



**NEWS FROM**

**ORLEANS  
CONSERVATION  
TRUST**

Protecting Nature for Our Community

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**TOWN VOTE MOVES CEDAR POND PROTECTION EFFORT INTO FINAL PHASE FOR  
ORLEANS CONSERVATION TRUST**

*Orleans, MA / May 12, 2026* – Orleans voters at the May 11 Town Meeting approved a measure by overwhelming majority authorizing \$175,000 in Community Preservation Act funding toward the Orleans Conservation Trust’s (OCT) effort to purchase and permanently protect nearly four acres on the shores of Cedar Pond.

This local commitment, unanimously recommended by the Select Board, Finance Committee, and Community Preservation Committee, moves OCT’s Cedar Pond Shore Land Protection Project into its final fundraising phase. The campaign is bolstered by recent grant awards, including \$260,000 from the Massachusetts Conservation Partnership Grant Program and \$50,000 from The Cape Cod Foundation’s Priscilla Alden Sears Land Acquisition Fund in its first year accepting grant applications.

OCT is now seeking community support to raise the remaining funds—about \$60,000—by June 30, 2026.

The property’s protection would expand a growing network of conserved land around Cedar Pond, linking to 12 acres of existing conservation land preserved over the past decade through Town and OCT efforts. In addition to its ecological value, including towering oak trees and one of the largest tupelo groves in Orleans, this project aims to create the first formal public access to Orleans’ fourth largest pond, with plans for modest parking improvements, a kayak launch, and a short walking path to a scenic overlook of the pond. Situated less than half a mile from Orleans Center and the Cape Cod Rail Trail, the property offers rare access to open space within walking distance of affordable housing developments and the business district.

“This land had been in my family for a hundred years and then some,” says Steve Peters, who represented the family in negotiations with OCT. “I talked with a couple of builders but found myself saying, ‘What am I doing?’ I’m just so glad OCT stepped up to protect it, given how much wildlife I see in there. It’s a special spot.”

Among the supporters of the land protection project at Town Meeting were members of the Association to Preserve Cape Cod’s (APCC) Team SOS, a network of advocates and volunteers committed to protecting open space for the future of the Cape.

“The Cedar Pond Shore project is exactly the kind of collaboration that Team SOS and The Cape We Shape campaign want to promote,” says APCC Advocacy Director Christy Johnson. “By working together with land trusts, residents, and towns, we hope to accelerate ‘protecting what remains’—the undeveloped priority natural resource lands needed to maintain healthy ponds and coastal waterways, critical habitats, clean drinking water, and protection against rising seas.”

OCT is calling on neighbors, members, and the broader community to help bring the project across the finish line. Donations can be mailed to OCT at 203 South Orleans Rd., Orleans, or made online at [www.OrleansConservationTrust.org](http://www.OrleansConservationTrust.org).

*Orleans Conservation Trust is a private 501(c)(3) nonprofit established in 1970. Over its 50-year history, the Trust has preserved 700 acres in Orleans. Among the most active land trusts on Cape Cod, OCT stewards a range of ecosystems, from freshwater ponds and wetlands to saltmarshes, wooded upland, and coastal grasslands, managing its lands to protect and enhance wildlife habitat, restore native ecosystems, and provide public recreation and education through a network of trails and informational signage. OCT also educates residents and visitors about important natural values and environmental issues in Orleans and around Cape Cod via grants to Orleans schools, guided walks, free lectures, its website, newsletter, and other communications.*

[All photos cleared for use.]



[Preservation of the 3.78 acres located on Locust Road (outlined in red) will provide critical pond shoreline protection. Parcel layer and imagery provided by the Town of Orleans.]



[Cedar Pond from above, with Town Cove visible in the background. The oak trees and tupelo stands along the pond shoreline provide roosting sites for egrets and other wading birds. Photo by Hardie Truesdale.]



[View of Cedar Pond from Cedar Pond Road. Orleans Conservation Trust hopes to establish an official public access point to the pond. Photo by Ashley Martin.]