



# Hancock Forest Legacy Tract, Vermont

December 1996

**A**vast 31,450 acres of the Northern Forest was conserved on December 20, 1996. The State of Vermont closed a deal with the Hancock Timber Resource Group, a subsidiary of John



Aerial view of Brousseau Mountain, Vermont

Hancock Life Insurance Company using \$2.5 million of Federal Forest Legacy funds. In exchange for the money, Hancock has agreed to give up development rights forever on the land.

The complete value of the deal was \$2.8 million. The State also received \$150,000 from the Vermont Land Trust; \$100,000 from the Vermont National Governors' Association Host Committee, which had \$200,000 left over after the association's 1995 convention in Burlington; \$50,000 from the Virginia-based Conservation Fund and up to \$200,000 from the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board to make up the difference.

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Senator Patrick J. Leahy of Vermont

Under the terms of the agreement, much of the land will remain as productive working forest, clear-cuts will be restricted to 25-acre openings, public access, including hiking, hunting, fishing, snowmobiling, and cross-country skiing will be guaranteed. Because this property is in the Forest Legacy Program, a multi-resource management plan will guide land management. “Stewardship is a core value of Hancock,” said Hancock's forester Henry Whittemore.

“We do not speculate in real estate development.” The agreement applies to subsequent buyers of the land.

“There will be no job loss whatsoever; in fact, this guarantees the continuation of keeping this resource in good timber management” says Governor

Howard Dean of Vermont.

“The pressure on northern New England is going to be enormous in the next 20 to 100 years and if we don't plan ahead, we're going to look no different than suburban Boston,” said Dean.

“My children are going to live most of their lives in the next century,” said Senator Patrick Leahy (D-VT) who included the Forest Legacy Program in the 1990 Farm Bill. “What we do today will guarantee that access will be there in the next century.”

The Vermont Department of Forests, Parks, and Recreation, as owner of the easement, will assure the landowner is abiding by the easement terms.

The Forest Legacy Program goal is to prevent conversion of environmentally important forest lands from conversion to non-forest uses. The State or federal government purchases development restrictions from willing landowners. The landowner keeps all land rights not purchased. Important Forests provide key wildlife habitats, protect water quality, offer outstanding recreation opportunities, provide outstanding scenic views, contain historical sites or provide opportunities to continue traditional forest uses, such as timber harvesting.

The Forest Legacy Program is a Federal and State partnership. The State may request a grant to carry out the Forest Legacy Program in the State.