Simsbury Land Trust 2011 Annual Report

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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.

Letter from the President

The most visible activity of the Simsbury Land Trust for the past few years has been the acquisition of development rights to preserve Tulmeadow Farm. We closed on the 73-acre Tulmeadow Woodlot last Fall, bringing a close to the *Campaign for Simsbury*. During this ten-year campaign we were able to protect permanently an additional 657 acres, bringing the total number of acres under protection to 967. This would

not have been possible without the strong support of our members and residents of the Town of Simsbury.

The preservation of the Tulmeadow Woodlot was also made possible by the support and cooperation of the town, state, and federal governments. It literally took an act of Congress for the Simsbury Land Trust to receive the \$1.415 million Forest Legacy Grant that provided the lynchpin financing for the purchase of the development rights for the Tulmeadow Woodlot. It was only after we had been awarded this grant, as well as other grants from the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protec-

tion (DEEP), the Richard P. Garmany Fund from the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, and the Town of Simsbury, that we were informed that there were restrictions that precluded the Simsbury Land Trust itself from holding title to the development rights easement for which the grant was awarded. By working together, we found a way for the Simsbury Land Trust to acquire an access easement and for the Town of Simsbury to hold the conservation easement, which the Simsbury Land Trust, acting as the agent for the state and federal governments, will monitor.

Although the *Campaign for Simsbury* is over, our work is not done. We are continuing to identify and explore additional open space preservation opportunities. We have made much progress in strengthening the organizational fundamentals of the Simsbury Land Trust. We have also expanded our stewardship efforts and increased our member activities by offering additional hikes and education programs.

During 2011 we completed and adopted a new strategic plan that will guide our activities and operation over the next five years. With the help of a grant from the Connecticut Land Conservation Council and the Hartford Foundation for Public

> Giving, we began a comprehensive records management program to digitize our recordkeeping and to ensure that we properly document our acquisition and maintenance activities. In addition, we conducted a membership survey and held focus group meetings to help us learn what is important to the residents of Simsbury and how we can better fulfill our mission.

> The Simsbury Land Trust offered a full schedule of over 20 hiking activities and programs in 2011. We were impressed by the attendance at the education programs, often filling the meeting room of the Simsbury Library. If

you haven't already signed up for our email newsletter to receive up-to-date notices and reminders about these activities and programs, please go to our website and sign up for our email notification list so you don't miss out on our events.

Thank you for your role in the success of the *Campaign* for Simsbury and for your continued support as we move forward in acquiring, preserving, and using the wonderful land resources in Simsbury.

Chuck Howard President

Financial Highlights - 2011

Statement of Revenues and Expenses

January 1 – December 31, 2011

	CAMPAIGN	OPERATIONS	TOTAL 2011	TOTAL 2010
Revenues				
Campaign Donations	\$ 14,621		\$ 14,621	\$ 226,583
Grants	2,195,000	\$ 36,413	2,231,413	44,302
Land Donations				1,800,000
Annual Appeal Income				427
Membership Contributions		98,396	98,396	89,655
Art Auction				48,166
Simsburyopoly Income		19,158	19,158	
Miscellaneous Income	150	4,612	4,762	16,999
Total Revenues	2,209,771	158,579	2,368,350	2,226,132
Expenses				
Administrative	22,621	26,184	48,805	56,024
Salaries and Benefits	10,630	31,944	42,574	47,354
Membership		24,314	24,314	26,620
Acquisition Expenses		190	190	1,500
Stewardship		38,537	38,537	27,452
Art Auction Expense				28,848
Simsburyopoly Expense		13,240	13,240	
Depreciation		873	873	1,148
Total Expenses	33,251	135,282	168,533	188,946
Excess of Revenues				
Over Expenses	\$2,176,520	\$ 23,297	\$2,199,817	\$2,037,186

August Town Meeting

Due to the programmatic constraints of the Forest Legacy Grant, the only option for the preservation of the Tulmeadow Woodlot was for the Tuller family to grant the Simsbury Land Trust an access easement and for the Town of Simsbury to hold the development rights conservation easement. Under this arrangement, the Simsbury Land Trust could contract with the state to become the monitoring agent for the conservation easement, and the transaction could move forward. A town meeting, however, was required in order for the Town of Simsbury to be authorized to accept an assignment of money and rights from the Simsbury Land Trust and to accept the conservation easement. With great support from town officials and the town's boards and commissions, a town meeting was scheduled for August, 2011 at which the issue was presented to town meeting electors. Not only was there a fabulous attendance at this meeting, there were no votes against the proposal. We are grateful for the great support shown by the attendance of members at the town meeting and for our strong partnership with the Town of Simsbury.

By working together, we were able to accomplish the task of preserving the last remaining portion of Tulmeadow Farm, which will benefit our town for generations to come.

Tulmeadow Celebration

The Simsbury Land Trust holds a membership celebration each year, but the celebration we held in September was particularly special. Once it became clear that we would be able to conclude the Tulmeadow Woodlot transaction with the assistance of the Town of Simsbury, we planned a party — and what

a party it was. We had a barbecue, hayrides, hikes, music, and even a program for kids on reptiles (complete with snakes and other critters). There were a few speeches and presentations, but it was a terrific party perfect for kids, parents, grandparents and everyone else who loves being outdoors on a



Balance Sheet

DECEMBER 31, 2011	DECEMBER 31, 2010	
\$ 184,922	\$ 310,395	
62,650	356,072	
333	258,201	
6,693	11,254	
52,760	56,409	
307,358	992,331	
14,267,885	11,412,438	
881	1,754	
14,268,766	11,414,192	
\$14,576,124	\$12,406,523	
	\$ 30,000	
\$ 1,329	1,545	
1,329	31,545	
12,084,482	10,047,296	
30,000	30,000	
2,295	2,295	
258,201	258,201	
2,199,817	2,037,186	
14,574,795	12,374,978	
\$14,576,124	\$12,406,523	
	\$ 184,922 62,650 333 6,693 52,760 307,358 14,267,885 881 14,268,766 \$14,576,124 \$ 1,329 1,329 1,329 1,329 1,329 1,329 1,329 1,329 1,329 1,329 1,329 1,329 1,329 1,329 1,329 1,329 1,329	

beautiful autumn day. We have events like this every year, and we urge you to consider making our membership celebration an annual event for your family. It is a perfect opportunity to renew your ties to the Simsbury Land Trust and to just have a good time.

U.S. Department of Agriculture Meeting

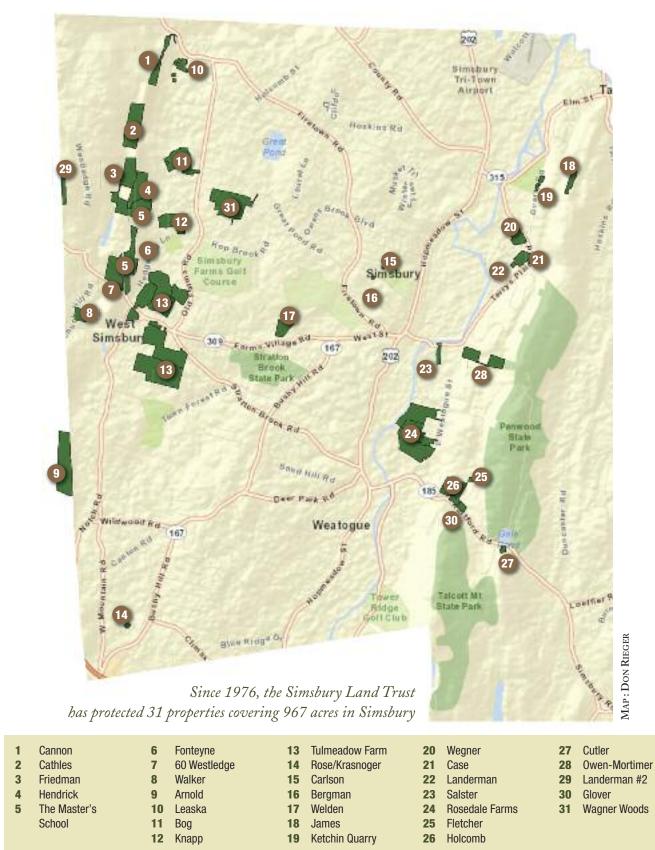
We are proud of what the Simsbury Land Trust, thanks to the support of our members and donors, has been able to accomplish in preserving open space in Simsbury. Of course, much of this would not have been possible without grants and strong support from government officials and agencies at the state and federal levels. But we discovered last fall that Connecticut and federal officials are also proud of the preservation efforts of the Simsbury Land Trust, because they asked the Tuller family and the SLT to host a meeting with Harris Sherman, the Undersecretary of the U.S. Department of Agriculture for Natural Resources and the Environment, on his trip to Connecticut. Since Secretary Sherman has direct responsibility for the

U.S. Forest Service and the Natural Resources Conservation Service, two of the federal agencies that have provided



grants to the Simsbury Land Trust, it was clear that this would be an important opportunity to speak with key government decision-makers.

This meeting was the only land trust stop made by Secretary Sherman during his visit to Connecticut, and we were joined by a veritable "who's who" of leading state and federal conservation officials in Connecticut for a roundtable discussion on ways that government can work with private organizations to leverage conservation dollars. We felt honored to have been asked to help host this meeting and we believe it demonstrates that our efforts and success are viewed by others as a model of what can be accomplished by a strong local organization with committed supporters.



SIMSBURY LAND TRUST PROPERTIES

New Children's Program and Trail Guide



Increasing the number of family and kid friendly activities for Simsbury Land Trust members and area residents has been a goal

of the Education and Recreation Committee this year. We are in the process of creating an exploration outdoor program for children. An activity book with trail

maps and trail information for children and their families to use while exploring the SLT trails is being developed, and should be available for distribution later this year. This book will be printed this fall and will be available for download on the SLT website as well.

Several family events are already planned for this spring, and we hope to add more this fall. If you are interested in signing up to receive information on the trail guide and the children's program please be sure to visit our website and opt in to our email news list. We are always looking for new committee members to help us plan our programs, so please contact the office if you are interested in helping us plan activities for this exciting new children's program.

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Preservation in Perspective — Keeping Our Promise

Whenever the question arises as to whether to spend the next dollar, or the next measure of time and effort, on acquiring a new property or on caring for the land we already own, the Simsbury Land Trust has always been quick to choose the new acquisition. Time is short, opportunities are finite and if we do not protect certain land when we can, we might never have another chance. We still believe in that and the truth is deferred maintenance, as long as you do not wait too long, can often be remedied down the road. However, this choice has other implications for a land trust.

When the Simsbury Land Trust promises to preserve a special place — a favorite vista, a secluded stream, a corridor link or a challenging trail — we do not just mean that the land will

remain undeveloped. We mean that we will do our best to maintain or enhance the characteristics that make each place special.

People sometimes question this objective. Why not simply leave the land alone and let nature run its course? After all, aren't we trying to preserve it in its natural condition? Unfortunately, in a densely populated community like ours, we have already modified our natural environment, and do so every day, often in wide ranging and traumatic ways. For example:

 A new development replaces an absorbent hillside, creating runoff from rooftops and pavement and overwhelming the stream on an adjacent property, changing its stability and ecology. This does not happen slowly, enabling the plants and animals the time to adjust. It happens quickly and aggressively.





2) We purchase a beautiful ornamental shrub, transported by a nursery from thousands of miles away and plant it in our yard. A flock of birds eat the seeds and drop them in the nearby woods where the plant spreads quickly, a single foreign species with no natural enemies, replacing what had been a diverse variety of native plants.

3) We no longer take the time or spend the money to mow a field that provides a panoramic view and a home for grassland birds and mammals. Soon the field has grown to brush and trees, the field habitat and the view are gone.

The Simsbury Land Trust would argue that we are not doing the job we set out to do when we neglect these things. With thoughtful planning, professional skills, hard work and financial resources we can slow the run-off and

catch the sand and salt before they enter the stream. We cannot eradicate an invasive species but we can control it and keep it from destroying the wide diversity of our native plants and animals. And by maintaining a field, we can save the scenic vista and a diverse habitat, elements that add immeasurably to the healthy vibrancy of the world that supports our mind, our body and our happiness.

If the Simsbury Land Trust does not make active management of the land an integral part of our operations, we only do half the job. At the end of the day, we must provide the same level of effort and resources to caring for those special places that we did in acquiring them. Only then have we truly preserved them and kept our promise.



Stewardship of Our Properties

Trail Building and Maintenance

Simsbury Land Trust properties are open to the public. The SLT works hard to make sure that the public can enjoy their visits by providing well designed, marked and maintained trails that offer the opportunity to explore the properties while at the same time protecting their natural features such as wildflowers and wildlife. Developing a new trail may involve consulting professionals such as a botanist, herpetologist (a person who studies amphibians and reptiles) or other knowledgeable naturalists to make sure that we route the trail in such a way that special plants and animals and the resources they use will be protected. Sometimes we designate areas as environmentally sensitive and ask the public not to enter.

Once a good route for a trail is defined, land trust volunteers use flagging tape to mark the route of the trail so that workday volunteers can help cut back brush, cut small trees, move rocks and make other necessary changes to create an open pathway. When the ground work is finished, the trail is blazed, marked with small painted rectangles on trees and occasionally rocks to show the route.



Did you know that two blazes together, one above the other, means that the trail is about to turn? If the upper blaze is to the right of the lower blaze, look for the trail to turn right. A blaze to the left of the lower blaze means the trail is about to turn left. Blazes are placed so that you can see the next blaze from the one you are standing near except when the trail is an old road or other obvious travel way.

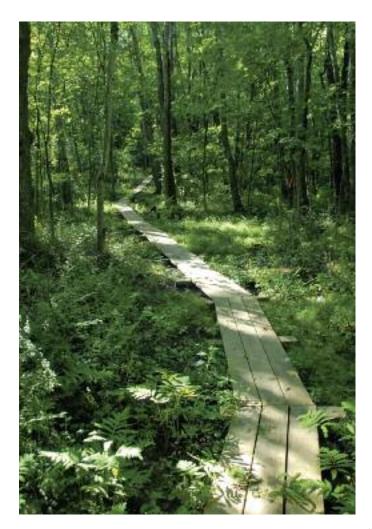
All trails require repeated maintenance. The October snowstorm resulted in many downed trees blocking trails and paths, but even under normal conditions bushes grow back after being cut and trees die and fall. The obstacles have to be addressed regularly.

Bridge Building and Boardwalks

The SLT owns a number of properties with brooks and wet areas. Unless these features are very small, when trails must cross them we try to provide bridges and boardwalks both to make walking more pleasant and to protect the land. The Simsbury Land Trust's bridges are found at Rosedale Farm, the Cathles property, 60 Westledge Road, Case Meadow, Wagner Woods and Owen-Mortimer. The small log bridge in the Wagner Woods will be replaced in spring of 2012 with a higher bridge that offers better footing.

Boardwalks help keep walkers from getting wet, muddy feet, help prevent erosion and protect many plants in wet areas from being trampled. There is a long stretch of boardwalk at the Owen-Mortimer property and shorter boardwalks at 60 Westledge Road, the West Mountain blue trail and the Knapp property where one boardwalk ends at a viewing platform. The Bog property also has a viewing platform that is accessible by a raised wooden walkway that originates at the shoreline of the bog.

All these structures have been built by volunteers. In many cases, the SLT has partnered with Boy Scouts who need community projects to earn their Eagle Scout awards. We work with the Eagle candidates on the design of projects, providing direction and guidance while leaving much of the planning to the scout. The SLT also pays for the materials required. For a bridge or a boardwalk, the scout must go before the town's Inland Wetlands and Watercourses



Commission to apply for a permit. This provides experience in dealing with local governments. While we provide the materials, Scouts and their families provide the labor. The Simsbury Land Trust very much appreciates the efforts of the Scouts and of the other volunteers whose hard work makes our properties accessible to the public.

Signage

Many of our signs are directional. One purpose of our signs is to help you find our properties. For example, a small sign on the east side of North Saddle Ridge Drive marks the entry to the town trail that leads to our bog. The 60 Westledge Road property has a "60" at the street, and you can see the parking area and large trailhead kiosk from the driveway. The West Mountain Trails that start at 60 Westledge are shown on a map on the kiosk, and the trails are

blazed in colors that match the colors used on the map. Minikiosks protect copies of the map at critical junctions along the trail. We don't want you to get lost.

In some cases we use signs to provide information about the property that you are visiting. Ketchin Quarry has signs that explain some of the Quarry's geology and history. Did you know that the Town Hall is made of stone from the Quarry? Signs at Rosedale Farm give some history and some information on the farm's exceptional soils and on nonnative plants that are found close to the river.

We also post some advisory signs. "Please stay on the blazed trail. Environmentally sensitive area" means we are





trying to protect important species of plants or animals at the same time that we want to provide public access. Tulmeadow Farm, which is owned by the Tuller family and protected from development through a conservation easement to the SLT, requires that dogs be leashed to prevent damage to crops. An advisory sign gives that reminder to visitors. While we want you to visit and enjoy our properties, sometimes misuse occurs, warranting signs with a sterner message. We had a problem at 60 Westledge with people partying in the parking lot after dark, so we have asked the police to keep watch. A sign warns potential violators of the possibility of arrest.



Managing Invasive Plants

Expenses for managing invasive plants are the single largest stewardship expense facing the Simsbury Land Trust. About half of the stewardship budget goes into this work. Why do we put so much money and effort into this work?

First, we want to protect the ecological value of our properties. When you visit a SLT property and hear wood frogs calling from a vernal pool in the spring or see bluebirds hunting insects over a grassy field, it is because the habitat meets the needs of those animals. Our native wildlife species have evolved in concert with native plants. As a Connecticut North Central Conservation District brochure explains, "Native insects need native plants to thrive. Native birds and mammals need native insects, as well as native plants, to thrive. Native insects are critical to higher forms of life." Invasive species of plants such as Oriental bittersweet or Japanese barberry do not provide much food to native insects because the plants' chemical composition prevents our insects from eating them. While this may seem desirable to landscapers because it means the plants are nearly "pest-free", it also allows these plants to take over natural landscapes and crowd out native plants. If we want to have



native birds and animals living in our area, we need to protect native vegetation.

Another good reason for tackling stands of invasive plants like Multiflora rose and Japanese barberry is that they interfere with the public's enjoyment of some of our properties and also can be a risk to human health. At the Owen-Mortimer property, the thick stand of very thorny Japanese barberry along the route of a potential trail prevented access to all but the most determined walkers. There were too many barberry bushes for volunteers to dig out successfully so we hired professional help. In addition to walkers preventing from



After the October snowstorm, property stewards and workday volunteers cleared the trails at Owen-Mortimer, Ketchin Quarry, the West Mountain Trails and Wagner Woods. The Simsbury Land Trust also had to hire an arborist to cut dangerous branches hanging over the trails.

getting their legs scratched up, Japanese barberry control also reduces the likelihood of their encountering ticks carrying Lyme disease. Research from the Connecticut Agriculture Experiment Station shows that areas with heavy Japanese barberry infestations have more ticks that can carry Lyme disease and other human



When a trail goes through a spot where there is a problem with erosion, we put in "water bars", logs or lumber dug part way into the trail nearly at a right angle to it. This causes rain or snow melt to run across the trail and into the woods or grass rather than running straight downhill carrying soil with it.

diseases than areas without barberry. Also, the ticks in the barberry infested areas have a higher rate of infection than similar ticks from uninfested areas. The research also shows that controlling barberry reduces the risk of people contracting Lyme disease by reducing both the number of ticks and the percentage that are infected.

Encroachments

From time to time, we have to deal with the unpleasant issue of encroachments. An encroachment occurs when someone makes unauthorized use of a Simsbury Land Trust property. Examples that we have dealt with recently include the dumping of leaves, brush and construction debris on SLT property, and moving earth from a residential lot onto SLT property, cutting trees, installing a dog containment fence and creating and blazing an unauthorized trail. Under Connecticut law, a person who encroaches on land trust property can be required to restore the property to its original condition and to pay punitive damages. Simsbury Land Trust prefers to resolve encroachment issues in a neighborly manner, especially when the offense was unintentional. We need to respond to encroachments: our donors count on the Simsbury Land Trust's protecting and caring for its properties. Our continued viability depends on maintaining the community's trust in us. Visitors to SLT properties are welcomed and encouraged, but we expect visitors not to take advantage of the properties in ways that would embarrass them were it their next door neighbor's yard.

> STEWARDSHIP IN ACTION

Wagner Woods

Simsbury Land Trust acquired Wagner Woods in 2010 through generosity of the Richard Wagner family. Its 62 acres include a large field that is cut for hay each year as well as woods. The gently rolling landscape has allowed the SLT to develop walking trails suitable for families and people who like to be outdoors but either can't or don't want to deal with the steep inclines and rocky footing of the much longer West Mountain trails. People looking for a longer walk on relatively level ground can combine the walk at Wagner Woods with the trails at Great Pond State Forest across the street. We are looking forward to having a kiosk installed at the entrance to Wagner Woods. It will house a map of the trails, a poster showing the 60 species of birds that have been identified there and information about Simsbury Land Trust.

Wagner Woods was once farmland and like most Connecticut farmland that has reverted to woods, it has many invasive plants. Of major concern is a large stand of Japanese barberry. We have applied for a Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP) grant from the USDA's Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) to cover some of the cost of managing the barberry here. Without the grant, the SLT cannot afford to have the work done. Controlling the barberry is desirable because it should allow native plants to

The gently rolling landscape has allowed the land trust to develop walking trails suitable for families and people who like to be outdoors but either can't or don't want to deal with the steep inclines and rocky footing of the much longer West Mountain trails. come in where the barberry has crowded them out and should also reduce the number of ticks in the area.







Wagner Woods

LOCATED ON GREAT POND ROAD, SIMSBURY 2010 GIFT 62 ACRES OF LAND

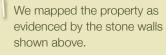
Built and installed blue bird boxes in the meadow and now we maintain them. Invasive control has been done in several areas, but there is much more to be done, especially where indicated by the map, if we can get a grant. The lumber is already pre-cut for a bridge that will be built this spring. Parking area was cleared.

The location for a planned trailhead kiosk that an Eagle Scout candidate should be building this spring. We have prepared birding information and maps for the kiosk.

Removed brush, poison ivy, briars and branches blocking the driveway.

Planned the blue, red, yellow and orange trails and then cleared and blazed them.

After the October storm, we did significant clean-up along all trails and the edge of the meadow and also hired a professional arborist to do the clean-up that was not safe for volunteers.



A surveyor was hired and we had critical parts of the boundaries marked. Then we put up signs showing the property lines and made note of encroachments.

60 Westledge

60 Westledge Road is the gateway to the West Mountain Trails. We were honored to have the trails designated a Connecticut Greenway in 2009. 60 Westledge Road itself was once the summer place of a West Hartford dentist. When the SLT acquired it, it featured the abandoned residence and a derelict garage at the end of the paved driveway where the land trust has provided a picnic table. Other remnants of its former uses include two stone stairways that have been incorporated into the Simsbury Land Trust's trails, two rows of large rhododendrons



along the driveway and a 19th century stone and earth dam that once impounded water to run a mill.

Much work has gone into providing public access to 60 Westledge Road and the West Mountain Trails. Because Westledge Road is a busy street, the SLT developed off street parking adjacent to the driveway. The house and garage, which were safety hazards, had to be removed; brush and leaves that had been dumped on the property were cleaned up; the trees and vines overgrowing the meadow were cut and removed; the trails were laid out, cleared and blazed; and a bridge was built to provide a crossing over Hop

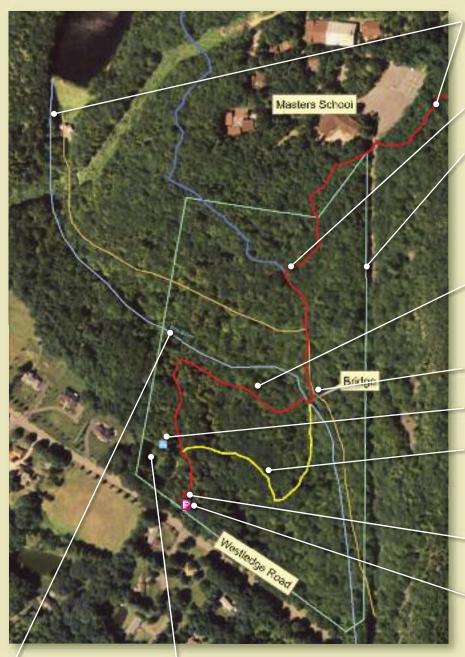




Brook. The addition of the kiosk near the parking lot has provided a place for a map and other information for visitors.

Keeping 60 Westledge Road and the West Mountain Trails open requires ongoing effort. Volunteers walk the five mile loop regularly and remove downed branches. Stewards pick up litter along the road and in the parking lot. The Simsbury Land Trust hired an arborist to clear dangerous broken limbs near the parking lot and driveway after the October snowstorm. Without good volunteer help and stewardship funding, the Simsbury Land Trust would not be able to maintain this well-loved area for the public.

The house and garage, which were safety hazards, had to be removed; brush and leaves that had been dumped on the property were cleaned up; the trees and vines overgrowing the meadow were cut and removed; the trails were laid out, cleared and blazed; and a bridge was built to provide a crossing over Hop Brook.



After we found invasive Japanese Knotweed in Hop Brook we contacted Aquarion Water, our upstream neighbor, which agreed to begin a control program. We have removed invasive plants from many areas, but there is always more to do. We keep the small meadow open with annual mowing and invasive plant removal.

When the property was enlarged through The Master's School purchase, we laid out and then cleared and blazed the new blue and red trails.

Trail signs were installed with maps.

The boundaries of the property were marked and then we marked the boundaries of the addition.

A forester was retained to do a forest management plan for the property.

A boardwalk was built over a seasonally wet area of the trail.

After obtaining an inland wetlands permit, we built a bridge over Hop Brook.

We built and installed a picnic table.

Having consulted with our DEEP service forester, we laid out the red and yellow trails on the original parcel and then cleared and blazed them.

An Eagle Scout candidate installed a trailhead kiosk.

Cleared and created a parking area.

When we first acquired the property, we removed a great deal of brush and trash that had been dumped there. Trash needs to be picked up regularly in the parking area and on the trails.

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60 Westledge

LOCATED AT 60 WESTLEDGE ROAD WEST SIMSBURY PROTECTED IN 2000 22 ACRES OF LAND • 5 MILES OF TRAILS

Membership Donations

Ted and Kathy Fleming

Leon and Colleen Forbes *

Tom and Anneliese Frank *

We want to thank the community for its generous support this past year. None of the Simsbury Land Trust's accomplishments in 2011 would have been possible without our membership and its many remarkable volunteers and donors.

✤ 5 Year Donor

Membership Donations

Star

The Gryphon Fund ◆ United Technologies ◆ Illinois Tool Works Foundation Oak Foundation The Trumbull Family Foundation The Werth Family Foundation ◆

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Journal of the Farmington River

Winner, Adult Category – Inspired by Nature by Deborah Ott

How do you measure time by a river? By its swollen banks, The curve of its u-shaped bed, The gray, wise stones that speak from its depths The velvet flow of a winter sky Reflected on the water at dawn.

We would catalogue what grows there, And clock the years that witness an invasion, Bittersweet, shrub honeysuckle Is this the natural order of things? How long until the plant kingdom Overcomes us all?

There is a part of the Farmington Called The Boneyard Fly fishermen venture in there Brambles, undergrowth, and then a paradise On the river's edge A concert of frogs, relentless, discordant, Crowd the air from a nearby pool No one seems to care. Two canoers drift by.

We measure time by the absurd seasons When ripe, jolly pumpkins float down the river After an epic autumn flood We can make of it what we will, The joyous bobbing, Children hold parents' hands, Watch them make their way To the end of the world.

Simsbury Land Trust would like to express its thanks to our talented volunteer photographers whose work is featured in this report: Jay Sams, Alexander Anisimov, Dick Clark, T.J. Donohue, Lawrence Boblas, Ray Padron, Jim Ray, Don Rieger, Rick Warters

Back cover photo: Jay Sams *Design:* John Johnson Art Direction & Design, www.jjartdir.com

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