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**2,864 Acres of Forestland in Western Massachusetts  
to be Conserved**

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**North Amherst, MA:** With leadership from the Kestrel Land Trust (“Kestrel”), W.D. Cowls has negotiated, with an affiliate of The Lyme Timber Company (“Lyme”), the conservation sale of nineteen (19) parcels of timberland in ten (10) western Massachusetts towns. The parcels, which total 2,864 acres in Hampshire and Franklin Counties, are adjacent to existing conservation land, securing more forests for permanent public benefit.

Lyme will be working with the Kestrel and The Trustees of Reservations (“The Trustees”) to keep the properties open to the public for recreational use, and permanently protect the land for wildlife habitat, climate resiliency, and water quality benefits.

Scheduled to be completed in the summer and fall of 2025, the project will protect:

-Several designated coldwater fisheries critical to the health of the Connecticut River Watershed, including:

- 6,000 feet of the North Branch of the Manhan River
- 3,000 feet of Rice Brook
- 3,000 feet of Foundry Brook
- 1,550 feet of Tucker Brook

-Several local peaks, including:

- Breakneck Hill (elev. 1,331 ft)

- Cub Hill (elev. 1,380 ft)
- Catamount Mountain (elev. 1400 ft)

-Important headwaters, including Johnny Brook, Bean Brook, Roaring Brook, Nye Brook, Beaver Brook, and several vast wetland complexes (including part of Lily Pond).

This extensive conservation initiative builds upon the 2024 conservation purchase of 2,396 acres in Pelham, Belchertown, Amherst, Gill and New Salem, which included two of the largest unprotected contiguous forested tracts in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts; several miles of the Robert Frost Trail; and the opportunity to return miles of the Metacomet-Monadnock Trail, now National Scenic Trail, to its original route.

"I want to thank the Kestrel Land Trust and Kristin DeBoer, Kestrel's Executive Director, for helping W.D. Cowls imagine and achieve our forest conservation goals. Over the past 20 years, we've conserved over 10,000 acres of forests together. That's a legacy we're proud of. While W.D. Cowls still owns and manages two thirds of its original holdings, including the conserved Paul C. Jones and Walter Cowls Jones Working Forests, these recent conservation deals are private sales with land trust management futures," said Cinda Jones, the company's president.

"Lyme is pleased with the opportunity help acquire these additional forested tracts for conservation, adding to the hundreds of thousands of acres of land we've permanently protected with partners across New England. Each of these newly acquired properties is critical to maintaining connectivity to benefit wildlife habitat and water quality in the Connecticut River Valley and is part of a broader national effort to protect the broader Appalachian landscape," said Peter Stein, one of Lyme's Managing Directors. "We greatly appreciate the initiative that W.D. Cowls has taken to conserve these and other important tracts of forestland over the last fifteen years. Additionally, we would like to thank the Kestrel Land Trust and The Trustees of Reservations for helping to make this project possible."

"Kestrel Land Trust is thrilled to advance the protection of another swath of significant forestlands across the Valley. From the North Quabbin region to the hilltowns west of the Connecticut River, each of these parcels represents important forested areas for local towns, the region, and the country," said Kristin DeBoer, Executive Director of Kestrel Land Trust. "This opportunity is a chance to accelerate the pace of conservation locally at a time when conservation nationally is facing significant challenges.

"Protecting this vital habitat and keeping these forestlands open for public recreation are among our key strategic priorities at The Trustees," said The Trustees President and CEO Katie Theoharides. "We are proud to protect these lands with Kestrel, Lyme, and Cowls, and add to neighboring conservation land."

### About the Partners:

Founded in 1976, The Lyme Timber Company is a private timberland investment management company that focuses on forest-related investments in the US and Canada. The Company's current portfolio includes approximately 1.3 million acres of third party certified working forest in New York, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Tennessee, Alabama, Michigan, and Wisconsin. Lyme is a leader in land conservation, sustainable forest management, and ecosystem services, having conserved over 800,000 acres of working forest over the past 20 years.

<https://www.lymetimber.com/about/>

Kestrel Land Trust was founded in 1970, and has conserved more than 32,000 acres of wildlands, woodlands, farmland, and riverlands in the Valley in partnership with willing landowners, communities, and state and federal agencies. Kestrel's strategic priorities are guided by science, inspired by the desire to make conservation meaningful to communities, and designed to build momentum to conserve more land with landowners and partners.

<https://www.kestreltrust.org/about/>

The Trustees is one of the oldest land conservation organizations in the U.S. It has protected over 47,000 acres and cares for more than 120 special places of exceptional scenic, historic, and ecological resources across Massachusetts. Partnering with other organizations to further the conservation of large landscapes and to connect people with nature is a priority for the organization as it launches a new strategic plan.

<https://thetrustees.org/what-we-do/>

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