

November 18, 2022

**Annual Newsletter**

Dear Members, Friends and Neighbors,

First, I would like to introduce myself if we have not met already; I am Amanda Thompson and I have been the East Granby Land Trust President for 2022. I have been a board member for 13 years, Program Director for 10 years, and created and implemented our Student Intern Program. I also maintain our Facebook page and post on Instagram @Eastgranbylandtrustlady.

I would like to invite you to attend our annual meeting at the East Granby Senior/Community Center on November 28 at 7pm (the Monday after Thanksgiving weekend). Our guest speaker will be Brian Kleinman, owner of Riverside Reptiles Education Center, who will be talking about our native reptiles. Please register at [WWW.EGPL.ORG](http://WWW.EGPL.ORG) or by calling the library at (860) 653-3002. The EGLT annual business meeting will follow the presentation.

We would also like to remind you to **renew your membership for 2023** (or join us if you are not a member). Dues payments received from now through December 2022 will cover membership for all of 2023. Please see the membership form attached or visit our website to join and pay electronically ([www.eglt.org](http://www.eglt.org)).

Highlights from 2022

- We thank Indus Realty Trust, Inc. for the December 2021 donation of three properties totaling 38.7 acres, all bordering or containing Salmon Brook, part of the federally-designated National Wild and Scenic Rivers system. To honor one of our late board members and his wife, one of the parcels has been named the Tom and Ginnie Howard Educational Preserve (Howard Preserve); the other two make up the River Bend property, named after a subsidiary of Indus Realty Trust.
- An engineering design has been completed for a pathway to connect R.D. Seymour School to Granbrook Park via the new Howard Preserve, thanks to a grant from East Granby Greater Together Community Fund at the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving.
- The EGLT has a new partnership with the non-profit Nourish My Soul to farm a portion of the Howard Preserve and develop healthy food-centered educational programs (see newsletter for details).
- The Connecticut Land Conservation Council awarded the EGLT their 2022 Excellence in Community Engagement Award for our Student Intern Program (see newsletter for details).

We look forward to 2023. We hope you will join the East Granby Land Trust and come along on one of our hikes, programs or learn how to identify invasive plants and control them by attending a property work party. Please renew your membership or consider becoming a member of the East Granby Land Trust. Your support and participation help us keep the open spaces of East Granby healthy and beautiful.

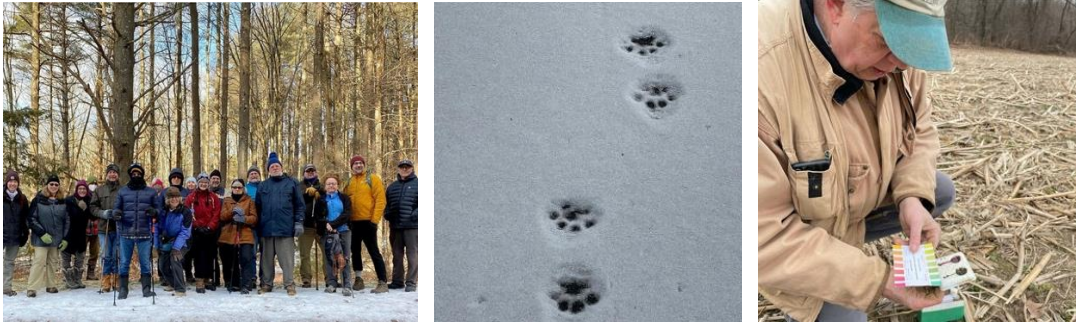
Sincerely,  
Amanda C. Thompson, President  
East Granby Land Trust

Please find info on all upcoming activities at: ([www.eglt.org](http://www.eglt.org)), Instagram (Eastgranbylandtrustlady) and Facebook.

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## EGLT 2022 Summary

January and February were spent planning and organizing the many activities held throughout the year. On February 6 there was a very-well-attended winter hike from Ian Clark Preserve up to Newgate Pond and back, with many interesting animal prints observed in the snow. On March 20<sup>th</sup> we had Yoga in the Woods to celebrate the Spring Solstice, held in the Pine Bowl of our Great Marsh property. Local high school teacher Brittney Mihalich donated her time and led the program. In March we also embarked on learning more about our new agricultural property, Howard Preserve, as Kip Kolesinskas, Consulting Conservation Scientist from the Connecticut Farmland Trust, tested our soil and advised us on erosion controls on the banks of Salmon Brook.



In April, Brian Kleinman, owner of Riverside Reptiles Education Center, held a program co-sponsored by EGLT and the EG Historical Society on Folklore, Myths, and Legends about reptiles and amphibians. The High School Youth Action Council celebrated Earth Day in April by planning and holding an interactive scavenger hunt at the Ian Clark Preserve. We also were able to partner with the East Granby Middle School and Farmington Valley Trout Unlimited to teach the 8<sup>th</sup> grade students about clean water, which invertebrates trout eat, how trout use scent to find food, and how to cast a fly rod. Farmington Valley Trout Unlimited does a great deal to protect our rivers and we were glad to make a new partnership.



In May, our student interns were able to resume our Outdoor Education Day with the 6<sup>th</sup> grade East Granby Middle School after a 2-year Covid break. The interns ran stations about water conservation, plant identification, native plants, carbon cycles, and conducted a pond study to connect what students learn in class to the outdoors. We also held a decomposer station for the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade students during their East Granby Public Library visit. The students were able to touch snails and cockroaches and build mini ecosystems for their snails to enjoy.



Brian Kleinman led our annual bird walk at the Suffield Wildlife Management Area later in May, as well, where we heard and saw songbirds, sparrows and butterflies. The walk was well attended by EGLT members as well as members of the Connecticut Land Conservation Council and Hartford Audubon.

Nate Welsh, one of our student interns, was a panel presenter at the Connecticut Land Conservation Council Conference held outdoors at People's State Forest this past June. This year's focus was on hearing conservation ideas and perspectives from young people, who will take conservation into the future. One of our newest interns, Alex Cardoso, represented EGLT in the group discussion following the panel presentations.



On July 30 the East Granby Land Trust was honored to receive the Connecticut Land Conservation Council's (CLCC) 2022 Excellence in Community Engagement Award. This award recognized the EGLT's internship program, which brings local high school students onto the EGLT Board of Directors. These students attend monthly EGLT board meetings, co-steward an EGLT property, and attend work parties. They plan and run the 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Outdoor Education Day and other programs in our community. The award ceremony was held on our newest property, the Howard Preserve, and was attended by Senator John Kissel, Representative Tami Zawistowski, and First Selectwoman Eden Wimpfheimer. Amy Paterson, Executive Director of the CLCC, presented the award, followed by a hike around the perimeter of the Howard Preserve.

At the end of July we were also able to have a redo of Summer Nature Camp, which had to be cancelled in June due to Covid. In July camp consisted of: visiting Alicia Cruz on the Nourish My Soul Farm, learning about composting and sustainable farming; looking for invertebrates in Salmon Brook to test the water's cleanliness; and a hike to Old New-Gate Prison and Copper Mine, where EGLT Board Member Bob Ravens-Seger walked us through the mine, explaining its geology; and CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection's Wildlife Biologist, Devaughn Fraser, taught us about bats in Connecticut.



In September EGLT co-sponsored a program with the East Granby Public Library on Outstanding Native Trees and Shrubs for Northeast Gardens, presented by Joan Butler and Jana Milbocker. They discussed the pros and cons of planting native vs. non-native plants and shrubs and answered many questions about gardening.

The EGLT is very excited about our new partnership with Alicia Cruz and her non-profit, Nourish My Soul. Nourish My Soul believes all people have the right to have access to healthy food produced locally through sustainable methods. She and her dedicated volunteers planted a vegetable garden on the Howard Preserve, growing everything from tomatoes and peppers to herbs, leafy greens, gourds and squash. Programs at the farm consist of lessons in caring for the earth through composting, planning and planting, harvesting, preparing foods and sharing them with the community, while developing leadership and other life skills. As a part of the Nourish My Soul mission for food sovereignty, all are welcome to harvest food from the farm for their table, so please come and take a tomato or some beans to enjoy with your meal.



We would like to thank our 2022 officers: President Amanda Thompson, Vice President Gene Rondeau, Treasurer John Erbland, and Secretary Jeanne Dube. We thank our senior interns, Maria Amisano, Samantha Kovaleski, and Madeline Tracey, and said goodbye to our graduating seniors, Isaac Mullen and Nate Welsh. We welcome our newest interns, Cecilia Carcorze-LeFebvre, Alex Cardoso and Mira Goberman.

We would also like to recognize and thank all of our board members who contribute so much to getting things done, especially:

- John Erbland, for maintaining and improving the EGLT website and stepping up as Treasurer;
- Catherine Delasco, for taking over as Stewardship Chair;
- Jeanne Dube, Secretary, for all of her successful grant applications, as well as the great job she does on our meeting minutes, documents and bylaws.

This year's Thomas F. Howard Memorial Scholarship was awarded to East Granby High School Senior Tirna Iqbal with a generous donation from Windsor Federal Savings Bank. Tirna is planning to study environmental science in college.

## Property Stewardship

The East Granby Land Trust now owns and stewards 23 parcels comprising 322.2 acres within the town of East Granby and Granby. Caring for and maintaining these properties in their healthy and natural state for passive recreation is the most important work that we do. Stewardship meetings are held several times a year, to review plans for maintaining and caring for the properties, reviewing possible encroachments and scheduling work parties. This year we held many large and small (1 person) work parties, with over **430 work hours** (a new record!) donated by adults, scouts, and other local young people. More than 140 hours were spent on the Howard Preserve alone (many thanks to Anteneh Abrham, the property steward).

Focuses of work parties this year included:

- Removing invasives and maintaining trails
- Planting native trees, bushes and plants
- Checking and marking / signing EGLT property boundaries and working with neighbors to address encroachments such as dumping or mowing
- Maintaining the Story Trail paths, replacing bog bridges and adding new bridges where needed.

Tom and Ginnie Howard Educational Preserve – Our newest property got the most attention this year. The Howard Preserve will connect R.D. Seymour School to Granbrook Park to allow for outdoor education programs. We have partnered with the town to create a walkway from the school down to Howard Preserve for access to Granbrook. We completed the design and engineering plans and presented them to the town, thanks to a generous \$10,000 grant from East Granby Greater Together Community Fund from the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving. The next step will be to begin fundraising for the walkway materials.

A large area adjacent to Salmon Brook has been cleared of many invasive plants, including large bittersweet vines and dense areas of knotweed. A generous \$4,000 donation from Attorney Sarah Poriss allowed us to purchase native trees, fenced enclosures, and a watering system for the trees. They will help stabilize the banks at the edge of Salmon Brook. The deer fencing and planting was done by Scouting BSA Troop 1175, an amazing group of girls. Additional plantings of paw paw trees was done by Cub Scout Pack 70, and a large vegetable garden, educational area and composting bin were put in place by Nourish My Soul. The Middle School Youth Action Council helped, learning about composting and assisting in clearing invasive plants.



Ian Clark Preserve (ICP) – This is our most visited property, thanks to the story trail installed on the property. Amy Thompson, EG Children’s Librarian, installs several stories from April – November along the trail. This past spring, a large group of volunteers gathered on a snowy day in March to distribute a mountain of mulch along the trails in preparation for the 2022 season, thanks to East Granby Public Works. Eagle Scout Candidate Ben Pascavis and fellow scouts from Troop 175 installed a beautiful new bridge across an area of ICP where temporary bridges had been washed away and, this past September, Property Steward Michelle Clifford singlehandedly replaced an old bog bridge that had rotted into the ground with a new, elevated plank bridge.



Pond Meadow – The steady removal of invasive Japanese knotweed is finally showing results and, thanks to a \$500 grant from the Hartford Audubon Society, we purchased and planted 19 native plants in areas where there had been only knotweed. We planted winterberry, blueberry, elderberry, hazelnut, mountain laurel, birch, and flowering dogwood, all native plants that feed/sustain wildlife. We have also been removing multiflora rose, Oriental bittersweet, and other invasives, and have seen and heard a great variety of colorful warblers on the property, along with a nesting pair of red-shouldered hawks near the northern border of the property.

Griffin Marsh – New Property Steward Sander Hamilton and his family have worked hard on removing invasives and clearing and maintaining the trails on this beautiful property. Many thanks to Sander for sharpening all of our tools, helping to improve our “cutting and painting” work. The blueberry, winterberry, sweet pepperbush, chokeberry, and cranberry shrubs that we planted last May are all thriving and improving the habitat on the property.

Fieldstone Farms – Following the conservation plan developed by our very special young member, Asher Scarlato, several native trees were planted where large areas of Japanese barberry had been removed. Work was led by property steward John Erbland, and trees were purchased with a \$200 grant from the Hartford Audubon Society.

Old Newgate Ridge – We are delighted to have a steward for our Old Newgate Ridge property, which comprises three EGLT parcels along the Metacomet Trail, a National Scenic Trail. Jon Huber has been walking the Farmington Valley Greenway for years and decided he would like to care for our section of the trail, as well. Jon dove right in, walking property boundaries and putting up EGLT signs, and maintains the EGLT kiosk at the beginning of our property. He also helped out at a work party on the property, removing burning bush along the trail. Thank you, Jon!



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**2023 EGLT Membership Form**

The East Granby Land Trust is a registered non-profit organization.  
All your contributions are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Name & Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
(for EGLT news and updates)

Membership: \_\_\_\_ Individual \$30 \_\_\_\_ Household \$40 \_\_\_\_ Corporate \$250 \_\_\_\_ Lifetime \$500

Donation: \_\_\_\_\_ Donation for Land Purchase or Preservation \_\_\_\_\_

**Please make payment to East Granby Land Trust and mail to:  
P.O.Box 39, East Granby, CT 06026**

Volunteer Opportunities: Please circle your interests.

- |              |                  |                                  |
|--------------|------------------|----------------------------------|
| Trail Work   | Property Steward | Marking Boundaries               |
| Work Parties | Hikes and Walks  | Mapping                          |
| Fundraising  | Publicity        | Scientific or Historical Studies |
| Photography  | Programs/Events  | Board Membership                 |
| Making Signs | Fundraising      | Eagle Scout Project              |

**Comments or suggestions:**

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**Thank you for supporting the East Granby Land Trust!**

