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Secretary of the Commonwealth

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**EAST LEVERETT HISTORIC DISTRICT AND MOORE’S CORNER HISTORIC DISTRICT,
LEVERETT, 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 East Leverett and Moore’s Corner Historic Districts for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places at its June 12, 2013, meeting. The nominations 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 historic, architectural, archaeological, and cultural resources,” Secretary Galvin said. “Inclusion of the East Leverett and Moore’s Corner Historic Districts in the National Register is a testament to the town’s and its residents’ hard work to preserve historic resources.”

Both the East Leverett Historic District and Moore’s Corner Historic District are significant as late 18th- and 19th-century agricultural and industrial villages, the residents of which followed the occupational patterns of their time, working both as farmers and in grist, saw, textile, or turning mills that occupied the waterpower sites on nearby brooks and rivers. This type of mixed economy was typical of small western Massachusetts towns, where reliance solely on agriculture or industry was not possible due to the nature of soils and irregular landscape available for farming and grazing, and to the limited size of the streams and rivers that powered machinery.

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The buildings that make up both districts are largely modest in scale and ornament, but were well constructed and remain well preserved. Architecture in the districts includes the Federal, Greek Revival, Gothic Revival, Italianate, and Colonial Revival styles.

In the East Leverett Historic District, which is located in a small village centered on a crossroads and a waterway known as Roaring Brook, the varied building types include a former schoolhouse, a former store, a former mill, houses, and outbuildings. The district also includes the East Leverett Cemetery, which was established around 1813 and contains about 200 markers of granite, marble, limestone, sandstone, and slate. The cemetery is still in use, with the most recent burial occurring within the past two years.

During the early 20th century, no longer an active industrial and farming village, East Leverett's economy declined along with its buildings, until most were owned by absentee owners or were highly mortgaged. Minona Seagrove, daughter of Robert Fitts, whose family had lived in Leverett for generations, turned the village around by buying houses, fixing them up, and selling them to people looking for summer places. Her progress encouraged others to come and, over time, restore additional homes for summer use. After World War II, faculty members from the Amherst campus of the University of Massachusetts discovered East Leverett and began to buy houses for year-round residences, changing the area's demographics once again by replacing vacationers.

The Moore's Corner Historic District is a small mill village located about four miles from Leverett Center and about five miles from the East Leverett Historic District, with buildings arranged around the intersection of four roads and including the Sawmill River and a brook. The district includes a building that once doubled as a meetinghouse and school, a former sawmill, a former gristmill, a church, a cemetery, a 20th-century cooperative store, fifteen houses, and several barns and other outbuildings. The Moore's Corner Cemetery, established in 1810, contains more than 280 markers and about fifty to seventy-five footstones. The 1810 Moore's Corner School and Universalist Meetinghouse, 230 North Leverett Road, was closed in 1950 after the town's school consolidation.

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For the next ten years, the building languished, but in the 1960s communitywide fundraising enabled important maintenance work. Since 1964, the building has been home to the Leverett Historical Society's collection and has served as a meeting place for Moore's Corner. The town voted to use Community Preservation Act funds in 2007 to restore the former schoolhouse's belfry and paint its exterior.

The Leverett Historical Commission has been active for decades documenting the town's historic buildings, structures, objects, burial grounds, and sites through inventory work and nominations to the National Register, and the community has responded with support for those initiatives.

The East Leverett and Moore's Corner Historic Districts are two of five 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 historical and archaeological assets of the Commonwealth. Visit our website to learn more about the Commission's programs (www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc).

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