



WARREN LAND CONSERVATION TRUST

We think the world of Warren

NEWSLETTER

FALL 2020

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A "NOVEL" ANNUAL MEETING

Since its reinvigoration several years ago, the Warren Land Conservation Trust has held regular Annual Meetings as is required by its by-laws. In addition to the business aspects, such as election board members and officers, we have offered varying programs to engage our community. One year the subject was aquaculture, and Roger Williams University provided all the oysters we could eat. Another year we sponsored a fund-raising concert by Atwater and Donnelly and the Vox Hunters. Finally, last year the Director of the Coastal Resources Management Council spoke on how climate change will likely impact Warren's waterfront areas.

But, of course, the global pandemic has put a temporary end to such productive community gatherings.

This year our Annual Meeting will be virtual, and this current issue of our newsletter serves as our report to the community. The actual meeting will be held virtually at 7:00 on Tuesday, November 9th. Any member of the Trust who wishes to attend should let us know at warrenlctri@gmail.com and we will issue you an invitation. Likewise, if you have any comments or questions on the material below, let us know and we will respond directly or in the course of the meeting.

Hopefully the new normal in 2021 will allow us to return to the type of physical meeting that we all have enjoyed so much in the past.

Sincerely,


Mike Gerhardt
President, WLCT



View from a bench at Haile Farm Preserve

CONTACT THE WLCT



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A "NOVEL" ANNUAL MEETING, cont'd

TREASURER'S REPORT – FINN BRUDEVOLD

All accounts as of 9/2020:

Money market account	\$11,214
Checking account	\$2,425
PayPal account	\$100
Total funds	\$13,739

MEMBERSHIP: 142 on members list, 83 have renewed over the year.



Busy osprey nest at Jacob's Point

ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS

After six years leading the pack, Michael Gerhardt will be stepping down as president of the Warren Land Conservation Trust. During this time, Mike has reinvigorated the board, bringing in members with a range of expertise and skills. Additionally, he has overseen the inclusion of more than 70 acres to the properties the Land Trust stewards, nearly than doubling its holdings. He has brought in a number of grants, and overseen the establishment of an endowment, held with the Rhode Island Foundation. We are deeply grateful for the tremendous amount of attention, time and effort that Mike has dedicated to the Land Trust, and for his leadership, guidance and insight.

A “NOVEL” ANNUAL MEETING, cont’d

Taking over as president will be E. Jenny K. Flanagan. Jenny has been on the board for three years, and has assisted the Land Trust in GIS mapping of its preserves, creating trails at Haile Farm Preserve, organizing walks and kite flying events, and applying for corporate and legislative grants. Jenny has more than 25 years professional experience in land conservation, working as an appraiser for government agencies, non-profits, farmers, and other private property owners.

Rock Singewald has agreed to step up as vice president of the board, and Martha Antaya and Finn Brudevold will continue as secretary and treasurer, respectively.

Board members renewing their three-year terms are: Finn Brudevold, Ed McAloon and Bill Aylward, with the new addition of David Weed. The board additionally consists of Martha Antaya, E. Jenny K. Flanagan, Michael Gerhardt, Betty Lang and Rock Singewald.

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARDS

Every year the WLCT honors those who go above and beyond to conserve land and our natural environment. This year the WLCT is honoring *Dave Peterson* and *David Weed* with Distinguished Service Awards. These gentlemen have been consistent and dedicated volunteers for many years now, performing all aspects of trail development. These tasks have been accomplished in all weather conditions including the heat of summer and cold of winter. Without their efforts, our trail system could not have advanced to where it is today.



David Weed, Michael Gerhardt and Dave Peterson at awards ceremony in September.

RECENT ACQUISITIONS

WETLAND RESOURCE PARCELS

By Jenny Flanagan, Vice President

The WLCT is proud to steward two new wetlands resource properties in the past year:

Shortly before last year’s Annual Meeting, we received the donation of a 2.5-acre parcel at the end of Ann Court. This property is a wooded wetland habitat, and is part of a

wetland corridor that stretches from Vernon Street south to Seymour Street. Thanks to the East Bay Land Development Corporation for this donation, and to the Warren Planning Board for its guidance in this project.

More recently, we received the donation of a 0.23-acre parcel on the south side of Pennsylvania Avenue. This also is entirely wetlands, and is part of another valuable wetland corridor that runs off of the east of Market Street, beginning at the Massachusetts state line and draining south into the marsh across from Malik’s Liquors and then into Belcher’s Cove and the Palmer River. We are grateful to Roger and Frances Orifice for their generous donation and support.

While both of these acquisitions are isolated wetland parcels, they are part of the Land Trust’s long-term goal of protecting all of the properties in these wetlands resource areas. Preservation and stewardship of these wetland areas improves wildlife conditions, reduces flood hazards, and in some areas can mitigate the impacts of climate change and sea level rise. The Land Trust will continue to work with the Town of Warren and other partners to protect these precious areas.

TOWESET LANDING

By Jenny Flanagan, Vice President

The WLCT is working on its newest preserve, Toweset Landing, which is open to the public.



View of the beach at Toweset Landing

We are extremely grateful to Norman and Joyce Cote for the donation of their property at the end of Maple Road on Mount Hope Bay. This small beachfront property is open to the public from sunrise to sunset.



Completed parking spaces – Toweset Landing

With permission from the RI Coastal Resource Management Council and in consultation with the Town of Warren, the Land Trust has constructed two parking spaces here, and a kayak rack is in the works.

While open to the public, please note that this is a very small preserve – about 7,000 SF or 1/6th of an acre. So it is important to be respectful to our neighbors and not park on the road or on private property.

BARKER FARM PRESERVE

By Michael Gerhardt, President

Land conservation is a long process. Karen Burnes of Westport, MA, expressed an interest in donating a parcel of almost 25 acres bordered by Market Street and the Palmer Rivers to the Warren Land Conservation Trust. To facilitate the donation, the Trust introduced Ms. Burnes to a representative of the USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service, as we thought that their Wetlands Easement Reserve Program might be applicable to her property. This program reimburses property owners in exchange for a very strict Conservation Easement on qualified properties.

But it is not an easy process to apply be reviewed and approved. We are pleased to report that all of the foregoing have been accomplished and that the property at 504 Market Street has now been enrolled in the USDA's Wetlands Reserve Easement Program.

This clears the way for the final donation of the land to the Land Trust, which is expected to be accomplished this Fall.

When joined with an existing parcel owned by the Trust, the new Barker Farm Preserve will encompass about 30 acres, which has the potential for future trail development.

The Trust is profoundly grateful to Karen Burnes for her generosity in donating this land, which will protected in perpetuity.

TRAIL TEAM NOTES

by Rock Singewald, Board Member

Since the pandemic hit and the need for social distancing and small groups became the way we live, we have had to do our trail maintenance work in some different ways. In March and April, we were able to identify some projects that Trail Team members could do on their own. Later, once we were able to have small groups together with masks and distancing, we were able to schedule limited work parties. Additionally, we cleared several big trees that fell on the trails at Haile Farm. Many thanks to Pat Armstrong and son who became our chain saw brigade.

JADE TRAIL IS NOW OPEN

The biggest project we were able to complete this past winter and spring was the new Jade Trail at Haile Farm Preserve. This trail offers a new entrance to the north side of the preserve and allows for a loop walk around the property that doesn't double back on itself. Because the trail crossed some very

wet areas, there was a need to build quite a few sections of boardwalk. The Trail Team did some really heavy lifting as they carried 10-foot long board after board into the woods. Jenny Flanagan and family did a great job of mapping out the boardwalk locations as well as handling the bulk of the work in putting them together.

We also got a big pile of wood chips donated by Kinder Industries in Bristol. With that we were able to cover both the new entrance and add to the existing entrance by the trailhead sign.

The result was a completed trail that we opened to the public in August with a ceremony thanking the Holland brothers from Jade Engineered Plastics for their help in getting the trail completed.



Boardwalk on newly completed Jade Trail

The core team that worked on the Jade Trail with us the most was Dave Peterson, Dave Weed, John Mensinger, Mike Gerhardt, Katie Caouette, and Carol Meeker. Hats off to all of you!

We did a thorough clean up before hosting the kickoff for RI Land Trust Days on August 21 and 22 at Haile Farm, and we think the trails look really good, so we urge everyone to go out and enjoy them.

ADOPT A TRAIL

We also were able to get some volunteers to adopt a few of the trail sections at Haile Farm and Jacob's Point for ongoing upkeep. Thanks to Martha Antaya, Don Betts, Anne Raver, Finn Brudevold and Bill Aylward for stepping up. We think this is a good model for our future efforts to keep the trails in good shape, so if anyone wants to take on a small section of the trails, please send an email to volunteerwct@gmail.com.

INVASIVE SPECIES MITIGATION

Trail maintenance work included some work on removing invasive species from both Haile Farm and Jacob's Point. We removed some Autumn Olive, Buckthorn and Purple Loosestrife, as well as cut back sections of Phragmites along the salt marsh. We did a lot, but there is always more to do in this area of maintenance. With financial assistance from the National Resource Conservation Service, we expect to make significant progress in 2021.



COVID compliant stewardship

LAND TRUST DAYS 2020

In the midst of COVID, the Land Trust was able to host two events as part of the Rhode Island Land Trust Council's Land Trust Days.

LAND TRUST DAYS' OPENING EVENT AT HAILE FARM PRESERVE



Ben Gagliardi and trail walkers taking a meditative break at the gloaming.

WLCT was proud to be the host for the kick-off event for Rhode Island Land Trust Days, a trail walk at Haile Farm Preserve with a talk and trail notes by entomologist Ben Gagliardi, RIDS Nature Lab's Staff Biologist. Due to COVID protocols, this was a reservation-only event, and it was split into 2 days – August 22 and 23 – to accommodate everyone who signed up to attend. We had a beautiful, dry, late afternoon to sunset walk on the 22nd. The next day, the attendees got to see how the trails and plant life rejuvenated after that day's strong storm had blown through. As always, Ben's commentary was both interesting and highly informative.

GO FLY A KITE!

On August 30, the Warren Land Conservation Trust hosted our 2nd annual kite flying event at Jacob's Point. Jenny Flanagan was out on this sunny, breezy Sunday (as the event was rained out the day before). Folks from ages 3 to 91 came by to help get kites in the air, watch them soar, learn about different types of kites, and just generally enjoy an afternoon at the beach.



Kite flying at Jacob's Point

PLEASE DONATE!

Finally, if you believe that the Warren Land Conservation Trust's ongoing work to protect open space in Warren and make it available to the public is of value to the community, ***please complete the form below.*** Or you can go to our **SUPPORT US** page on our web site WARRENLCT.ORG.

WLCT is a Federal 501(c)3 Non-Profit corporation.

- | | |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Renewal | <input type="checkbox"/> Individual \$15 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> New | <input type="checkbox"/> Family \$25 |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Patron \$100 |

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

*Make your check out to "Warren Land Conservation" and return this form to:
PO Box 565, Warren, RI 02885*

This publication was compiled and edited by Ed McAloon, WLCT Board Member.