

LANDMARK

The newsletter of the Northern Connecticut Land Trust



Number 14

February 2005

Scouts Enjoy Land Trust Property Hikes

The McCann Family Farm in Somers has become a popular location for nature education of our youth. On October 1, Ellington Girl Scout Troop 188 (picture) enjoyed the crisp autumn weather while hiking the trails. Highlights of their day included identifying a garter snake and an American chestnut tree. Brownies in the troop earned an Eco-Explorer try-it and Junior Girl Scouts were working toward a Hiker patch. On November 2, about 25 members plus adult supervisors of Cub Scout Pack 83 of Somers hiked a three mile loop while enjoying a nature scavenger hunt. Although they had to find such things as moss, ferns, and dead trees, they were taught not to touch and to leave nature in its place. The Cub Master spoke on hike etiquette and the use of a compass. The Pack also collected \$30 to donate to the Land Trust, for which we wish to thank them for their help in preserving such beautiful places as the Farm for everyone to enjoy.



SCANTIC RIVER WATERSHED ASSOCIATION .

Mark your calendar for Saturday March 26 for the 14th annual **Scantic River Spring Splash** featuring canoe and kayak races in 28 different classes. This is the largest down river race in Connecticut. Registration is between 8:30 and 11 AM at the headquarters located at the Powder Mill Barn, Maple St., Enfield. Check out the website **Scantic Spring Splash.com** for details or contact Mike Dynia @ 860-745-9986 or mdynia@yahoo.com. The SRWA is proud to be a sponsor of this race and will be offering food and refreshment throughout the event.

The major upcoming project for the association will be the publishing of the **Scantic River Guide**. The guide will contain interesting historical facts about the river, along with launching and take-out areas, description of the river, wildlife species and their habitat, fishing comments and other points of interest. The association is looking for volunteers to participate in this venture. Please direct inquiries to Judith Snyder – 860-749-5411 or nctia@yahoo.com.

If you have an interest in canoeing, kayaking, bird watching, fishing or just helping to preserve this interesting river, we would welcome your membership – “**WE SPEAK FOR THE RIVER**”. For more information please contact Mike Dynia @ 860-745-9986 or mdynia@yahoo.com or Judith Snyder – 860-749-5411 @ nctia@yahoo.com



Land Trust Hikes Popular Activities Year Around

The Land Trust hosted a New Year's Day hike for approximately sixty people at the McCann Family Farm in Somers. This was the largest crowd to gather for a Land Trust hike in recent memory, perhaps aided by a *Journal Inquirer* article profiling the hike about ten days before. Hike leaders Ginny Patsun lead one large group of hikers along the wooded three-mile South Boundary Trail, Jerry Stage guided a small group along the two-mile Shady Brook Trail, and Judy Snyder lead another group of twenty hikers, including many children with their parents, to visit the Whit Davis Bird Sanctuary in the northeastern portion of the property. Photos from the hike taken by John Sheirer appeared later in January in *The Rockville Reminder*. *Check out this year's hike*

schedule (attached) for more fun!

The public is welcome to venture through the area at their leisure.

Work Parties Continue to Improve Trust Properties

The volunteer list continues to keep busy attending to the various Trust properties and the extensive trail systems that have been constructed. Shown at right is one of the bog bridges being fashioned on the Scantic Riparian Area in Somers (Lipton/Wright properties). Jerry Stage, John Wraight, Hector Pope, and Bruce Marvonek are putting the finishing touches on this section. The team also tackled removal of a large tree that fell across the river back in November, trying to keep the riverway open for the enjoyment of fishermen and canoe/kayak exploration. The 1 mile loop trail on the SRA between Durkee Road and Four Bridges Road in Somers offers an exciting hike combining wooded, stream-side, and open meadow areas with opportunities to observe wildlife, birds, and flora of many varieties.



Trust Adds to Bald Mountain Area Open Space

The Land Trust recently took advantage of an opportunity to add a significant parcel to its holdings in the Bald Mountain area of Somers. Owner and Trust Member Arthur Galbraith sold the beautiful 22 acre parcel with the intention of adding this key piece to the open space inventory of Somers. With the generous support of the Bafflin Foundation, the final papers were signed and the land was transferred to our management late last year. A management plan will be developed and boundaries will be marked in the near future. NCLT wishes to express its sincere appreciation to Mr. Galbraith for his cooperation and his vision for the future of our area.

Do You Know Where the Highest Concentration of Biomass in the World Is Located?

If you guessed right here in the United States, you would be correct! Quinnault, Washington, in the northwest corner of the state, is the rainiest place in the Lower 48. It annually receives over 140 inches of rainfall on what may be the most efficient moisture blotter on Earth. Researchers have found that the temperate rain forest has more living biomass than any tropical rain forest, even those that receive more than twice the rainfall. Located near the upper end of a V-shaped westward-facing valley in the lower end of the Olympic National Park, Quinnault captures warm moist air coming off the Pacific, which dumps its precipitation as it climbs the steep walls of the Olympic Mountains. Even when its not raining,

fog and mist endlessly condense on the billions of needles in the conifers, falling as precipitation, which the locals call “tree pee”. The National Park Service owns most of the land and is working to reduce the year-around population by buying houses and demolishing them to preserve the sensitive area.

2005 Land Trust Annual Meeting Saturday, September 17

Be sure to mark your calendar for Saturday, September 17, 2005 for the Potluck and Annual Meeting of the Northern Connecticut Land Trust. A slide presentation entitled, “*Gifts of the Ice Age: Vernal Pools, Bogs and Swamps*” will show why these features are so interesting and valuable as we learn about the unique communities of plants and animals found in each! This highly entertaining program will be presented by Walt Landgraf, Naturalist at the Stone Museum, People’s State Forest, Pleasant Valley, CT.

This year the meeting will be in East Windsor at the First Congregational Church (124 Scantic Road, i.e., Rte. 191). The evening begins with a social at 5:30 PM followed by dinner at 6:00. The featured speaker is right after a brief business meeting at 7:00. Bring a dish to share, and your own plate and utensils. Beverages will be supplied unless you wish to bring your own.

Walt Landgraf is planning to visit the Wapping Bog and perhaps the Scantic Riparian Area earlier in the afternoon.

Anyone wishing to join him should contact Jerry Stage for details (860 870-4255 or JerryStage@aol.com).

2005 Hike Schedule

<u>Date</u>	<u>Day</u>	<u>Leader (s)*</u>	<u>Sponsor*</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Location (Meeting Place)</u>	<u>Title / Description</u>
Mar	20 Sun	Sheirer	NCLT	12 noon	Somers (Town Hall parking)	Skyline Scenic Area
	26 Sat	Snyder	SRWA	??	??	Spring Splash on the Scantic
Apr	16 Sat	Stage	NCLT & AMC	6:30 PM	Somers (Town Hall parking)	SSA Sunset/Moonlight hike
	24 Sun	Patsun	NCLT	9:00 AM	Somers (Soapstone Mountain parking)	Women's hike Soap Stone Mountain
May	1 Sun	Stage	NCLT	7:30 AM	Somers (Town Hall parking)	McCann or SRA bird walk
	1 Sun	A Grant	NCLT	1:00 PM	Somers (Soapstone Mountain parking)	Shenipsit Forest hike in Somers & Ellington
	8 Sun	Hasel	NCLT & SRWA	9:00 AM	Vernon, boat launch off Hatch Hill Rd	Paddling excursion / bird watching on Upper Bolton Lake
	22 Sun	Stage	NCLT & AMC	9:00 AM	Somers (Town Hall parking)	McCann interpretive hike (spring wildflowers)
Jun	5 Sun	Dresner	NCLT	9:00 AM	Vernon (Valley Falls parking)	Valley Falls area hike
	12 Sun	Patsun	NCLT	noon	McCann Family Farm (Town Hall Parking)	Family exploration walk (ideal for young children)
	26 Sun	Stage	NCLT & AMC	9:00 AM	Somers (Town Hall parking)	McCann interpretive hike (early summer wildflowers)
Jul	10 Sun	Stage	NCLT & AMC	9:00 AM	Somers (Town Hall parking)	McCann interpretive hike (ferns / club mosses)
	24 Sun	Patsun or Grant	NCLT	t b a	Somers (Town Hall parking)	Explore new NCLT properties
Aug	14 Sun	Stage	NCLT & AMC	9:00 AM	Somers (Town Hall parking)	McCann interpretive hike (summer wildflowers)
	28 Sun	Sheirer	NCLT	t b a	Somers (Town Hall parking)	Hike through the SSA
Sept	18 Sun	Stage	NCLT & AMC	9:00 AM	Somers (Town Hall parking)	McCann interpretive hike (late summer wildflowers)
	25 Sun	Patsun	NCLT/SRWA	1:00 PM	Somers (Town Hall parking)	Explore Scantic Riparian Area
Oct	2 Sun	Patsun	t b a	t b a	t b a	Birding on Plum Island, Mass
	16 Sun	Stage	NCLT & AMC	9:00 AM	Somers (Town Hall parking)	Fall Foliage hike on McCann
	30 Sun	Grant	NCLT	11:00 AM	East Windsor (128 Melrose Rd.)	Fall Foliage along the Scantic River
Nov	12 Sat	Patsun	NCLT & AMC	4:30 PM	Somers (Town Hall parking)	SSA Sunset / Moonlight hike
Jan	1 Sun	Snyder	STC & NCLT	11:00 AM	Somers (Town Hall parking)	New Years hike, to be decided

*** * Leaders, Sponsors & abbreviations**

Ed Dresner, Albie Grant, Ginny Patsun, John Sheirer, Wes Smith, Judy Snyder, Jerry Stage, Karl Hasel

*** Sponsors**

AMC = Appalachian Mountain Club

NCLT = Northern Connecticut Land Trust

SRWA = Scantic River Watershed Association

STC = Somers Open Space & Trail Committee

*** Properties**

SSA = Skyline Scenic Area; McC = McCann Family Farm; SRA = Scantic Riparian Area



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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.

MEMBERSHIPS:

Student - \$2.00 Individual - \$20.00 Family - \$30.00
Business - \$100.00 Life - \$250.00 Patron - \$500.00
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Mail to: Northern Connecticut Land Trust
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If you would like to volunteer to work projects such as fund-raising, trail maintenance, newsletter, or others, please check **YES** ___ **NO** ___