

## TRURO NEIGHBORS AND FRIENDS FIGHT TO SAVE THE TWINE FIELDS



The Twine Field project is a 10.2-acre upland meadow once used by local fishermen to repair and tar their nets. This property is under agreement with a developer who plans to subdivide it into nine lots with a 40-foot road emptying into Pond Road, just across from the monument, which commemorates the Pilgrims' second night on American soil. A group of concerned neighbors and friends who recognize the environmental and historical importance of preserving this land is working in conjunction with the Truro Conservation Trust to raise funds to buy the property from the developer. The Trust has pledged \$500,000 toward the purchase of the property. To date, neighbors and friends have raised \$90,000. In addition, the town's Community Preservation Committee (CPC) has approved funding for this project in the amount of \$200,000, which awaits final approval at Town Meeting in April. The Truro Conservation Trust will be negotiating the selling price with the developer over the next several months. The starting point for these negotiations is in the area of \$1.5M. The developer plans to begin construction in January 2018. So 2017 is the narrow window available to meet the purchase price.

Here are just some of the reasons why neighbors and friends feel it is so critical that this rare and beautiful land be preserved:

- Truro's Twine Field is an upland meadow, the most rare habitat on the Cape and the only meadow of its size on the Outer Cape. The National Seashore contains no such meadow. For decades in winters past, Truro fishermen laid out their nets in this Twine Field to tar and mend them. Historically and ecologically, it is a Truro treasure.
- The Twine Field has a long season of diverse plants, enabling animals that need this habitat to survive. These hardy plants have adapted to the dry conditions of upland meadows, some with root systems extending six feet underground. Bluestem grass, false indigo, bluets, field pussytoes, and other species shelter small animals such as meadow voles, which provide food to owls, hawks, foxes and others. Turkeys, box turtles, weasels, bobwhites, and others also benefit from the meadow. If the meadow vanishes, so do the animals.
- Bobwhites, which are seen on the Rogers property's undisturbed open space, are listed by the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife as a Species of Greatest Conservation Need, just regulations away from an Endangered Species.
- The water quality of Pilgrim Pond is threatened by the proposed Twine Field development. The filtering effects of both the upland meadow plants and the oak-pine forest behind them on the Rogers property help to maintain good ground water quality for Pilgrim Pond. This filtering effect will be lost if the meadow and the forest are replaced by roads, driveways, houses, lawns, and septic systems, thus accelerating the pond's decline. The natural filtering system of plants and trees that purifies the groundwater will be no more.
- Every town on the Cape once had a Twine Field. In 2015, Chatham recognized the historical importance of its Twine Field by purchasing it through a public-

private partnership. Except for Chatham's Twine Field, Truro's Twine Field is said to be the Cape's last.

- Pond Village, including Pond Road, is an eligible National Register Historic District. Pond Road, which runs between the Twine Field and Pilgrim Park and Pond is one of the oldest and most beloved roads in Truro and beyond. Nestled between the lighthouse and the bay, it has been painted by hundreds of artists over the centuries. Thousands come in season to savor the quintessential feel of the old village, the pond, the cattails, the meadow, and the peace that is so rare today. The proposed development would be a major step in the destruction of the beauty, history, and habitat of Pilgrim Park, Pond Road, and its Twine Field.

**WHAT YOU CAN DO:** To date, friends and neighbors have raised \$90,000. The Truro Conservation Trust has committed \$500,000 of its resources and is working to secure government funding. For more information, go to <http://www.trurotwinefield.com/> or contact Mary Ann Larkin at [pepperlarkin@juno.com](mailto:pepperlarkin@juno.com) Or contribute now directly (tax deductible) to the Truro Conservation Trust at Box 327, North Truro, MA 02652. Reference the "Rogers Property" in the check's memo line. Friends and neighbors and the Truro Conservation Trust are hoping all of Truro and beyond will work together to save these historically and ecologically rare ten acres!

