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**Northwest Connecticut
Land Conservancy**



**PROTECTING LAND AND WATER
FOR PEOPLE, FOR WILDLIFE, FOREVER.**

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April Newsletter

Dear Friend of NCLC,

There is no quiet season for a conservationist.

This month, I am delighted to announce that NCLC has been awarded a prestigious \$750,000 grant from the Connecticut Department of Agriculture's **Climate-**

Smart Agriculture and Forestry Grant Program.



The State of Connecticut allocated \$7 million for this innovative, state-wide grant program and, in a highly competitive process, received 78 applications seeking more than \$55 million in grant funds. **NCLC was one of only 12 organizations awarded funding.** This generous grant will enable NCLC to provide broad professional support to Northwest Connecticut's agricultural community while also directly funding more than \$500,000 in **climate-smart agricultural assessments, practices, and land improvements** on working farms and land trust owned properties throughout Northwest Connecticut. We look forward to partnering with our region's farmers and fellow land trusts to increase climate resiliency.

We will also be busy this month with the two-day Give Local fundraising campaign. Give Local is a *significant* source of funding for NCLC and helps us to continue to accelerate the pace of conservation. I hope that you will give as generously as possible to support land and water conservation efforts near you.

In other NCLC news, director extraordinaire Hiram Williams has stepped down from his position as President. Hiram led this organization with intelligence, grace, and wisdom for over a decade. Fortunately for us all, he continues to serve on the board. Hiram has passed the torch to our inspiring new Board President, Margery Feldberg. Margery has served on the NCLC board for seven years and is energetically rolling up her sleeves to create a strong future for land conservation in Northwest Connecticut. We are lucky to have such outstanding leaders helping us protect the wild places and working lands we all depend on.

There are several new faces at NCLC this spring. I am very happy to announce that Michele Shapiro Deshpande and Mark Gude have joined our board of directors. We are also delighted to welcome a new staff member, Mary Walsh. Mary joins our growing stewardship team and will oversee NCLC's conservation easements. We hope you will welcome her to the area if you see her out and about.

Finally, it wouldn't be spring without well-loved NCLC outdoor programs, such as the Story Walk at Mallory Preserve, our wonderful guided bird walks, and Earth Day events. We look forward to seeing you at these events and on the trails!

Catherine

Catherine M. Rawson
Executive Director



Our Greatest Thanks to Hiram Williams

This January, after 12 years as board president of NCLC, Hiram Williams stepped down. He will continue to serve on the board. Hiram guided the organization through two mergers with Brookfield Open Space Legacy in 2019 and Naromi Land Trust in 2020 and built a resilient organization ready to meet the challenges of regional conservation work.

Under Hiram's extraordinary service, the land protected by NCLC grew by over 4,500 acres, making NCLC the 22nd largest land trust in the United States by the number of lands protected. [Read More.](#)



Margery Feldberg Elected Board President



NCLC's Board of Directors elected Margery Feldberg to serve as president for the next three years. Margery, a resident of New Milford and owner of De Hoek Farm, has served on the board for seven years. [Read More.](#)

Welcome New Board Members



Roxbury resident Michele Shapiro Deshpande was the Head of Public Relations for McLaren Automotive North America, where she helped to launch the company in the United States. [Read more.](#)



Mark Duvall Gude is a resident of Sharon, Connecticut, where he loves frequenting local farmers' markets. [Read more.](#)

Welcome Mary Walsh

In March, Mary Walsh joined NCLC as our Stewardship Specialist. Mary will oversee NCLC's 6,600 acres of conservation easements. Mary previously worked as the land steward for Westchester Land Trust. There, she managed a portfolio of over 200 conservation easements and assisted in stewardship efforts on the land trust's preserves. We are thrilled to welcome Mary to the NCLC Team. [Read more.](#)



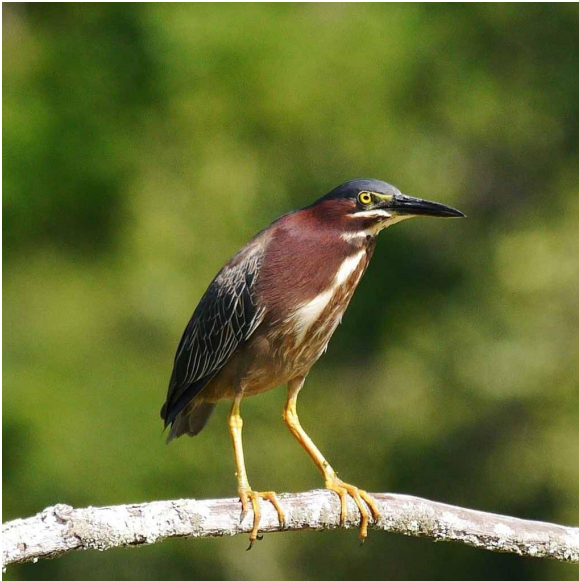
Upcoming Events



Spring Break Story Walk
April 10 to April 25



**The Great Big Day
of Composting**
April 22



Wimisink Bird Walk
April 29



Woodbury Earth Day
April 29



Sherman Green Fair
May 6



Smyrski Farm Bird Walk
May 6



NCLC is hiring and we hope you will join our team. NCLC welcomes people of all backgrounds, identities, and beliefs to join us in achieving our mission to protect the lands and waters of Northwest Connecticut forever. **To apply for an open position, please visit our Job Opportunities page.**

Northwest Connecticut Land Conservancy is a nonprofit regional land trust and the largest land trust in the state. As a guardian of natural and working lands, public recreation areas, and drinking water resources, NCLC permanently protects 13,000 acres (and growing) of vast, connected natural areas in Litchfield and northern Fairfield Counties.

DONATE NOW

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OUR TRAILS

Northwest Connecticut Land Conservancy

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