



Great Meadows Conservation Trust, Inc.
 P. O. Box 171
 Glastonbury, CT 06033
 www.gmct.org



Upcoming Events:

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CT Trails Weekend: June 3-4, 2017 – P. 5

Annual Reports and News:

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

Vol. XXXIII no. 1

March 2017

President’s Annual Report—2016

by Tom Kehoe, President

It seems like only yesterday that it began, but my time as the Trust’s president ends at our annual meeting. I know the Trust will be in good hands with the new slate of officers taking office. Being a member of the Trust and its president has been a rewarding experience for me and I encourage everyone to become more involved with this great organization and support its worthwhile goals.

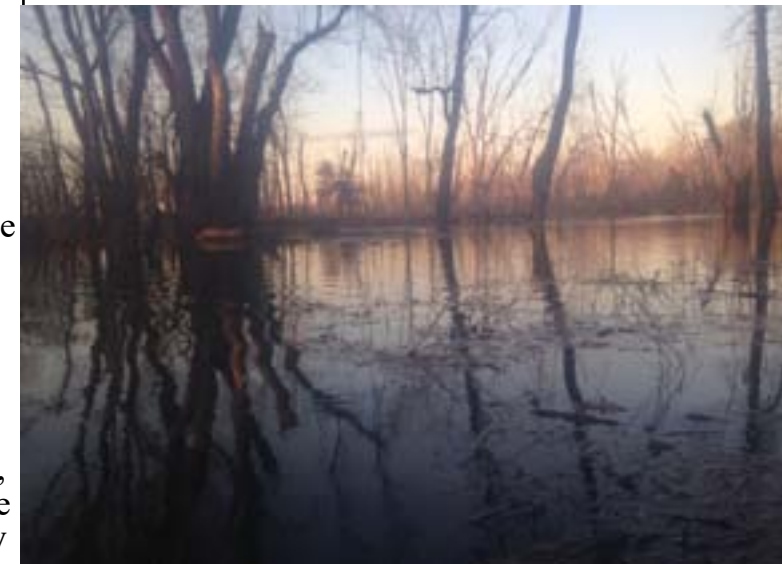
In our busy lives we often forget that we have such an incredible piece of nature in our collective backyards, over 4500 acres of open space and farmland comprising the Great Meadows. Though we may take it for granted that it is there, its continued existence was not a given nearly 50 years ago when the Trust was founded and it remains under threat even today. Thus the Trust and your continued support of the Trust play an important part in preserving this legacy.

Through its terrific volunteers, the Trust’s work continued this year with 40 property inspections and reports, six winter walks, plus two walks and two paddles on CT Trails Day. Numerous projects to improve paths, remove trash, remove invasive species and plant trees and plants originally found in the floodplain continued. The Trust remains on the lookout for additional strategic parcels to be acquired or donated to the Trust, so please let us know if you become aware of any.

Finally, I would like to say “Thank You” to all the officers, directors and working group members who have helped me during my term and who so enthusiastically help the Trust fulfill its mission and goals. You are truly an outstanding group of people, committed to preserving open

space and farmland and it is my honor to be associated with you.

“The Great Meadows’..continued existence was not a given nearly 50 years ago...and it remains under threat even today. Thus the Trust and your continued support of the Trust play an important part in preserving this legacy.”



Goff Brook, swollen by the early freshet, reflects the trees of the floodplain forest, and the marsh cattails beyond, bathed in late February light fading to purple behind the rocky hill.

Renew your membership now! Include your membership dues in your Annual Dinner payment or use this form.
 \$15 – Individual \$300 – Life Member Name _____
 \$ 25 – Family \$500 – Family Life Membership Address _____
 Send Check payable to Great Meadows Conservation Trust, inc. to P.O.Box, Glastonbury, CT 06033

Agenda — Annual Meeting, March 23, 2017

1. Minutes of Annual Meeting March 31, 2016.
2. Treasurer’s report for fiscal year 2016(see p. 3)
3. President’s 2016 annual report to the members (see p. 1)
4. Report of the Nominating Committee
5. Election of Directors to serve through 2020
Motion: That Christopher Duff, John Fergu-

son, Linda Nielson, and Elizabeth Schmitt be elected to serve as Directors for their respective terms.

6. Election of Officers to serve until next annual meeting Motion: That Christopher Duff, Diana Evans, Daniel Schnaidt and Richard Doran be elected to serve as President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer, respectively of the GMCT for the 2017 – 2018 term.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT – 2017

Date: February 23, 2017

Members: Richard Doran, Christopher Duff, Ralph Moyer, Penny Rusnak, and Daniel Schnaidt,

Re: 2017 Slate of Officers and New Directors Officers

President – Christopher Duff (Rocky Hill – 2nd – 2020)

Vice President – Diana Evans (Wethersfield – 1st – 2018)

Secretary – Daniel Schnaidt (Glastonbury—2nd – 2019)

Treasurer – Richard Doran (2018).

New Directors (Town and Term of Office)

- Chris Duff (Rocky Hill – 2nd 2020)
- John Ferguson (Glastonbury – 1st 2020)
- Linda Nielson (Wethersfield – 1st 2020)
- Elizabeth Schmitt (Glastonbury – 1st 2020)

Directors Continuing Terms

- Diana Evans (Wethersfield – 1st – 2018)

- Timothy Lewis (Rocky Hill – 1st - 2019)
- Whit Osgood (Glastonbury – 1st -2018)
- Daniel Schnaidt (Glastonbury – 2nd – 2019)
- Peter Spangenberg (Wethersfield – 1st 2019)
- Pamela St. Jean (Wethersfield – 2nd – 2018)
- James Zagroba (Rocky Hill -2nd -2018)

Directors Stepping Down

- Richard Doran (Wethersfield)
- Tom Kehoe (Glastonbury)
- Penny Rusnak (Glastonbury)
- Sandy Weiss (Rocky Hill)

Two motions for the annual meeting.

1. That Christopher Duff, John Ferguson, Linda Nielson, and Elizabeth Schmitt be elected to serve as Directors for their respective terms.
2. That Christopher Duff, Diana Evans, Daniel Schnaidt and Richard Doran be elected to serve as President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer, respectively of the GMCT for the 2017 – 2018 term.

Annual Meeting—Special Guest Speaker



Corrie Folsom-O'Keefe

Corrie Folsom-O'Keefe directs Audubon Connecticut's Important Bird Area (IBA) program which has identified nearly 40 critical bird habitats in Connecticut. Corrie will make the exciting official announcement of the designation of the Great Meadows as an Important Bird Area. She will talk about the IBA program and what makes the Great Meadows such a special place for birds. Corrie has a MS from Connecticut College, studying shrubland birds, and has done field work from Belize to Nova Scotia and the Farallon Islands.

The Gallery

141 New London Turnpike
Glastonbury

Thursday, March 23, 2017

Social Hour 5:30 • Dinner 6:30

Annual Meeting and speaker to follow

Buffet Dinner Menu

Cheese and cracker tray, cocktail meatballs

Tossed Salad and assorted cold salads

Carving station with New York sirloin of beef

Pasta with Pesto and Marinara sauces

Baked scrod, breaded with lemon and butter

Chicken Francaise

Vegetables du jour, red roasted potatoes

Dessert du jour

Regular and decaf coffee and tea

Cash bar for all other beverages and soda

The cost per person for dinner is \$28.00, tax and gratuity included

—clip here—

GMCT Annual Dinner Reservations

Please reserve no later than March 19th for the dinner Thursday, March 23rd, 2017

Questions may be directed to Rick Doran at 860-690-9983 or info@GMCT.org

The cost per person for dinner is \$28.00.

Name(s): _____

Phone Number _____ Address _____

Dinners @ \$28.00 _____ = _____

Memberships @ \$15 individual/\$25 family _____ = _____

Additional Donation _____

Total Enclosed: _____

Please enclose a check payable to “GMCT” and mail to: GMCT Annual Meeting

www.GMCT.org



Rick Doran
223 Main Street,
Wethersfield, CT 06109

Corrie Folsom-O'Keefe, Director of Audubon Connecticut's Important Bird Area Program

Corrie Folsom-O'Keefe directs Audubon Connecticut's Important Bird Area (IBA) program which has identified nearly 40 critical bird habitats in the state. IBAs provide habitat for birds of conservation concern, support large numbers of birds, and/or include rare habitats and their associated bird species. They are also places where Audubon works with landowners and local communities to increase awareness on the value of these sites to birds and encourage stewardship.

The Great Meadows, along the Connecticut River in Rocky Hill, Glastonbury, Wethersfield, and East Hartford, provides valuable habitat for a variety of birds, particularly during spring and fall migration. Its flood plain forests and grassy fields (which can be seen from quite a distance from the air) provide stopover habitat for landbirds and shorebirds, while its coves and riverine shores are valuable to waterfowl. The area also supports two pairs of nesting Bald Eagles. During this talk, Corrie will inform us about the IBA program and what makes the Great Meadows such a special place for birds.

The Great Meadows, long recognized as an important area for birds and other species, is now gaining official recognition!

Monitoring Osprey Nests

According to Milan Bull, Audubon scientist, osprey have rebounded from a low of 8 nests in 1970 to over 600 nests. Monitoring all those nests is a huge citizen science project.

Jim Woodworth recently attended a training session and will monitor the two nests in the meadows every two weeks from the arrival of the osprey in a few weeks until the chicks are fledged and grown..



Above. Nest atop the Global Oil dock flood light pole. Below. Nest atop a 40 foot stump deep in the marsh.



The Great Meadows environment isn't just for the birds. A species of special concern, the northern leopard frog, at right, was sunning him or herself on a recent warm February afternoon along Goff Brook.



GMCT and Wethersfield Game Club Sign Hunting License Agreement.

The Wethersfield Game Club has been protecting the meadows since its inception in 1933. Since the GMCT was incorporated in 1968, the two organizations have been partners in protecting the Great Meadows. So it was natural for the Trust and the Club to formalize their 50 year old gentleman's agreement in a written license.

In addition to their annual cleanups, filling town dump trucks with illegally dumped trash, the Club has a program to install and monitor wood



Three generations of the Munger family, Mark, Evan, and Mitch, with friend Nick Laurito make a team..

duck boxes throughout the marshy woods of the meadows. According to Tom Hock, who directs the program, the count is 130 boxes with about a 25% success rate. That's a lot of ducklings! Every spring the boxes get fresh woodchips, and the results are reported to DEEP.

Land Management Committee Report 2016

Larry Lunden, Land Management Chair

This year the committee has completed inspections on 40 parcels. We almost got all the scheduled inspections done, but this is an increase of inspections from previous years. I thank Rick Doran, Ken Etheridge, Sandi Kelly, and Deb Creeden for their help in writing the reports.

All three of our conservation easements have been inspected. We have developed mutually beneficial communications with all of the land owners. I thank Betty Schmitt, Rick Doran, and Penny Rusnak for their thorough work.

Our leasing program with local farmers continues to keep 56 acres of farmland in active use. Our leasing program is being run by Rick Doran and Deb Creeden. I thank them for their efforts.

We didn't acquire any new properties this year. We continue to have 189 acres under ownership or easement, in 49 parcels.

The Connecticut Land Conservation Council has an annual conference in the spring. Rick Doran and I were on a panel of presenters on TerraFirma easement insurance and risk management. We shared our experience with our conservation easements with other land trust leaders in Connecticut.

We are working on a hunting license agreement with the Wethersfield Game Club. They have hunted in the meadows for many years under a verbal agreement. Now we are putting in the effort to make a written agreement between our organizations. We had many meetings to educate ourselves on how hunting activity

affects our lands. The game clubs keep an eye on the meadows for any suspicious activity. They also do an annual cleanup of trash that is scattered around the meadows. The agreement has been finalized this spring.

Goodwin College is in the process of building a walking trail through



Informational sign along .2 mile handicapped accessible trail.

Hockanum Meadows, and across two of our parcels there. This section is now open to the public and allows access to



Welcoming sign at the gate on South Meadow Road off High St, East Hartford.



Note the yellow trail marker at the south end of the Goodwin C. trail at the Putnam Bridge.

these isolated parcels.

Jim Woodworth is starting a project to replace the broken culverts on our Wood parcel. These have been broken for many years and get blocked by debris occasionally.

We held six winter walks for the public, co-sponsored with the Connecticut Audubon Society at Glastonbury and the Eleanor Buck Wolf Nature Center. We had an attendance of 279 people total. Meetup.com continues to be a good form of publicity.

Treasurers Annual Report – 2016

Rick Doran, Treasurer

The operations account and the investment account of the Trust remain in sound financial condition. The Trust maintains its operations account secured as a business checking account at TD Bank. The investment account is managed by Vanguard Investments and its value increased over 8% for calendar year 2016, compared to its net asset value at the end of calendar year 2015.

A phone interview was conducted with the Trust financial advisor at Vanguard. The conclusion by the financial advisor was that our mutual fund accounts continue to contain a balanced and diversified risk position, which will permit the Trust

to attain our investment goals of current income and long term capital appreciation.

On February 16, 2017, the Audit Committee performed its review of all of the financial transactions conducted in 2016. The conclusion of the Committee noted that all deposit and expenditure transactions were properly applied, accounted and recorded by the Treasurer.

The annual budget for 2017 was presented to the Board at its February 23, 2017 meeting. The Finance and Development Committee recommended a balanced annual budget with income and expenses of \$13,900 for 2017. This compares with actual income of \$14,220 and \$9,577 expenses incurred in 2016.

Winter Walks 2017—Classic New England weather Warm and Open with Frigid and Snowy Interludes

Wood Parcel—January 7



The Walk season began with a stroll into the Wood Parcel and along Anderson Farm fields, with strawberries and spinach waiting for Spring. Above, Steven Frechette, center, and walkers on "Frechette Field." Continuing along Beaver Brook marsh, a fine beaver lodge came into view, surrounded by water held back by a dam spanning the marsh. Wood duck boxes placed and maintained by the Wethersfield Game Club abounded. Our summer bird watching task: listen for Virginia rail and sora, two reclusive marsh birds likely living in the marsh.



Wolf Parcel—January 22

The Wolf Parcel/DeMille Easement walk proved interesting, between the beaver engineering and the immature eagle soaring over head. Our walk out behind the dike, under Route 15, under I91 and over the dike at the Brainard Airport approach area had added interest this year because of the controversial "obstruction removal" program announced by the CT Airport Authority. The scope of tree removals includes areas in the Folly Brook Nature Area, in Wethersfield south of the dike, as well as areas along the river on the east side of the dike. Below, the group walks along the sewer plant outfall from the dike out to the river. The value of this area of forest to the Important Bird Area was made clear by the new Eagle's nest and four heron nests in an area that supported a heron rookery 75 years ago before I91. The hope is for tree removal sensitive to the birds. No snow enabled the group to fill many trash bags.



DiPaola, Hayes Parcels—January 28



Looping through the DiPaola and out along North Meadow Road to the Hayes Parcels, the group found a wide open sky...and plenty of trash. One more motocross track season... then maybe there'll be less trash thrown out windows along N. Meadow Road.



Hockanum Meadow Feb.12. Great snow, lovely snow storm...only two of us nuts out enjoying the river!

Crow Point—February 5



led along the river bank to the east side of the cove. Excavated for the construction of Rte.3 and I91, Crow Point Cove is now a rich fish spawning area and a migratory bird stopover. The warm west facing slope of the Cove traps a trove of trash brought by flood waters washing over the bank and into the Cove.



Point Meadow—February 18



Warm sunshine and sparkling snow beckoned 60 walkers on a sunny Saturday morning across the Point Meadow causway and out toward the river, through the corn field and under the bridge. The corn grown by Rick Botticello for the pigs he raises in Overbrook Farm in Manchester can't be harvested and stored unless it is dry enough. The warm damp fall meant harvesting and feeding as he goes along. That morning trees nearby were hosting a flock of red wing black-birds. Just south of the Putnam Bridge is a view across the sparkling waters.



CT Trails Day Events—June 3-4, 2017

Educational Walk for Little Kids! Saturday, June 3. 10:30 AM to 12:00 PM. Wood Parcel. Bring your young naturalists (ages 4-6) for a short 1-mile hike and nature activity on this Great Meadows Conservation Trust property. We will cross the shiny bridge over the brook, follow the trail through the woods, pass the turtle pond, and follow the trail along the marsh. The route will skirt the edge of the cornfield, site of the original "Pyquag" Native American summer camp, to the irrigation pond and back. We'll have a table set up with stickers and nature activities. Meet leader Jim Woodworth at the entrance to the Wood Parcel.



Kayak and Canoe Paddle. Sunday, June 4, 9:00AM to 11AM. Experienced Paddlers. Limit 20 boats. Join the Connecticut River Watershed Council Lower River Steward Alicea Charamut and GMCT's Tim Lewis. Launch in scenic Wethersfield Cove, paddle upriver to Hartford and back. Explore the beauty of the river—view eagles, ospreys, learn about clean water efforts and airport tree removal. **A limited number of canoes are available.** For more information and pre-registration (required!) call or email Jim Woodworth 860-808-9968, info@gmct.org. Life vests are required. Heavy rain or high water cancels.



Kayak and Canoe Paddle. Sunday June 4, 10AM. Novice Paddlers. Limit 20 boats. Join Boy Scout leader Denis Walter and GMCT's Paul Woodworth in a paddle around the Cove. Explore the north side of the Cove and Folly Brook. View bird-life, learn about clean water efforts and airport tree removals. **A limited number of canoes are available.** For more information and pre-registration(required!) call or email Jim Woodworth 860-808-9968, info@gmct.org. Life vests are required. Heavy rain or high water cancels.

Nature Hike. Sunday, June 4. 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM. Quarry Park, Rocky Hill. Join us for a hike as we visit this beautiful 84-acre park with spectacular views of Hartford, Glastonbury, and the Connecticut River. Distance: 2.5 miles. Meet at the Matteson Avenue parking lot for a prompt 2:00 PM departure. Leaders: Ed Chiucarello, Bob Ludwig. Sponsored by Rocky Hill Parks and Recreation. Rain or shine. Pre-registration is NOT NECESSARY. Questions: contact Rocky Hill Parks and Recreation, (860) 258-2772.

The Great Meadows was Central to Native American Life

The Wethersfield Historical Society Presents "Here We Stand: From Pyquag to Wethersfield"

Keene Memorial Cultural Center, 200 Main Street, Wethersfield, CT • 860.529.7656 • www.wethersfieldhistory.org

Dr. Kevin McBride "The Significance of the Wethersfield Raid in the Pequot War"

Tuesday, May 9, 2017, 7pm. \$5 non-members; Free to WHS members.

Annawon Weeden "Seven Generations Story-Telling Performance"

Wednesday, May 17, 2017, 7pm. \$20 non-membs, \$15 members..

Sherry Pocknett "Foraging Walking Tour"

Sunday, May 21, 2017, 2pm Location in the Meadows TBD

Explore Wethersfield's Great Meadows with native chef and foodways expert Sherry Pocknett as she provides background on native foodways, seasonality, and the cultural importance of various flora and fauna. **See the Great Meadows as you have never seen it before!**

Admission: \$20 non-members, \$15 members

Sherry Pocknett "Strawberry Moon Thanksgiving Celebration"

Join us in celebrating the Strawberry Moon and giving thanks for a bountiful harvest of strawberries. Native chef and foodways expert Sherry Pocknett will deliver a native foodways lecture and cooking demonstration while discussing seasonality, the significance of the Strawberry Moon, how her family kept native traditions and culture alive while growing up in the 1960s during the Red Power Movement, as well as modern issues faced by native peoples today.

Admission: \$25 non-members, \$20 members

