



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2014



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## **MORE THAN \$35K GRANT FUNDS GIVEN TO PERMANENTLY PROTECT 371 ACRES OF LAND IN COASTAL WATERSHED**

*PREP and GBRPP give \$36,725 in funding to support seven land conservation protection projects across the region*

**Durham, NH** – The important work of land protection is not done alone and it certainly is not done without the willingness of land owners. The land protection transaction grant program aims at providing vital support for the costs associated with conserving land. For many organizations, raising these funds can often be a barrier to successfully completing a conservation project.

In early May PREP and the Great Bay Resource Protection Partnership (GBRPP) jointly issued an RFP for \$53,000 in grant funds. The combined grant program offered an opportunity to provide more funding for land conservation projects in the coastal watershed. A total of seven applications were received, totaling \$36,725 in grant requests. All proposals were determined to meet the eligibility criteria and represented projects of high conservation value. The matching funds totaled \$153,493.

The grant funds will contribute to the conservation of 371 acres of land in three communities, and support the prospective conservation of an additional 1,474 acres of land in seven communities. The project locations are across the watershed in seven different communities: Epping, Dover, Madbury, Fremont, Nottingham, Wakefield and Farmington.

The benefits to the watershed from these projects are numerous including:

- Protection of wetlands and vernal pools
- Protection of woodlands and agricultural lands
- Protection of high value habitats as identified in the regional coastal conservation plans
- Frontage on streams
- Cultural and historic resources – the Burley farmstead is listed on the national register and Berrybrook farm has a mill foundation
- Protection of source water areas for clean drinking water resources
- Connections to existing conservation lands that help to create large swaths of land to support larger wildlife species

There were five organizations and towns who received funding including: The Town of Fremont, Southeast Land Trust of NH, The Nature Conservancy, Moose Mountains Regional Greenways and Strafford Rivers Conservancy.

“The PREP/GBRPP Land Transactions Grants are instrumental to the Southeast Land Trust of New Hampshire’s work. The grants awarded to the Land Trust helped us facilitate successful negotiations with landowners by providing much needed funds for real estate appraisals on a popular 260-acre farm in Epping that has extensive frontage on the Lamprey River, one of the State’s two federally designated Wild and Scenic Rivers, and toward the acquisition costs of over 200 acres of farm and forest land in Epping that will be permanently conserved for future local food production.” Said Duane Hyde, Southeast Land Trust’s Land Protection Director.

The next 2015 RFP and application for land transaction grant fund will be available online through the PREP and GBRPP webpages (see below) by 10/1/2014, grants due 1/30/2015.

For questions about this grant opportunity contact:

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**About PREP:**

The Piscataqua Region Estuaries Partnership (PREP) has been working to protect and preserve the Great Bay and Hampton-Seabrook Estuaries since 1995. Through water testing, monitoring and research efforts, the PREP staff is able to keep Federal, State and Municipal leaders informed on the ever-changing conditions of our community’s water sources in the 52 Seacoast towns served. <http://www.PREPEstuaries.org>

**About the Great Bay Resource Protection Partnership:**

The Great Bay Resource Protection Partnership is a collaboration of conservation organizations in the coastal region that promotes landscape-scale land conservation and stewardship. Funding for the Land Protection Transaction Grant program is provided by the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation. The Nature Conservancy serves as the fiscal and administrative agent for the GBRPP. <http://www.greatbaypartnership.org>

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