

Baseline Documentation Report:
Philip and Catherine Woodard Conservation Restriction

Owner: the Inhabitants of Leverett acting through its Select Board

Holder of Conservation Restriction: Rattlesnake Gutter Trust

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Baseline Documentation Report: Philip and Catherine Woodard Conservation Restriction

Table of Contents

Note: all maps were created in ArcGIS 9 (saved on CD as TIF files), all charts in Microsoft Excel, all text and pages of photographs in Microsoft Word

1. Location of Philip and Catherine Woodard Conservation Restriction on Depot Road
 - p. 1.1 Map with directions
 - p. 1.2 Chart with directions, brief land description
2. Maps of Philip and Catherine Woodard Conservation Restriction (there is no survey)
 - p. 2.1 Map with both the property and Nearby Protected Areas
 - p. 2.2 2005 Orthophoto
 - p. 2.3 Topographic map
 - p. 2.4 Map of the property with Natural Heritage Priority Habitat (2008) and Biomap2 (2011) overlays
3. Brief History of the Conservation Restriction
 - p. 3.1 History and Description of the Land
4. Conservation Restriction (*separate document*) and Abstract
5. Relevant Deeds:
 - p. 5.1 Philip and Catherine Woodard to the Inhabitants of Leverett. Franklin County Registry of Deeds: Book 5452, page 234
6. Photographs of property line and relevant natural resources
 - p. 6.1 Map of Location of Boundary Line Photographs
 - p. 6.2 Chart of Photo Log for Boundary Photographs
 - p. 6.3 Photographs of Boundaries and special locations
7. Boundary Information (also see *Section 6. Photographs* and *A3. Neighboring Deeds*)
 - p. 7.1 Map of boundaries
 - p. 7.2 Chart of boundary locations
 - p. 7.3 Boundary Lines for the Olivia Bernard Property

8. Signature Pages

- p. 8.1 Photographer
- p. 8.2 Report Writer
- p. 8.3 Land Owner and Rattlesnake Gutter Trust Representative

Appendices

A1. Log of contact with the land owner

- p. A1.1 Dates of Baseline Documentation Visits
- p. A1.2 Dates of Rattlesnake Gutter Board Select Board, and Conservation Commission Discussions

A2. Assessor's Map (page 5B, lot 12F)

A3. Neighboring Deeds

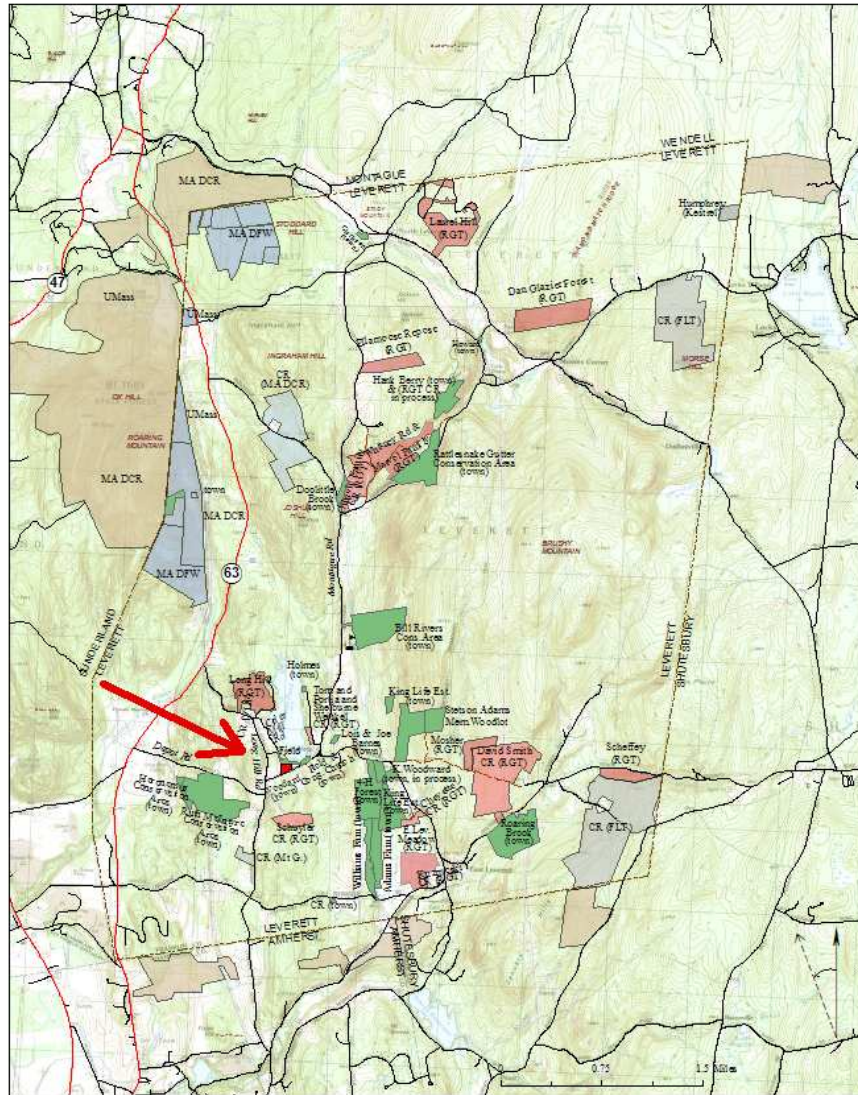
- p. A3.1 Map
- p. A3.2 Chart

Deeds

- A3.3 Bernard, 3647, 83
- A3.5 Town (Dave and Mary Field CR), 5452, 236
- A3.7 Fair-Snyder, 3639, 98

A4. Brief Plant Survey with Pictures

Directions to the Philip and Catherine Woodard Conservation Restriction

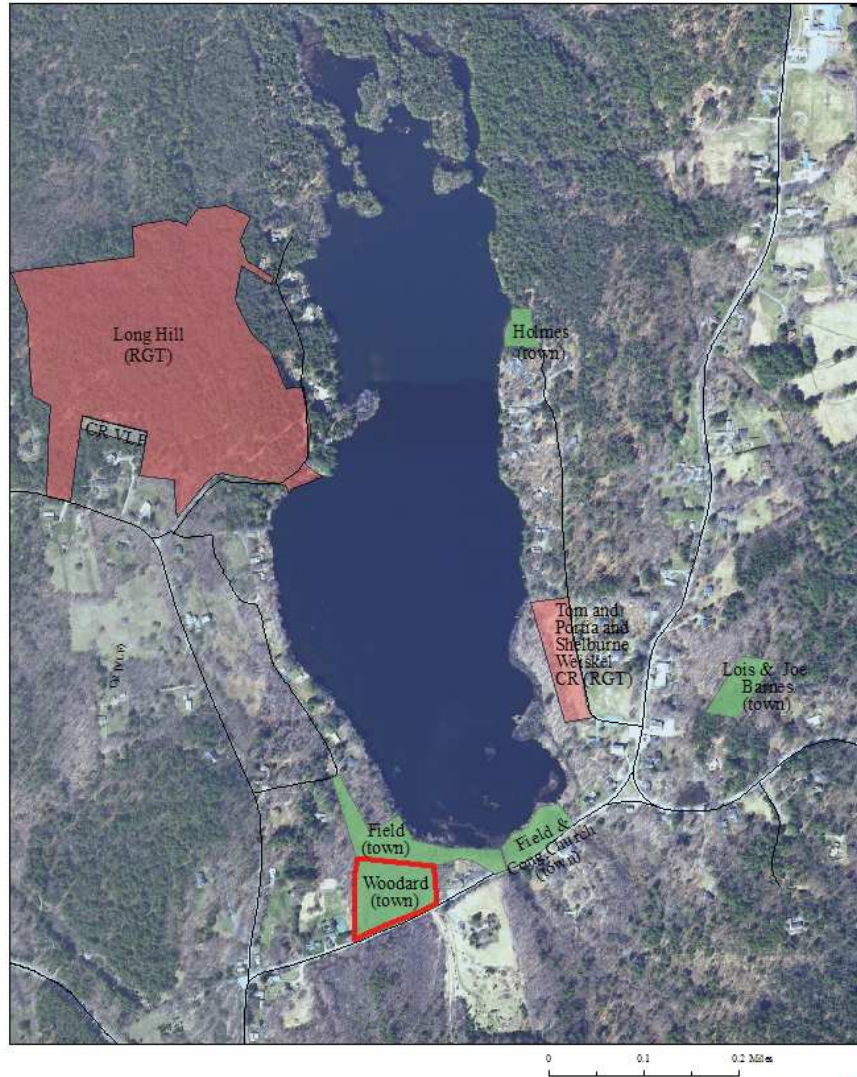


From the Leverett town hall, turn south and immediately bear right on Depot Road. The property is on your right/north/pond side just beyond/west of #124 Depot Road.

**Philip and Catherine Woodard Conservation Area
land description**

location/street address	Depot Road, Leverett
directions to site	From the Leverett town hall, turn south and immediately bear right/west on Depot Road.
acreage	The property is on your right/north/pond side just beyond/west of #124 Depot Road. approximately 5 acres
structures	none
physical description	Was wet meadow, now shrub wetland north of Depot Road sloping down toward Leverett Pond
special habitat(s)	Wet shrubland, entirely inside NHESP Priority Habitat (9/08)
special species(s)	No surveys done, hosts breeding and migratory birds. Red maple dominant overstory, winterberry dominant understory
special views(s)	From well-traveled Depot Road: summer greenery, winter view of pond.
special other	Extends protected town-owned property back from lakeshore. Protects Leverett Pond (Great Pond) from road and household run-off

Philip and Catherine Woodard Conservation Restriction and Nearby Protected Areas



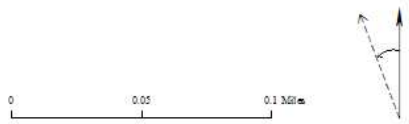
Both the Field and adjoining Woodard Properties were purchased by the town using Community Preservation Act funds. The Conservation Restriction will be held by the Rattlesnake Gutter Trust (RGT).



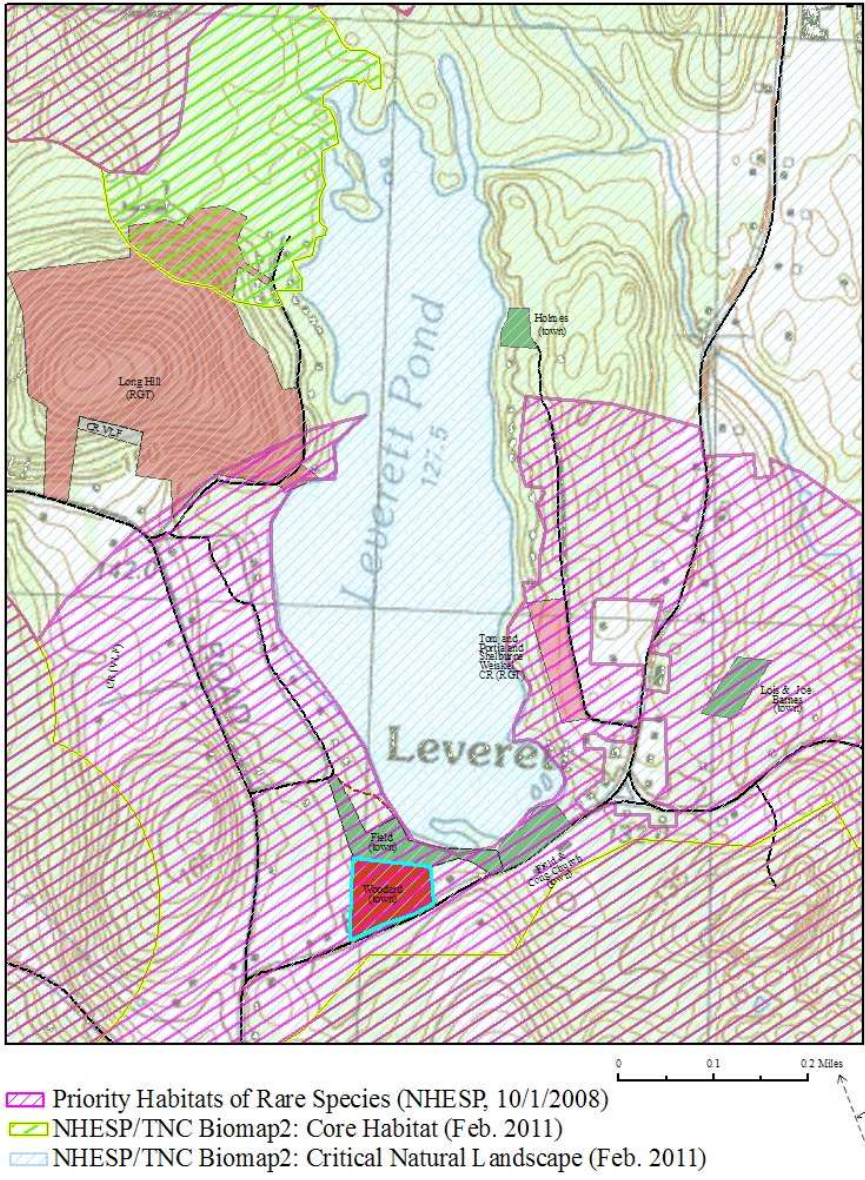
Philip and Catherine Woodard Conservation Restriction



Philip and Catherine Woodard Conservation Restriction



Philip and Catherine Woodard Conservation Restriction Priority Habitat and NHESP/TNC BioMap2



Philip and Catherine Woodard Conservation Restriction History and Description

History

On April 28, 2007, the Leverett Town Meeting voted unanimously to use Community Preservation Act funding to purchase two pieces of property at the southwest corner of Leverett Pond, the shoreline area owned by David and Mary Field and the adjoining land along Depot Road owned by Philip and Catherine Woodard.

The Woodard name has long been a part of Leverett history. Philip's mother was the town librarian. He and his wife moved into their home at the corner of Long Hill Road in the early 1950s.

While the Woodard property does not touch the shoreline, it is very low and is often flooded in the spring. It was not always so.

In fact, the changing size of Leverett Pond is endlessly fascinating and can be followed on early maps and two old photographs (attached). The Leverett Center insert map in H.F. Walling *Maps of Franklin County*, 1858 page 35, shows a much-smaller Fish Pond with wetland extending to the south (near the present Field CR). The 1883 topographic map, Northampton quadrangle, shows the same small pond and marsh (the pond is at the right-hand edge of the map). The photographs, one a postcard, were probably taken in the early 1900s. They show how open the area was – and how small the pond area was. It was only more recently that the dam at the north end of the pond was raised and the shoreline expanded to its present size. One of the (at least) three repairs was done as part of the work of the Civilian Conservation Corps in the 1930s.

Philip remembers haying the property with a tractor in the early 1950s. Jim Field remembers that, after it became too wet to use a tractor, he was hired to cut it with a scythe. While the wetness might have hastened the end of the mowing, Philip Woodard believes the more important factor was the general decline of agriculture and the abandonment of meadows in the area. It is difficult to visualize how much more land near Leverett Center was open, even in the mid 1950s there was much more open land than there is now. Philip Woodard could stand behind his house at the corner of Depot and Long Hill Road and see across the pond to the basement of the Congregational Church

Description

Because the Rattlesnake Gutter Trust will be monitoring this CR regularly, it is important that all boundaries are marked clearly. The south side of this property runs along Depot Road. The southeast corner is marked by an iron pin in the ditch. From there the eastern boundary follows the drainage ditch which is not quite straight but is visible (the average angle of the line is 8 degrees. There is no official NE corner marker, but a corner has

been agreed to by the owner of the adjacent property at 124 Depot Road, Olivia Bernard, and the RGT representative and it has been blazed with red paint. For more information on the east line with the Bernard property, see Boundary Lines for Olivia Bernard Property 7.3 in this baseline report. To the north, is a straight-line boundary with the David and Mary Field Conservation Restriction (land purchased by the town at the same time as the Woodard property). The approximate angle of the line is 285 degrees. It is possible to see some land-use difference between the former meadow (newer growth) and the larger trees on the Field CR. That line has not been blazed, since it divides two town-owned conservation areas, but it does have blue flagging. The northwest corner is marked with an iron pin. To the west, is a straight-line boundary with the Fair-Snyder property at 112 Depot Road. That boundary is listed in the Fair-Snyder survey as 448 feet, 197 degrees. It has been blazed with red paint. At the SW corner, there are iron pin in the stone wall marking the Fair-Snyder/Woodard roadside line. Note: there is a second iron pin further to the east just beyond the stone wall on Depot Road, which is not the corner pin. The boundary will be easy to monitor as long as blazes are re-painted regularly.

The request for CPA funding of the Field and Woodard properties pointed out that these two properties would:

- extend the already-protected land at the south end of Leverett Pond (given by David and Mary Field and by the Leverett Congregational Church in 1992);

- offer spectacular views of the pond, Long Hill, Joshua Hill, and the steeple of the church silhouetted against Brushy Mountain. While these views are best from the shoreline of the Field property, the winter views through the Woodard property are lovely;

- protect Leverett Pond (a Great Pond by Massachusetts law) from surface water run-off from the road and nearby households;

- protect rich and diverse habitats both terrestrial and aquatic;

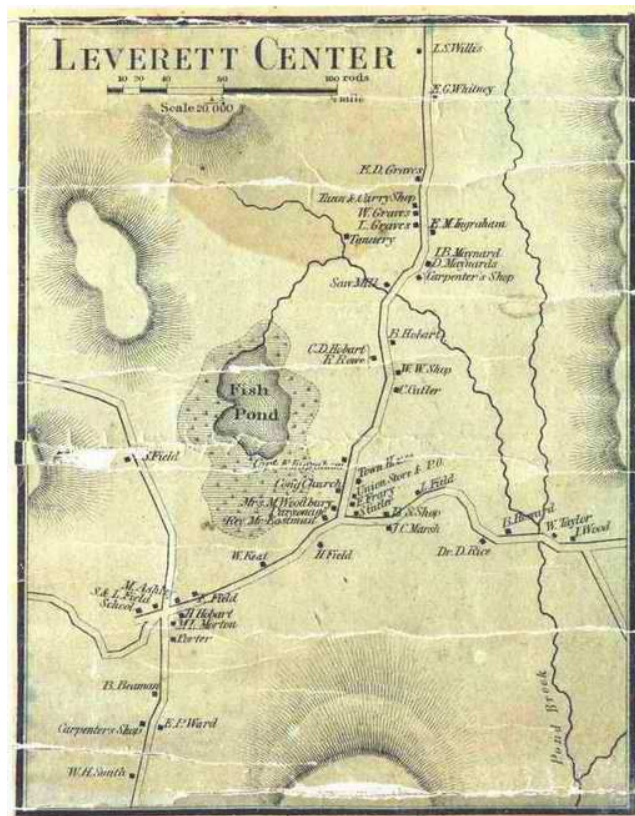
The protection of the water (and terrestrial and aquatic life) of Leverett Pond is especially important. In addition, the EPA-funded Leverett Pond Watershed Study (2003) points out the importance of the vegetation in this area buffering the run-off from Depot Road and neighboring households. There are a number of ditches on the property which were used to drain the meadow for haying and at least one ditch/culvert carrying water from the higher land on the south side of the road toward the pond. The stream flowing from the south side was not mapped. It was gps-mapped only on the Woodard and Field properties.

A survey of the plants appears in Appendix A. It was possible to complete the work easily in early October because it had been such a dry year. Most years such a survey would require rubber boots and considerable patience.

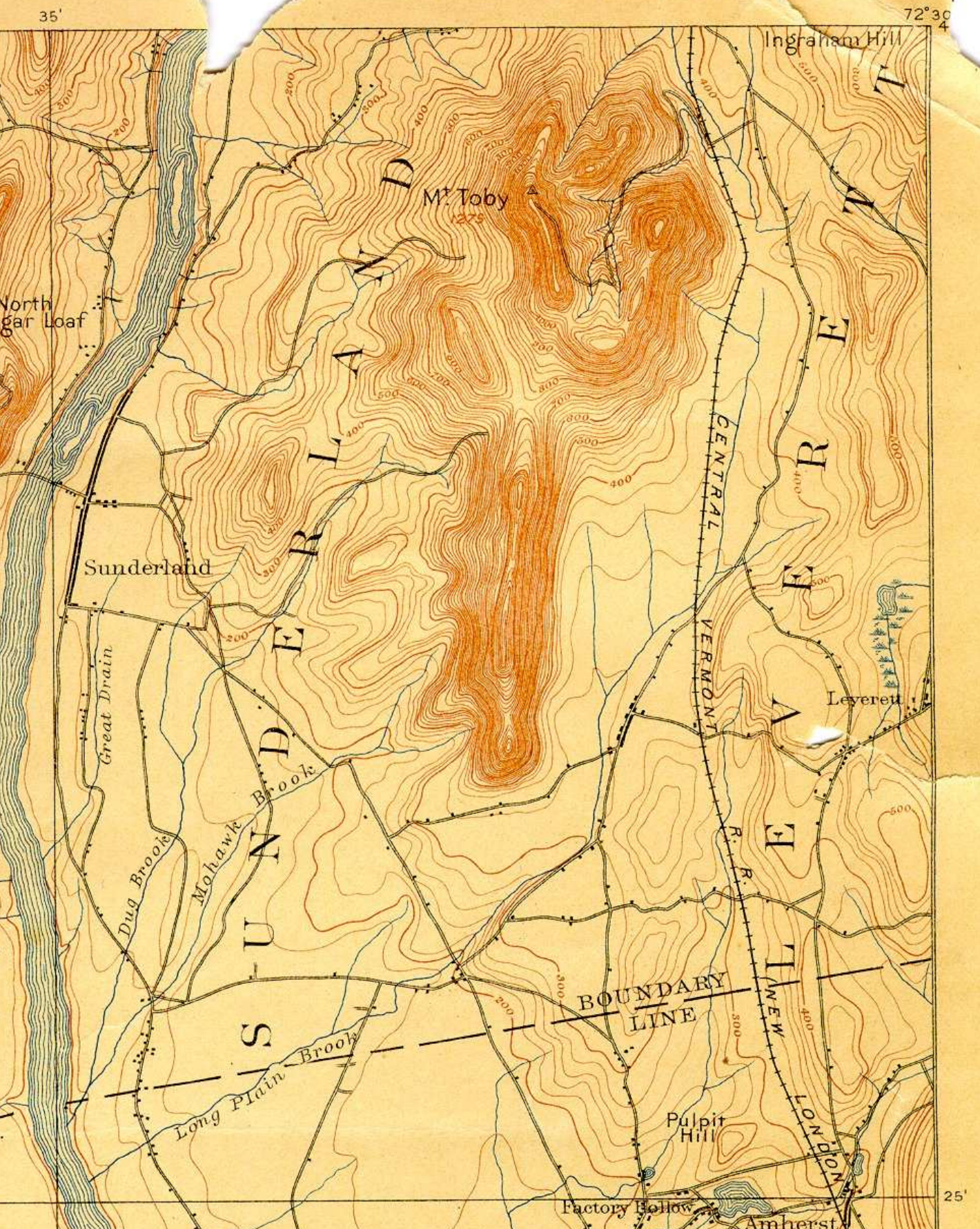
No wildlife surveys have been done. However, birders know that it is a great place to visit both in migration and breeding season. During the baseline data collection in September, we had brief glimpses of migrating male Magnolia and female Black-throated Blue Warblers as well as the resident flocks of chickadees, nuthatches, woodpeckers, and cardinals. An osprey flew over on its way to the pond in early October accompanied by a flock of disapproving crows. In mid-October there was a flock of purple finches eating winterberry along the Woodard-Field line. This area is always a stop on the Leverett Bird-a-thon team's route in mid-May for migrating warblers and wetland birds. It has been a regular stop on the Massachusetts Breeding Bird Atlas as volunteers searched for breeding shrubby wetland and forest-edge birds.

There is no survey of Native American cultural sites in the pond area. There are some documented habitat sites nearby, but a systematic survey of this area, indeed all of Leverett, needs to be done.

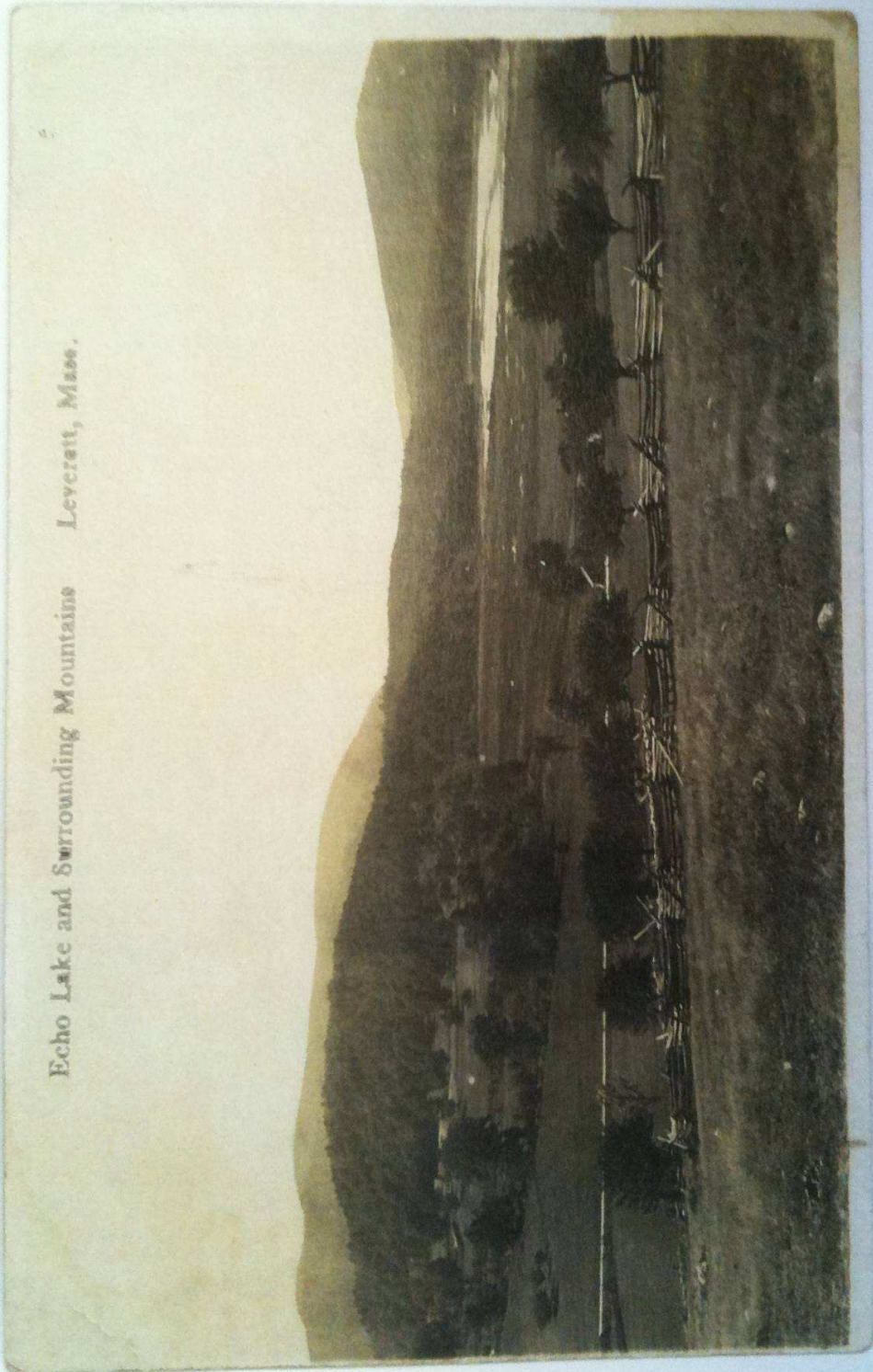
H.F. Walling Map of Franklin County 1858, insert from page 35
from www.old-map.com



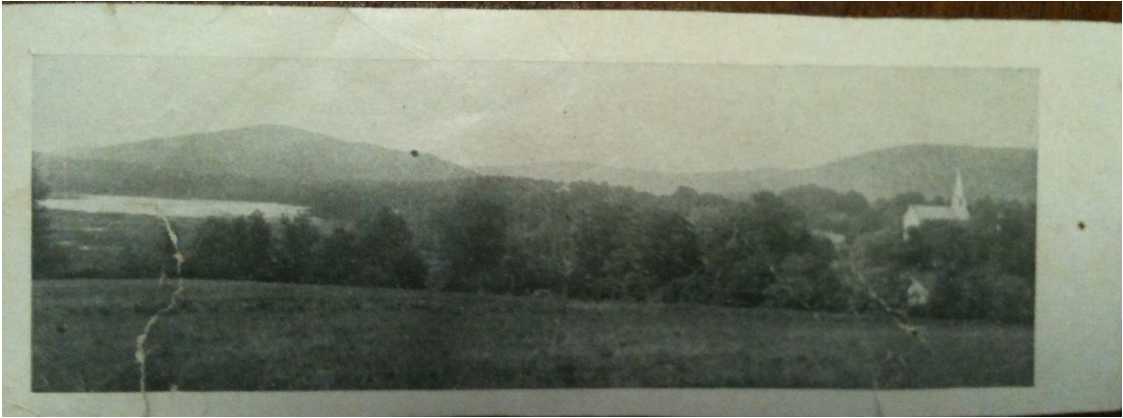
MASSACHUSETTS
NORTHAMPTON SHEET



Echo Lake and Surrounding Mountains Leverett, Mass.



The previous postcard shows Echo Lake (Leverett Pond), Long Mountain in front of Mount Toby with Joshua Hill to the right. The small scene on this page show Joshua Hill and Brushy Mountain behind the town center (church steeple). In both, the pond is smaller and the land is much more open. They were taken from the hill south of Depot Road. Both pictures are courtesy of the Leverett Family Museum. There is no date, but other postcards that appear to be from the same time are postmarked at the beginning of the second decade of the 1900s. The most likely photographer was both the minister and a printer, Arthur L. Truesdell, who came to town in 1909.



Conservation Restriction Abstract: Philip and Catherine Woodard Conservation Restriction

Note: This abstract is designed to help with monitoring, for more information see the Deed itself.

Landowners: Inhabitants of Leverett, Town Hall, P.O. Box 300, 9 Montague Road, Leverett, MA 01054

Holder of CR: Rattlesnake Gutter Trust, P.O. Box 195, Leverett, MA 01054

Property location: north of Depot Road, between houses at 112 and 124 Depot Road.

Acreage: approximately 5 acres

Date CR Recorded: **Registration Book and Page #:**

I. Purposes

- Open Space Preservation: Land was purchased by the town using Community Preservation Act funds. A Conservation Restriction will assist in maintaining the land for conservation purposes. It abuts the David and Mary Field Conservation Area (also CPA funded, town-owned land) to the north.
- Scenic Protection: View of wet woodlands from Depot Road, winter view of Leverett Pond from Depot Road.
- Surface and groundwater protection: Vegetation helps protect water, plants, and animals of Leverett Pond buffering run-off from Depot Rd and near-by households (see EPA-funded Leverett Pond Watershed Study, 2003)
- Protection of Wildlife Habitat: The entire property entirely within the NHESP Priority Habitat (September 2008). Shrubby wetland hosts variety of breeding and migratory birds. Some plant survey done.
- Public Use: Passive recreation as long as no negative impact on ecological health or conservation purposes of CR.
- Protection of Native American Cultural Resources, Burials, and Interment of Ceremonial Objects. Surveys not yet done, but there are a number of stone configurations in the area.
- Furtherance of Government Policy - goals of Leverett Conservation Commission: rural character, natural resource protection, public education about open space, wider recreational use of natural resources.

II. PROHIBITED ACTS AND USES, EXCEPTIONS THERETO, AND PERMITTED USES

A. Prohibited Acts and Uses

1. temporary or permanent buildings, signs, facilities
2. mining, excavating, dredging
3. dumping, storing of rubbish
4. destroying trees, vegetation
5. activities detrimental to drainage, flood control, water quality
6. use, parking or storage of recreational/motorized vehicles
7. disruption or removal of stone walls, or any stone structures or alignments
8. conduct of archeological activities including removal of artifacts
9. subdivision of Premises
10. any use inconsistent with protection for conservation

B. Reserved Rights and Exceptions:

1. Recreational Activities: non-motorized that do not degrade environment.
Owner can limit or prevent hunting.
2. Vegetation Management: for forest health with prior written approval all plans avoiding stone structures of traditional cultural properties. Pruning/cutting for astronomical line of sight, under supervision of Tribal Historical Preservation Officer or representative. (Forestry Plan not included - property too small.)
3. Non-native/invasive flora: can be removed
4. Composting: of biodegradable materials from the premises if does not impact protection and or scenic views
5. Wildlife Habitat Improvement: with prior written permission to enhance or restore
6. Trails: new or maintenance (including handicapped accessible trails) as long as not materially altering landscape or degrading environmental quality.
7. Excavation: with prior approval if incidental to trails, drainage, conservation (see #9)
8. Motorized Vehicles: for maintenance, safety, mobility as long as not detrimental to environment.
9. Archeological Excavations: non-destructive field investigations with approval of state archologist and, if Native American site, of Tribal Historic Preservation Office.
10. Subsurface Disturbance: subsurface or surficial rock disturbance, only with appropriate approvals from Tribal Historic Preservation Officer or representative.
11. Signs: to protect conservation values, information
12. Permits: needed as appropriate

C. Notice and Approval

If needed, owner must notify Trust 60 days before approval needed. If no response in 60 days, deemed to be approved.

Public Access included: yes, passive only