



WYNDHAM
LAND TRUST, INC.

The Wyndham Land Trust, Inc.
P.O. Box 302
Pomfret Center, CT 06259-0302



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Natural Surroundings

WYNDHAM LAND TRUST, INC. • SINCE 1975

Conserving the Natural Resources of Northeastern Connecticut

Summer 2019

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:

Mike St. Lawrence, **President**
Michael Green, **Vice President**
Stephen Adams, **Secretary**
Denise Baum, **Treasurer**

Board Members:

Janet Booth
George Jackson
Jo-Ann MacFarlane
Andy Rzeznikiewicz
Jeff Stefanik
Ron Tillen

Staff

Marcy Dawley

President's Address:

The Wyndham Land Trust has preserved and protected land in Windham County for 44 years. Over that time we have faced many challenges, ranging from suburban sprawl to the changing weather.

According to NASA/GISS, global surface temperature data shows that the world is rapidly getting hotter; 18 out of the last 19 years were the hottest years on record (since 1880). This heating is leading to changes even here in Windham County, resulting in warmer temperatures, invasive pests, erratic weather, and earlier growing seasons.

Both 2015 and 2016 saw severe summer droughts here in Windham County. These droughts stressed many trees and encouraged an explosion of gypsy moths because it was too dry to allow the growth of the moth's natural pathogen (Mainaiga Fungus). This combination led to the death of many trees, especially red oak and white pines.



In the spring of 2017 it became clear that many trees had died in portions of the Wyndham Land Trust's Gellert Preserve. About 90 acres of mostly red oak and ash trees were completely dead, and we decided to harvest the dead trees. The harvest reduced further insect infestations, and the modified habitat provided many benefits. The increased sunlight on the forest floor allows many young trees and shrubs to grow.

Most of the forests in Connecticut are mature forests and lack a healthy understory, which is important for many nesting birds. We expect to see an increase in birds and other wildlife using the preserve after three to four growing seasons, including bird species such as Wood Thrush, Veery, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Eastern Towhee, Black and White Warbler, Chestnut-sided Warbler, and Blue-winged Warblers are some of the bird species populations that will likely increase.

In addition, to encourage public access, some of the logging roads will be maintained as a new hiking trail connecting Ayers Road to the Airline Trail. The tree harvest on the Gellert Preserve is now completed with cleanup and repairs to the Airline Trail underway.

Best,

Mike St. Lawrence

Welcome

We welcome the following new members:

Preston Abbott • Lynn Bourque • Jeffrey Cartier • John Cartier
Chris Cyr • Louis Davis • Mark Goetz • Edward Graff • Helena Ives
Steve Lewis • Sue Orcutt • Leila Philip • Lindsay Philips
Terry Wakeman • Glenn Warner • Elizabeth Williams

Summer Solstice Gathering

It doesn't get any better than this.



Please join us on June 21st between 7 and 9 pm at the Duck Marsh Preserve on Holmes Road in Pomfret to celebrate the summer solstice. Enjoy the beauty and serenity of Mother Nature and all she has to offer as the sun sets on the longest day of the year. Kids can make s'mores over a fire, and there will be snacks and refreshments for all. Feel pride in land you have protected and preserved. We look forward to seeing you there. The event will be cancelled if it rains.

Janet Booth – Why I Volunteered to Serve on the Board

Four years ago I returned to live in my home town of Brooklyn, CT. I volunteer as a board member of the Wyndham Land Trust because I believe in the work of land trusts and I believe that natural landscapes and the wildlife that live in them not only enhance but are vital to all our lives.

It's been a circuitous route back to Brooklyn since I left home in 1982 to attend college in Maine. Despite a dread of math and the burgeoning phenomenon of computers, (they must have a lot to do with math!!) I ended up in Silicon Valley working in the tech industry and eventually learned application interface design and usability.

Though I flew in and out many times, the first sight of the San Francisco Bay and the approach from the air are indelible in my mind. It was so different from New England. It took me months to resist the impulse to run outside when the weather was gorgeous. One could actually relax in the knowledge that tomorrow would most likely be sunny. When I wasn't in the office I was either putting as many miles as I could on my bicycle or hiking the many interesting valleys that snake into the coast from Big Sur to Mendocino. The Bay Area I was told had once been a natural wonder, teeming with wildlife and home to acre after acre of orchards.

Work eventually took me back to the east coast. Missing green forests, I hoped to land back in New England, but I had to settle for a stop of a few years in northern Virginia. There I saw poorly planned concrete sprawl pushing its way into the beautiful farming and horse country. The question always on my mind as I drove out



to explore the Shenandoah was, 'when, how, and where will they decide so stop?'

Another move for work took me back to Maine. Though I was an avid outing club member at Colby, I now had more time to explore the state. I took a great deal of hope and inspiration, not to mention superb food, from the organic farming movement there and joined a land trust for the first time.

When I was very young here in Windham County, my idea of fun was to search for salamanders under rocks and logs. Walks on old forgotten roads that meandered into the woods were among my favorite activities as well. Interesting nooks in gnarly trees never went unnoticed by my father, our guide, who excitedly pointed them out as possible hideaways for mysterious woodland creatures. I had a project in elementary school once that I remember him helping me with. I have to say I knew I had an 'in' when it came to preparing for a presentation on ocean krill. It was an especially important topic: the lesson was, very simply put, that big animals need little ani-

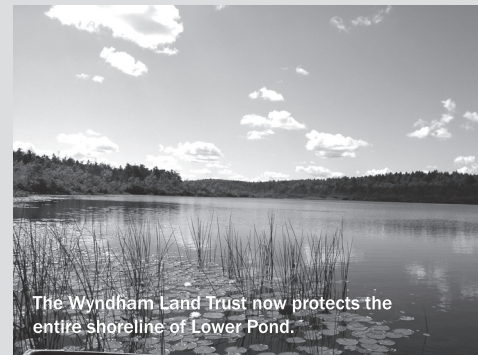
mals and that without a clean place for the little animals to live and thrive, the big animals would eventually suffer and even die. Natural landscapes aren't just pretty; they perform the additional function of keeping our world healthy so that we can be healthy.

My father was an early member of the land trust and later became its president. As a kid I took for granted that there would always be people like him and the trust's founders who would take up the cause of the natural world. Having enjoyed many special places in the states I have lived, I realize that we also have something special here in this part of Connecticut. Supporting a local land trust is but one of many ways we can all pitch in to take care of our beautiful and important world.

NEW PROPERTIES

The Wyndham Land Trust continues to expand thanks to the generous support of our members.

In early December of 2018, we added 152 acres, situated in both Thompson and Putnam, to expand the Lower Pond Preserve to 280 acres. The property was formerly owned by the Orr family. The land trust now protects the entire shoreline of Lower Pond. The new parcel contains an Atlantic white cedar swamp, white pine/oak upland forest, a grassy marshland, and a small stream. The property holds a high concentration of endangered plants and insects associated with Atlantic white cedar swamps. Ospreys nest in the dead trees that line the swamp.



The Wyndham Land Trust now protects the entire shoreline of Lower Pond.

"The late Dick Booth, president of the land trust for many years, was very aware of the ecological significance of Lower Pond," said Andy Rzeznikiewicz, who spearheaded the recent acquisition of the property. "Dick focused much of his energy on protecting the entire pond. He would be so happy to know that we have finally accomplished that goal."

We also acquired an additional 18 acres from the Orr family, which expands the Chafee Preserve in Putnam to 47 acres. The Chafee Preserve was donated to the land trust in 1977 by Joseph Chafee and was the first property protected by the land trust.

We continue to work on the Bull Hill Project, and have added three properties since the Winter newsletter totaling 70 acres. We now protect a total of 955 acres on Bull Hill.

Connecticut Trails Day/The Last Green Valley Spring Outdoors

Jeff Stefanik is leading a walk to the viewpoint on our property at Bull Hill as part of Connecticut Forest and Parks Trails Day and The Last Green Valley Spring Outdoors series of walks. Jeff's walk is scheduled for Saturday, June 1 from 10:00 to 11:30 am and will be held rain or shine. Meet Jeff at the gate on Bull Hill Road after entering from Senextet Road in Woodstock, look for event signs.

Killingly Power Plant

The Wyndham Land Trust continues to oppose NTE's proposed 650-megawatt combined-cycle natural gas-fired electric generating facility in Killingly. NTE bid successfully at the regional ISO New England forward-capacity auction in February, and the Connecticut Siting Council voted to reopen their application.



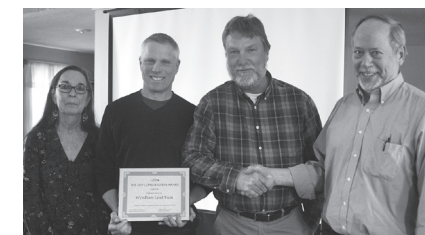
Proud to stand with our neighbors.

The proposed plant is adjacent to our 30-acre Dunn Preserve along the Quinebaug River and would dramatically reduce the conservation value of the land. Once again we have teamed up with our neighbors and friends at Alexander's Lake and the surrounding neighborhood to retain legal counsel to fight the proposal. Joining us in opposition are the Connecticut Fund for the Environment (CFE) and the Connecticut chapter of the Sierra Club.

Part of our mission is to protect the environmental quality of the land we own, and we are proud to stand with our neighbors and supporters in opposing the power plant.

Joshua's Trust Award

At their annual meeting in April Joshua's Trust presented the Wyndham Land Trust with a Land Conservation award for the work we have done protecting over 800 acres of land in the last two years. The meeting was a well-attended event, with a guest speaker from UConn, who gave a presentation on the effect of climate change in New England.



Mike St. Lawrence, Jeff Stefanik and Jo-Ann MacFarlane receive the 2019 Conservation Award from Joshua's Trust Vice President Paul Pribula.



The group searched for salamanders at the Bosworth, Butner, and Butts Preserves in Pomfret in May.

Wee Wanders

What do skunk cabbage, salamanders, mountain laurel, fireflies, bats, stunning views, eagles, and fresh air have in common? They are just some of them topics set for Wyndham Land Trust's Wee Wanders in 2019. The walks are held on preserves that are easy to access, and walk leader Marcy Dawley encourages all ages and abilities to come out. "We can't wait to show you where we can walk together. You can revisit these spots with your family and friends."

Upcoming Wee Wanders:

- Mountain Laurel & Views at Bull Hill Forest, Sunday, June 23, 1-2:30pm, Bull Hill Rd., Woodstock
- Fireflies & Sunsets at Duck Marsh, Saturday, July 13, 6:30-8pm, Holmes Rd., Pomfret Center
- Bats & Twilight at Lyon Preserve, Saturday, August 3, 6:30-8pm, Wrights Crossing Rd., Pomfret Center
- Tamler Trail Walk, Saturday, September 7, 1-2:30pm, Quaddick Rd., Thompson

Mission Statement

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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