Kestrel Land Trust conserves, cares for and connects people to the forests, farms, and riverways that make the Pioneer Valley a great place to live. Our goal for the Valley’s forests is to protect a network of connected wildlands and woodlands to conserve habitat for wildlife, safeguard drinking water sources, provide for outdoor recreation, support sustainable forestry, and promote resiliency to climate change.

As a landowner, you can help by learning about options for managing or conserving your own forest. Your land may be valuable to you as wildland if:

- You love the feel of big old forests—that complex structure of tall trees, dead snags and downed logs that supports wildlife.
- You appreciate the spiritual, ethical and healing values of forests.
- You recognize that forests are a natural solution to climate change.

What Are Wildlands?

Wildlands are places where natural processes direct the ebb and flow of life. These forests are not necessarily pristine, but are left alone by people so that nature can take its own course.

In its Wildlands and Woodlands, Farmlands and Communities vision, Harvard Forest defines wildlands as “Large forest landscapes permanently protected from development, shaped by natural processes and the prevailing environment to promote conditions largely free from human impact.” This regional vision calls for 7% of the New England landscape to be conserved as wildland.

NATURAL CLIMATE CHANGE SOLUTIONS: All forests remove carbon pollution from the air and store it in tree trunks, leaves, roots and soils. Preserving forests as forever wild and allowing them to grow undisturbed for centuries means they can store more carbon each year.

“It is not so much for its beauty that the forest makes its claim upon men’s hearts, as for that subtle something, that quality of the air, that emanation from the old trees, that so wonderfully changes and renews a weary spirit”.

— ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON
The Forever-Wild Conservation Fund

With a passion for old-growth forests and big trees, and the benefits they provide society including “supporting the complex web of life, carbon sequestration, water quality and the restoration of the human spirit,” Monica Jakuc Leverett and Bob Leverett have partnered with Kestrel Land Trust to create the **Monica and Bob Leverett Forever-Wild Conservation Fund**. The fund was initiated in 2018 and continues to grow thanks to generous donations. Kestrel uses these funds to help conserve, in perpetuity, wildlands in the Pioneer Valley.

**How You Can Help**

**LANDOWNERS:** Forest owners can consider conserving their land under a forever-wild agreement. This may be through a donation of the land or donation of a conservation restriction on the land through a bequest in your will, or a sale or bargain sale of the land to a conservation organization. Each option may provide various tax benefits.

We can help you determine which option is right for your land, your goals, and your situation.

**EVERYONE:** If you don’t own forest land, but love wild forests, you can still help by contributing to the **Monica and Bob Leverett Forever-Wild Conservation Fund**. Your donation will be used to help with the transaction and stewardship expenses associated with conserving forests as wildlands, forever.

**Are You Ready to Learn More?**

Landowners, visit kestreltrust.org/conserve/process/ or call (413) 549-1097.

Donors, visit kestreltrust.org/give/donate

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**New England Forest Trees Today: Young and Small** *(Source: The Nature Conservancy)*

Many forests could more than double their carbon storage if protected as wildlands.

– HARVARD FOREST

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**Bob Leverett determined that this black birch tree is at least 200 years old.**

*Photo by Bob Leverett.*

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**Monica Jakuc Leverett & Bob Leverett**