



**WARREN  
LAND TRUST**



Fall/Winter 2023

## President's Letter

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

Among many other things, Fall brings the Warren Land Trust annual meeting (more about that in this newsletter!) – an occasion to reflect on what has been accomplished in the past year, and what projects lie ahead. It's no spoiler alert to say that in both cases, the answer is: a lot! I hope it also goes without saying that none of it – what WLT has accomplished recently and what will be accomplished in the immediate future – could take place without the help of our community.

**Where:** WLT often partners with other conservation organizations to expand our reach, but we do our work in the context of a particular place: Warren, Connecticut. Our backyard, and yours. We love it and know it well – its history and character, its unique opportunities and challenges.

**How:** We conserve land thoughtfully and strategically, using criteria based on conservation values, in line with best practices in our field, and informed by Warren's Town Plan of Conservation & Development (POCD).

What shape have these conservation principles taken lately? Here, I have some exciting updates that reflect that strategic approach.

It is currently an interesting moment for land conservation. Policy priorities at the state and federal level, and the funding that accompanies them, are focused on land conservation and its role in environmental health and climate change resilience.

At the same time, in this broader context, we've seen not one or two, but three once-in-a-generation land transitions, properties that have been on WLT's radar screen for many years due to their exceptional conservation value.

As you may know (and can read more about on page 3), WLT recently acquired the Cunningham Nature Preserve at the end of Cunningham Road. These 237 wooded acres are historically significant, protect important wildlife habitat, and have exceptional recreational potential. The Preserve abuts the Kent Land Trust's East Kent Hamlet Nature Preserve, and we are working closely with KLT on connecting, expanding, and improving a trail network that connects our two properties, thanks to a jointly-awarded trails grant from the CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection.

At the same time, preservation plans are underway for the Tanner Farm, nearly 200 acres of farmland and forest trails along Route 341. This property comprises some of the most iconic views in Warren and beyond, and has key implications for the environmental health of Lake Waramaug: Sucker Brook, which runs through the farm, empties directly into the lake. We have secured federal and state funding for the project and expect to be moving forward on the project in the coming months. Working together with the Northwest Connecticut Land Conservancy and the Lake Waramaug Task Force, we are excited to preserve the Tanner Farm's agricultural legacy, and to develop the trail system at the property's rear.

Finally, WLT is working to preserve approximately 150 acres at the end of Mountain Lake Road. Locally known as "the Bible Camp," this property represents a linchpin connecting land held by the Warren Land Trust, the Kent Land Trust, and the State of Connecticut, as well as private conservation easements. Together, these properties will make up a protected forest bloc of 1000+ acres, providing fantastic hiking opportunities, valuable wildlife habitat protection and connectivity, and significant climate change resilience potential.

These projects are exciting and will benefit our town's environmental health and our community's outdoor recreational opportunities. But they'd be impossible without that community's input and support. So, thank you – and we look forward to seeing you out on some great new trails!

Sincerely,

Rebecca

## Family Fun at the Cider Run

Rainy weather didn't dampen spirits at this year's Cider Run 5k, co-sponsored by WLT and Warren Parks & Rec. Over 60 runners and walkers took to road and field for the 5k, while the kids enjoyed a fun run followed by pumpkin painting...with cider doughnuts for all at the finish! Family fun was had in more ways than one at this year's event, as first place runner Owen Mansfield was followed by his brother Bennett Mansfield in second place, with Dad Bill Mansfield not far behind in fifth place. Cara Falcetta of Manchester, CT was the first woman to finish, with Warren's Tiffany Parkhouse (and her equally speedy pup) hot on her heels. Congratulations to all the runners and walkers, and thank you for supporting the Parks & Rec Scholarship Fund!



## New Faces at the Warren Land Trust

As you know, WLT has grown significantly in the last several years: land holdings, trail network, outreach, professional practices and more. We've been able to do this so successfully in part thanks to Office Manager Gwynne Seufert and Trails Manager Don Lawson.

Gwynne started at WLT at the outset of the COVID pandemic. She keeps the WLT office, administrative affairs, and record-keeping running like clockwork...with a smile! In her spare time, Gwynne enjoys gardening and the great outdoors, and is a talented cook (who makes a mean mixed-berry jam) and an avid runner.

Don joined us more recently, but has hit the ground running and has already had a notable positive impact on our trails. He has extensive experience in construction, is a skilled woodworker, and has built and maintained trails for hiking and mountain biking. Truly at home in the forest, he and his dog are early risers who can blaze a trail before most of us have had our coffee!



## Warren Land Trust Board Members

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Greg LaCava

## Warren Trust Mission Statement

The Warren Land Trust is a nationally-accredited conservation organization dedicated to the preservation and responsible stewardship of open space, watershed and natural resources in and around Warren, Connecticut for the benefit of current and future generations. These protected resources include meadows, forests, lakes, ponds, streams, wetlands, wildlife habitats and corridors, farmland and scenic vistas. Committed to connecting the community to nature, the Warren Land Trust creates opportunities to enjoy, learn about and care for land and the environment.

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## Thank you, Ted Morse and Nancy Adams Morse!

After many years of service to the Warren Land Trust, Ted Morse and Nancy Adams Morse are stepping down from the Board of Directors. A historian, teacher, headmaster, and hockey coach, Ted joined the WLT Board in 2009 and served as President from 2009 until 2013. A natural leader, during his tenure WLT received accreditation by the national Land Trust Alliance – an onerous process that Ted oversaw with his customary good nature and equanimity.

Nancy Adams Morse joined her husband on the Board of Directors in 2011. Although gardening and singing are her avocation, Nancy's professional background was in computer programming and related services. That and her role as Secretary for the Kent Singers stood her in good stead as she assumed the role of WLT Secretary just as we embarked upon a major records overhaul associated with accreditation. Thanks to Nancy's meticulous eye and inquiring mind, those records are in ship-shape.

Thank you, Ted and Nancy!



## New Cunningham Nature Preserve Debuts with 2023 Housatonic Heritage Walk

This year's Housatonic Heritage Walk was especially notable as the official debut of WLT's newest acquisition: the Cunningham Nature Preserve. An enthusiastic group of hikers explored the 237-acre preserve's historic and natural features, as well as the exceptional opportunities for trail connectivity presented by the Kent Land Trust's abutting East Kent Hamlet Nature Preserve.

### More about the Cunningham Nature Preserve:

The new Cunningham Nature Preserve features forests, trails, streams, vernal pools and dramatic rock formations. Combined with adjacent Kent Land Trust property and Wyantenock State Forest, over 1,000 acres in the sensitive Lake Waramaug and Aspetuck River watersheds are now protected. The area encompasses substantial core forest, which the Housatonic Valley Association's Greenprint Collaborative Follow the Forest initiative highlights as critical for protecting wildlife migration, varied species habitat and climate change mitigation.

WLT is working jointly with the Kent Land Trust to enhance, expand and connect trails. The expanded trail network will highlight historically significant features, including the homestead of Charles Finney, 19th-century religious leader and President of Oberlin College, and the monument Oberlin students erected in his honor.

The acquisition of the Cunningham Nature Preserve was funded by private donors like you, as well as by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services Highlands Act Grant Program, the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection's Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Grant Program, the John T. and Jane A. Wiederhold Foundation, the William P. Wharton Trust and the Connecticut Land Conservation Council's TAG Grant Program. Thanks also to the Thyberg family for their long-time stewardship of the land and commitment to its conservation, and to the Kent Land Trust and Housatonic Valley Association's Greenprint Collaborative for their invaluable collaboration and support throughout the acquisition process.



### Check out WLT's handy new QR code

A quick way to get all the latest info! How do I use a QR code, you ask? It's easy:

1. Open your phone's camera app.
2. Point the camera at the QR code, center it on your screen, and hold the phone steady for a couple of seconds.
3. Tap the notification that pops up to open the link to the WLT landing page.



*(You'll need an Internet connection to do this.)*

Over 1,130 acres are permanently protected by the WLT.

### IF YOU AREN'T A MEMBER OF THE WARREN LAND TRUST, WE INVITE YOU TO JOIN NOW!!

Becoming a Member of The Warren Land Trust is easy. To join or donate online, visit [www.warrenlandtrust.org](http://www.warrenlandtrust.org) or cut off this page and send it to our mailing address below, along with your check. We will send you a receipt with our thanks for your generous, 100% tax deductible contribution. Please include your name, address and email so that we may include you in our email updates. Choose the type of membership you would like:

<input type="checkbox"/> Land Guardian	\$5,000	<input type="checkbox"/> Land Caretaker	\$ 300
<input type="checkbox"/> Land Grantor	\$2,500	<input type="checkbox"/> Land Protector	\$ 100
<input type="checkbox"/> Land Steward	\$1,000	<input type="checkbox"/> Family Membership	\$ 25
<input type="checkbox"/> Land Conservator	\$ 500	<input type="checkbox"/> Other	\$ _____

Email:

Please make your check payable to: The Warren Land Trust  
 MAIL THIS FORM AND CHECK TO: The Warren Land Trust  
 50 Cemetery Road, Warren, CT 06754

To join or donate online, visit [www.warrenlandtrust.org](http://www.warrenlandtrust.org)

Please make any necessary corrections to your name and address on the mailing panel and submit to the WLT.

## The Green Leaf



50 Cemetery Road  
Warren, CT 06754

Email: [info@warrenlandtrust.org](mailto:info@warrenlandtrust.org)

[www.warrenlandtrust.org](http://www.warrenlandtrust.org)

### WLT Annual Meeting Program Promises a Surprise in the Woods

**Saturday, November 18th 10am**  
**Town Hall Lower Level Conference Room**

Come learn what your local land trust accomplished in 2023, and what's up for next year! Coffee and seasonal refreshments will be available. The meeting will be followed by a brief presentation about Warren artifacts and a walk on the nearby Dorothy Maier Preserve to see...something pretty cool! We'd tell you what it is, but we don't want to spoil the surprise! 😊 Suffice it to say, it may be even cooler than the saw buried in the tree on that preserve...and that's saying something! The walk is approximately 1.5 miles with some easy-to-moderate up- and down-hill. Appropriate footwear recommended. For more information, contact us at [info@warrenlandtrust.org](mailto:info@warrenlandtrust.org).

### Wamogo Woodworking Students Walk in Warren's Woods

This spring a group of 14 high school seniors from the Wamogo Natural Resources Class "Forests to Furniture" took a field hike through the Wyantenock Forest and Warren Land Trust's Coords Preserve (currently partly impassable due to a beaver dam).

The Wamogo High School Agriscience Department teamed up with Warren woodworkers Ansis Bergs, Jim DeStefano and Greg St. John to teach students sustainable forestry and the process of turning local trees into beautiful furniture - on a small scale. The focus of the walk through the forest, led by Warren timber-frame instructor (and neuropsychologist) Jed Struckus and engineer-designer Ken Jacob, was to explore 20th century charcoal production as well as interesting wood and stone cluster structures confirmed as indigenous ceremonial sites. To protect the sites and the structures the students had been taught archaeological preservation and integrity. They were impressed with the spirit portal, several effigies and the ceremonial stone row on WLT's Coords Preserve and were eager to take turns trying out the prayer seat. Wamogo's head of Natural Resources Gino Masi, State Forester David Irwin, and a board member of the Warren Land Trust also took part in the hike.

