

# LANDMARK

The newsletter of the Northern Connecticut Land Trust

Number 43

September 2023



*“Between every two pines there is a doorway to a new world.” --- John Muir*

## **Annual Meeting Sunday, September 24**

The annual meeting/potluck dinner of the Trust will be held at the Somers Congregational Church from 5:30 to about 8:00. Following a social time and potluck supper beginning at 5:30 and 6:00, there will be a short business meeting to elect officers and Board members, followed by a featured speaker. Our guest this year will be Ginny Apple of Barkhamsted, a Volunteer Representative of the Ct Dept of Energy and Environmental Protection. She will give a presentation on Bobcats and Fishers. Bring a dish to share and your own dishware and utensils. Beverages will be provided unless you wish to bring your own adult or other selections.

### **Nominated Officers, 1 year term:**

Patrice Carson, Pres.  
Jim Gage, 2<sup>nd</sup> V. Pres  
Paul Lagel, Secretary

Karl Hasel, 1<sup>st</sup> V. Pres  
Bryan Jambard, Treasurer

### **Nominated for Board of Directors, 3 year terms:**

Jim Gage, Ellington  
Don Smith, Somers  
Richard Bailey, Somers

Karl Hasel, Vernon  
George Grant, Somers

### **NCLT Bylaw review: No revisions proposed.**



*“If you take care of the land, it will take care of you.” --- Bob Dixon*

## **Wildlands Initiatives**

***Wildlands in New England: Past, Present, and Future*** is the first study in the U.S. addressing all permanently preserved lands in one region that are being managed for long term, forever wild forests. The report of the study, released in May this year ([wildlandsandwoodlands.org](http://wildlandsandwoodlands.org)), is a call to action for policymakers, funders, conservation organizations, landowners, and citizens to advance and accelerate wildlands conservation regionally and nationally. Also referred to as forever-wild, or natural area stewardship, these forests are managed with little to no human intervention. These forests then represent natural ecosystems that evolve to contribute to local and global cooling, carbon accumulation, helping challenged wildlife, and protecting water resources.

Currently about 2 million acres of forest cover Connecticut. The benefits we continue to realize from these lands however is dependent on how they are used, managed, and protected. The report shows scientifically that forests are the lowest-cost method for managing carbon emissions while leading to greater resilience to climate-related disturbances. Forever-wild forests also provide people of all ages and abilities places for mental and physical re-energizing and enjoyment.

As a subset of these initiatives, the Old Growth Forest Network ([www.oldgrowthforest.net](http://www.oldgrowthforest.net)) officially welcomed the NCLT Webster Preserve and Echo Ridge properties into their national network April 29. The Trust committed to a plan of no commercial logging in these woods in order to let them mature into old growth forest conditions for future generations to be able to use and to appreciate the natural settings they provide.

Northeast Regional OGFN manager Sarah RobbGrieco joined a group of 11 folks from around the area and state for an informal ceremony at the Webster Preserve trailhead on Valley Falls Road in Vernon (pictured) with Trust 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President Karl Hasel accepting the plaques noting the property inclusion in the network. Thanks also to Mike Blouin for the new property sign installed for this event.

The network has only 3 requirements; it is accessible, it has open-to-the-public trails, and it is protected forever from logging (other than for public safety). Some of the benefits of an OGFN include:

1. spreading awareness of the forest and the ecological aesthetic values of old-growth forests (listed in national website registry for all to enjoy)
- 2) acclaim for NCLT's preservation and stewardship efforts
3. joining a growing alliance of old-growth preservation and
4. enhanced support for forest protection and organization funding.



*"To do more for the world than the world does for you – that is success." --- Henry Ford*

## **August is National Make-a-Will Month**

A recent survey of more than 2,000 people by the online legal service Rocket Lawyer found that 64 percent don't have wills. The biggest reason cited by folks: They just never got around to it. Some said they didn't want to think about death.

You might believe that only wealthier families need a will. You'd be wrong. "Having a will is important for every family, regardless of how much money they have," says Elisa Shevlin Rizzo, managing director and trust counsel at Fiduciary Trust Company International in New York, an investment management firm. "It provides some peace and certainty about how things will be handled after an individual has died." If you die without a will, the state could get involved in the costly job of trying to determine who in your family gets what. It may not be what the individual intended and it becomes much more complicated.

If you are considering making or updating your will and/or estate plan and want to leave funds or property to the Trust, we would be honored to meet and talk with you or your representative to discuss how your intentions and benefits to the Trust match up. There are many ways to structure such legacy plans, and there is no time like the present to address them. If you do put end-of-life intentions in place, please let us know so we can acknowledge your gifts and learn more about your story in order to inspire others to consider the same.

## **How Ct Land Trusts are Helping Protect our Wild Spaces**

Excerpts from Connecticut Magazine

When the Ct General Assembly set a goal of conserving 21% of Ct land base by 2023, the date seemed a long way off. But here we are, and at 673,210 acres (~18%) we are far short of the goal. Although the state's 130 land trusts hold 210,000 acres, almost 85% of the non-state-owned land conserved, it will take almost another 65 years to reach the goal at the current rate of protection acquisitions. According to Amy Paterson, executive director of the Connecticut Land Conservation Council, statistics show "our state ranks as the lowest in New England and one of the lowest nationally in terms of the combined federal and state funding per capita for land conservation."

In 1891 in New England, America's land trust movement was born, when the Trustees of the Reservations was founded in Massachusetts. The Connecticut Forest and Park Association got started in 1895 and is going strong with 2,250 acres preserved. The state's first town land trust, the Newtown Forest Association, was established in 1924. It is still active with nearly 300 members and some 1,450 acres under conservation. Like most of its peers, Newtown was all volunteer from the start, but in 2021 it hired an executive director, its first paid staffer after 99 years. Connecticut would not be the same without its 130 individual and regional land trusts, devoted as they are to conservation. It wouldn't be as wild and scenic. There would be 500 fewer miles of hiking trails, fewer nature programs, fewer urban farms and community gardens, and fewer popular outdoor events.

While some oppose the acquisition of conservation land because it takes parcels off the town tax rolls, studies have shown that, among other benefits, property values tend to rise in areas where parks or protected preserves are established. In addition, residential development often costs more in town services than it generates in taxes. This debate aside, preserving land for various purposes — whether for recreation, to promote clean air and water, to mitigate climate change, or to protect wildlife — has long been endorsed by the laws of the land, at all levels.

*Nature is not a place to visit. It is home.*



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

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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.

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

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