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## Project Proposals Accepted by the Land for Maine's Future Board

July 15, 2014

The Land for Maine's Future Board (LMF) accepted project proposals totaling \$9,149,513 for 30 projects, conserving nearly 50,000 acres of conservation, recreation, forest and agricultural land. The approved projects are located in 37 communities, in 13 counties and include:

- 25 projects protecting important natural resources, wildlife habitat and public access
- 4 working farms in southern Maine and one project providing permanent coastal access for the commercial fishing industry.
- Funds for the projects were approved by Maine voters at referendum, and applicants are required to provide matching funds at least equal to the funding requested from LMF. The value of the matching contributions for these proposals is estimated at nearly \$25,000,000.

**Two major projects protecting over 18,370 acres and containing 7700 acres of high quality deer wintering habitat.** Protection of critical wintering habitat to support Maine's white tail deer population was a primary objective of the bond funds approved by Maine voters in November 2012. These properties are:

### Cold Stream Forest Project – Somerset County

Protects 8153 acres, including over 3000 acres of Biological Deer Wintering Area habitat (BDWA), north of The Forks. It includes 30 miles of streams on a major tributary to the Kennebec River, and conserves more wild brook trout pond habitat than in the rest of Northern New England. The LMF funds will match a substantially larger grant from the USDA Forest Service Forest Legacy Program. Cold Stream Forest ranks #3 in the nation for the USFS Forest Legacy Program in 2014. The project ensures access for fishing hunting, snowmobiling, and continued timber supply to local mills, supporting jobs, wood supply, and outdoor recreation uses - all supporting Maine's economy.

A partnership with USFS Forest Legacy Program, Trust for Public Land, Trout Unlimited, Sportsman's Alliance of Maine, Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands and Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife.

### Seboomook Expansion – Somerset County

Protects 10,215 acres northeast of Moosehead Lake, including 4,672 acres of biological deer wintering area (BDWA) and 800 acres of maple syrup production. The property is part of the large West Branch Conservation Easement lands to the north, and abuts the Plum Creek Moosehead Region Conservation Easement to the south. It increases access to Canada Falls Lake, ensures a popular snowmobile trail connecting Pittston Farm to Jackman, and will enable additional ATV trails, in the Moosehead Lake region which is popular for hunting and an important contributor to the local economy.

A partnership with the Forest Society of Maine and Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands.



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**Other large projects receiving funds are:**

Gulf Hags - Whitecap Project – Piscataquis County

Protects ecological, scenic and recreational values of the renowned Gulf Hags region and the Appalachian Trail (AT). The 13,875 acre project includes 12,650 acres of working forest easement and 1,225 acres of purchased land. This will conserve productive forestland, protect a significant portion of the Pleasant River corridor, many streams and campsites, four mountain peaks, and a significant length of the AT. The project scored #10 nationally by the USFS Forest Legacy Program.

A partnership with USDA Forest Legacy Program, Forest Society of Maine, and Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands.

Central Maine Sportsman's Access Project – Somerset and Waldo counties

Expands access for sportsmen and women and protects critical wildlife habitat in an underserved part of the state. The 2883 acres, located in the towns of Burnham, Cambridge, Detroit, Emden and Ripley, protect 880 acres of deer wintering habitat, 4,000 feet of pond shoreline, wetland complexes, rare plants and animals, and important natural communities. The project increases access in the area of the state with the lowest concentration of land protected for public access coupled with the highest documented outdoor use.

A partnership with Trust for Public Lands and Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife.

Redington Forest – Redington Township, Franklin County

Working forest easement on 10,258 acres in the High Peaks Region, abutting the Crocker Mountain Preserve adjacent to Sugarloaf Mountain ski area. Conserves forest lands that support Maine's timber economy, protects high altitude habitat and water quality. Ensures continued public access, hunting and fishing and protects trail connectors between Rangeley and the Carrabassett Valley region.

Partnership with US Navy, Trust for Public Land, and Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands.

**Important recreation properties near population centers in Southern Maine**, all of which are easily accessible from urban areas for day trips, family outings, educational experiences, hunting, fishing and habitat conservation.

Crooked River Forest - Otisfield and Harrison

Protects 730 acres and 3.5 miles of shoreline on the Crooked River, helping ensure water quality of the largest tributary to Sebago Lake, the public water supply for 11 communities and 200,000 residents. Includes critical habitat for native landlocked salmon. Provides the Town of Otisfield with its sole public access to the Crooked River.

Partnership with Western Foothills Land Trust, Loon Echo Land Trust, Portland Water District, Open Space Institute, and Town of Otisfield.

Gardiner Pond - Wiscasset and Dresden

The 362 acre project protects public access to the pond and provides extensive recreational opportunities including year round fishing, hunting, paddling, swimming, nature classrooms, and trail network for hiking, biking, cross country skiing, and snowmobiling. The Kennebec Estuary Land Trust will partner with the town to manage the undeveloped shoreline and parcels west of the pond which have high ecological values including extensive wetlands and 253 acres of an 1133 acre deer wintering area.

A partnership with Town of Wiscasset Parks and Recreation Department, Wiscasset Conservation Commission and Kennebec Estuary Land Trust.

Howard Hill – Augusta

165 acres to be acquired by the City of Augusta for recreation, open space and wildlife habitat. The property is well-known as the scenic backdrop to the State Capitol Building in downtown Augusta. The historic Ganneston Park property is significant in Maine's history, and once contained a series of carriage paths. In 1930 it was designated a wildlife sanctuary and today remains habitat for deer, foxes, eagles and numerous other species. It provides trails and views in an area easily accessible for public use.

A partnership with the City of Augusta and Kennebec Land Trust, Kennebec Valley Chamber of Commerce, Maine Historic Preservation Commission.

Knight's Pond and Blueberry Hill - Cumberland and North Yarmouth

215 acres, with frontage on the pond and the summit of Blueberry Hill, from which Casco Bay is visible. Located just 12 miles from downtown Portland, provides attractive recreation destination, with hiking trails, forested land with wetlands, streams, wildlife habitat and special natural features.

A partnership with Trust for Public Land, Chebeague and Cumberland Land Trust, Royal River Conservation Trust and Towns of Cumberland and North Yarmouth.

North Falmouth Conservation Corridor - Falmouth

The Town of Falmouth will protect 250 acres to further the town's efforts to create greenbelt corridors, connecting large areas of open space with wildlife and recreational corridors. The recreational value of this protected land so close to Maine's largest population center is significant. The properties include vernal pools, deer wintering areas, wetlands, and lands essential to preserving biological diversity.

A partnership with Town of Falmouth, Falmouth Land Trust and Falmouth Conservation Commission.

Roberts Farm Preserve Extension – Norway

This project builds on the success of previously LMF funded Roberts Farm Preserve, adding three miles of trails in the downtown area, creating a 5 mile trail loop with views of lake and mountains, connecting the preserve to a downtown trail head. The 111 acre match parcel provides wetland habitat and water quality protection for Pennessewassee Lake and a four-season trail connecting two existing preserves. Partnership with Western Foothills Land Trust, Town of Norway and Norway Downtown.

**Four farmland protection projects**, protecting productive working farms from development with agriculture protection easements:

Nezinscot Farm – North Turner

Agriculture conservation easement to conserve a 4<sup>th</sup> generation family diversified dairy farm, protecting a keystone of the agricultural infrastructure in Androscoggin County. Protects 177 acres of rolling terrain supporting crop, food and animal production and woodlands and two miles of frontage along the Nezinscot River. Conserves productive farmland, supports local agriculture, protects water quality and conserves landscape character.

Partnership with Maine Farmland Trust, USDA Farm and Ranchland Protection Program, Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association and USDA Farm Service Agency.

Parker Farm - North Berwick

Agriculture protection easement to conserve key soils and scenic open space in a rapidly developing area just 80 miles from downtown Boston. Conserves productive farmland, supports local agriculture, protects water quality and landscape character. The 27 acre project is part of a larger community conservation effort, providing public access and trails connecting a proposed greenway along the Negataquit River. Partnership with Great Works Regional Land Trust, USDA Farm and Ranchland Protection Program, Town of North Berwick and Maine Farmland Trust.

Winterwood Farm- Freeport

Agriculture protection easement to conserve 39 acres containing productive soils on an equestrian farm with gently sloping land and managed woodlands near the center of Freeport and the Desert of Maine. Protects aquifer and wildlife habitat in a bustling coastal community.

Partnership with Freeport Conservation Trust, USDA Farm and Ranchland Protection Program and Town of Freeport.

Wormell Farm - Cumberland Center

Agriculture protection easement to conserve a 78 acre multi-generational family farm operating as an organic dairy farm. Protects productive farmland, supports local agriculture, conserves landscape

character in a growing area of the state. The open, gently rolling terrain is bounded on the south by Mill Brook and on the east by the East Branch of the Piscataqua River.

Partnership with Maine Farmland Trust and USDA Farm and Ranchland Protection Program.

**Working waterfront properties**, protective covenants providing permanent protection for access by commercial fishing enterprises, supporting jobs, families and communities along the coast.

Erica's Seafood – Harpswell. Approved a commercial seafood wharf that primarily serves lobster fishermen. The 1.31 acre property has 200 feet of ocean frontage, a wharf, service buildings, and a takeout seafood stand.

Two other waterfront projects were discussed for future consideration.

#### **Additional projects receiving approval for funding:**

Biddeford RiverWalk Park Project – parcel of waterfront property for the existing City of Biddeford Mechanics Park/RiverWalk. It provide residents and visitors with opportunities for exploring the waterfront of the Saco River. The parcel is adjacent to a proposed carry-in canoe and kayak launch.

Partnership with City of Biddeford Recreation Department, Biddeford Riverwalk Coalition, Heart of Biddeford, Biddeford Open Space Committee.

#### Brave Boat Headwaters - Kittery

This 60 acre property is part of a larger conservation project and provides a key connection between the 48,000 acre Mt. Agamenticus Conservation Project with the Rachel Carson National Wildlife Refuge. Hiking trails are planned. The property contains a rare ecosystem and three vernal pools.

Partnership with the Town of Kittery, Kittery Land Trust, Rachel Carson National Wildlife Refuge, York Regional Chamber of Commerce and the Mt. Agamenticus to the Sea Initiative.

#### Caribou Bog Conservation Area – Old Town

300 acre addition to a large regional conservation project in five adjoining towns protecting key habitats in the 5500 acre Caribou Bog complex for rare plants, ecological communities, wildlife and recreation. Includes segment of a popular and heavily used rail trail corridor.

Partnership with Orono Land Trust, University of Maine and Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife.

#### Clapboard Island - Falmouth

This proposal would guarantee public recreational access to an island that is among the busiest recreational boating grounds in the state. 15 acres in size, it contains over 3,800 feet of oceanfront with existing trails and an active eagle's nest.

Partnership with Maine Coast Heritage Trust, Falmouth Land Trust and Bureau of Parks and Lands

#### Crow Island Thread of Life - South Bristol

This three acre island protects important wildlife habitat and scenic values, coupled with public access. The project increases recreational opportunity by including Crow Island in the Maine Island Trails system. Public access will be managed to ensure protection of wildlife, especially during nesting seasons. Partnership with Damariscotta River Association and Fields Pond Foundation.

#### Eagle Bluff - Clifton

The '**Crown Jewel**' of Maine rock climbing destinations - Climbing Magazine, 1998

This unique 165 acre site has 87 established rock climbing routes, rising to 600 feet in height and a rock climbing face nearly 1,200 feet long by 200 feet high. It is heavily used by all levels of rock climbers who travel from all parts of Maine and New England. The Bluff provides extraordinary educational

opportunities, and is heavily used by scouts, youth groups, college programs and commercial outfitters. Located adjacent to other conservation land.  
Partnership with Clifton Climbers Alliance, The Access Fund, Town of Clifton, Maine Coast Heritage Trust and Forest Society of Maine

Ellis River to Whitecap Mountain – Rumford

277 acres, with two miles of frontage on the Ellis River, matched with donated 180 acre conservation easement for total protected area of 457 acres, protecting rare plants, animals, ecological communities, and connecting to existing conservation land and hiking trail systems.  
Partnership with Mahoosuc Land Trust.

Goslings Islands - Harpswell

Provides permanent public access and protection of three undeveloped islands in one of the most scenic and heavily visited parts of Casco Bay. The islands total 13.7 acres, with 6800 feet of shoreline, protected anchorages and multiple landing points for easy access. Many thousands of Mainers live only minutes from Casco Bay. Just three miles from the Mere Point public boat launch, The Goslings are a favorite destination for boaters and paddlers. They feature beautiful beaches, mature forests, one of the finest anchorages in the Bay and can be visited by small boats.  
Partnership with Maine Coast Heritage Trust. And Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands.

High Island – Saint George

18 acre island providing the primary feature of a scenic vista from State Route 131, north of Tenant's Harbor. Island is readily accessible from Tenant's Harbor public landing. Supports a long established youth outdoor education program, as well as camping and picnicking. The island contains habitat for migratory waterfowl and is part of the statewide island trail network.  
Partnership with Maine Coast Heritage Trust, Town of Saint George, Saint George Conservation Commission, U of Maine Cooperative Extension Service, Georges River Land Trust, Maine Island Trail Association.

Kimball Pond - New Sharon

Provides public access on the west side of the Kennebec Highlands Unit. Guarantees access to Kimball Pond, helps protect water quality of the pond, and protect important wildlife habitat, particularly wetlands. The 278 acres increases the size of a contiguous block of undeveloped land, which helps maintain ecological functions and habitat for a diverse range of wildlife species in an area identified as a priority habitat area. Maintains working forest lands in an area where tracts of commercial forest land are increasingly being fragmented.  
Partnership with Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands, Belgrade Regional Conservation Alliance, and The Nature Conservancy.

Lily Pond Water Access Site - Deer Isle

10 acre parcel with 700 feet of frontage on the pond will expand and improve public access to a popular lake just outside Deer Isle's village center. Increases opportunity for parking, boat launch and handicapped access.  
Partnership with Island Heritage Trust and Maine Coast Heritage Trust.

Lower Weskeag Fields and Forests – South Thomaston

220 acres on the Weskeag River with 7,000 feet of tidal shoreline; 20 acres of deer wintering habitat, access for clamming and worming and planned hiking trails. Extensive shorebird feeding and resting sites which are part of an estuarine ecosystem of Statewide Ecological Significance.  
Partnership with Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, Maine Coast Heritage Trust and Georges River Land Trust.

Raymond Community Forest - Raymond

This project conserves a 350 acre community-managed recreational forest. Provides multiple recreational opportunities: hunting, hiking, snowshoeing, cross country skiing, nature observation, mountain biking and motorized use. Property contains rare plants and a unique forested community on Mount Pismire.

The lower elevation forestland will be managed for sustainable forestry.

Partnership with Loon Echo Land Trust and Town of Raymond Conservation Commission.

Weston Homestead Forest - Madison

The 282 acre Weston Homestead Forest conservation easement is part of a three pronged effort to protect this historic homestead of national significance, with its adjoining farmlands, and forest lands. With over 4000 feet of frontage on the Kennebec River, the working forest easement will continue active forest management and expand existing recreational uses, including hiking fishing trapping, fiddlehead gathering, and hunting, cross country skiing, ATV and snowmobiling.

Partnership with Maine Farmland Trust and Somerset Woods Trustees.

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