



Contact:
Wright Preston, (802) 871-4415
Bob Low, (802) 434-3132
Nancy Stoddard (802) 434-2048

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Fritz Martin, CHAIR

Wright Preston, TREASURER

Ted Lyman, SECRETARY

Lou Borie

Gary Bressor

Larry Copp

Brad Elliott

Jim Feinson

John Hildebeitel

Christa Kemp

Dan Martin

Judy McVickar

For immediate release

A Reprieve for Gillett Pond?

Gillett Pond, a popular recreation and natural resource area on the borders of Richmond and Huntington, Vermont, could continue serving its many functions thanks to an agreement signed on December 1 between a local land trust and the pond's owner.

The Richmond Land Trust, on behalf of the Friends of Gillett Pond, has entered into an agreement with the Girl Scouts of the Green and White Mountains, the pond's current owner, to acquire the pond, adjacent land and the rights to the dam which created the current pond. The land trust and the Friends have until the end of January to raise \$90,000 to cover the purchase price and associated costs for acquiring the 88-acre property along Wes White Hill Road.

"We're delighted with the Girl Scouts for this commitment to protecting a place treasured throughout our communities," said Fritz Martin, Richmond Land Trust Chair. "Recreation, wildlife habitat, scenic beauty, water quality, flood control – you name it, Gillett Pond provides it. This is a win-win for the Scouts and the organizations and communities involved."

Martin cited a survey of Richmond and Huntington residents conducted by the Friends of Gillett Pond, a group formed by local citizens focused on the pond's long-term health and survival. More than 200 people responded. Many commented passionately about the year-round recreational opportunities the pond provides, including canoeing, wildlife viewing, hunting, fishing, cross-country skiing, ice-fishing and skating.

The pond is also well-known by local pond hockey enthusiasts, who keep several small rinks cleared during the winter months, using large shovels kept by the shoreline.

-more-



Gillett Pond release

Page 2

“The immediate goal is to complete an initial public fundraising campaign in time to complete the purchase by the deadline,” said Nancy Stoddard, spokesperson for the Friends. “We can then start working to protect the pond for the long term by raising another \$250,000 to renovate the dam.”

The pond was created by a dam built in the mid-1800s – possibly as early as the 1850s. In 1902 the Richmond Light and Power Company improved the dam to supplement the water supply to a hydroelectric plant on the nearby Huntington River. The plant ceased operation several years later but the dam and pond remain.

“Generations of people in Richmond, Huntington and beyond have enjoyed Gillett Pond,” according to Bob Low, another member of the Friends group and who lives near the pond. “Now we’ve gained the chance to guarantee that this beautiful resource will be there for future generations to enjoy as well.”

The Richmond Land Trust is a private, all-volunteer, non-profit organization formed in 1987 to conserve important natural, historic, agricultural and recreational resources in Richmond. It has established and manages six nature preserves across the town, and it has assisted local landowners in conserving some 675 acres.

More information on the project to protect the dam is available from Nancy Stoddard at 434-2048 or tennisvt@gmail.com.

###

(Caption)

Depending on the results of a public fundraising campaign, an agreement between the Richmond Land Trust and the Girl Scouts of the Green and White Mountains could lead to the conservation of Gillett Pond. Located on the border between Richmond and Huntington, it is a popular spot for skating and other outdoor pursuits. Photo by Bob Low.