

ANTRIM

Caugheys donate land

Fifty-eight acres along Gregg Lake go to Harris Center

By **ABBE HAMILTON**
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George and Michelle Caughey purchased 58 acres of lakeside property along Gregg Lake in Antrim and donated the conservation easement to the Harris Center.

They were inspired to buy the parcel earlier in 2019 after they learned it had the

potential to be developed, George Caughey said. Caughey said he was interested in maintaining the lake's water quality, and that he and his family enjoys foraging for edible mushrooms in the forest. He and his family lives near the lake, and have conserved other land in the Gregg Lake watershed with the Audubon society. He said he supports the Harris Center's work to establish a SuperSanctuary of conserved land in the region.

The easement was com-

pleted on Dec. 23.

The easement reserves the Caughey's rights to conduct forestry and agricultural activities on the land, although the property hasn't been logged in about 80 years and there are no current plans to cut trees, Harris Center Land Program Manager Eric Masterson said.

The parcel contains approximately 2,000 feet of the Gregg Lake shoreline, and includes suitable loon nesting habitat.

The Harris Center now

holds conservation easements on 533 acres of land in the Gregg Lake watershed. When combined with an additional 393 acres protected by other organizations, 34 percent of the watershed has now been conserved.

Masterson said the Harris Center is grateful to the Caugheys for their incredibly generous donation, and to the Antrim Conservation Commission for providing a grant to help offset the ongoing costs associated with stewardship of the easement.