscapes: frontage along the Mohawk Trail, properties that frame the view from the top of Mt. Sugarloaf and the entrance to the French King Bridge, land along the Connecticut River and Deerfield River corridors, the historic Ashfield Town Common, and north and south meadows of Old Deerfield, to name just a few.

New Initiatives

Exciting improvements continue at Guyette Farm in Plainfield, a beautiful and historic property gifted to FLT by the Guyette family in 2008. With the help of the Student Conservation Corps, FLT completed further expansion of the interpretative trail at the farm, which is open for public enjoyment. We also broke ground at our new community garden, a project spearheaded by local volunteers.

With the help of grant funding and a new AmeriCorps MassLIFT volunteer, **FLT has also expanded our stewardship program.** The staff is recruiting and training community members for a new volunteer monitoring program that will help FLT steward the 120 properties on which we now hold Conservation Restrictions. Once up and running, this program will relieve some of the pressure on our land staff.

Looking Back, Looking Forward

It seems incredible that FLT has grown from an ad-hoc, one-person office to a fully staffed organization that has helped to conserve almost 25,000 acres in the region. The growth and vitality we have experienced is due in large part to support from the community. It's gratifying to know that so many are coming to understand both the immediate and long-term benefits of conservation. **As we move into our second quarter century, FLT is poised to accomplish even more on behalf of the people and the land that sustain us.**



The Deerfield Dirt Road Randonnee drew over 900 riders and raised over \$50,000 for FLT's conservation work.



Cinda and Ruth Owen Jones, Governor Deval Patrick, EEA Secretary Richard Sullivan, FLT's Rich Hubbard and Alain Peteroy and Kestrel Trust's Kristin DeBoer celebrate the completion of the Brushy Mountain project.



A view from the historic French King Bridge of newly conserved land at the confluence of the Connecticut and Millers Rivers in Gill.



Wild edibles expert Russ Cohen demonstrates "fieldwork" at a recent FLT workshop.

From the Executive Director

There is only one constant in FLT’s work—“perpetuity.” Each day presents new and different challenges and opportunities. No two landowner’s needs and concerns are the same—no two properties are the same.

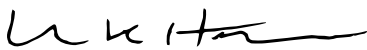
However, no matter who the landowner or what the property, all of our efforts to conserve western Massachusetts’ critical farmland, forest land and natural resources are with an eye towards the future. When we accept ownership of land or a Conservation Restriction (CR), we assume a responsibility to steward and defend that land or CR forever - a responsibility that we take seriously.

The challenge of making sure that FLT’s land conservation successes live on in “perpetuity” was further driven home by Hurricane Irene and the subsequent flood, which forced FLT out of our office in Shelburne Falls. As we continue to face the challenge of operating out of cramped and temporary quarters, it has become more and more apparent that for FLT to be sustainable in perpetuity, we need to find a permanent home.

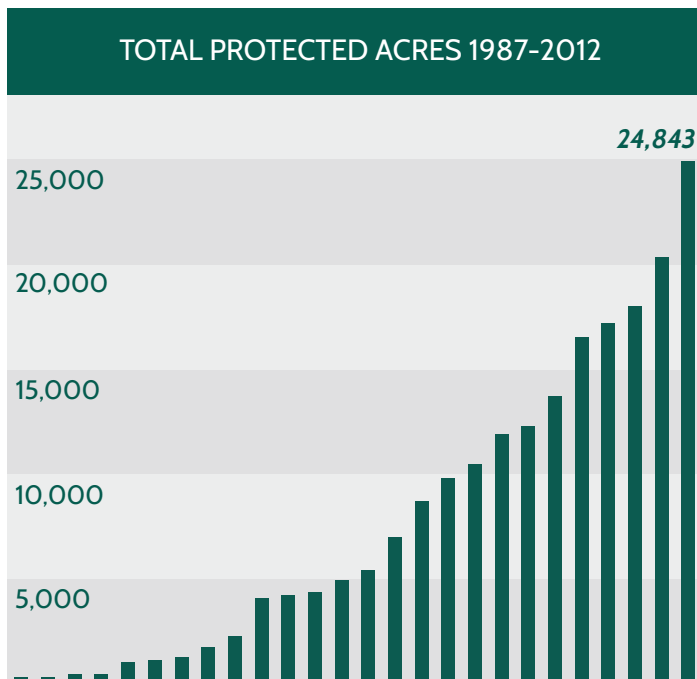
FLT is 25 years old this year. Looking ahead, FLT must ensure that we have the capacity to meet both our long-term stewardship obligations and our organizational needs. **A permanent home and a more robust endowment demonstrates to our members and other supporters that we take pride in our organization, value our staff and their work, and are serious about our long-term obligations.**

Beginning in 2013, FLT must begin to lay the foundation for our next quarter century and beyond: building FLT’s Mary Robertson Torras Founder’s Fund, our Board restricted endowment, will be a high priority.

Here’s to our second quarter century, conserving the land we cherish and meeting the challenges and opportunities to come.



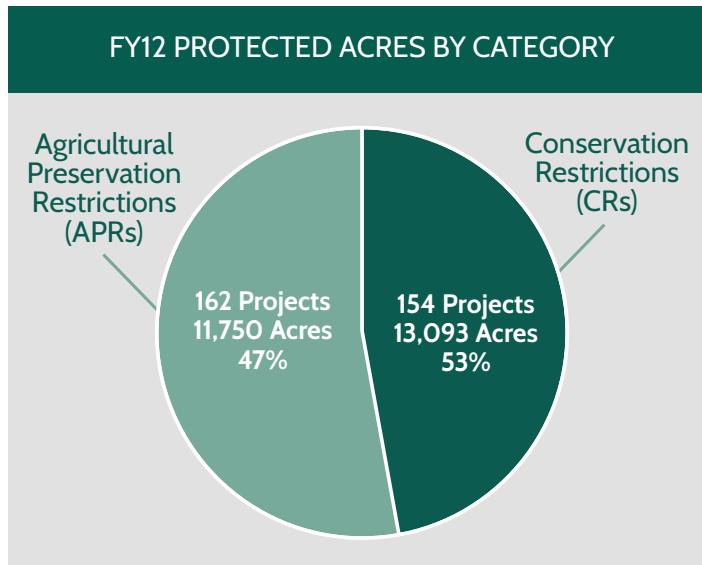
Richard K. Hubbard, *Executive Director*



TOWN-BY-TOWN SUMMARY 1987-2012

Includes all assisted and FLT held projects

Town	# of Projects	Acres Protected
Ashfield	39	2,797
Ashfield/Buckland	1	215
Bernardston	2	102
Bernardston/Leyden	1	133
Buckland	5	194
Charlemont	16	907
Colrain	15	2,084
Colrain/Shelburne	2	107
Conway	22	1,760
Conway/Buckland	1	124
Deerfield	55	2,073
Erving	7	35
Gill	6	438
Greenfield	9	448
Greenfield/Bernardston	1	128
Hadley	4	227
Hawley	13	1,320
Heath	21	1,788
Leverett	4	3,863
Leyden	13	1,188
Monroe	1	48
Montague	9	517
Montague/Wendell	1	100
Northfield	4	216
Plainfield	2	540
Rowe	1	15
Shelburne	17	1,653
Shelburne/Colrain	1	21
Southampton	1	108
Sunderland	16	395
Wendell	3	87
Westfield	1	27
Whately	20	1,185
Totals	314	24,843



The Projects

The Franklin Land Trust helped landowners conserve almost 5,000 acres of land in the past fiscal year.

ASHFIELD

■ FLT received a gift Conservation Restriction (CR) on approximately 104 acres of **farm and woodland** from Christine Jerome. A farm in earlier centuries, its fields continue to be hayed by a local farmer. A pond on the property provides **habitat for birds, beaver, otter and invertebrates**.

■ Olie Thorp donated a CR on 115 acres of land that contains **woodland, field and water resources** that are characterized as Priority Habitat of Rare Species, as well as **scenic road frontage**. **These parcels add to a substantial area of privately and publicly conserved land**, including the Loomis Farm; 360 acres conserved by Cal and Joan Clark through two donated CRs to FLT; the Poland Brook Wildlife Management Area, the Conway State Forest and The Trustees of Reservations' Bullitt Farm and Chapel Brook Conservation Area.

BERNARDSTON

■ FLT helped Frank "Bud" Foster conserve 80 acres that has now been transferred to the MA Dept. of Fish & Game. **This project adds to a large block of Fish & Game land that provides important wildlife habitat and is open to the public for recreational use.**

CHARLEMONT

■ **The children of Albert Gould conserved their family's 40-acre, second generation farm** with an Agricultural Preservation Restriction (APR) and funding through the state Scenic Byways program. This lovely farm is located along both sides of the Mohawk Trail and has **frontage along the Deerfield River**.

CONWAY

■ The Clapp family worked with FLT on two projects that resulted in donated CRs on 177 acres that form a block of almost **400 acres of conserved farmland, field, forest, ponds and river frontage**. This beautiful area includes road frontage in the **historic Poland Gate district** and adds to a **crucial wildlife corridor** that connects with the Poland Brook Wildlife Management Area protected by the MA Dept. of Fish & Game (DFG).

■ FLT facilitated an APR for the Totman family on **one of the county's most scenic family farms**. The farm has striking views, and at 200+ acres, it's also one of the few large farms left in the area. With both open and wooded acreage, the property has **extensive frontage on the South River and considerable natural resource significance**.

■ FLT worked with the owners of Natural Roots Farm to help them purchase an APR on fields that furnish 75% of the hay for their horse-powered operation. **The Natural Roots project is small in scale compared to most of the projects FLT works on, but its impact on the community is significant:** it is a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) farm with approximately 240 members in the area.

■ Jack and Danielle Lochhead also worked with FLT on a project small in scale but with **considerable scenic significance**. The Lochheads placed a CR on approximately 9 acres of woodland that protects about 570 feet on frontage along Reeds Bridge Road that is within **Living Waters Critical Supporting Watershed**.

As we mark our 25th anniversary, we are also closing in on 25,000 acres of permanently conserved land—some of the most beautiful and productive farmland, woodland and open space in the northeast. Here are some highlights from projects FLT completed this year:

ERVING

■ The Carroll family helped conserve **one of the most beautiful and iconic vistas in Franklin County**—11 acres at the eastern entrance to the **French King Bridge**. The project was funded through the state Scenic Byways program, and the land will ultimately be transferred to the MA Dept. of Conservation & Recreation, who already own three "corners" of the bridge, ensuring the continued protection of this landmark.

GILL & NORTHFIELD

■ FLT assisted Richard French and Emily Samuels with conservation of a total of 50 acres in the two towns. The land includes **frontage on the CT River as well as scenic road frontage, woodland, farmland, a brook and associated wetlands, including fens, which are critical to water quality**. The properties also contain significant **wildlife habitat**.

HAWLEY

■ FLT received a gift CR on approximately 29 acres of farm and woodland on Plainfield Road by Hugh Schoelzel. **The property contains six idyllic ponds and abuts the Dubuque Memorial Forest, adding to the state forest's extensive wildlife habitat.**

SHELburne

■ Becky Ashenden and John Marcy donated a CR on 15 acres and FLT purchased the CR on an additional 129 acres of land through local fundraising efforts. The open and forested land has **frontage on Dragon Brook and is especially important as habitat to a wide variety of migratory birds**.

■ FLT assisted the Samoriski family in applying for an APR to conserve their 98 acre farm on Little Mohawk Road in Shelburne. In addition to having **"prime" and "state important" agricultural land**, the farm also has high **scenic significance** for Little Mohawk Road.

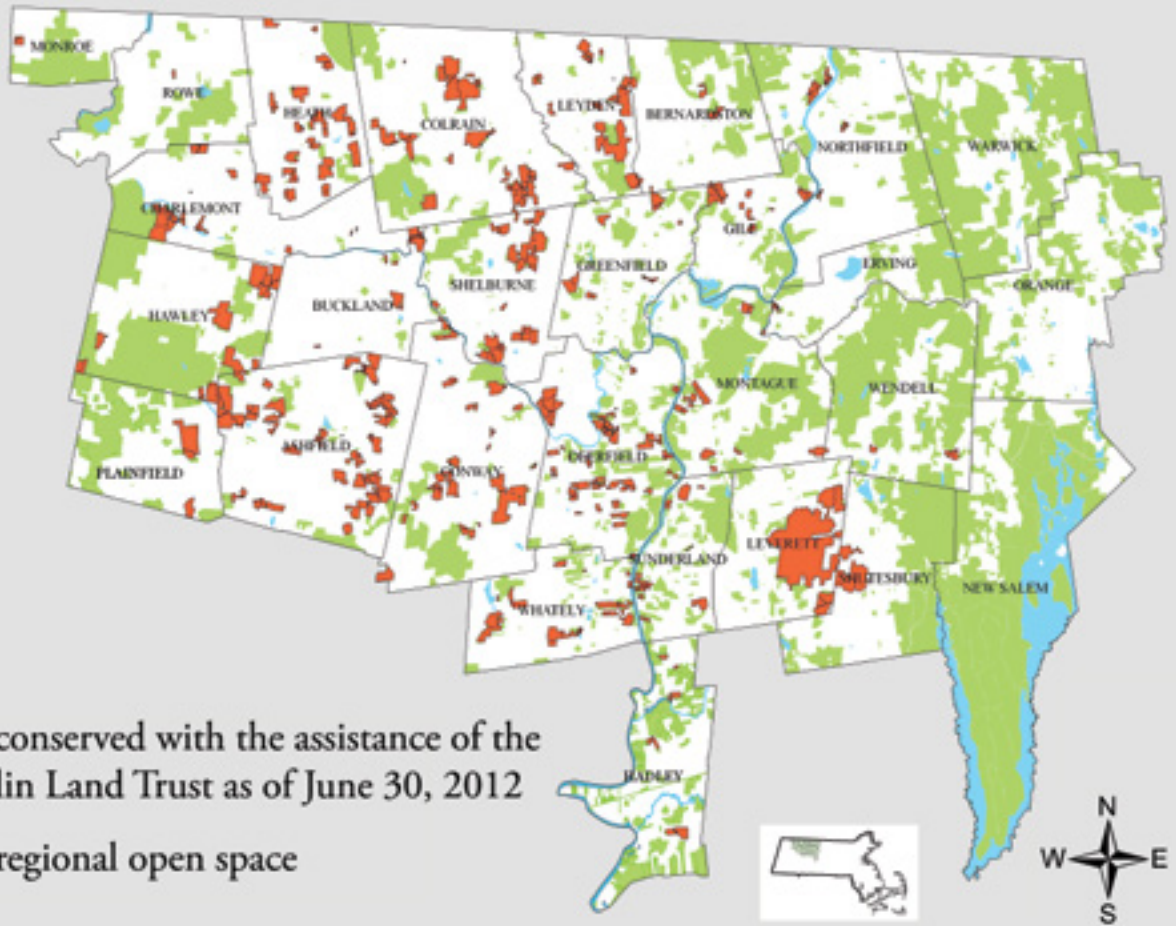
LEVERETT & SHUTESBURY

■ In partnership with the DFG, Franklin Land Trust, Kestrel Land Trust, and North Amherst-based W.D. Cows, Inc. conserved 3,486 acres of **working forest land**. The CR acquired by the DFG and its Division of Fisheries and Wildlife (MassWildlife) from W.D. Cows is the **largest on a contiguous block of privately owned land in Massachusetts' history**. The Conservation Restriction conserves wildlife **habitat**, guarantees public **recreational** access, and promotes sustainable **forestry** in perpetuity.

WHATELY

■ FLT assisted in the conservation of the 15 acre Skroski property on Christian Lane in Whately through an Agricultural Preservation Restriction (APR) with the state's APR Program. This property, which is being rented to a local farmer for vegetable production, is primarily comprised of **"state important" farmland**. It is also located in a **large block of farmland** protected through the APR program.

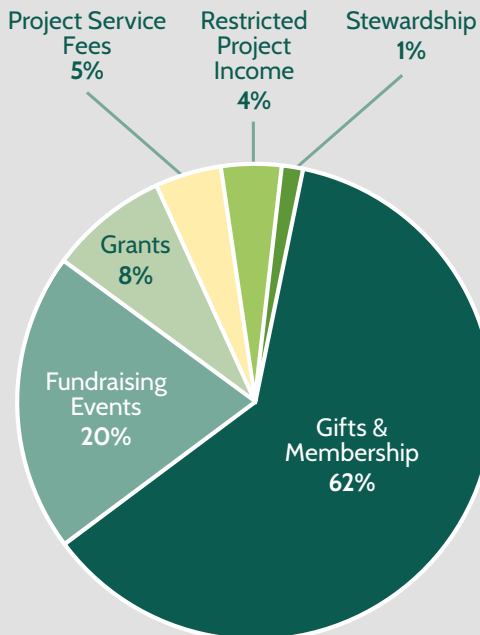
FY12 REGIONAL CONSERVATION MAP



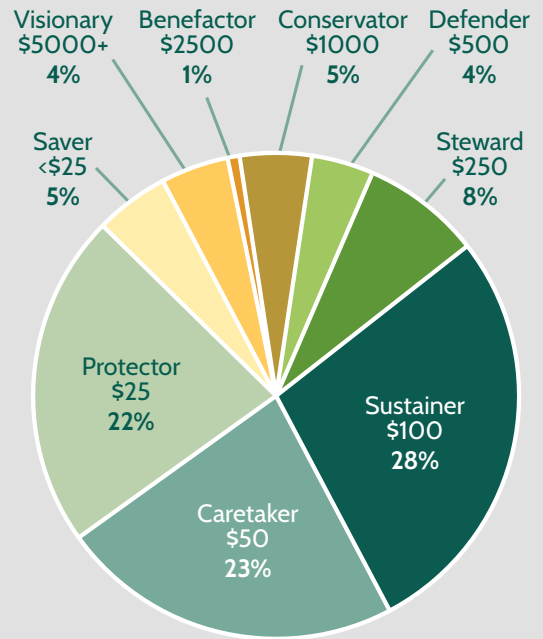
Land conserved with the assistance of the Franklin Land Trust as of June 30, 2012

Total regional open space

FY12 REVENUE



FY12 DONORS BY CATEGORY



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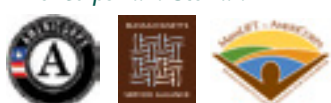
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