

Jackson Farm Conservation Area – 88 Acres

Questions and Answers

1) How did this project get started?

Belchertown has been working with the Jackson family for about 2 years in protecting these 88 +/- acres of property located at Meads Corner in the Northeast section of Belchertown, adjacent to Knights Pond. We now have the opportunity to acquire these 88 acres of the Jackson Farm property through the Local Acquisitions for Natural Diversity, (LAND) Grant program of the Mass. Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs. The grant application deadline is 7/12/12.

2) How will this land purchase benefit the Town?

- ✚ Preserves and protects 88 acres of forest land.
- ✚ Protects and enhances a huge wildlife corridor, connecting the Quabbin Reservoir and the University of Mass. Cadwell Memorial forest which is 1,200 acres.
- ✚ Promotes the connectivity of habitat and protects endangered species.
- ✚ Preserves important water bodies and drinking water supplies.
- ✚ Protects and restores connectivity to the National Scenic Trail.
- ✚ Optimizes the use and enjoyment for the Towns residents and visitors and serves multiple recreational uses.

3) Will this land become a Town Conservation Area?

Yes, these 88 acres will become a Town Conservation Area and will allow passive recreation opportunities available to the general public. Hiking, fishing, bird watching, skiing and other passive recreational activities will be allowed. This property must be purchased by 6/30/13 to qualify for the State grant re-imbusement requirements and to meet the States fiscal year deadlines and timetable.

4) What is the Town's Share?

Two-thirds of this funding will come from a State LAND grant of \$340,000.00 from the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, to be voted on at this Annual Town meeting. The required local match is \$160,000.00 and the Conservation Commission has been approved by the Community Preservation Act Committee for the remaining balance, pending Town Meeting vote on Warrant Article #33. Additional fundraising is ongoing for this land purchase and the CPA fund will be reimbursed for any additional monies raised.