



Holich Forest Legacy Tract, Massachusetts

July 1995

A healthy-looking forest joined the Forest Legacy Program on July 31, 1995. Mr. Martin Holich, owner of approximately 113 acres of forest land, sold a conservation restriction to the USDA Forest Service. The tract is in the western Massachusetts town called Hatfield. The conservation easement ensures that the land will remain forest forever.

Terry Blunt, who heads the Connecticut Valley Action Project for the Massachusetts DEP and who helped coordinate the efforts said that the 113 acres of pine hemlock, oak, birch and other trees are prime habitat for black bears. The tract abuts the entire western side of the watershed above the Town reservoir that serves as a drinking water supply. The soils are characterized as "prime for forest use." Development restrictions and mineral extraction restrictions were exchanged for \$220,000. Mr. Holich owns all remaining rights to the land, and he may manage the land according to a Forest Stewardship Plan.

Pat D'Andrea of the Green Mountain National Forest developed the conservation restriction and followed federal acquisition procedures to complete the purchase. "This tract impressed me because it is next to town land and another Legacy Parcel. The town will enter an agreement to manage the parcel, and their management has been high quality," says Ms. D'Andrea. "The forest looks healthy!"

The Massachusetts DEM has agreed to have someone visit the landowner and forest every year

to make sure the landowner is abiding by the easement.

The Forest Legacy Program protects important forest areas from any kind of development. The federal government purchases development restrictions from willing landowners. The landowner keeps all land rights not purchased by the federal government. Forest protected are important. They may provide key wildlife habitat, protect water quality, offer outstanding recreation opportunities, provide outstanding scenic views, contain historical sites or provide opportunities to continue traditional forest uses, such as timber harvesting.



Mr. Martin Holich's Property will remain forested forever, thus protecting water quality and wildlife habitat.

The Forest Legacy Program is not just a federal program. A State may become a part of the Forest Legacy Program by completing an Assessment of Need. In this assessment the State designs a Forest Legacy Program to fit their needs. Massachusetts was the first State in the Union to complete an Assessment of Need for the Forest Legacy Program. They joined the program on August 5, 1993.

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