



The Warren Conservator

Fall 2019

**WARREN
LAND TRUST**



Notice of Annual Meeting 2019

WLT Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of the Warren Land Trust will be held on Saturday, November 16, 2019 at 10 AM at the Warren Town Hall, 50 Cemetery Road. All land trust members are encouraged to attend and participate. Non-members are also welcome to attend – this is an excellent opportunity to learn about our conservation work! The business portion of the meeting should last approximately 40 minutes. We will summarize the year's undertakings and our plans for 2020.

Following the business meeting, enjoy seasonal refreshments and hear an important and compelling presentation on the economic benefits of land conservation - see details below! After the presentation, join board members as we hike the beautiful new extension of the Dorothy Maier Preserve trail. Questions? Contact us at info@warrenlandtrust.org

Annual Meeting Program: Can Land Conservation Benefit the Local Economy?

Join us for a lively discussion on the potential economic benefits of land conservation! Local experts and engaging speakers Mark Nielsen and Connie Manes will present the case and take your questions.

Mark is the Assistant Director of the Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments, responsible for regional environmental and transportation planning programs. He was recognized by the Connecticut Greenways Council for his dedication to the development of greenways, including providing oversight and technical assistance to the Naugatuck River Greenway Committee in its construction of a 44-mile multi-use trail from Torrington to Derby.

Connie Manes is a consultant to many local land trusts and Director of the Litchfield Hills Greenprint Collaborative, one of the country's leading Regional Conservation Partnerships, of which the Warren Land Trust is a member. She has been instrumental in developing "Follow the Forest," a regional initiative protecting the woodland and wildlife corridors of the Northeast.



Mark Nielsen and Connie Manes

WLT Celebrates 30 Years of Land Conservation

A beautiful September day at the Hopkins Vineyard provided the perfect setting for the Warren Land Trust's 30th Anniversary Celebration. Nearly 200 friends and supporters enjoyed a delicious barbecue lunch from the Clambaking Company, local spirits, and live music from Switch Factory. We were thrilled to welcome attendees from all walks of Warren life and beyond, including former board members (among them two founding members); organizational partners including Parks & Rec and the Warren Historical Society; and other representatives of the conservation community, including the Lake Waramaug Task Force, Weantinoge Heritage Land Trust, the CT Land Conservation Council, and Steep Rock Association, among others. WLT is grateful to the Connecticut Community Foundation and the Northwest Connecticut Community Foundation for grants which allowed us to keep admission costs reasonable for families. And we appreciate the generosity of our sponsors, including the Hopkins Vineyard, Litchfield Distillery, and the Kent Falls Brewery. We were also fortunate to have the assistance of a team of Americorps volunteers, whose help with set-up, check-in, and cleanup was invaluable. But most valuable and most memorable was the opportunity to celebrate three decades of land conservation and rural preservation in Warren with members of our community. Here's to another thirty years and beyond!



Save the Date! UPCOMING 2020 WLT Events

Further details on all of these upcoming events forthcoming on our website and in email blasts.

Town Clean-Up and Family Environmental Program:

April 18 or April 25
(check our website for date confirmation)

CT Trails Day Hike - "Mattatuck Marathon" Hike:

June 6

Housatonic Heritage Walk:

September 12 - Tour a privately owned historically and environmentally significant local property!

Warren Fall Festival:

October 10-11

Cider Run 5K:

September or October date TBD

Annual Meeting and Program:

November 21

Holiday on the Hill:

December date TBD

As events approach, check our website for the most up-to-date information
www.warrenlandtrust.org

Are you WLT's neighbor?

Do you live near one of the Warren Land Trust's fee properties? If so, we'd appreciate your neighborly oversight! Some of our preserves have trails (see the piece on trail stewardship in this newsletter), but many do not, and even those that do obviously extend well beyond the trail. Our aim is to maintain these properties in a largely natural state, and we inspect them annually to ensure that. But a lot can happen in between annual inspections! If you see anything of note - whether unauthorized (like dumping, hunting, or ATV usage) or interesting (like unusual wildlife sightings), please let us know!

Warren Land Trust Board Members

President

Rebecca Neary

Vice-President

Ted Morse

Treasurer

Barbara Page

Secretary

Nancy Adams Morse

Directors

Tim Angevine

Laura Moore Brown

Elizabeth Chandler

Timothy Clew

Bill Mansfield

Dave Schneiderbeck

Roberta Stafford

Waltraud Tammen

Ex Officio Board Member

Craig Nelson

Warren Land Trust Mission Statement

The Warren Land Trust is a conservation organization dedicated to the preservation of the rural character of Warren.

Its mission is to preserve farmland, open space, natural and endangered resources such as wetlands, forests and wildlife habitats, to encourage outright gifting of land for permanent protection and the use of conservation easements to preserve open space.

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WLT Teams Up With Historical Society To Find "Iron In the Woods"

In recent years, WLT has partnered with the Warren Historical Society for Fall "Housatonic Heritage Hikes," organized under the auspices of the Upper Housatonic Valley National Heritage Area. These walks have a dual focus on local history and the natural environment, a popular combination. This year,



Undated Photo from Cornwall showing the old growth that was cleared

WHS Curator Ellen Paul and WLT board member BK Stafford led hikers to the site of a former charcoal pit, now well hidden by forest regrowth. Given the wealth of flora and fauna along the newly cut trail, it's hard to imagine what the area would have looked like back when the land was owned by the Cornwall Bridge Iron Company. But the iron industry in the Northwest Corner fundamentally changed the area's landscape. By the Revolutionary War era, 80% of the cannon produced in the colonies came from Litchfield forges; by 1850 there were 21 blast furnaces in the northwest corner, running 24 hours a day, week in and week out. Their demand for fuel - charcoal - was never-ending. The men who made the charcoal, known as colliers, were among the highest paid employees in the iron industry - it required great skill to properly build a charcoal mound and recognize the stages of the burn by the color and smell of the smoke. The collier spent the entire charcoal-making season (from one winter to the next) living in a small hut between the mounds. The enormous quantities of wood required denuded local forests. The smell of burning wood would have been pervasive, and smoke would have filled the air, sometimes nearly obscuring the sun. A far cry from the verdant overgrowth surrounding this year's Heritage Hikers!



Fall Housatonic Heritage Hike group led by WHS Curator Ellen Paul and WLT board member BK Stafford



Looking West toward Warren Center - old growth forest cleared for charcoal and agriculture.

WANT TO DO A LITTLE MORE FOR WLT BUT NOT SURE HOW? HAVE A BUSY KID INTERESTED IN COMMUNITY SERVICE? BECOME A TRAIL STEWARD!

BECOMING A TRAIL STEWARD IS EASY, YOU CAN DO IT ON YOUR OWN TIME, AND IT'S A GREAT WAY TO DO SOMETHING GOOD FOR THE COMMUNITY WHILE ENJOYING THE GREAT OUTDOORS.

What is a trail steward? A trail steward helps take care of a trail. In practice, that means making a point of going out on one or more of our trails and walking it with an eye to keeping it clear. Move branches aside and pick up litter. If there are larger branches or trees that need to be cleared, if trail markers are damaged or unclear, or if it looks like there is damage from trespassers, make note of it and contact us with that information.

Our trails on the Dorothy Maier Preserve, Strong Preserve, and Coords Preserve all need regular stewardship to keep them clear and enjoyable. And our Eel Pond viewing platform needs visitors to keep an eye out for litter and structural damage. We will be working on our Willis Tanner Preserve walking path in 2020, and it will require the same type of stewardship.

We have a handy trail-clearing tips information sheet - check our website or contact us at info@warrenlandtrust.org, and we'd be happy to send it to you!

The WLT currently holds over 750 acres under permanent protection.

IF YOU AREN'T A MEMBER OF THE WARREN LAND TRUST, WE INVITE YOU TO JOIN NOW!!

Becoming a Member of The Warren Land Trust is easy. Simply cut off this page and send it to our mailing address below, along with your check. We will send you a receipt along with our thanks for your generous, 100% tax deductible contribution. Please include your name, address and email so that we may include you in our email updates. Choose the type of membership you would like:

___ Land Guardian	\$5,000	___ Land Caretaker	\$ 300
___ Land Grantor	\$2,500	___ Land Protector	\$ 100
___ Land Steward	\$1,000	___ Family Membership	\$ 25
___ Land Conservator	\$ 500	___ Other	\$ ___

Email: _____

Please make checks payable to: The Warren Land Trust, Inc.

MAIL THIS FORM AND CHECK TO: The Warren Land Trust, Inc.
50 Cemetery Road, Warren, CT 06754

To join or donate online, visit www.warrenlandtrust.org

Please make any necessary corrections to your name and address on the mailing panel and submit to the WLT.

**Stakeholder Notification/
Public Notice: WLT Seeking
Accreditation Renewal**

The land trust accreditation program recognizes land conservation organizations that meet national quality standards for protecting important natural places and working lands forever. The Warren Land Trust is pleased to announce that it is applying for renewal of accreditation. A public comment period is now open.

The Land Trust Accreditation Commission, an independent program of the Land Trust Alliance, conducts an extensive review of each applicant's policies and programs. As Board President Rebecca Neary observed, "Accreditation shows that we follow best practices in land conservation. It has given us confidence and credibility as we continue to grow and develop as a partner in our community and in the land conservation field."

The Commission invites public input and accepts signed, written comments on pending applications. Comments must relate to how The Warren Land Trust complies with national quality standards. These standards address the ethical and technical operation of a land trust. For the full list of standards see <http://www.landtrustaccreditation.org/help-and-resources/indicator-practices>.

To learn more about the accreditation program and to submit a comment, visit www.landtrustaccreditation.org, or email your comment to info@landtrustaccreditation.org. Comments may also be faxed or mailed to the Land Trust Accreditation Commission, Attn: Public Comments: (fax) 518-587-3183; (mail) 36 Phila Street, Suite 2, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866.

Comments on The Warren Land Trust's application will be most useful by December 20.

Public Access, Public Benefit!

Our 30th anniversary theme has been "public access, public benefit," and we have been hard at work making that slogan a reality! In our last newsletter, we noted that our 2019 GiveLocal! fundraising campaign would focus on building a wheelchair-accessible viewing platform at our Eel Pond Preserve. Well, we raised more funds than ever before and that, combined with a generous grant from the Ellen Knowles Harcourt Foundation, allowed us to realize a project we've been talking about for years. An information kiosk and programming are in the works, so stay tuned! We also extended the trail at the Dorothy Maier Preserve (come check it out with us after our Annual Meeting), and cleared our Coords and Strong Preserve trails. We were fortunate to have summer interns (thanks to the Connecticut Community Foundation's generous support, and the organizational efforts of partner Weantinog Heritage Land Trust), and an Americorps team (thanks to the Litchfield Hills Greenprint Collaborative), who helped us with the spadework - sometimes literally! And we couldn't have implemented our 2019 theme without the dedication of our board members. Special thanks go to Land Acquisition & Stewardship Committee chair Elizabeth Chandler, and Land Committee member BK Stafford, who took the viewing platform project in hand and didn't let up until it was completed.



The Eel Pond Preserve wheelchair accessible viewing platform



The view of Eel Pond Preserve from the platform



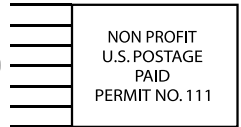
Photo captions: Top Left: Previewing an extension of the Dorothy Maier Preserve trail. Top Right: Working with the Americorps team. Bottom Left: Trail clearing on the Coords Preserve trail. Bottom Right: Summer interns Mario Vinci and Catrina Morgan at the Strong Preserve.



50 Cemetery Road
Warren, CT 06754

Email: info@warrenlandtrust.org

www.warrenlandtrust.org



Stay in Touch with WLT

In between newsletters, you can keep up with WLT news and events by:

- checking our website:
www.warrenlandtrust.org
- liking us on Facebook
- subscribing to our email list
(contact us at info@warrenlandtrust.org to be added to our list - we send occasional emails with news and events information)

President's Letter Fall 2019



Dear Friends and Neighbors,

Ever see a newsletter in which the President's Letter or Editor's Note highlights or summarizes the content you're about to read? It's a common approach - and an effective one! But for our Fall 2019 newsletter, I'd like to summarize what you're *not* going to read - what didn't make it into these pages...because we are still working on it, or it occurred after we went to press, or because we didn't have space to include it. There's just that much going on this year and headed into 2020! So, what is the Warren Land Trust doing that you *won't* read about here??

We participated in Fall events. We were a presence at this year's Fall Festival, answering questions about our preserves and trails, handing out new trail maps and trail mix cookies, and offering some great new logo merchandise. We co-hosted the annual Cider Run 5K with Warren Parks & Rec, helping run registration and then running the race (that's the fun part, of course!)

We looked after our fee properties and easements. Fall is the perfect time to start monitoring our preserves and conservation easements, so our board members accompany our stewardship consultant on inspections to ensure that all is as it should be on the properties under our purview. Along similar lines, we also continue to pursue potential acquisition projects.

We continued work on the Warren's Farming Future project, surveying farmers and farmland owners about their land and livelihood. This grant-funded project was an outgrowth of the Town Plan of Conservation and Development, in which we also played an advisory role.

We took care of business - not very glamorous, but important. Most significant in this regard, we prepared our application for accreditation renewal. Less onerous than the initial accreditation process, it nevertheless required marshaling a daunting array of land, governance, and financial documentation to prove that we continue to follow best practices in our field. And of course we conducted business-as-usual: committee meetings and calls, board meetings, meetings with partner conservation organizations and others, etc.

Not all of these activities are newsworthy, perhaps, but they reflect a land trust - your local land trust - that is deeply engaged in its work and its community, and deeply committed to its mission to maintain Warren's rural character. We hope that you, our friends and supporters, are as pleased with what didn't make it into the newsletter as you are with what did!

Sincerely,

Rebecca