

## **CHEBEAGUE & CUMBERLAND LAND TRUST PROJECT SELECTION CRITERIA AND CHECKLISTS**

**Mission Statement:** Our Purpose is to preserve and protect the intrinsic values and public benefits of the natural resources in the Towns of Chebeague and Cumberland – mainland, islands and contiguous Casco Bay – and to be responsible stewards in perpetuity for those resources in out trust.

### **Conservation Values:**

CCLT adopted the following conservation values in the Fall of 2009 to guide our efforts.

- I. Natural Areas Conservation
  - Forests
  - Habitat for native plants, wildlife, and marine life
  - Water Resources
- II. Scenic Areas and Open Space Conservation
- III. Working Landscape Conservation
  - Agricultural Land
  - Working Waterfront
  - Working Forests
- IV. Recreational Area Conservation
- V. Conservation Education and Outreach

**The Board's Discretionary Role:** The following criteria are intended to guide rather than limit the actions of the Land Trust. The Directors retain discretion over acquisition or disposition of land and conservation easements, and will evaluate each project and proposal on its own merits after careful investigation of the property, its resources, and its public benefits.

### **I. GOALS AND PURPOSES CHECKLIST:**

*To qualify for selection property must meet ALL of these criteria:*

1. The property is located in the towns of Chebeague Island or Cumberland.
2. The property protects natural resources, historic, or scenic open space land of importance to the people of the towns and in support of established public conservation policies.
3. The property is in a relatively undisturbed natural, scenic, or historic condition and has significant, adjacent agricultural lands.
4. The property is of sufficient size or importance or uniqueness that its conservation resources are likely to remain intact.
5. Protection of this property aids sound land use planning, promotes land conservation, and encourages good stewardship of land and water resources.
6. The Land Trust, the landowner or other parties have identified a plan that is adequate to ensure proper long-term management of land to be acquired, or adequate monitoring and enforcement of the proposed conservation easement.

## **II. PUBLIC BENEFIT CHECKLIST:**

Based on the IRS U.S. Internal Revenue Code Section 170(h)(4) which stipulates:

- (A) In general, for purposes of this subsection, the term “conservation purpose” means
- (i) the preservation of land areas for outdoor recreation by, or the education of, the general public,
  - (ii) the protection of a relatively natural habitat of fish, wildlife, or plants, or similar ecosystem,
  - (iii) the preservation of open space (including farmland and forest land) where such preservation is
    - (I) for the scenic enjoyment of the general public, or
    - (II) pursuant to a clearly delineated Federal, State or local governmental conservation policy, and will yield a significant public benefit, or
  - (iv) the preservation of an historically important land area or a certified historic structure.

*Therefore, to qualify for selection a property must meet one or more of these criteria. Projects meeting multiple criteria will have a higher priority in the allocation of limited Land Trust Board Member and staff time as well as funding for new projects.*

- 1. Contains endangered, threatened, or rare species.
- 2. Contains significant and relatively undisturbed wildlife habitat, watershed or natural features.
- 3. Contains or has potential to contain natural features or unique landforms of educational, scenic or scientific value.
- 4. Buffers agricultural land, wetlands, wildlife habitat or other sensitive areas.
- 5. Provides a buffer for or is close or contiguous to existing conservation easement, park, preserve or other protected land.
- 6. Protects scenic views from public roadways, waterways or recreation areas.
- 7. Provides for appropriate public access for education or recreation activities.
- 8. Sets an important precedent for resource or open space protection in a targeted area.
- 9. Has historic or archaeological value, or is adjacent to and buffers such lands.
- 10. Has working waterfront significance.
- 11. Other island or mainland significant issues.

**III. FEASIBILITY CHECKLIST:** *A property may meet the selection criteria favoring a land protection proposal but still may not be accepted if one or more of the following considerations apply:*

- 1. There is no threat or likelihood of the property being developed or disturbed in a way that would compromise its conservation values.
- 2. The property's values are primarily scenic, but are not readily visible or accessible to the general public.
- 3. The property is small and there is little likelihood of adjacent properties being protected.
- 4. There is reason to believe that the land/easement would be unusually difficult to manage/ enforce; for example, because of multiple or fractured ownership, difficulty of access, frequent incidence of destructive trespassing, landowner or other restrictions, irregular configuration, etc.
- 7. The landowner is not sufficiently committed to land conservation or insists on provisions in a conservation easement that the Land Trust believes would seriously diminish the property's primary conservation values or its ability to enforce the easement.
- 8. The property cannot be acquired by the Land Trust with reasonable effort in relation to the property's conservation value.
- 9. The property is found to be irreparably contaminated.
- 10. Ethical or public image problems exist in association with the Land Trust's involvement with the project.
- 11. For proposals to purchase land or an easement, it is unlikely that sufficient private or public funding can be raised by the Land Trust and/or project partners to develop, manage and complete the project, including funding for Land Trust administrative costs, in the timeframe proposed for the acquisition.
- 12. For land proposed to be acquired, there is not a public agency willing to accept transfer of the property from the Land Trust, and the Land Trust does not have the desire or financial resources to own and manage the property itself.
- 13. For conservation easement proposals, the landowner or other project supporters are unwilling or unable to make an adequate donation toward the Stewardship Fund to sustain long-term monitoring and enforcement of the easement.
- 14. Any other reason the Land Trust deems significant.