

## Canton Land Conservation Trust, Inc.

Spring 1999  
Newsletter

### OPEN SPACE GRANT WILL HELP LAND TRUST ACQUIRE NEW PROPERTY

The Land Trust has been awarded an Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Program grant of \$67,500 by the State Department of Environmental Protection. This grant will help us purchase a 145 acre property on Breezy Hill Road, which will be called the Sun, Wind and Woodland Preserve. The grant was awarded in a competitive program for which there were 59 applicants. We were one of seventeen projects that were approved.

(Continued page 3 GRANT)

### Forestry Operations at Smith Tree Farm

Last fall the Land Trust's consulting forester, Jim Gillespie of Forestland Associates, completed our management plan for the operation of the Smith Tree Farm on Doyle Road. An important element in the management plan is a selective harvest of mature hardwoods in the northwestern area of the property, and of a stand of pine in the center of the property that has been storm-damaged. This management is consistent with the way Dr. Smith managed the property before it was donated to the Land Trust.

(Continued page 3 FORESTRY)

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### PHOTO WORKSHOP ON JUNE 5 AT THE CONKLIN SANCTUARY

On June 5<sup>th</sup> the Canton Land Conservation Trust will celebrate the completion of the Ray Smith Trail at the Mary Conklin Sanctuary with a combination hike-photo workshop lead by Dave Girardin. It will begin at 8 a.m. and last until noon. No experience is necessary—just bring any camera, film, hiking boots, water and lunch. Space is limited to 8-10 participants and the cost is \$20 (\$18 for CLCT members). Call 693-6142 to reserve a space.

(Continued PHOTO WORKSHOP page 3)

### ANNUAL MEETING AND NATURE TALK JUNE 13, 4 P.M. ROARING BROOK NATURE CENTER

Please plan to come to the Annual Meeting of the CLCT. After a brief business meeting to elect directors for the class of 2002, Walt Landgraf, Naturalist at Peoples State Forest, will give a slide lecture on the changes that have occurred to the landscape in the Canton area since the departure of the last glacier about 15,000 years ago. Learn how our forests have been altered since the arrival of the first colonists from Europe. Walt is a former biology teacher from Regional #7 High School and gives a very interesting talk. Following the talk, there will be hot dogs, hamburgers, and light refreshments. Please plan to come—the whole family will enjoy the Nature Center, the talk and the refreshments.

## To Members and Friends of the Canton Land Trust

This is the first of an occasional letter to you from your president. These letters will note significant events and developments, and it is a pleasure to begin by noting a most important step forward.

We reported in a previous article that the Land Trust was awarded a grant by the State to help with the purchase of 145 acres on the west side of Breezy Hill Road. This is, indeed, exciting news. The grant application that was sent to the State represented a tremendous amount of work, and we have been told that our submission was outstanding for its completeness and accuracy. Not a detail was left out. We are most appreciative of the work that went into this effort, and I am particularly pleased to express great thanks to Board member and our Secretary, Charlie DeWeese, who did the bulk of the work.

The initial news of our grant was received by phone from a Hartford Courant reporter prior to the newspaper report. Our official notification came at our February 23 Board meeting, when Representative Jessie Stratton not only presented us

with a framed copy of the Grant Award, but also with a very generous check for our Land Acquisition Fund. We were fortunate to have the help and enthusiasm of Jessie behind all our efforts. Her support of our activities and those of other groups who are trying to preserve open space is significant. Thank you, Jessie.

Every member of your Board of Directors has made a donation to the Land Acquisition Fund, as have many Land Trust members. It is gratifying to see this support from so many. Money from this Fund will be needed to help with the purchase of the Sun, Wind and Woodland Preserve, but this is just the beginning of Fund activities, not an end. There will be other opportunities for land purchases, and it is always best to be financially prepared. These are promising, but challenging, times for the Land Trust. It is hoped that, as you are able, you will contribute to the Land Acquisition Fund so you can have the satisfaction of increasing our ability to preserve significant open space and, with the land, the character of the Town of Canton.

### The Ray Smith Trail at the Mary Conklin Preserve

The Land Trust has been developing a hiking trail through the Mary Conklin Preserve since last fall. The trail was laid out by consulting forester Peter Jensen, who presided over a workshop in September where Land Trust volunteers were taught trail construction techniques. Volunteers have met throughout the winter to cut brush and trees, pull stumps, and move rocks. Where the trail traverses hillsides, it had to be cut into the side to provide a level walking surface, while allowing for proper drainage. The basic trail is now roughed in. Volunteers were excited to join the two ends of the loop on March 5. Volunteers also met on April 3 and 24 to further improve the trail and to start work on a footbridge for a stream crossing. The trail will then be marked with paint blazes. All work needs to be completed by June in order to qualify for a cost-sharing grant under the Stewardship Improvement Program.

The Ray Smith Foundation has very generously offered to fund a trail booklet, which is in the process of being designed. It will contain a map of the trail, as well as a guide to the interesting natural and historical features of the Mary Conklin Preserve.

## STUDENTS TO STUDY BOX TURTLES

Sixth grade students from Canton Intermediate School will be studying Eastern Box Turtles this spring as part of an ongoing effort to develop baseline data on box turtle populations in the Town of Canton. The turtles will be weighed, measured, and marked for identification purposes, then released where they were found. The object of the project is to accumulate information on this declining species. If conservation measures are not taken, the species may become endangered in the future. Loss of habitat, automobile mortality and the pet trade have all contributed to the current decline in the population of this attractive turtle!



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The project, under the supervision of Roaring Brook Nature Center, has been funded by a grant from the Ray Smith Endowment for Education and Conservation, which is administered by the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving and provides funding for educational programs, exhibits and research projects at Roaring Brook Nature Center and within the Town of Canton. Ray was the past president of the Land Trust. As part of the study, students will attempt to locate as many box turtles as possible within the town. They are most easily found basking in the sun along a forest/field boundary in late April and May. Land Trust members and other Canton residents who find box turtles this year, should contact a Canton Sixth Grade Student, or call the Nature Center at 693-0263. Please note that turtles should not be removed from the vicinity of where they are found. Mating or egg-laying turtles should not be disturbed. It should be noted that box turtles are now protected and cannot be kept as pets.

(GRANT continued from page 1)

The Sun, Wind and Woodland Preserve contains forest land, field, early succession habitat, wetlands and a small pond. Once the acquisition is completed, the property will be open to the public. The Land Trust plans to construct a hiking trail through it, and eventually to connect it to other Land Trust properties by a trail network. It is an important link in over 700 acres of conservation land on Breezy Hill and Ratlum Mountain, and provides excellent wildlife habitat.

The Land Trust is in the process of raising the remaining \$82,500 needed to complete the acquisition, and has already received many generous contributions toward that effort. Additional contributions are necessary, and will be gratefully accepted.

(FORESTRY continued from page 1)

Our forester has marked the trees to be cut. We have selected a buyer for the timber on a competitive bidding basis. Work will be done this spring, weather and ground conditions permitting. Under the contract, the logger is required to follow industry best management practices. This requires grading of all skid trails and landing areas, and cutting unused tree tops to less than three feet, as well as protection of watercourses during and after the operation.

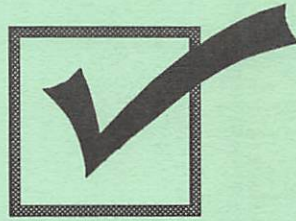
Also, as part of the contract, the logger will construct two vistas by cutting trees marked by our forester. One of these will be at the top of the Charlotte Craig Trail on the west side of Doyle Road, and the other along the Ted Wright Trail on the east side of Doyle Road. Cutting these vistas will qualify us for cost sharing under the state's Stewardship Improvement Program. For further information, contact Charlie DeWeese at 693-3988 or Ted Cowles at 693-6340.

(PHOTO WORKSHOP continued from page 1)

Dave studied photography in Germany while in the service. When he returned home, he worked as a professional photographer for many years in Hartford. Wishing to spend more time with his family, he made photography a hobby. Since his recent retirement, photography has once again become a profession. Now he combines his photography and work as a naturalist by conducting outdoor photo workshops. He also has had many photos published in nature magazines.

Dave has visited the trail several times choosing subjects that will help teach the participants to create more than just snapshots. Coincidentally, Dave's first visit to the Conklin property was about thirty years ago when he was invited on a sort of photo tutorial by Mr. Conklin. Mr. Conklin (founder of the Canton Camera Club) had built photographic blinds on the property so that he could capture on film the varieties of birds that he had attracted there. The blinds are gone but the volunteers have created a trail that is a natural resource for photographers and hikers.

This will also be good preparation for a photo contest planned by the CLCT for Sam Collins Day.



**FOR YOUR CALENDAR**

**PHOTO WORKSHOP** 8:00–12:00 Noon, **Saturday, June 5** Mary Conklin Sanctuary  
Dave Girardin will lead hike and workshop 144 Indian Hill Road  
Call 693-6142 to reserve a space.

**ANNUAL MEETING** 4:00 PM, **Sunday, June 13**  
New Location **Roaring Brook Nature Center** 70 Gracey Road  
Short business meeting followed by talk by Naturalist, Walt Langraf, and light refreshments  
Please plan to come Call 693-2074 if you have questions.

**MOWING PARTY** 9 AM, **Saturday, June 19** Smith Tree Farm, Doyle Road



P.O. Box 41  
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