

HCT Meets Goal For Purchase Of Jenkins Bog 10 November 2021

By: William F. Galvin

PLEASANT LAKE – The Harwich Conservation Trust has met its \$800,000 fund-raising goal for the purchase of the Jenkins bogs and surrounding uplands across Pleasant Lake Avenue from Cape Cod Regional Technical High School. The trust is expected to close on the 31-acre parcel at the end of December.

The parcel will serve as an integral part of the Hinckleys Pond-Herring River headwaters eco-restoration project, an initiative focusing on improving water quality in the watershed.

“We’re very grateful to all who donated in supporting the Hinckleys Pond-Herring River Watershed project,” Harwich Conservation Trust Executive Director Michael Lach said Tuesday. “People see the importance of protecting pond and river health.”

The purchase attracted a lot of attention. In the early stages of HCT’s interest in restoring the Jenkins bog the town was considering partnering in the purchase. The Hinckleys Pond Association made more than \$75,000 in contributions, and an anonymous donor committed to match \$220,000 once the trust raised \$360,000. The Hinckleys Pond Association was named the trust’s 2021 Conservationist of the Year in HCT’s annual meeting on Saturday.

Lach said the trust sent out a town-wide newsletter seeking support for the project, and “people donated from all walks of life.” Those contributions were matched by the anonymous donor, allowing HCT to meet the goal. The Compact of Cape Cod Conservation Trusts served as the buy-and-hold agent during the fund-raising campaign. Several weeks ago, HCT also received a \$146,700 grant from the Southeast New England Project to fund data collection, design, and permitting to restore the watershed, including the Jenkins bog and 500 feet of Hinckleys Pond shoreline and create public trails on the property.

The projects funded by the grant will serve as phase one of the eco-restoration project, Lach said. It will start this winter and take 18 to 24 months. HCT will be establishing a trail head parking lot this winter off Headwaters Drive, he said. Phase two will involve the restoration and construction work to revitalize the habitat.

The trust also announced a new land-saving campaign in its annual meeting with an eye toward purchasing 3.3 acres on the west side of Robbins Pond. The trust hopes to raise \$350,000 for the acquisition. Lach said the property owned by Scott Trask has 660 feet of shorefront on the pond.

“In this time of intense development pressure, the time to act is now to save these lands before they are lost,” Lach said. “Part of our long-term priority is pond protection, saving watershed lands that protect our ponds.”