

News Release

North County Land Trust, Inc.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Committee Works to Promote and Protect Crocker Conservation Area

The Crocker Conservation Area Stewardship Committee is leading a hike on the conservation area on Saturday, December 4, 2004. The hike will begin at 9:00 A.M. at the top of Flat Rock Rd. in Fitchburg. The hike will be fun and informative, with time to stop and discuss the history and present uses of the area, which includes the Overlook Reservoir.

North County Land Trust, Inc., owner of the 150 acre conservation area, wants the community to get more involved with the natural area that has been preserved for their benefit. The Crocker Conservation Area is accessible within one-half mile of Fitchburg's Upper Common, with frontage on Caldwell Street, Flat Rock Road and Ashburnham Hill Road. The CCA is unique in its proximity to Fitchburg's urban center and as the gateway to over 1200 acres of open space in north Fitchburg. This open space area includes the 400 acre Audubon Flatrock Wildlife Sanctuary and over 800 acres of water supply land owned by the City of Fitchburg.

Janet Morrison, Director of Land Protection for the land trust commented, "Many people don't know about the Crocker Conservation Area and the large area of protected open space in north Fitchburg, even those who live and work nearby". With the help of a newly formed Stewardship Committee, made up of neighbors, open space enthusiasts and the Applewild School, that may soon change.

The Stewardship Committee hopes that Saturday's hike will be the first in a series of activities to involve the community in the Crocker Conservation Area. Such activities may include maintenance and trail-building, as well as hikes and educational programs. The Stewardship Committee is seeking partnerships with neighborhood associations, schools and scouting groups to develop programs that help meet the challenges of managing and protecting the conservation area in an urban environment.

William Marshall, President of North County Land Trust, commented, "The proximity of Crocker Conservation Area to Fitchburg's urban neighborhoods and to public and private schools presents opportunities to develop positive relationships. Greater community participation in the conservation area will provide benefits to everyone involved."

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North County Land Trust, Inc. is a non-profit, land conservation organization which works to protect open space in Fitchburg and other communities in north central Massachusetts.

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