

December, 2014



Gillett Pond: Saving a Treasure

A unique opportunity to conserve and protect a popular and much-loved multi-town resource.

For more information
contact:

Friends of Gillett Pond
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<http://tinyurl.com/fofgp>

[https://www.facebook.com/
GillettPond](https://www.facebook.com/GillettPond)



A Local Treasure

Located in a dramatic valley formed during glacial melt at the tail end of the last ice age, Gillett Pond is a one-of-a-kind resource for Richmond and Huntington as well as the broader Vermont community. The pond is enjoyed by skaters, skiers and snowshoers in the winter months, kayakers and canoers in the summer months and anglers in all seasons. It is a frequent hotspot for wildlife year-round as casual observers, citizen scientists and educators can attest. With a dam holding back water since at least the mid 1800's, the Pond represents an important piece of the



A typical winter scene on Gillett Pond

history of the local area and as the only publically accessible body of water in the host

towns, a truly unique landscape feature.

A Resource at Risk

In late 2013, local residents became aware that the Girl Scouts of the Green & White Mountains, owners of roughly 70% of the Gillett Pond shoreline, intended to breach or remove the Gillett Pond dam and drain the water. Outcry was rapid, and a community group calling ourselves the Friends of Gillett Pond (Friends) was quickly galva-



Gillett Pond Dam

nized around exploring how best to support this significant resource.

For over a year, the Friends have been meeting with community leaders, State regulators, conservation organizations, local politicians, news outlets and the Girl Scouts in an effort to forge a positive solution.

To be a part of this landmark project, please mail your pledge form or gift made out to Richmond Land Trust with "Gillett Pond" in the memo line to:

Richmond Land Trust
PO Box 605
Richmond, VT
05477

An Exciting Opportunity!



Working in close partnership with the Girl Scouts, the Richmond Land Trust (RLT), Conservation Commissions from both Towns, the State of Vermont, and regional conservation organizations, the Friends negotiated a plan that would allow the Richmond Land Trust to purchase the land surrounding much of Gillett Pond and repair the dam.

We can now protect the scenic 88-acre property forever and secure the treasured open water pond into the future.

Today, thanks to the leadership and commitment of many people throughout our communities, Gillett Pond has a chance to remain the treasured landmark that it has been for over a

century!

To secure this cherished resource, the Richmond Land Trust has negotiated a Purchase and Sale agreement for less than the anticipated market value with the Girl Scout organization. The Land Trust is also working closely with the Friends to plan for the repair of the dam at the Pond outlet.

Valuable and Valued

Examples of how Gillett Pond adds value to our lives and community include:

- **Winter Recreation:** Skating, pond hockey, skiing, ice fishing and wildlife tracking
- **Summer Recreation:** Kayaking, canoeing, bird-watching, hiking, fishing
- **Wildlife Habitat:** Extensive wetland, open water and edge habitats frequented by river otters, mink, moose, bear, deer, beavers, ducks, geese, many songbird species, fox, bobcat and many, many more.
- **Historic Landmark:** Water body dating to at least 1850s, serving as a probable source of water power, ice, irrigation and recreation. The current dam was built in 1900 as a flow control structure to support an early electric generation facility downstream at the Huntington Gorge.
- **Scenic Treasure:** The dramatic valley accented by diverse wetlands and a mile of open water is frequently photographed and thoroughly appreciated by travelers along the adjacent dirt road.

"This is a precious place for our family and so many in our community." From January 2014 Community Survey Responses



A painted turtle basks, and a spotted salamander crosses the road to breed in Gillett Pond

An Immediate Need

In order to protect this resource, a total of \$340,000 must be raised. \$90,000 of this is needed immediately to close on the land transaction by the beginning of February, 2015.

Initial outreach has secured \$50,000 toward the overall goal, but much more help is needed. For Phase 2, we plan to seek funding from community conservation funds and grant resources whose application timelines preclude Phase 1 consideration. In order to reach that next stage, immediate help is needed now to secure the property under RLT ownership.

Be a Part!

Please consider a tax-deductible gift today to help us finalize the purchase of Gillett Pond and move us all toward a future with this incredible place available and accessible.

With your contribution you will help to

- Secure public access and use of Gillett Pond and most of its shoreline
- Protect a popular recreational resource
- Protect a complex of wetlands, open water, streams and forest and the habitat they support
- Conserve a unique historic feature and it's stories of our past
- Ensure the enjoyment of Gillett Pond into the future

To be a part of this landmark project, simply mail your pledge form or gift made out to Richmond Land Trust with "Gillett Pond" in the memo line to the address on the front of this letter. **Thank-you for your help**