

* * * MEDIA ADVISORY * * *

WHAT: **Land Tour and Public Meeting to be held at Eagle Point Farm/Michael Dunn Property, Derby**

WHEN and WHERE: **Tuesday June 29th**
1-3 p.m., Land Tour, 2 Woodlawn Rd., Eagle Point Farm, Eagle Point Rd, Derby
5-8 p.m. Informational Meeting and Public Comments, North Country Union High School Auditorium

CONTACT: **Tracy Zschau**, Northeast Kingdom Director, Vermont Land Trust (802) 748-6089 or tracy@vlt.org
Janet Kennedy, Refuge Supervisor North, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, (413) 253-8553 and Janet_Kennedy@fws.gov
Mark Frederick, President & CEO, Community Financial Services Group, (802) 334-1677 and mfrederick@cfsgrust.com
Jonathan Wood, Secretary, Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, (802) 241-3601 and jonathan.wood@state.vt.us

On Tuesday, June 29, there will be a public meeting about the proposed gift of Derby's Eagle Point Property to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

Michael Dunn generously created the opportunity for public ownership of his outstanding 420-acre Eagle Point property on Lake Memphremagog in Derby. The property sits on the Vermont-Quebec border and includes 210 acres of wetland, woodland, and riparian land, 220 acres of productive agricultural land, and 6,301 feet of frontage on the east shore of beautiful Lake Memphremagog.

A partnership consisting of Community Financial Services Group (Trustee of the Michael Dunn Trust), Vermont Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) and the Vermont Land Trust (VLT) propose that the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) accept title to the property, as the Federal government is named as the beneficiary of the property under the Trust. These partners further recommend that ANR serve as manager of the federally owned property.

If the U.S. Government does not accept the gift of the property by September 1, 2010, the property will be retained by the Trust and will be sold, with proceeds going to the Trust beneficiary.

The USFWS has prepared a draft Environmental Assessment recommending federal acquisition of the property and evaluating whether there would be any significant adverse impacts from this proposed action. This assessment is available online at www.fws.gov/northeast/planning/EaglePoint and is available in hardcopy at the Derby town office.

The upcoming Land Tour at Eagle Point Farm will be attended by representatives from the Vermont ANR, the Dunn Trust, the USFWS, and VLT, who will all be available to give tours and answer questions.

The evening public meeting at North Country Union High School auditorium is an opportunity for representatives to share information about the federal land acquisition plans and hold a question and answer period. It is also an opportunity for the public to comment on the USFWS Draft Environmental Assessment. The draft EA will remain open for public comment from June 16 through July 16.

For those interested who cannot attend these events, written comments on the environmental assessment can be submitted by e-mail or letter directly to USFWS.

Bill_Zinni@fws.gov

Bill Zinni
US Fish and Wildlife Service
300 Westgate Center Drive
Hadley, MA 01035

###

The Vermont Land Trust is a statewide, member-supported, nonprofit land conservation organization. Since 1977, the Vermont Land Trust has permanently conserved more than 1,580 parcels of land covering 502,000 acres, or about eight percent of the private, undeveloped land in the state. The conserved land includes more than 700 working farms, hundreds of thousands of acres of productive forestland, and numerous parcels of community lands. This conservation work changes the lives of families, invigorates farms, launches new businesses, maintains scenic vistas, encourages recreational opportunity, and fosters a renewed sense of community. For more information or to become a member, contact: Vermont Land Trust, 8 Bailey Avenue, Montpelier, VT 05602, (802) 223-5234.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is the principal Federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting and enhancing fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. The Service manages the 150-million-acre National Wildlife Refuge System, which encompasses over 550 national wildlife refuges, thousands of small wetlands and other special management areas. It also operates 69 national fish hatcheries, 63 Fish and Wildlife Management offices and 81 ecological services field stations. The agency enforces federal wildlife laws, administers the Endangered Species Act, manages migratory bird populations, restores nationally significant fisheries, conserves and restores wildlife habitat such as wetlands, and helps foreign governments with their conservation efforts. It also oversees the Federal Assistance program, which distributes hundreds of millions of dollars in excise taxes on fishing and hunting equipment to state fish and wildlife agencies.