



Warren Land Conservation Trust

We think the world of Warren

NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2020

VOLUME 3

ISSUE

PRESIDENT'S NOTE

The mission of the WLCT is simply to preserve, protect and, to the degree possible, foster the utilization of open space in Warren. We are an organization devoted to improving our community.

As many of you know, recently, at our request, we received a donation of 55 acres of land along the Palmer River from the Town of Warren. The past year has largely focused on developing walking trails at the Haile Farm Preserve to make the property accessible to the public. With the invaluable assistance of the Boy Scouts of Troop 25 (Warren), over a mile and a half of walking trails have been developed, several providing outstanding views of the Palmer River. And the work continued this past winter and spring, with another mile of trail in development, as well as the installation of an osprey platform in the marsh. We urge everyone to take advantage of this tremendous asset and visit the Haile Farm Preserve which is being kept open during the COVID 19 crisis. Please follow the posted social distancing guidelines and stay safe on the trails. For additional details, check our Facebook page.

Haile Farm Preserve can be reached on New Industrial Way off of Market Street. This has been made easier with the recent addition of State "Wayfarer" signs on Route 136 (Market Street).

While this is the most obvious of our activities, it is not the only project underway. We have an application pending that will allow for considerable additional restoration work at Jacob's Point. Also, a study has been commissioned that will document all of the 15 WLCT properties in Warren with the objective of developing a comprehensive stewardship plan. We hope the community appreciates the hard work of our Board in saving open space in Warren. We are always looking for volunteers so if you are interested in discussing how you might help contact us at warrenlctri@gmail.com.

Mike Gerhardt, President, WLCT

Note our new logo at the top of this page. Many thanks to VP Jenny Flanagan for concept and to Board Member Johanna Barthmaier-Payne and her husband Brian Payne for graphic design. This team was also responsible for the new WLCT brochure.

CONTACT THE WLCT



<http://www.warrenlct.org>



[fb.com/wlctri](https://www.facebook.com/wlctri)



warrenlctri@gmail.com



PO Box 565, Warren, RI 02885

2020 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Mike Gerhardt, President

Jenny Flanagan, Vice President

Martha Antaya, Secretary

Finn Brudevold, Treasurer

Rock Singewald, Ed McAloon, Johanna Barthmaier-Payne, Betty Lang

HAILE FARM FOREST STEWARDSHIP PLAN, NEW ADDITIONS AND POSSIBLE EDITION

By Jenny Flanagan, Vice President



Haile Farm Preserve Christmas Day 2019

Stewardship etc... - Continued

- The WLCT received a grant from the USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to prepare a plan to manage the forest and other habitat resources at Haile Farm Preserve. This plan was completed in the fall. It has identified several forest stands with distinct tree and shrub populations. It makes recommendations for managing the habitat to encourage various woodland species of bird, mammal and insect, and the removal of invasive species. Additionally, it plans for marsh migration into some of the freshwater wetland areas, to be responsive to sea level rise.

Recent additions - The Land Trust is proud to announce the addition of two new properties, totaling more than 2.5 acres.

We received a 2.25-acre parcel at the end of Ann Court between Almy Avenue and Barden Lane. This wooded area is the rear wetland remainder of a house lot created last summer.

Another addition, while the smallest, is the most exciting. A 0.3-acre parcel at the end of Maple Road in Touisset was gifted by Norman and Joyce Cote. This property fronts on Mount Hope Bay/the Coles River, and the Land Trust expects to use this property to improve access to this gorgeous waterway. We are pleased to announce we have received an "Assent" from the Coastal Resources Management Council (CRMC) to develop a kayak launch area including 2 parking spaces.

Also, a 23.6-acre property on Market Street is in the process of being donated by Karen Burnes. The property includes two large fields, as well as woodland and marshland, with a quarter mile of frontage on the Palmer River/Belcher's Cove. The NRCS will have a Wetlands Reserve Program Easement over most of the property, ensuring it be used solely for natural habitat. The property also includes a small house and a barn (in poor condition) and the Land Trust will be investigating options for these structures.

This would bring the amount of land the WLCT stewards up to 190 acres! Thank you to East Bay Land Development Corp. and the Cotes for their generous donations. If you have a property that you would like to see forever preserved for the benefit of Warren, please contact us.

2019 ANNUAL MEETING

By Mike Gerhardt, President

The 32nd Annual Meeting of the Warren Land Conservation Trust, held at the Historic Warren Armory,

attracted more than 75 attendees. Mike Gerhardt, WLCT President, summarized the year's significant achievements. The work at the Haile Farm Preserve and plans for additional trails were highlighted. Efforts to facilitate stewardship of the Trust's 15 properties were outlined. Mr. Gerhardt thanked the community for its support and urged as many people as possible to join the WLCT and volunteer to assist with the needed trail work.

There was a brief report to the members on the financial health of the organization (more liquid assets this year than last) and officers and Board members were elected for the upcoming year.

The Boy Scouts of Troop 25 (Warren) accepted the annual Distinguished Service Award for their outstanding work in several areas at HFP (there were four successful Eagle Scout projects completed). They were further recognized by Senator Walter Felag and Representatives Jason Knight.

The featured speaker, Grover Fugate, head of the Coastal Resources Management Council (CRMC) for the last 33 years, made a sobering presentation on their forecast of the effects that climate change will have on Rhode Island in general and Warren in particular. He noted tools that individuals have available to ascertain such effects down to the individual property level.

The meeting was followed by a reception featuring cider and fresh pressed apple juice generously provided by the Warren Cider Works.

Plan to join us at our 33rd Annual Meeting in the Fall of 2020.



Boy Scouts Deliver Benches to Haile Farm

2019 LAND TRUST DAYS

The WLCT hosted many events for RI Land Trust Days.

2019 Land Trust Days - continued

Go Fly a Kite - Rhode Island's Land Trust Days kicked off in early August with a day of kite flying out at Jacob's Point, hosted by Jenny Flanagan. Several kids were there who had their first try at flying a kite. The winds were fair and the skies sunny and dry. At one point, five kites were seen flying over the marsh, with osprey overhead and salt marsh sparrows flitting by below. This was just one of 10 events we organized in collaboration with the state's other land trusts, and we are proud of the broad range of activities we are able to offer.

A Beach Sing was attended by about 25 people on August 16 held at Jacob's Point. According to organizer Martha Antaya "We had a magical twilight. Many voices raised in song in a spectacular setting."



An edible plant walk was held with Russ Cohen at Jacob's Point on August 19.

On September 14, participants rowed from Belchers Cove to Tom's Island, A WLCT property in the Palmer River.

The next day, a bird banding event was hosted by Deidre Robinson and Steve Reinhart of the Salt Marsh Sparrow Project at Jacob's Point.

Cornelia Dean, science writer and former Science Editor of The New York Times and author of books on science and climate change presented a sobering outline of what lies ahead for coastal communities such as Warren, Bristol and Barrington. Rising sea levels driven by climate change threaten to cause major disruption in the viability of low lying land adjacent to water. The main obstacle to progress, said Dean, is the failure to engage the general public and government entities in a conversation that confronts the issue and plans accordingly.

Dean, who has taught at Harvard and Brown University, urged those who support The Warren Land Conservation Trust to help advance the conversation as a matter of urgency. She cited the fact that infrastructure such as the sewage treatment plant and

the historic waterfront district in Warren are extremely vulnerable to the rising tides.

Dean's first book, *Against the Tide*, is about erosion and coastal land use. She is currently at work on a new book about coastal land use in an era of rising seas.

A crowd of four dozen left Dean's presentation with a deeper understanding of the emerging threat and motivated to engage in helping others comprehend the challenges that the East Bay faces. Thanks to Board Member Betty Lang for organizing this event.



LEGISLATIVE GRANTS

The WLCT is grateful to have received a grant for \$2500 from representatives June Speakman and Jason Knight. This money is targeted to contract for Baseline Management Plans of all WLCT properties. This work will be done by consultant Carol Trocki.

We are also pleased to announce a \$2000 grant from Senator Wally Felag which is targeted for the development of a new right of way trail into the Haile Farm Preserve. President Mike Gerhardt and VP Jenny Flanagan receive the grant check from Senator Felag at the entrance to Haile Farm Preserve.



ENJOY WLCT PROPERTIES FROM YOUR COUCH

The WLCT has worked with Grace Parker Health to produce drone footage of the Haile Farm Preserve and Jacob's Point properties. These can be viewed on our website, www.warrenlct.org. Proceed to *News and Events*, *2019 News*, and click on the *Drone Footage...* selections. Happy flying.

THE TRAIL TEAM IS WORKING HARD

By Rock Singewald, Board Member

We have had a number of successful work parties out at the Haile Farm Preserve this fall and winter thanks to our members who signed up for the Trail Team. We cleared a number of fallen trees on our trails after a major wind storm this past fall, and we finished a rough clearing of a new trail to give another way to access our Dick Hallberg trail in the woodlands on the northeastern side of the property. We are calling this new access route the Jade Trail to recognize the cooperation and generosity of our new neighbor Jade Plastics who gave us permission to cross their property to make access to our trails much easier.

WLCT is always looking for additional volunteers to join our Trail Team to help maintain and improve trails at our nature preserves. We meet two times a month at one of the properties weather permitting. We'll be doing things cutting brush along new trails, removing invasive plants, building boardwalks for the wetter parts of the trails, installing signs and trail markers, and ongoing pruning and clipping to keep existing trails open.

Between COVID and the weather there have been very limited opportunities for trail development at Haile Farm Preserve. Individuals have made some progress but there is more to be done to open at least one and perhaps 2 trails later this Spring and work days will be scheduled. If you wish to help, send a note to volunteerwlct@gmail.com to get on our Trail Team list. Social distancing guidelines will be observed.



Thanks for your help and thanks to Rock Singewald our Trail Team Leader!

NEW OSPREY PLATFORM AT HFP

The habitat along the Palmer River is almost ideal for the fish eating raptor, the osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*) and there are numerous nests and platforms in the area. But the revival of the species has been so successful that every year there is a demand for additional platforms. The Warren Land Conservation Trust is pleased to announce that, with support from a legislative grant sponsored by Representatives Speakman and Knight, a new platform has been installed off the Saltmarsh Trail at the Haile Farm Preserve. The high tech platform was constructed off site by the firm Pearson Pilings of Swansea and installed by their crew. Branches were attached to the platform since this is known to attract birds and assist with their nest building in the Spring. The platform will welcome the birds back from their 3000 mile fight from South America when they arrive in May.



Pearson Pilings Crew at Haile Farm Preserve

The WLCT Could Use Your Support

In the typical year the Warren Land Conservation Trust would reach out with the Fall membership campaign and the Spring appeal to support special projects. But given the Covid 19 crisis, supporting human service organizations is a priority for us all. However, the WLCT also has expenses such as for lumber needed to continue work on new trails slated for Spring opening.

As noted, the Haile Farm Preserve is open to allow the community to have an opportunity to get outside in this time of stress (see www.warrenlct.org). If you think the WLCT is providing a valuable service to the community, we would welcome any contribution you might wish to make to PO Box 565, Warren, RI 02885.

Thanks in advance for your support.

This publication compiled and edited by Ed McAloon, WLCT board member