

The Nature Conservancy Protects 90 Acres in Durham

Project helps connect large-scale conservation area along the popular Sweet Trail

The Nature Conservancy, NH Chapter

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<http://www.nature.org/ourinitiatives/regions/northamerica/unitedstates/newhampshire/newsroom/90-acres-protected-in-durham.xml>

Look at a map of the Crommet and Lubberland Creek area in Newmarket and Durham, and you will see why The Nature Conservancy and the Great Bay Resource Protection Partnership were eager to protect two parcels of undeveloped land bordering the popular **Sweet Trail**. The 41-acre and 48-acre properties fill some of the last remaining holes in what has developed into a remarkable, large-scale conservation and recreation success story in the Great Bay Watershed. The Nature Conservancy completed the acquisition of the two parcels in January.

“We are very excited to protect these ecologically valuable properties and add them to the impressive collection of conservation lands around Great Bay,” said Jan McClure, Land Protection Specialist for The Nature Conservancy. “These tracts not only connect important conservation lands and conserve valuable habitat, but also enhance a well-used recreational trail network.”

The Crommet and Lubberland Creek watersheds have been a focus for conservation because they harbor the largest unfragmented block of coastal forest remaining in New Hampshire, and support an extraordinary array of freshwater and estuarine wetlands and wildlife habitat. The two properties contain a mosaic of valuable wetlands, including a large beaver pond, vernal pools, and a 15-acre cattail marsh. Upland forests on the properties are dominated by white pine, oak, Eastern hemlock and shagbark hickory and studded with numerous rock outcrops. With 3,000 feet of riparian frontage along Crommet Creek, a tidal tributary of Great Bay, the properties are important for safeguarding water quality. Funding for the acquisition came from a North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA) grant through the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

The two newly protected tracts fit like pieces in a jigsaw puzzle in the twenty-four hundred acres of land already protected by the **Great Bay Resource Protection Partnership** – a coalition of organizations working together to protect the Great Bay watershed.

“The two Langley properties are integral pieces in the region’s conservation landscape,” said Dea Brickner-Wood, Coordinator for the Great Bay Resource Protection Partnership. “Helen and Pam Langley have been steadfast stewards of the land, and it is wonderful to know that their conservation action ensures permanent protection for generations to come. The Langley family has long

contributed to the rich history of Great Bay, and this is another chapter in their commitment and legacy in the region.”

The protected parcels contribute to the recreation assets of the region. *The Sweet Trail* is a four mile pedestrian trail ([download a trail map & guide](#)) stretching from Longmarsh Road in Durham to the mouth of Lubberland Creek in Newmarket, providing visitors the opportunity to experience a diversity of habitats – from freshwater marshes and wetlands, to mixed forests, to the shores of Great Bay. These different habitats provide excellent opportunities for wildlife and waterfowl viewing in all seasons. The trail travels through the lands protected by the Great Bay Partnership, and runs alongside the two recently protected parcels in Durham.

“The Sweet Trail is a wonderful recreational asset for the entire seacoast region,” continued McClure. “We are pleased that more and more people are exploring this unique area, and experiencing nature first-hand on lands that so many individuals, communities, and organizations have worked hard to conserve.”

For more information on the Sweet Trail and the Great Bay Resource Protection Partnership, visit greatbaypartnership.org.

Since 1961, The Nature Conservancy has helped to protect over 280,000 acres of land in New Hampshire by utilizing sound conservation science, developing innovative strategies, and working collaboratively with a wide variety of public and private partners. The Conservancy’s mission is to protect the lands and waters on which all life depends.