



# Cow Mountain Pond Forest Legacy Tract, Vermont

April 1993

The town of Granby, Vermont has the distinction of being the first place in the nation to complete a Forest Legacy project. On April 20, 1993, the Green Mountain National Forest headquarters was the site where the U.S. Government exchanged \$271,000 with The Nature Conservancy for 1,660 acres of forest

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land. The Nature Conservancy had been holding the land while funding was being secured. Two parcels of land surrounding Cow Mountain Pond will remain essentially as they are now, providing recreation, scenery, and timber. The town of Granby holds the timber rights to this property. A Forest Stewardship Plan has been prepared by the town of Granby to guide forest management.

The total closing cost was \$570,000. In addition to the Federal funds, the State of Vermont Housing and Conservation Fund supported the action with \$180,000, and the town of Granby agreed to take out a bank loan for \$55,000 and raised \$73,000 through private donations and potluck suppers, and by selling birdhouses and Adirondack chairs.

Granby has a population of 71. About 97 percent of the town is forested. The extensive forested acreage, along with the attraction of Cow Mountain Pond were good reasons for the area to appeal to developers. A 1988 development scare, when a New Hampshire development company purchased 22,426 acres of northern forest from

Diamond International Corp., prompted the town to move to purchase the tract.

“We are just thrilled to death that it is done completely,” said Bruce Berryman, chairman of the Granby Planning Commission. The land is open for

recreation but, Berryman emphasized, use is restricted to pedestrian traffic. Conrad Motyka, Commissioner of Natural Resources, said the project cost less than expected, but took more time than anticipated.

The Vermont Department of Forests, Parks, and Recreation agreed to have someone visit the forest every year to assure the provisions of the easement are being followed.

The Forest Legacy Program offers an alternative to development of important forest areas. The Federal Government purchases development restrictions from willing landowners. The landowner keeps all land rights not purchased by the Federal Government. Protected forests are important. They may provide key wildlife habitat, protect water quality, offer outstanding recreation opportunities, provide outstanding scenic views, contain historical sites, while providing opportunities to continue traditional forest uses, such as timber harvesting.

The Forest Legacy Program is a Federal - State



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partnership. A State becomes part of the Forest Legacy Program by completing an Assessment of Need. Costs for the Forest Legacy Program are shared, with the Federal Government paying no more than 75 percent of total program costs.

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Partners in forest conservation

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