

THE TRUST *for* PUBLIC LAND

CONSERVING LAND FOR PEOPLE



THE SEBAGO LAKE REGION GREENPRINT *A Community Partnership*

Many residents of Maine's Sebago Lake region identify a deep connection between their quality of life and the area's natural beauty. The small towns of Bridgton, Casco, Denmark, Harrison, Naples, Raymond, and Sebago are linked by lakes and hills, as well as by snowmobile and hiking trails. But with less than 5 percent of land conserved, residents recognize that these cherished natural assets and easy access to recreation are at risk.

Role of The Trust for Public Land

In 2011, the region's seven towns joined with The Trust for Public Land and the Loon Echo Land Trust (LELT) to create a regional Greenprint for guiding open space and natural resource conservation. Through a series of stakeholder meetings, in-person interviews, and a poll of approximately 400 residents, community members

identified seven priorities for open space conservation. These included the protection of water resources, plant and animal habitat, working farms and forests, scenic views, trail networks, and recreation lands. Residents also wanted to preserve the small-town character of village centers. Trust for Public Land experts then created color-coded, interactive maps displaying lands with the greatest potential to meet those priorities and highlighting properties whose protection would meet multiple objectives. Using a web-based mapping tool, project partners are able to search for and zero in on lands that best meet conservation goals.

Project highlights

The stakeholder group realized that without a clear strategy for implementing the Greenprint's goals, the process would have little lasting impact. An action plan was needed,

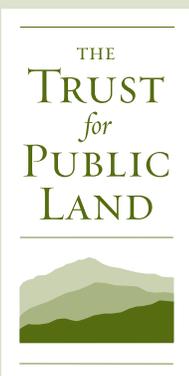
concrete steps for engaging willing landowners and potential project partners. Under LELET's leadership, the stakeholder group created a detailed action plan that would draw broadly on the region's resources and the capabilities of its individuals, organizations, and municipalities. The plan discussed how local, state, federal, and private funding could be leveraged in support of the Greenprint's objectives.

Results

LELET is coordinating with area towns to build on the momentum generated by the Greenprint. Just one year following completion of the plan, the land trust has raised \$700,000 for the acquisition of a beloved 27-acre hilltop—easily accessible and offering sweeping views. The land trust and towns are also working to option 1,500 acres for community forests. Each of these properties was identified as a priority acquisition in the Greenprint.

“Looking ahead, the Loon Echo Land Trust will chart its future course with the new set of tools, goals, and action plans, knowing it has more support when conserving the region's landscape.”

—Carrie Walia
Executive Director, Loon Echo Land Trust



*The Trust for Public Land
conserves land for people to
enjoy as parks, gardens, and
other natural places, ensuring
livable communities for
generations to come.*

tpl.org

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