



# CITY OF PEABODY

RECREATION, PARK and FORESTRY DEPARTMENT

50 FARM AVENUE, PEABODY, MA 01960

(978) 536-7130

[peabodyrecreation@gmail.com](mailto:peabodyrecreation@gmail.com)



## BROOKSBY FARM

### FOREST STEWARDSHIP OUTREACH PLAN IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES 2012

#### Summary

The following document contains the Stewardship Outreach Plan for the City of Peabody Brooksby Farm. It will show our goals and how we plan to achieve these goals with the next 10 years.

The guidelines include activities designed to meet the community's needs, the farm's needs, and the needs nature. The activities are broken down into an implementation timeframe, 1-2 years, 3-5 years, and 6-10 years. The timeline is arranged to gradually build community around Brooksby Farm while simultaneously building the community's capacity to engage in Brooksby Farm related projects or programs. Many activities occur multiple times over a year's time.

The means of advertising and evaluating are the same, for the most part, for each activity; therefore, it is outlined at the beginning of the plan. Each activity is then described in detail. The target audience for each activity is defined. The goals that each activity has been designed to meet are listed.

The activities have been geared towards promoting education and interpretation along with increasing local participation in the Forest Stewardship.



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## Forest Stewardship Outreach Goals

1. Preserve or Improve Scenic Beauty
2. Improve Access for walking/skiing/recreation
3. Enhance habitat for birds and small animals
4. Promote Biological Diversity
5. Improve hunting or fishing
6. Protect Water Quality
7. Protect Unique/Special/Cultural Areas
8. Improve Orchard Edges
9. Improve Safety for passive and active recreation
10. Reduce competition for our crops
11. Enhance the pond surroundings
12. Educate users of ecosystems at the farm
13. Promote Environmental Education and interpretation
14. Increase Local Participation in Forest Stewardship



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## Recommended Timeframe for Activities to Meet Forest Stewardship Outreach Goals

Activities Years 1-2	Page #
Jr. Explorers and Jr. Rangers Programs	4
Brooksby Farm Photo and Art Expo	4
Pride in Peabody Trail Day	5
Hook, Line & Sinker	5
Family Nature Nights	5
Winter at the Ski Haus	6
Sweetheart's Snowshoe Classic	6
Fairy House Workshop	7
Family Survivor Challenge	7

Activities Years 3-5	Page #
Perimeter & Trail Signage	7
Bat and Owl Boxes	7
Brooksby Fall Festival	8
Welcome Kiosk	8

Activities Years 6-10	Page #
Brooksby Outdoor Education Center	8





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**Advertising:** Newspapers, website, Facebook, Online newspapers, E-blasts, press-releases, word of mouth, community groups, program brochures, flyers to schools, etc.

**Evaluation:** Success of most of the above programs will be monitored by registration/participation numbers and post program/event surveys.

Activities Years 1-2
Jr. Explorers and Jr. Rangers Programs
Brooksby Farm Photo and Art Expo
Pride in Peabody Trail Day
Hook, Line & Sinker
Family Nature Nights
Cross Country Skiing and Snowshoeing
Sweetheart's Snowshoe Classic
Fairy House Workshop
Winter at the Ski Haus
Family Survivor Challenge

**Activity description: Jr. Explorers and Jr. Rangers:** Both programs are a series of workshops that introduce children ages 3-12 to the life on the farm. Each meeting of this four-week program includes a healthy snack, and an interactive activity designed to expose children to the many ecosystems in Massachusetts.

**Target Audience:** children ages 3-12

**Goals Met by Activity:** Educate users of ecosystems at the farm; Promote Environmental Education and interpretation; Increase Local Participation in Forest Stewardship

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**Activity description: Brooksby Farm Photo and Art Expo:** display photographs and other art work depicting life and areas of the farm, woods, animals, etc. in our barn.

**Target Audience:** all ages

**Goals Met by Activity:** Protect Unique/Special/Cultural Areas; Improve Safety for passive recreation



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**Activity description: Pride in Peabody Trail Day:** Participants will take over the farm and assist in cleaning up trails and beautifying the farm. That could consist of removing trees, branches, brush, trash, etc.

**Target Audience: All ages**

**Goals Met by Activity:** Improve Safety for passive and active recreation. Improve access for walking/skiing/recreation; Improve Orchard edges, Enhance the pond surroundings, Preserve or improve scenic beauty; enhance habitat for birds and small animals; Improve hunting or fishing. Increase Local Participation in Forest Stewardship

**Activity description: Hook, Line, & Sinker:** We will provide all that is needed to teach youth the art of fishing in our ponds on the farm.

**Target Audience: ages 7-12**

**Goals Met by Activity:** Enhance the pond surroundings; Promote biological diversity; Improve safety for passive recreation. Protect Water Quality; Promote Environmental Education and interpretation; Increase Local Participation in Forest Stewardship

**Activity description: Family Nature Night Series;** the whole family joins us at the farm and participates in a guided exploration as the wildlife prepares for night. Each meeting is a different theme: Owls, Amphibians, Trees, etc.

**Target Audience: All ages**

**Goals Met by Activity:** Educate users of ecosystems at the farm; improve safety for passive/active recreation; Promote biological diversity, Enhance habitat for birds and small animals; Promote Environmental Education and interpretation; Increase Local Participation in Forest Stewardship





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**Activity description: Winter at the Ski Haus:** During the winter months, when snow is on the ground, we open up our ski haus for folks to rent cross country skis, snowshoe, and hike. Maps are available for participants to explore the many miles of trails the farm has to offer. Explorers can go deep into the woods, through the orchards, around the ponds, or cruise the perimeter.

**Target Audience:** All ages

**Goals Met by Activity:** Preserve or Improve Scenic Beauty; improve access to walking/skiing/recreation; Improve orchard edges; Improve safety for passive/active recreation; Promote Environmental Education and interpretation; Increase Local Participation in Forest Stewardship

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**Activity description: Sweetheart's Snowshoe Classic or Trail Run:** Participants snowshoe or run a 5K through the trails of Brooksby Farm. This event is held in the winter so if there is snow on the ground participants snowshoe, if there is no snow, then it's a trail run.

**Target Audience:** All ages

**Goals Met by Activity:** Preserve or improve scenic beauty; Protect unique/special cultural areas; Improve safety for active recreation

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**Activity description: Fairy Houses & Gnome Homes:** This workshop includes everything needed to create a fairy house or a gnome home using natural resources found in the woods and on the farm. Families will listen to stories about fairy and gnome lore as they build their homes.

**Target Audience:** 5 yrs. and older

**Goals Met by Activity:** Preserve or improve scenic beauty; enhance habitat for birds and small animals; protect unique/special/cultural areas, educate users of ecosystems.



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**Activity description: Family Survivor Challenge:** The entire family joins at the farm in a "Survivor" scavenger hunt. They'll learn map & compass skills, complete a ropes course challenge that is in the woods, look for tree species and more.

**Target Audience:** Ages 7 & older

**Goals Met by Activity:** Improve Access for walking/skiing/ recreation; Promote biological diversity; educate users of ecosystems; Promote Environmental Education and interpretation; Increase Local Participation in Forest Stewardship

Activities Years 3-5
Perimeter& Trail Signage
Bat and Owl Boxes
Brooksby Fall Festival
Welcome Kiosk

**Activity description: Perimeter and Trail Signage:** Create and post signs around the perimeter and throughout the orchards and farm land. Signs would be made from sustainable harvested wood products, Signs will indicate the Forest Stewardship Plan

**Target Audience:** community members, trail groups, youth groups

**Goals Met by Activity:** Improve Access for walking/skiing/ recreation; preserve or improve scenic beauty.

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**Activity description: Bat and Owl Boxes:** Focus on having a group or groups construct owl or bat boxes and place them in appropriate locations. Host a workshop about bat and owl habitat and natural history.

**Target Audience:** community members, community organizations; youth groups; homeowners; landowners

**Goals Met by Activity:** Promote Biological Diversity, enhance habitat for birds, promote environmental education and interpretation, increase local participation in Forest Stewardship.





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**Activity description: Brooksby Fall Festival:** Hold an annual event at Brooksby Farm to celebrate its place and importance within the community. Multiple workshops and activities could be included in the event such as interpretive hikes, scavenger hunts, clean ups, orienteering, and nature art contests. Local businesses would donate funds for supplies or food and drinks. This activity would be a chance for the city to come together around the farm and a good opportunity to increase the awareness of the forest among city residents.

**Target Audience:** community members, community organizations; youth groups; homeowners; landowners

**Goals Met by Activity:** promote environmental education and interpretation, increase local participation in Forest Stewardship.

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**Activity description: Welcome Kiosk:** Create kiosk from local, sustainable harvested wood products, Kiosk can include maps of property and trail system, as well as information about the Forest Stewardship Plan and natural resources found on the property.

**Target Audience: All Ages**

**Goals Met by Activity:** Improve Access for walking/skiing/ recreation; promote environmental education and interpretation, increase local participation in Forest Stewardship.

Activities Years 6-10
Brooksby Outdoor Education Center

**Activity description: Outdoor Education Center:** To build a facility to hold educational classes, programs, and events focused on outdoor education, environmental sciences and the interpretive classroom.

**Target Audience:** community members, community organizations; youth groups; homeowners; landowners

**Goals Met by Activity:** promote environmental education and interpretation, increase local participation in Forest Stewardship.

**Landowner:** City of Peabody Parks Commission and Conservation Commission

Signature: *Jennifer P. Davis*

Date: June 28, 2012



HAMPDEN-WILBRAHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT  
MINNECHAUG REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL TRACT  
FOREST STEWARDSHIP OUTREACH PLAN

William VanDoren  
Massachusetts Licensed Forester #380  
January, 2012

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Forest Stewardship Outreach Plan was prepared concurrently with a Forest Stewardship Plan for 74.07 ac. of woodland owned by the Hampden-Wilbraham Regional School District (HWRSD) around the Minnechaug Regional High School (MRHS). This woodland is spread across several tax parcels but is under the same ownership and so forms a contiguous tract of woodland, called the MRHS tract. The Stewardship Plan was an integral part of an RFP for the salvage and restoration of woodland damaged by the June 1, 2011 tornadoes and July 26, 2011 microburst.

The preparation of the Forest Stewardship Plan was funded by a grant from the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR). When a municipal agency takes advantage of these grants, they are also presumed to have a greater responsibility to the community than a private landowner; part of this responsibility includes education and outreach to the community on issues of forest stewardship, forest ecology, and forest management. A Forest Stewardship Outreach Plan is then required of municipalities to help summarize and plan activities to demonstrate forestry and forest stewardship to the community at large. An additional grant was provided by the DCR to fund the preparation of this outreach plan, which was prepared with feedback from Edward Cenedella, Jr., Director of Facilities and Operations for the HWRSD.

This outreach plan discusses the proposed activities in chronological order. The proposed activities are the creation of an interpretive/educational trail, integration of the post-disturbance ecological succession with earth/life sciences curriculum at MRHS, and outreach to forest landowners within the community. For each activity there are a set of particular goals; a target audience, a brief description of the proposed activity and suggestions for implementation, and a discussion of methods to evaluate the outcome of the activity. In-depth recommendations for specific activities are contained in the Stewardship Practices section of the Forest Stewardship Plan.

## Activity 1: Interpretive/educational trail creation

2012-2015

### *Stewardship-specific goals:*

Improve access for walking/skiing/recreation

Enhance learning experience for community

Enhance property as public area for Hampden/Wilbraham residents to enjoy

### *Practice-specific goals:*

Increase community use of MRHS tract

Increase community awareness/educational level of forest ecology and management

### *Target audience:*

General public

### *Possible partners:*

Wilbraham Conservation Commission

Wilbraham Historical Society (for possible information about the history of the MRHS tract)

Massachusetts Forest Landowners Association

State/federal land agencies with land management responsibilities (for suggestions on messaging)

### *Activity:*

An interpretive trail will be created, running concurrently in part with an existing cross-country (XC) running trail, and utilizing forwarder roads from the 2011-12 salvage operation in other areas. An informational kiosk could be installed at the trailhead where the trail interfaces with the woodland area. This kiosk could contain information on property rules, use guidelines (avoid trail use during wet conditions), and a property overview map. Trail maps and other information could be distributed via a weatherproof box at this location.

In-woods kiosks would probably not be located along the XC running trail to avoid injury to runners. However, the forwarder roads pass near a variety of other types of features that could be elaborated on by in-woods kiosks and/or information contained on a trail map distributed at the trailhead kiosk. Possible educational topics could include forest succession, wildlife, land use history, geology, and forest management. Trail construction would use sustainable practices designed to minimize erosion and prevent unauthorized uses, and the trail would be constructed to appeal to a wide range of users. A logbook is suggested to quantify the number of users of the trail and solicit feedback on educational outcomes.

### *Feedback:*

A comment card box or trail logbook could be maintained at the kiosk. Alternatively, a website with a feedback feature could be established as well. This will help to (1) quantify the number of users and (2) allow users to provide feedback on the educational/interpretive success of the signage. Alternatively, remote methods are available to provide counts of trail users.

### *Advertising:*

Information about the creation and opening of the trail could be delivered through a press release or on the HWRSD website. Trail maintenance days could be held, enlisting volunteer help from the community to clear the trail, clean waterbars, and brush back the trail on an annual or biannual basis. This would help to foster a sense of ownership among the community. However, if future timber harvesting is planned, care should be taken to reinforce the notion of this tract as a working forest to avoid ideological conflict at the time of the proposed harvest. Further, joint walks could be held on an as-desired basis with other organizations engaged in promoting forest stewardship, such as the Massachusetts Forest Landowners Association.



## Activity 2: Integration of property with earth/life science curriculum at school

2015-2018

### *Stewardship-specific goals:*

Enhance learning experience for community

### *Practice-specific goals:*

Increase integration of MRHS grounds into the student educational experience

Increase student awareness of ecological issues

### *Target audience:*

Students and their families

### *Possible partners:*

Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation

Massachusetts Division of Water Supply Protection

Massachusetts Division of Fish and Wildlife

United States Forest Service

### *Activity:*

The blowdowns from the tornadoes and microburst during the summer of 2011 affected woodland owned by private entities, municipal governments, and state agencies. Each owner will respond to the casualty differently. Private landowners may choose to either salvage their timber or let it remain; government agencies may have mandates to follow that explicitly preclude salvage of timber or other active forest management. While ecological succession is always occurring, it is perhaps most readily observable, and appears to proceed most rapidly, after a severe disturbance such as that endured at the MRHS tract.

To evaluate the post-disturbance response of the affected woodland under these various management regimes, the MRHS could establish a monitoring program based, in part, upon a protocol established by members of various state and federal agencies. This protocol includes evaluation of vegetation responses at all canopy layers, from herbaceous vegetation on the forest floor to overstory trees; bird point counts; and sampling of native pollinators. Obviously, conditions would have to be safe prior to undertaking this activity and teachers would have to be both willing and able to participate.

The school could integrate a student/citizen monitoring program as a component of an earth/life sciences curriculum, and data and results could be shared with state agencies. This presents an excellent opportunity to engage students, further education on forest ecology and management, and learn about forest response to disturbance. Ongoing monitoring of forest regeneration is also important to be sure forest health and regeneration composition goals are met. MRHS faculty and staff could also be provided with an outline for a short course on forest ecology with additional reading opportunities and photographs of the MRHS tracts' forest succession.

### *Feedback:*

Any additional educational use of the MRHS grounds above present levels could be deemed a success. Students could be asked of their opinion of this activity, and teachers could be queried as to their opinion of its effectiveness. A sample goal is that students should be able to identify three forest management goals or three forest successional stages after participating in this program. State/federal cooperators could also be asked to evaluate the effectiveness of the cooperative monitoring program.

### *Advertising:*

While there would not necessarily be an advertising component in public media for this activity, teachers and students should be engaged as early in the process as possible to ensure its feasibility and success.

### **Activity 3: Outreach to/woods walk with forest landowners in the community**

**2018-2021**

#### *Stewardship-specific goals:*

Enhance learning experience for community

#### *Practice-specific goals:*

Increase awareness of forest management in the community

#### *Target audience:*

Non-industrial private landowners of more than 20 acres in Hampden and Wilbraham

#### *Possible partners:*

Massachusetts Forest Landowners Association

Massachusetts Society of American Foresters

Hampden Conservation Commission

Wilbraham Conservation Commission

#### *Activity:*

Landowners who have enrolled in the Massachusetts Chapter 61/61A/61B or Forest Stewardship programs have already demonstrated some level of engagement in forestry above and beyond average forest landowners. This practice would start by acquiring a list of all non-industrial private landowners of more than 20 acres (the typical minimum economically viable woodland tract size) from the Wilbraham and Hampden assessors and mailing an invitation to these people to a woods walk to discuss the management of the MRHS tract and forest stewardship in general.

This activity would likely take place on a weekend afternoon and would include a woods walk on the newly restored XC/interpretive trail, and a discussion of the management philosophy of the MRHS tract. Obviously, faculty and staff time are at a premium, so this event would need to be coordinated and planned to use a minimum of their time. Other environmental groups and forest stewardship organizations such as the Massachusetts Forest Landowners Association or the Massachusetts Society of American Foresters, who may need to host educational events from time to time for their members, may be cooperators who could handle some of the responsibilities of coordinating this event. Specifically, it is important that management for timber is not a primary goal of the HWRSD, but public safety, recreation, education, and habitat are. The discussion of how the post-disturbance salvage operation both fit in with and furthered these goals may be of interest to other forest landowners in the two communities.

#### *Feedback:*

The overall number of attendees is, of course, one barometer of the success of the event. A post-event feedback card could be prepared where attendees could offer their feedback on the event. MRHS staff and faculty should also be consulted as to their perceptions of the success – or lack thereof – of this activity. DCR staff and town assessors could also monitor for additional interest or enrollment in the Forest Stewardship or Chapter 61/61A/61B programs.

#### *Advertising:*

As mentioned above, one component of an advertising campaign for this event would be targeted mailings to the non-industrial private owners of medium and large tracts in the communities. The HWRSD website could also be utilized to advertise for this event, as could the capacities of any cooperating groups or agencies. Press releases in local newspapers could also be prepared.



# **Town of Southborough**

## **Forestry Stewardship Outreach Plan**

***GOAL: Increase awareness of the Town Forest both as an asset and a corridor between the Turenne Wildlife Habitat and the Breakneck Hill Conservation Land, two better-known Town properties.***

**Target Audience:** Southborough residents, abutters, youth groups, Town officials

**Message:** In addition to the more well-known Turenne and Breakneck Hill properties, Southborough has a Town Forest that connects the two.

**Activities:**

- Make maps and copies of the Forestry management plan available at the library and through the Town website.
- Post signs at the trail heads
- Host hikes and snowshoeing events across all three properties
- Sponsor a booth at Heritage Day with maps and copies of the plan available

**Evaluation:** Gather feedback from hike participants. Review and evaluate attendance and participation by the public at sponsored events, and discuss at Southborough Stewardship meetings.

**Costs:**

Advertising – publicize maps on website, local papers, local blogs

Staff or Consultant Time – design trail maps, lead walks

Printing – Forest Stewardship Plan and maps

Booth Rental for Heritage Day

***GOAL: Maximize the assets of the property.***

**Target Audience:** Southborough residents, potential volunteers, youth groups, Town officials

**Message:** The Town Forest is a resource that has aesthetic value; we can make it more accessible and desirable.

**Activities:**

- Maintain the trails
- Sponsor educational walks with Conservation Commission members and other environmental experts
- Create vistas
- Create new trails around and adjacent to natural resource areas
- Install boxes for wood ducks
- Identify volunteers to take on projects at the Town Forest

**Evaluation:** Review and discuss at regular Southborough Stewardship meetings.

Increase in interest to develop Eagle Scout projects in Town Forest

Expand the membership of the Stewardship Committee

**Costs:**

Materials to build wood duck boxes

Materials to perform trail maintenance and trail creation

Advertising of educational walks and payment to expert guides



***GOAL: Increase public use of the Town Forest.***

**Target Audience:** Southborough residents, recreational users, youth groups, Town officials

**Message:** The Town Forest is available for public use and enjoyment

**Activities:**

- Sponsor nature walks
- Investigate potential vernal pools and certify any that are found
- Identify volunteer opportunities
- Increase public awareness of the Town Forest as a recreational opportunity
- Host School and Scout groups on educational walks
- Sponsor wildlife tracking hikes
- Publish Fact Sheets and Town Forest Maps
- Sponsor a Photo Contest
- Submit articles to local newspapers and local websites
- Mail Town Forest fact sheet to residents as insert with tax bill
- Partner with Open Space Preservation Commission and Southborough Open Land Foundation to co-sponsor interpretive walks

**Evaluation:** Review and discuss at regular Southborough Stewardship meetings.

Evaluate participation on sponsored walks and photo contest

Increased requests for maps and Fact Sheets

**Costs:**

Trail signage

Experts and Staff to lead walks

Advertising in local papers and websites

Printing of maps and Fact Sheet

Prizes for photo contest winners

***Goal: Publicize the Forestry Stewardship Plan.***

**Target Audience:** Southborough residents, abutters, Town officials

**Message:** Forest stewardship promotes ecological integrity and biodiversity while fostering connections between people and the forest.

**Activities:**

- Formally present the Forest Stewardship Plan to Town Officials at a televised meeting
- Make the plan available on the Town Website and at the library
- Write newspaper articles and distribute to town and local websites
- Host a program on local cable television promoting the Forest Stewardship Plan and the Town Forest
- Sponsor a booth at Heritage Day

**Evaluation:** Review and discuss at regular Southborough Stewardship meetings.  
Distribute a survey to residents.

**Costs:**

Printing of FSP for distribution

Heritage Day booth rental