

Conservation Fund Preserves Pattee Property

CAMPTON, NH Earlier this fall, the Campton Conservation Commission went through the process to dedicate town conservation fund money to purchase the Pattee property on Blair Road and Route 175. The house, field and small woodlot with other small out buildings had become available after the recent death of Mr. Ed Pattee who had been a long time resident and road agent of Campton.

The property is 11.2 acres and borders the Blair State Forest and is near the Blair Cemetery and covered bridge. It is centrally located within the town and known by many as an old farm field, lovingly taken care of by the Pattee family since the 1930s. The conservation commission was interested in keeping the land as open space and in having public access for recreational use of the adjoining state forest. Since creation of the conservation fund in 2001 there were public funds readily available to consider the purchase.

After several meetings with the Select Board in August and September, a public hearing held on September 17 informed residents of the proposed purchase. At the hearing, local residents overwhelmingly approved this use of the conservation fund. With this indication of approval, the CCC made a bid on the property. The Pattee heirs were pleased at this interest in preserving their parent's property. The money for the purchase comes from funds set aside from the Land Use Change Tax, paid when land in Current Use is taken out for subdivision or development. This is the first purchase of land by Campton's conservation trust fund.

The purchase was completed on October 14, with \$195,000 paid for the 11.2 acre piece, including the small house. Purchase of the house was not part of the original plan, but a counter bid made it necessary to include it in the town's purchase. The conservation commission is charged with management of the property and will be considering various uses for it, including sale of the house pending a vote at town meeting to do so. In late October, the Waterville Valley Region Chamber of Commerce hosted its carved pumpkin festival in the corner of the Pattee field near Rt. 175. Events like this are encouraged as long as they are in keeping with the long term conservation goals for the property.