



Photo: M. Burns, Looking South from Devils Hopyard State Park Look Out

Lower Connecticut River Land Trust Annual Report 2020

The Lower Connecticut River Land Trust works to conserve, study, steward, and promote the unique values and scientific significance, natural and working lands, and historic, ecologic, cultural, and scenic resources of the communities of the Lower Connecticut River Valley Region.

2020 Board Members

- * President – Lauren Gister, Chester
- * Treasurer – Noel Bishop, Westbrook
- * Secretary – Ed Bailey, Middlefield
- * David Brown, Middlesex Land Trust
- * Kristina White, Lyme Land Conservation Trust
- * Marilyn Gleeson, East Haddam Land Trust
- * Dr. Melvin Woody – Ct River Gateway Commission, Alternate Claire Matthews

2020 Permanent Members

- | | |
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| * Jenny Kitsen, Chester Land Trust | * Angus McDonald – Deep River |
| * Gail Reynolds, Haddam Land Trust | * Laura Francis – Durham |
| * Nancy Rambeau, Essex Land Trust | * Rob Smith – East Haddam |
| * Tom Elliott, Westbrook Land Conservation Trust | * David Cox – East Hampton |
| * Michael Urban, Old Saybrook Land Trust | * Norm Needleman – Essex |
| * Ann Courcy, Deep River Land Trust | * Bob McGarry – Haddam |
| * David Bingham, Salem Land Trust | * Cathy Iino – Killingworth |
| * Margot Burns, Lower Ct River Valley Council of Governments | * Steve Mattson – Lyme |
| * Anthony Salvatore – Cromwell | * Ben Florisheim - Middletown |
| * Karl Kilduff – Clinton | * Carl Fortuna – Old Saybrook |
| | * Tim Griswold - Old Lyme |
| | * Susan Bransfield – Portland |

It was a steadfast year for the Lower Connecticut River Land Trust in spite of the year's difficulties due to Covid19. With the expanded 2020 permanent membership meeting virtually, on a monthly basis, and completing several significant projects while beginning another.

The land trust works to support our member organizations and our communities through its project selection. Projects for 2020 included the *Potential Preserve/Easement Evaluation Template Form and Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Evaluation Form* and a flyer, approved by all the Lower Ct River and Coastal Region Land Trust Exchange (LTE) land trusts, to promote the nomination of them for the Pop Up Grants being given by the Community Foundation of Middlesex County during the summer months. The LTE is an informal collaboration of the land trusts, and a program of the RiverCOG. An important project begun for 2021 was the Connecticut Land Conservation Council (CLCC) LCRLT Advanced Collaboration Assistance Program Project, a project made possible by a grant from the Peter and Carmen Lucia Buck Foundation. Projects that will be carried forward include a bylaw review, website development; endowment creation for both the LTE land trusts and the LCRLT; due diligence funding; and proactive land owner outreach,



Photo: J. Preston, Lord Cove, Lower CT River



Photo: USFWS, Mallards, Salt Meadow Unit,



Photo: J. Preston, Wild Rice, Lower Ct River

The *Potential Preserve/Easement Evaluation Template Form and Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Evaluation Form* were created through a collaboration of our member land trusts as useful templates for all to use, and were sent to the CLCC for inclusion on the land trust resource page. The pop-up grant flyer was developed by RiverCOG's summer Sustainable CT interns. It was approved by all the LTE land trusts, but due to the short duration of the Community Foundation's grants, an unknown at the start of the project, and the long duration of

individual land trusts' approval of the flyer, we were not able to use the flyer this year. We will be able to use the flyer next year should the pop-up grants be repeated. It is felt that it is a good project to not only promote the region's land trust but also the Community Foundation.



Photo: M. Burns, Clinton Land Trust, Elliot Preserve

Primary projects for 2021 will be the Connecticut Land Conservation Council (CLCC) LCRLT Advanced Collaboration Assistance Program Project and to review the current bylaws. The project will be led by Amy Paterson, Executive Director of CLCC and consultant Sharon Danosky of Danosky and Associates. Over the course of 2021 the land trust will explore its vision and goals over the long term including, an evaluation of its current status, its capacity to grow, its vision for the future and how a strategic alliance of some form with land trusts and/or other groups in the region can further this vision. We will also explore which entities our land trust can look to for an alliance and what form that alliance might take.