

Summary 05/19/2010
Lower Connecticut River and Coastal Region Land Trust Exchange
7 P.M.
CRERPA Office
455 Boston Post Road
Old Saybrook, CT

Attendees:

Gregg Mirando – Clinton Land Trust
John Bellows – Chester Land Trust
Bob Gorman – Chester Land Trust
Sarah Keaney – Old Saybrook Land Trust
Mark R. Leas – Westbrook Land Conservation Trust
Kristen Elliot Leas – Westbrook Land Conservation Trust
Tom Elliot – Westbrook Land Conservation Trust
Cindy Sullivan – Haddam Land Trust
Wini Olson – Essex Land Trust
Betsy Morgan – Lyme Land Trust
David Bingham – Salem Land Trust
Harvey Thomas – East Haddam Land Trust
Melvin Woody – Ct River Land Trust
Francis Pickering – CCRPA
John Kennedy – Deep River Land Trust
Peter Howard – Deep River Land Trust
Amy Paterson – Connecticut Land Conservation Council
Lisa Bassani – Trust for Public Land

The topic for the May meeting of the Lower Connecticut River and Coastal Region Land Trust Exchange (LTE) focused on *How to Approach Land Owners Concerning the Long Term Protection of Their Land*. An experienced and knowledgeable group led and guided the round table discussion that included: Amy Paterson, Executive Director of the Connecticut Land Conservation Council; Lisa Bassani, Project Manager for the Trust for Public Land; and Dr. David Bingham, President of the Salem Land Trust. Other topics discussed included the 2010 Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry Forest Stewardship Project Competitive Grant, the June 4th Wildlands and Woodlands Conference in Concord, N.H., future funding for the LTE, CRERPA website linkage and design, and the Yale Conservation Finance Camp. The next meeting for the LTE is scheduled for September 15th at 7:00pm at the CRERPA office. Its topic will be *Fundraising for Stewardship Purposes*.

Main discussion points concerning how to approach landowners about the long term protection of their land focused on having a conservation plan for your community, providing opportunities for landowners to learn about and discuss how to conserve their land in a non threatening environment, exploring financing alternatives and contributing tax incentives and what if scenarios with landowners, and preparing your land trust to become an effective collaborator, proponent for landowners, and effective player in the game of land conservation.

Reaching out to landowners in a community could be done through public workshops geared towards large property owners. This would allow them to obtain information in a non-threatening, autonomous manner that would allow for general discussion concerning how their land fits into broader conservation goals and to learn generally what tools are available for them if and when they wish to conserve their land. More direct approaches that could be taken with the appropriate land owners were discussed. Questions concerning what they would like to see happen after they are gone, and what would happen to your land if you were to die were two that were given as examples.

Information was handed out by Margot Burns concerning the U.S. Forest Service National Woodland Owner Survey and an overview and categorization of Connecticut's woodland owners created through the "*Tools for Engaging Landowners Effectively (TELE)*" project of the Sustaining Family Forests Initiative (SFFI), an ad hoc collaboration of universities, government agencies, industry, conservation organizations, certification systems, and landowners engaging land owners. SFFI is managed jointly by the Yale School of Forestry & Environmental Studies and the USDA Forest Service Family Forest Research Center, along with the American Forest Foundation, MeadWestvaco, and USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture, with an advisory group of over 40 organizations representing diverse sectors. The objectives of the Sustaining Family Forests Initiative are to:

- Serve as a wide-ranging information resource about America's family forest owners for government agencies, university extension educators, consulting foresters, landowner associations, land trusts, conservation and biodiversity NGOs, sustainable forestry certifiers, and the forest products industry;
- Provide tools for enhanced outreach to woodland landowners; and
- Aid a broad spectrum of organizations to be more strategic in meeting education and service goals with limited resources."

For more information please visit – <http://www.engaginglandowners.org/> and [www.sustainingfamilyforests.org.](http://www.sustainingfamilyforests.org/)"

Preparing your land trust to become an effective collaborator, proponent for landowners, and an effective player in the game of land conservation begins with the makeup and conservation actions of your board. It was offered that it is helpful if your board is made up of people who are knowledgeable about your town and its land, and if possible, provide an example as a conservationist through personal action.

As a demonstration project we looked at a group of contiguous parcels in Chester that are in various states of ownership and sale opportunity. Together they constitute a key regional and town protection opportunity area due to the unfragmented forested landscape they cover, their connectivity to existing protected land and trails, access to and from important cultural areas, and for their scenic quality.

Other topics: Margot Burns will be attending the June 4th Wildlands and Woodlands Conference on behalf of the LTE and CRERPA, and will also attend the week long Yale Conservation Finance Camp being offered in June. Funding for 5 meetings to be held in September, November, January, March, and April next fiscal year will be provided through CRERPA and through CT RC&D/ERT. Margot asked the group if their Land Trust's web sites could be linked to the LTE portion of the CRERPA website and all in attendance agreed. The next meeting for the LTE is scheduled for September 15th at 7:00pm at the CRERPA office. Its topic will be *Fundraising for Stewardship Purposes.*