

AMP Chair Report, Nov 5, 2009

The following is a summary of stewardship activity for the period Nov '08 to Nov '09.

Management Plans

No new or updated plans.

Work Parties (LT members & neighbors)

We organized 15 work parties. Combined with individual efforts by Stewards, over 280 volunteer hours were contributed at: Griffin Marsh/Holcomb Pond, 87.5 hours; Newgate Farm, 114.5 hours; Pond Lane, 81.5 hours. A major focus was to control non-native invasive plants that tend to suppress native plants and reduce biodiversity. Prevalent invasive species on our properties include oriental bittersweet, Japanese barberry, Japanese knotweed, multiflora rose, autumn olive, garlic mustard, Phragmites and winged euonymus.

Other On-site Management (mostly Stewards & Directors)

- Property inspection walks & AMP reports.
- Mow Griffin Marsh/Holcomb Pond access paths.
- Addressed tree cutting issues at Coppergate and a landscaping encroachment at Griffin Marsh/Holcomb Pond.

Stewardship Education

- Nov '08, 1 Steward, CT Forest Forum, UConn (full day).
- Jan '09, 3 Stewards, CFPA Trails Workshop, Rockfall (full day).
- Apr '09, 2 Stewards, CT Land Conservation Conference, Wesleyan U. (full day).
- May, Jun '09, 1 Steward, Land Use Leadership Alliance Program, Simsbury (4 days).

Outreach

- Stewards led two winter hikes for the public (Eastfield Farm, Great Marsh)
- Four page planting plan for native plants recommended for the Chelsea Commons pond to provide wildlife food and cover and protect water quality
- Stewardship calendar

Notable Wildlife Sightings

- Bears at Newgate Farm, Griffin Marsh/Holcomb Pd, Eastfield Farm
- River Otters, Pied Billed Grebe at Griffin Marsh/Holcomb Pd
- Bobcat, Barred Owl at Newgate Farm
- Brook Trout at Eastfield Farm

Stewardship Results

Griffin Marsh/Holcomb Pond (Cathy Delasco): We cut and treated invasive plants to improve native plant diversity and wildlife habitat, cleared weeds from the deer guards, kept trails and access paths open and cleared our access right of way easement. We also received a WHIP (Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program) grant for \$225. This contract is for one year for biological control of purple loosestrife, a non-native invasive plant. The work will be done by East Granby Middle School students as a class project directed by Bob Paskiewicz, Science Teacher. When the Land Trust receives the funds on completion of the project, the money will be given to the school.

Newgate Farm (Michelle Clifford & Bill Grabinsky): We received a WHIP (Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program) grant for \$4,698. The contract obligations run from 2009-2011. As part of the WHIP grant, this summer we marked over a hundred trees to be cut down in the first of three sections of the property and cut and treated invasive plants on that section. The purpose for cutting the trees is to restore roughly half of the property to early successional woodland and shrubs. Tree cutting has begun and will continue through the winter. We'll start on the next section next year. The grant also calls for planting native shrub "islands" which will be done at a later date. We also placed two new property corner marker posts and commenced work on a small foot bridge.

Pond Lane (Tom Howard & Steve Holt): We built two additional foot bridges, measured and charted the pond depth. With a \$500 grant from CL&P we planted 25 native shrubs to replace the trees destroyed when the town dug a spillway on the dam. The shrubs have been protected with deer guards. Later in the year we cleared weeds from the deer guards. We also cut and treated invasive plants.

Respectfully submitted,
Ian Clark, AMP Chair