



METACOMET LAND TRUST

Annual Report And notice of the **Annual Meeting and Program**

Saturday, November 22, 2008

5:30 p.m.

Franklin Elks Lodge, 1077 Pond Street, Franklin MA

“Young people, I want to beg of you always keep your eyes open to what Mother Nature has to teach you. By so doing you will learn many valuable things every day of your life.”

George Washington Carver

The Metacomet Land Trust is a non-profit conservation organization dedicated to the protection of open space and natural resources in the communities of South Central Massachusetts.”

Mission statement approved in 1999 and re-affirmed April 25, 2002

The Metacomet Land Trust, PO Box 231, Franklin MA 02038
1-888-298-7284 www.metacometlandtrust.org

October 2008

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

In 1988 a handful of far-sighted individuals in Bellingham, Blackstone and Franklin saw the need to create a mechanism whereby land -- our most precious resource -- could be saved as private or public open space. But for what? Little did they know then that at the turn of the century the Blackstone Valley and southern Norfolk County would experience an unprecedented building boom. Many of our farms and forests rapidly became subdivisions in bed room communities that housed workers traveling to Boston on a daily basis.

The boom has since peaked but we learned some valuable lessons along the way. We learned that protecting open space is a 21st century obligation that we are committed to pursue for the children of the future. That from the Lake Manchaug Greenway and Wildlife Corridor in Sutton to the Lady Bug Trail in Franklin, people and children need the outdoors to explore, enjoy and most importantly, to find themselves.

We learned that our wildlife and our fight to deal with climate change hinges on how much the earth is left to heal itself. From the Blackstone Gorge and the forests surrounding the Daniels Farm in Blackstone to the Boria Farm fields and forests in Sutton, our conservation properties are there *in perpetuity* to help it do just that.

And we recognized that people can work with the land and still protect it, too. We own seven house lots in Franklin where affordable housing helps people live in a great community. We also hold conservation restrictions (CRs) on acres in Bellingham along the Charles River, acreage in Sutton and Upton where families live, more in Uxbridge where horses are trained and still more in Wrentham as a Christmas tree farm.

We have learned, in the last twenty years, that as an organization we can be creative with the tools available to us. We are bridge builders and problem solvers. We are stronger than we ever thought we could be.

As we enter our 20th year we are celebratory but we are also humbled. It is an incredible responsibility to own and steward these properties. As a board, we look to do the very best for these lands. Our resources might be limited, public sympathies short, time fleeting. But we persevere. We love this land and, as our mission says, we are dedicated to the protection of open space and natural resources.

Celebrate with us and then join our efforts. Volunteer to help monitor and steward our lands. Step up to help us maintain and grow our membership. Contribute your time, your money and your influence. Protecting land is a choice and what better investment could we make in our future than to invest in our own communities.

Sincerely,
Lisa Moczynski
President, Metacomet Land Trust

Metacomet Land Trust is a tax-exempt conservation organization and serves Bellingham, Blackstone, Douglas, Franklin, Mendon, Millville, Norfolk, Upton, Uxbridge, Sutton and Wrentham

MLT Annual Meeting Minutes
Thursday, November 29, 2007

Location: Upton Senior Center 1 Centennial Court, Upton

6:30 p.m. Finding a quorum of the membership present, President Cliff Matthews called the annual meeting to order and asked for nominations to the Board of Directors. Dick Lindstrom moved to nominate the slate of directors as follows:

William Bauser, Wrentham
Dianne Demarais, Wrentham
Susan Speers, Franklin
Nicholas Bik, Blackstone
Pat Nedoroscik, Sutton

Motion was seconded by Tom Bik and passed unanimously.

Tom Bik then moved to approve the minutes of the Annual Meeting of November 18, 2006. Anne Matthews seconded the motion and they were approved with a unanimous vote.

Tom Bik also moved to accept the 2006 Annual Report. Anne Matthews seconded. Treasurer Susan Speers pointed out that on the balance sheet under Liabilities and Capital the \$640,000 line reflected the approximate value of the land deeded to the Daniels Farm Foundation in that fiscal year. The motion passed with a unanimous vote.

President Cliff Matthews then informed the membership that he would be stepping down as president of the land trust after seven years. "It has been a great personal pleasure to serve the land conservation community," he said. He stated that he would continue to serve on the board and that new members were stepping up to serve. He thanked everyone for attending the meeting and announced that a program titled Horses and Land Trusts -- On the Same Trail exploring the relationships between land trusts and horse owners and riders would follow.

Dick Lindstrom moved to adjourn. Anne Matthews seconded the motion and it passed.

The annual meeting concluded at 6:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Mosczynski
Secretary

What is the Metacomet Land Trust?

The Metacomet Land Trust was founded in 1988 as a tax-exempt land conservation and environmental education organization. To date MLT has assisted in the permanent conservation of more than 1,300 acres of open space through a variety of protection techniques and has partnered with various state and local entities. The land trust owns 350 acres of open space that it protects and manages. Another 162 acres of privately owned land is protected by the land trust through permanent conservation restrictions.

In the community of Franklin, as an example, Metacomet owns 55 acres of open space with trails in the Franklin Woods area and the Lady Bug Trail outdoor classroom near the Kennedy School. In the town of Sutton, the Metacomet Land Trust has acquired ownership of a large tract of land in the proximity of the Blackstone River, the former Boria farm. This parcel, which has access to both municipal water and sewer, was once the site of a proposed large residential development. Through the efforts of the property owner and the land trust this land is preserved in its natural state.

Metacomet's first major land protection effort, more than fifteen years ago, in the Town of Blackstone resulted in the protection of the Blackstone Gorge. This site, now part of a Bi-State Park, is a beautiful conservation and recreation resource.

In a unique affordable housing program created with the Town of Franklin, Metacomet owns seven house lots which are permanently restricted for affordable, owner-occupied single family homes. MLT has worked with the Town of Mendon, helping to preserve 427 acres of open space. There are trails for hiking, biking and horseback riding and the land is also used for camping by the Boy Scouts.

Abutting these acres in Mendon is land in the Town of Blackstone that the Metacomet Land Trust has helped to preserve, creating an area of more than 800 acres of permanent open space. Included in this greenway is 130 acres of land owned by Metacomet that is filled with beautiful wooded trails surrounding the spectacular hilltop Daniels Farm house and barns; those buildings are owned and managed by the Daniels Farmstead Foundation, Inc.

Metacomet's coverage area includes Franklin, Bellingham, Blackstone, Douglas, Mendon, Millville, Norfolk, Sutton, Upton, Uxbridge and Wrentham. Each of those communities has invited the Metacomet Land Trust to represent and assist them in land preservation and affordable housing issues.

“In every walk with nature, one receives far more than he seeks.”

John Muir
Founder, the Sierra Club

Did you notice our new logo on the cover page and below? Designed by graphic artis Carolyn Letvin to honor Metacomet's 20 years and counting commitment to land conservation, preservation, education and affordable housing. Metacomet's new logo will appear on our correspondence, website, newsletters, hats and bags!



How does the Metacomet Land Trust Operate?

The Metacomet Land Trust is governed by a Board of Directors. Our Board of Directors includes representatives from towns throughout the service area, each of whom brings years of experience in local conservation and planning. Monthly meetings are held, usually at the Mendon Senior Center, and additional meetings are held as needed.

From the onset, MLT board members have provided key support and technical assistance for a variety of state and community projects, such as planning for the Southern New England Trunkline Trail (SNETT), a rail trail which stretches from the Franklin State Forest to the Douglas State Forest, planning for the Providence to Worcester Bikeway, securing a trail easement from the Whitinsville Water Company for land contiguous to the Lake Manchaug Greenway and Wildlife Corridor in Sutton, and providing assistance to the Open Space Committees and Conservation Commissioners in our region.

Members of the Board of Directors serve three year terms. Current members are:

President Lisa Moczynski, Douglas	(term expires 2008)
Vice-President Tom Bik, Blackstone	(term expires 2009)
Treasurer Susan Speers, Franklin	(term expires 2010)
Secretary Patricia Nedoroscik, Sutton	(term expires 2010)
Andy Backman, Blackstone	(term expires 2009)
Nicholas Bik, Blackstone	(term expires 2010)
Dianne Demarais, Wrentham	(term expires 2010)
Barry Lariviere, Bellingham	(term expires 2008)
Anne Matthews, Bellingham	(term expires 2008)
Mike Penko, Upton	(term expires 2009)
Larry Rettman, Franklin	(term expires 2008)
William Bauser, Wrentham	(term expires 2009)

**PROPERTIES IN WHICH METACOMET LAND TRUST
HOLDS AN INTEREST
As of September 30, 2008**

OPEN LAND: Our total open land acreage currently stands at 337 acres.

10.5 acres off Dawn Marie Circle, Franklin: conservation land.

41.8 acres off Lincoln Street, Franklin: within Franklin Woods open space subdivision.

1.75 acres, Coronation Drive, Franklin: outdoor classroom used by Kennedy Elementary School and Stony Brook Wildlife Sanctuary. Dedicated to Alfred S. Ferguson in May 2000.

3.2 acres, Central Turnpike, Sutton: conservation area.

130 acres, The Daniels Farm, Mendon Street, Blackstone: The land trust retains ownership of the 130 acres of woodland for open space and trails originally donated by Doris Daniels King in 1998. In June 2007, we conveyed a permanent conservation restriction on approximately 127 acres to the Mass Department of Fish and Game. The CR allows for future construction of an educational center and office. A 3-acre lot south on Mendon Street is not included in the CR.

126.9 acres off Chase Road in Sutton and Millbury: conservation land

6.5 acres on Putnam Hill Road, Sutton, donated by James and Marina Gvazdauskas, January 2001: conservation area.

9 acres on Manchaug Road in Sutton, donated by Otco, Inc. in November, 2001: conservation land.

6 acres off Manchaug Road in Sutton, donated by John & Donna Couture, December 2002: conservation land

CONSERVATION RESTRICTIONS: total acreage under permanent restriction is 162 acres

27 acres at the Hancock Christmas Tree Farm, 508 Hancock Street, Wrentham, donated by Bill and Joyce Marland, December 28, 2005

11.7 acres on Charles River, off Plymouth Road, Bellingham: owned by the Bellingham Conservation Commission

62 acres, Chestnut Street, Upton: owned by the Bernat family

27 acres, Fox Fire Farm, Hazel Street, Uxbridge, owned by the Hanscom family

35 acres, Dan Griffiths Property, Sutton, now owned by new owners.

7 AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROPERTIES: House lots in Franklin owned by Metacomet Land Trust and leased to owners of affordable homes on each parcel, total acreage 4.8 acres

61 Lewis Street
195 School Street
891 Lincoln Street
608 Maple Street
4 Rolling Ridge Road
809 Summer Street
813 Summer Street

Metacomet Land Trust Annual Membership Meeting and 20th Anniversary Celebration

Please join us as we celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Metacomet Land Trust with a very special annual membership meeting on Saturday, November 22, 2008 at the Franklin Elks Lodge, located at 1077 Pond Street in Franklin MA.

The Agenda for the evening is as follows:

- 5:30 p.m. The Celebration begins with appetizers, music, a cash bar, silent auction, and a series of displays by invited partners and friends of the Metacomet Land Trust.
- 6:30 p.m. Annual meeting with approval of minutes from last year's meeting, election of Board of Directors, and special recognition of the founding members of the Metacomet Land Trust. There will also be special recognition of special groups and people who are striving to better their environment in several Metacomet communities.
Board of Directors slate of nominees: Lisa Mosczynski, Douglas; Barry Lariviere, Bellingham; Anne Matthews, Bellingham; Larry Rettman, Franklin; and Laurie Salmon, Northbridge, member at large.
- 7:00 p.m. Featured speaker Todd McLeish.
The Metacomet Land Trust is proud to feature **Todd McLeish**, a Rhode Island based author who has been writing about wildlife and environmental issues for 20 years. In addition to authoring more than 100 newspaper and magazine articles Mr. McLeish also works as a science writer and publicist for the University of Rhode Island. He will be speaking about his first book, "Golden Wings and Hairy Toes".

Golden Wings and Hairy Toes: Encounters with New England's Most Imperiled Wildlife

The first book by natural history writer Todd McLeish profiles fourteen of New England's most rare and endangered flora and fauna — mammals, birds, insects, plants, and fish — by following the biologists who are researching, monitoring, and protecting them. Each chapter includes a first-person account of the author's experience with these experts, as well as details about the species' life history, threats, and conservation strategies. Todd traps bats in Vermont and lynx in Maine, gets attacked by marauding birds in Massachusetts, and observes the metamorphosis of dragonflies in Rhode Island. He visits historical cemeteries to see New England's rarest plant, tracks sturgeon in the Connecticut River, and observes a parade of one of the rarest mammals on earth, the North Atlantic right whale, in Cape Cod Bay.

"Golden Wings and Hairy Toes" clearly demonstrates that each rare species has an important story to tell about the causes of its population decline, the obstacles each face in rebuilding a sustainable population, and the people who go to extraordinary lengths to give these species a chance to thrive.

- 8:00 p.m. Anniversary Cake and Coffee

Please join us as we celebration 20 years of preservation, conservation, and education and honor the efforts made by founding members and ordinary citizens. Suggested donation is \$ 10.00 which is payable at the door. For additional information or to RSVP, please call 1-888-298-7284 or visit our website www.metacometlandtrust.org. We hope to see you there!

Metacomet Land Trust Inc.

Balance Sheet

September 30, 2008

Assets

Current Assets:

Operating Checking	10,695.68	
Aff Housing Land Purchase	37,518.78	
CR Protection Endowment	7,123.26	
CR Endow CD	5,506.00	
SNETT Special Project	1,251.32	
Lake Manchaug Projects	3,299.29	
Upton Project Fund	676.62	
Wrentham Land Preservation Fund	4,373.54	
Lease Fees Receivable	262.50	
Prepaid Expenses	2,697.93	
Total Current Assets		\$ 73,406.72

Property and Equipment

Equipment	1,842.56	
Accumulated Depreciation	(1,467.04)	
Land/Affordable House Lots	341,707.00	
Land Open Space	1,159,192.00	
Total Property and Equipment		\$ 1,501,274.52

Other Assets

Total Other Assets		\$ 0
Total Assets		\$ 1,574,681.24

Liabilities and Capital

Current Liabilities:

Accounts Payable	48,098.23	
Accrued Expenses	2,000.93	
Total Current Liabilities		\$ 50,099.16

Long Term Liabilities

Total Long Term liabilities		\$ 0.00
Total Liabilities		\$ 50,099.16

Capital

Retained earnings	10,901.93	
Unrestricted funds	2,251.03	
Board designated DF	3,007.69	
Board designated CR enforcement	2,000.00	
Temporarily restricted	27,425.80	
Permanently restricted	1,470,527.05	
Net Income	8,468.58	
Total Capital		\$ 1,524,582.08

Total Capital and Liabilities		\$ 1,574,681.24
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Unaudited—for management purposes only

Metacomet News and Notes

Website---the Metacomet Land Trust website is continuing to evolve. Please check it out at www.metacometlandtrust.org and let us know of any suggestions or inclusions that you would like to see. The website is for the benefit of our members and the nearly 100,000 residents who live within the land trust towns.

Outreach---On March 31st Metacomet Land Trust made a visitation outreach presentation to the **Blackstone Conservation Commission**. We met with Jim and Maggie Plasse, Larry Cannata, Lisa Brita and Jim Pitier and had a very informative discussion regarding our mutual interests and needs. This meeting was so successful that the Blackstone Conservation Commission as a whole has become members of the Metacomet Land Trust.

Metacomet also met with the **Sutton Conservation Commission** in March of 2008. This meeting was also very successful with an informative discussion about the land trust and the services that it continues to provide to the Town of Sutton.

Metacomet has renewed its good relationship and partnership with the **Manchaug Pond Association**, a partnership first started under the leadership of former Sutton MLT representative and conservation friend John Duff.

In Douglas, Metacomet assisted with a **Water Quality Issues and Water Testing Forum** on April 10th.

Metacomet assisted at **Franklin's Earth Day celebration** and had a display at the rain soaked May 16th **National Heritage Corridor annual meeting** at the Blackstone River and Canal State Park.

Legislation---In 2008 the Metacomet Land Trust was part of the successful lobbying for the **Environmental Bond Bill** which has been signed by the Governor. MLT is also involved in the pursuit of legislation relating to the Community Preservation Act, Surplus Land, Expiring Use, No Net Loss, Environmental Justice, establishing Massachusetts Land Conservation incentives, and affordable housing.

Farm Tour---On Saturday, September 13th Metacomet conducted its 1st Farm to Farm Tour. Beginning at the Brigham Hill Community Barn in Grafton, the site of the Community Harvest Project, guests traveled to Sweetwilliam Farm in Upton, an organic farm and the site of the CSA (Community Supported Agriculture), to Foppema's Farm in Northbridge, an APR farm and a recent recipient of a Rural Development Grant for alternative energy, lunched at historic Waters Farm in West Sutton, toured a dairy operation conducted by the fourth and fifth generations at Whittier's Farm in Sutton, and ended at Keown Orchards in Sutton, also a multi-generational and APR farm. The tour was very successful and well received; one guest commented "What an opportunity to tour these farms, speak to the farmers and to develop a clear understanding of the commitment made not only by the farmers but by all involved in the Metacomet Land Trust".

Strategic Planning Grant---Through a grant funded by the Massachusetts Land Trust Coalition, Metacomet has been working with Nanette Robicheau of TDC of Boston MA. The strategic planning is ongoing and is dealing with topics such as a review of the mission statement, organizational strengths and weaknesses, stewardship, resource management, education, affordable housing, fund raising and finances, and community outreach.

Stewardship and Protected Lands

The responsibility of a land trust extends further than just conserving priority lands. Conserved land is an investment in the environment. As with all investments, it needs constant vigilance, attention and care.

Land trusts, as well as Conservation Commissions and Open Space Committees in each town, have the added responsibility to maintain their investment to keep it in the natural state it is intended for.

Each year, Metacomet members conducts “site walks” or “stewardship visits” for the land that is protected by the land trust. “Stewardship” simply means, “people taking care of the Earth.” Stewardship for the land trust is the responsibility to monitor and protect that land which they govern.

To accomplish this, “stewardship visits” are carefully planned to examine the condition of the land. Each site is reviewed in the same way to carefully take note of new or existing wildlife habitats, tree and plant life, human encroachment, such as boundary issues, trash problems or illegal activities. Repair work is typically done within budget to maintain each area.

One of Metacomet’s goals this year is to involve interested members from each community in the stewardship of MLT properties. We encourage you to contact the Board of Directors on how you can participate in the stewardship program. Our hope for this coming year is to encourage flexible arrangements for management of resources in each community that we service.

And.....our sincere thanks to all of you for *Conserving Your Land*

As you consider the future of your land and the wildlife that live around you, we encourage you to consider the contribution your land makes to a healthy ecosystem. Your land -- farm fields, woods, wetlands, or river frontage – provides habitat for the native plants and animals of our region and also helps keep our air and water clean. It is a lasting contribution to a healthy environment for tomorrow’s children. The Metacomet Land Trust is here to assist you with your conservation efforts whether “your land” is hundreds of acres or your back yard. Please contact us with your questions, concerns, and suggestions for programs that would assist you with your conservation efforts.

To join or renew your membership in the land trust, please fill in below and mail to
Metacomet Land Trust, P.O. Box 231, Franklin, MA 02038

Senior/ Student Member \$ 10.00 _____
General Individual Member \$ 25.00 _____
Family Membership \$ 50.00 _____
Business/Corporate Member \$ 100.00 _____
Friend of Conservation \$ 100.00 _____

I would like to make an additional gift to the Metacomet Land Trust. Please apply my gift towards:

The Land Projects Staff Campaign _____ As needed _____
Other (please specify) _____

NAME(S): _____

ADDRESS: _____

TELEPHONE _____

EMAIL: _____

If you would like to discuss a bequest to Metacomet Land Trust,
please call Board President Lisa Moczynski at (888) 298-7284.

Proxy Vote:

If you are not able to attend the annual meeting, you may fill out and return this portion as your proxy ballot. This will count toward the required quorum of 20 voting members or 20% of all dues paying members (whichever is larger). Your proxy instructs Lisa Moczynski, President, or Tom Bik, Vice President, to cast your vote in the election of board members, the approval of last year's meeting minutes, and approval of this year's Annual Report.

METACOMET LAND TRUST 2008 ANNUAL MEETING MEMBER PROXY

I authorize MLT Board President Lisa Moczynski or Vice President Tom Bik to exercise my vote at the 2008 Annual Meeting for the ELECTION OF BOARD MEMBERS, APPROVAL OF 2007 MEETING MINUTES, and APPROVAL OF THE 2008 ANNUAL REPORT.

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

Please mail your proxy to Metacomet Land Trust, PO Box 231, Franklin, MA 02038 to arrive by Wednesday, November 19, 2008.