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Secretary of the Commonwealth

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**HASSANAMISCO RESERVATION, GRAFTON, APPROVED FOR NOMINATION TO THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**

Secretary of the Commonwealth William Francis Galvin is pleased to announce that the Massachusetts Historical Commission approved the Hassanamisco Reservation in Grafton for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places at its June 8, 2011, meeting. The nomination will be submitted to the National Register of Historic Places at the National Park Service in Washington, DC, for final consideration and designation.

“The Massachusetts Historical Commission is dedicated to preserving the Commonwealth’s rich architectural, cultural, archaeological, and historic resources,” Secretary Galvin said. “Inclusion of the Hassanamisco Reservation in the National Register will help to protect this exceptionally significant property.”

The Hassanamisco Reservation, 80 Brigham Hill Road, is an approximately three-acre property owned by the Nipmuc Nation. The reservation has been the property of the Nipmuc tribe since before written history, and has long been the principal location where members of the Nipmuc community have convened to carry out cultural practices important in maintaining their historical and contemporary culture, including the Annual Hassanamisco Indian Fair held every July. The property is a mixture of open and wooded land, with a number of ceremonial areas and several structures. The most significant structure is a building known as The Homestead, which has been home to the tribe’s culturally and politically prominent Cisco family. The one-story building consists of a gable-roofed core surrounded by shed-roofed additions, constructed in several phases over the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The present-day reservation was once part of the Hassanamessit Plantation, established in 1654 by the Reverend John Eliot and intended as a mission where Native people would adopt Christian religion and elements of English culture. In 1728, most of the area was transferred to English settlers, leaving 1,200 acres divided among seven Nipmuc families in separate parcels within the town. Survival of even a small, three-acre parcel into the 21<sup>st</sup> century was and is significant, as all other Nipmuc land occupied at the point of English settlement had been lost by the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. Responsibility for the reservation today is maintained by the Nipmuc Nation Tribal Council, and Chief Natachaman (Walter A. Vickers).

The Hassanamisco Reservation is one of 6 historic resources around the Commonwealth approved for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places by the Massachusetts Historical Commission at this meeting.

Secretary Galvin serves as Chairman of the 17-member board, which meets regularly and considers historic resources eligible for the National Register four times a year.

The National Register is the nation’s official listing of significant historic resources. In Massachusetts, there are over 70,000 properties listed in the National Register. The Massachusetts Historical Commission has been administering the National Register of Historic Places program in Massachusetts since 1966.

The Massachusetts Historical Commission is the office of the State Historic Preservation Officer and the State Archaeologist. It was established in 1963 to identify, evaluate, and protect important  
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historical and archaeological assets of the Commonwealth. Visit our website to learn more about the Commission's programs ([www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc](http://www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc)).

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