

CFPA News & Notes

Conserving the land, trails, and natural resources of Connecticut since 1895

Spring 2011

Volume 4 Issue 1

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Exciting Start for the “Commissioner in Your Corner”

On March 25th, CFPA had a great opportunity to exchange ideas with new CT Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Commissioner Dan Esty when he agreed to hold the first of a series of “Commissioner in Your Corner” events at the Goodwin Forest Conservation Education Center in Hampton.

The event began at CFPA forester Steve Broderick’s Tree Farm in Eastford, where about 40 people joined Commissioner Esty and new Department of Agriculture Commissioner Steve Reviczky for a tour of Steve’s maple sugaring operation. Commissioner Esty then headed to the Goodwin Nature Museum, where some 50 people, including many CFPA and Friends of Goodwin members, attended the “Commissioner in Your Corner” open house. Mr. Esty discussed the soon to be Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP). He emphasized that in addition to energy and environment, a third “e” for economy would be an integral part of the new Department’s focus.

After a quick tour of the Goodwin Center Demonstration Forest, the Commissioner headed to the Goodwin Center main building, where he joined State Senator Tony Guglielmo and some 60 Friends of Goodwin for the Friends’ second annual Spring Equinox Celebration.

Here he learned the details of CFPA’s partnership with DEP to operate the Goodwin Center, and how the Friends of Goodwin is a new CFPA affiliate that has brought thousands of dollars and thousands of volunteer hours to the center in its short life.

We were delighted that the Commissioner chose Goodwin for this first-of-its-kind event. It was a great opportunity for him to see firsthand the energy and enthusiasm that local citizens have for the Goodwin Center, to learn about our outreach partnership, and for CFPA and Friends members to share ideas with him on forests, trails, and conservation.

As an added bonus, the second “Commissioner in Your Corner” event took place at Harkness Memorial State Park in Waterford on May 18th, just prior to CFPA’s Annual Meeting. The event was kicked off with tours of the Harkness mansion and grounds, led by Friends of Harkness Memorial State Park. The “Commissioner in Your Corner” public forum followed the tour and was

well attended by CFPA members and Connecticut citizens.

Mr. Esty concluded the day as the keynote speaker at CFPA’s Annual Meeting, discussing DEEP’s continued commitment to conservation, the need to get youth (our future stewards) involved, and the importance of collaboration between the agency and nonprofit organizations like CFPA in order to reach shared conservation goals. Most everyone at the meeting would likely agree that we do indeed have a commissioner in “our” corner.



(left to right) CFPA Forester Steve Broderick, DEP Commissioner Dan Esty, and Department of Agriculture Commissioner Steve Reviczky at the first-ever “Commissioner in Your Corner” event March 25th. Photo: Courtesy of Dennis Schain

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From the Executive Director's Desk**Change is in the Air**

We are so lucky in New England to have four seasons, and I suggest that this helps prepare us for ongoing and inevitable change even in the "land of steady habits." At CFPA, our conservation mission and dedication to it have not changed; however, there are several changes this year of note for you.

CFPA Governance Changes

We are fortunate to welcome Eric Lukingbeal as our new Board President, and thank Dave Platt for his tremendous service and leadership over the past 4 years at the helm of our organization. With Eric Lukingbeal's expert stewardship of our Governance Committee, we have instituted term limits for CFPA Board Members as a way to constantly reinvigorate the ranks of our most important group of ambassadors, incorporate diverse voices, and attract a broader base of support for conservation in Connecticut.

CFPA Legislative Changes

With the expert assistance from contract lobbyist John Larkin, CFPA has made outstanding strides toward implementing the priorities in our Conservation Agenda for 2011 (distributed to members and the General Assembly in January every year):

- **10 Mill Forest Lands / H.B. 6263:** CFPA has been working for 2 years with forest landowners who collectively own 14,000 acres registered in the 10 Mill Program—the state's first forest conservation law in 1913. If we are successful, 10 Mill landowners who have made a 100-year commitment to keep their land in forest will have their property taxes capped at the same level paid by forest landowners in the P.A. 490 program. Without this change, landowners in the 10 Mill program will face large property tax increases triggered by reaching the 50 year anniversary in the program (landowners in 34

towns will reach this key anniversary between 2011 and 2022).

- **Recreational Liability Protection for Municipalities / H.B. 6557:** CFPA worked with over 70 organizations and businesses and thousands of interested citizens to restore recreational liability protection to municipalities to ensure that towns and town entities like the MDC do not close lands to recreation due to liability concerns. There have been 14 bills, four public hearings, and a major grassroots effort to restore the protection to municipalities that was lost through a landmark court case, *Conway v. Wilton* in 1996. Outstanding partnerships, remarkable leadership by Representative David Baram (Bloomfield), long negotiations with the Trial Lawyers Association, and a dose of common sense have enabled this outstanding achievement to occur; and
- **Timber Harvest Revolving Fund / H.B. 6157:** CFPA has worked for several years to establish a mechanism that would enable CT DEP Forestry to recoup a portion of revenues generated by forest management. This revolving fund would allow the DEP to recoup up to \$100,000 in timber harvest revenues for the purpose of developing and implementing forest management plans. As forest management plans are implemented, the fund would be replenished. This is a critical need given that only 1/3 of the State Forests actually have up-to-date management plans, and these are critical to well-managed, sustainable forests.

As we continue to promote a culture of change while also "sticking to our knitting," we both thank you for your support and encourage you to suggest ways that we can do even better with fulfilling our mission to connect people to the land in order to conserve Connecticut.



Photo: Courtesy of Heather Allore

Celebrate CT Trails on June 4th and 5th

The 2011 Connecticut Trails Day Celebration will be held June 4th and 5th. This year's theme is "Made With All Natural Ingredients." Our natural ingredients should be easy to find with 193 Trails Day events scheduled in 115 towns on over 500 miles of Connecticut trails.

There will be outdoor activities for everyone—including hiking, biking, trail maintenance, kayaking, educational walks, bird watching, geocaching, and more. These events are guided by knowledgeable volunteers from local hiking clubs, parks and recreation departments, state agencies, conservation organizations,

historic groups, naturalists, educators, and land trusts. Don't miss out on this fun-filled weekend, which will provide many opportunities to discover new places and experience the outdoors with family, friends, and neighbors.

The CT Trails Day 2011 booklet is available at CT public libraries and online at www.ctwoodlands.org/CT-TrailsDay2011.

Outdoor Gear Expo Hits the Ground Running

On April 30th, the CFPA sponsored its first Annual Connecticut Outdoor Gear Expo and Silent Auction at Fayerweather Beckham Hall at Wesleyan University in Middletown. The Expo featured all types of outdoor gear, demonstrations by various experts, and a silent auction of great gear and other items—all donated by gracious supporters of our association. Funds raised by this event enable our advocacy, education, trails, and WalkCT programs to continue to serve our communities and further our mission "to connect people to the land."

The clinics were well attended and, thanks to the participating vendors, provided lots of information and tips on outdoor gear all of which we know will be useful as we approach the warm weather! Everyone enjoyed the demonstrations—carving a walking stick with the Connecticut Woodcarvers and reading a compass with CFPA forester Steve Broderick gathered quite a crowd. The silent auction saw some bidding wars. We won't divulge the participants, but rest assured CFPA was the ultimate winner!



Expo attendees place their bids at the silent auction. Photo: Courtesy of Emily Lewis

Geoff Meissner's handcrafted kayak, which he donated to CFPA to raffle, also drew a constant stream of people wanting to know more about how it was built and how long it took to build. Many remarked that they won't want to put such a fine piece of work in the water, but Geoff assured them that the craft looks even better there. The raffle drawing will be held at CFPA at 4:00 p.m. on June 3rd. Tickets are still available, just call or stop by the office.

We wish to thank the participating retailers (Eastern Mountain Sports, North Cove Outfitters, REI, and Trailblazer, to name a few), Wesleyan University, and all the CFPA volunteers and staff who

worked to make the event a success.

Join Flat Stanley's CT Outdoor Adventure

Remember that childhood literary friend Stanley, who was flattened by a falling blackboard? Author Jeff Brown wove a tale of how Stanley's parents used this as an opportunity to mail Stanley around the world so he could experience all that life can offer a boy who is flat. Now Flat Stanley has found his way to Connecticut. He has become lost along the New England Trail (NET), however, and CFPA is asking families to come out to search for him this spring and summer.

Join CFPA Intern, Erin Lewis, on the upcoming June 25th or July 30th WalkCT Family Rambles to find secret Flat Stanley letterboxes on the NET (visit www.walkct.org for details on these and other WalkCT Family Rambles). Or, set out on your own adventure, visiting www.ctwoodlands.org/educ to get the letterbox clues. Download the template of Flat, and bring him along on your own NET hike. Post photos of your Flat Stanley on the trail or share written adventures at www.ctwoodlands.blogspot.com. All submitters will be entered into a random drawing to win a *Connecticut Walk Book*.

Trail Mix

A New Trail in Town

On a crisp Friday in April, 20 staff members from Northeast Utilities (NU) joined CFPA to construct 1.75 miles of new trail in the Maromas section of Middletown. The staff worked like a crew of long-time, experienced trail builders. They constructed a new footpath, hauled out long-accumulated trash, and cleared the new trail corridor to establish the Scovill Rock Trail.

Adjacent to the Connecticut River, the trail is on NU property that is protected by a conservation restriction held by CFPA. It will officially open with an inaugural hike on Connecticut Trails Day, June 4th. In the coming months, a new trailhead kiosk and parking area will be installed on River Road to offer improved access for walkers. The loop trail will be adopted and managed as part of the statewide Blue-Blazed Hiking Trail System.

Special thanks to volunteers Bob Nodine and Tim Johnson, as well as Jeff Borne, Senior Land Management Specialist for NU, for all their assistance in bringing this project to fruition. Thank you also to NU for their hard work, enthusiasm and long-time support.

Charles Tracy Selected as Administrator for the NET

It is official! Charles Tracy has been selected as the new trail administrator for the newly-designated New England Trail (NET) in Connecticut and Massachusetts. Working from Boston, he will be responsible for overseeing the NET's management, in partnership with the Appalachian Mountain Club and CFPA. Tracy will also coordinate the National Park Service's Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance projects in Massachusetts.

During 22 years with the National Park Service (NPS), Tracy has specialized in organizing recreational and heritage-based greenways throughout New England. Major projects include the Bay Circuit Trail, a metropolitan greenway

and trail around Boston; Portland Trails, an urban trail system in Maine; and the Quinebaug and Shetucket Rivers Valley National Heritage Corridor in Connecticut and Massachusetts.



Charles Tracy, new NPS trails administrator for the NET. Photo: Courtesy of NPS

Tracy is coauthor of *Organizing Outdoor Volunteers*, a guide to initiating and building greenway partnerships. In 2001, he initiated Art & Community Landscapes, a federal partnership program between the NPS and the National Endowment for the Arts, which integrated the work of artists in the design, development, and promotion of greenway projects.

Tracy has been active on greenways internationally. He presented a paper on conservation partnerships at the 2010 European Greenways Conference in Budapest, Hungary. He also led a series of training sessions in greenway design and community engagement techniques for four greenway pilot sites in Belarus, working with officials from the Ministry of Environment and local greenway advocates. Up until recently, Tracy has been working on the management of the NET in an unofficial capacity. We are thrilled that he is now the official NPS trail administrator for the NET!

Pathfinder is a Great Read

Ron Strickland, one of the only two living founders of National Scenic Trails, hopes his new book, *Pathfinder*, will attract a new generation of hikers to trails. Founder and past executive director of the Pacific Northwest Trail Association, Ron has a long and storied history with the nation's national scenic trail system.

His current book of essays tells the tale of the creation of the Pacific Northwest Trail, hiking adventures and one essay, "Willful and Eccentric", recounts adventures of his 2009 thru-hike of the New England Trail. To learn more about Ron, his research, and his new book visit www.ronstrickland.com.

Friends Remembered

This winter and spring we had to say goodbye to three dear friends and devoted CFPA supporters—Dick Blake, Birge Dayton, and Jennifer Schiller. Their memories live on through the Blue-Blazed Hiking Trails they worked so hard to maintain and protect. CFPA's deepest sympathies go out to their families and friends.

And the Sam Dodd Service Award goes to...

CFPA's Eastern Roving Trail Crew! "I'm so jealous of CFPA's volunteers, they're awesome!" exclaimed Jennifer Kauffman, Mansfield Parks & Recreation Director and long-time fan of CFPA's Eastern Roving Trail Crew. She has partnered with the crew on a number of projects on town lands, particularly in the Moss Sanctuary. The crew has installed bridges, rock steps, and improved trailheads. In March, the crew was recognized with the 7th annual Sam G. Dodd award for distinguished volunteer service in Mansfield, Connecticut Natural Areas. Great work and congratulations crew!

Coincidentally, Sam Dodd is a CFPA Honorary Director and will be featured in the summer issue of Connecticut Woodlands. Interested in working with the crew? Email Chris at trailblazed72@gmail.com.



CFPA's Eastern Roving Trail Crew receives Sam Dodd Service Award. Photo: Clare Cain

Noted Author Tom Wessels Comes to CFPA

Tom Wessels, author of such books as *Reading the Forested Landscape* and *Forest Forensics*, led a spirited workshop for existing and potential WalkCT Family Guides and local outdoor educators at CFPA headquarters on April 16th. Mr. Wessels, a professor at Antioch College, taught the assembled group the basics of how to interpret the natural and agricultural history of a given wooded site based on a few key observations.

Did you ever think about why some stone walls are full of fist-sized stones, while others are built from large ones? The former generally indicates that it abutted a field growing crops rather than being used for hay or pasture land. The constant tillage of soil turned up the seemingly infinite “New England potatoes” that wound up in the walls. Many other fascinating facts about the landscapes that surround us were also revealed.

To get a real-world feel for the process of reading the forest, participants accompanied Mr. Wessels on a walk through CFPA’s demonstration forest. Despite the unseasonably cold weather, the WalkCT Family Guides thoroughly enjoyed learning about why birches benefit from white bark, how to tell the original size of a nurse tree that has produced sprouts, and whether a rotted stump was a hard- or soft-wood tree. All came away with a new appreciation of the small, telling details that give us a glimpse into the past.

The WalkCT program is always looking for people interested in becoming Family Guides. The next workshop will be September 17th and will feature a walk and talk with former state geologist Ralph Lewis. Contact the CFPA office to register.

Leaving No Stone Unturned

There is a Jekyll and Hyde aspect to the development program of all nonprofit organizations. Fund raising is a necessary component of the operation, but very uncomfortable for many. The reason for the latter is that it is difficult to ask people for money—that is unless they are offering grants. Grant-making organizations advertise the fact that they want to give money to support a specific mission, which eliminates the difficult task of almost blindly seeking individual private donors. Grant-making organizations have a protocol, set amounts offered, and often offer assistance to nonprofit grant seekers. They are varied and include government agencies, several types of foundations, and corporations.

Recently, CFPA has been more active in identifying and sending out grants applications. It has been successful; grant revenue benefitting CFPA programs has more than doubled since 2008. As with every development effort, this is a result of positive teamwork among program managers, a substantial time commitment, and fortuitous timing. One example of fortuitous timing is the result of the designation of the New England Trail (NET) in 2009 and new federal grant dollars being awarded to Connecticut through the National Park Service. As the Connecticut steward of the NET, CFPA has benefitted from this funding



Tom Wessels leads a WalkCT training session. Photo: Jen Benner

for trail protection.

CFPA has maintained productive and mutually beneficial relationships with the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection and the Federal Recreational Trails Program. They have supported Connecticut Trails Day and the Blue-Blazed Hiking Trails with grants for the creation of the Trails Day booklets and funding for materials to improve and maintain the trails. Other grant-making organizations that have supported CFPA programs include the Connecticut Department of Public Health, Connecticut Commission on Culture & Tourism, Rockfall Foundation, Middlesex Community Foundation, Northeast Utilities Foundation, and Crosswicks Family Foundation. The U.S. Forest Service has also supported CFPA’s education and trail programs for a number of years.

The increased focus on grant research and writing has expanded our grant partners in the last three years. Many corporations have established and funded foundations to support the community. We have recently received grants from the New Alliance Foundation, REI, Patagonia, and Bank of America to name just a few.

As a member, who understands our mission, you may be aware of a nonprofit, corporate, or family foundation that should have an interest in supporting our work. If you do, please give Eric Hammerling or Jim Little a call. Development is about building relationships and a personal introduction can make all the difference in the world.

Report Your Volunteer Hours Online

You can now report your volunteer hours online! It’s easy, quick and will help CFPA secure funding to continue our work on the Blue-Blazed Hiking Trails and other programs. Visit www.wadu.ctwoodlands.org to enter your hours.

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Diego Calderon
 Annie deBoer
 Genelle Faulkner
 Michael Gaines

Education and Trails Intern:

Erin Lewis

WalkCT Family Guides:

Janet Ainsworth
 Susan Barlow
 Steve Broderick
 Lucy Meigs
 Ralph Riello

Welcome to new Family Guides:

Liz Fossett
 Scott Gray
 Dianne Lendler
 David Provencher
 Helen Stowe

CORRECTION

Eunice Carden has been a CFPA member for 57 years, not 67 years.

**Indicates new member*

Celebrate the Great Outdoors!

In addition to supporting trails and Connecticut's conservation legacy, CFPA membership benefits include:

- Subscriptions to *Connecticut Woodlands* (magazine) and *CFPA News & Notes* (newsletter), and a copy of the annual Connecticut Trails Day booklet
- Invitations to special meetings, educational programs, and workshops
- Membership discounts for the *Connecticut Walk Book*, East and West editions, and with partners like Eastern Mountain Sports

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Membership Categories

- Individual.....\$35
- Family/Club.....\$50
- Non-Profit.....\$75
- Supporting.....\$100
- Benefactor.....\$250

Enclosed are dues of \$ _____ This is a gift membership

Gifted From: _____

Member Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Charge Card: Master Card Visa Exp. Date: _____

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Signature _____

If paying by check please make payable to CFPA.

Mail Payment to: CFPA, 16 Meriden Rd., Rockfall, CT 06481

Dues are deductible from your federal income tax to the extent allowed by law. Bequests are deductible for federal estate and gift tax purposes.

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CFPA News & Notes

VOLUME 4 ISSUE 1

Find event times, details, registration information, and the latest events at:
www.ctwoodlands.org/events

Upcoming Events

Aug. 2—5

Teachers' Forestry Tour with CT Project Learning Tree

Teachers and educators are invited to 3½ days of fun and learning. Enjoy tours of working forest lands as well as hands-on, forest related activities that can be brought back to your school or center. Lunching by lakes, outdoor forest recreation and other activities will round out our exciting learning adventures about sustainable forestry in Connecticut. 2011 is the International Year of Forests, as declared by the United Nations. Join this celebration of the International Year of Forests and learn about sustainable management, conservation, and development of all types of forests. For updates, visit www.ctwoodlands.org/educ or contact LBrant@ctwoodlands.org.



Photo: Lori Brant