

Conserving the Western Field of Bearcamp Valley Farm

part of Whites-to-Ossipees Wildlife Connectivity

As you drive Route 25 into Tamworth from the west, a mix of forest, wetlands, and farmland spread out on either side, affording clear views to the Sandwich Range to the north. The Ossipee Mountains rise close to the south. The future of the farmland here – Bearcamp Valley Farm – is being decided now. The western-most parcel of land is used by the Farm – cattle are often grazing here - but is owned by someone else. A group of Tamworth and Sandwich citizens have secured an option to purchase this property by the end of April, to save it from development. Lakes Region Conservation Trust will take ownership of the parcel, and the Town of Tamworth, through its Conservation Commission, will hold a conservation easement on it, allowing for continued agricultural and forestry uses, as well as public access.

PROJECT DETAILS

Seller:

Van Hertel, Alton, NH

Buyer and future landowner:

Lakes Region Conservation Trust

Project Proponents:

A local committee, private donors, and the Tamworth Conservation Commission

Holder of Conservation Easement:

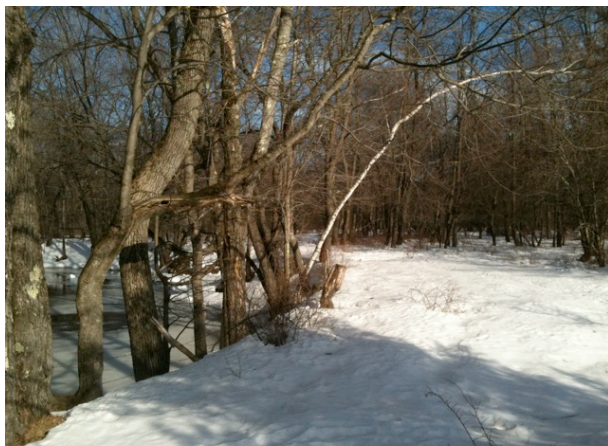
Town of Tamworth (purview of TCC)

Specifics:

- 26.5 acres
- 8 acres open field, plus forested, with wetlands and extensive floodplain
- long meandering frontage on Bearcamp River
- 1,275 feet of road frontage on Rte. 25
- To be conserved in perpetuity, with sustainable forestry & agriculture.



Looking southeast from the corner of the field near the bank of the Bearcamp River toward Route 25 and the Ossipee Mountains



The north edge of this land borders the meandering Bearcamp River.

CONSERVATION VALUES

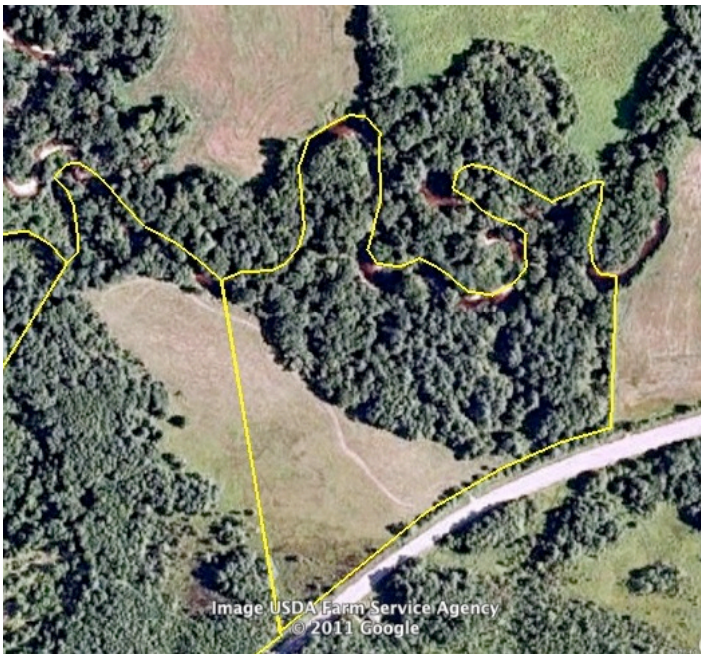
- Land is presently undeveloped.
- Conserves habitat, open space, including farm and forest.
- Land contains NH Fish & Game *Wildlife Action Plan*'s "Highest Ranked Habitat in NH."
- Documented diverse wildlife activity here.
- Protects critical habitats: riparian, riverine, shrub wetlands, field edge, and unusual cherry community.
- Part of the larger Ossipee stratified drift aquifer and its abundant water resources

- Part of the larger Bearcamp Valley Farm to the east to be protected with willing landowner.
- Expands the area's conservation lands, including conserved land of The Community School to the northeast across the Bearcamp River.
- Protecting this lot is consistent with Tamworth Conservation Commission priorities:
 - to protect shorelands along major rivers and streams
 - to protect diverse habitats in the Whites-to-Ossipees Wildlife Connectivity area.
- Development pressure is real; a significant subdivision and sales of house lots is occurring just to the west in Sandwich
- Development pressure is real: this property already has an approved septic system, was about to be heavily logged for bigger views, and would be sold in the summer of 2011.

PUBLIC BENEFITS

- Protection in perpetuity through a Conservation Easement held by the Town.
- Includes productive farm and forest soils.
- Preserves part of the historic Bearcamp Valley Farm.
- Affords education, recreation, and scenic enjoyment.
- Maintains community character.
- Consistent with Tamworth *Master Plan*
- Cost-effective:
 - Purchase at appraised value, below likely private sale price.
 - Transaction costs minimal due to extensive volunteer contributions.
 - Conservation Easement stewardship costs will be low, because new landowner will be a conservation land trust.

The conservation of this property is a critical next step in the eventual protection of other Bearcamp Valley Farm lands along both sides of Route 25 to the east.



The Western Field's western (left) edge is the Sandwich town line, which crosses through the field. Its southern edge is Route 25. Boundary line shown is approximate.

CONTRIBUTIONS

Send contributions to:
 Lakes Region Conservation Trust
 P. O. Box 766
 Center Harbor, NH 03226
 Please indicate the contribution is for
 "Western Field."

Lakes Region Conservation Trust is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, and contributions for this project are tax deductible.

Questions?
 Call Ned Beecher: 603-387-7869

More information about the Whites-to-Ossipees Wildlife Connectivity effort and associated projects can be found at : <http://tamworthconservationcommission.org/specialprojects.html>