



THE MEADOW VIEW

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

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The Great Meadows Conservation Trust
Presents

FARMING ON THE EDGE: AGRICULTURE IN AN URBAN ENVIRONMENT

By Robert Wagner, Director, State and Local Programs,
American Farmland Trust

Thursday, October 19, 7.30 P.M.
Solomon Welles House,
220 Hartford Avenue, Wethersfield

Robert Wagner has been involved with the American Farmland Trust since 1985, and holds a master's degree in natural resources planning from the University of Vermont

The public is invited Refreshments will be served
The Solomon Welles House is at the corner of Hartford Avenue
and State Street. The State Motor Vehicle Office, a familiar
landmark, is on State Street.

THE BIG CANOE WEEKEND! A FALL TRIP ON THE RIVER

Saturday, September 30, the Trust and the Connecticut River Watershed Council are sponsoring a Fall Canoe Trip on the Connecticut River, from 2.30 P.M. to sundown. Canoes are provided by CRWC, or bring your own. Meet at the Rocky Hill boat ramp near the ferry. Charge \$10 GMCT or CRWC members, \$15 others. Pre-registration required. Call CRWC at (860) 528-3588 Bring USCG personal flotation equipment,

snack, beverage. You must be able to swim and handle a canoe on a river.

NAYAUG CANOE RACE

Sunday, October 1, will see the grand celebration of the Seventh Annual Nayaug Canoe Race and Riverfront Celebration. It will take place at the Kinne Farm at Route 160/Tryon Street and Pease Lane in South Glastonbury. It includes a variety of activities beginning with a pancake breakfast at 9.30 A.M. and culminating

with the BIG RACE starting at 1.30 P.M. There will also be a dog show. For more details, call David Ahlgren at 633-5665. The event is sponsored by the Land Heritage Coalition of Glastonbury and the CRWC.

FUTURE MEETINGS

February 1, 1996 - "Ways Mother Nature Can Defeat the IRS", by Austin D. Barney, Business Planning Associates of Avon, CT. Place: Rocky Hill Congregational Church.

April 28, 1996 - Annual Meeting at Connecticut Audubon Society, Glastonbury. This will be a luncheon meeting followed by walks.

ANNUAL MEETING, FRIDAY, APRIL 21, 1995

For our 26th Annual Meeting we repeated the success of last year by staging it to follow another of the delicious chicken dinners catered by the United Methodist Women of Rocky Hill. The meeting was held in the activity room of the United Methodist Church of Rocky Hill. Thirty three people were present.

Copies of the Treasurer's Annual Report, which had been audited, were available for anyone to see.

President John Lepper gave his report, a summary of which follows.

Elected by the membership to serve as Directors until the Annual Meeting of 1988 were: Joyce Bauer of Wethersfield, Eleanor Revill of Rocky Hill and Deborah McIntosh and Julianne Steffens of Glastonbury.

The Directors then elected officers for the year ahead:

President	Julianne Steffens
Vice-President	Deborah McIntosh
Secretary	Eleanor Revill
Treasurer	Ingrid Boelhouwer.

After the business portion of the meeting, Joyce Bauer, Program Chairperson, introduced the speaker, Thomas H. Maloney, Steward for the Connecticut River with the Connecticut River Watershed Council. He spoke on THE CONNECTICUT RIVER: ECOLOGY AND STEWARDSHIP

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The main points of President Lepper's report to the Annual Meeting are given below. He included summaries of some of the committee reports.

John Lepper began with the comment, "Looking back over 1994 it seemed like 1991, the first year I was elected President. The same issues were still with us - the Boat Launch, Sand Excavation, Quarry Park, Welles Street Housing, plus a few more new ones." He then described the year's activities, including 1994 and early 1995.

The Board of Directors elected Joyce Bauer of Wethersfield to fill the unexpired term of Frank Child, who retired and moved to Woods Hole, Massachusetts.

As was the case with many other land trusts, we had difficulties renewing insurance; however, the problems have been resolved and we now have broader coverage than before, it will cost more; but given the times we are in, it is important to have good coverage.

At the year's end we had 140 family and individual memberships and 47 life members. We gained 5 new family and individual memberships, and one life member. The new members are: Robert and Sonny Googins, Andrew and Katherine Cutko, Thomas and Joan Kemble, and Carl Berquist, all of Glastonbury, and Dina Greene of Avon. The new life member is Ruth H. Beck of Wethersfield.

Death claimed three of our members: Ethel Cooke of Rocky Hill, Joseph Robinson of Glastonbury, and Robert Bacon, formerly of Wethersfield.

So far this year 75% of our membership has renewed. This is the third consecutive year in which the renewal rate has increased in the first quarter of the year - a very positive sign.

Voluntary contributions over and above membership dues have reached \$1,165 so far this year. That's \$800 more than for the same period in 1994. On behalf of the other officers and directors Lepper thanked the membership. He noted, "It gives us confidence that we have been leading your organization in the right direction".

During the past year the Program Committee sponsored a lecture "The Connecticut River: A Historic Resource", presented by Brenda Milkofsky, Director, Wethersfield Historical Society. We also co-sponsored with several other conservation groups a lecture by Sarah Leff, Executive Director, Rivers Alliance. Such programs are part of our public educational outreach

All of our investment funds performed well. They are well diversified and meet our

purpose of long term growth with suitable risk.

Following a year when net asset values of most mutual funds, including ours, showed losses, an update of value of our Vanguard Funds showed an increase of 5.1%. This bears out the philosophy of holding funds for the long term and through downturns.

Several years ago we received a sum of money from the estate of Bernadette Holden of Rocky Hill. This was placed in a money market fund until the opportunity for land acquisition arose. This occurred in 1994.

Through the efforts of Bill Robbins and Debbie McIntosh we were able to acquire the 9.5-acre DiPaola Parcel in Rocky Hill. Bill found the opportunity, laid the initial groundwork, and Debbie went to work negotiating the purchase. After two years of offers and counteroffers the agreement was signed in June 1994. The parcel is wooded, has Goff Brook running through it and is accessible from a public road. Unfortunately part of it has been used as an unauthorized dump, presenting a challenge to our Land Management Committee. Once cleaned up, the parcel will present opportunities for passive recreation, such as birding and nature study.

The Land Management Committee inspected ten parcels during the year and reported no major abuse to the land. Plans were developed with The Nature Conservancy for a joint stewardship program on the Trust's parcel on Wethersfield Cove. The program is to commence this summer. The Committee led three "Brisk Winter Walks" for members wishing to look at Trust Parcels.

Lease arrangements with the U.S. Coast Guard for a river navigation aid site and with Michael Longo and William Collins for farming were continued.

During the March-April 1994 freshet, which reached the 21 ft. stage, the flow of water across the Standish Parcel, south of the Putnam Bridge, was observed with special attention. The erosion, while slight, pointed to a loss of ground over the years. This informal study tied in with that being done by Milone and MacBroom Consulting Engineers, under contract with the Town of Wethersfield. Of particular concern was the flood water entering the large drainage ditch between State and Trust land.

Jim MacBroom made inspections during last April's freshet. His study provided solid engineering data that confirmed the observations made by those familiar with the river and meadows. The existing drainage ditch has an adverse effect on the meadows as would the ramp for the proposed boat launch.

The evidence was submitted to Commissioner Keeney of the Department of

Environmental Protection (DEP) by Wethersfield's Town Manager along with a request that a permit be issued to build a dike across the drainage ditch. A "yes but" response was received from DEP's Tom Morrissey with the added suggestion that the Town find other means of controlling the scouring.

In February the Town was informed by the Connecticut Department of Transportation that it will be filing an application with DEP for construction of the boat launch to fulfill the conditions set forth as a part of the Baldwin Bridge Permit.

Last fall the National Eastern Corporation filed an application with the Town of Wethersfield to permit the fabrication of steel bridge spans on barges at Crow Point to be towed down the river to the point of installation in New Haven. In spite of a somewhat vague application, it went through the Flood Erosion Control Board, the Inland Wetland and Planning and Zoning Commissions without difficulty. The Trust and the Connecticut River Watershed Council, among others, opposed the application, but the Town Commissions did not accept opposing arguments. A big surprise was the Connecticut River Assembly's approval of the project. Don Watson, Dick Mihm and Eleanor Wolf representing Rocky Hill, Glastonbury and Wethersfield on the Assembly made excellent arguments against the proposal, but were not able to carry the vote. Next steps for the applicant are the DEP and Army Corps of Engineers.

Glastonbury's Town Council gave us a breath of fresh air by turning down the application for moderate income housing on Welles Street.

The Towns of Wethersfield and Rocky Hill finally shut down the sand excavation on the town line. The Trust has taken the position that while the material was dredge spoil it had been in place long enough to become part of the meadows, and that removing it could impact the meadows in time of flood.

An agreement was finally reached between interested parties and Richard Johnson over his access through Quarry Park land to two proposed houses north of the Park. The Trust was strongly in support of the park formation and was involved in the access matter.

In conclusion John Lepper said, "From time to time we have been accused of being against everything, not only by outsiders but by some of our members as well. This is a charge I strongly reject and resent. We supported the acquisition of Quarry Park and have lent support to the Rails to Trails and Greenway Programs. I am sure we will continue to support projects that are in our best interest.

"In order to be against something you need to be for something. Unless our Certificate of Incorporation and bylaws are changed, there

should be no question of what we are for. I think our critics need to seriously examine what they are for or against.

"This is my last annual report as your President. After serving two years as Vice-President and four years as President, it is time to retire. It has been a privilege and an honor for me to serve. However, for an organization to evolve and grow, leadership change is necessary.

"No one can do this job alone. I would like to thank the committee chairs who served with me:

Joan Mihm - Membership
June Cox - Finance
Peter Revill - Land Management
Debbie McIntosh - Land Acquisition
Joyce Bauer - Program
Duffy Schade - Publicity
Jolly Steffens - Secretary Operations

Committee

Three other people I guess you would call special advisors:

Don Watson, Peter Stern and Thayer Chase.

Thank you all."

TO FULFILL A DREAM

By President Steffens

The creation of the Silvio O. Conte Fish and Wildlife Refuge began with the dream of a man who loved the Connecticut River Valley. The late Senator Conte envisioned clean and clear streams and rivers with open meadows and woodlands where fish, birds, animals and people could thrive together. Several events this summer highlight how that dream might be fulfilled.

At the Conte Anadromous Fish Research Center on the Connecticut River in Turner's Falls, Massachusetts, wrapping up a three day swing through the New England states, Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt thanked hundred of volunteers for their efforts to restore the Connecticut River watershed. He also stressed the importance of federal environmental protection and the place of scientific research to guide decision making. "There's an all out attack by congress on 25 years of bipartisan environmental progress," he said and spoke of proposed cutbacks that threaten ecosystem projects.

At Gillette Castle overlooking the Connecticut River, Governor Rowland signed three environmental laws, saying: "It is our responsibility to make sure we maintain the environment, the beauty of our state, for generations to come." The Greenways Act supports local initiatives to establish greenways, such as trails for people and corridors for

wildlife. Another act provides more local control in development near traprock ridges. In the new Rivers Act more local authority to control development and preservation along river corridors is given in dealing with state agencies.

Passage of these bills is a result of coordinated lobbying, including your calls and letters to your representatives. There are lobbyists from a number of environmental organizations tracking bills before and during legislative sessions. It is important to have our voices heard and to be alert to the pressures on our legislators. The same holds true of the need for volunteers to monitor local council and commission actions and be heard.

Most recently on the Sunset Canoe Trip in the Great Meadows, paddlers enjoyed the beauty and learned of threats to the meadows. With Connecticut River Watershed Council's River Steward Tom Maloney as trip leader, and with use of CRWC's canoes, eighteen people in eight canoes and two kayaks departed Wethersfield Cove. On the way, John Lepper, past president of the Great Meadows Conservation Trust, pointed out the Folly Brook "Folly", the needless tree cutting for the approach to Brainard Field. In Crow Point, Lepper told about the proposed bridge structure to be assembled on a barge in the cove and the need for extensive dredging for the barge to enter the cove. Returning to Wethersfield Cove as the sun set, several on this joint venture of the Watershed Council and the Trust plan to join to help protect the river environs.

Each of these three events brought out to me the importance of working together in organizations, serving in public office and on town commissions and committees, to try to balance the needs of people with the environment. Let's continue to work together to fulfill the dream of Silvio O. Conte.

THE SILVIO O. CONTE NATIONAL FISH AND WILDLIFE REFUGE

The Draft of the Action Plan and Environmental Impact Statement concerning the Refuge was issued in May 1995 and subject to several public hearings in the Connecticut River watershed. Some of these were attended by members of the Trust which has a great interest in the project.

The Federal Act establishing the Refuge was signed in 1991 and includes the whole watershed of the Connecticut River, an area of about 11,250 square miles. While this entire area is to be studied, the portions that might constitute controlled refuge areas is likely to be much smaller.

The Draft of the Action Plan is an inch thick book, and the executive summary, which is in small print, is over 20 pages long. No short coverage here is in any way adequate, but we can report that the plan will be administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Five different plans, A to E, are reviewed of which D is the Proposed Action. This plan is based largely on voluntary cooperation involving very small Federal land acquisitions, none of which would involve condemnation.

Land to be protected are noted as Special Focus Areas of which there are 45 in the entire watershed. In our Great Meadows area the identifying map includes the Wethersfield and Rocky Hill Meadows, and Keeney Cove. (The Glastonbury lands south of the Cove are not included). The listing calls these "Rocky Hill Meadows/Keeney Cove", noting their importance for federally listed species, rare species and waterbirds.

The Trust believes that the entire area of the flood plain in Glastonbury, Rocky Hill and Wethersfield should be designated as a Special Focus Area, and has sent its recommendation to the Fish and Wildlife Service.

WETHERSFIELD COVE, JULY 29

The cooperative work party of The Nature Conservancy and the Great Meadows Conservation Trust met at Eleanor Wolf's house Saturday morning, July 29. This was the volunteer occasion, set by TNC, hoping to restore the open meadow portion of our so called "Nature Conservancy" parcel on the northwest corner of Wethersfield Cove. This land, once in Ms. Wolf's family, had come to the Trust from the Conservancy which has offered help in its stewardship.

Eight people, three TNC volunteers and five Trust members, exchanged greetings and news, and six ventured into the broiling sun to attack sumac and purple loosestrife. Some progress was made, but the heat and magnitude of the job were overwhelming.

Before noon we were recovering at Eleanor's enjoying her brownies and lemonade!

A failed project? Not quite. One of the neighbors, curious about the crew roaming around "their" backyard area, approached us and volunteered to help keep some of the meadow clear using his equipment. His interest was sparked by a desire to maintain his view of the Cove, now obscured by a great growth of sumac. We are hoping to work out some sort of neighborhood agreement for mutual benefit of all concerned

The TNC volunteers came from Manchester, Coventry and Westbrook, Connecticut. Trust members Jolly Steffens, Eleanor Wolf, Larry Lunden, John Lepper and the writer formed the local contingent. Only the men ventured into the field, and I am not sure that their dedication made sense in view of the weather!

Peter Revill



"People need to understand that the choice between people and animals, between the economy and endangered species, is a false one. There is no choice. Our fate and our economy are inexorably linked to the state of ecosystems, and wildlife is the best indicator of the health of those ecosystems."

Mollie Beattie, Director
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

OUR ORGANIZATION

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

(Elected)

Julianne Steffens (G)	President
Deborah McIntosh (G)	Vice-Pres
Eleanor D. Revill (R)	Secretary
Ingrid Boelhouwer (W)	Treasurer
Joyce Bauer (W)	
Clyde Brooks (G)	
John C. Lepper (W)	
Peter J. Revill (R)	
Edith Schade (G)	
Donald G. Watson (R)	

THE OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

Julianne Steffens	President
Deborah McIntosh	Vice-Pres
Ingrid Boelhouwer	Treasurer
-----	Secretary

All other members of the Board and the following
(appointed by Pres.)

Carl Bergengren (G)
Nancy Berges (W)
Thayer Chase (W)
June Cox (R)
Joseph Hickey (W)
Henry Kinne (G)
Joan Mihm (G)
William Robbins (R)
Peter M. Stern (G)
Eleanor B. Wolf (W)
G. Glastonbury, R. Rocky Hill, W. Wethersfield



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COMMITTEE CHAIRS

(Appointed by Pres.)

Membership	Joan Mihm
Publicity	Edith (Duffy) Schade
Finance	June Cox
Land Acquisition	Deborah McIntosh
Land Management	Peter Revill
Program	Joyce Bauer

TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Joyce Bauer	529-6776
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Deborah McIntosh	633-2179
Joan Mihm	633-1806
Ellie & Peter Revill	529-9254
Duffy Schade	633-4885
Julianne (Jolly) Steffens	633-9379

CREDITS

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

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. FOR MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION, please write to Membership Chair, Great Meadows Conservation Trust, P.O. Box 171, Glastonbury, CT 06033

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