NRC 597C: Case Studies in Conservation [3 credits]
Spring 2011 semester [SPIRE # 16103]
Tuesday/Thursday, 4:00 – 5:15 pm, 202 Holdsworth Hall

Instructor: David Kittredge. 327 Holdsworth Hall. 545-2943; dbk@eco.umass.edu

Background: Landscapes dominated by private ownerships have pressing conservation needs. Stakes are high in many places as conservation options are lost due to land conversion and development. Massachusetts Audubon estimates that the Commonwealth loses as much as 40 acres of open space to development on a daily basis. One strategy is for the state or federal government to buy land in fee, and this has been done successfully, resulting in the creation of the White Mountain National Forest, various wildlife refuges, national seashores, and state and national parks. Alternatively, there are many examples of conservation and land protection in a parcelized or fragmented landscape dominated by private ownership which are not the result of federal or state fee simple acquisition. In many cases, towns, non-governmental organizations, partnerships, and individuals respond to need and act at a smaller spatial and financial scale but with significant conservation results. Indeed, these groups and individuals can often act with greater speed and local credibility than larger public entities.

This course will review real-world actual case studies in conservation, with a focus on locally initiated, small-scale success stories, described by outside speakers. The course is intended for the dual audiences of:

- Currently enrolled graduate and undergraduate students in natural resource disciplines (e.g., fisheries, wildlife, forestry) and other relevant areas (e.g., resource economics, geosciences, regional planning). These future resource managers and stewards need to have an understanding of tools and tactics that can be applied in different circumstances to conserve land; and

- Practicing natural resource managers in private and public sectors, as well as locally-based conservation volunteers who are active in land trusts, Conservation Commissions, and other groups. These people are currently involved at the front lines of conservation, often at the local level, and would benefit from knowing what has been successful in other places.

Working singly or in groups, enrolled students will be responsible for assembling the elements of one case study, which will be subsequently developed into an on-line case to be used in outreach to private landowners, natural resource professionals, and community volunteers. Thus, this course represents a unique and valuable opportunity for students to interact with people and real-world examples of conservation occurring at the local level. Through meeting the requirements of the course, students will be participating in the development of online case study resources to be disseminated to a wider audience.

Requirements:

1. Attendance and participation in the weekly seminar presentations and discussions.
2. Mid-term take home exam. One question and you have a week to complete it.
3. Commitment to a case study. In no more than 1 page, identify and describe the case study you will ultimately submit at the end of the semester. This commitment must identify:
   a. name of landowner[s] and other involved organizations
b. how the target audience of private woodland owners, conservation organizations, and others will benefit from this case. What is the take-home message? How might this message be applied in other situations?

4. **Assembly of materials to describe a case in an on-line format** for wider distribution. Students will work in teams [no more than 2 people/team] or individually with the person who presents the case to the class [or, find and develop their own case!], to gather information that will be used in subsequent development of the case on-line for wider distribution. Cases developed by students in previous semesters are located here: http://www.masswoods.net/index.php/future/cases

Students do not need to create the on-line case. That will be done subsequent to the class. They need only assemble the required elements of the case. **Required elements of a case include:**

- a. Narrative description of the case (1,000 – 1,500 words), including as much relevant detail to tell the story as possible, e.g., expenses; methods of financing; people and groups involved and the roles they played; location / size of the property; history of the land and its ownership; ecological / conservation role of the property, importance of the case – why it mattered? tools, tactics, and strategies used to conserve land.
- b. Timeline describing how the case developed, and how much time elapsed from beginning to end
- c. Summary of the case distilled into “lessons learned” presented in a bulletized format
- d. Digital photos that illustrate the case, including the land and people involved, and text captions that accompany the images
- e. Digital renditions of maps and air photos that describe the case, at several different scales, illustrating the overall landscape context of the case, as well as the actual, individual parcel[s] involved, and text captions that accompany the images
- f. List of relevant web sites and links that pertain to the case (e.g., agencies, local groups, communities and programs involved).
- g. Audio clips of people describing the case and their role, and text transcriptions of the audio clips (optional, but a good idea!)

Please submit all case materials on a CD. Format of the materials for a case is as follows:

- o Narrative, timeline, list of associated links, and lessons learned each in a separate word document
- o Provide a word document with captions to photos and maps. Be sure the file name to the photo or map is listed in the document along with the caption.
- o Photos and maps should be submitted as JPGS. Preferred size: 23(w) x 17(H) and 72 dpi. BUT-don't resize photos. No scanned photos.
- o Provide a title to the case, thumbnail photo and one sentence lead in.
- o Provide the primary conservation tool used in the case (CR, Fee Simple, etc.)
- o No video.

See the following site for examples of past cases: http://www.masswoods.net/index.php/future/cases
Basis for grading:
Attendance and class participation 30%
Commitment to a case study and development plan (Due 22 March; 5:00 pm) 10%
Mid-term take-home exam (distributed 22 March, Due 29 March; 5:00 pm) 20%
Requisite elements of a case study (Due Tuesday, 10 May; 5:00 pm see above): 40%

1-credit option: as an alternative to taking the course for three credits and meeting all requirements, students may enroll for 1 credit of independent study (e.g., NRC 596), and meet the requirements of: attending all Tuesday seminar presentations (30% of grade), Case study development plan (10%), and preparing materials for one case (60% of grade).

0-credit option: The Tuesday afternoon seminars are free and open to the public. Just come and learn about conservation organizations, practices, and success stories.

Prerequisites:
1. Working knowledge of GIS would be helpful, to be able to acquire relevant spatial data from MASSGIS and create spatial imagery for a particular case (see e.g., above).
2. Ability and willingness to travel on your own [or with your group] to actually visit the site of your case study (one or possibly more times, as needed), to interview relevant parties, take photos, and acquire other background information.

Waiver:
Students will be required to make independent trips to visit the site of a case study, and hereby release and agree to hold blameless the University, Department, and Instructor from any and all liability or loss resulting from acts of omissions.

ACADEMIC HONESTY: Academic dishonesty is a violation of the spirit and regulations of the University, and will not be tolerated. Examples of academic dishonesty include cheating, plagiarism, and fabrication. Any student found to be in violation of University Academic Honesty regulations will automatically receive a failing grade for the course. For further information on academic honesty regulations, please consult: http://www.umass.edu/dean_students/codeofconduct/

Attendance: Attendance and class participation represent 30% of the final grade. There will be a brief, 1-question quiz administered at the beginning of every class on Tuesdays, prior to the guest speaker's presentation. Because the guest speaker's presentation and participation are an extremely important part of class and their time is valuable, the quiz will be administered in the first 5 minutes of each Tuesday class. The class starts at 4:00 pm, and the quizzes will be picked up at 4:05 pm. It is not acceptable to come late and take the quiz after 4:05 pm. That would be disruptive to the class, the speaker, and the instructor. Please plan ahead and be prompt. The lowest quiz grade will be dropped at the end of the semester and not used in determination of the final course grade.

Course schedule: The class meets every Tuesday and Thursday, from 4 – 5:15 pm in 202 Holdsworth Hall. Seminar presentations of cases by outside speakers will be each Tuesday, and class discussion will be on Thursdays. See the schedule below for a list of speakers and topics.
## Case Studies in Conservation. NRC 597C
### Spring 2011 seminar schedule
Seminars meet **Tuesdays** from 4 – 5:15 pm, in Holdsworth Hall 202

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Speaker and Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 25</td>
<td>Bob Wilber. Director of Land Protection, Massachusetts Audubon Society. <em>Land protection by a statewide conservation organization</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>February 1</td>
<td>Wayne Feiden. Director of Planning and Development, City of Northampton. <em>Land protection through zoning, municipal acquisition, easement, and limited development</em></td>
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<td>February 8</td>
<td>Kristin DeBoer. Executive Director, Kestrel Trust. <em>Regional land trust land protection example(s).</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>March 1</td>
<td>Katie Theoharides, Executive Director, Hilltown Land Trust. <em>Regional land trust land protection example(s).</em></td>
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<td>March 8</td>
<td>Brandon Kibbe. Land protection specialist, Mass Wildlife. <em>Land protection from the perspective of a state conservation agency</em></td>
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<td>March 22</td>
<td>Paul Gagnon. Land Protection Specialist, Franklin Land Trust. <em>Regional land trust land protection example(s).</em></td>
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<td>April 5</td>
<td>To be announced.</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 12</td>
<td>Leslie Reed-Evans. Executive Director, Williamstown Rural Lands Foundation. <em>Conservation by a local land trust.</em></td>
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<td>April 19</td>
<td>Ellen Anderson. Real estate appraiser</td>
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<td>April 26</td>
<td>Keith Ross. Senior Advisor, Landvest. <em>Aggregation of land protection projects: reducing cost, time, and energy, and stimulating interest.</em></td>
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