

MEMORANDUM

To: Sarah London, General Counsel

From: Kate Willard, FPR Lands Division 

Date: July 1, 2015

RE: Governor's Approval for Property Fee Acquisition:
1,000+/- acres in the Towns of Cabot and Marshfield, Vermont.

This acquisition is a fee purchase by the State of Vermont from Vermont Land Trust and will be a new state park. Included are the Governor's approval memo, maps of the property and surrounding area, photographs, a letter of support from the Town of Cabot Selectboard dated August 27th, 2012, and the minutes from the Town of Marshfield Selectboard meeting, October 16, 2012, demonstrating support for the acquisition.

If you have any questions regarding this acquisition, please contact me at 272-3365 or at kate.willard@state.vt.us, thank you.

MEMORANDUM

TO: Peter Shumlin, Governor

THROUGH: Deborah L. Markowitz, Secretary, Agency of Natural Resources *DM*

FROM: Michael C. Snyder, Commissioner, Department of Forests, Parks & Recreation *MS*

DATE: July 1, 2015

RE: Fee Acquisition Approval for Molly's Falls Pond Forest Legacy Project,
1000.0± acres owned by Vermont Land Trust, Cabot and Marshfield, Vermont

Your approval is requested pursuant to Title 10, Chapter 83, §2606(a), VSA, for the acceptance of the fee acquisition referenced above. The acquisition was reviewed by the Agency of Natural Resources Land Acquisition Review Committee on 9/6/2012 and approved by the Secretary on 10/17/2012. Both the Town of Cabot and the Town of Marshfield approve this project.

This acquisition will result in the protection of an important public recreational resource and contribute to the implementation of the policies of the State designed to foster conservation of wildlife habitats, forestry resources, and other natural resources.

Description

This 1,000 +/- acre property encompasses the 400 +/- acre Molly's Falls Pond, also known as the Marshfield Reservoir, a popular recreational and scenic site on the south side of US Route 2 in Cabot, Vermont. The property was owned until recently by Green Mountain Power Corporation (GMP). GMP has retained ownership of the dam, located at the west side of the reservoir, which is used for generating hydroelectric power. Public access to the reservoir is facilitated by the existing fishing access and boat ramp, managed by the Department of Fish & Wildlife under a lease agreement.

One of the exceptional attributes of this property is the approximately 35,000 feet of undeveloped shoreline. With the exception of the fishing access area and one camp (owned by GMP), the shoreline is entirely free of development and is utilized by wildlife such as the state-endangered Common Loon which nest in several locations along the shoreline. The forests,

wetlands, and streams add to the variety of habitats on the property which provide for a diverse suite of wildlife species.

Ownership and Management

The current owner, Vermont Land Trust, purchased the property from GMP as an intermediary with the intention of transferring ownership to the State of Vermont. The parcel will be owned by the State of Vermont, Agency of Natural Resources, Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation and will be managed by the Barre district office.

The property will be purchased with Federal Forest Legacy funds and will not be subject to a conservation easement. It will be managed as a new park, Molly's Falls State Park, and will be incorporated into the existing Long Range Management Plan for the Groton Management Unit by way of amendment. During the development of the Long Range Plan, the property will be managed under an Interim Management Plan that allows pedestrian public access, water-based recreation, and continued use of the Dept. of Fish and Wildlife Access Area.

Budget & Funding

Total acquisition cost will be \$1,200,000. This is the appraised fee value of the property. It is expected that an additional \$40,000 will be used for surveying and associated closing costs. The appraisal was completed by Peter Nault and reviewed by a Federal review appraiser to ensure that the appraisal met the requirements of the *Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice* and the *Uniform Appraisal Standards for Federal Land Acquisition*.

Funding for this acquisition and the associated closing costs will come from a Federal Forest Legacy grant awarded for Fiscal Year 2014 for the Groton Forest Initiative Forest Legacy Project in the amount of \$3,500,000.

APPROVAL FOR LAND ACQUISITION

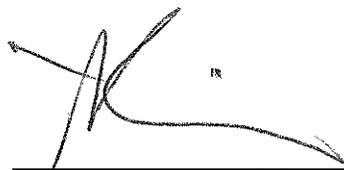
We, the undersigned, hereby approve the acquisition by the State of Vermont, Agency of Natural Resources, Department of Forests, Parks, & Recreation, of a property, located in the Towns of Cabot and Marshfield, from the Vermont Land Trust. The property is 1,000 ± acres in size, including a 400+/- acre pond.

This approval is pursuant to Title 10, Chapter 83, §2606(a) of the Vermont Statutes Annotated for the acceptance of the land acquisition referenced above.

7/21/15
Date

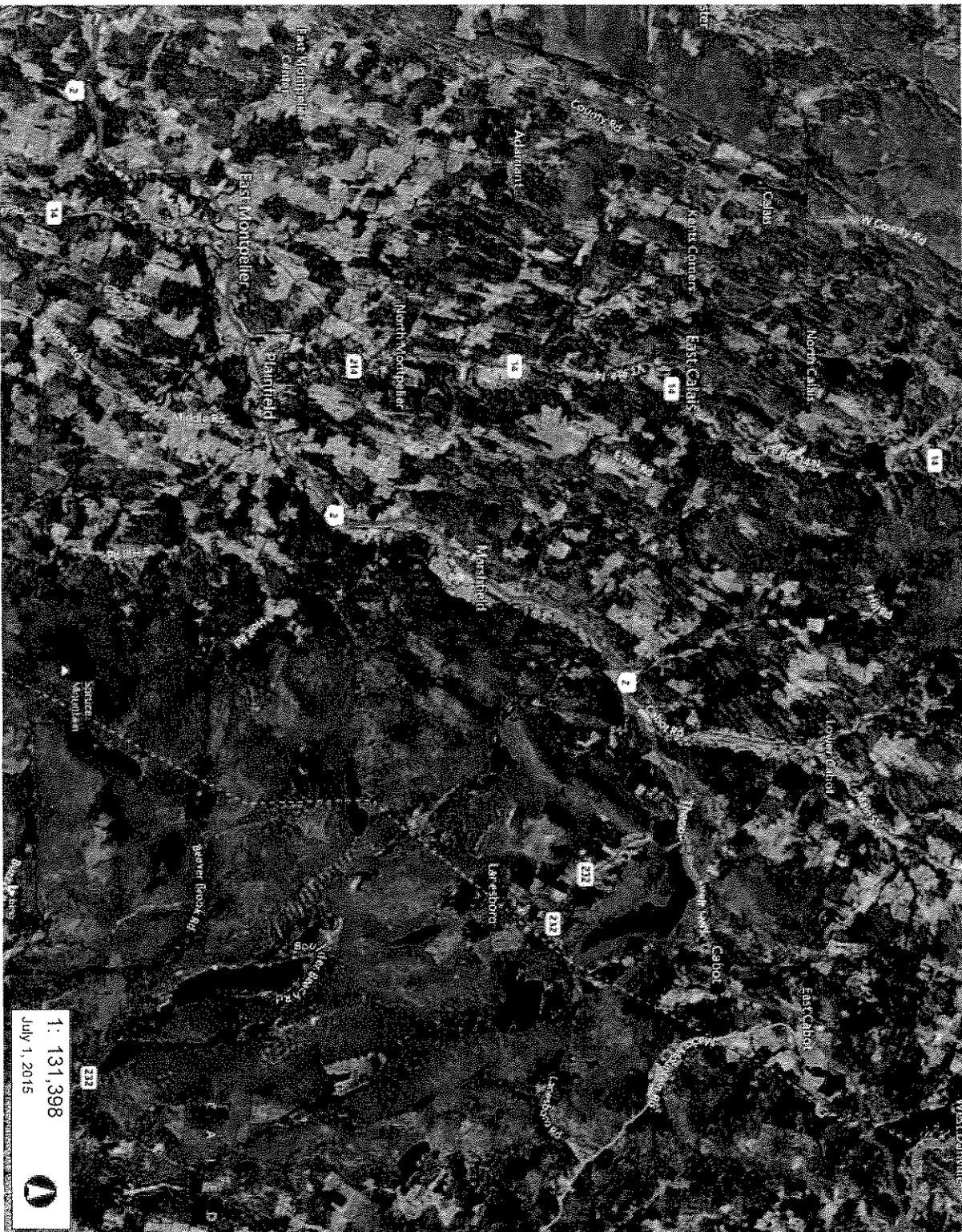
7-2-15
Date

7/1/15
Date


Peter Shumlin, Governor
State of Vermont


Deborah L. Markowitz, Secretary
Agency of Natural Resources

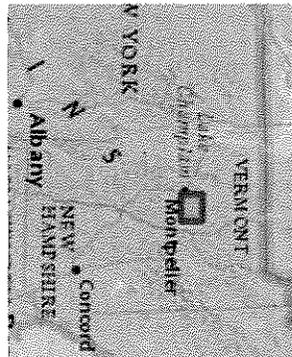

Michael C. Snyder, Commissioner
Dept. Forests, Parks & Recreation



1: 131,398
July 1, 2015

6,675.0
0 3,338.00 6,675.0 Meters
1" = 10850 Ft 1cm = 1314 Meters
© Vermont Agency of Natural Resources
THIS MAP IS NOT TO BE USED FOR NAVIGATION

DISCLAIMER: This map is for general reference only. Data layers that appear on this map may or may not be accurate, current, or otherwise reliable. ANR and the State of Vermont make no representations of any kind, including but not limited to, the warranties of merchantability, or fitness for a particular use, nor are any such warranties to be implied with respect to the data on this map.



LEGEND

NOTES

Map created using ANR's Natural Resources Atlas

WHEELER RD

POTTER RD

± 23.0 acres retained by GMP

HIST. E. MILL RD

HOOKERSVILLE RD

LOVELY RD

± 4.0 acres retained by GMP

Orthophoto Map	
Vermont Land Trust	Property: Molly's Falls Pond
Location: Cabot, Vermont	
8 Bailey Avenue Montpelier, VT 05602	

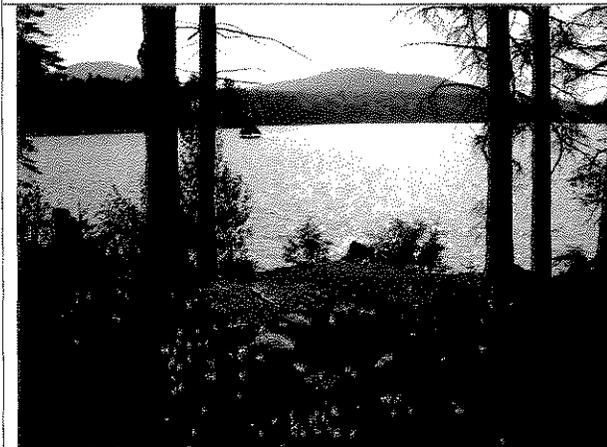


bing

KELLOGG MILL RD

BEACHAM PO. RD

Molly's Falls Pond



Town of Cabot

Cabot, Vermont 05647

August 27, 2012

Carl Powden,
Forest Projects Director,
Vermont Land Trust
8 Bailey Ave.
Montpelier, VT 05602

Carl,

Thank you for taking the time to meet with the Cabot Selectboard to explain the proposed acquisition of the Molly's Falls Reservoir parcel from Green Mountain Power.

The reservoir is currently a valuable natural and recreational resource to our community, with a state-maintained boating access and no public swimming area. The residents of Cabot make frequent use of both the reservoir itself and the land around it, and have done so without the objection of GMP.

Our understanding of the transfer is that the property will be eventually turned over to the State of Vermont and that it will in general be maintained in its present condition - that is, an undeveloped recreational resource. It is our hope and expectation that no commercial or residential development will occur on the parcel.

We ask that some notice be taken of the fact that a village once existed at the dam site - a village called Peterville. To our knowledge, many of the building foundations of this village lie submerged, and are therefore protected to some degree from human activity. We hope the village will remain undisturbed in the future, particularly if the dam is destroyed or removed, or the reservoir otherwise drained.

The Selectboard is unanimously supportive of the proposal as you explained it, and I can say that the several members of the Planning Commission with whom I have spoken are also in favor of it. The transfer furthers several important goals of our current Town Plan, and appears to have no negative tax implications for the community.

Thank you for your efforts, and good luck with the project.

Caleb Pitkin, Chair
Cabot Selectboard

SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, October 16, 2012, 6:00 p.m., Old Schoolhouse Common

Present: Selectboard members John Warshow, Chris Martin, and Helen Ducharme; Town Clerk Bobbi Brimblecombe; Visitors: Mike Zahner (Conservation Commission); Carl Powden (Vermont Land Trust); Ann Smith (Friends of the Winooski); Will Walters (Hardwick Gazette)

At 6:05 p.m. the meeting was called to order by Chair Chris Martin.

Forest Legacy Program: Mike Zahner and Carl Powden attended the meeting to explain a conservation effort that is being considered in Marshfield and surrounding towns, involving Molly's Falls Pond and several parcels that are adjacent to the Groton State Forest. The intention of the program is to have the State acquire conservation easements on the parcels. He explained that since all of the properties are in the current use program already, there would be little or no tax consequences to the Town.

Carl Powden explained that the Vermont Land Trust made the application to the State. The application will be put through a regional and national ranking process. If the project is chosen, it will be in the President's budget. If successful, it would be funded in 2014. The parcels would remain privately owned. They would have to allow pedestrian access. The State would be the steward of the Conservation Easements so there would be no responsibility on the part of the town.

He noted that the Vermont Land Trust has already purchased the land around Molly's Falls Pond.

John moved to authorize the Conservation Commission to send a letter of support for the Forest Legacy prospects in Marshfield. Helen seconded – all in favor.

Fish Passageways: The Conservation Commission has been contacted by the Friends of the Winooski to discuss projects to improve fish habitat. There are two proposed sites on Beaver Meadow Brook. They propose to retrofit a culvert at Peck Place and replace a culvert at Tibbetts Road.

The Friends would put out a request for proposals for an engineering firm to work with them to design the passages. The design will consider needs for Brook and Rainbow Trout, while taking into consideration the flood flows. The Selectboard and Road Foreman will be invited to take part in the decision-making.

The funding for the project comes from US Fish & Wildlife, VT Fish & Wildlife, a grant from Green Mountain Coffee Roasters, and Cabot Creamery.

The Selectboard is supportive of the project.

George Jewett Road: Helen received a call from Mr. Thaler. He recently put his camp on the market, and he would like to pay a private contractor to plow the road in the winter so that he can access the camp. The Selectboard did not allow the road to be plowed last winter because

plowing increases the speed of spring runoff, damaging the road. The road is Class IV and has no ditches, and no room to put in ditches. The Vermont statutes allow the Selectboard to prevent the road from being plowed, and to charge the property owner for damage to the road that occurs as a result of the plowing. The Board will discuss it with the Road Foreman before making a decision.

Martin Covered Bridge Park: The Board decided not to replant the trees that have been damaged at the bridge park, because so many cars go off the road there.

Trash Complaint: The Selectboard received a complaint about trash at 1114 US Route 2. They saw building materials and what looked like bags of construction material. They noted that none of the bags had been ripped open by animals, so it is probably not garbage and most likely not a health threat. It appears that someone has been working on the property.

Flood Repairs: The railroad bed access to the covered bridge has been repaired. The ballfield has been raked and seeded; Chris will order material for the infield.

Cree Farm Road: The Town received minutes of a meeting of TAL, LLC confirming that Mr. Datner is authorized to act on behalf of the company.

Stranahan Stewardship Committee: The Selectboard read the minutes of the joint meeting of September 17th, and agreed with them subject to the Stranahan Committee approving them.

Expenses, Permits & Payroll: Selectboard members read and signed reports for General Expenses and Payroll. They approved the minutes of the October 2, 2012 meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Bobbi Brimblecombe, Town Clerk

The foregoing is a true copy of the Minutes of the October 16, 2012 Selectboard Meeting.
A True Record. Attest, _____, Town Clerk
