

The Metacomet Land Trust Annual Report

October 1, 2006 to September 30, 2007

and notice of the
Annual Meeting and Program

Thursday, November 29, 2007

6:30 p.m.

Upton Senior Center, 1 Centennial Court, Upton



*“The oaks and the pines and their brethren of the wood
Have seen so many suns rise and set, so many
seasons come and go
And so many generations pass into silence
That we may well wonder what the “story of the
trees” would be to us
If they had tongues to tell it or if we had ears fine
enough to understand.”*

Author unknown

*“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 2007

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

In January of 2007, your land trust's Board of Directors met for a strategic planning session at which time the board members identified several important goals to be accomplished by this year's end. These goals would be held separate from Metacomet Land Trust's regular operations and projects or requests for information and review from our members or communities that we serve.

I am proud to report that progress has been made in achieving most of those goals. A Conservation Restriction has been recorded with the Department of Fisheries and Wildlife preserving in perpetuity, 130 acres at the Daniels Farm in Blackstone while reserving MLT's right to build a future environmental education center. Our capital campaign to secure staff has reached 75% of its goal. Only \$5,000 remains to be raised. The Board is currently working on five separate land preservation projects in the towns of Blackstone, Mendon, and Uxbridge. In addition to these activities, we have made substantial headway in updating the Metacomet Land Trust website. Please visit www.MetacometLandTrust.org and see for yourselves!

I would like to extend to all of our members as well as interested members of the public an invitation to join us for our annual meeting on Thursday, November 29th at the Upton Senior Center, 1 Centennial Court, just off Route 140. A brief business meeting at 6:30 PM will be followed at 7:00 PM by our program, "Horses and Land Trusts: On the Same Trail!" an interactive panel discussion including equestrians and members of the land preservation community.

It is necessary to continue our important work! Please renew your membership for the year 2008. Additional donations are gratefully accepted and assure that we will continue with the mandate you have given us.

On behalf of the Board of Directors for Metacomet Land Trust, I thank you for your past support and once again, warmly extend an invitation to attend our Annual Meeting on Thursday evening, November 29th. If you cannot attend due to prior commitments, please return the proxy ballot so that we have the required quorum voting on matters before the membership!

Sincerely,

Clifford A. Matthews
President

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

Metacomet Land Trust
2006 Annual Membership Meeting
Minutes
November 18, 2006
Sutton Senior Center, Sutton, MA

A quorum being present, President Cliff Matthews called the meeting to order at 1:44 p.m. at the Sutton Senior Center. Cliff gave an overview of the organization and of the need to fill the Board of Directors' seats.

Minutes: Tom Bik moved that the minutes of the November 12, 2005, annual meeting be accepted. Richard Lindstrom seconded the motion which passed by unanimous vote.

Annual Report: Richard Lindstrom moved to approve the Annual Report as submitted with a second from Tom Bik. Motion passed unanimously.

Nomination of Directors: Susan Speers moved, with a second from Richard Lindstrom, to accept the following slate of nominees presented for the Board of Directors: Mike Penko of Upton, Cliff Matthews of Bellingham, Tom Bik of Blackstone, and Andy Backman of Blackstone all to be re-elected to three year, at-large terms. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

No nominations for open lease holder seats were heard from the floor and President Matthews noted that they would remain open.

Susan Speers announced that there were new IRS guidelines outlining procedures on donations. She also pointed out that there were cards on the tables entitling meeting participants to 10% off of merchandise at Nature's Room, a retailer supporting MLT work. Members were also urged to participate in the raffle being conducted for a basket of items donated by the Bird Shed and other members.

Tom Bik moved to adjourn and Susan Speers seconded the motion. The annual membership meeting adjourned at 1:54 p.m. with an invitation for all to stay and enjoy a presentation program by Ken MacKenzie, Coordinator of the *MassWildlife* Landowner Incentive Program (LIP).

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Moczynski
Secretary

Think globally and act locally!

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.

"Most of the time open space land only comes on our radar when it is gone. We can ride by it a thousand times and take for granted that it is there and then when we ride by and see a foundation on the land or a road being constructed we realize its true importance to our lives."

LNS



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.

Current members of the Board of Directors are:

President Cliff Matthews, Bellingham	(term expires 2009)
Vice-President Tom Bik, Blackstone	(term expires 2009)
Treasurer Susan Speers, Franklin	(term expires 2007)
Secretary Lisa Moczynski, Douglas	(term expires 2008)
Andy Backman, Blackstone	(term expires 2009)
Nicholas Bik, Blackstone	(term expires 2007)
Dianne Demarais, Wrentham	(term expires 2007)
Barry Lariviere, Bellingham	(term expires 2008)
Anne Matthews, Bellingham	(term expires 2008)
Pat Nedoroscik, Sutton	(term expires 2007)
Mike Penko, Upton	(term expires 2009)
Larry Rettman, Franklin	(term expires 2008)

**PROPERTIES IN WHICH METACOMET LAND TRUST
HOLDS AN INTEREST
As of September 30, 2007**

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

Please join us at our annual meeting on Thursday, November 29, 2007 at the Upton Senior Center. The Senior Center is located at 1 Centennial Court in Upton MA. The meeting will begin at 6:30 p.m. Directions are on page 10.

Agenda:

- Approval of minutes of annual meeting of November 19, 2006
- Approval of annual report
- Nominations and election of officers and Board Members

Current Board Members up for re-election are: Nick Bik, Blackstone, Susan Speers, Franklin, Pat Nedoroscik, Sutton and Dianne Demarais, Wrentham. Bill Bauser of Wrentham has asked for appointment to the Board. There are also three vacancies of varying terms representing the leaseholders of our property in Franklin. After any leaseholder candidates are elected, these vacancies may be filled from the general membership.

All land trust members or leaseholders are encouraged to stand for election so that we may have voting representatives of the towns we serve. If you would like to know more about the time commitment or board activities, please contact Cliff Matthews, Susan Speers or Lisa Moczynski.

- Adjournment of annual meeting and start of program

“Horses and Land Trusts: On the Same Trail!”

Horse Farms, Trail Riders, and the Conservation Community

Discuss our mutual concerns for the environment Immediately following annual meeting

Panel: Cliff Matthews, MLT Board President; Ann Hanscom, Fox Fire Farm, Uxbridge; Annie Eldridge, Equestrian Land Conservation Resource and Cap Kane, Wildlands Trust, of Duxbury; Karen Fleming-Brooks, BSTRA and Grafton Land Trust ; and Becky Kalagher, President of the Bay State Trail Riders Association, of Douglas.

Join us for a friendly discussion of the common goals and needs of horse owners and trail riders and the conservation community. We believe there is a new, strengthening and evolving partnership between owners of trail riders and private horse farms with conservationists, due in part to the continuing increase in land values in central Massachusetts.

What do horse owners want and need for their animals? What do land trusts need to protect habitat and farmland? We will explore the ways our two communities are learning to cooperate for mutual benefit and spark new ideas for partnerships.

(Both the Hanscom and the Eldridge-Kane properties have been permanently preserved through conservation restrictions. Metacomet works with Ann & John Hanscom to protect Fox Fire Farm and the Wildlands Trust of Southeastern Massachusetts works with the Anne Eldridge and Cap Kane to protect Setters Run Farm.)

Metacomet Land Trust Inc.

Balance Sheet September 30, 2007

Assets

Current Assets:

Operating Checking	39,565.07
Aff Housing Land Purchase	4,657.22
CR Protection Endowment	7,020.19
CR Endow CD	5,006.51
SNETT Special Project	1,245.07
Lake Manchaug Projects	3,253.93
Upton Project Fund	673.20
Wrentham Land Preservation Fund	4,441.98
Lease Fees Receivable	171.50
Prepaid Expenses	2,276.94
Board designated CR Enforce	(2,000.00)

Total Current Assets \$ 66,311.61

Property and Equipment

Furniture and Fixtures	79.60
Equipment	3,902.45
Farm Equipment	2,457.00
Daniels Farm Land & Building	1,473,500.00
Daniels Farm Improvements	1,685.00
Accumulated Depreciation	(5,130.45)
Land/Affordable House Lots	341,707.00
Land Open Space	458,300.00

Total Property and Equipment \$ 2,276,500.60

Other Assets

Total Other Assets	\$ 0
Total Assets	\$ 2,342,812.21

Liabilities and Capital

Current Liabilities:

Accounts Payable	47,328.73
Accrued Expenses	1,482.54
Total Current Liabilities	\$ 48,811.27

Long Term Liabilities

Accrued Lawsuit Contingency	640,000.00
Total Long Term liabilities	\$ 640,000.00
Total Liabilities	\$ 688,811.27

Capital

Retained earnings	14,720.00
Unrestricted funds	52,592.36
Temporarily restricted	22,828.28
Permanently restricted	1,549,049.05
Net Income	14,811.25
Total Capital	\$ 1,654,000.94

Total Capital and Liabilities \$ 2,342,812.21

Unaudited—for management purposes only

Metacomet News

Website---thanks to board members spearheading the effort, the Metacomet Land Trust website is undergoing a complete renovation. 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.



Stewardship Project---as reported in an earlier newsletter Metacomet has started a Land Stewardship Project. As part of the trust's requirement when property is acquired either through ownership or a conservation restriction, members of the trust must periodically walk the land to personally view the property. This viewing allows us to ensure that no one is improperly infringing on the land and through such uses as building or dumping and also allows us to observe first hand what is happening on the land—new habitat or dangers to habitat, active vernal pools or streams drying up, healthy vegetation or invasive species.

Paige, Patrick and Ryan Salmon, along with their mother and grandmother, walked one of MLT's parcels in Sutton. This property is at the intersection of Central Turnpike which runs through Sutton from Oxford and Route 395 to Route 146 and Northbridge, and Manchaug Road. Paige and Patrick supplied the following reports to the land trust:

Recently, we walked the land trust parcels as part of our service requirement for Whitinsville Christian School. I was shocked to see the amount of trash along the side of the road. There were many Dunkin' Donuts and McDonalds bags, along with beer cans and bottles. It even looked like someone had dumped their household trash there. I was very shocked, and disgusted at the amount of trash on the land. And this is protected land! I can't help wondering what kind of trash is on unprotected and maintained land and I really feel like we should do something about it.

*Paige Salmon
Age 14*

I was happy to do the stewardship walk on the land off Central Turnpike. I didn't expect to find the amount of trash that we did. There were a lot of bottles, and beer cans as well as bags of trash that looked like it came from someone's house. I wonder if people think it's easier to throw trash out of their car than to take it to the dump where it belongs. We also found a lot of takeout trash from McDonalds and Dunkin Donuts. It seems as if people get food to go and throw the trash in the woods because keeping their car clean is more important than the environment. My siblings and I are sending letters to the management of both Dunkin Donuts and McDonalds asking them to spread the word about proper disposal of trash that comes from their restaurants. Hopefully more people think before they throw their trash in the woods and ruin our beautiful environment.

*Patrick Salmon
Age 14*

Paige, Patrick and Ryan wrote to both the local franchises and main offices of Dunkin' Donuts and McDonald's asking for their cooperation in reminding their customers about the proper disposal of litter.

If you would like to participate in the Stewardship Project please contact the land trust at info@metacometlandtrust.org or call our toll free number 1-888-298-7284.

Strategic Planning Session -- In early January the Board of Directors held a "Strategic Planning Session". Using a format commonly used by professional facilitators, the board focused on three questions—"what do you think the organization can create/do/make/build/save; my personal goal for my work with this organization is; to make these things happen we need". Education for landowners, additional focus on affordable housing in areas where it is lacking, and saving land were the common responses to the questions and fit in with the goals of the land trust established many years ago.

Four concrete goals came out of this Strategy Session:

1. To form a subcommittee to develop proposals for the Mendon Street, Blackstone property;
2. To obtain \$ 20,000.00 to hire a part time staff person;

3. To record the Division of Fish and Wildlife Conservation Restriction on the Daniels Farm property;
4. To complete at least one large Conservation Restriction or Conservation project before the end of 2007.

Goal One--The subcommittee noted has been created and is working on proposals for the use of that property.

Goal Two--The primary "need" identified by board directors was professional staff. Dedicated volunteers spend countless hours on all aspects of the operation of the trust, however, without professional staff functioning in a part time capacity the trust's ability to follow through on some projects is jeopardized, especially if the response must be time sensitive. The Board has received a grant from the Harper Foundation of \$ 7,500.00 that must be matched with local donations. Board members are in the process of raising the remaining \$ 5,000.00 towards the \$ 20,000.00 goal. Any assistance that members can provide towards this effort will be greatly appreciated.

Goal three--The Daniels Farm Conservation Restriction was recorded in the summer of 2007! Hurray! (see President's letter)

Goal Four--Board members have been working diligently with several landowners in Blackstone, Mendon, and Uxbridge who are interested in moving forward with major conservation projects.

Educational Fund:

The Board of Directors believes that the land trust should be a repository of educational materials and information for landowners. The Educational Fund is a campaign to raise funds for a separate budget line item that will be reserved for educational materials, programs and resources. The land trust has already received \$ 1,400 towards an ultimate goal of \$ 5,000.00 for that fund. Contributions are gratefully accepted.

Directions to the Upton Senior Center:

From 495

Exit 21 (towards Upton)

Follow West Main Street (AKA Hopkinton Road, High Street, and Hartford Avenue) to West Upton Center traffic light (140).

Turn right onto 140 North at the light

Travel 750 feet on 140 N and turn left onto Centennial Court

The Senior Center is at 1 Centennial Court.

From 140 S (i.e. Milford)

Follow 140 North to the traffic light at West Upton Center (Hartford Avenue).

Continue on 140 N for 750 feet and turn left onto Centennial Court

The Senior Center is at 1 Centennial Court.



We would like to express our sincere gratitude to the following friends for the support that they have given to the Metacomet Land Trust:

Professional Assistance Received From:

Karen LaRochelle, CPA, Franklin
Phil Truesdell & Daane Crook, MA Fish & Wildlife
Robert Levite, Esquire
Erick Anderberg, Esquire

Personal and Corporate Gifts Received From:

Strata Bank, Franklin
Northeast Ecological Services, Upton
C & S Lumber, Millbury
Dick Lindstrom, Sutton
Ellie Crothers, Franklin
Trust Design & Consulting, Franklin
Peter Keenan, Esquire, Millbury
Gary & Judi Vaillancourt, Sutton
Mike Penko, Upton
Russell Hook, Sutton
D.J. Salmon Lawn & Landscape, Uxbridge
Dana Gravison & Wendy Holst-Gravison, Sutton
Mary Anne Squillace, CPA, Franklin

Contributions to our Staff Campaign Received From:

The Lee and Annanette Harper Family Foundation
The Mazar Family Foundation
Air Safe Contracting, Wrentham
John & Ute Gannett, Mendon
Northeast Ecological Services, Upton
Leon & Shirley Moczynski, Douglas
Cliff & Anne Matthews, Bellingham
Robert & Susan Speers, Franklin
PGC Associates, Franklin
Paul & Pearl Cheli, Franklin
Tricia Diggins, Mendon
Jeff Nutting, Medway
Mary Anne Squillace, CPA, Franklin
Larry and Marge Rettman, Franklin
Stephen Johnson, Carpenter-Builder, Upton

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.



Water Conservation and How You Can Help

For several months much of New England, including our area, has experienced rainfall amounts that are much less than normal. In addition, we have all watched the news reports of the severe drought hitting all along the Atlantic States, and notably the Atlanta, Georgia area where the available supply of drinking water is being counted by days.

We can help to conserve our valuable and fragile water resources by becoming more conscious of the water that we use every day.

Here are a few tips that can be implemented to assist with water conservation:

- Turn off the water while brushing your teeth. Doing this will save 200 gallons of water a month for a family of four.
- Put a layer of mulch around trees and plants to slow down the water evaporation.
- Fix leaky faucets. One leaky faucet could waste up to 20 gallons of water each day.
- Install water saving shower heads or flow restrictors. Doing this could save between 500 to 800 gallons per month. While you're at it, time your showers to under five minutes for additional savings.
- Capture tap water while you are waiting for hot water to come through the pipes and use this to water your plants and garden.
- Volunteer to help clean up a body of water.
- Support and encourage water recycling projects in your community and do everything that you can to promote water conservation awareness.

Working together we can all make a difference in our nation's water consumption!

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 Cliff Matthews, 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 2007 ANNUAL MEETING MEMBER PROXY

I authorize MLT Board President Cliff Matthews or Vice President Tom Bik to exercise my vote at the 2007 Annual Meeting for the ELECTION OF BOARD MEMBERS, APPROVAL OF 2006 MEETING MINUTES, and APPROVAL OF THE 2007 ANNUAL REPORT.

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

Please mail your proxy to Metacomet Land Trust, PO Box 231, Franklin, MA 02038 to arrive by Wednesday, November 28, 2007.