

Fall 2020

WLCT TIDINGS

PO Box 1124, Westbrook, CT 06498 (860) 399-6359 WestbrookLCT@Gmail.com



The Westbrook Land Conservation Trust Newsletter

President's Message by Tom Elliott

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

This has been a difficult year for all of us and a challenge to stay safe, and at the same time to make the most of positive opportunities! One of the best opportunities is to get outdoors and enjoy the many open space benefits of this great community and region.

Much has happened with our Land Trust this past year:

- The Town of Westbrook is in the process of purchasing a key 146 acre parcel of open space known as Toby Hill VIII which will tie several open space parcels together in the northeast corner of town, including two large WLCT properties. In our commitment to this effort, the Land Trust proposed a matching challenge and raised \$2,620.
- In September, the Land Trust participated in the International Coastal Cleanup. 22 volunteers cleaned West Beach (1.5 miles), Coral Sands Beach (.3 miles) and Kirtland Landing (.2 miles). We gathered 8 full Garbage bags!
- On the regional level, our Land Trust has joined other Land Trusts to form the new LCRLT (Lower Connecticut River Land Trust) to facilitate regional initiatives.

I want to thank the Residents of Westbrook for their continued support of the Westbrook Land Conservation Trust.

Respectfully Submitted,

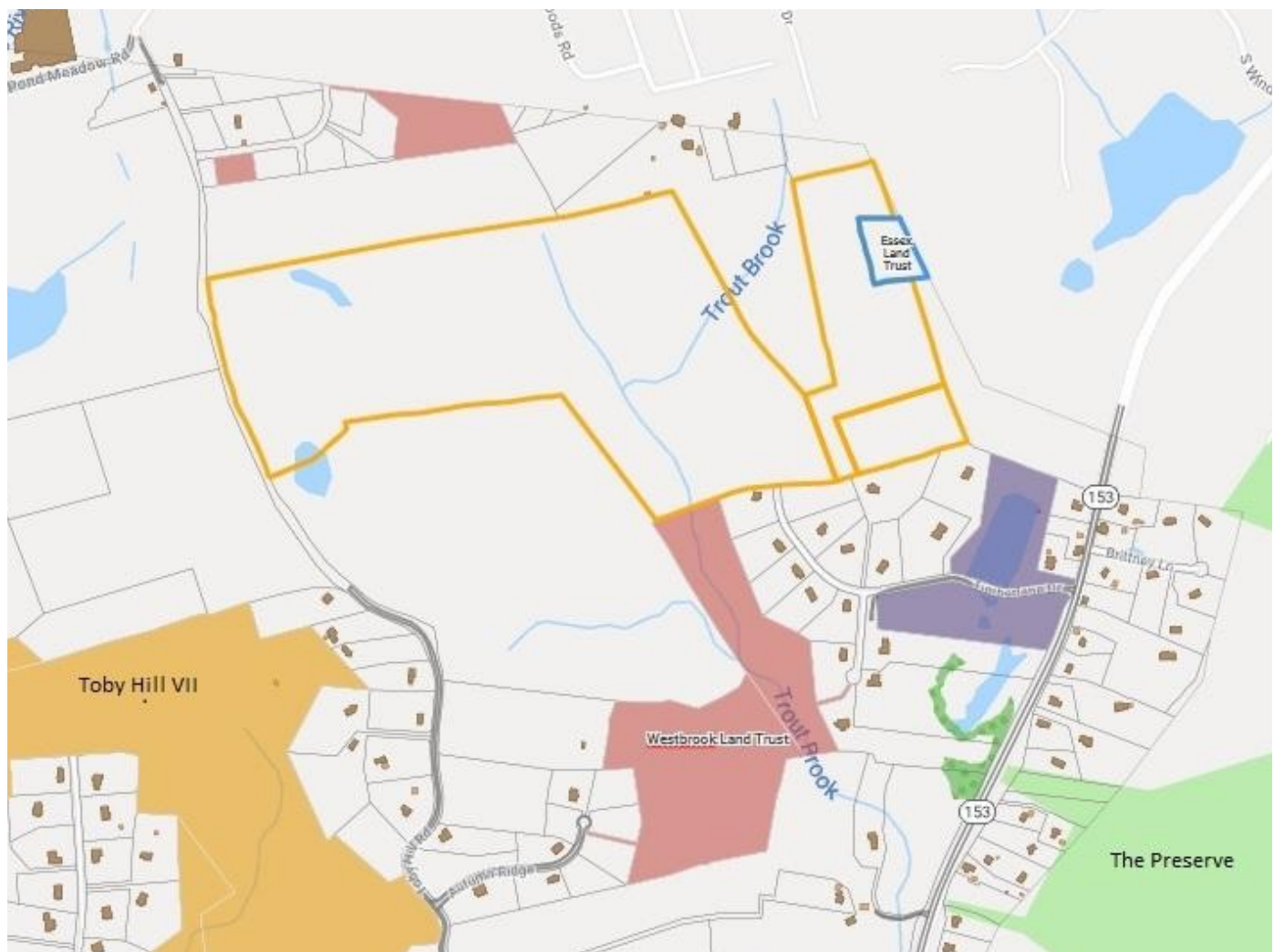
Tom Elliott

Annual Meeting

This year our Annual Meeting will be virtual. An invitation will be sent via email to all members, so that all may participate on **Wednesday, November 11 at 7:00 pm**, via Google Meet.

Land Parcel Spotlight: Timberlane and Toby Hill Chase Connection

The Timberlane Drive and Toby Hill Chase properties are the Trust's largest properties, and both have trails that connect! The parcels were acquired in 2006 as part of a town regulation requiring the designation of open space in subdivisions. Timberlane Drive consists of 15 acres that includes wetland, hilly forest and Trout Brook, and can be accessed from Lake Louise Drive, off Timberlane Drive. Toby Hill Chase is 26 acres of upland forest on Autumn Ridge, off Toby Hill Rd. There is a marked trail starting from either property that takes you on about a one mile walk through mature forests, cedars and over a bridge crossing Trout Brook. If you are looking for an extended hike or bike ride, you could exit the trail to Lake Louise, turn right on Timberlane Drive, head south on Route 153, then enter the Preserve off Rt 153. The Trust's 41 acres combined help to protect our natural resources, provide an excellent opportunity for outdoor recreation, and are an important part of the town's plan of development that envisions a greenway creating a corridor of connected open space. If the town can purchase the abutting 146.47 acre forested Toby Hill VIII land, a large gap would be filled in the continuation of the McVeagh Greenway, envisioned in the Town's Plan of Conservation and Development, in northeast Westbrook. In the illustration below, you can see the Trust properties near the center bottom, and the access roads. The proposed open space acquisition is outlined. Note Trout Brook.



New. The Westbrook Land Conservation Website! Search <https://westbrooklct.wixsite.com/landtrust>. Or, put westbrooklct.org in the URL search bar at the top of any webpage. *Look around!!!!*

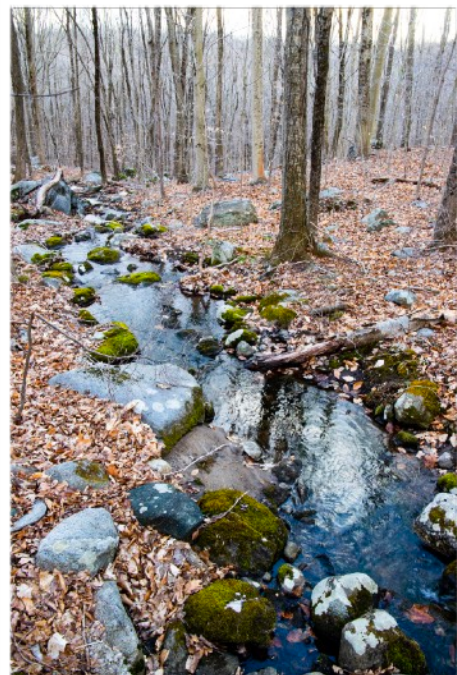


Trust Property Pics

Above: The bridge over Trout Brook on the trail through WLCT Timberlane Drive property

Left: Entrance from Autumn Ridge to WLCT Toby Hill Chase property

Below: Trout Brook - goes through potential Toby Hill VIII acquisition to Timberlane Drive



International Coastal Cleanup - 4th Year of WLCT Participation

On Saturday, September 26, 2020, the Trust participated again in **International Coastal Cleanup Day** at the Town Beach. 22 volunteers from around the state showed up!! They were dispersed to a variety of beaches to help clean. This effort began more than 30 years ago. Now, volunteers from states and territories across the U.S., and more than 100 countries come together each year to participate. Ocean trash affects the health of wildlife, people, and local economies. The WLCT owns several properties that encompass tidal wetlands and creeks - fragile habitat vital to coastal marine life, and we are responsible for stewarding these properties, such as the [Seaside Avenue tidal wetland](#).



Who am I?

I am considered a vulnerable species because my population is declining. My species has existed nearly unchanged for at least 445 million years, well before even dinosaurs existed. You might see my kind en masse, spawning in shallow waters at the beach during spring high tides around full or new moons. I'm important because:

1. I release hundreds of thousands of eggs during spawning providing valuable nutrition to migrating birds and fish and other sea creatures
2. My blood contains a clotting agent, Limulus Amebocyte Lysate, or LAL, which clots in the presence of certain groups of bacteria. The FDA requires the use of LAL to test all injectable and intravenous drugs produced in the U.S before they are used in patients to make sure they are sterile...I'm a horseshoe crab!!! If you see me on my back, pick me up (holding both sides of my shell, never my tail) and release me back into the water.

The Seaside Avenue Tidal Wetland





Westbrook Land Conservation Trust Membership Form

P. O. Box 1124, Westbrook, CT 06498 (860) 399-5224 email: WestbrookLCT@gmail.com

Names: (Please list all family members) _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

- ___ Individual \$15/yr
- ___ Family \$25/yr
- ___ Patron \$50/yr
- ___ Donor \$100/yr
- ___ Lifetime Membership \$300
- ___ Additional contribution for land acquisitions _____

By providing your email address, members will receive notification of board meetings, special activities, including nature walks, as well as property clean ups, and a newsletter highlighting annual accomplishments.

**Please make checks payable to “Westbrook Land Conservation Trust.”
Dues and contributions are tax deductible to the extent permitted by law.**

Circle one

- Yes No Please contact me about volunteer opportunities.
- Yes No Please contact me about neighborhood stewardship.
- Yes No Please have a director call me to discuss land acquisitions

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

Westbrook Land Conservation Trust can be proud of its 52-year history and its part in the protection of approximately 20% of Westbrook's land area as open space. Our responsibility to manage it prudently involves insurance, the majority of the annual expense of the organization. Please join and make your contribution to the continuation of responsible stewardship.

Membership involves as little as paying the \$15 individual membership fee, but there are plenty of opportunities for more involvement including helping with the newsletter, stewarding one of our parcels or becoming aboard member. You will receive our newsletter, be invited to help with special events - including hikes, displays on the Town Green and programs with speakers - and get updates on important environmental issues such as land use and issues in Westbrook. The success of our Land Trust depends upon an active membership, for financial support, and to better understand and meet local needs for conserving and enjoying open space in Westbrook. Please show your support by returning the form below. Your support will help sustain WLCT for another 52 years!



Calendar of Events

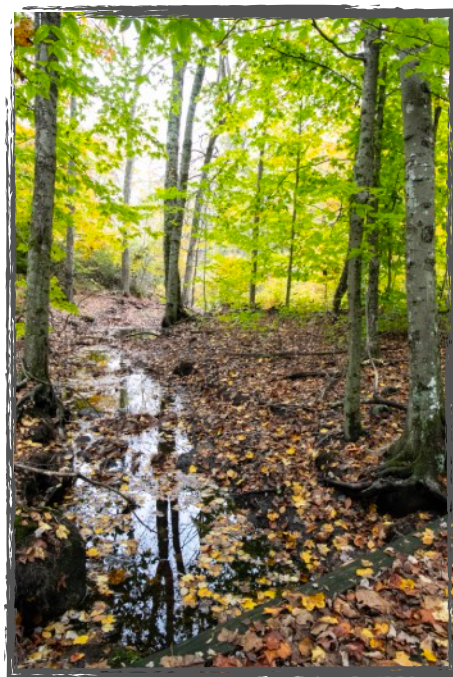
Wednesday November 11, 7pm: Annual Meeting via Google Meet - no speaker

Properties Clean-Up

At your leisure, visit some of our parcels! Look on the website for locations, or email us. Help pick up litter.

Board Meetings are normally held on the 2nd Wednesday of most months at 7pm in the Town Hall. However, the Board intends to meet virtually until further notice. If you would like to attend a virtual meeting, email us. All are welcome!

The WLCT email: WestbrookLCT@gmail.com
Phone: 860-399-6359



WLCT Mission Statement: *The Westbrook Land Conservation Trust acquires, preserves, and actively stewards its own real property, including wetlands and woodlands, to conserve natural resources and to promote the scientific, educational, and passive recreational uses of open space, all for the benefit of the public. In addition, the Trust supports the town of Westbrook in its endeavors to conserve and educate the public regarding the value of its natural environment.*

Board of Directors: • Tom Elliott, President • Barbara Helander, Vice President • Kate Gilstad, Treasurer • Bill Neale, Secretary • Doug White, Membership and John Cotton, Properties • Kristin Elliott Leas, Alternate • Sarah Greaves, Counselor



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