

LANDMARK

The newsletter of the Northern Connecticut Land Trust

Number 45

September 2024



“Nature knows no indecencies; man invents them” -- Mark Twain

Annual Meeting Sunday, October 6

The annual meeting/potluck dinner of the Trust will be held at the Somers Congregational Church from 5:30 to about 8:00. All members are invited. 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 speaker this year will be Ginny Patsun, Soil Conservation Specialist from the North Central Conservation District and a licensed arborist. Ginny will speak on agroforestry the practice that integrates trees with livestock and crops to mimic a natural ecosystem offering many benefits for the environment, for food and fodder for livestock and wildlife, and increases marketable commodities.

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.

Karl Hasel, 1st V. Pres

Jim Gage, 2nd V. Pres

Bryan Jambard, Treasurer

Nominated for Board of Directors, 3 year terms:

Rick Dewey, Stafford

Gene Julian, Stafford

Walt Moody, Ellington

Patrice Carson, Somers

Bryan Jambard, Enfield

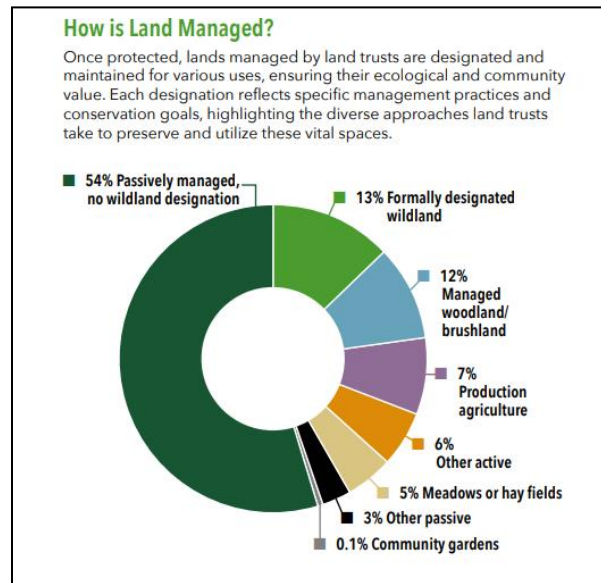
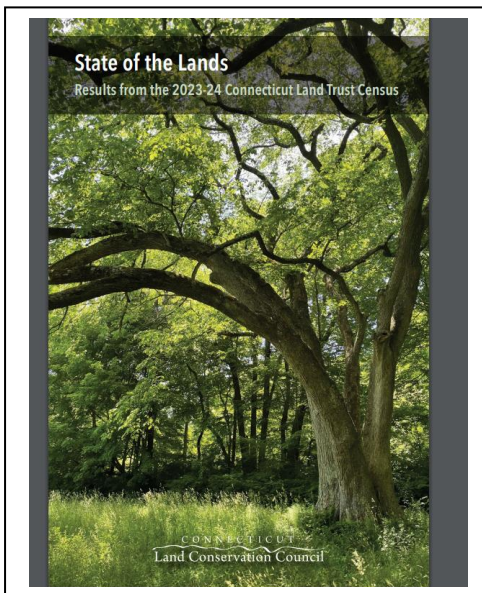
NCLT Bylaw review: No revisions proposed.



“Land really is the best art” --- Andy Warhol

2024 Connecticut Land Trust Census

This year the Connecticut Land Conservation Council (CLCC), the statewide organization providing support and service to all Connecticut land trusts, conducted a survey of the 117 state land trusts to (1) document the pace and scale of land conservation by land trusts, (2) understand current and future priorities, and (3) identify ways to better support land trusts in achieving their goals. After 5 months response time to the request to participate in this census, 90% of the trusts replied, resulting in the findings in the report. The full report can be found at the CLCC website, ctconservation.org.



Connecticut land trusts currently protect 190,550 acres, with another 128,000 acres identified as future conservation priorities and projects. This would put the total at approximately 90% of the goals set by the state in 1998. The chart above shows how the different land trusts designate and manage their properties, demonstrating the diverse approaches land trusts take to meeting their community goals.

In general, land trusts were optimistic about their future. Many considered partnering with other organizations to reach their goals, but very few mergers were being considered as priorities. Positive outlooks were noted for recruiting volunteers, to grow community support, and to effectively steward their conserved lands. Not surprisingly, the biggest concern about the future was finding sufficient sources of funding for acquisition, stewardship, outreach, and continued operation.

“Choose only one master – nature.” --- Rembrandt

Revised Membership and Annual Report Schedule

You may have noticed that no membership reminders have been sent out this year. The Board of Directors has decided to change the membership year from a calendar year, which it has always been, to correspond with our fiscal year running from begin July to end June. You will soon see membership renewal letters reminding of this change and urging you to continue partnering with the Trust to preserve and protect our natural resources in the north-central Connecticut region. Membership donations for the rest of 2024 and early 2025 will then carry thru to the end of June 2025.

The Trust Annual Meeting will continue to be held around the end of September each year with all invited to the potluck supper and guest speaker presentation. The Annual Report for the previous fiscal year will be available then to pick up, or you will receive a copy in the mail.

Old-Growth Forest Network Reaches Milestone

In April 2023, the Trust's Webster Preserve and Echo Ridge properties in Vernon were inducted into the national Old-Growth Forest Network, marking the 4th such forest in Connecticut and 190th nationally to be preserved. The OGFN mission is "to create a network of forests across the U.S, with one in each county where forests can grow, open for visitors and never logged, and a network of people inspired to protect them". Of the 3140 counties across the nation, 2400 can grow forests as a native landscape type. The recent induction of the Gila Wilderness in the Gila National Forest in New Mexico into OGFN, the first in the state, marked the 250th addition to the network, meaning 10% of the goal has been reached.

Congratulations to the organization for the achieving this step in their efforts to preserve our national heritage.

Local Farm Protects More Connecticut Farmland

The Connecticut Department of Agriculture (CT DoAg), in cooperation with Connecticut Farmland Trust (CFT), USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA-NRCS), and Town of Ellington have completed the 2nd phase of the preservation of the Oakridge dairy in Ellington. With this 101-acre parcel added to 52 acres previously protected, a large portion of locally important prime soils supporting the dairy will forever remain productive farmland. Oakridge currently partners with the NCLT leasing farmland for corn and hay production.

Oakridge Dairy, owned by the Bahler family, has a 130-year farming history in Ellington and as the state's largest dairy farm with over 2500 cows, has continued to innovate while keeping a strong focus on community relations. Oakridge Dairy CEO Seth Bahler said, "Ensuring that our land is permanently protected is important to the future of agriculture, not only for our business, but also our community which values open space. By taking this step it allows us to reinvest the easement dollars into our dairy operation for future projects and support farming operations for generations to come." The current dairy operation provides milk for Guida's Dairy in New Britain, CT, and a home delivery subscription service, The Modern Milkman.

The dairy has an amazing operation to visit on Jobs Hill Road. Stop in to see the milking operation with its giant rotating milking parlor, and sample their wonderful chocolate milk.



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Northern Connecticut Land Trust
PO Box 324
Somers, CT. 06071

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Patrice Carson, Somers

1st V. President

Karl Hasel, Vernon

2nd V. President

James Gage, Ellington

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 Don Smith, Somers
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 Elise Bennett, Ellington

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:	Individual	\$25	Family	\$35
			Sustaining	\$50
			Patron	\$100
			Benefactor	\$1000

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE: _____ **E_MAIL:** _____

Would you like to receive the newsletter by e-mail? _____

Mail to: Northern Connecticut Land Trust
PO Box 324
Somers, CT. 06071

If you would like to volunteer to work projects such as fund-raising, trail maintenance, newsletter, or others, please check **YES** ___ **NO** ___