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Madison

December 11, 2009

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As a Community, We Get to Decide

Published 12/10/2009 12:00 AM Updated 12/10/2009 12:25 PM

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My early nature memories are from the rich, diverse landscapes of wetlands, meadows, woodlands, rivers, ponds, fields, and other self-contained and integrated ecosystems, all of which are available on the Griswold Airport property. But as I've since learned, the wonderful, natural diversity I grew up with has to be protected and I must do my part to preserve the awe-inspiring diversity of the Griswold Airport land. We have the opportunity to learn about the other plants, creatures, nature, and other cycles there that make our lives larger and more inspiring. There's a remarkable connection among all life forms on the whole connected landscapes, thus we must conserve the biological diversity of the different habitats and vote for the purchase.

It's rare when a single vote takes such a larger meaning than this one. In the case of coastal marshes and access to the water, we don't get a second chance. Once they're gone and bricks and mortar and asphalt cover them, they are never again there for us or for the animals and plants that we need to survive.

The airport is land that was lightly used and remains open with possibilities for town park use. We rarely get to vote on whether a forest stands or a marsh remains, but this time is different. As a community, we get to decide whether these salt marshes and this coastal forest and the native grasslands will live and be protected. Yes, it has a high cost. Most things today do. Not voting in favor of acquisition, I'm afraid, has a greater cost, not only in the natural assets that will be lost, but in the message we send to a community about our values.

I encourage Madison residents to renew their covenant with the land and vote for approval in January.

Carol L. Altieri

Madison

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