



SIMSBURY LAND TRUST

2 0 0 6 A N N U A L R E P O R T

*Dedicated to Preserving the Natural Beauty
of Our Community*



MISSION STATEMENT

The Simsbury Land Trust is a not-for-profit organization whose mission is to protect scenic vistas, geological features and farmland that visually define Simsbury's character and provide healthy habitats for local wildlife and plants. Our goal is to consistently craft, support and implement creative land conservation solutions for the benefit of present and future generations.

The Simsbury Land Trust seeks to accomplish its mission through:

Acquisitions: Soliciting and accepting gifts of land and interests in land from individuals and businesses.

Partnerships: Partnering with individuals, organizations, and governmental entities to accomplish our goals.

Advocacy: Participating in public policy dialogue at the local and state levels, in public and private forums.

Stewardship: Managing and using acquired properties in a manner consistent with our mission.

Legacy Building: Soliciting donations from individuals, organizations, foundations and businesses.

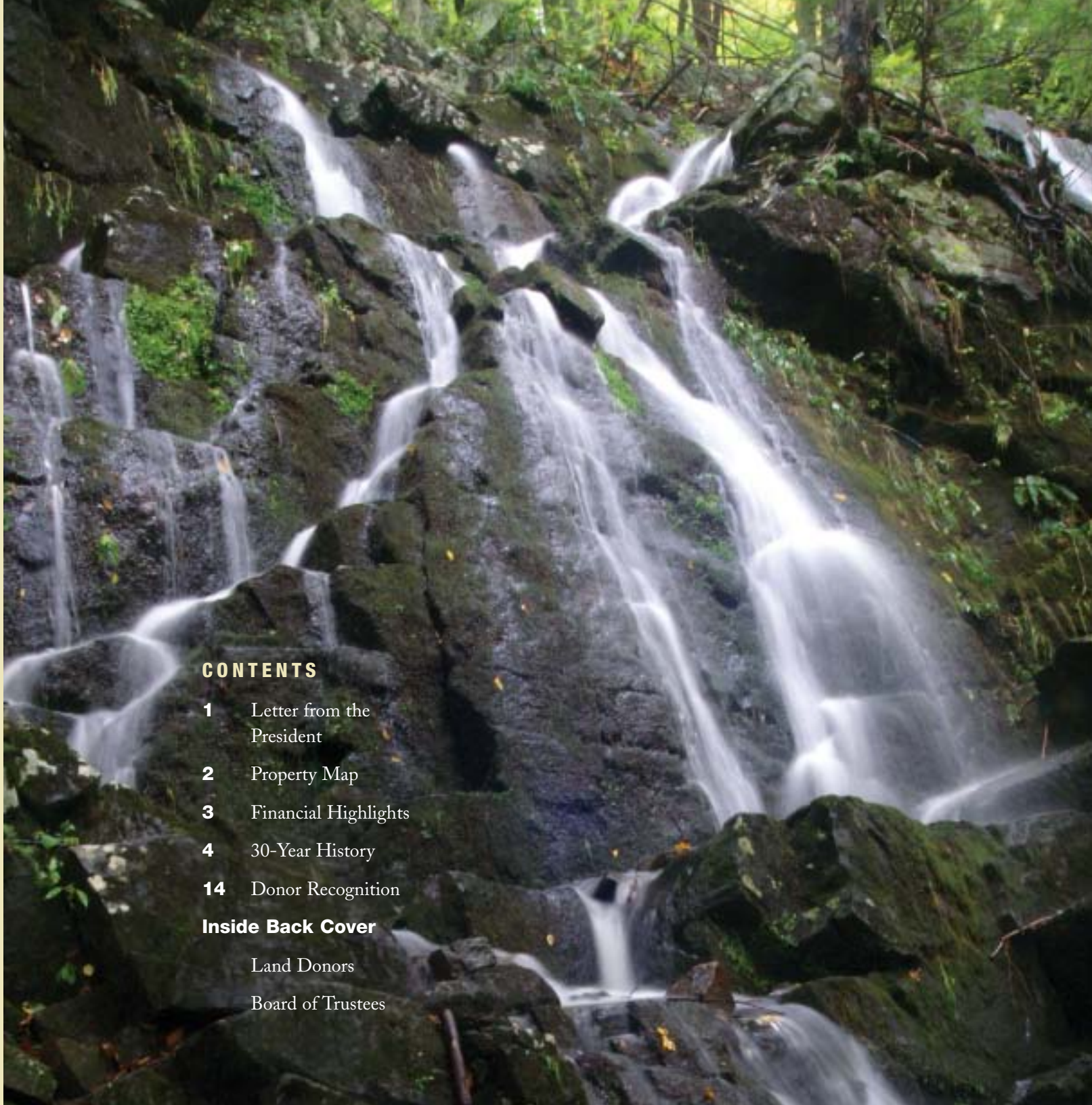
CONTENTS

- 1** Letter from the President
- 2** Property Map
- 3** Financial Highlights
- 4** 30-Year History
- 14** Donor Recognition

Inside Back Cover

Land Donors

Board of Trustees



Letter from the President

This year the Simsbury Land Trust made progress on three important land protection projects. These include an option to purchase a permanent conservation easement on the remainder of Tulmeadow, 20 acres consisting of the triangle and adjacent pasture, and the 73 acre woodlot. We also exercised an option to acquire 80 acres of land along the ridge from The Master's School. Over the course of the year, we obtained a large part of the funds necessary to complete these purchases. We were awarded a \$625,000 grant from the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service and a \$181,000 grant from the CT-DEP. In addition, individuals from the community contributed or pledged \$590,000 that will be applied to these projects. A large part of our 2007 effort will be to raise the remaining funds needed to complete The Master's School ridge and the Tulmeadow triangle and pasture.

2006 was also a busy year of stewardship effort and that too will continue into the coming months. The traprock ridge, of which The Master's School is such an important part, is home to a variety of rare state-listed species. We commissioned a professional botanist, Bill Moorhead, to survey the plant and wildlife along this ridge over a six month period from May to October, and to recommend actions to better manage this unusual environment. We were successful in obtaining a multi-year grant from the State administered Wildlife Habitat Improvement Program to better manage the fields and wetlands at the Case and Wegner sites. And we worked on key portions of an expanded trail network.

Amidst the many other things that occupied us this year we also paused to take note that 2006 was the 30th anniversary of the Simsbury Land Trust. We have dedicated the primary part of this 2006 Annual Report to a brief overview of the land trust's efforts over the last 30 years.

At this point we would like you to sit back and remember the 1970s here in Simsbury.

With population growth in the late 1950s and 60s, the Town had outgrown its roads, its library and its town hall. People recognized the need for change and the 1970s was a time of intense thought, discussion and differences of opinion. Among the ideas from that time that helped to shape the Town was the recognition that in the rush to meet these needs, we needed to protect our natural setting. Jackson Eno credits John Ellsworth with "saving Simsbury's ridge lines from development" and Charles Schnier's donation of the Pinchot Sycamore was a signature first step in protecting Simsbury's riverfront. The lengthy public discussion a few years later surrounding the development of The Hartford resulted in an example for the future of how major developments can be both functional and sensitive to their surroundings.

Within this context, Barbara Rust, John Ellsworth, Peggy Shanks, John O'Neil, Martha Austin, Pat Wegner, Jackson Eno, Karen Clarke, Carol Stevens and other key people established the Simsbury Land Conservation Trust in 1976.

We hope you enjoy the brief historical overview in the following pages and we thank you once again for all you do to enable us to continue this work.

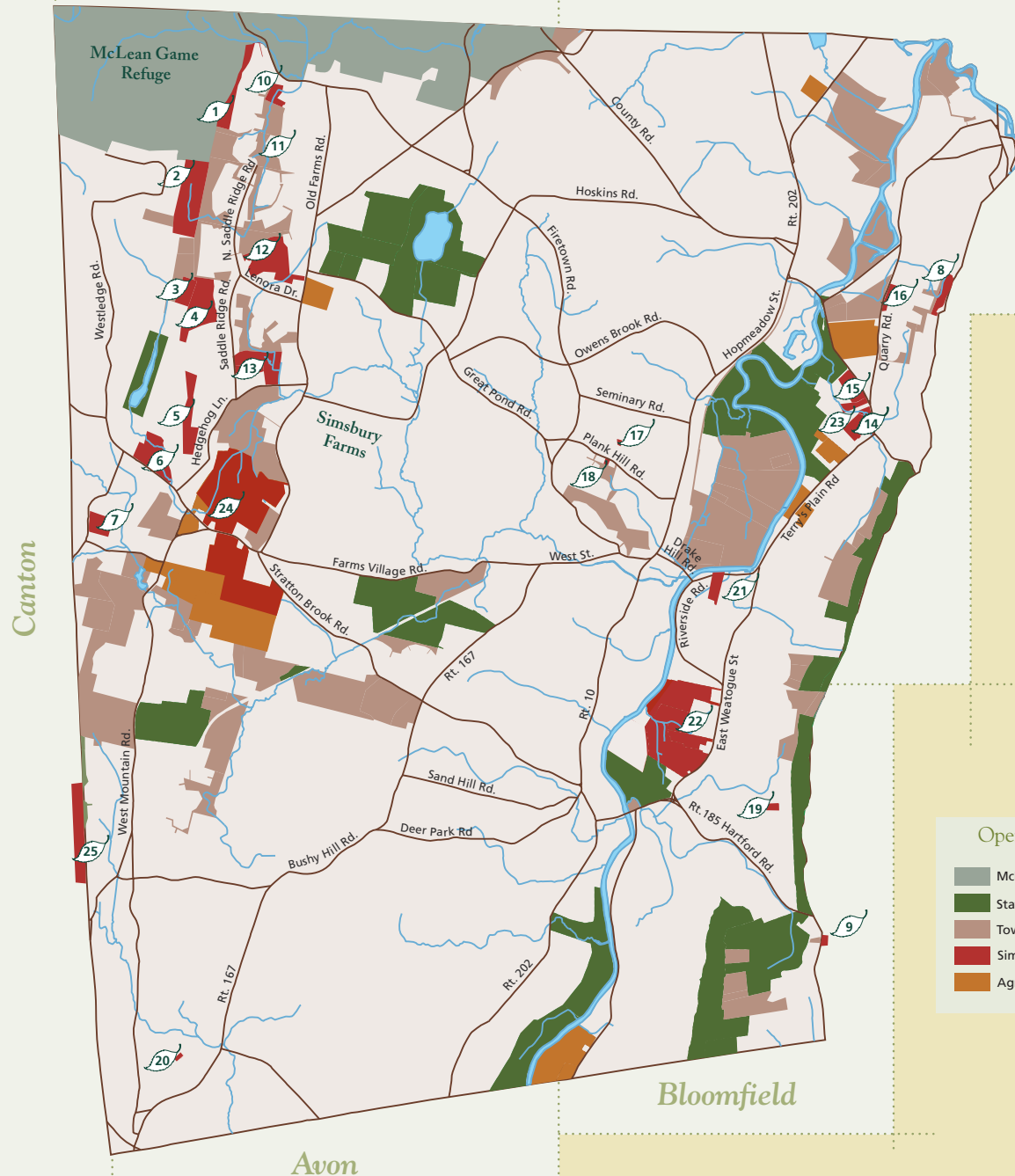


Dick Davis
President



Simsbury Open Space

Simsbury Land Trust Property



Financial Highlights – 2006

Statement of Revenues and Expenses

January 1 – December 31, 2006				
	CAMPAIGN	OPERATIONS	TOTAL 2006	TOTAL 2005
Revenues				
Campaign Donations	\$367,142		\$367,142	\$ 458,240
Grants		\$ 9,600	9,600	1,095,000
Gain on Sale of Real Property	18,506		18,506	
Annual Appeal Income		9,395	9,395	13,621
Membership Dues		90,646	90,646	76,526
Miscellaneous Income		1,124	1,124	749
Total Revenues	\$385,648	\$110,765	\$496,413	\$1,644,136
Expenses				
Administrative	46,759	14,864	61,623	44,979
Salaries and Benefits	19,373	19,373	38,746	36,587
Membership		31,991	31,991	26,706
Acquisition Expenses	6,848		6,848	32,946
Stewardship	8,931	8,416	17,347	13,874
Depreciation		845	845	2,585
Total Expenses	81,911	75,489	157,400	157,677
Excess of Revenues Over Expenses	\$303,737	\$ 35,276	\$339,013	\$1,486,459

Balance Sheet

	December 31, 2006	December 31, 2005
Assets		
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash	\$ 575,633	\$ 191,457
Accounts Receivable		
Pledges Receivable – Net	171,616	65,101
Prepaid Expenses	30,200	
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	777,449	256,558
FIXED ASSETS		
Land	5,946,937	6,131,937
Office Equipment – Net	2,273	2,868
TOTAL FIXED ASSETS	5,949,210	6,134,805
TOTAL ASSETS	\$6,726,659	\$6,391,363
Liabilities and Fund Balance		
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Accrued Liabilities	\$ 1,132	\$ 4,849
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	1,132	4,849
FUND BALANCE		
Beginning Fund Balance	6,386,514	4,900,055
Excess of Revenues over Expenses	339,013	1,486,459
ENDING FUND BALANCE	6,725,527	6,386,514
Total Liabilities and Fund Balance	\$6,726,659	\$6,391,363



The Simsbury Land Trust has set out several times to review its archives, interview its past trustees and others, and organize the material in an interesting manner. Each time, a major transaction or other important activity has interrupted. This is one of those undertakings that we always feel can wait for tomorrow. However, it is important and it cannot be put off forever. Our memories fail, people move on, and there is less and less of interest to fill in between the lines. The 30th anniversary of the Simsbury Land Trust is a good time to assemble the first chapter.

Why Keep Track of History?

An organization's history serves a number of purposes.

- It provides a philosophical and operational framework, reminding us of why the organization was established, what its purpose was, and how it has set about accomplishing its purpose.
- It provides guidance for future accomplishment, showing us what has worked and what has not worked.
- It provides a context for measuring performance.
- It provides an opportunity to recognize the contributions of key individuals.
- It can sharpen an organization's public identity, sparking interest and recognition.

And it is fun to see where we have been and how far we have come.



This history

is not a complete story but a beginning chapter.

Those of us who have had the good fortune to be associated with the Simsbury Land Trust over the past 30 years have experienced one of those uncommon intersections where mission, hard work, and opportunity almost perfectly complement one another.

What the Simsbury community has achieved through the SLT to date has strengthened the organizational foundation and confirmed the effort, improving the chance for future success.



Protecting additional land, increasing the community's awareness and understanding of the local environment, and managing these natural resources in a more knowledgeable and professional manner are remaining needs and continuing goals.

What we hope we are achieving is a townwide landscape with unique beauty and environmental health, emotionally satisfying and intellectually stimulating, that stands a better chance today of still being here for generations to come.



Fields & Farms

Simsbury's fields and farms provide habitats for a whole range of birds, flowers, and other wildlife that depend on grass and brush environments, and they contribute disproportionately to the scenery in town. We enjoy looking at fields, and fields enable us to see beyond. Without periodic wildfire and uninterrupted beaver activity, fields are not a natural phenomenon and therefore need active management to continue to exist. An effective and efficient way to accomplish this is to see that the farms continue to exist.



In 1975 a group of individuals led by Barbara Rust, Peggy Shanks and John Ellsworth saw the need for a local land trust to complement growing efforts by the Town to protect its natural environment for future generations. This group included Pat Wegner, Jackson Eno, Carol Stevens, John O'Neal, Lina Wagner, Martha Austin, Waddy Fyler, Al Schuyler and a dozen others.

1976

Incorporation of the Simsbury Land Conservation Trust (SLCT).
Peggy Shanks elected first president.
70 charter members



Margaret C. (Peggy) Shanks
Founding Member

Peggy Shanks chaired the Steering Committee that established the Simsbury Land Trust in 1974 and 1975, served as the new land trust's first president from 1976 to 1979, and was a trustee from 1976 to 1979, and again from 1990 to 1996. Peggy describes the task of getting the Simsbury Land Trust up and running as "a gathering of like-minded people working to give Simsbury and its residents another tool for land preservation." The early focus was on creating an organizational structure, building membership, acquiring the first properties and formulating plans for future acquisitions. She added, "I do not think of involvement as broken into parts or key issues. Those were the 'whole enchilada' years."



1977

Founders worked with town and state officials, experts in land use, and existing environmental groups to develop organizational structure, procedures and focus.

Spent significant energy in exploring several issues including restoration of Folly Farm, its potential future uses and permanent protection of its natural resources.

SLCT acquires its first property, a 10 acre wetland donation from George Leaska.

1979

Marge Alspaugh creates the first edition of "Landlines", the SLCT newsletter. Marge remained editor of the newsletter until she retired from the board in 1985.

John Cannon donates the first portion of 25 acres on the West Ridge.

1980

Simsbury's first conservation officer, Natalie George, speaks to SLCT members on "The Sense of Simsbury."

130 members

1981

Issues included disposition of Westledge School land, the Ox Bow at Horseshoe Cove and the State's newly formed Farmland Preservation Committee.



Ridges

People often talk of a recognizable sense of place, a particular character, when they speak of Simsbury. Much of what they mean by this derives from a number of geological features highlighted by a grand river valley tucked between two dramatic ridges.

Traprock ridges exist in New England in a very limited area, primarily along the southern Connecticut River Valley. Simsbury has more of these volcanic outcroppings within its boundaries than nearly any other town in Massachusetts or Connecticut. They create an unusual variety of distinct habitats and, as a result, support a disproportionate number of state-listed uncommon, rare, or endangered plants and animals. They also provide exceptional hiking opportunities, enhanced by several miles of trails the Simsbury Land Trust maintains.

The magnificent West Mountain in the northwest corner of town represents the oldest exposed bedrock in Simsbury. This rock formation can be readily viewed in the road cuts along Route 309 leading to North Canton.

Metacomet Ridge serves as Simsbury's eastern border and is notable not only for its imposing presence but also for its unique geology and ecology. The extensive Metacomet Trail runs the length of the ridge; Penwood and Talcott Mountain state parks are situated there. The panoramic Tower Trail is doubtless the most heavily hiked trail in the valley.

The western edge of the ridge is fractured and heavy with rock debris called talus. Along with the effects of west-to-east weather patterns, this has created specialized microenvironments. The windswept and exposed summit is another environment not seen elsewhere in Simsbury. In the spring, depressions along the ridge fill with water, forming the numerous vernal pools that are vital for the survival of local toads, frogs, salamanders, and turtles. In the fall hawks and other birds of prey ride the thermals and follow the ridge during their migrations.

1982

Began examining the open space corridor along the Farmington River.

Two more West Ridge donations, 10 acres from the Friedman family, 50 acres from the Hendrick family.

1983

Several Ethel Walker parcels are available. Town acquires the site at the corner of Stratton Brook and Bushy Hill.

Town and SLCT examine the impact of a proposed North Saddle Ridge extension on the ridge and wetlands.

Mary Knapp donates the first portion of a 29 acre wetland at the south end of Saddle Ridge.

1985

Several sites were offered to the SLCT, considered and declined.

Land trust considers more active management of several parcels.

187 members

1986

SLCT considers development of a West Ridge Trail and planning was begun on several portions.

Town and land trust begin an inventory of large undeveloped tracts of land and begin contacting new property owners.



Paul Knierim

SLT Board of Trustees 1991–2005

As a trustee from 1991 to 2005, Paul served as a key player in increasing the organization's capacity to undertake larger, more complex transactions and programs. "As time passes, the opportunities to protect Simsbury's key remaining natural features as well as lesser parcels with aesthetic impact are fewer and fewer," says Paul. "The Simsbury Land Trust needs to continue to be on the lookout for these opportunities, diligent in pursuing them and creative in making them happen."



1987

Portions of the West Ridge trail are begun.

1989

SLCT begins work to create The Simsbury Walkbook.
Carlsons donate a kettle pond.

1990

Farmington River Watershed Association begins work on a Wild & Scenic designation.
SLCT identifies corridor value of the wetlands and a pine stand at the north end of Ethel Walker property between town and state parcels, discusses with town.
193 members

1991

Trustees approach landowners along the Farmington River for interest in contributing to a linear park.
First publication of The Simsbury Walkbook.



Wetlands

Wetlands are among our most important types of open space, providing the essential functions of water retention and purification. They also harbor the largest amount and variety of life of any habitat in Simsbury. As would be expected in a river valley bounded by ridges, wetlands can be found in every part of town, from the floodplain itself to vernal or seasonal pools and seasonal streams high in the hills. However, they have become partitioned over the years as residential development has spread into private nooks and crannies and into more marginally developable areas. As wetlands are divided into smaller and more isolated parcels, migration patterns are altered, wildlife with minimum range requirements disappear, and the life that remains lives under additional stress from nearby chemicals, family pets, and changes in water levels.

Simsbury boasts several types of wetlands, defined primarily by the distinctive plants and animals each supports. Among these are the river and its tributary streams, year-round ponds, red maple or brush swamps, bogs, wet meadows, and vernal ponds. The loss of any one of these wetland types would diminish the rich variety of plants, insects, birds, amphibians, reptiles, and mammals that share this part of the earth with us.

1992

SLCT donates \$1,200 to Roaring Brook Nature Center to continue its program in Simsbury schools.

SLCT awarded The Nature Conservancy's Land Trust Service Bureau Progress Award.

Gerti James donates 9 acres on Metacom Ridge to SLCT.

1993

Study group led by Steve Noble recommends a multi-use trail through seven towns along the old rail bed.

Scenic Road designation is approved for E. Weatogue, Terry's Plain, Ferry Lane and Goodrich Roads.

Pat Wegner donates the 15 acre Traineband Field on Terry's Plain Road to SLCT.

1994

SLCT produces the second edition of The Simsbury Walkbook.

Ensign-Bickford Realty Corp donates the Ketchin Quarry to SLCT.

Ilva Bergman donates a wetland site.

Preston Case donates 12 acres on Terry's Plain Road.

1995

SLCT representative on Iron Horse Study Committee.

Rose/Krasnoger families donate a wetland site.

Cathles family donates 49 acre ridge property.

233 members



Dr. John and Doris Cannon

SLT Land Donors and Life Members

The Cannons were one of the earliest landowners to recognize the value of gifting land to the Simsbury Land Trust. In the late 1970s Dr. Cannon developed a portion of his Firetown Road property, but donated approximately 23 acres of it to the Simsbury Land Trust. Looking back on that decision, Dr. Cannon says, "Not only were Doris and I able to protect the more environmentally important parts of the property, but we hoped that the early gift would help the land trust get up and running and provide an example for others." Twenty seven years later, he is still contributing to the Simsbury Land Trust as an honorary co-chair of its current acquisition campaign and is a strong advocate of using more land trust sites for educational purposes.



1996

SLCT representative on Selectmen's Task Force to consider establishing a land preservation program.

First 5-Year Management Plan approved for Case meadow restoration.

1997

A tree is planted on the Traineband Field in honor of Martha Austin.

Stewardship Account initiated with excess funds.

Membership categories are restructured to improve financial stability.

1998

SLCT engages graduate students from Yale School of Forestry to study the West Ridge and recommend a management plan.

Town establishes a Land Preservation Program.

Town purchases the 153 acre Baker Tract between Iron Horse Boulevard and the Farmington River.

1999

SLCT acquires 19 acres on Hedgehog Mountain, the first effort by SLCT to raise acquisition funds.

SLCT acquires 40 acre bog.

Karen Fine donates ridge land at the Bloomfield border.

Town buys the 13 acre Dewey Flower Farm.



Scenic Vistas

One of the most important factors in creating our sense of place is the visual landscape. Simsbury is fortunate to have a number of notable physical features. To a degree the community has been successful in maintaining well distributed panoramas where development is scattered, hidden or non-existent. There is a contentment and hopefulness that comes with living within a natural setting that we do not experience in a manmade world surrounding isolated parks, no matter how spectacular those parks might be.

Continuous natural corridors or greenbelts are much more valuable than individual, isolated parcels. They support a wider variety of species because of greater size, a greater likelihood of mixed habitats, better buffers from incompatible use, and generally more interesting hiking and educational opportunities.



2000

SLCT receives a gift of common stock to be used to purchase 22 acres west of The Hedgehog.

SLCT sponsors a Farmland Protection Forum.

Town purchases Stoddard Reservoir with State grant.

Town buys development rights to 16 acres at Flamig Farm.

630 members

2001

SLCT commissions a feasibility study for a major campaign.

Land trust hires first Executive Director and rents office space.

Bog Walk is constructed.

SLCT changed name to Simsbury Land Trust (SLT) and a new logo adopted.

Town buys site on Iron Horse Boulevard for summer concerts and recreation.

2002

10 Year Campaign for Simsbury announced with a goal of protecting specific properties totaling 1,000 additional acres.

Farmington River Watershed Association administers seven town biodiversity study.

Helen and Marion Walker leave an 8 acre ledge to SLT.

2003

SLT receives its first public grant, \$740,000 from the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service for a conservation easement on Rosedale Farms.

Madeline Salster donates 5 acres to SLT on the Farmington River.



*This short history of the Simsbury Land Trust was produced
with financial support from SKY Investment Group.*

*Congratulations and thanks to the Simsbury Land Trust for 30 years
of dedicated effort preserving the natural beauty of our community!*

SKY Investment Group LLC
One Financial Plaza, Suite 2010
Hartford, CT 06103
(860) 761-9700
www.skyig.com



Bob Bingham
Carol Bingham
Peggy Witherell Hubbard
Bill Newman
Claire Paré

2004

SLT acquires a conservation easement from 109 acre Rosedale Farms with funds from federal, state, town and individual sources.

Subject to a life estate, Preston Case gifts his residence to advance the SLT mission.

Simsbury and Canton Land Trusts acquire the 67 acre Arnold site next to Onion Mountain.

SLT accepts a \$325,000 bequest, its largest monetary gift ever, from the estate of the late Marie Dugan.

2005

SLT purchases a 167 acre easement from Tulmeadow Farm.

Landermans donate a 2 acre easement to SLT adjacent to Case land.

Town acquires rights to the remaining 22 acres at Flamig Farm.

775 members

2006

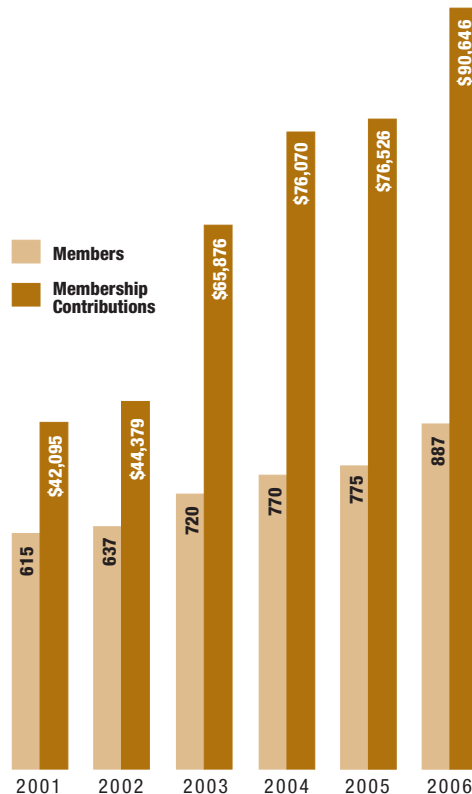
SLT obtains a grant to manage plant diversity under a CT DEP-Wildlife Habitat Improvement Program.

Professional botanist William Moorhead engaged to survey SLT ridge properties for rare state-listed species.

Donor Recognition

The Simsbury Land Trust's Board of Trustees and staff gratefully acknowledge the support we receive from our members and friends, which enables us to continue our land protection efforts and membership program. The following individuals, families, businesses and other organizations contributed gifts in the year 2006.

2006 was a record year for Simsbury Land Trust membership with 887 households making an annual contribution.



Membership Donations

Star \$1,000 and above

Aetna Foundation, Inc.
Bluestone Foundation
The Gryphon Fund
United Technologies

Anonymous
Mr. and Mrs. Steve Ballentine
David and Anna Clark
Katie French
Joan and Chuck Howard
Ralph and Lynn Jones
Att'y. and Mrs. F. John Kearns
Bob and Jill Lautensack
Marcia S. Sanderson
Mr. and Mrs. Richard Wagner
Katherine and Sam Weinhoff

Steward \$500-\$999

Flamig Farm
Illinois Tool Works Foundation
Odyssey America Reinsurance Corporation

Marjorie Alsbaugh
Ernie Ballagh and Vicki Pittenger
Larry and Barbara Berger
Mr. and Mrs. Robert M. Ellis
Mrs. John E. Ellsworth
Mr. and Mrs. Charles G. Goetz
Alan and Judy Lieberman
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Robert and Judith Sturgis Family Foundation
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Sustainer \$250-\$499

Mass Mutual Life Insurance Company

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Sponsor \$100-\$249

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 Grif and Deedee Ryerson
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 John and Jean Sziklas
 Joe and Dianne Treacy
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 Marilyn Tyszk
 J.E. VanWagenen
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 Fred and Janet von Pechmann
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