



## 2-Mile Landbridge Forest Legacy Tract, Massachusetts

March 2003

**W**ildlife can continue to roam in central Massachusetts now that the Forest Service has acquired a conservation easement on a 467-acre forested property in Petersham that provides a corridor between two pieces of protected land. On March 8, 2003, the USDA Forest Service Forest Legacy Program paid Barbara and John Kenneth Maniha, and son John C. Maniha, owners of the 2-Mile Landbridge property, \$330,000 for a conservation easement, preventing the conversion of the property to nonforest uses. The Mount Grace Land Trust, a local land trust, provided the landowners valuable assistance with the complex process of protecting their property.

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Landowners Barbara and Ken Maniha

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The 2-Mile Landbridge property contains significant road frontage and connects many other protected lands. It is adjacent to the Petersham State Forest and the Popple Camp State Wildlife Management Area. Within a mile of the property are the Harvard Forest Museum and the North Common Meadow Reservation. The easement protects 3,200 feet along Tom Swamp Road, 1,700 feet along Route 101, and 800 feet along Route 32.

The property has been in Barbara Maniha's family for five generations and, with the conservation easement in place, the property will remain forested for generations to come. “The Forest Legacy Program had allowed us to keep this land, in our family since 1880, for our children while at the same time protecting it for the future,” Barbara and Ken Maniha said after the project completion.

Besides protecting the forest, keeping a corridor protected between other protected lands, and keeping large amounts of road frontage natural, the property offers many other features. Also protected are a heron rookery, an open water pond, extensive fields, and miles of stone walls crisscrossing the land. The protection of the property also

complements several goals of the Forest Legacy Program, including scenic quality, public access for recreation, protection and conservation of wildlife habitat, protection of public water supplies through filtering runoff, continuation of significant forest uses, and opportunities for ecological research and conservation.

The property's forests will continue to be managed for forest products and wildlife through the implementation of a forest management plan approved by the Massachusetts State Forester. The same consulting forester has managed the property since 1978, illustrating the landowners' commitment to keeping the land both managed and protected.

The Forest Legacy Program protects important forests from conversion to nonforest uses. These forests provide essential wildlife habitat, protect water quality, offer outstanding recreation opportunities, afford outstanding scenic views, are home to historic sites, and/or provide the opportunity to continue traditional forest uses. A Federal-State partnership allows landowners to keep their land private while ensuring it remains forest forever through the use of conservation easements.



The 2-Mile Landbridge Forest Legacy Project will continue to provide wildlife habitat, forest resources, clean water, and enjoyment by the public.  
Mount Grace Land Trust Photo

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