

PRESERVING WETLANDS MAKES DOLLARS AND SENSE

Land trusts preserve wetlands in one of three ways. All three provide tax advantages to the owner, by reducing property tax, federal income tax and estate tax.

1. Outright gift

Owner conveys a deed of the wetland to the land trust; provides maximum tax benefits

2. Conservation restriction

Owner retains title, but signs a contract agreeing not to develop or harm the wetland; provides modest tax benefits

3. Bargain sale

Owner sells wetland to land trust for less than fair market value; provides tax benefits related to lowered sale price

In all cases, the land trust can guide the landowner through the conveyance process, providing professional guidance or referrals on questions of taxes, surveys or appraisals. To date, Cape Cod landowners have donated over 1,000 acres of wetland to trusts.

DID YOU KNOW...?

A donation of one acre of wetland to a land trust for protection may result in an income tax deduction of \$3,000 or more.

TO LEARN MORE...

The *Challenge for Cape Cod Wetlands* is sponsored by the 17 local land conservation trusts and watershed associations which comprise The Compact of Cape Cod Conservation Trusts. Founded in 1986, the non-profit Compact represents, through its members, almost 7,000 households on Cape Cod and has preserved 2,000 acres of open space throughout Barnstable County. Land trusts are non-profit organizations dedicated to acquiring and managing natural areas as protected open space.

For more information
about the *Challenge*, contact:

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CHALLENGE FOR CAPE COD WETLANDS



... The tangy smell of salt marsh in the autumn air...

... The unseen fish finning slowly in the dark silence of the ice-locked kettle pond...

... The raucous din of spring peeper frogs hunkered in a maple swamp...

... The sight of high white dunes beneath an impossibly blue summer sky...



These scenes are but a small part of the panorama of wetlands on Cape Cod. Wetlands — swamps, marshes, tidal flats, pondshores, beaches, dunes and streambanks — are the keystones of the Cape's reputation as a natural resource of national significance.

The *Challenge for Cape Cod Wetlands* is designed to inform property owners about the ecological significance of their wetlands and to alert them of the financial benefits available for preserving them.

WETLANDS - THE HEART OF CAPE COD

About one-quarter of Cape Cod is wetland, double the percentage of Massachusetts as a whole. Our beaches attract tourists from all over North America. Our pondshores host colonies of globally-rare plants.

The Cape's bays serve as a major stopover for black ducks and other seabirds migrating the Atlantic Flyway. Freshwater wetlands filter and replenish the aquifer, our sole source of drinking water. The cranberry industry originated in the bogs of the Cape.

WETLANDS ARE AT RISK

The threats to these valuable wetlands are varied and powerful. Half of the nation's and state's original wetlands have been displaced over the years. A similar percentage may have been lost on Cape Cod. Wetlands have been filled, drained, cleared, dredged, built on and polluted.

Government regulation of development has slowed, but not stopped, the loss of wetlands. A degraded quality of remaining wetlands hinders their value for wildlife habitat, flood and erosion control, water filtration, recreation and aesthetics.

CHALLENGE FOR CAPE COD WETLANDS

Our local Land Conservation Trusts are devoted to working with wetland owners to preserve this ecological heritage. The *Challenge for Cape Cod Wetlands* relies on the voluntary cooperation of landowners, scientists and non-profit land trusts to design protection strategies for separate wetland parcels as well as regional habitats.

Land trust volunteers are identifying and contacting all wetland owners on Cape Cod through mailings, public workshops, educational field walks and personal interviews. The intent is to encourage landowners to preserve wetlands voluntarily, to show them what they *can* do with their wetlands, rather than telling them what they *cannot* do.

