

Photo: Barnstable Land Trust

DIVISION OF CONSERVATION SERVICES

**FY27 Conservation
Partnership Grant
Program Workshop**

May 12, 2026

Grant Program Overview

The Conservation Partnership Grant Program, authorized by Chapter 236 of the Acts of 2002, s. 13, provides funding “to assist not-for-profit corporations in acquiring interests in lands suitable for purposes of conservation or recreation.”



Photo: Westport Land Conservation Trust

Program Details

- 🌿 All projects must include a **perpetual conservation restriction**, to either the municipality in which the project is located, a federal or state agency, or a not-for-profit corporation, or combination of these entities
- 🌿 All projects must provide appropriate **public access**
- 🌿 Maximum grant award for the purchase of land or a CR is **\$425,000**.
 - 🌿 Maximum award for due diligence costs related to a gift of land or CR is \$20,000.
- 🌿 Maximum reimbursement is **50%** of the total eligible project cost.
- 🌿 All funds must be expended **by June 30, 2027**

Grant program priorities:

- 🌿 Organizational characteristics
- 🌿 Land protection (acres, abutting protected land)
- 🌿 Biodiversity & natural resource protection
- 🌿 Working farms & forests
- 🌿 Recreational opportunities
- 🌿 Burdened areas

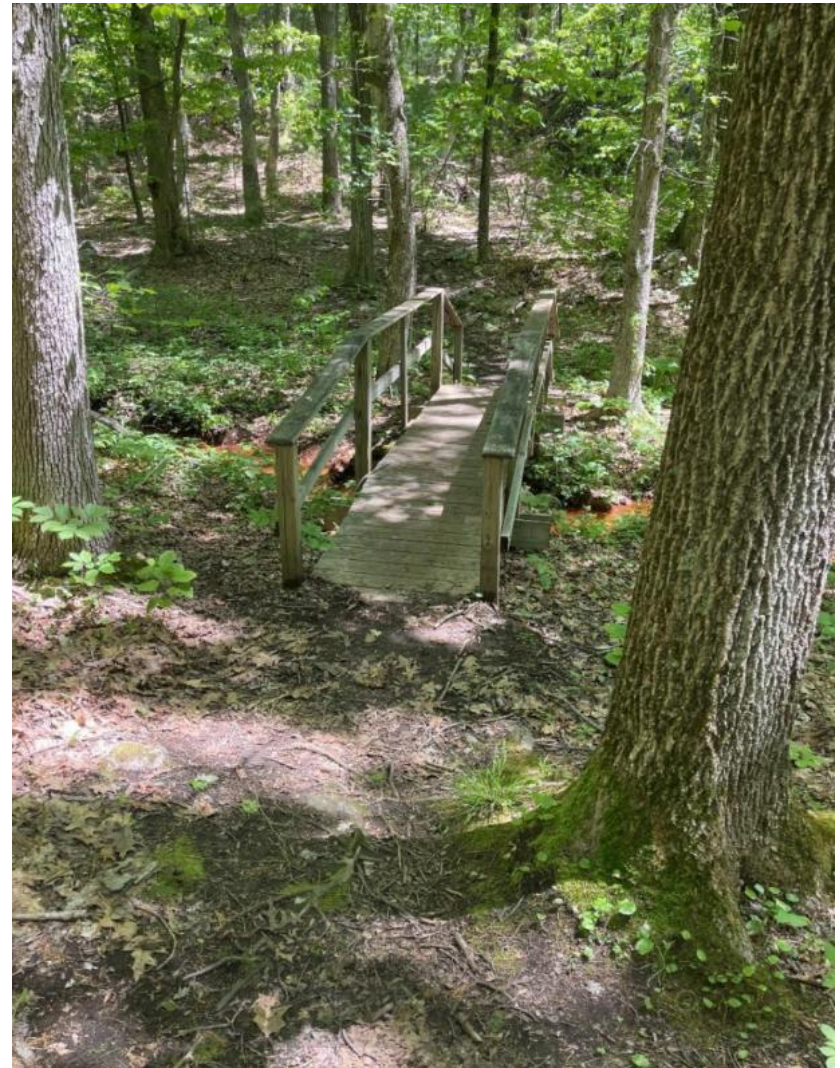


Photo: Trustees of Reservations

Eligible Project Costs

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- Acquisition
- Title search
- Baseline Documentation Report
- Chapter 21E assessment
- Survey
- Legal fees associated with the acquisition
- Other contractual services to facilitate the transaction (up to 10% of grant request)



Photo: Buzzards Bay Coalition

Application Requirements

- Application form (completed in the online Grants Management System)
- The appropriate type of appraisal for the project
- Budget (itemized)
- Project narrative
- Maps
- Survey
- 501c3 status
- Letters of commitment from additional CR holders
- Letter from Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP)
- Site photos
- Grant deadline: Monday, July 13, 2026 at 11:59 pm**

Grants Management System (GMS)

- 🌿 Centralizes grants management in one place. Applications are submitted, reviewed, and managed through this system.
- 🌿 Will soon be used for all EEA grant programs (applicants can browse all grant opportunities).
- 🌿 Requires that each applicant create an account, which can have multiple users.
- 🌿 Consultants and partners may still assist with creating application materials, but the **application must be submitted by a person directly affiliated with the applicant** (staff, board/commission member, etc)

Grants Management System (GMS)

Sign up for GMS: Visit [Grants Management System \(GMS\) | Mass.gov](#) for instructions

Watch our instructional playlist on YouTube:

[https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLzQVK6KiTOqyPW5PUOcFE42iRJgdm8LA & si=Wm2l78OgFDZ-1nA](https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLzQVK6KiTOqyPW5PUOcFE42iRJgdm8LA&si=Wm2l78OgFDZ-1nA)

See our user guide at the GMS Portal: [Help - Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs Grants Management System](#)



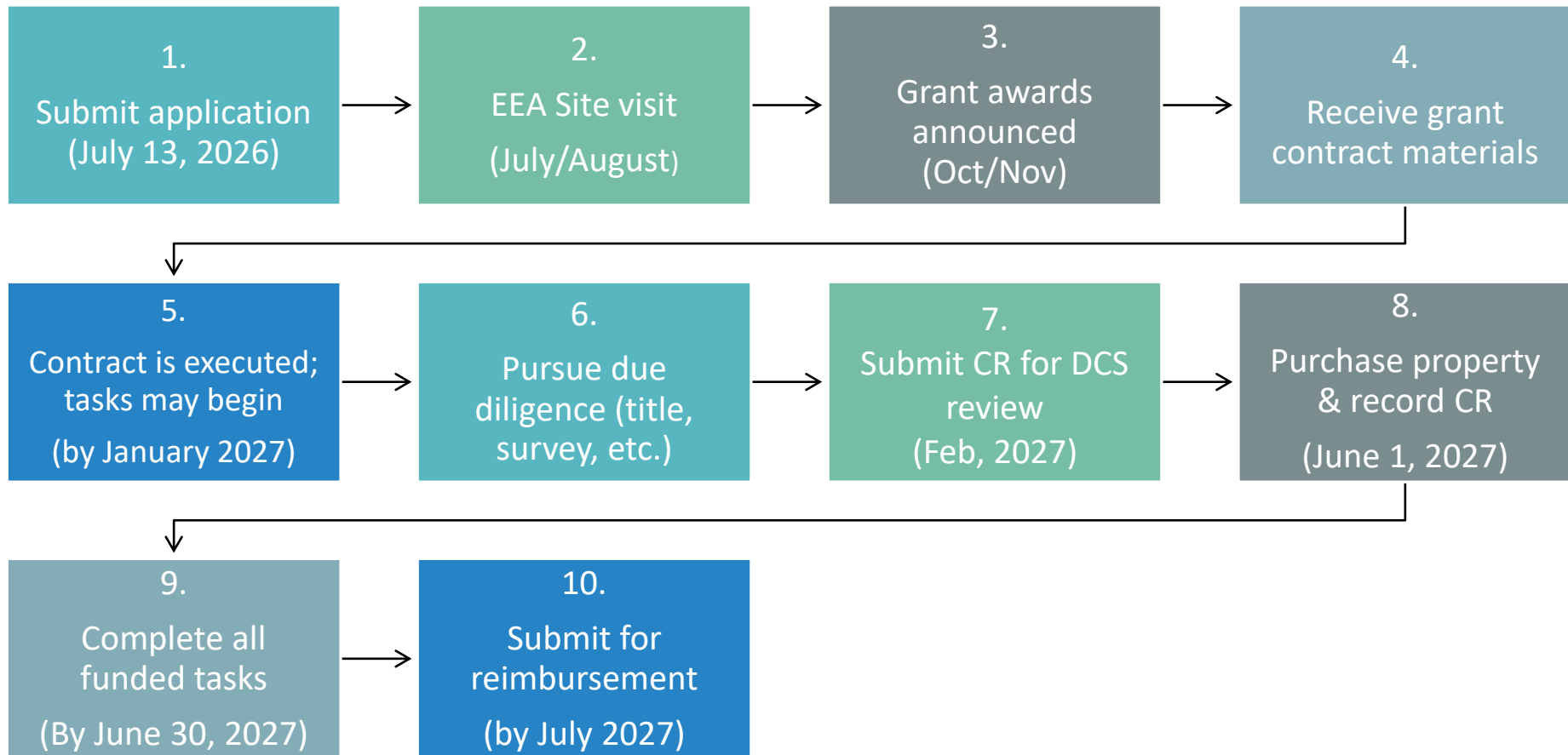
Selection Process for DCS Grants

- 🌿 All projects are visited by DCS staff, then scored and ranked (rating system is included in the grant bid package)
- 🌿 Recommendations are reviewed and approved by EEA's Secretary and the Governor's office
- 🌿 *Estimated* grant award announcement date is November 2026



Photo: Essex County Greenbelt

Grant Timeline & Project Requirements



Other DCS grant programs for land conservation open to nonprofits

Landscape Partnership (munic. conservation commissions, water departments, nonprofits, and state & federal agencies)

Max award: \$1,250,000 App deadline: April

For large, unfragmented landscapes – 100-500 acre minimum depending on the county

Forest Reserves (municipalities, nonprofits, other conservation organizations)

Max award: \$425,000 App deadline: February

For forested land to be managed passively

Tribal Land Acquisition (tribal governments, nonprofit partners)

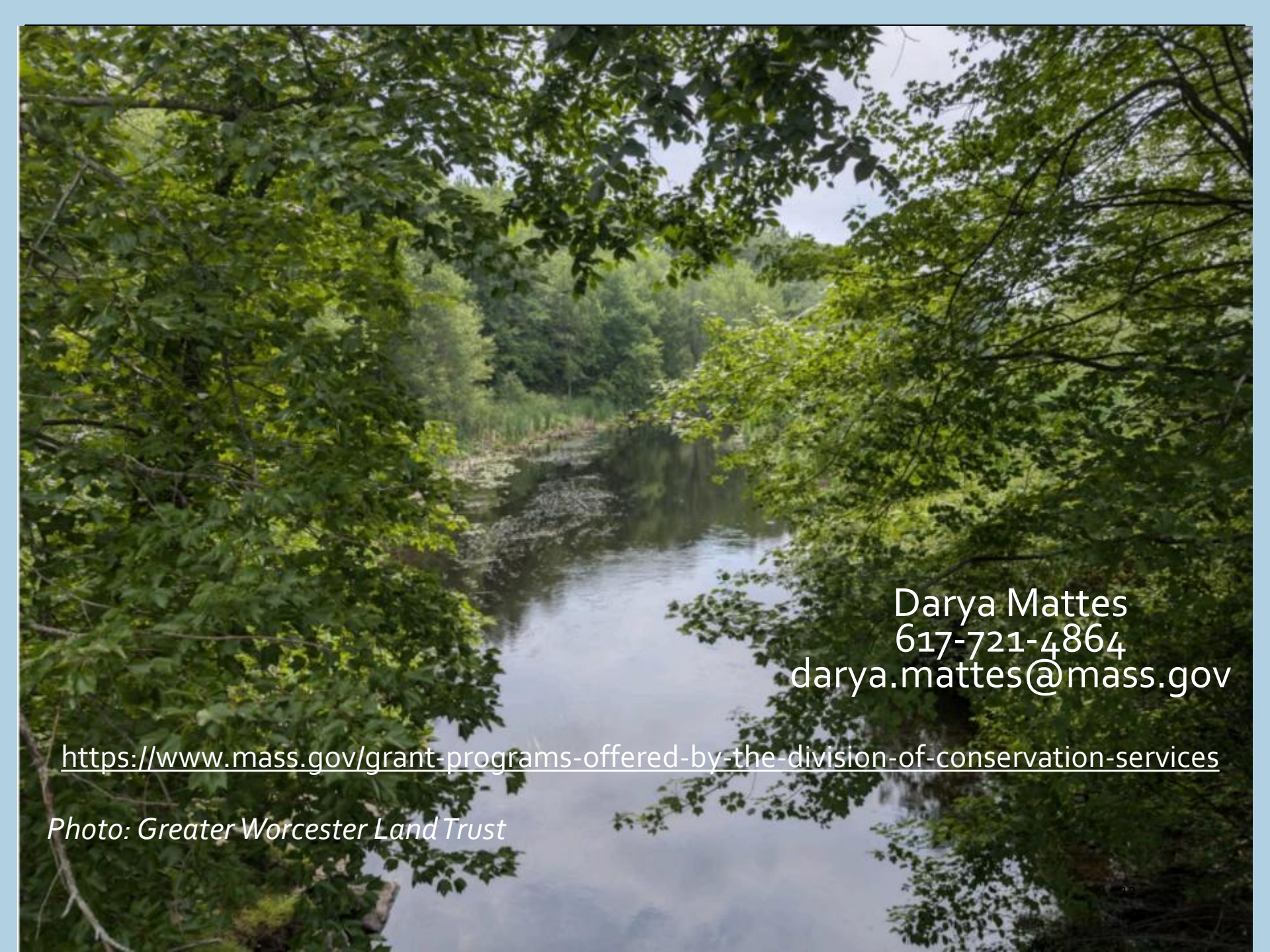
Max award: \$500,000 App deadline: September

For returning ancestral land to MA-based tribes. Nonprofits may apply to purchase a CR.

Land Conservation Assistance (municipalities, nonprofits)

Max award: \$60,000; depending on project type App deadline: Rolling

Does not fund acquisition, but provides funds for related costs (appraisals, surveys, etc)



Darya Mattes
617-721-4864
darya.mattes@mass.gov

<https://www.mass.gov/grant-programs-offered-by-the-division-of-conservation-services>

Photo: Greater Worcester Land Trust