Trees

A Tribute to Rich Hubbard
Planting Trees
Building Resilient Landscapes
A Tribute to Rich Hubbard

HARRY DODSON & MARK ZENICK

A s the head of the Agricultural Preservation Restriction (APR) Program, Rich Hubbard guided and supported the Franklin Land Trust from the outset. In 1986, FLT founders Steve Judge and Harry Dodson, backed by an excellent farmer-oriented board of directors, the Trust for Public Land, and a generous grant from the Island Foundation, struggled for over a year to complete FLT’s first, challenging project: the Loomis farm in Ashfield. The rag-tag, fledgling FLT soon realized that it desperately needed help to pull off the project. First FLT hired the outstanding Mark Zenick who would captain the organization for 17 years as its executive director. Concurrently the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources, under Rich’s remarkable leadership realized the potential of FLT and came to its rescue, beginning a lengthy, highly successful relationship with the organization.

This was the beginning of a beautiful relationship spanning 33 years. Rich brought a great naturalness as an ambassador for the Department of Agricultural Resources. Farmers could easily relate to Rich and not struggle with him as a state employee. He took on the Massachusetts Woodlands Institute as a subsidiary of FLT to support the organization’s objective of helping people learn how best to preserve and manage forested land throughout the Commonwealth. Rich grew membership from under 100 annual contributors to over 1,200. He championed the D2R2, a bicycle ride that brings over 1,500 cyclists from all over the country and world to the region annually. He more than doubled the number of state APR projects FLT facilitated to over 13,000 acres of preserved farmland.

To honor Rich’s tremendous impact on farmland conservation in our region and state, FLT will dedicate a farmland fund to him. The Richard K. Hubbard Farmland Fund will perpetuate the ground-breaking work Rich has accomplished over the course of his career.

Rich instilled an awareness in thousands that each of us has a responsibility to save a resource that the State of Massachusetts and, in a larger sense, our nation can’t afford to lose. This is a testimonial to Rich’s manifold gifts for leaving rural Massachusetts more inspiring, healthy, productive, and beautiful than he found it. A life’s work accomplished over the course of his career.

Make your donation today! FRANKLINLANDTRUST.ORG/FARMLAND

Following in Rich’s footsteps

The Richard K. Hubbard Farmland Fund will continue the important work of farmland protection by providing a revolving fund to help farmers keep their farms. This enduring legacy is a testament to an inspiring career devoted to the protection of working farms.

Local farms boost our economy, provide jobs, protect important soils, and feed your family. But farmers are facing increasing pressure to develop and farmlands in our region are at risk. You can help! Your donation will work to conserve and protect agriculture in our region, preventing valuable farmland soils from being developed for non-agricultural purposes that could harm our environment, our economy, and our food source.

You can carry Rich Hubbard’s passion for farmland protection forward.

FLT Welcomes New Staff Member

FLT is thrilled to welcome Marie Henry to the FLT family as our new Financial Administrator. Marie hails from Houston Texas, where she worked as an accountant for the last 25 years. She moved to western Mass in the summer of 2018 to be near her children. She is acclimating to the New England winter, but is certainly ready for spring!
Arbor Day Celebration
Friday, April 26, 12pm-1pm
Greenfield Post Office
FREE AND OPEN TO ALL
Come to a tree planting celebration on Arbor Day! Join the Greenfield Tree Committee, the Greenfield Department of Public Works, and FLT for an Arbor Day tree planting on the sidewalk in front of the Greenfield Post Office.
Kids and families welcome. No RSVP required.

Do you live in Greenfield, Montague or North Adams? Do you want a free tree?
CALL TODAY
Greenfield: Greenfield Public Works Department (413) 772-1528.
Montague: Montague Public Works Department, (413) 863-2054 x 111 or hwycompliance@montague-ma.gov.
North Adams: Bret Beattie, Northern Berkshire Community Coalition, (413) 663 – 7588 or bbeattie@nbccoalition.org.

Volunteers, tree committee members, and public works staff in both Greenfield and Montague have already been working to plant more trees in recent years. "This is an exciting opportunity for us to expand on the important work we have been doing to bring more trees to our neighborhoods and downtown streets," says Paul Raskevitz, Greenfield DPW Field Superintendent and Tree Warden.

The presence of trees in a neighborhood can increase walkability, slow down motorists, and even contribute to a sense of pride in a community. "This project will have a measurable, positive impact in Montague," says Walter Ramsey, Montague Town Planner. "It will make our villages and downtown more beautiful and more energy efficient for generations to come."

The Northern Berkshire Community Coalition (NBCC) is working in partnership with FLT to spearhead this project in North Adams. "North Adams is a city surrounded by beautiful mountains covered in trees, but our City’s center and its extended arms are lacking similarly established and healthy trees," says Amber Besaw, Executive Director of NBCC. "This project will make our sidewalks more enjoyable and walkable, help to cool our city in the warm summer months, as well as help create a desire among our residents to be stewards of our beautiful city and its neighborhoods."

Franklin Land Trust is honored to be a part of this ambitious and transformative project. Tree planting will begin in the spring of 2019, but we need your help! Contact FLT to see how you can get involved and visit the events page on our website for more tree planting volunteer opportunities.

Do you live in Greenfield, Montague or North Adams? Do you want a free tree?

Trees provide a multitude of benefits to the people who live near them. Trees improve air and water quality, reduce energy costs, store carbon, curb stormwater runoff, and provide much needed shade in urban landscapes. Thanks to a grant from the U.S. Forest Service, Franklin Land Trust, in partnership with the MA Department of Conservation and Recreation, is working with local groups and municipal public works departments to plant 2400 trees in Greenfield, Montague, and North Adams in the next 3 years.

Small cities across the country are suffering from a loss of tree canopy cover, and a lack of funds to plant new trees. Many urban areas have high percentages of impervious surfaces, such as paved roads, sidewalks, or parking lots that reflect heat and don’t allow water to seep into the ground beneath. This is leading to what is called the “Urban Heat Island Effect,” referring to significantly higher temperatures in urban areas compared to surrounding rural towns. To make matters worse, climate change is driving average temperatures up making it harder for city streets to cool down, even at night.

Trees can help to mitigate the effects of climate change by shading sidewalks, parking lots, and buildings in the hot summer months. Thanks to this grant funding, downtown streets lacking tree canopy cover in Greenfield, Montague, and North Adams will soon see the many benefits that trees can bring.

We need your help! Contact FLT to learn about how you can get involved.

Hannah Harvester is a painter and print maker living in Conway, MA. Her work is a meditation on the small miracles of our planet. She will be making tree prints to benefit the tree planting project by donating 10% of her proceeds to FLT.

Her work is for sale at HannahHarvester.com.
Seeing the Forest for the Trees

NOTES FROM MWI

Woodland management plays an important role in the health and resilience of our forested lands. Through the efforts of MWI’s board and staff, we partner with community members, landowners, conservation organizations, state and federal agencies to provide funds for landowners to create plans for timber and wildlife management for their woods. We partner with the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), USDA NRCS to give forest landowners management tools that benefit wildlife and create resilient landscapes that can withstand the impacts of a changing climate.

With researched based knowledge, we can support the natural landscape, and make sound decisions in the face of rapid change.

Visit www.masswoodlands.org to learn more about managing your woodlands.

Leaving a Legacy

Charlie Cohn, past treasurer of the Franklin Land Trust Board of Directors, bought 70 acres of the Dean Farm in the Patten District in Shelburne in 2016 for the sole purpose of conserving it. This stunning hay, maple and old apple farm has frontage on Dragon Brook with cold water fisheries, an old farm pond, good hilltown farm soils and an abandoned orchard that supports a wide variety of wildlife.

The Patten District was home to Charlie and his wife Kiki. Protecting the scenic views and rural character of this iconic New England Landscape was a lifetime goal for Charlie, especially as the neighborhood was under increasing pressure to develop. With frontage on Patten Road, the Dean Farm could have been converted into four house lots, forever changing this beloved landscape. But thanks to Charlie and Kiki’s generous donation of a conservation restriction, the Dean Farm will remain undeveloped forever. Sadly, Charlie passed away before he could see the farm officially conserved, but FLT staff worked with Kiki to fulfill his wishes, conserving 20 acres on the west side of the farm in 2018 and creating a plan to conserve the remaining 50 acres in the next few years.

Scenic Byway

The Massachusetts Scenic Byway Program, funded by Federal Highway Funds through the MA Highway Department, was a collaborative effort to preserve and enhance the Connecticut River Scenic Farm Byway and the Mohawk Trail Scenic Byway. This program began in 2008 and concluded in 2018. FLT has been part of the Scenic Byway program from the very beginning, working in partnership with Franklin Regional Council of Governments, the MA Department of Conservation and Recreation, the MA Department of Agricultural Resources, and the MA Highway Department to protect land along these byways that were recognized for their agricultural, archeological, cultural, historic, recreational and scenic qualities.

With your support, FLT worked with dedicated landowners to conserve a total of 242 acres of land along Scenic Byway routes in 2018. These lands include a 16-acre horse farm in Montague, 124 acres of farmland and forest in Shelburne, 97 acres of woodlands and public trails in Ashfield, and 5 of the most photographed acres in the Pioneer Valley to the northeast of the French King Bridge.

FLT will highlight the Scenic Byway Program and the important rural landscapes and scenic views protected through this program in our fall 2019 newsletter. Stay tuned!
As you travel through the Franklin County hilltowns you can’t help but notice the rolling landscape, laced with rivers and streams, fields and forests. Seemingly never-ending blocks of forests, home to stately pine and maple, are interrupted by pastures and fields of all shapes and sizes. In many ways it seems unchanged. Our forests, streams and fields offer a sense of stability in an ever changing and chaotic world.

However, if we look at this landscape with a longer time scale than our own, we notice that this landscape has undergone tremendous changes over time, and that we live in a very dynamic place. Much of what we take for granted as always being here was not. Our woods have a historic pattern of cutting and regrowth. In fact, most of the forested land you see today has been cut, not just once but twice, in the last two centuries. In the early 1800’s our forested land was nearly deforested to make way for farming and agriculture. When farming declined in the mid 1800’s, our forests re-grew. In the early 1900’s our forests were cut again to feed industries like tanneries, charcoal pits, and the growing demands for wood products in our region. As industry shifted, our forests re-grew again.

Reaction to the seemingly wholesale destruction of our forests in the early 20th century brought about scientific resource management research in new forestry schools such as Yale, Harvard and Land Grant Universities. These institutions produced early conservation giants like Aldo Leopold, Gifford Pinchot, and Bob Marshal, who brought a scientific, practitioner’s voice to the literary observations of Thoreau and Muir. It is within this crucible that land conservation was born.

When we look at our landscape, we recognize one fact. Our native forests are resilient. If you have ever tried to keep a field open, you quickly realize how hard that actually is, as pine, birch and aspen race to the sun. Our forests have evolved with significant disturbance from hurricanes and ice storms, to beavers and pathogens. Our forest’s tree species are constantly using their competition strategies to fight for sunlight, in large openings or small. However, our resilient forests haven’t seen much in the way of disturbance in the last 100 years. Fire and beaver activity have been largely suppressed, and land tenure and parcel fragmentation has reduced forestry activity. This has led to a decline in younger forests, which in turn has led to a decline in wildlife species that need the food, cover and nesting grounds that young forests provide. Birds like ruffed grouse and woodcock are in significant decline, due to a lack of young forests in our region. The State Wildlife Action Plan identifies only 4% of our upland landscape as young forest, while the ideal young forest distribution should be closer to 15%.

Thanks to a MassWildlife Habitat Management Grant from the Department of Fish and Game, with support from the Ruffed Grouse Society, the American Woodcock Society and the Wildlife Management Institute, FLT is working to create 17.5 acres of important young forest habitat at FLT’s Guyette Farm Conservation Area by cutting trees to create openings in the forest. These openings will allow new trees to grow, in the same way that our fields returned to forests when they were abandoned 100 years ago.

Young forest habitat makes up only 3% of the area within a 2-mile radius of Guyette Farm, the rest of the landscape is developed land, open fields or closed woods. Within 5 years these 17.5 acres will be bustling with wildlife activity. Young hardwood trees will be growing amidst shrubs and fruiting plants, and wildlife will be nesting and feeding on these young plants. The creation of this young forest habitat will complement FLT’s ongoing management practices at the Guyette Farm, including the management of grassland and shrubland habitat, invasive plant monitoring and removal, pollinator planting, and the wildland area of mature forest that will never be cut.

Just as diversity in an ecosystem is important, so is diversity in adaptive forest management goals and techniques. As climate change threatens habitats with more significant weather events, changes in our growing seasons, migration of species and exposure to invasive species, pests and pathogens, it is important to create a diversity of habitats to help make a landscape more resilient in a time of uncertainty.

Much of the area surrounding Guyette Farm is open fields or closed woods. Young forest habitat is largely lacking in the greater landscape.

We’re re-building the barn and we need your help!

Although the main Guyette barn found a new home elsewhere on our New England landscape, the original Guyette ell, which was an additional wing attached to the main barn, was dismantled and stored in hope of a future raising.

Now’s the time to make the dream of raising the barn a reality. We need your help to rebuild it on its original site, with all of its former glory!

Using wood means that trees are cut somewhere. Fortunately, the current wildlife habitat improvement project happening on the Guyette Farm will generate a local source of timber to be used in the barn’s re-construction. In Massachusetts, we import 98% of our wood products, which requires higher transportation energy costs and emissions. By using wood sourced from the Guyette Farm, FLT will greatly reduce the environmental footprint of the barn.

Once reconstructed, the barn will serve as an event and workshop space for FLT, the Raspberry Hill Garden and the community.

You can help us rebuild this barn by sending a tax-deductible donation to:

Franklin Land Trust, P.O. Box 450
Shelburne Falls, MA 01370
or by donating online at:
www.franklinlandtrust.org/guyette
Events

Thursday, April 18 | 6–8pm
Westfield State University
Horace Mann Center

Planning for the Future of Your Land
Creating a plan for the future of your land and figuring out your options can be an overwhelming process. Come to this workshop for an overview of essential estate planning tools that help you accomplish your goals, whether they are minimizing taxes, passing the land on to the next generation, or keeping it open and undeveloped in the future. You’ll hear from a local estate planning attorney, and Franklin Land Trust staff, followed by your questions. A light dinner will be served.

RSVP REQUIRED
Please reserve your seat in advance

Friday, May 24 | 8–10am
Elmer & Mary Sherman Conservation Area
Heath

Birds in a Young Forest
Join bird watcher and conservationist Mara Silver for a bird walk at FLT’s Elmer and Mary Sherman Conservation Area. This property was harvested according to a Bird Habitat Assessment through DCR’s Foresters for the Birds Program in the winter of 2018. Come see how this new young forest is attracting birds and other wildlife. Mara Silver has been studying swallows and other birds for 30 years. She holds a master’s degree in Wildlife and Fisheries Conservation and worked throughout New England and Canada on swallow conservation projects.

RSVP REQUESTED

Saturday, April 27 | 10am–12pm | Plainfield

Guyette Farm Earth Day Celebration!
Join Franklin Land Trust Board and Staff members for an Earth Day celebration at Guyette Farm. Take a free tree home to plant in your yard, build a blue bird box to attract more birds to your neighborhood, and go for a hike on the Guyette Farm nature trails. Come prepared to be outside! Light refreshments will be served.

KIDS AND FAMILIES WELCOME
RSVP REQUESTED

Saturday, June 15 | 1–4pm
Apex Orchards, Shelburne

Retirement Party!
Join us in celebrating Rich Hubbard and his many and meaningful accomplishments as FLT’s Executive Director. We will gather at beautiful Apex Orchards on June 15th and celebrate Rich’s legacy of land conservation over drinks and appetizers. Enjoy the stunning view as we raise a glass to a man who has devoted his career to protecting the land we love.

ALL ARE WELCOME
RSVP REQUIRED

Can’t join us? Feel free to share stories and photographs to: mlsabourin@franklinlandtrust.org
Your support matters.
Thank YOU for making a difference!

Last Call!

FLT’s Voluntary Public Access Program (VPA) is in its final year. This program is funded through the United States Department of Agriculture’s Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) and will pay landowners in the northwestern part of the state to allow public access on their land for hunting, fishing, wildlife viewing, and hiking.

Through this program, landowners can choose between a temporary 10 year or permanent public access easement. Additionally, landowners can also choose between a full access easement on all or most of their property, or a trail easement. Funding rates will vary depending on the amount of land, enrolled in the VPA program.

Visit www.franklinlandtrust.org/vpa to learn more about this program.