



# Piermont Mountain Forest Legacy Tract, New Hampshire

May 1997

A father, fishing with his daughter on Lake Tarleton, was surrounded by land he owned. He planned to sell lakefront lots; indeed, some of the land was already subdivided. On this particular trip, his daughter declared, "Why does this ever have to change? I like it the way it is." C. Fred Weeks, Jr. wanted to indulge his daughter, yet he had a financial investment in the land that he could not abandon. He looked to the Forest Legacy Program to help fulfill his daughter's wish.

First, the Trust for Public Land (TPL), a nationwide land trust that often acts as intermediary for governmental entities, purchased the Lake Tarleton property from Mr. Weeks. TPL then found a "conservation buyer," a person interested in owning and managing protected land, to hold the underlying fee. Mr. Weeks' property, referred to as the Lake Tarleton Project, has been separated into different acquisitions. On May 30, 1997, TPL sold an easement on the 1,650-acre Piermont Mountain tract to the State of New Hampshire for \$219,450 - the appraised fair market value of the conservation easement. These funds were granted to the State by the USDA Forest Service through its Forest Legacy Program.

The Piermont Mountain tract is the upland portion of the property. The USDA Forest Service plans to use Land and Water Conservation Fund money to purchase a 1,250-acre tract on the easterly shore of Lake Tarleton for \$1,400,000 in February 1998. In October of the same year, the USDA Forest Service will pay \$2,000,000 for 2,154 acres on Lake Tarleton's north shore. A 118-acre tract, already subdivided into lots, is located on the western shore and includes 6,000 feet of water frontage. The USDA Forest Service is scheduled to purchase this property outright from the Trust for Public Land for \$1,700,000 in May 1999.

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David Houghton, Trust for Public Land

TPL's David Houghton, the Lake Tarleton Project facilitator, noted, "The Lake Tarleton Project consists of a large fee acquisition by the Forest Service. Yet, it was important to the State and to the community to keep the Piermont Mountain tract in the tax base. The most productive forest land was conserved and remains in private hands." The State of New Hampshire will administer the conservation easement.



View of Piermont Mountain Tract from Across Lake Tarleton. Undeveloped shoreline will contribute to the sanctuary often sought by hikers and anglers. Forest Service Photo

The Forest Legacy Program protects important forests from conversion to nonforest uses. Important forests provide important 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 at the same time ensuring it remains forest forever through the use of conservation easements.

USDA Forest Service  
271 Mast Road  
Durham, New Hampshire 03824

Partners in forest conservation

New Hampshire Department of  
Resources and Economic Development  
172 Pembroke Road  
Concord, NH 03301

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