

JULY 2025



MEMBER NEWSLETTER

Dudley Conservation Land Trust

Happy summer to all of our members, friends, and supporters!

We appreciate all you do for the Dudley Conservation Land Trust (DCLT), and look forward to seeing you out on our trails. Until then, let's catch up! There's a lot going on with our organization to tell you about.

National conservation organizations such as the Nature Conservancy have adopted the Global Diversity Framework goal, endorsed by over 190 countries, called 30x30: conserve 30% of our land by 2030. Ambitious but achievable, this is an important tool to combat climate change and preserve our natural heritage. DCLT will strive to meet that goal also in coordination with other organizations such as Mass Audubon, the Mass Land Trust Coalition, Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation, and local municipalities. Dudley is fortunate to already have 18% of our land under some type of conservation restriction. We have done so much already but there is always more we can do.

Same mission and passion, new leadership

With great pride in our recent accomplishments, our former president, Keith Kirkland, resigned from his position. Most recently, he was a pivotal partner with Mass Audubon in conserving another 239 acres of land in perpetuity. The conservation restriction, which DCLT is proud to hold, has been recorded for Oxford Woodlands, a new property for Mass Audubon which abuts Slater Woods and offers numerous opportunities for wildlife to thrive and for passive recreation for the community. We look forward to stewarding the land together under the direction of Liza Moran who has assumed the role of Acting President until this fall's annual meeting, when officers are formally elected for the coming year. We thank Keith for his leadership of our organization and his many contributions to our success. Keith said, "I will continue to care passionately about the lands we have already conserved."

Exciting opportunities

In addition to the noteworthy conservation of Oxford Woodlands, DCLT is thrilled to announce that we have launched a \$540,000 capital fundraising campaign with a goal to expand our existing wildlife corridors in Dudley:

- We have entered into an agreement with the Tierney family to acquire 21 acres of pristine woodland and fields straddling Dudley, Oxford, and Charlton. This property abuts existing conservation land and marks the northern most boundary of an extensive wildlife corridor that we are working to protect. This month we were awarded a \$10,000 grant from the Cecelia J. Smolenski-Millette Charitable Trust toward our fundraising goal, and we have several more grants in process including a large Partnership Conservation Grant with the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs.
- We are working with a local family to conserve a piece of their historic Dudley property that abuts existing conservation land owned by Mass Audubon. We will keep you in the loop as more details emerge.
- There are several other parcels of land in this scenic area which DCLT is pursuing in order to preserve this historic, thriving landscape for future generations. Have you seen an important property that we've missed that should be conserved? Let us know!

Be inspired – there are many ways to help

Give! Your contribution makes conservation possible! Checks may be made out to “DCLT” and mailed to us at P.O. Box 14, Dudley, MA 01571. Donations can also be made via our website—please just shoot us a quick email to ensure your donation gets added to our land acquisition campaign should you so choose.

Enlist others! Does your employer match charitable contributions? Doesn't hurt to ask. DCLT can also accept stock or mutual funds directly as donations or through a donor advised fund. Any contributions make a difference in maintaining our beautiful scenic and agricultural landscapes and protecting wildlife habitats for generations to come.

Join our Board! Ready to learn more about what we do? We are looking for local residents who are passionate about our mission and would like to put their skills to use! We have open seats on the Board. Give our new Acting President, Liza Moran, a call at 617-877-6007 if you think you can help.

Advocate for conservation! Many of you came to Board of Selectmen meetings when DCLT business was being discussed. Your presence makes a difference! Recently, our Tufts Branch steward and long-time DCLT supporter, Mark Smith, sent a letter to the Editor of the Webster Times, about the importance of land trust organizations like DCLT, and the role we play in preserving land for our children's future. Speaking of investing in conserving while also allowing for housing, he writes: “...if you believe there should be a balance at all, then the DCLT is worthy of your support, because no other entity is looking out for those interests in this area. When lands are developed, they will never be natural open spaces again.” Thank you, Mark! Read the full letter on pages 6 and 7 of the Times: <https://linpub.blob.core.windows.net/pdf/2/43088a44-95c8-4ff7-8baf-ac86792c4437.pdf>

Save the date: Annual Meeting, October 19

In addition to these new opportunities for land conservation, DCLT has recently completed an assessment of our current sanctuaries and the investment required to maintain them for the next five years. We will review these findings at our member meeting this fall. Stayed tuned for details on this meeting which will take place on October 19.

We will also be able to provide you with an update on our upcoming new, interactive, user-friendly website. DCLT was awarded a \$20,000 grant from the Greater Worcester Community Foundation for this project which we hope will better help us serve our membership and our mission. Our goal launch is in early 2026.

Thank you to our members

You are our allies in our mission to conserve and protect land and open space. Please reach out if there are ideas you'd like us to pursue or properties that might fit our acquisition criteria. Together we can preserve the rural, natural, and scenic character of the Town of Dudley and our extended community for current and future generations.



Contact

Dudley Conservation Land Trust

Protecting land – it's our nature.

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