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PRESS RELEASE

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Senator Gobi Announces Grants for Local Land Trusts

BOSTON –Senator Anne M. Gobi (D-Spencer) has announced Conservation Partnership (CP) Grants for three area land trusts. The East Quabbin Land Trust, Opacum Land Trust, and the Rutland Land Conservancy were all awarded funding through the Conservation Partnership Grant program administered by the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs.

“The first land trust was founded over 100 years ago right here in New England, and the many others since, throughout the region, have played an indispensable role in protecting open spaces of all kinds,” said **Senator Anne Gobi, Chair of the Joint Committee on Environment, Natural Resources & Agriculture**. “These groups are a major part of that mission and I am thrilled that they have received support from the state to continue the great conservationist work that they do.”

The East Quabbin Land Trust will receive \$85,000 to acquire a Conservation Restriction on 53 acres of land that abuts the Muddy Brook Wildlife Management Area (MBWMA) and helps to add to a corridor of protected land between the MBWMA and the Quabbin Reservoir. The East Quabbin Land Trust (EQLT) began in 1994 because of concern for the loss of farmland and wildlife habitat to unplanned sprawl in and around Hardwick. Since 1998, EQLT has expanded its protection efforts to Barre, Petersham, New Braintree and other nearby towns and has been able to protect over 4,000 acres.

The Opacum Land Trust will receive \$85,000 to protect a 76 acre parcel of woodland that is adjacent to Brimfield State Forest and will provide an additional entry point to the forest. The Opacum Land Trust, Inc. is a thirteen town land conservation organization founded by volunteers in 2000 to protect natural and cultural resources in South Central Massachusetts.

The Rutland Land Conservancy will receive \$4,195 to help pay for the due diligence cost on a gift of land that has frontage on two roads and contains hardwoods and a wetland. According to their website, The mission of the Rutland Land Conservancy is: to protect and preserve land through restrictions, acquisitions, easements, and donations; to act as a resource for landowners; and to educate citizens relative to land conservation issues for the benefit of the environment, current and future generations and the maintenance of the rural character of the center of Massachusetts.

The Conservation Partnership Program assists non-public, not-for-profit corporations in acquiring interests in lands suitable for conservation or recreation purposes.

For more information please contact Senator Gobi's office at 617-722-1540.

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