



Natural Surroundings

WYNDHAM LAND TRUST, INC. • SINCE 1975

Conserving the Natural Resources of Northeastern Connecticut Winter 2017

About The Wyndham Land Trust

The Wyndham Land Trust, Inc. is engaged in the preservation of natural resources in Windham County, Connecticut. Its emphasis is on wildlife habitat, especially where unique or particularly fragile assemblages of animals and plants exist or may be expected to exist. Its properties are open to the public for the quiet enjoyment of nature. Land may be acquired by donation or purchase. Since WLT enjoys 501 (c) 3 status donations to it are deductible under IRS rules, a feature which sometimes proves attractive! Our work is supported by dues, donations, grants and a very modest endowment income. Members enjoy an annual potluck supper, generally in the fall.

Inquiries may be directed to the Wyndham Land Trust, Inc., PO Box 302 Pomfret Center, CT, 06259 or to info@wyndhamlandtrust.org Please see our web site www.wyndhamlandtrust.org Phone (860) 963-2090. Your comments, questions and suggestions are most welcome.

Wyndham Land Trust Board of Directors:

- President:** Michael St Lawrence (Thompson)
Vice President: Michael Green (Killingly)
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Jeff Stefanik (Woodstock)
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Benjamin Williams (Pomfret)
Staff:
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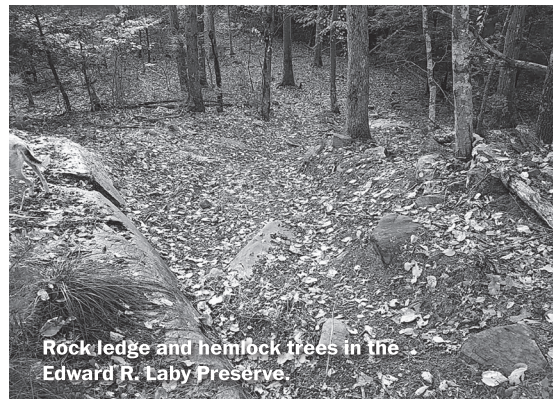
President's Message

In September of this year, Ben Williams elected to step down as President of the Wyndham Land Trust after five years at the helm. Speaking for myself and the rest of the Board of Directors, we cannot thank Ben enough for his leadership and extensive service to the land trust. Fortunately for us, Ben will continue his long-term service by remaining a member of the board. As the incoming President, I look forward to benefiting from Ben's counsel.

This year, 2017, has been incredibly productive for the Wyndham Land Trust. We have increased the acreage of protected land by 25% while establishing two major, expandable preserves. The amount of activity is unprecedented in the 42-year history of the land trust. Going forward, I envision the Wyndham Land Trust continuing to aggressively increase the amount of land it protects, while remaining actively engaged with its supporters. As a result of this growth, it will be even more important that the land trust continues to improve its operational excellence by completing the national accreditation process. With the support of its members, volunteers, donors and regional partners, I believe the Wyndham Land Trust has a very bright future, and it's an honor for me to serve as President.

Edward R. Laby Preserve

In October Anna May Scanlon of Smithfield, RI, donated 81 acres of forested land in East Killingly. The property abuts the discontinued Kentuck Road that runs north-south along the border between Connecticut and Rhode Island. Like Bull Hill, it is a large area of unbroken forested land that extends south into state forest and east into protected land in Rhode Island. Hermit Thrushes and Black-throated Green Warblers are two of the interesting breeding forest birds known to inhabit this plot. The property will be named the Edward R. Laby Preserve, in honor of Mrs. Scanlon's late son.



"I knew I wanted the beauty of the land to be protected, but I didn't know how," explained Mrs. Scanlon. "Then I learned about the Wyndham Land Trust, and they were the answer to my question. I'm happy to know that my wishes will be carried out."

Welcome

We welcome the following new member:
Jorge Martinez

Bull Hill

Through a combination of land donations and purchases the land trust now owns 512 acres on Bull Hill in Thompson and Woodstock. We have targeted Bull Hill as a large, unbroken forested block with ecological significance. Acquisitions have been helped by grants from the Glass and Summer Hill Foundations, by the State of Connecticut DEEP Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Grant Program, and by generous donations from our members.

The land trust now owns a total of 2951 acres across ten towns in northeast Connecticut, and we plan to continue acquiring land as we move into 2018. Your continued support is more valuable than ever; we could not function without the financial and moral support of our members.

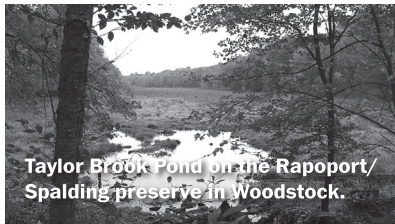


Andy Rzeznikiewicz leads his group to the lookout point on our Bull Hill Preserve.

Walktober 2017

The land trust hosted two Last Green Valley “Walktober” events in 2017.

On the morning of October 1, Jeff Stefanik, guided walkers along a peaceful wooded trail in our Rapoport/Spalding preserve in Woodstock. The walk took the group along Calkins Road and around Taylor Brook pond.



Taylor Brook Pond on the Rapoport/Spalding preserve in Woodstock.

After lunch on the same day Andy Rzeznikiewicz led a walk at our Bull Hill preserve in Thompson. For many attendees this was their first opportunity to visit the new preserve that

has been the focus of our activities for much of 2017. Andy led the group to the spectacular lookout point and explained how we are hoping to protect even more of this large, unbroken forest lot.

Killingly Power Plant

By Steve Adams

The Wyndham Land Trust took an active role in opposition to the proposal before the Connecticut Siting Council (CSC) by NTE for the construction and operation of a proposed natural gas power plant adjacent to our Dunn Preserve along the Quinebaug River in Killingly. If approved, the power plant would dramatically reduce the conservation value of the land. We teamed up with our neighbors and friends at Alexander’s Lake and the surrounding neighborhood to retain John Bashaw, Esq., of the Hartford law firm of Reid and Riege to fight the proposal, together with the Connecticut Fund for the Environment (CFE) and the Sierra Club.

During the application process, NTE had withdrawn from the bidding in the annual ISO New England Auction for electricity for future years. After many hours of testimony and argument before the CSC, the Council denied the application without prejudice on the basis that NTE had not been able to demonstrate a need for the electricity that would be generated by the proposed plant, especially in light of the fact that NTE had withdrawn from the auction. After the denial, NTE appealed the decision of the CSC to the Superior Court. The appeal is still pending at this time.

In October Eversource Energy filed an application with the Army Corps of Engineers and the Connecticut DEEP for the construction and installation of a larger natural gas pipeline to supply, among other things, the proposed NTE plant. Eversource currently owns and maintains an existing natural gas pipeline, which originates from a main pipeline in Pomfret. If approved by the Corps and the DEEP, the new pipeline will disturb not only the Dunn Preserve in Killingly but also the Duck Marsh Preserve in Pomfret. Again, working with our neighbors and CFE and Sierra Club, we are opposing this proposal and have requested that the DEEP hold a public hearing on the application.

It is anticipated that NTE will enter the ISO New England Auction for future energy production in early 2018, and if successful as a bidder, will re-submit their application to CSC. As a result, we must all remain vigilant to protect the land that others have entrusted to us in perpetuity. The land trust greatly appreciates the continuing financial support of our friends and neighbors in Killingly and Pomfret and the surrounding towns, which allows us to remain an active participant represented by legal counsel in these matters.

Pot Luck and Annual Meeting

Thanks to **Hadi and Cheryl Bozorgmanesh** for hosting the land trust’s Annual Meeting and Pot Luck dinner back in September.

During the evening **Ben Williams** announced he was stepping down as president, to be replaced by **Mike St Lawrence**. **Carolyn Werge**, the Conservation Officer in Thompson, was recognized as the volunteer of the year for all the GIS mapping assistance she has provided for our recent Long Pond and Bull Hill acquisitions. Carolyn also provided valuable assistance with deed research and analysis for both Bull Hill and Long Pond. To round out the evening, **Janet Booth** resurrected the popular book raffle that her father, Dick Booth, started many years ago and raised a valuable \$325.

TED GELLERT'S RETAINED LIFE ESTATE

Ted Gellert of Abington, Connecticut passed away on October 10 at the age of 90. Ted, a Navy vet of both WWII and the Korean War, was a strong supporter of the land trust and a regular attendee at our annual Pot Luck dinner.

In 2007 Ted entered into a retained life estate with the Wyndham Land Trust. Under the terms of the retained life estate, Ted deeded his house and property to the land trust, while retaining the entire use and responsibility of ownership during his lifetime. Even though he continued to live on the property, Ted's 2007 donation to the land trust was eligible for a charitable deduction with the IRS; the amount of the deduction was based on his life expectancy and the appraised value of the property. Now that Ted has passed away, the property in its entirety is owned by the Wyndham Land Trust.



Ayers Road cuts through the preserve and leads to the Airline Trail

We plan to sell the house coupled with a small house lot and will use the proceeds to protect more land in the Quiet Corner. The remaining acreage will become the Theodore and Virginia Gellert Memorial Preserve. The property covers 125 acres and runs along the west side of the Airline Trail. It is contiguous with our existing 43-acre Valentine Preserve and a 168-acre parcel owned by the New England Forestry Foundation.

Land Manager, Andy Rzeznikiewicz is already working on improving the habitat for birdlife. "Due to extreme gypsy moth damage a large percentage of the oak trees on the Gellert Preserve have died. There is a four-acre area where every tree is dead, and we are conducting a salvage operation with Hull Forestry to remove the trees. Over the next three to five years, as new growth matures, we expect many bird species to colonize the cut areas, including Hooded Warblers, Eastern Towhees, Veerys, Black and White Warblers, and Chestnut-sided Warblers. We will utilize the logging roads as new trails for the public to access the property."

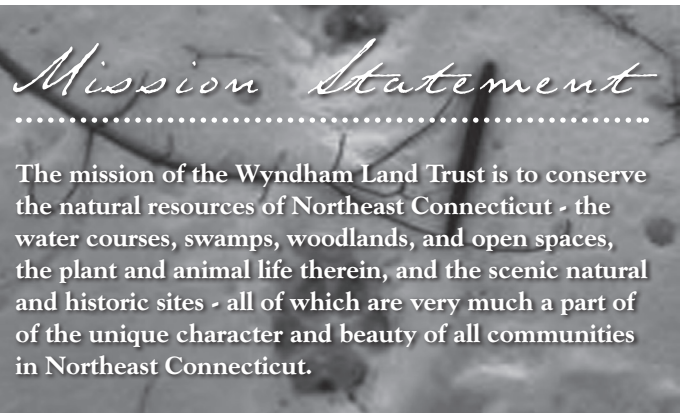
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Welcome Marcy Dawley

Marcy Dawley took over as our office manager in October, and quickly put her stamp on the land trust office in Danielson. Marcy moved to Northeast Connecticut from Rhode Island about 12 years ago and fell in love with the rural character of the region. She volunteered and worked for many years for The Last Green Valley and is known to many as Ranger Marcy. Marcy is a member of the Putnam Elks Lodge and the Putnam Rotary Club and has long been a supporter of the land trust. She is one of the faces behind our Facebook postings and was named volunteer of the year in 2016. We are happy to have her on board.

Annual Appeal

You should have received a request in the mail to donate to our annual fundraising drive. To simplify things for you, we have combined our annual appeal with our annual membership drive. Memberships in the land trust will now run from January through December. Please support our mission by renewing your membership and donating to the annual appeal. Both memberships and donations are tax deductible. Unlike many organizations, this is the only time during the year that we ask for donations from our members.



The mission of the Wyndham Land Trust is to conserve the natural resources of Northeast Connecticut - the water courses, swamps, woodlands, and open spaces, the plant and animal life therein, and the scenic natural and historic sites - all of which are very much a part of the unique character and beauty of all communities in Northeast Connecticut.



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Wyndham Land Trust



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LAND TRUST, INC.

The Wyndham Land Trust, Inc.
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Share the shortest day of the year with your fellow land trust supporters.

Winter Solstice Gathering

Please join us at the Lyon Preserve in Pomfret on the afternoon of Thursday, December 21, to watch the sun set on the shortest day of the year. The event will run from 3-5pm and light refreshments will be served.

The Lyon Preserve is on Wright's Crossing Road in Pomfret, just north of the intersection with 101—look for the gate and the land trust signs.