



Nicatous Lake

Forest Legacy Tract, Maine

April 2000

Located in Hancock County, the 20,268 acres of lands around Nicatous and West Lakes was protected from future development with a conservation easement on April 24, 2000. The property contains 34 miles of shoreline, 7 remote ponds, wildlife habitat, and a large block of contiguous forestland. It offers hiking, boating, camping, hunting, and fishing opportunities.

The Trust for Public Land, the Forest Society of Maine, and Maine Coast Heritage Trust pooled their skills and resources in order to bring the project to fruition. They worked with the landowners, Robbins Lumber and Champion International, to shape a conservation easement on the property. This coalition of nonprofits brought the project before Maine's Forest Legacy committee, where its outstanding attributes made it a top priority for Forest Legacy funds. The USDA Forest Service also promoted the project nationally.

"The Nicatous Lake project stands out nationally as a model of innovative land protection. Not only is it the largest conservation easement in Maine, it also provides very strong protections for both public access and the management of the property's natural resources, including habitat for bobcats, moose, black bears, bald eagles, and loons," said Whitney Hatch, New England Regional Director of the Trust for Public Land.

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Senator Susan M. Collins of Maine

According to Jenness Robbins, president of Robbins Lumber, "Easements are important for wildlife and public recreation, and are an integral part of Maine's working forest. We believe in a balance between ecology and economics. While our primary objective on the Nicatous and West Lakes property will continue to be timber growing and timber harvesting, traditional access will also continue, biological resources will be protected, and

Robbins Lumber will pay all local and State property taxes."

"The Nicatous Lake project began with a vision held by Jim and Jenness Robbins," observed Alan Hutchinson of the Forest Society of Maine, a Bangor-based nonprofit specializing in conservation easements on large productive forest land. "They believed there had to be a way to keep their lands undeveloped, a place the public could enjoy and wildlife could thrive, while generating a sustained flow of



Nicatous Lake and surrounding lands are now protected from conversion to nonforest uses through the purchase of the development rights. Logging and recreational activities on the land will continue. Photo by Alan Hutchinson

forest products. The Forest Society of Maine is extremely pleased to have been part of making their dream come true, and we now look forward to working with them and the State to ensure that the goals of the easement are met in the years ahead."

Maine's congressional delegation secured \$3 million from the Forest Legacy Program, and the Land for Maine's Future Program allocated \$750,000

toward the acquisition of the Nicatous and West Lakes conservation easement.

"The Legacy Program works particularly well in Maine by uniting, rather than dividing, disparate interests, and I am pleased to have been able to help in securing financing for this project," said U.S. Senator Olympia Snowe.

"The Nicatous Lake project is exactly the sort of project Congress envisioned when it created the Forest Legacy Program. This project represents the type of partnership that should be the hallmark of land conservation efforts throughout the country, with cooperation of the government, private landowners, and private organizations," said U.S. Senator Susan M. Collins.

The Forest Legacy Program protects important forests from conversion to nonforest uses. These forests provide essential wildlife habitat, protect water quality, offer outstanding recreation opportunities, afford outstanding scenic views, are home to historic sites, and/or provide the opportunity to continue traditional forest uses. A Federal-State partnership allows landowners to keep their land private while ensuring it remains forest forever through the use of conservation easements.