



Friends of Upton State Forest
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“To preserve, enhance and protect the natural and historic resources of Upton State Forest.”

Urgent Memo from the Friends of Upton State Forest Board of Directors

We are sending this urgent request for help in protecting the ecologically rich, 40+-acre property at 203 Pond Street in Hopkinton. This property would connect Upton State Forest to Lake Whitehall State Park. Those two properties owned by the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) connect to other public properties creating a corridor that would extend from Pell Farm in Grafton, through Upton, and on to protected properties abutting Lake Whitehall in Hopkinton.

The Friends are asking for your help in an urgent private fundraising effort. We need pledges and donations towards the purchase price of the property by March 3rd, the date of a Special Town Meeting at which Hopkinton voters will consider purchasing the property. A significant commitment of private funds towards the purchase price will make it more likely that Hopkinton voters will approve the purchase. The FUSF Board of Directors has already pledged \$1000.00 from our funds and ask that you join us in pledging a personal donation.

The property owners have been offered \$2 million by a developer for a 12-lot subdivision parcel within the 40+-acre property. When the 12-lot parcel is sold to the developer, the rest of the property, about 32 acres, will be given to the Sudbury Valley Trustees to hold as open space. Since the property was enrolled in the Chapter 61 tax program, the Town of Hopkinton has the right to acquire the property under the terms offered by the developer. This allows the Town to preserve the whole property.

The Hopkinton Board of Selectmen have called a Special Town Meeting on March 3rd to allow the voters of Hopkinton to decide whether to purchase the 12-lot parcel, and have proposed funding the purchase through a debt exclusion. If the vote is positive at Town Meeting, a ballot vote to approve the debt exclusion will be held on March 10th. The Town's option to purchase the property expires March 14th.

If Hopkinton votes to acquire the property Sudbury Valley Trustees has made a commitment to donate the 32 acres to the town of Hopkinton as open space.

DCR has offered \$250,000 toward the purchase, provided the Town acquires the property for open space, and recreation.

Sudbury Valley Trustees is leading the fundraising effort and have raised \$74,000 toward a goal of \$150,000. It is critical to have as much as possible raised before the town meeting on March 3rd.

We have enclosed a pledge/donation form and are asking that you pledge or donate as much as you feel you can toward this goal. If we are not successful in seeing the property preserved all donations will be returned, and the pledges will not be collected. More information about the property and contact information are on the reverse of this memo. You can also go to this link: <http://www.sudburyvalleytrustees.org/news/save-whitehall-woods>. Donations of any amount are important and appreciated. Please indicate on the form that you are a member of Friends of Upton State Forest.

Why Protect 203 Pond Street?

- This property abuts Upton State Forest and is located across a narrow street from Lake Whitehall State Park. If protected it would connect 1,357 acres of Upton State Forest and 815 acres of Lake Whitehall State Park. They, in turn, connect to other parcels creating a block of over 3,125 acres of protected land.
- Protecting the entire property vs the 32 acre donation makes sense because:
 - It removes the potential of conflict between forest trail users and homeowner and would improve the recreational experience.
 - The property is approximately 1000' in width, the minimum requirement for a successful wildlife corridor
- This property has consistently been identified in Hopkinton planning documents as the number one parcel to protect. This includes the 2009 Action Plan Map and a 1997 Open Space study.
- The Nature Conservancy Resiliency map identified this property as a critical piece to help mitigate the effects of global warming.
- The property's location makes it ideal for linking these two sizable areas, creating extensive recreation opportunities for walkers, hikers, bikers, and equestrians, and also preserving an important wildlife corridor and watershed protection area. It will also provide needed parking and pedestrian access from Pond Street to Upton State Forest.
- 203 Pond Street acts as an important buffer for adjacent, state-designated Priority Habitat for an Endangered Species. The property also abuts the Miscoe-Warren-Whitehall Area of Critical Environmental Concern
- Protecting the property enjoys the support of a broad range of organizations and user groups, including Sudbury Valley Trustees, Hopkinton Area Land Trust, Friends of Whitehall, Friends of Upton State Forest, New England Mountain Biking Association and Bay State Trail Riders

Who Can I Contact For More Information?

Christa Collins, SVT Director of Land Protection can be reached at ccollins@svtweb.org or 978-443-5588 x115.

FUSF at news@friendsofuptonstateforest.org, or: Bill at 508-529-6369, or Ellen at 508-529-6610.

More information:

<http://www.sudburyvalleytrustees.org/203PondStreet>

View Letters of Support:

<https://hopkinton.digitalgov.us/imageapi.php?docid=Qmx1ZVJpdmUxMDMxNnItU3lzdGVtcyAxNyA1>

Pledge Form – Whitehall Woods/203 Pond Street Protection Effort



Sudbury Valley Trustees

Sudbury Valley Trustees is a regional land trust that conserved land and protects wildlife habitat in the Concord, Assabet, and Sudbury river basin for the benefit of present and future generations.

Donor Information (please print or type)

Name _____
Billing address _____
City, State, Zip Code _____
Phone _____
Email _____

Pledge Information

I (we) pledge a total of \$ _____ to be paid now upon project success
I (we) plan to make this contribution in the form of cash check credit card other

Credit Card type / exp. Date _____
Credit Card number _____
Authorized signature _____

Gift will be matched by (company/family/foundation) _____

Form enclosed form will be forwarded

Acknowledgment information

Please use the following name(s) in all acknowledgments

I (we) wish to have our gift remain anonymous

Signature(s)

Date

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