



THE MEADOW VIEW

**The Great Meadows Conservation Trust, Inc. in Glastonbury, Rocky Hill and
Wethersfield, Connecticut**

Vol. V No.3

November 1993

**The Great Meadows Conservation Trust
Members and Friends
are invited to**

GLASTONBURY: ITS BEAUTY AND BOUNTY A Thanksgiving Program

November 18 at 7.30 P.M. at the Gideon Welles School Auditorium

**The Great Meadows Conservation Trust joins Glastonbury's
environmental organizations in celebrating the Town's 300th
Anniversary.**

The program will be presented by J. Bard McNulty and will feature color slides taken by some of Glastonbury's well known photographers including Ruth Bergengren, Clyde Brooks, Bill Reed, Duffy Schade, Jolly Steffens and others.

In keeping with the Thanksgiving season, the slides have been selected to display the natural beauty and abundance that drew settlers to Glastonbury three centuries ago and that remain today: fertile meadows, rushing streams, fruitful uplands, wooded hillsides, carpets of wildflower, birds and animals and much else for which the today's townspeople are thankful. There will be refreshments.

The program is sponsored by the Connecticut Audubon Holland Brook Nature Center, the Friends of Great Pond, the Land Heritage Coalition of Glastonbury, the Glastonbury Sub-Chapter of The Nature Conservancy, the Kongsicut Land Trust and the Great Meadows Conservation Trust.

The Gideon Welles School is on the north side of Nelpsic Road about 1.4 miles east of Route 2 exit 9. This exit is south of the Putnam Bridge connection.

HUNTING SEASON IS HERE

Exercise caution when in the meadows during the hunting season.

The Department of Environmental Protection has issued a pamphlet noting that the peak hunting season for small game and deer occurs from the third Saturday in October through December. Morning hours before 9 A.M. are the most active times, especially on Saturdays and holidays.

No hunting is allowed on Sunday. DEP recommends avoiding the wearing of gray, brown, tan or white when hiking in hunted areas. Be visible!

More details can be obtained from your town hall. Report any wildlife violations to the T.I.P. Hotline 1-800-842-HELP

BRISK WINTER WALKS

The January and February walks organized by the Land Management Committee attract those hardy souls who enjoy the crunch of frozen ground underfoot and the sparkling air of the Meadows in Winter. The dates have not yet been set, but notification will be in the mail before the New Year.

A TRUST PARCEL GOES BACK TO NATURE

The Brooks Parcel in the northwest meadows of Rocky Hill has been farmed for a long time even before the Trust acquired it, but our renter has given up the lease. The Land Management Committee examined the site and recommended that the parcel be allowed to "go back to nature". The reasons given include the overgrown condition of the land and the small size and peculiar shape of the field. The area involved is 0.7 acre, and eventually it will be forested like the rest of the 1.5 acre parcel which is heavily wooded. The Trust's Operations Committee has accepted this recommendation. Records will be kept of the changes in vegetation as the years go by.

PUTNAM BRIDGE BOAT LAUNCH NEWS

Background -The Trust has opposed the construction of a boat launch at the Putnam Bridge because it is felt that the cut in the river bank for the ramp could induce flood waters to change the course of the river with great damage to the Wethersfield Meadows. The Trust and Town have proposed that a dike be built across an old drainage ditch south of the bridge to ensure the

continuity of the river bank. Details have been reported in previous issues of the Meadow View

The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), Water Resources Unit, has denied the Town of Wethersfield's application for a Stream Encroachment and Structures Permit to construct an earth dike across the drainage ditch located downstream from the Putnam Bridge and next to the Trust's Standish Parcel. This action came in July after costing the Town Engineering Department a considerable amount of time and money for the DEP permit and fees. In his letter to the town, Tom Morrissey, Director, Inland Water Resources, indicated that the town could request a public hearing on the denial, but that his staff would recommend that the application be denied.

On August 6 the Town Attorney filed a request for a public hearing. As of this writing, DEP has not responded.

On August 16 the Wethersfield Town Council unanimously passed a resolution introduced by Councilman Larry Ebner calling the area legislators to take action on the dike and the proposed boat launch. The Great Meadows Conservation Trust followed up with a letter to Senators DiBella, Balducci, Meotti; and Representatives Gilligan, Tulisano, Bowden and Munns supporting the Town's resolution and asking for their help. To date there has been no response from the legislators.

Early in September the Wethersfield Town Council unanimously approved another resolution to establish an Advisory Committee to study and recommend uses of the state owned site in the vicinity of the Putnam Bridge. Copies of the resolution were sent to Governor Lowell Weicker, Jr. and D.E.P. Commissioner Timothy Keeney. Governor Weicker responded with an appreciation for the information and wrote that he looked forward to future cooperation with the Town of Wethersfield in determining the most appropriate use of the Connecticut River bank. In his response, Commissioner Keeney did not see the need for an advisory committee, and stated that the site in question is limited to the jurisdiction of the Connecticut Department of Transportation (DOT) for highway functions, and DEP for the development and operation of a boat launch facility. Mr. Keeney also outlined his department's schedule for the boat launch facility as follows:-

1. Jan. 1, 1994 FONSI (finding of no significant impact) begins public review period.
2. 90 day public hearing/comment period
3. June 1, 1994 begin wetland permit process.

4. Spring 1995, begin project construction by DOT

Notwithstanding a Stipulation of Fact Agreement signed in November 1991 by representatives of DOT, DEP, Town of Wethersfield, and the Great Meadows Conservation Trust which granted approval for the dike; DEP has continued to present obstacles to its construction.

At the March 1992 Informational meeting at the Wethersfield Town Hall, DEP Assistant Commissioner Arthur Rocque assured the public that proper procedures would be followed in advancing the boat launch project. He indicated that a reassessment could result in a modification or cancellation of the project. However, at this time, evidence suggests that DEP is firmly resolved to build one of the State's largest boat launches in the Wethersfield Meadows.

THE CONTE ACT

A September 1993 release by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service gives some details of the Silvio Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge Act of December 1991. The Act, in brief, calls for a refuge for-

- 1) conserving, protecting and enhancing the valley's population of various fish and birds;
- 2) conserving, protecting and enhancing the diversity of wildlife and the ecosystems upon which it depends;
- 3) protecting endangered species;
- 4) restoring and maintaining wetlands and other waters;
- 5) fulfilling international treaty obligations relating to wildlife and wetlands;
- 6) providing opportunities for research, education, and wildlife oriented recreation and access.

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The Act authorizes the setting up of up to four educational centers in the valley to interpret the wildlife resources. To achieve this an advisory committee of fifteen members from various agencies, private and public, has been authorized.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has created the Connecticut River Planning Project as part of implementing the Conte Act. It has been working on various aspects of the project since January 1992, mainly focussing on a computerized geographical system (GIS) containing data on species and habitats. It has also held meetings with many groups in the river basin to encourage cooperative approaches to the objectives of the Conte Act.

A series of meetings in watershed towns is being conducted as part of the program. For information about time and place, contact the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Massachusetts, telephone 413-582-3174.

WHY DOES A RIVER MEANDER?

The Connecticut River snakes dramatically through its alluvial flood plain, the Great Meadows. Why?

Why doesn't a river through such a valley run straight, assuming that its purpose is to hurry the water out to sea? The reason is Nature's attempt to balance the erosion of the channel and the depositing of the material suspended in the water. The slower the water, the less the erosion, but the greater the build up of material it is carrying and then depositing.

The velocity of a river in a given reach is controlled by the drop in water level between the points of entry and exit. The longer the channel the slower the speed of the water. A river in a

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

This application is for those who wish to join the Great Meadows Conservation Trust and help to keep the flood plain of the Connecticut River as open space for agriculture and natural enjoyment.

Membership Chair
Great Meadows Conservation Trust, Inc.
P.O.Box 171, Glastonbury, CT 06033

Please enroll _____

(Name, address, telephone no.)

as _____ Member(s). Enclosed is \$ _____ annual membership dues.

Date _____

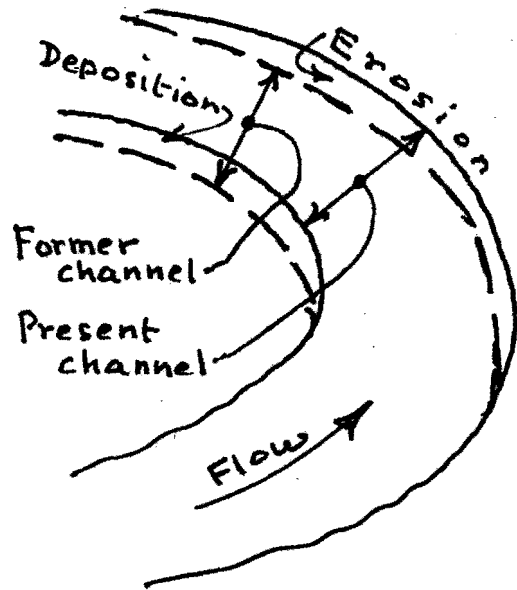
Membership categories: Individual Member (resident in Glastonbury, Rocky Hill or Wethersfield) \$10
Associate Member (Non-resident) \$10
Family (parents and children under 16) \$15
Life Member \$200

wide alluvial valley can change this velocity by varying the length of its channel, in other words, meandering.

By means of meandering, nature achieves an ever-changing balance between the erosion and the deposition, normally keeping the changes slow. Ever-changing because there will always be some erosion and some deposition; erosion carving out the outside bank of a bend, and deposition filling the channel along the inside bank. The shifting channel sometimes forms islands and ox-bow lakes. These events usually occur during abnormally large flows.

The Connecticut River has been meandering for ages, and the meanders have themselves meandered. All the the edges of the flood plain have at one time or another been carved by the river by the meandering meanders, and one can find traces of earlier river banks in many places along the edge of the Great Meadows.

Peter Revill



CREDITS

Material for this issue has been provided by John Lepper, Julianne Steffens and Editor Peter Revill

NEEDED - Copies of "The Great Meadows of the Connecticut River, Glastonbury, Rocky Hill and Wethersfield, State of Connecticut. An Inventory and Analysis of Resources and Recommendations for Conservation and Development", published by the University of Massachusetts, Summer 1969. This 32—page 8 1/2 by 11 booklet is the founding document of the Trust. Please phone Ellie Revill, 529-9254.

The Great Meadows Conservation Trust was incorporated in 1968 as a non-profit tax exempt land trust to protect and preserve the flood plain lands of the Connecticut River in Glastonbury, Rocky Hill and Wethersfield. The Trust has acquired land, holds conservation easements and leases land for farming.



Printed on recycled paper.



P.O. Box 171, Glastonbury, CT 06033

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