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Secretary of the Commonwealth

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**SECRETARY GALVIN TO PRESENT 2012 HISTORIC PRESERVATION AWARD TO  
DCR'S *TERRA FIRMA***

Secretary of the Commonwealth William Francis Galvin, Chairman of the Massachusetts Historical Commission, announces the selection of the Department of Conservation and Recreation's *Terra Firma* technical bulletin series to receive a 2012 Massachusetts Historical Commission Historic Preservation Award.

"The Massachusetts Historical Commission is proud to recognize the extraordinary accomplishments of this year's awardees," said Secretary Galvin. "The projects the Commission is recognizing this year are particularly diverse and represent the many creative ways that significant historic resources are being preserved across the Commonwealth. DCR's *Terra Firma* series reaches and educates historic landscape stewards of all backgrounds, and has become an indispensable resource unlike any other in the state."

Since 2005, the *Terra Firma* publication series has brought up-to-date, non-academic technical information to landscape stewards, breaking down barriers between landscape professionals and non-professional advocates interested in preserving our common landscape heritage. The Department of Conservation and Recreation developed *Terra Firma* to address a critical need for knowledge of landscape preservation best practices. A target audience included advocates and managers of historic parks, cemeteries, and civic grounds. The series is the first of its kind: conversations about issues related to landscape preservation usually take place in professional forums, most of which are inaccessible to the average person. Through concise, familiar language and high-quality design, *Terra Firma* empowers a diverse audience to preserve historic landscapes. *Terra Firma* is developed and written entirely in-house, with support from outside topic experts and sister public agencies as needed. The series is cost-effective to produce and is offered free of charge both online and in hard copy. The bulletin template is designed to be flexible, attractive, and compact. Issues range from ten to sixteen pages and include graphic devices to enhance content and readability. Each publication identifies an issue, provides background or historical context, lays out planning recommendations, and highlights tools or successful case studies. Published one to two times per year in runs of 3,000-3,500 copies, the series is funded through DCR's capital budget, as well as grants from partners. Each issue is distributed in hard copy to more than 2,600 people, and is posted online. The mailing list grows each year, with requests for past issues continuing long past their initial run. Over the course of ten issues, *Terra Firma* has gained national and international appeal and has proven an invaluable reference tool for organizations such as historical commissions, local libraries, and friends groups.

This is the 34<sup>th</sup> year of MHC's Preservation Awards program. Projects are considered annually for awards in the categories of Rehabilitation and Restoration, Adaptive Reuse, Education and Outreach, Archaeology, Stewardship, and Landscape Preservation. Individuals are considered in the categories of Individual Lifetime Achievement and Local Preservationist. Secretary Galvin serves as the chair of the 17-member Massachusetts Historical Commission.

Secretary Galvin will present the awards at an afternoon ceremony on May 30, 2012, at the Massachusetts Archives Building at 220 Morrissey Blvd., Dorchester. The *Terra Firma* series is one of 12 projects, individuals, and organizations to be honored.

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](http://www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc)).

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