



# GREAT POND MOUNTAIN CONSERVATION TRUST

## Advocacy Policy

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Adopted: April 14, 2014

Revised: \_\_\_\_\_

Due for Review: \_\_\_\_\_

See Also: \_\_\_\_\_

### Land Trust Standards and Practices

This policy complies with the LTA Standard 2, Practice E.

### Introduction

**Purpose of Policy:** To govern the Trust's involvement in public issues.

**Responsible Committee:** The Governance Committee will provide the initial screening of topics for consideration for the Board, which must make all final decisions.

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### Policy

Various public matters concerning land use and environmental policies, regulations, project applications, enforcement matters, and other such issues may have an impact on the Trust, its mission and its conservation lands which could suggest the advisability of Trust involvement.

However, involvement by the Trust in such issues also has the potential for exceeding the scope of the Trust's purposes, straining Trust resources and diminishing the Trust's opportunity to work with land owners on a cooperative basis to conserve their lands (due to the potential difference of opinion between the land owner and a position that the Trust might take).

Given this, the Trust must evaluate each potential public issue for which it might take a public position in terms of the possibility of negative impacts on the Trust's goals and programs.

Under no circumstances may the Trust take a position which has a significant potential of jeopardizing the Trust's 501(c)(3) status.

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### Procedure

All proposals that the Trust intervene in such public issues, whether originating from the public or within the Trust, will first be reviewed by the Governance Committee. The Governance Committee shall consider whether:

- The issue is directly related to the Trust mission, and intervention in the issue will advance the mission;
- The issue impacts the region as a whole or strategic resources within the region that provide major community benefit. If the issue is isolated and/or only impacts private interests, it is recommended that those parties handle it.

- The conservation values and public benefits of one or more of the Trust's conservation easements or preserves are directly affected by the issue, and thereby impact the Trust's stewardship of those conservation lands;
- Intervening in the issue will result in allocations of organizational resources to the extent that other program initiatives will be impeded;
- The Trust has adequate expertise and organizational and financial resources to impact the outcome of the issue and whether those are duplicative of parties already involved; and
- Whether the Trust's involvement will enhance or detract from its standing in the community.

If it believes the issue satisfies the criteria above, the Governance Committee may, by majority vote, forward the matter for consideration by the Board.

The Governance Committee may recommend:

1. That the Trust take no position on the matter; or
2. That the Trust take a particular position as detailed by the Governance Committee.

The Board will review the recommendations of the Governance Committee, applying the same criteria listed above. If the Board votes to involve the Trust in an issue, it shall consider the financial commitment entailed and plan for funding.

### **Registration for Lobbying Election**

The Trust has registered for the lobbying election with the Internal Revenue Service. The purpose for registration is to allow the Trust to expend funds on lobbying activities. When lobbying activities occur, the expenditures will be recorded in a specific bookkeeping account dedicated to lobbying expenditures. These expenditures will be reported in the IRS Form 990 for the relevant fiscal year.

### **Finance**

Adoption of this policy will involve no expenditure. Funding the expenses, if any, associated with any involvement in any specific public issue will be determined by the Board at the time of the vote to involve the Trust in any issue.

### **Adoption**

This policy was adopted by the Board of Directors of Great Pond Mountain Conservation Trust on the 14th day of April, 2014, at a duly constituted meeting at which a quorum was present.

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Signature of authorized officer

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Date