

SAVE THE LAND  
SHARE THE RESPONSIBILITY



WEANTINOGE  
HERITAGE LAND TRUST

# Impact Report



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FRONT COVER: JERRY MONKMAN  
BACK COVER: BY PETER HALL  
DESIGN: MERRYALL STUDIO



## Welcome from the Executive Director

It is my pleasure to present you with Weantinoge's annual Impact Report. At Weantinoge, our strength has always come from our ability to adapt quickly and effectively to the changing needs of our communities. As I write this, we are responding to a rapidly transforming world. The United Nations has recently unveiled a draft plan to protect 30% of the Earth's lands and waters by 2030. It is an urgent call to action to safeguard global biodiversity and slow the impacts of a warming climate.

The need for action is clear, but

there is hope. Here in Northwest Connecticut approximately 23% of the region is already conserved. Weantinoge expands these natural lands by permanently protecting on average seven new conservation properties each year. Our proactive land conservation work prioritizes climate resilient landscapes (areas where plants and animals can move to adapt to climate change) and habitats for rare, endangered, and threatened species.

As supporters of our work, you are creating a conservation legacy that will last beyond our lifetimes. In

this Impact Report you will see the breadth of what we are accomplishing together. Through our acquisition, stewardship, education, and partnership programs, your support touches the lives of thousands. You have made it all possible and the future is ours to create together.



All the best,  
**Catherine  
M. Rawson**  
Executive Director

**Trail work day  
at Pratt Glen  
Preserve  
in Brookfield.**



# Protecting Natural Lands and Waters

Weantinoge is Northwest Connecticut’s regional land trust and largest in the state, protecting an average of seven new properties annually. As a guardian of natural and working lands, public recreation areas, and drinking water resources, Weantinoge permanently protects 10,500 acres (and growing) of vast, connected natural areas.

## 2017 LAND ACQUISITIONS

PROPERTY  
**Hochberg Ascent, 25 Acres**  
LOCATION  
**New Milford**  
DONORS  
**Steven Hochberg/Ascent Group**  
CONSERVATION VALUE  
This 25-acre parcel includes hill top oak forest with a rich shrub layer of wild lowbush blueberry, providing a cornucopia of summer and fall foods for wildlife. This parcel also preserves scenic vistas which would have been compromised had a house been built on the highest point. With its long, wooded road and easy access, this property might one day be opened for public use.

PROPERTY  
**Hart, 5 Acres**  
LOCATION  
**New Milford**  
DONOR

Cary Hart  
CONSERVATION VALUE  
This 5-acre acquisition is an addition to the 8-acre Trika’s Preserve, which was donated to Weantinoge by Cary Hart’s late sister Margaret Smith-Burke. Trika’s Preserve maintains the scenic character of Mud Pond Road in northern New Milford. The property is an important bird nesting and migration area and is home to wood ducks, osprey, and a beaver dam.

PROPERTY  
**Hochberg Geiger Road, 121 Acres**  
LOCATION  
**New Milford**  
DONORS  
**Steven and Hilary Hochberg**  
CONSERVATION VALUE  
This 121-acre hilltop area completes the conservation of the eastern flank of Bear Hill, New Milford’s highest point. Bear Hill is visible for miles, and

the Geiger Road lands ensure that views of the summit remain unspoiled. With both fields and deep woods, the land offers diverse habitats. Birds and small mammals especially enjoy the unique shrubby area, uncommon in Litchfield County.

PROPERTY  
**Nickoll-Potash, 103 Acres**  
LOCATION  
**Litchfield**  
DONORS  
**Chrissy Armstrong and Ben Nickoll**  
CONSERVATION VALUE  
The Potash acquisition preserves the northern and southern approaches to Milton Preserve, ensuring heavily-wooded road sides remain free of new development. The southern parcel protects a wetland dominated by dense hemlock trees, which filter the waters flowing into a small pond.

PROPERTY  
**Moss, 14 Acres**  
LOCATION  
**New Milford**  
DONOR  
**Charles “Ben” Moss**  
CONSERVATION VALUE  
The Moss parcels sit above and drain directly into Walker Brook, a clean, clear tributary of the East Aspetuck River. The Moss parcels are densely wooded and protect the scenery from Walker Brook Road.



Over the Housatonic River, in Sharon, CT

## 2018 LAND ACQUISITIONS

PROPERTY  
**Comanche Hill Farm, 34 Acres**  
LOCATION  
**Bridgewater**  
DONOR  
**Bud Wright**  
CONSERVATION VALUE  
Comanche Hill Farm was protected with a conservation easement through Connecticut’s Department of Agriculture State Farmland Protection Program, which buys farmer’s development rights. Comanche Hill Farm is part of a swath of farmland that stretches from Northrup Street to Town Line Road. Weantinoge was instrumental helping close this deal and assisted Bud Wright through the lengthy administrative process.

PROPERTY  
**Hallock Hills Nature Preserve, 128 Acres**  
LOCATION  
**New Milford**  
DONORS  
**Anne Bass and William Rondina**  
CONSERVATION VALUE  
The property, known as Hallock Hills, is part of the town of New Milford’s early history. This newly created nature preserve adds to over 350 contiguous acres already protected by Weantinoge and comprises of large blocks of forest. Largely unbroken by roads, it is important for public recreation, clean water,

and wildlife. Familiar animals like bobcats, coyotes, and owls thrive in these large forested areas.

PROPERTY  
**Bear Hill, 50 Acres**  
LOCATION  
**New Milford**  
DONORS  
**Elise Frick and Jack Garrity Jr.**  
CONSERVATION VALUE  
The easement completes the protection of the entire north and east sides of Bear Hill, the highest and most prominent landmark in New Milford. In addition to protecting natural habitat, this project will also permit a hiking trail to cross through the easement and ensure public access to Bear Hill’s 1,270-foot summit. The trail head can be accessed from our Kahn Preserve on Cherniske Road.

PROPERTY  
**Tinker Hill, 2.5 Acres**  
LOCATION  
**Washington**  
DONORS  
**Chrissy Armstrong and Ben Nickoll**  
CONSERVATION VALUE  
This 2.5-acre lot in Washington was a building lot on Lake Warmaug, which has been under tremendous development pressure in recent years. The property abuts the 214-acre Mt. Bushnell State Park, and its conservation will protect water quality of the lake by preventing erosion and filtering runoff naturally.

PHOTOGRAPH BY JERRY MONKMAN





## Supporting Local Farms and Food

In order to perpetuate local agriculture in the face of prohibitively expensive land values, Weantinoge provides low or no-cost leases to farm families in exchange for their following good farming and stewardship practices on our lands. Weantinoge's ownerships produce beef, pork, poultry, corn, and hay that are sold locally.

**The Bill Blass Preserve** is a 40-acre farm and woodlot property on Gunn Hill Road atop New Preston Hill. The tract is adjacent to state-protected lands in a scenic and historic area in the shadow of Mount Bushnell. It sits in a compact basin between Mount Bushnell and Gunn Hill, with long views to the north, east, and southeast. The land is a mosaic of open pasture, forest, stream, pond, and edge habitats, bounded by 3,100 feet of stonewalls. Farmer Gary Rebillard sustainably and humanely raises mixed-breed beef cattle and at times hogs and poultry on 21 open acres. Gary has been successfully farming the property for almost a decade.

PHOTOGRAPH BY JERRY MONKMAN





## Fall Celebration at Smyrski Farm in New Milford

Each September Weantinoge hosts a Fall Celebration to celebrate the region's farming heritage. The event is held on Weantinoge's 220-acre Smyrski Farm in New Milford which has been in continuous operation for over 200 years. The day begins with tethered hot-air balloon rides rising 100ft. A birds of prey show is offered to the wonderment of nearly 100 children and guests of all ages. A petting zoo including calves, pot belly pigs, ducks, rabbits, sheep, and a donkey gives families a chance to interact with farm animals. Other attractions include hayrides, face painting, nature walks, and antique farm equipment demonstration.

Balloon rides (right), dissecting owl pellets (below). Children enjoying hay rides through the Smyrski Farm pastures (opposite).



PHOTOGRAPHS BY WENDY CARLSON (ABOVE AND OPPOSITE)





# Connecting People To Nature

Weantinoge's trails are free and open to the public, traversing fields, forests, and wetlands. They provide places for exploration, adventure, and solace. In order to preserve the backcountry experience, trail use is limited to hiking, skiing, and snowshoeing.

**Candlewood Mountain**  
13 Sherman Road, New Milford, CT 06776

PRESERVE ACRES: **16**  
TRAIL LENGTH: **4 Miles**  
TRAIL DIFFICULTY: **Moderate**

This hike is unique because it requires the use of your hands, most notably at a giant pile of boulders known as the "corkscrew." The beginning of the path includes a rocky ravine and a stunning overlook. Throughout, you'll be rewarded with varied terrain features under a mixed forest canopy.

**Cobble Mountain**  
Macedonia State Park  
159 Macedonia Brook Road, Kent, CT 06757

PRESERVE ACRES: **20**  
TRAIL LENGTH: **3 miles**  
TRAIL DIFFICULTY: **Moderate to Advanced**

This trail is our steepest climb and includes some rocky patches – visitors are glad to have brought boots and a walking stick. The westward views from the summit make the hike more than worth it as they extend to the Hudson River Valley and Catskill mountains on a clear day.

**Cobble Brook Vista**  
26 Studio Hill Circle, Kent, CT 06757

PRESERVE ACRES: **158**  
TRAIL LENGTH: **2.2 Miles**  
TRAIL DIFFICULTY: **Moderate to Advanced**

Cobble Brook Vista offers breathtaking views right off the bat. Within a few minutes, you traverse a sandy knoll with a magnificent pastoral and ridge panorama. The soils are almost pure sand and the vegetation is like a Vermont hill pasture, peppered with junipers, British soldier, lichen, and poverty grass.

**Hauser Nature Park**  
100 Fern Avenue, Litchfield, CT 06759

PRESERVE ACRES: **90**  
TRAIL LENGTH: **1 mile**  
TRAIL DIFFICULTY: **Easy**

The defining character of the park is a hayfield, which looks out to the high points of the Litchfield Hills, including Cornwall's Mohawk Mountain. During the spring and early summer months you'll observe nesting bobolinks. The hayfield serves as a pre-migration staging area for them, as timothy and reed canary grass seeds fatten them for their long journey.

**Henry Preserve and the Pond Brook Trail**  
22 Sawmill Road, Newtown, CT 06470

PRESERVE ACRES: **28**  
TRAIL LENGTH: **.5 miles**  
TRAIL DIFFICULTY: **Easy**

This preserve is home to a pleasant, well-worn trail. Previously used to harvest corn and raise livestock, the preserve has evolved into a thriving, shady forest. The trail passes a stream and large boulders.

**Kahn-Nostrand Preserves**  
58 Cherniske Road, New Milford, CT 06776

PRESERVE ACRES: **267 Acres**  
TRAIL LENGTH: **3.25 miles**  
TRAIL DIFFICULTY: **Easy**

These preserves provide an idyllic experience in the West Aspetuck River Valley. The river itself is exceptionally clean, protected by the forests and wetlands upstream. The trails are enjoyed by runners, hikers, and mountain bikers. You may see mink, otter, ducks, and frogs along the way.

**Alice McCallister Memorial Sanctuary**  
74 Camps Flat Road, South Kent, CT 06785

PRESERVE ACRES: **64**  
TRAIL LENGTH: **1 Mile**  
TRAIL DIFFICULTY: **Easy**

The Alice McCallister Memorial Sanctuary is part of over 400 acres that Weantinoge protects around Mud Pond. The sanctuary's mile-long trail offers plentiful opportunities for bird watching and is home to several beaver lodges. Join us as we improve this trail so more people can enjoy this hidden treasure.

**James Morrissey Family Nature Preserve**  
130 Gaylord Road, New Milford, CT

PRESERVE ACRES: **59**  
TRAIL LENGTH: **1.5 Mile**  
TRAIL DIFFICULTY: **Easy**

This preserve contains varied landscapes and species. The trail climbs steeply to a woodland studded with red cedars, then crosses a small brook to the clearing for the Iroquois Gas Pipeline. You'll enjoy plants like showy orchids, wild oats, and

Environmental  
education at  
Cobble Brook  
Vista.



endangered sedge. As you ascend, you'll see butternut trees, more red cedars, and towering tulip poplars.

**Mount Tom Preserve**  
43 Mt. Tom Road, New Milford, CT 06776

PRESERVE ACRES: **50**  
TRAIL LENGTH: **1.25 Miles**  
TRAIL DIFFICULTY: **Easy to Moderate**

While most of the trail is easy, meandering around vernal pools, it has a moderately steep finale ending with a scenic vista. Mount Tom Preserve was completely restored in 2018 with the support of the Connecticut Community Foundation, creating a new parking area, kiosk and trail map, foot bridges, and trail signage.

**Pratt Glen Preserve**  
40A Obtuse Road North, Brookfield, CT 06804

PRESERVE ACRES: **74**  
TRAIL LENGTH: **3 Miles**  
TRAIL DIFFICULTY: **Easy to Moderate**

This preserve was hard-hit by the 2017 macroburst. Thanks to our volunteers, the trails were cleared and re-routed so that people can once again enjoy this peaceful preserve. Pratt Glen's trail overlooks Skyline Ridge in Bridgewater and includes some of the region's finest wild dogwoods and a spruce and white pine plantation. While weaving your way around the trail, you may get a distant view of eagles, ospreys, minks and otters.

**Wildwoods Nature Preserve**  
24 Caray Hill Road, Sharon, CT 06069

PRESERVE ACRES: **163**  
TRAIL LENGTH: **2.5 Miles**  
TRAIL DIFFICULTY: **Easy to Moderate**

Wildwoods offers a serene hike and magnificent westward views of the Taconic Mountains and is home to both wetlands and woodlands, so you'll get the best of both worlds. You will also find Weantinoge's best stand of northern hardwoods. Plan a fall hike to enjoy the colors.

For trail maps and further information on planning your trip, visit [www.weantinoge.org](http://www.weantinoge.org).

PHOTOGRAPH BY WENDY CARLSON



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Sunset in Sharon.

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Connecticut Trust for Public Land  
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Environmental Professionals  
Organization of Connecticut  
Land Trust Alliance  
Northwest Connecticut Community  
Foundation





Join the Legacy Society and help protect the lands you love forever.

Every acre that Weantinoge conserves comes with the promise of protecting that land in perpetuity. There are few better or easier ways to support land conservation many years into the future than with a bequest. Through your will or living trust you can not only provide for your family and friends, but also make a lasting conservation legacy. Gifts made through your will or living trust are easy to arrange and can be changed at any time, giving you total control over your estate planning.

When you designate Weantinoge as a beneficiary in your will or living trust, you become a member of the Legacy Society and will be recognized at our Annual Meeting and in our publications. Bequests are indispensable for ensuring that the special places you love will be protected forever. Please let us know if Weantinoge is named in your estate planning so you can be recognized as a member of the Legacy Society.

How it Works

Although there are many ways to join the Legacy Society, a gift to Weantinoge in your will or living trust is one of the easiest ways to ensure that Weantinoge can, in good faith, accept and protect land in perpetuity. Making a bequest can be as simple as designating a dollar amount, percentage of your estate, or parcel of property.

- You retain control of the assets making up the gift.
- You can change your gift at any time and for any reason.

Most Common Bequests

- A general bequest leaves Weantinoge a gift of a specific dollar amount, percentage of your estate, or a specified gift of property.
- A residuary bequest leaves Weantinoge a percentage of the “rest, residue, and remainder” of your estate after debts, taxes, and other bequests have been paid.

If you would like to learn more about the Legacy Society, please call Matt Soper, Director of Philanthropy, at 860-927-1927 or e-mail matt@weantinoge.org



Weantinoge Volunteers

AmeriCorps  
Dr. Lawford Anderson  
Ken Anderson  
Donny Annino  
David Bain  
Bart Barown III  
Norm Berg  
Mike Bertrand  
Peter Birch  
Brian P. Bouffard  
Rickey Bouffard  
Clare Brady  
Danny Brass  
Mike Butterfield  
Dr. Carole Cheah  
John Cianciullo  
Kathy Conroy  
Kevin Conroy  
CT DOT  
Michael Cuff  
Kevin Curran  
Michael Deutsch  
Kevin Devito  
Russ Dibble  
Angela Dimmett  
Ken Divito  
Jeff Dostaler  
Curtis Ek  
Geordie Elkins  
Jeleni Fernandez  
Gary Francis  
Sigrun Gadwa  
Charles Gereg  
Kristen Gill  
Art Gingert

Andrew Gordon  
Mike Grouver  
Colin Harrison  
Norma Hart  
Troy Hart  
Bill Hopkins  
Nora Hulton  
Ron Hummel  
Joan Ivler  
Sandy Ivler  
Devin Johnson  
Rob Kenyon  
Paul Koker  
James LaFlam  
Harry Larson  
Rory Larson  
Bob Lengyel  
Ryan Libby  
Peter Litwin  
Keith Hill  
Chris Mangels  
Seamus McKeon  
Angie Melton  
David Melton  
Louis Memoli  
Mark Menkin  
Pete Meyers  
Mayia Mileva  
Daniel Morrissey  
Jack Nelson  
Kathleen Nelson  
Ryan Nelson  
T.R. Nelson  
New Milford Youth Agency  
Chris Nichols

Jim Norton  
Clare Obarowski  
John F. O'Rourke III  
Charles Peterson  
Peg Peterson  
Susan Pettigrew  
Fran Pinto  
Rick Plumb  
George Pommer  
Linda Pouder  
Nick Pouder  
Henry Pratt  
Dennis Preston  
John Prittie  
Carl Raab  
Joan Raab  
Martin Ronan  
John Russell  
Michael Sanchez  
Franz Schober  
Abigail Schrang  
David Schrang  
Maridith Schrang  
Bob Simmons  
Edward Simonovich  
Lovett Smith  
Still River Watershed  
Connections  
Bill Stuart, Jr.  
Brendan Taylor  
Louis Tencza Jr.  
The Green Spot  
Christina Tsitso  
Kathy Wandelmaier  
Marc Weingarten  
James Wistman  
Noah Wistman  
Bud Wright  
Yard Apes  
Jack Yeomans

PHOTOGRAPH BY WENDY CARLSON

2018 Financial Report

**Financial Overview** Weantinoge continued to increase its operating revenues to meet growing demand as the leading land conservation organization in Connecticut. Total operating revenue and support, including member contributions, grants, and investment income, was \$2,690,226 in FY 2018. Of this, contributions of conservation land and easements comprised \$1,691,003. Total operating expenses, including

Weantinoge's acquisition, education, stewardship, and partnership programs, grew from \$768,614 in FY 2017 to \$969,218 in FY 2018. Financial assets available to meet cash needs for general expenditures within one year totaled \$1,340,392. In addition, Weantinoge maintains a Stewardship Reserve Fund for the long-term care, stewardship, and defense of our easement and fee land properties of \$1,024,578.

| Consolidated Statement of Financial Position |                     |
|--|---------------------|
| December 31, 2018                            |                     |
| Land and easements held for preservation     | \$39,391,903        |
| Cash and investments                         | \$1,172,916         |
| Receivables and prepaid expenses             | \$167,476           |
| Restricted cash and cash equivalents         | \$1,602,405         |
| Property and equipment                       | \$334,217           |
| <b>Total Assets</b>                          | <b>\$42,668,917</b> |
| Liabilities                                  | \$312,656           |
| Net assets without donor restrictions        | \$40,882,805        |
| Net assets with donor restrictions           | \$1,473,456         |
| <b>Total Liabilities and Net Assets</b>      | <b>\$42,668,917</b> |



Kestrel banding





**Weantinoge Heritage  
Land Trust, Inc.**  
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