

Northeastern Area Forest Legacy Program
The Tract Record
First Quarter FY 2009

2009 FLP Continues to Operate By Way of a Continuing Resolution So Far

As reported in the previous Tract Record the FY 2009 budget is being put into action through a continuing resolution that extends through March 6, 2009. Neither the House nor the Senate passed an appropriations bill for the Interior, Environment or Related agencies for FY 2009. After March 6, 2009, either a year-long continuing resolution or an omnibus appropriations bill is expected to be put through congress. Until a spending bill is passed, FLP operations are limited for the most part to administrative activities and prior year project acquisition activities.

Conservation Easement Monitoring Roundtable Receives Round of Applause

"Thanks for caring" is the gist of a response received about the Large-acreage Conservation Easement Monitoring Roundtable organized by Northeastern Area (NA) Forest Legacy Program (FLP) staff. The roundtable, held October 2 at the Bethel Inn in Bethel, ME, was the final session of the Eastern Lands and Resources Council (ELRC) fall conference. NA Forest Legacy Specialist Scott Stewart set the stage by presenting the purpose of the roundtable.

"We organized this roundtable to ensure that our partners have the information they need to effectively monitor the FLP conservation easements that they hold," Stewart said.

To kick off the discussion, representatives of four agencies presented their approach to large-acreage conservation easement monitoring: Tracy Boisvert, New Hampshire Office of Planning; Chris Pryor, New England Forestry Foundation; Jake Metzger, Forest Society of Maine; and Kathy Eickenberg, Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands. The presentations generated lively discussion among participants who called in, and conference attendees. Participants noted that large-acreage conservation easements are administered differently from average-sized tracts. Deirdre Raimo, NA FLP Manager, assured participants that the Forest Service would continue its leadership role with states and other partners to help them effectively monitor their FLP conservation easements. Ed Meadows, Michigan Department of Natural Resources, extended an invitation to the Forest Service to be a partner in a similar roundtable at next year's ELRC fall conference, which will be held in Michigan.

Recently Completed FLP Projects

Rhode Island Borderland Forests Protected by way of a Woman's Charitable Wish

Straddling the Connecticut-Rhode Island border lies a 200 square mile forested block, which is part of the last great stretch of forested land from Washington, D.C. to Boston, MA. On December 28, the State of Rhode Island acquired from the RI Chapter of The Nature Conservancy (TNC), conservation easements for two parcels totaling 1,033 acres of forest land as part of the Tillinghast Pond Project. These tracts were part of the estate of Phoebe Shepard, who declared in her will that "fully one-half of my estate shall be donated to a charitable organization," the charity being unspecified. TNC acquired from George Shepard, executor of the estate, these, and other parcels, before they were developed. These two closings add to a previous 476-acre tract that was protected in April 2008 as cost share for the project. The US Forest Service FLP provided \$3,000,000 of the \$5,275,000 appraised value of the two tracts. The project came about

through a partnership with TNC, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Forest Service, State of Rhode Island, and the Towns of Coventry and West Greenwich.

Quabbin Corridor Connection Conservation Campaign Continues in Massachusetts

The Massachusetts Quabbin Corridor Connection project, located in central Massachusetts, added 2 more tracts to the project bringing the total to 8 of 19 tracts completed. The 187-acre Yggdrasil Trust tract conservation restriction cost \$382,585 in FLP funds and was acquired by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts from the trust on October 15. Other due diligence and a bargain sale by the landowner for the conservation restriction provided \$14,000 in cost share. A second tract, the 43-acre Lockesmith tract was acquired from landowner David Lockesmith on December 30. The \$202,114 cost to acquire the tract used \$189,500 from the FLP and \$12,614 in due diligence costs from the state. Three tracts that were acquired with non-Federal funds or were donated by the landowners to the Quabbin Corridor Connection project will serve as project cost share.

Missouri Completes First Forest Legacy Project

The Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) purchased in fee the first FLP tract in the state on December 30. The 154-acre tract, which contains two-thirds of a mile of frontage on LaBarque Creek, is located just southwest of St. Louis. The property is an addition to the 969-acre Young Conservation Area, which is primarily managed for watershed protection and public recreational use by the MDC. The property was acquired from the Wild Canid Survival and Research Center, which in an effort to help protect LaBarque Creek, had purchased more land than they needed for their wolf and other wild canid breeding and recovery efforts. In a truly collaborative effort, the property, valued at \$1,510,180, was acquired from the landowner using \$500,000 in FLP funds, with the remainder of the needed funds provided by the Missouri Coalition for the Environment, the Ozark Chapter of the Sierra Club, the Webster Groves Nature Study Society, the American Bottom Conservancy of Illinois, the Missouri Conservation Heritage Foundation, and the MDC.