

LANDMARK

The newsletter of the Northern Connecticut Land Trust

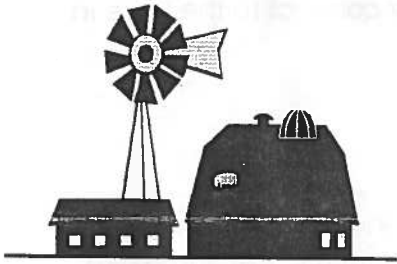
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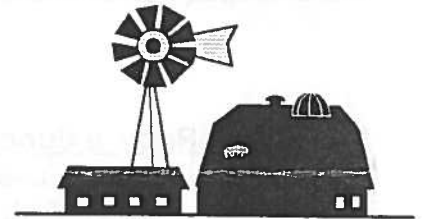
DON'T FORGET THE ANNUAL MEETING SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 26

The evening begins at 5:00 with a pot luck dinner at the Wesleyan Church hall on Route 140, just east of Route 83 in Ellington. There will be a program featuring an illustrated talk by Dr. Jerry Stage on unusual bees, wildflowers, and pollination in "Wild Sex in Meadow and Woodland", followed by a short business meeting to elect new officers. Everyone is invited, so bring your favorite dish and please join us. Call Fay at 860-872-4129 for more information.



McCann Family Farm Dedication Day

Sunday, October 10, 1999



Guided Tree Identification Walk
Starting at 9:00 AM
Meet behind Somers Town Hall

Festivities Begin at 12 Noon at the Farm
Rt 190 about 1 mile east of Rt 83 intersection in Somers

Hay & pony rides, children games
Food and art sale
Nature walks

Dedication at 1:00 PM

Auction starts at 2:00 PM

Refreshments available



McCann Family Farm Highlights

The 84 acre farm, located on Route 190 about 1 mile east of the Route 83 intersection in Somers, has been receiving much of our recent attention. New bridges have been constructed across the stream, bluebird houses were installed around the fields, and a series of wildflower hikes have been held this spring and summer. A new access and parking lot are also being constructed on the northeast corner of the property to simplify access, with a sign along Route 190 to identify the entrance. The final hike for 1999 will be held Sunday, October 10 at 9:00. If you would like to join us (we had 79 walkers for the June walk!), meet behind the Somers Town Hall on Route 190. We will also be holding a formal dedication ceremony that day at 1:00, to be followed by hay rides, nature walks, food sales, an auction, and all sorts of fun, so please join us to introduce this beautiful asset to the public.

The Farm is primarily hilly with a variety of scenery. About 1/3 of the land is in hay or fallow fields, while the rest is forested. It is crossed by 2 streams: Gulf Brook is permanently flowing, while Shady Brook dries in late summer. There are also several vernal pools located around the farm. All of this supports a variety of flora and fauna. Nearly 150 species of wildflowers and 90 species of trees and shrubs have been identified thus far. Deer, turkey, ruffed grouse, and many other birds can be seen at different times of the day. A limited trail system is under construction (another area needing volunteers!), hopefully to be ready for the dedication, with plans to eventually connect to the trails in the Shenipsit Forest and Soapstone Mountain.

Soapstone Race a Success / Land Trust Wins!

The books are finally closed on the 1999 running of the Soapstone Mountain Trail Race and the Soapstone Sampler. With a record number of entrants (260 and 90 respectively) it is not surprising the host Shenipsit Striders enjoyed a record "profit". Though a substantial part of it will stay in the club's treasury to cover expenses and for next year's races, the Steering Committee voted to donate \$1000 to the Northern Connecticut Land Trust. This is double last year's contribution and brings the cumulative amount donated through the years to \$2000 from the Striders. The Trust thanks the Striders for their continued support, and we wish you success with the race in coming years!

Membership Reminder

Membership renewals were mailed late August to all currently active and former members, as well as other potential supporters, for continued support of the organization. Membership contributions currently make up a large part of our annual operating income, so we would appreciate your help in meeting our new goals. Any memberships received will be applied for the rest of 1999 and all of 2000, at which time we will be switching over to a calendar-based fiscal year for 2001. All proceeds go directly into furthering the Trust's objectives and protecting open space, as we are an entirely volunteer organization with no paid staff. And of course, all contributions are tax deductible. Anyone is welcome to attend the annual meetings, held the end of September each year, or the Board of Director's meetings held the 4th Thursday of each month. All members will automatically receive the Landmark, to be published each February and August. Watch the local papers for special events, programs, and Trust-sponsored hikes in the various towns as well, and come out to enjoy the extensive natural resources available to us all in Northern Connecticut.

New 5 Year Plan to Carry the Trust into the 21st Century

A plan to organize the work of the Trust and move forward with renewed energy has been instituted by the Board of Directors. The plan aims at increasing the membership to 500 members and reaching yearly income of \$50,000 by the year 2004, with more effort at targeting properties to be acquired and protected in member towns of East Windsor, Ellington, Enfield, Somers, Stafford, and Vernon. To reach these goals, committees have been formed to coordinate the efforts in the areas of Membership and Programming, Finances, Land Acquisition, Land Stewardship, Public Relations, and Fundraising. The committees are currently chaired and minimally staffed by Directors and a few at-large members, and are in need of staff to meet their goals. If you are at all interested in working on the various projects which these committees are undertaking (instead of just attending meetings!), please contact the Volunteer Coordinator, Ginny Patsun, at (860)-749-7383 or gpatsun@yahoo.com.

The Trust already has several new exciting land acquisition opportunities and fundraising projects underway that need staffing, and we need point contacts in each of our member towns to help distribute our flyers and maintain contact with town and public organizations so that our name and objectives are kept visible with anyone who may wish to work with us in protecting our natural resources. **We also have a request for an old lawnmower (preferably with an operator, not necessarily old) to help keep the parking area and trails at the McCann Family farm open.** Contact Jerry Stage at 870-4255 (home), 645-3595 (office) or JerryStage@aol.com. Thanks for your help!

Have You Heard About Our Latest Land Acquisition?

Thanks to an anonymous gift of appreciated stock for the specific purpose of open space acquisition, the Trust has purchased 13 acres of undeveloped land along Echo Ridge in Vernon to protect as open space, near the Valley Falls park and contiguous to the town soccer field at the top of Boulder Ridge Drive. The donors took it upon themselves to contact landowners of potential parcels in the area and set up the purchase before donating the stock, which also covered the attorney and appraisal fees associated with the purchase. This is an ideal example of another way for individuals to both help protect our natural areas as well as achieve personal financial goals at the same time! Thanks for your generous and thoughtful contribution, wherever you are! The addition of this property brings the total acreage owned by the Trust to just over 190 acres in 13 locations.

Congratulations to Lisa Terrill-Hageman for Spearheading the Acquisition of Lake Street Property in Vernon!

Hard work and determination paid off recently in the acquisition of 5.2 acres of undeveloped space along Lake Street abutting Risley Reservoir near the Vernon-Bolton-Manchester line. Lisa's efforts were key in raising \$26,000 in private donations for the Friends of Risley Reservoir and Park, in obtaining \$36,000 from the first round of state open space grants in early 1999 under the 1998 Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Grant Program, and in convincing the towns of Vernon and Manchester to donate \$9,000 each to complete the \$80,000 purchase. Acquisition of this land, now held by the Manchester Land Trust, completes the protection of over 125 acres surrounding Risley Reservoir and its watershed, and allows complete access to its shoreline and surrounding walking trails for the public.



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