



SAVING THE LAST GREAT PLACES ON EARTH

## News Release

For Immediate Release  
October 24, 2006

Contact: Bruce Kidman, The Nature Conservancy  
207-729-5181 [bkidman@tnc.org](mailto:bkidman@tnc.org)

### **The Nature Conservancy and Plum Creek Sign Agreement to Permanently Conserve Nearly 345,000 Acres in Northern Maine**

BRUNSWICK - The Nature Conservancy and Plum Creek have signed a definitive purchase and sale agreement to conserve nearly 345,000 acres in northern Maine. The intent to pursue this transaction was announced in March by The Nature Conservancy, Appalachian Mountain Club, Forest Society of Maine and Plum Creek as part of a broader Conservation Framework. When completed, the transaction would represent one of the largest land conservation projects in Maine history and would help create the second largest conservation easement in the United States. . Under the Framework, The Nature Conservancy, Appalachian Mountain Club and Forest Society of Maine will jointly raise private and public funds in support of the project.

There are three components to the Purchase and Sale Agreement:

- 270,000-acre Moosehead Legacy Conservation Easement
- 45,200-acre fee purchase of the Moose River parcel
- 28,320-acre fee purchase of the Roach Ponds parcel

“This is a concrete step toward the permanent conservation of 345,000 acres,” said Mike Tetreault, Executive Director of The Nature Conservancy in Maine. “The agreement means we can conserve vast stretches of forest near Moosehead Lake, protecting forest products jobs, natural resources and public access, including hunting, fishing, hiking, backcountry and motorized use. With these purchases, Maine will have established a contiguous stretch of a million and a half acres of conserved lands stretching westward from Baxter State Park and northward to the St. John River.”

Through the purchase and sale agreement, The Nature Conservancy is confirming that the purchases will occur should Maine’s Land Use Regulation Commission (LURC) approve the Concept Plan submitted by Plum Creek. The Nature Conservancy and Plum Creek have

- more -

submitted information about the Purchase and Sale Agreement to LURC. Neither the Conservancy nor its conservation partners, Appalachian Mountain Club and Forest Society of Maine, have taken a position on the Concept Plan itself.

Under the Purchase and Sale Agreement, the two fee parcels would be purchased for a total of \$25 million, and the Moosehead Legacy Conservation Easement would be purchased for \$37 an acre or approximately \$10 million. Under the Agreement, the purchasers will have five years from the date of LURC approval and Plum Creek acceptance of the Concept Plan within which to complete those purchases. The Purchase and Sales Agreement is not contingent on financing.

In addition to the purchases covered by the Purchase and Sale Agreement, Plum Creek's Concept Plan proposes the grant of a permanent conservation easement at no cost on approximately 72,000 acres as balance required for the Concept Plan.

"We structured the purchase and sale agreement to provide the Commission and Plum Creek with flexibility to continue to work through the typical considerations that occur in a review process," continued Tetreault.

The Nature Conservancy has assigned its right and obligation to purchase the Roach Ponds parcel to the Appalachian Mountain Club. Upon approval of the Concept Plan by LURC and acceptance of the Plan by Plum Creek, the Appalachian Mountain Club will purchase the Roach Ponds Tract for conservation, recreation and sustainable forestry as part of AMC's Maine Woods Initiative.

"The Roach Ponds parcel is the 'missing link' in our vision for a protected corridor running through the 100-Mile Wilderness from Greenville to Baxter State Park," said Walter Graff, deputy director of the Appalachian Mountain Club. "Acquiring this parcel would allow us to move forward on our goal of supporting the local economy by providing additional backcountry trails, overnight trips between sporting camps and remote cabins, educational programs, and continued public access."

The Purchase and Sale Agreement includes:

- Purchase of a 270,000-acre easement that would keep lands undeveloped, ensure traditional public access including hunting, fishing and hiking, protect ecologically important attributes and assure that forest management continues in a sustainable manner. Combined with the grant of 72,000 acres of conservation easements under the Concept Plan, this would result in a forest conservation easement of more than 342,000 acres.

- Fee purchase of the 28,320-acre Roach Ponds tract, which includes several Roach Ponds and abuts the State's Nahmakanta Reserve to the north and Appalachian Mountain Club's Katahdin Iron Works holdings to the south. It would become a keystone piece in a corridor of land protection stretching north to Baxter State Park.
- Fee purchase of 45,200 acres including the last portion of Number Five Bog not already in conservation and a substantial portion of the popular Moose River Bow Trip. Of that, the Bog, which is recognized as one of the Northeast's most outstanding peatlands, would be managed by the Bureau of Parks and Land as an ecological reserve. The remaining acres would be managed as a working forest with conservation restrictions.

*For maps, please go to [nature.org/maine](http://nature.org/maine)*

- 30 -

**The Nature Conservancy** is an international, nonprofit organization dedicated to the conservation of biological diversity. On-the-ground conservation work is carried out in all 50 states and in 27 foreign countries and is supported by approximately one million individual members. The Conservancy has conserved nearly 15 million acres of land in the United States and Canada and more than 102 million acres with local partner organizations globally. The Conservancy owns and manages the largest private system of nature sanctuaries in the world. Projects increasingly seek to accommodate compatible human uses and benefits. More information: [nature.org](http://nature.org) and [nature.org/maine](http://nature.org/maine)

**Plum Creek** is the largest and most geographically diverse private landowner in the nation, with approximately 8 million acres of timberland in major timber producing regions of the United States and 10 wood products manufacturing facilities in the Northwest. Plum Creek owns and manages more than 929,000 acres of timberland in Maine. Since 1989, the company has participated in conservation transactions on nearly half a million acres of its lands across the country.

**The Forest Society of Maine (FSM)** is a statewide, Maine-based, nonprofit land trust focused on working forestlands, with a special emphasis on conservation and stewardship of large tracts in the North Maine Woods. The organization develops land conservation programs that will sustain the land's ecological, economic, cultural, and recreational values. This is done with the full involvement of forestland owners and has garnered strong credibility in the forestry and conservation communities. To reflect this multi-faceted approach to land conservation, FSM maintains a diversity of board members with forestry, conservation, and business backgrounds.

**The Appalachian Mountain Club** has been promoting the protection, enjoyment, and wise use of the mountains, rivers, and trails of the Northeast outdoors since 1876. The nation's oldest outdoor recreation and conservation organization, AMC has 90,000 members in 12 chapters that reach from Maine to Washington D.C. Members maintain over 1,500 miles of trails throughout the Northeast, including nearly 350 miles of the Appalachian Trail in five states. The AMC owns and manages 37,000 acres of conservation land in Piscataquis County and operates two sporting camps as part of its Maine Woods Initiative. Both the land and sporting camps are open to AMC members and the general public. For information on the Maine Woods Initiative, see [www.outdoors.org/mwi](http://www.outdoors.org/mwi).