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THE COMPACT

OF CAPE COD CONSERVATION TRUSTS, INC.

Officers:

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Colin A. Leonard (Harwich)
Vice President
Henry Lind (Eastham)
Treasurer
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OUR VISION for Cape Cod

The Compact of Cape Cod Conservation Trusts believes there is still an opportunity to preserve the essence of Cape Cod which exists in the collective imagination: a place of white sand beaches, broad salt marshes, quiet pine woods, intriguing cranberry bogs, and startlingly blue kettle ponds. Despite rapid and extensive residential and commercial development, the Cape's beauty and uniqueness persist, attracting newcomers and holding those born here.

Land in its natural state provides the resource base for the region's environmental and visual quality. Our upland animals, such as deer and songbirds, need large undeveloped areas to bed down in and migrate through. Our ground waters need large areas of woodlands and wetlands to recharge the quantity and filter the quality of our aquifer. Our fish and shellfish need unpolluted upland buffers to keep their bays and marshes clean. Our people need woods for walking, unspoiled vistas for inspiring, and quiet green places for contemplating themselves and their history.

The Compact seeks to instill and nurture a land conservation ethic in every Cape Codder. We recognize that, in the absence of individual and collective action, every parcel of open space will be developed on Cape Cod. The result will be an unlivable, unsustainable region. To save our open space we need a comprehensive approach, from decisions made by individuals to partnerships among government agencies and non-profit organizations. The Compact was founded to assist those making simple and complex decisions about how and why land should be preserved.

The effort of the land trusts of The Compact is a significant supplement to the work of government in protecting open space, but it is not a substitute. The enormity of the problem and the high cost of land on Cape Cod require concerted action. Public dollars and private ingenuity can often be the right recipe for success. The fate of the last 16% of the Cape's land mass that is still undecided (neither developed nor protected) hangs in the balance.

MISSION

*To encourage
and assist in
the acquisition,
preservation,
and
management of
open space on
Cape Cod.*

Member Organizations: 25

Association to Preserve Cape Cod
Barnstable Land Trust
Bourne Conservation Trust
Brewster Conservation Trust
Buzzards Bay Coalition
Chatham Conservation Foundation
Dennis Conservation Trust
Eastham Conservation Foundation
The 300 Committee Land Trust (Falmouth)
Friends of Herring River
Friends of Pleasant Bay
Harwich Conservation Trust
MassAudubon
Native Land Conservancy, Inc.
The Nature Conservancy (MA Chapter)
Orenda Wildlife Land Trust
Orleans Conservation Trust
Oyster Pond Environmental Trust
Provincetown Conservation Trust
Sandwich Conservation Trust
Three Bays Preservation (Barnstable)
Truro Conservation Trust
Wellfleet Conservation Trust
Wildlands Trust (SE Mass.)
Yarmouth Conservation Trust

PURPOSE

The Compact of Cape Cod Conservation Trusts, Inc. was formed in 1986 as a non-profit service bureau assisting six local land trusts on the Lower Cape. The Compact now works with 25 local and regional land trust and watershed associations on their projects to acquire and manage important natural areas as protected open space. The Compact also advises its members on non-profit administration, tax, and legal questions. Because most local trusts are managed by volunteers, they find the full-time staff support provided by The Compact crucial to fulfilling their land conservation goals. As a regional organization, The Compact also conducts research and promotes land projects that foster a regional approach to open space protection. The Compact is supported by dues from member land trusts, donations, and grants from private foundations.

REGIONAL PROJECTS

Cape Cod National Seashore Landowner Outreach: In 2012-14 The Compact produced a 32-page color booklet *To Live Lightly on the Land: A Guide to Private Land Protection in the CCNS*, describing the techniques and tax benefits available to the 600 private property owners inside the National Seashore. A 10-minute accompanying video was also produced by The Compact with case studies of participating families. *Lead funders: The Island Foundation, The Bilezikian Foundation, and The Horizon Foundation.*

Cape Cod Land Bank Final Report: Between 1998-2007, 15 Cape towns completed 234 transactions, using \$213 million to preserve 4,450 acres of wildlife habitat, wellfields, and other open space. The Compact inventoried each project, creating the only comprehensive data base on the Land Bank and identifying anomalies needing correction to ensure permanent protection of the acquired lands. *Funded by the Cape Cod Five Cents Savings Bank Charitable Foundation.*

Perceived Open Space Project: A two-year effort (2005-6) to identify all private parcels of land in each town (9,900 acres total) that are used for agricultural, recreational or institutional purposes, such as farms, summer camps, and museum lands, that may or may not be protected as open space. An outreach effort to encourage these owners to employ protective overlays on their lands will be pursued. *Funded by the Jessie B. Cox Charitable Trust.*

Cape Cod Land Fund: A revolving loan fund providing local land trusts with timely access to capital to purchase critical property for conservation. Capitalized at \$650,000, the Fund has provided 41 loans since 1992 totaling \$3.75 million. Over \$101,000 in small grants have also been distributed to local projects. In total, grants and loans have resulted in the purchase of 931 acres worth almost \$42.5 million.

Cape Cod Wildlife Conservation Project: This scientific mapping and planning process (1997-2003) advances the goal of preserving biodiversity on Cape Cod by identifying priority parcels of wildlife habitat. The needs of critical and keystone wildlife species have been evaluated, and lands with characteristics that fit those needs have been identified as high priorities for protection. *Funded by International Fund for Animal Welfare, Sweet Water Trust, Woods Hole Research Center, and The Nature Conservancy.*

Priority Ponds / Lands Project: This effort (2001-2003) identified the most important freshwater ponds to save on Cape Cod, based on their relative importance for water quality, wildlife habitat and recreational values. One result is a list of the top 200 pondfront parcels remaining undeveloped. An outreach effort is being made to the owners of these important pondfront parcels to educate them about conservation options. *Funding provided by The Dolphin Trust and the Agua Fund.*

Land Bank/CPA Training & Implementation: Land acquisition training and policy research is provided to the volunteer land bank and Community Preservation Act committees in each of 15 Cape Cod towns. Seven training modules have been prepared on issues including negotiation, outside funding, and tax incentives for landowners. *Funded by The Dolphin Trust, Island Foundation, and the Pegasus Foundation.*

Take Back the Cape: Discovering Opportunities for Undevelopment: In 2001 The Compact produced a color booklet describing nine case studies on Cape Cod and Martha's Vineyard in which towns and land trusts have restored blighted developed sites into natural areas and parks. It is hoped that this publication will inspire other communities to consider efforts to do likewise. *Funding by the Dunn Foundation of Rhode Island and the Cape Cod Five Cents Savings Bank.*

Cape Cod Pathways: This project (1995-2004) involves the creation of a countywide network of linked walking trails from one end of the Cape to another. Over 50 miles of paths have been dedicated to the regional system. The Compact has produced five extensive interpretive trail guides, and planning maps for six towns and the National Seashore. *Funding provided by the Jessie B. Cox Charitable Trust and Barnstable County.*