

**A Press Release from Hilltown Land Trust**

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For Immediate Release

New Hiking Trails Open in Worthington

Three miles of hiking trails in Worthington are now officially open to the public, thanks to a partnership between Hilltown Land Trust and MassWildlife.

Hilltown Land Trust’s Conwell property is comprised of 70 acres of forestland in Worthington along Route 112, and includes a small pond, the top of Eagle Nest Ridge, and 0.5 miles of frontage along the Little River.

“We are excited to be able to share this property with the public,” said Sally Loomis, Executive Director of Hilltown Land Trust. “It was difficult to find the right spot for cars so people could access the trails, and we are grateful to be able to share a space with our partner MassWildlife.”

The parking area is on adjacent MassWildlife land and will also serve for people accessing their Hiram H. Fox Wildlife Management Area.

“In addition to sharing a parking area, we are working with MassWildlife to purchase a property to the north in order to expand our trails,” Loomis stated. “Conserving this land will also help connect parcels of forest land that will provide larger corridors for migrating wildlife.”

A wildlife tracking study conducted by The Nature Conservancy determined that the Conwell property is an active wildlife crossing for mink, red fox, and other species moving between the Jackson Brook area to the east and the Department of Fish and Game’s Hiram Fox Wildlife Management Area to the west.

The land was donated to the land trust in 2017 by former owners Cynthia and Peter Cook. Volunteers helped Hilltown Land Trust create a trail spur that connects the trail system on the land to the new parking lot.

“Volunteers were crucial in getting these trails open to the public,” said Audrey Boraski, Hilltown Land Trust’s Land Stewardship Coordinator and TerraCorps-AmeriCorps service member. “From constructing and installing the kiosk, to building and blazing the trails, to helping hang signs to orient visitors, they helped make this a place where people can enjoy going for a hike!”

People interested in accessing the land can visit [www.hilltownlandtrust.org](http://www.hilltownlandtrust.org/) to download a map, get directions, and learn more.

**-End of Release-**

Hilltown Land Trust is a nonprofit land trust serving 13 rural towns in Western Massachusetts. HLT’s mission is to protect land and promote ecological diversity and health, respectful land stewardship, historic character, and natural beauty in our hilltowns. The organization has protected over 5,000 acres of farmland, forest, streams and wetlands since its founding in 1986. In 2010, HLT affiliated with The Trustees to combine the efforts and resources of these two nonprofit land conservation organizations and accelerate the pace of land conservation in the hilltowns. For more information, visit [www.hilltownlandtrust.org](http://www.hilltownlandtrust.org/)