



Name: [Downeast Lakes Forestry Partnership](#)

Location: [Washington County, Maine](#)

Grantee: [The Conservation Fund](#)

With the support of the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and Wal-Mart, The Conservation Fund and its partners will permanently conserve 312,000 acres of forestland, securing the second largest forestland conservation easement in U.S. history. These forestlands are strategically positioned between more than 600,000 acres of conserved lands in New Brunswick and 200,000 acres of state, federal and Native American lands in Maine. This bold conservation initiative will result in the permanent protection of more than one million acres of essentially uninterrupted habitat across an international boundary.

The 312,000-acre property will be placed under a forest conservation easement and an access easement that together will maintain sustainable forestry practices and ensure perpetual public access for hunting, fishing, hiking, birding and boating. The project represents one of the last opportunities to protect a landscape of this magnitude in one of America's great wildernesses.



The lands contain 54 lakes with 336 miles of lake shoreline and more than 1,500 miles of river and stream shoreline in the Machias, East Machias, Dennys, Mattawamkeag and St. Croix River watersheds. There are at least eight active bald eagle nests and 33 nesting pairs of loons, representing seven percent of the loons in northern Maine. Together, the lakes and 50,800 acres of wetlands provide habitat for 180 bird species, including 23 warblers, American black ducks and wood ducks, as well as bear, moose, deer, pine marten, beaver, and otter. This tremendous coldwater fishery also supports landlocked salmon and smallmouth bass.

This is an exemplary forest conservation project that has been truly community incubated, community supported, community led and designed to sustain a natural resource based, rural community economy and the lifestyle of residents in Maine's Washington and Penobscot counties. The project brings together an extraordinary group of public and private partners to support the local economy, linked by tradition to the surrounding natural resource base.

Project partners include: New England Forestry Foundation; State of Maine, The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, The Nature Conservancy, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Downeast Lakes Land Trust.

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“With 15 million acres of forest land changing hands within the next ten years, the nation is at a crossroads. The protection of the Downeast Lakes Property is one of the most important and innovative private land conservation efforts of our time. Thanks to the leadership and vision of our partners, we are preserving America’s land legacy for future generations.”

Larry Selzer, President of The Conservation Fund

ABOUT THE CONSERVATION FUND

The Conservation Fund forges partnerships to preserve our nation's outdoor heritage -- America's legacy of wildlife habitat, working landscapes and community open-space. Pioneering a unique brand of conservation driven by Effectiveness, Efficiency, and Environmental and Economic Balance, the Fund produces unsurpassed results.

Since 1985, The Conservation Fund, through its partnership-driven approach, has protected more than 4 million acres of America's outdoor heritage -- leading other organizations in leverage and effectiveness.



“This community-incubated, community-led and community-supported project offers a model for forestland conservation that is sensitive to a local economy long dependent on this natural resource base” said Amos Eno, New England Forestry Foundation’s Executive Director. “Thanks to Wal-Mart’s vision, these lands will continue to be undeveloped and available to support and grow this economy and these forests will be conserved in perpetuity.”

Amos Eno, Executive Director of the New England Forestry Foundation

ABOUT NEW ENGLAND FORESTRY FOUNDATION

Founded in 1944, New England Forestry Foundation (NEFF) is a regional conservation organization dedicated to the conservation and sustainable management of America's private and municipal forestlands. The Foundation owns 22,000 acres in 127 community forests throughout New England and holds 96 conservation easements over 802,521 acres. NEFF's forests and NEFF's forest managers are third party certified. With the completion of this project NEFF and numerous partners will have conserved more than one million acres of New England forestland.

