

## **Dane Property Key Facts/Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Facts**

- 245 acres
- Between Center Harbor Neck, Anthon, High Haith, and Bean Roads
- Less than 1 mile from Center Harbor village
- Magnificent wildlife habitat
- Prime recreational land, with planned trail network and trailhead parking
- Extraordinary setting and opportunities for nature observation and education
- Abuts Pine Hill Conservation Area (121 acres) and Proctor Sanctuary (47 acres); together these conservation properties will total 413 acres
- Currently owned by Dane Trust
- Conservation Partners: Lakes Region Conservation Trust (LRCT), Squam Lakes Conservation Society (SLCS), Town of Center Harbor (Conservation Commission)

### **Questions**

#### ***Why did organizations decide to pursue this project?***

Key wildlife habitat and recreational land, linking existing conservation land, all close to Center Harbor village, equidistant from Squam and Winnepesaukee and half in the watershed of each lake.

#### ***Why and how are organizations working together?***

Lakes Region Conservation Trust—regional focus and responsibilities, Squam Lakes Conservation Society—Squam watershed focus and responsibilities, Center Harbor Conservation Commission—town focus and responsibilities.

This land falls squarely within the missions and conservation priorities of all three organizations and is an ideal opportunity for collaboration to accomplish a project that the organizations consider critical. It is key habitat, recreational, and viewshed land in the middle of the Lakes Region, with significant acreage in the Squam and Winnepesaukee watersheds, and an important large tract close to Center Harbor village.

The conservation partners are working together to secure the necessary funds to acquire the property and provide for creation of a trail network and trailhead parking and other future stewardship. All three organizations will play official roles in the permanent conservation and stewardship of the land—LRCT will hold title, SLCS will hold a conservation easement, and the Town will hold an executory conservation easement. In other words, there will be three tiers of conservation protection of this key property.

#### ***Will the land be open to the public?***

Yes, dawn to dusk.

#### ***What activities will the public be able to enjoy on the property?***

Hiking, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, and nature observation. Snowmobilers will be allowed to continue using the existing corridor (NH State Corridor 15, also known as the Meredith Trail) running along the power line from Bean Rd. to Dane Rd. Camping and fires will not be permitted in the interests of safety and stewardship. Motorized vehicles will be limited to maintenance and trail grooming.

Given the use of the property for hiking and wildlife study, and the proximity of surrounding residences, hunting is not envisioned as being compatible with the proposed recreational uses. The conservation organizations encourage hunting, where appropriate, such as on the vast area of conserved land on nearby Red Hill. Consistent with the management of the abutting conservation lands, there will be significant opportunities for recreational use in all seasons. The conservation partners expect that the property will see extensive use for organized nature education activities by local school groups and other organizations.

***Will the snowmobile corridor that runs through the property continue to be open?***

Absolutely. We have already discussed the project with the NH Trails Bureau and the Moultonborough Snowmobile Club, which have responsibility for maintaining the trail through the property. Language would be written into the proposed conservation area upholding this use.

***How will people get onto property? Where will we park?***

Trailhead parking already exists on Center Harbor Neck Road, across from the entrance to the Proctor Sanctuary. This parking area would be enlarged slightly and improved to also serve the Dane parcel. Additional trailhead parking is planned on High Haith Rd. between the Pine Hill Conservation Area and the Dane Forest, providing access to trails on both those properties. Trailhead parking is also planned off Dane Rd. (Route 25B) near the powerline. This will provide easy access around the perimeter of the property. It will also be possible for people to walk to the property from Center Harbor Village, which is only a little more than a half mile away.

***Why is one lot being carved out for sale?***

It's an existing house parcel, with existing buildings. The proceeds of this sale will be used for the acquisition and stewardship of the property and thus will lessen the amount of funds that needs to be raised from other sources.

***What about the open fields on the other side of Center Harbor Neck Road?*** The fields are not part of the Dane property so are not part of this immediate conservation project. LRCT and SLCS consider conservation of those open fields also to be a conservation priority because of their scenic, habitat, and agricultural value, and are working on options to conserve the open fields.

***Doesn't the Dane property include land extending out to Route 25 B?*** The Dane Trust also owns approximately 26 acres extending east and south of the Town cemetery out to Route 25B. That property is not part of this conservation project and will be retained by the Dane Trust.

***What is the plan for raising the necessary funds?*** The current owners of the property have granted an option to purchase which must be exercised by December 18, 2009. The total campaign goal is \$830,000 (\$735,000 for purchasing the land, and the remainder for surveying, transaction costs, trailhead parking, trail work, and establishment of a stewardship endowment fund for the property). The conservation partners are working to secure contributions and pledges for the necessary amount by the option date. Already sources of more than \$500,00 have been identified. Assuming commitments for the necessary funds can be obtained, the acquisition would occur by March 31, 2010.

***Is the land at risk of development? Isn't part of the land undevelopable wetland?***

Approximately 20 acres are wetland areas, but the remainder of the property has great potential for development. In fact, three years ago, a developer had a plan for approximately 30 house lots on the property.

***Why does such a large parcel of land need to be conserved?*** This parcel is unique in providing significant wildlife habitat and potential recreational land for the public, all close to Center Harbor Village and surrounding residential areas. Conservation of this land will increase the amount of publicly-accessible conserved land in Center Harbor by 30%.

***How will this conservation land benefit specific neighborhoods?***

For people living in the vicinity of the village of Center Harbor, conservation of the Dane land will mean easy access to prime recreational land and preservation of a peaceful and scenic natural area that is significant to the character and quality of life in that part of town. It will also mean an expansion of the nature observation and recreational opportunities available at the Proctor Sanctuary. For people living near the Pine Hill Conservation Area, such as in the Bean Road and Bean Cove areas, conservation of the Dane land will mean expansion of the nature observation and recreational opportunities already enjoyed at the Pine Hill Conservation Area. And for everyone in the region, conservation of the Dane property will mean significant opportunities for recreation and nature observation and a place where school groups and other organizations can conduct nature education programs and activities for the benefit and enjoyment of all.

***Will the Town of Center Harbor be losing Property tax revenue?***

The proposed conservation area is already enrolled in the Current Use program. The 2008 property taxes for this area amounted to \$400. Since public access is at the core of this proposal, and funds from Center Harbor will be used to acquire this property, there will be a request for an exemption from the \$400 property tax. But the gain to the residents of Center Harbor will far outweigh the minimal loss of tax revenue.