

## The Expansion of Windswept Ridge and the Art of Trail Building

By Geoff Furtney

The stewards of the Essex Land Trust have been designing and building hiking trails for 50 years. On average they make ½ mile of trail every year. But when the opportunity to expand Windswept Ridge was being finalized, the Board decided to break from the in-house tradition and employ a professional trail builder to design and create a new set of trails on the recently acquired 17 acres adjacent to the Windswept Preserve.

### The Original Windswept Ridge

The Windswept Ridge property with its entrance at the end of Windermere Way once belonged to the prominent Bull and Bushnell families. More recently, it was open space created when a developer built a number of homes off of Windswept Ridge. Consisting of 30 acres, the space was ceded to the Town of Essex and the town gave the property to the Land Trust in 1998.

Windswept has always been a beautiful property, attracting occasional hikers from the surrounding neighborhood and local kids who played in the wetland areas. In 2015, Paul Greenberg, Acquisitions Chair, added a small 6-acre parcel off Windsor Lane in Ivoryton, donated by Ted Zito, and completed a right of way to connect the new acquisition to the legacy Windswept Ridge property. This created a second entrance to Windswept with street parking at the end of the cul de sac on Windsor Lane.

Then in 2017, the Land Trust acquired another 11 acres adjacent to Windswept behind Essex Financial on Route 153. This property, along with right of ways for entrance trails and parking dramatically changed the character of Windswept.

The Board knew that, with the new acreage and the right of ways, the whole may be significantly greater than

the sum of the parts. On paper the new preserve, now expanded to 46 acres, offered a unique benefit – a family in Ivoryton could hike all the way to Essex and vice versa. The new Windswept cuts a swath north to south that connects the two villages.

Windswept's new steward Jeff Croyle's job grew overnight. He began walking the new forestland, planning prospective trails, contemplating a property significantly larger in size.

The smaller Windsor Lane acquisition is relatively flat but is strewn with rocks and covered with the Japanese Barberry. A week or so of cutting these invasive plants and leveling created an easy path to an old stone wall. Adhering to the steward's policy of leaving old walls in place, the Land Trust asked Bill French, a man seemingly compelled to build things, to construct a bridge spanning the old wall. With the bridge installed, the first leg of the Ivoryton/Essex trail was in place.



Stone wall bridge built by Bill French

Incorporating the larger property behind Essex Financial was more of a puzzle. The acreage purchased on the southern end was characterized by a series of plateaus and steep rocky inclines. Several paths were considered,

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# The Expansion of Windswept Ridge ... continued from page 1

each judged to be too extreme for the average hiker. The property just goes up and up and up.

## The Trail Building Company

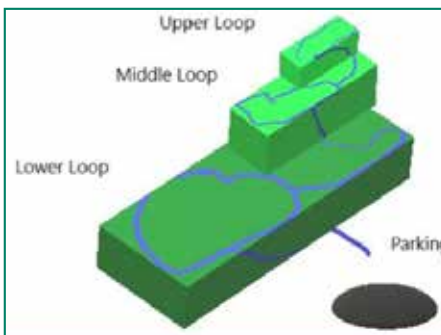
Enter Ben Collins, proprietor of The Trail Building Company. We first met Ben when he was discussing trail building and maintenance with the Old Saybrook Preserve team. Ben had ten years of experience building and maintaining a variety of trails (hiking, biking, cross country skiing) in Vermont. His undergraduate degree is in environmental science.

Several Land Trust stewards had walked the property looking at prospective sites for new trails. Jeff Croyle walked the steep inclines and valleys countless times alone. He invited other stewards to walk with him to find ways to best show off the terrain and be amenable to a wide range of hikers. He marked several possible trails with small flags. They dotted the landscape but did not identify a coherent set of trails.

Ben drove down from his home in Mansfield one crisp, summer morning in 2017 and met with a small group of stewards led by Croyle. As they walked, they talked about the terrain, soils, drainage issues as well as Ben's trail maintenance philosophy – how design and maintenance are two sides of the same coin. They discussed tools. It was an interesting discussion – a twenty something with a pertinent college degree and experience on highly traveled pathways in Vermont and Maine and a group of grumpy retired guys who had been stewarding the land for years. *Note: One side of that conversation thought they knew it all.*

## Home Run

It turned out that Ben's first idea was all we needed to hear. It was perfect. It addressed the terrain problem – steep rocky climbs that would tax most visiting hikers – and it showed off every important aspect of the landscape.... None of the grumpy guys had seen it. Ben observed that



the hill rising above the valley floor consisted of three plateaus. Each plateau diminishes in size with elevation, but each has enough space for the installation of a loop-designed trail. Ben proposed

the stewards create three stacked loops on each of the plateaus and connect them with ascending and descending routes. In this way a series of interconnected loops were formed with various levels of difficulty serving a range of abilities.

Ben's second idea was harder to swallow. He wanted to work alongside the steward team and show them how to design and cut a trail. He wanted to educate the stewards about design philosophy, introduce proper tools and talk about trail building and maintenance techniques. He wanted to emphasize sustainable and safe stewardship practices. He wanted to teach the men and women who manage nearly 1000 acres of open space how to do their job! The stewards held a confab.

Without mentioning names, Myron Stacks, Steward for the Preserve, observed that he had cleared miles of trails for years in northwest Connecticut and steered the effort in the Preserve in Essex. Do we really need to hire someone to show us a skill set we already have? Myron was not the only steward with this opinion. Roger Field, ever the diplomat, thought the idea had merit—maybe there was something to learn. That idea was seconded by Bob Nussbaum (Land Trust Vice President, who is not a steward but perennially butts into steward business). Chief Steward Tom Rutherford settled the matter; he reminded us the average age of the steward group is 75; why not get some work out of the young man? Jeff Croyle negotiated a fair cost with Ben, and sketched out a schedule.

## Tools of the Trade – MacLeod's and Pulaski's

Work started after Labor Day with Ben directing a team of 4-7 stewards and continued into the fall until the ground froze. When he pulled into the parking lot behind Essex Financial on the first day, the waiting stewards eyed the tools in the back of the truck...chainsaw,



Applying trail building skills



**Jeff Croyle with trail builder Ben Collins**

rakes, safety gear, and a couple tools we hadn't seen before.

Ben did the introductions: this is a Macleod. We'll use it for duffing the trail. He described the particular model and why he favored its weight and the length of its shaft. Then he showed off his

Pulaski. It looked like an axe with a hook on the end. We grabbed all the tools and headed up the hill. Ben's idea was to clear the loops first so if something interrupted the work calendar, we could follow the basic outline we had created.

We learned duffing – removing the detritus (organic material from the first inch or so of the proposed path so it wouldn't create sinks and crevices as it decomposed). He showed us where to put drainage, and which side of trees to cut. He cut small saplings with the Pulaski using a technique that made perfect sense once you saw it done...a half dozen older gentleman and a twenty something bent our heads and cleared a half of one loop that first day. And we learned.

In the weeks that followed we cleared three loops and all the connectors...all properly duffed, drained and marked. We all smiled at Ben's energy and we came to admire his leadership. We disagreed often about a direction, the need to remove some old tree or who got to say it was quitting time. But it was always with a smile. From his side, Ben confided he had no idea everyone was so old...and how

## Steward Jeff Croyle

Jeff and his spouse, Pam Peters, recently moved to Essex from Nyack NY. They discovered Essex in 2015 while exploring places to retire and are thrilled with their decision to relocate here.

Jeff and Pam both retired after decades of HR consulting focused on technology and operations.

Both are avid kayakers and have traded paddling on the Hudson River with kayaking on the CT River. They have paddled the 150 miles from Albany to Manhattan and participated last summer in the Connecticut River Museum's inaugural Conquer the Current 9-mile race from Haddam to Essex. They look forward to competing again this year in the fund raiser.

They have restored a number of antique homes over the years and are currently working on the 1760s burgundy saltbox at the entrance to Cross Lots.

They belong to ECYC and PYC and Pam is on the Friends of the Library Board and is an active member of the Essex Garden Club.

everyone kept working – no one stopping to look at their cell phone! Ben never saw that before.

A new Windswept took shape. The looped plateau trails more than double the hiking distance. The loops skirt unusual rock formations, and bring hikers high above Scotch Plains. Without Ben Collins and The Trail Building Company, the stewards of the Essex Land Trust would still have gotten up the hill but the path would have been less interesting and less travelled. Ben created a unique system of trails for the Land Trust and showed a bunch of old stewards new tricks. And he has a bunch of old grumpy men calling him friend.

## Grand Opening in October

As part of our 50th anniversary, the Essex Land Trust has scheduled a formal opening of the expanded Windswept Ridge property for Saturday October 6, 2018 at 10 am. All ages welcome and boots recommended. The rain date is Sunday, October 7 at 1 pm.

Come celebrate the re-opening of this unique and greatly expanded property and explore its ridges, ravines and wetlands. A steward will meet hikers at each of the three entrances – the Windermere Way entrance, the Windsor Lane entrance or the Route 153 (Plains Road) entrance behind Essex Financial. Stewards will guide everyone to a central location, we'll have refreshments and talk about the history of the property, some of its unusual features and the opportunities ahead.



# Celebrating 50 Years: The Falls River Initiative

By Chet Arnold

With a resounding and unanimous vote of “YES” at the town meeting of October 13, 1998 – almost exactly 20 years ago – over 200 Essex residents ushered in a new era for land preservation in town, and with it a new way of thinking and operating for the Essex Land Trust (then the Essex Land Conservation Trust). The vote was to approve a town contribution of \$125,000 toward the \$450,000 purchase price of a property along the Mill Pond section of the Falls River in Centerbrook. Those funds would later be joined with a state grant from a brand-new open space fund, and Essex Land Trust contributions raised from Essex citizens, to permanently protect the 22-acre parcel of wetlands, dramatic rock outcrops and woodlands.

It was the first time since its inception in 1968 that the Land Trust had proactively fundraised and acquired a property. Previously, the Trust had been the recipient of valuable and iconic properties such as Meadow Woods and Cross Lots, but these had always been donated by forward-thinking landowners. With the Heinemann-Hallisey property – the first acquisition of what would soon be called the Falls River Initiative, the Land Trust changed its modus operandi from a passive to a proactive organization. Armed with this new perspective, in rapid succession the Land Trust and its partners acquired a series of properties along the river, reaching a total of 107 acres: Falls River I (1998, 22 acres), Osage Trails (1999, 8 acres), Tiley-Pratt Pond, (1999, 9 acres), Falls River II (2000, 22 acres), the Mill Race in Ivoryton (2005, 7 acres), Jean’s Island (2006, 8 acres), and the Platt property addition to Bushy Hill Preserve (2007, 31 acres).

As most Essex residents know, the Falls River is a tributary of the Connecticut, connecting the town’s three villages of Ivoryton, Centerbrook and Essex as it flows from west to east. About 70% of Essex lies within the 18



Falls River Initiative Fundraising Sign

square-mile Falls River watershed. The Falls is both an ecological and historical “backbone” tying together the villages of Essex. Much of the early industrial era development in town, from the factories of Ivoryton to the mills of Centerbrook to the shipyards of Essex. Ecologically, the River provides a wide diversity of upland, wetland, and aquatic habitat, and is important to the protection of the area’s drinking water.

In sum, the Falls River Initiative figures are impressive: seven properties totaling just over 100 acres with a market value of about \$3.5 million, acquired for a total of about \$960,000. This was all done in the nine-year period from 1998-2007 – not a very long time in the world of land acquisition. Many partners were needed to make this happen. Most properties were sold by the owners at a “bargain price” far below market value, and some were gifted. The Town of Essex used its Open Space Sinking Fund to contribute to almost every Initiative purchase. Also critical was the State: ELT has made good use of the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection’s Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Program with a series of successful competitive grants.

Of course, the ELT contribution was made possible by generous ELT members and other citizens of Essex responding to fundraising campaigns. For instance, for that first purchase 309 individuals responded to the campaign with contributions. And there were other local fundraising efforts, ranging from a tag sale by the Tiley-Pratt Pond neighborhood to “Reservations for Preservation,” a special dinner at the Griswold Inn, attended by almost 300 supporters, at which every penny spent was donated by Doug and Joan Paul to that first Falls River purchase. This event raised over \$9,000 and was repeated with resounding success two years later to help fund the second Mill Pond purchase. In addition

to traditional fundraising, the land trust board learned to use new mechanisms to make these deals happen, including the use of conservation easements (Mill Race) and the selling of buildable lots to finance the purchase of the most ecologically important pieces of a property (Tiley-Pratt).

That first Falls River purchase in 1998 was the result of a “perfect storm” of factors: generous landowners Parker Heinemann and Michael Hallisey, forward-thinking Essex Land Trust President Barbara Edwards, and new open space funds at both the town and the state levels. But, instead of being a “one-off,” the purchase energized the Board, educated the town residents, and fundamentally changed the way that we now go about protecting land in Essex. The Falls River Initiative continues today, as ELT continues to look for opportunities to protect the backbone of Essex.



Doug Paul handing over Griswold Inn donation to then ELT President Chet Arnold

## The Falls River Initiative – A Perspective

By Steve Knauth

It took nine years to bring to fruition, three presidents and one of the largest town meetings in Essex’s collective memory. The state was a willing ally; town government stood behind the effort, as did the people of the three villages.

And, in the end, the Essex Land Conservation Trust’s Falls River Initiative ended up preserving 41-acres of contiguous land and a 7-acre island on the Falls River, one of the town’s most beautiful – and important – waterways.

It took a team to pull it off. First, there were three land owners, all of whom valued preservation over profit. Parker Heinemann and Michael Hallisey’s offer of their 18-acre parcel started the whole affair, when, resisting the offers of a developer, they let the town know in 1998 that they’d like to see the land preserved as open space.

Two years later, Douglas and Marilyn Hanberg offered up their adjacent 22-acre parcel for preservation, doubling the size of the preserved land. And, in 2005, long-time land trust member and supporter Jean Leuchtenberg and her sons, Tom, Chris and Josh, sold their 7-acre island on the Falls River to the trust. Said Leuchtenberg, a long-time land trust member, the transfer was “by far, the most appropriate thing for the island. I’m thrilled at the accomplishment.” Jean’s island has been described

as “a landmark property - a scenic, environmental and recreational benefit to the entire community.”

Three presidents led the trust during the 7-year project, and each recognized the value of these properties, beyond their mere possession. The initiative was first made a priority under the aegis of then-president Barbara Edwards. “[It’s] a gorgeous piece of property,” she said of the river.

Chet Arnold followed as president, presiding over the second purchase writing the all-important grant applications. The land owners, Arnold said in an interview, “provided us with a great opportunity to expand the protected waterfront forest along the Falls River, and I’m pleased we were able to take advantage of it.”

Funding had to come from three major sources; according to published figures, the state contributed around \$360,000 through its Open Space Fund. State Sen. Eileen Daly, chairperson of the Environment Committee, was a staunch supporter at the state level. “We’ve worked extremely hard for open space ... and now we can see a tangible result,” she said at the dedication of the first Falls River park. The Town of Essex allocated around \$237,000 and the land trust and private donors added just over \$300,000.

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# Essex Land Trust Annual Report - April 12, 2018

*Editor's Note: This article is an edited summary of the more complete report which can be accessed on the Essex Land Trust website, on its New & Notable page.*

2018 marks the Essex Land Trust's 50th year in pursuing its mission of preserving and enhancing our community's open space and natural resources for the benefit of future generations. We thank all our members and donors for the sustained support provided over many years. Without this support we would not have been so successful in realizing our vision.

The past year was another successful year for the Essex Land Trust. We are pleased to report the following highlights.

## **Finance Report:**

Our Operational Income for calendar 2017 was \$114,000 with \$34,000 coming from dues and the balance from Donations, Grants, and Bequests. Expenses were \$109,000 with the largest portion attributable to mowing, tree removal, and treatment for

invasives on several of our properties. Other Core expenses were to fund our communications efforts, various programs & activities, and the Membership drive.

**Acquisitions:** Windswept Ridge started out as a 30-acre property that the Land Trust has owned since 1998. In 2015 we added 6 acres to the north end and in May 2017 we closed on an additional 11 acres of woods and steep rock ledges that extends Windswept Ridge Preserve southward. This is a spectacular new piece of property, and the stewardship team, led by Jeff Croyle is in the process of creating a new series of trails that incorporate these scenic ledges into our trail system.

We finalized license agreements with Essex Savings Bank and Herb Clark, and now have access to Windswept Ridge from Route 153. This access point is behind the Essex Financial parking lot and up a short gravel road which

leads to the new Land Trust parking lot. These expansions and improvements make Windswept Ridge an enlarged, beautiful, and easily accessible 46-acre Essex Land Trust Preserve.

A second major achievement is the expansion of James Glen, creating a contiguous 40 acres of open space. In January 2004, the Town of Essex gave the Land Trust the 4-acre James Glen, located off of Hudson Lane. In August 2016, we purchased an 18-acre abutting property called Doanes' Woods, which is accessed from Navy Lane. Most recently, we closed on another 18 acres of gorgeous abutting property from the Doane family that will be called Woodja Hill, a Native American name. Accessed from Oxbow Lane, it consists of open meadows, hilly wooded areas and wetlands.

With this new purchase we now have a preserve that goes from Hudson Lane in Essex all the way to the 10.7-acre Lyons Meadow Preserve in Deep River, a beautiful open-space property owned by the Deep River Land Trust.

**Stewardship:** the 34-member team has been very busy

as always, developing trails and access points, installing signs and kiosks, addressing invasive plants and clearing extensive tree damage brought on by several severe winter storms. An important initiative has been developing and implementing management plans for each of our preserves. It goes without saying that the impressive efforts of these many volunteers are vital to preserving the quality of the Land Trust's 22 properties, representing nearly 650 acres.

**Membership:** Essex Land Trust Membership continued strong. At the end of 2017, you were part of our community of 385 individual and household members. We are very grateful for the support and commitment we receive from the community and encourage all current members to renew their membership as membership dues are an important contributor to the Land Trust's financial well-being.



**Programs & Events:** In 2017, there were 22 events. Four lectures spanned the topics of invasive plants, geologic history of the Lower Ct. River, monarch butterflies and their habitat and archeological history of indigenous people of our valley with events in the field to complement these lectures. In addition, there were a number of other programs that helped participants explore our properties. Many of these events could not have been as successful without the collaboration of our partners the Essex Garden Club, The Essex Historical Society, The Deep River Historical Society, the Deep River Land Trust and Essex Meadows.

A special note about the 12th annual Land Trust Photo Contest which took place on April 6. Coordinated by ELT volunteer Susan Scott, the contest was sponsored by 6 land trusts: Old Lyme, Lyme, East Haddam, Salem, Essex and Old Saybrook. There were more than 140 photographers and 340 photos. A great success for this collaborative effort!

**Follow the Falls Initiative:** We joined the Essex Historical Society in the Follow the Falls project, which begins at Falls River Cove and celebrates its natural environment, its industrial history and its place in the history of Essex. Three lectures in January were well attended by a total of 470 people. This project initiates its journey up the Falls River from Elizabeth “Diz” Callender’s 8-acre Osage Trails the property next to her home on Foxboro Point. Osage Trail’s is situated next to what became the Williams Complex and Shipyard.

**Looking to the Future:** During 2016, with guidance from the national Land Trust Alliance, we had completed a detailed assessment of four areas: governance, finance, acquisitions and stewardship. Overall, we received a very good evaluation and sound recommendations which we are implementing to ensure that we will continue to be responsible stewards in perpetuity of the land we hold for your benefit.

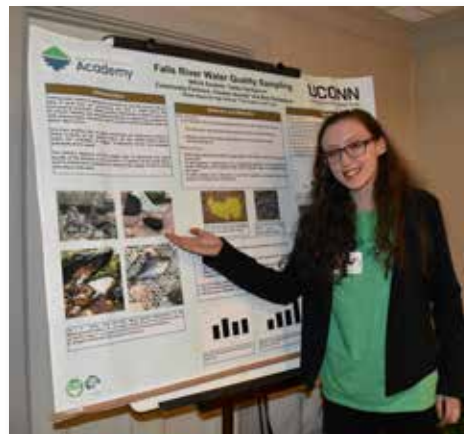
In 2017, we began the process of evaluating where we have been and how best to continue to manage and conserve the land in Essex which we hold and have committed to hold on behalf of members and future generations forever. We adopted a new strategic plan under the leadership of Tom Rutherford. Key areas of focus include Organizational Strength and Land Transactions. Based on our first quarter review, we are making excellent progress in reaching our objectives.

**Accreditation:** As a result of above-mentioned organizational efforts over the past 2 years, the Essex Land Trust Board decided that it was in the organization’s



**ELT President with Peter and Susan Scott**

interest to take a next step, applying for accreditation by the national Land Trust Alliance. We registered to begin the formal process in 2017, with board member Joel Anik taking the lead in overseeing this complex and very detailed initiative.



**Tabby Hardgrove, David Hyde Scholarship recipient**

participation in the USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service program sponsored in Connecticut through UConn. This year’s participant, Tabby Hardgrove, is the third since we established the scholarship. Tabby’s community partners were Bob Nussbaum and Chet Arnold. For her project, Tabby completed a very detailed study of the water quality in the Falls River.

**Eagle Scout Project:** Once again we are grateful to the Boy Scouts and their Eagle Scout program. And to the Ryan Family whose children have supported ELT in the past. Michael Ryan designed the bridge over the stream that runs through Doanes’ Woods and James Glen and led his fellow scouts in its construction.

**Recognitions:**

Annually ELT provides the **David Hyde Memorial Award** in memory of long-time Board Member, David Hyde, to a student who has demonstrated an interest in conservation. The scholarship supports

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**Tom Rutherford presenting Conservator for Life recognition to Myron Stacks**

**Valley Regional:** Each year on its annual day of service, Valley Regional HS provides teams of students to various organizations throughout the tri-town area. The Land Trust typically receives 5 teams of about 10 people each who perform a variety property maintenance tasks. We are

particularly grateful for the assistance these young men and women for their contributions to our stewardship activities.

**Myron Stacks:** The Board elected to honor steward Myron Stacks as a Conservator for life for his outstanding contribution to the stewardship of Essex Land Trust properties.

**Board Election:**

Annual meeting concluded with the election of the Board of Directors.

1. Barbara Sarrantonio to the Board of Directors for a 3-year term. Former attorney representing ELT and a resident of the village of Ivoryton for a number of years.
2. Re-Elect Michael Carlucci, James Denham, Gudrun LeLash and Thomas Rutherford to new 3-year terms.
3. Confirmed the Board classes as shown below:

	2019	2020	2021
Geoff Furtney		Joel Anik	Michael Carlucci
Paul Greenberg		Cynthia Field	James Denham
Judith Saunders		Robert Nussbaum	Gudrun LeLash
-		Nancy Rambeau	Tom Rutherford
-		-	Barbara Sarrantonio

**The Falls River Initiative** ... continued from page 5

The public also spoke at “one of the most heavily-attended town meetings in years,” according to the Hartford Courant’s Charles Stannard. Some 200 residents agreed by unanimous voice vote to allow the town to contribute \$125,000 towards the purchase price of the first Falls River property. The purchase was supported by the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Finance.

In the end, Chet Arnold, speaking at the dedication of the Falls River I property summed it up for all the land preservation efforts: “We owe this victory to the town, the state and to the many private donors who made it all possible.”



**Aerial View of Falls River Mill Pond and Jean's Island**



# ELT Briefs

## Essex Land Trust Accreditation by the Land Trust Alliance Stakeholder Notification and Public Notice

The national Land Trust Alliance's accreditation program recognizes land conservation organizations that meet national quality standards for protecting important natural places and working lands forever. During 2016, with guidance from the Land Trust Alliance, the Essex Land Trust completed a detailed assessment of four areas: governance, finance, acquisitions and stewardship. This was followed in 2017 by the development of a new strategic plan for all functional areas. Now, in 2018, while celebrating 50 years since our founding, we are pleased to announce that the Essex Land Trust is applying for accreditation by the Land Trust Alliance. 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. Accreditation is a mark of distinction that will enable the Essex Land Trust to maintain public confidence while enabling ELT to review and implement policies and procedures, on a regular basis, that improve operations and lead to more effective land conservation. It will also provide third party assurance of quality and permanence of land conservation and be demonstrative of a strong, effective organization that can be trusted.

The Commission invites public input and accepts signed, written comments on pending applications. Comments must relate to how the Essex 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](http://www.landtrustaccreditation.org), or email your comment to [info@landtrustaccreditation.org](mailto: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 Essex Land Trust's application will be most useful if submitted by October 26, 2018.

## Membership Renewal Reminder

So far, 281 families have renewed their Essex Land Trust membership this year. With a goal of 400 sustaining members we encourage those who have not done so yet to send in their renewal and contributions. Membership dues and individual donations are important contributors to the Essex Land Trust's financial strength. Your support really does make a difference. We thank you.

Celebrating **50** Essex Land Trust

***"If we can somehow retain places where we can always sense the mystery of the unknown, our lives will be richer."***

*Sigurd F. Olson, Mystery and the Unknown*



# Coming Events – Mark Your Calendar!



## Hike at Canfield Meadow Woods

**Saturday, September 8, 9am**

**Book Hill Woods Road entrance, Essex**

A part of this land trust property was donated by Mr. and Mrs. Earl Canfield in 1968, making it one of the land trust's earliest properties. A donation by the Nature Conservancy in 1985 completed the more than 300 acres of preserve shared by Essex and Deep River. It consists of 17 trails winding through mixed old and new growth forest with many rocky outcroppings. Bad weather cancels.

## 50th Anniversary Hike

**Saturday October 6, 10am**

**Windswept Ridge Preserve, Essex**

Come celebrate the re-opening of this unique and greatly expanded property. Once just a neighborhood property, it has become a large preserve stretching from Ivoryton to Essex. With help from a professional trail builder, our stewards have created new and unique trails in this 46-acre property, which consists of ridges, ravines and wetlands. Enter at one of the three locations: the Windermere Way entrance, the Windsor Lane entrance or the Plains Road entrance. Stewards will guide you to a central location where we will celebrate the re-opening of this very special property. All ages welcome. Boots recommended. Rain date: Sunday, October 7, 1pm.

## Annual Ivoryton Library

**Pumpkin Chase 5K**

**Saturday, October 20, 7:30am**

**Ivoryton Green**

Co-sponsored in part by the Essex Land Trust, the Ivoryton Pumpkin Chase benefits the Ivoryton Library and its programs. The 5K-race course winds through Ivoryton Village and the Essex Land Trust's Falls River Preserve. 5K prizes awarded in 10 age groups. Runners 8 and under running in the Kids' Fun Run will be given medals and invited to stay for craft and story time. Registration begins at the Ivoryton Village green at 7:30am. Race starts at 8:45 am for children and at 9:15 for adults. Parking in designated lots. Rain or shine.

## Hike Falls River Preserve

**Saturday, November 3, 9am**

**Falls River Drive, Ivoryton**

A beautiful autumn walk, the Falls River preserve is a 40-acre peninsula of forest and ledge projecting into Mill Pond on the Falls River. The more challenging trails cross over ledges of 800-million-year-old metamorphic schist forming the peninsula's spine. The Falls River was dammed in the 18th century to provide waterpower to run a gristmill, a sawmill and an iron works over the years. The land has been used for logging and pasture as recently as the 1930s. Bad weather cancels.

## Cross Lots Clean up

**Saturday, November 17, 9am**

**Cross Lots Preserve, 40 West Avenue, Essex**

Cross Lots lovers and dog walkers: come help us put this Land Trust preserve to bed for the winter, get a mild work out and connect with your neighbors in a beautiful setting. Refreshments will be provided. Please bring rakes, blowers, etc. Families welcome. Rain date: Sunday, November 18.

## Year-end Hike at Johnson Farm

**December 8, 9am,**

**Read Hill Street, Ivoryton**

Once a working farm, this 49-acre jewel of fields and forest in Ivoryton now offers trails across fields and through the woods. There are beautiful open sky vistas from several locations. If windy, bring a kite to fly. Trails are easy to moderate. Leashed dogs welcome. Park in parking lot on Read Hill Street, off of Comstock Rd. Bad weather cancels.

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