



February 17, 2009

Contact:
Jennifer Holske
jholske@ttor.org

Dexter Mead
dexter@dnrt.org



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Trustees of Reservations and Dartmouth Natural Resources Trust announce Protection of 131-acre Cornell Farm in Dartmouth

DARTMOUTH, MA — Thanks to the foresight of the Cornell family of Dartmouth, and to the generosity of a multitude of conservation partners, The Trustees of Reservations and Dartmouth Natural Resources Trust are thrilled to announce the purchase and perpetual conservation of the 131-acre Cornell Farm in Dartmouth.

The Cornell Farm was one of the last remaining large unprotected parcels within the Little River watershed in Dartmouth and has long been a high priority for local conservationists. It includes many acres of ecologically significant wetlands and salt marsh, and scenic views of protected land to the south. The farm's frontage along Smith Neck Road contributes to the rural character of the area, and is an important agricultural parcel in the community.

The property, owned by the Cornell family for five generations is now forever protected. The Trustees will own and manage it as a reservation open to the public, with a conservation restriction to be held by Dartmouth Natural Resources Trust (DNRT) and the Town of Dartmouth.

“This project is the result of a huge community effort and could not have occurred without our partnership with the Town of Dartmouth and its Community Preservation Committee, Dartmouth Natural Resources Trust, the federal government and the generosity of the Cornell family” said Andrew Kendall, President of The Trustees of Reservations. “ This project involved many caring partners and friends working together to make their collective vision a reality for the Dartmouth community. Generations to come will benefit from the results of their commitment to preserve this significant landscape. ”

DNRT was a formidable partner in this project, with its staff and volunteers leading the charge to raise funds from local families and foundations. “There was an incredible outpouring of support to protect this wonderful property,” said Dexter Mead, DNRT Executive Director. “DNRT is delighted to have played a part in seeing that it remains open space forever.”

The Town of Dartmouth, through the Community Preservation Act, was a vital partner in this project. In October 2008, the Dartmouth town meeting approved a \$750,000 grant to for the purchase and protection of this farm. “The preservation of the Cornell Farm is a great example of a community based initiative that represents the essential mission and purpose of the Community Preservation Act. We are very pleased to have had the opportunity to help preserve such an important natural asset for our community,” said Buddy Baker-Smith, Community Preservation Committee Chairman.

The Cornell Farm was most recently an active dairy farm the foresight of the current generation ensured the farm’s permanent protection. “Protection of this farm is a tribute to generations past and present,” stated Marcia Cornell Glynn, a Cornell Farm owner. Quoting her father from year’s past, Marcia stated, “We are given this land and we are only stewards of its care, protecting and preserving all that live off the land.”

For several years local support mobilized around the possibility of preserving this property. Finally, in 2008, a grant through the federal North American Wetland Conservation Act (NAWCA) Program catalyzed this project forward and allowed The Trustees to collaborate with DNRT to pursue other funding sources. The Trustees negotiated a purchase agreement with the landowners and together, the two organizations mounted a fundraising campaign to protect the property.

The \$689,000 federal NAWCA grant was derived from one of the nation’s most significant environmental crimes prosecutions. In March 2007, Overseas Shipholding Group Inc. (“OSG”), a multinational shipping company, pleaded guilty to numerous violations of federal law relating to its widespread practice of deliberately discharging oil from its ships on the high seas. OSG paid a record \$37 million—the largest-ever criminal penalty involving deliberate vessel pollution—of which \$9.2 million was directed to community service projects. The U.S. Attorney’s Office in Boston, where the case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Jonathan Mitchell, directed the funds apportioned for Massachusetts to wetlands conservation and restoration projects, like the Cornell Farm.

“Thanks to a truly impressive collaborative effort and funding support through the US Fish & Wildlife Service, what began as an inspiring idea has become a tremendous conservation success,” added Jennifer Holske, Director of South Coast Community Conservation for The Trustees. Next steps for The Trustees will include working with the community to develop a management plan for the farm. This plan will establish passive recreation and agricultural opportunities and guide the future use of the property. Efforts are also underway to raise funds to support The Trustees long-term maintenance and management of the farm.

Photographs are available upon request by contacting jholske@ttor.org

Organizational Information:

The Trustees of Reservations: Founded in 1891, The Trustees of Reservations is the nation's oldest regional nonprofit conservation organization. Supported by more than 40,000 members, The Trustees protect Massachusetts' natural and historic resources for everyone to enjoy. From working farms to historic homesteads, barrier beaches to mountain vistas, The Trustees own, manage, and interpret nearly 25,000 acres on 96 reservations, including four National Historic Landmarks, a National Natural Landmark, and seven properties listed with the National Register of Historic Places. The Trustees employ 130 full-time and 400 seasonal staff with expertise in many areas, including ecology, education, historic resources, land protection, conservation, land management, and planning. To find out how you can volunteer, become a member, or interview Trustee experts on important topics and issues, contact The Trustees of Reservations at (978) 921-1944, visit our website at www.thetrustees.org, or email us at membership@ttor.org.

Dartmouth Natural Resources Trust: Dartmouth Natural Resources Trust is a non-profit land trust founded in 1971 to preserve and protect Dartmouth's natural resources for people and nature, forever. DNRT works to accomplish its mission by:

- Identifying and preserving important wildlife habitats, farmlands, historic sites, wetlands, and open spaces in Dartmouth by purchasing or accepting donations of land and conservation restrictions.
- Protecting our lands through stewardship practices based in science and designed to maintain the working landscape and enhance biodiversity and healthy ecological systems while encouraging public access.
- Collaborating with other organizations to accomplish our land conservation and stewardship goals.
- Educating and engaging all sectors of the community to ensure the long-term support for natural resource conservation and stewardship.

###