

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Local non-profits collaborate to acquire land for housing and conservation

Island Workforce Housing and Island Heritage Trust are pleased to announce their collaboration to acquire land on the Sunset Crossroad in the Town of Deer Isle. This land is intended to be used for both workforce housing and land conservation. The approximately 40-acre parcel has 3,000 feet of frontage on Oliver's Pond, a large body of fresh water, and freshwater wetlands with abundant birdlife that is relatively unknown to members of the community due to the lack of public access. The land is attractive to both non-profit organizations for its natural beauty, size, location, and the opportunities it presents to support their respective missions.



Island Workforce Housing has sought a site for developing its first phase of workforce housing since completing its Strategic Plan earlier this year. IWH has already begun the process of organizing a team of architects and engineers to help plan this first phase, and anticipates selecting a design firm later this month.

Mike Wood, Chair of Island Workforce Housing, stated: "Cooperation between non-profits focused on housing and land conservation is well established throughout Maine, and helps us create high-quality year-round housing opportunities for workers on the island. Having walking trails and access to the gorgeous Oliver's Pond will really enhance the housing we anticipate building here."

Island Heritage Trust sees the joint acquisition as an opportunity to conserve and protect one of the island's most significant bodies of fresh water and freshwater wetlands. IHT anticipates implementing a stewardship plan that includes creation of a trail system on the property, enabling community members to enjoy a natural resource that has formerly been difficult to access.

Paul Miller, Executive Director of IHT, commented: "We are excited to partner with Island Workforce Housing to promote the dual goals of conservation and housing. Oliver's Pond and the adjacent wetlands are a unique island ecosystem with diverse plants and animal life. Such systems protect the island's water resources and purify its air. Affording public access to such resources is a key component of IHT's mission."

The two non-profit organizations will undertake a joint fund-raising campaign this fall to cover the cost of acquiring the property. Island Heritage Trust will then raise money separately for stewardship of approximately 12 acres of pond frontage, while Island Workforce Housing will undertake a larger capital campaign to support its development of ten units of rental housing to serve those already working on the island that cannot find housing they can afford in Deer Isle or Stonington.

For more information, contact:

Island Workforce Housing

Mike Wood
email: mibrwo@gmail.com
phone: 207-348-9997

Peter Roth
email: peterroth@newatlantic.net
phone: 617-697-6530

Island Heritage Trust

Paul Miller, Executive Director
email: iht@islandheritagetrust.org
phone: 207-348-2455

Bill Wiegmann, Board Chair
email: williamwiegmann@msn.com
phone: 207-610-4007