

# LANDMARK

The newsletter of the Northern Connecticut Land Trust

Number 29

September 2015



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## **Annual Meeting Sunday, Sept. 20**

The pot luck dinner and Annual Meeting, open to all members and guests, will be held at the Somers Congregational Church on Rt 190 in Somers Sunday evening starting at 5:30, beginning with a social time followed by dinner starting at 6:00. A short business meeting will follow to elect officers and directors for 2016, followed by a presentation by Director Walt Moody discussing bees and his activities with beekeeping and honey production. Please bring a dish to share, plus your own plates and utensils and any special beverage you might want.

This year's nominating committee has put forth the following slate of Officers and Directors for consideration. Officers serve for one year, while Directors serve 3 year terms. Additional nominations will be recognized at the meeting before voting.

President – Patrice Carson, Somers  
1<sup>st</sup> V. President – Wes Smith, Somers  
2<sup>nd</sup> V. President – Rick Dewey, Stafford  
Treasurer – Jim Gage, Ellington  
Secretary – Paul Lagel, Enfield

Directors:  
Rick Dewey, Stafford           Arend Knuttel, East Windsor  
Patrice Carson, Somers       Paul Lagel, Enfield  
Walt Moody, Ellington

## **CT Legislation Helps Preservation**

In June, the General Assembly passed a bill raising the cap on combined state and federal funding for acquisitions under the state Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Program. Funding from these sources can now total 90% of the price of the land, up from 70% in the past. This considerably eases the matching fundraising burdens on land trusts and towns when purchasing high priced land parcels. The bill also contains language providing the DEEP Commissioner with discretion to waive the cap entirely under certain conditions.

Further agreements restored a large portion of the funds to be cut from open space conservation and farmland/dairy support of the Community Investment Act. During a Special Session held the end of June, several bonding packages were passed:

### **UPDATE: Conservation Funding: Bond Authorizations Approved**

During the budget implementer session in July, the General Assembly approved a bond package that included authorizations for the following funding over the next two fiscal years:

- \$16 million for the [Open Space & Watershed Land Acquisition Grant Program](#) for land trusts, towns and water companies.

- \$15 million for the [Recreation and Natural Heritage Trust Program](#), which is essential to DEEP's ability to acquire land for conservation and recreation -- another significant victory in light of the fact that the original biennial bond package had proposed completely eliminating funding for this program.
- \$10 million for the [Recreational Trails Grant Program](#) for construction, maintenance, and improvements to bikeways, pedestrian walkways, greenways, and multi-use trails.

## **\$2.5 Million Grant will Protect Stafford Forests**

The MassConn Sustainable Forest Partnership had been notified by the US Department of Agriculture that their Whip-Poor-Will Woods project has been awarded a Forest Legacy grant of \$2,505,000 for the protection of forest land in Stafford CT. The money will be used to purchase the development rights on up to 775 acres of privately owned land. In exchange for payment, the land owners will grant a conservation easement on their land that will prevent all future development. The NCLT is an active partner in the MassConn organization and strongly encouraged MassConn to initiate this project. This will have a significant impact on preservation of natural resources in one of our towns. An additional benefit is that the Culver Pond property that the NCLT is in the process of acquiring connects to the MassConn Whip-Poor-Will Woods properties through the Shenipsit State Forest.

A second phase of this project that may provide additional funding is currently under review by the US Department of Agriculture.

## **New Land Trust Reference Opens**

In partnership with the talented folks at the [UCONN Center for Land Use Education and Research \(CLEAR\)](#), the Ct. Land Conservation Coalition (CLCC) is delighted to now offer the [CT Land Trust Listserv](#) -- the state's first conservation listserv for land trusts.

The [CT Land Trust Listserv](#) is intended for use by members of Connecticut's land trust community for discussion of land conservation, land stewardship and land trust organizational questions. In the few

weeks that it has been up and running, we've already had email conversations on topics including tax exempt status of land trust properties, land management equipment, and opportunities to partner with students interested in conservation.

Give it a try! It's simple to sign up and participate. Visit the Listserv page [HERE](#) for more details on how to subscribe along with guidelines and general information. Or contact us anytime for more information at [abpaterson@ctconservation.org](mailto:abpaterson@ctconservation.org).

## **Board of Directors Continues Improvements**

Based on findings and recommendations of the self-assessment completed with the guidance of the Conservation Consulting Group last year, the Board is pursuing several initiatives to improve the efficiency and consistency of its operations. Besides formally reviewing the Land Trust Alliance Standards and Practices and formulating a new 5-Year Plan, the Trust is working with a contractor to scan and organize all its records. The contract was awarded NCLT by the Ct Land Conservation Council as part of their 2015 CLCC Organization and Record Keeping Project, in an effort to help land trusts coordinate organized recordkeeping in an effective manner and reduce the chance of lost records for the future of the organizations. The plan is to get all our various records in one place and stored in a protected manner, and to continue this method of recordkeeping in the future once the huge task of getting the last 28 years of paper records together is completed! Many thanks to the CLCC in selecting NCLT for participation in this activity.

Other activities that resulted from this review include development of a Director's Handbook to document the responsibilities of Directors and provide them with important Trust policies (completed), and consideration of developing and adopting a Board and Leadership succession plan (underway).



**LANDMARK: *Newsletter of the***  
**Northern Connecticut Land Trust**  
**PO Box 324**  
**Somers, CT. 06071**

**Board of Directors**

**President**

Patrice Carson, Somers

**1st V. President**

Wes Smith, Somers

**2nd V. President**

Rick Dewey, Stafford

**Treasurer**

Jim Gage, Ellington

**Recording Secretary**

Doug Metivier, Enfield

**Directors**

Gail Faherty, Vernon

Walter Moody, Ellington

Albert Grant, Melrose

Arend Jan-Knuttel, East Windsor

George Grant, Somers

Karl Hasel, Manchester

Don Smith, Somers

Paul Lagel, Enfield

Richard Bailey, Somers

Martin Smith, Somers

Ingrid Aarrestad, Stafford

If you have a friend interested in joining the Trust and supporting the work of protecting our natural resources, please pass this newsletter on to them. Contributions are tax deductible.

<b>MEMBERSHIPS:</b>	Individual \$25	Family \$35
		Sustaining \$50
		Patron \$100
		Benefactor \$1000

**NAME** \_\_\_\_\_

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