

SIMSBURY LAND TRUST 2 0 1 2 ANNUAL REPORT

There's something for everyone!

The Simsbury Land Trust has something for everyone

The mission of the SLT is to permanently protect fields, farms, scenic vistas and wetlands to preserve the natural beauty of Simsbury. In addition to conservation of properties, we also spend a great deal of time and energy caring for these properties and providing hiking trails so the public can enjoy them. More recently we have focused on adding more recreation and education programs to appeal to a variety of groups in town.

Education Programs

Each year we host a number of talks about topics ranging from the traprock ridges to photographic slide shows of interesting subjects and places. These programs are open to the public and free of charge, and are generally hosted on Sunday afternoons in the Simsbury Public Library or Simsbury Farms Apple Barn.





New this year is **Green Scenes: A documentary film and discussion series.** The six-part series has featured documentaries about recycling, local food sources, energy and the environment, young farmers and even queen bees. Following the film is a panel discussion with local experts with experience and expertise in the topic featured in the film. Next fall the series will be held at the Simsbury Public Library on the first Thursday evening

of the month beginning in October. This series will be free of charge. We are in the planning stages for film selection and if you have any interest in this type of program we would welcome suggestions and volunteers.

Dirty Boots Kids Club

After a year of hard work, the Dirty Boots Kids Club was officially launched in September at our membership BBQ. Designed for young children (ages 12 and under, with some group members as young as four) and their parents, the



group meets at least four times a year for a hike and activity. Thanks to a generous contribution from Educational Playcare, this year club members received a new activity guide with hikes and activities for families, a knapsack and a water bottle. Winter animal



tracking, a farm walk and a search through the woods are three of the programs offered this year. There is a small fee for a child's membership. Please contact our office if you would like to sign your child up for the program.

Hikes and Recreation Activities

This year we offered more activities than ever before! Bird hikes, a winter tree identification walk and talk, a spring wildflower walk, and a family photography hike are some of the programs offered during 2012.





Don't Miss Out! Sign up for email news and event reminders.

While many of our programs are planned far in advance, on occasion we add last minute hikes or programs, or occasionally have time or location changes. To be sure that you receive the most current information visit our website and sign up for our email news mailing list.

Visit us at simsburylandtrust.org

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Financial Highlights – 2012

NGN 871 871 871 088	OPERATIONS \$ 35,520 124,245 5,330 13,412 178,507 47,092	TOTAL 2012 \$ 36,871 35,520 124,245 5,330 13,412 215,378	TOTAL 2011 \$ 14,621 816,413 98,396 19,158 4,762 953,350
871	124,245 5,330 13,412 178,507	35,520 124,245 5,330 13,412 215,378	816,413 98,396 19,158 4,762 953,350
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	5,330 13,412 178,507	5,330 13,412 215,378	19,158 4,762 953,350
	13,412 178,507	13,412 215,378	4,762 953,350
	178,507	215,378	953,350
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188	17 002	50 400	40.005
000	47,092	52,180	48,805
	44,298	44,298	42,574
	35,400	35,400	24,314
077		1,077	190
	16,961	16,961	38,537
			13,240
	474	474	873
165	144,225	150,390	168,533
			\$784,817
,	,165	,165 144,225	

Balance Sheet

	DECEMBER 31, 2012	DECEMBER 31, 2011
Assets		
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash – Unrestricted	\$ 175,956	\$ 184,922
 Restricted 	94,209	62,650
Pledges Receivable – net		333
Prepaid Expenses	33,242	6,693
Investments Held by Others	70,786	52,760
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	374,193	307,358
FIXED ASSETS		
Land	12,852,535	12,852,885
Office Equipment – net	407	881
TOTAL FIXED ASSETS	12,852,942	14,268,766
TOTAL ASSETS	\$13,227,135	\$13,161,124
Liabilities and Fund Balance CURRENT LIABILITIES Accrued Liabilities	\$ 2,162	\$ 1,329
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TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	2,162	1,329
FUND BALANCE		
Beginning Fund Balance	13,091,695	12,342,350
Board Designated Stewardship Fund	42,500	30,000
Restricted Stewardship Fund	10,457	2,295
Temporarily Restricted Net Assets	15,333	333
Excess of Revenues over Expenses	64,988	784,817
ENDING FUND BALANCE	13,224,973	13,159,795
Total Liabilities and Fund Balance	\$13,227,135	\$13,161,124

Our/Latest/Property

The Simsbury Land Trust has worked for many years to help provide permanent protection for places important to the character, scenic vistas, and environmental health of the Town. In doing so, it has helped protect large portions of several magnificent north/south corridors — the Metacomet Ridge, the Farmington River and the West Ridge — as well as large individual sites throughout the Town, like Tulmeadow Farm and Rosedale Farms, Wagner Woods and the Bog.

Two important goals remain. There is no east/west corridor enabling a hiker to walk easily from the Metacomet Ridge (the National New England Scenic Trail) in the east into the center of Town and across the river to the West Ridge, or beyond to the Appalachian Trail. And, one of Simsbury's top three farms in terms of agricultural production has still not been protected. During 2012, the Simsbury Land Trust entered into purchase and sale agreements to accomplish both of these goals and is now actively pursuing the funding for these projects.

George Hall Farm/ Pharos Farm

George Hall's 12-acre farm on Old Farms Road has been the base for approximately 75 acres of other land that he has leased for his farming operations. The existing farm consists of several temporary greenhouses, shelter for farm equipment, a farmhouse, six acres of US Prime and CT Important soils and a popular farm stand. The proposed transaction between George Hall and the Simsbury Land Trust will place a permanent conservation easement on his existing land and enable him to purchase an additional 38 acres of Prime farmland soils from the Town that he has been leasing from the Town since the early 1970s. This property will also be subject to a permanent conservation easement. The additional 38 acres is known as Pharos Farm, located between Terry's Plain and Quarry Roads near the east side of the Farmington River. Not only will this transaction protect the farm from future development, but making Hall Farm a 50-acre farm gives the farm greater flexibility to meet future challenges and a better chance to remain economically viable over the long term. Removing the development rights from both parcels will also reduce the farm's market value, making the farming much more affordable for future farmers.





Additionally, the Old Farms Road site will provide off-street parking and public access for the trails on the SLT's adjacent Wagner Woods property. The Pharos Field portion will preserve a working farm that has been farmed continuously at that site since it was first cleared by Native Americans long before the colonists arrived. Pharos Farm is part of an area with State or National Agricultural, Historic, and Scenic designations. It is also adjacent to the CT Wildlife Management Area along the banks of the Farmington River, and within walking distance of the SLT's Wegner Field and its Quarry Site.

The purchase price for a permanent agricultural conservation easement protecting the combined 50 acres is \$550,000. The Town has already approved the sale of Pharos Farm as part of a transaction that will preserve that land and Hall's Farm through the conservation easement. The USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service has approved a \$275,000 grant to contribute to this acquisition. We have received commitments toward the remaining funds, but will need help from members and the general community to complete the transaction this spring.

Acquisition Projects

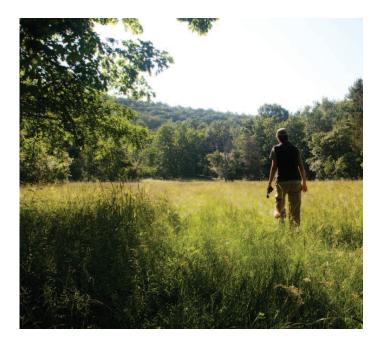
Tanager Hill

Completion of a trail from the east ridge of Town to the west ridge and beyond has been impeded for years by three challenging barriers: 1) the steep escarpments near the top of the Metacomet Ridge, 2) the nearly continuous string of housing developments that run just below the escarpments between Tariffville and Folly Farm, and 3) the Farmington River. Of the three river crossings in Simsbury, only the Drake Hill Bridge is a practical pedestrian crossing. It has the least traffic, sidewalks run from the bridge through the Town Center connecting to trails to the west, and just east of the Drake Hill Bridge via Riverside Road is Tanager Hill, a spectacular route between developments and through the escarpment.

Approximately 1,600 feet wide, the 92-acre Tanager Hill parcel is the only meaningful natural corridor that remains between the Farmington River floodplain and the top of the Metacomet Ridge. It separates the neighborhood of Pinnacle Mountain from that of Talcott Mountain Drive. It rises 500 feet from East Weatogue Street to Penwood State Park feet in a series of manageable slopes, and the remains of an cart road from the olden days provides rare access through the escarpment within Penwood from Tanager Hill to Lake Louise, the Pinnacle and the New England Scenic Trail (one of only two trails in New England designated as National Trails by the National Park Service).

Besides being the one remaining link to completing an east/west trail across town, Tanager Hill is forested with a wide variety of tree types typical of upper and lower elevations and transitional pasture. A series of meadows scattered through the woods,





the Lucy Brook Ravine and a network of three miles of paths winding through the site also makes this a spectacular stand-alone destination. Because of the size of this tract and its unusually varied habitats in close proximity, this site is also an important protection for the 17 state listed plants and animals found near or adjacent to the property. This property is immediately adjacent to the Owen Mortimer property already owned by SLT, and with access frontage on East Weatogue Street, acquisition of Tanager Hill will enable to create a premier hiking destination in Town.

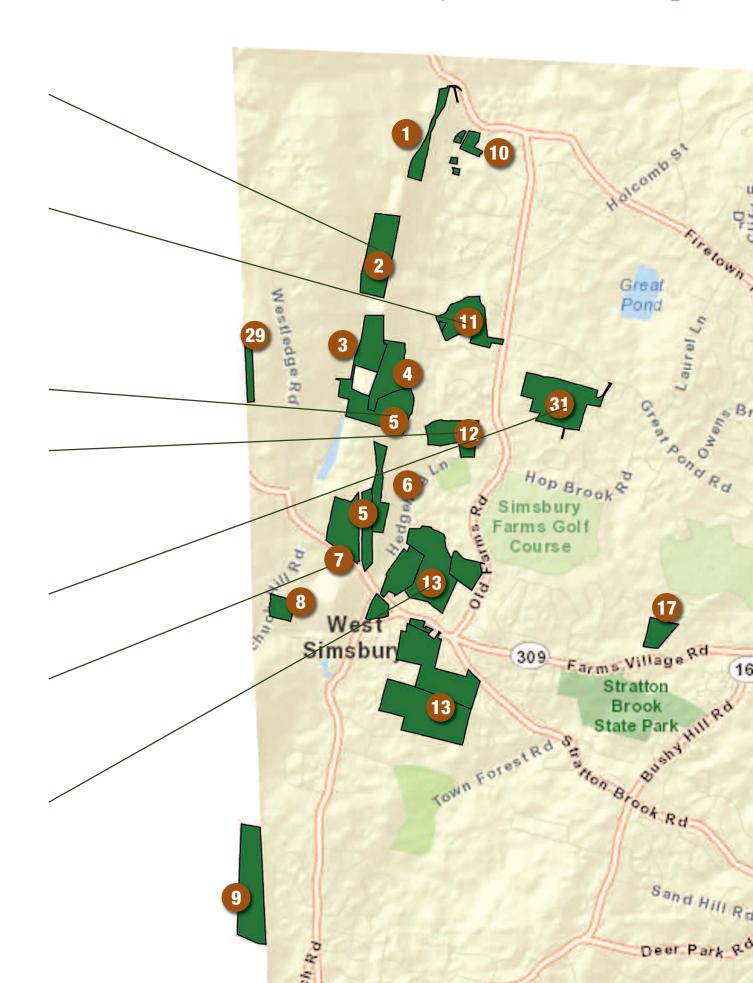
The purchase price for Tanager Hill is \$2,150,000 including a reserve for its long-term management. The CT-DEEP has already approved a \$500,000 grant, and a request from the National Park Service- National Scenic Trails program is currently going through the Interior Department's review process. Present commitments to date from individuals exceed \$375,000. Assuming we are able to obtain grant funding from the Department of Interior, we need at least \$275,000 in additional funds from members, neighbors and the community at large.

WE NEED YOUR HELP!

These two projects demonstrate what the Simsbury Land Trust, with continued support from a generous membership base, has been able to accomplish. The SLT has consistently worked with landowners to create a conservation plan and obtain substantial matching funds from public sources, but as the late Herman Fonteyne would say, "It is up to you to make it happen." Once again we need your help to bring it home! There will never be another chance to secure two important sites. Please be a part of the effort and respond with a generous contribution.

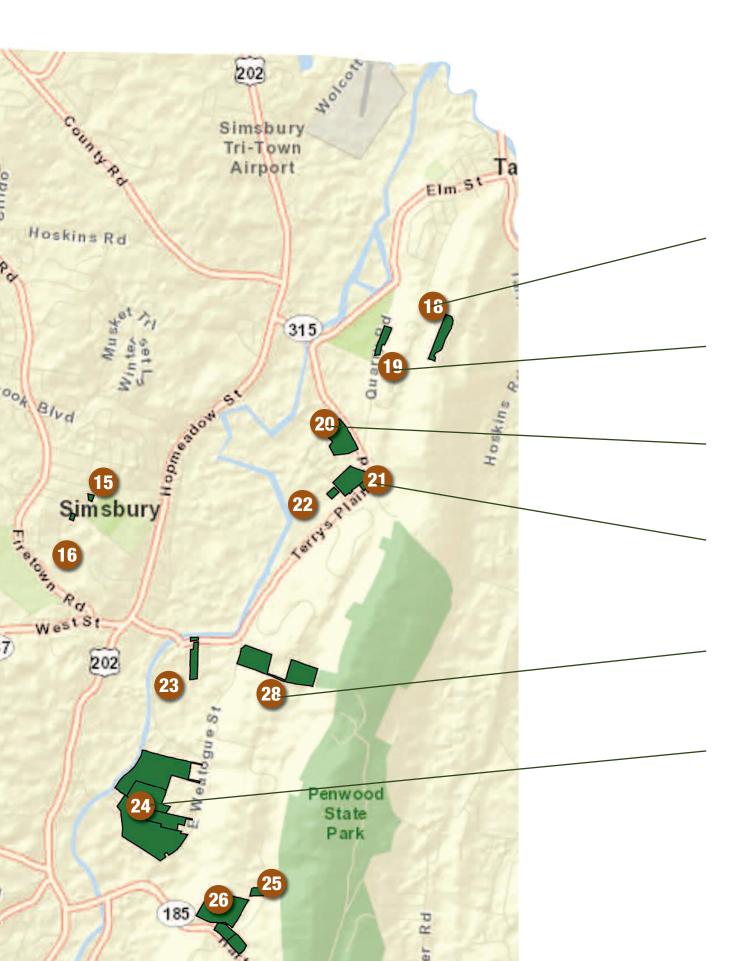
SIMSBURY LAND T

Since 1976, the Simsbury Land Trust has protect



RUST PROPERTIES

ted 31 properties covering 967 acres in Simsbury



Membership Donations

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.

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Our Mission

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.

