

SLC NEWS

Newsletter for SLC Members

Fall 2020 / Winter 2021

SPOTLIGHT

Despite the impact of the Covid 19 pandemic, the SLC remained active. We are excited by the acquisition of a new 23 acre parcel directly across from the Suffield High School. This was nearly three years in the making, and now that we have the land our intention is to turn the John and Madeline McClean property into an outdoor learning center for the school. We expect the total cost will be approximately \$150,000 and we plan to do a capital campaign next year to raise the funds. To date, we have received over \$30,000 from grants and individual gifts.

We also recently acquired 25 acres of beautiful upland forest behind North Main Street donated by the Ray Daddario family. Because access to the parcel was restrictive, we acquired an abutting seven acre parcel off of Wren Drive and are in negotiations to acquire another 12 acres of adjacent land to provide better access to the property.



Joe Grimard, science teacher and SLC Board Member, at the new outdoor classroom



In our newsletter last fall, we discussed the importance of establishing greenways to create wildlife corridors. We hope these acquisitions combined with efforts by the town to acquire development rights will create a greenway between North Main Street and East Street.

Unfortunately, we were not able to hold our annual wildflower walk, birding day, or hiking day due to gathering restrictions. However, a silver lining to the pandemic has been the increased use of our trails by families who want to get outdoors. Many people are now aware of our diverse properties and the access they provide to our natural resources.

Left, cars lined up to hike on the Metacomet Trail (Spencer Woods Wildlife Preserve)

John and Madeline McClean Outdoor Educational Preserve

The Preserve is a 23.22 acre lot that houses several different biomes. It is accessed by a 20 feet right of way directly across from the Suffield High School parking lot. The trail starts at the on the south side of Sheldon Street and moves downhill along the western border of the property for approximately 500 feet before opening up to an over grown meadow and orchard.

The forgotten orchard of pear and apple trees are now buried under wild thick rope-like concord globe grape vines and bittersweet. As you continue down the western edge of the property, the trees thicken until you come to an old oak, which in the recent past, a bear used as a scratching post.



From here the trail breaks off in two general directions. If you continue south, along the western border, you will need to watch your step, and apply liberal amounts of bug spray, as you travel another 500 yards through swampy vernal pool-filled marsh until reaching a tributary of Devine Brook and the limit of the property. If, at the bear tree, you travel east, you will cross the property along an old barbed wire fence line, the thick older trees still bearing the marks and metal of the long rusted away border. On this path, the trail will end at an old sunken road that will wind both north and south on the eastern edge of the property. Throughout your walk you are sure to see, hear, and find of all manner of creatures to including several bird species, bobcats, deer, and perhaps even a bear!



Currently, the Suffield Land Conservancy is in the process of turning this wonderful property into an Educational Preserve that, when completed, will house two Adirondack shelters, a tool shed, a compostable toilet, two learning decks and a high observational platform (affectionately known as the “treehouse”).

The goal of the Suffield Land Conservancy in this endeavor is to increase a wonder and appreciation of the outdoors, and to foster and/or create a stewardship of our most important resource, our environment.



DIRECTORS

Melanie Brown	Art Christian	Chris Childs	Muriel Coatti	Brian Dudack	Edward Ewald
Secretary	2018-2021	President	2018 - 2021	2017 - 2020	Vice President
2017-2020	668-7556	2019-2022	668-2414	543-0787	2019-2022
789-3819		668-7140			668-6678



Annual Meeting

Invasive Plants in Connecticut: Identification and Impacts of Some Key Species in Our Natural Areas

Our very own Todd Mervosh will be speaking at our annual meeting about his expertise: invasive plant species. Todd Mervosh is general manager of TM Agricultural & Ecological Services in Suffield. A native of Illinois, he earned a Ph.D. in agronomy / weed science at the University of Illinois in 1994. For the next 20 years he was a scientist at The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station in Windsor, where he conducted weed control research in a variety of crops and management of invasive plants, including oriental bittersweet, Japanese knotweed, swallowworts, mile-a-minute vine and Japanese stiltgrass. He was also a diagnostician in the general inquiry office at Windsor.

In his business since 2015, Todd consults for growers and property managers about effective and environmentally sound plant management strategies, including proper use of herbicides. He provides vegetation control services on a wide range of lands across Connecticut.

Todd has lived in Suffield since 1999 with his wife Lynn and daughter Anna. He is a longtime board member for both the Suffield Land Conservancy and Friends of the Farm at Hilltop, and also serves on the town tree committee.



Autumn colors of the South Grand property reflected in still waters

DIRECTORS

Marie Gauthier	Joe Grimard	Todd Mervosh	Norm Noble	Art Sikes	Joellen Woodworth
2019-2022	2017-2020	Past President	2017-2020	Treasurer	2018-2021
729-5460	668-1338	2018-2021	668-1721	2019-2022	668-0612
		668-2988		668-0414	

UPCOMING EVENTS

December 3, Thursday 7:00 pm Virtual Annual Meeting - On Zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83728124637?pwd=TnZreFlnQjdmaW1hcmFZNFIWZ3oxdz09>

Meeting ID: **837 2812 4637**

Passcode: **505736**

One tap mobile:

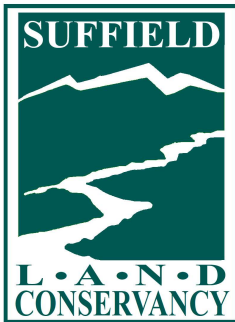
+13017158592,,83728124637#,,,,,0#,,505736# US (Washington D.C)

Dial by your location: +1 929 205 6099 US (New York)

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Please use the enclosed envelope for your annual membership renewal. Please ensure to write your email on the renewal form or email SuffieldLandConservancy@gmail.com so we may contact you about upcoming events and links to virtual meetings!

Thank you for supporting the Suffield Land Conservancy!



SUFFIELD LAND CONSERVANCY
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