

# Aspetuck Land Trust Newsletter

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS NEWS**

It is with a great deal of enthusiasm and excitement that we welcome David Brant as the Land Trust's new Executive Director.

David, his wife, and twin two year olds have recently moved to Fairfield from Minneapolis where David was director of a business-led student based summer jobs program. Prior to that, David founded the Youth Farm and Market Project, an organization to teach young people about healthy eating, life-skills, agriculture, and the environment. With additional experience on a ranch in Wyoming and running an organic farm in Vermont, David's skills are many and varied.

His goals for the Land Trust are to work with partners to help preserve as much of the remaining parcels—large or small—we have in our area, continue the excellent maintenance of our existing trails and preserves, and develop more programs to involve adults and children with our lands.

David looks forward to meeting all the key players and activists in our four towns and to hearing from our members.

## **LAND MANAGEMENT**

**Easton – Trout Brook Valley - Fish By-Pass**  
Hawley's Brook in Trout Brook Valley (TBV) in Easton is classified as a Class 1 Wild Trout Management Area. As we mentioned in our Annual Report, we obtained approval from the CT DEP to build a fish by-pass which will allow fish to pass under the jeep trail to the up-stream portion of Hawley's Brook. The Land Trust has committed \$44,000 for construction of the by-pass. The by-pass will replace one of the five cast iron pipes that let the brook flow

under the jeep road on the white trail, thus providing a “ladder” that will allow the fish to swim upstream and spawn. The funds for this project were graciously donated by the Everett Family of Easton. We thank them for their generosity.

## **Land Management Costs**

Many of you know that as the Aspetuck Land Trust (ALT) has grown, so have our land management costs. We've found that many of the walkers and hikers using our preserves do not realize that we are a membership organization and moreover, that ALT maintains more than half of the acreage in TBV, not the State. ALT spends over \$5,750 a year to maintain TBV. Please let people know that we count on donations to help maintain our preserves.

## **VOLUNTEER & MEMBER ACTIVITIES**

### **Invasive Plant Removal - TBV**

ALT was pleased to have participation from two different volunteer groups in an effort to reduce the barberry infestation in TBV. The first group, 11th graders from Hamden Hall along with six faculty members, participated on Earth Day began to clear an area earmarked for new trails. The second group was comprised of the Wolf 3 AmeriCorps of the National Civilian Community Corps, through the cooperative efforts of Habitat for Humanity in Bridgeport. They sent 12 members of the Wolf 3 team to TBV one day a week for twelve weeks to remove a particularly heavy barberry infestation.

These two young groups of volunteers were a wonderful boost to the current invasive removal team, which typically focuses on a different area of the TBV preserve. Other local schools & another AmeriCorps team are scheduled to help again this fall. This generous donation of time and effort is greatly appreciated.

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If you're interested in joining this strong team, please contact Lisa Brodli, Weston resident and Board member, by email at [lbrodli@aol.com](mailto:lbrodli@aol.com) or you can call 203-372-2785 and leave your name and phone number.

## **Invasive Plant Removal – Allen Salt Marsh, Bermuda Salt Marsh**

We are continuing our state-sponsored invasive species removal program. The Allen and Bermuda Salt Marshes have extensive populations of Phragmites, a tall reedy plant with a tassel on the top. The Land Trust applied for state grants for these preserves and both were approved. The first step of spraying the phragmites is complete and mowing will take place over the next couple of months. We expect to have an 80% kill rate this year and will complete the removal over the next two years.

## **Family Fun Fest – Sept 21<sup>st</sup> 1-4pm**

Join us for our third annual Family Fun Fest to celebrate the preservation of Open Space and wildlife habitats! There will be many free activities to enjoy at the duPont property in Easton.

This family day is open to everyone and will include pony and tractor rides, orienteering and fly fishing/fly tying demonstrations, kid's crafts, face painting, guided hikes and much more. Representatives of the Connecticut Audubon Society and Wildlife in Crisis will be on hand with a collection of snakes, turtles, and small wildlife. There will be refreshments from Newman's Own and fresh pizza to purchase from the Big Green Truck Pizza. There's a small fee for the pony rides and face-painting. Other activities are free including parking and admission. Although we allow dogs on our properties, we ask that you leave your dog at home during the Fest so as not to frighten the wildlife.

**Directions:** the duPont property is off Route 59 (Sport Hill Road) between Route 136 and Adams Road, about 3 miles from the Merritt Parkway. Parking is just past Adams Road on the left side of the road. There will be plenty of signs. For more information, please call 203-536-5334 or 372-2785. If you would like to volunteer, please call us—we'd love your help!

## **EMS Sales Event – Oct 17<sup>th</sup> thru Oct 19<sup>th</sup>**

Please join our friends at EMS in Fairfield for their Grand Re-Opening Event on October 17<sup>th</sup> through October 19<sup>th</sup>. EMS is kindly donating 1% of their net sales to ALT during the event. We would greatly appreciate your support and thank our friends at EMS for selecting ALT as their conservation partner.

## **FALL HUNTING SEASON**

The Aspetuck Land Trust does not allow hunting on our properties. There is a limited, permit-only – 15-permits-per-day, deer and turkey hunting program in the State-owned portion of Trout Brook Valley. If you hike in the fall or use Trout Brook Valley (TBV), it is important to understand the seasons.

- 09/15 thru 11/18 & 12/24 thru 12/31  
Archery Season – Deer & Turkey
- 10/04 thru 10/31  
Shotgun Season – Turkey only
- 11/19 thru 12/09  
Shotgun Season – Deer only
- 12/10 thru 12/23  
Muzzleloader Season – Deer only

Note: Hunting is not allowed anywhere in Connecticut on **Sundays**, so if you are concerned, that is the best day to hike. A few simple precautions to take are:

- Since the deer are "white-tailed", avoid wearing white when in the woods during hunting season.

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- Wear something blaze orange. Also if you have a dog, tie something brightly colored around their neck. Blaze orange vests are also available for dogs.
- Hike midday since hunters are normally out early morning or late afternoon.
- Hunters in TBV are required to park in the Permit Parking Area (inside the gate). If you see a vehicle parked there then you know someone is hunting.
- The TBV hunting area is on the west side. Over half of TBV and all of Crow Hill and Jump Hill (700 acres) are outside the hunting area. There are hunting-free trails from all of the access points.
- All other Aspetuck Land Trust preserves are **hunting-free**.

## 2008 FALL WALK SCHEDULE

**October 19<sup>th</sup>**

**Trout Brook Valley:**

**Red-Purple-Red-Green-Violet**

**Sunday @ 1 PM**

**Location:** Weston off Bradley Road.

**Walk:** Loop walk: This walk will include the spectacular and rough Red Trail and the Purple Trail to an overlook of the Saugatuck Reservoir. It will return to the Red Trail and then take the Violet Trail via Green Trail for a lovely walk alongside Hawley's Brook back to the parking area.

**Distance:** 2.5 miles. A steep climb in stages from the Red to the Purple Trail, then a descent to the Violet Trail which is mostly flat with some boulder hopping.

**Time Estimate:** 3 hours

**Park:** TBV Permit Parking Area - inside

**Leader:** Lisa Brodlie (203-227-1522)

**October 26<sup>th</sup>**

**Crow Hill to TBV Orchard**

**Sunday @ 1 PM**

**Location:** Easton off Woodland Drive. Rte. 58 past Bluebird Restaurant to Norton Rd, to Wydlewood to Woodland Drive.

**Walk:** Loop walk: Crow Hill White to Red to Blue to Magenta to Orchard and back. See the best of the 167-acre Crow Hill Preserve, a good example of old CT farm land returning to forest with lots of beautiful stone walls. Also see the splendor of CT fall leaf color from the top of the Orchard. The views at this time of year are spectacular.

**Note:** Dogs are welcome.

**Distance:** 2.0 miles. Easy to Moderate

**Time Estimate:** 2 hours

**Park:** At cul-de-sac on Woodland Drive

**Leader:** Peter Oldershaw  
(203-259-3868)

**November 2nd**

**Trout Brook Valley: Blue-Orange-Yellow-Blue/White-Yellow-White-Green**

**Sunday @ 1 PM**

**Location:** Weston off Bradley Road.

**Walk:** Loop walk: This walk takes you through the heart of TBV. The Blue/White takes you to a scenic overlook where you can see the LI Sound from the middle of the valley. The Yellow trail follows some spectacular ridges with an easy walk back on the White and Green Trails.

**Distance:** 2.2 miles. Moderate

**Time Estimate:** 2.5 hours

**Park:** TBV Permit Parking Area - inside

**Leader:** Bruce LePage (203-372-2785)

**Note:** MEET AT "**Park:**" LOCATION. To **reserve a spot**, call Leader with your name, the date(s), number in party, and your telephone number. We will call you if weather causes cancellation. No rain date. We recommend wearing appropriate clothes, shoes, and bringing a water bottle.