



THE HINGHAM LAND CONSERVATION TRUST

2017 Annual Report & Newsletter

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Understanding Our Watershed—2017 Annual Meeting

EILEEN MCINTYRE



HLCT Board Chair Skip Hull (at podium); Panelists (l to r) Kristin Uiterwyk, Environmental Policy Specialist, and Board member, Weir River Watershed Association; Duane LeVangie, Section Chief, Water Management Act, Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection; John Walsh, V.P. of Operations, MA Aquarion Water Company; and Kirk Shilts, Hingham Water Supply Committee. (Kirk also serves on the Hingham Board of Health and Hingham Sewer Commission.)

The Hingham Land Conservation Trust annual meeting, on March 30th at the Hingham Library, featured a panel of experts who deepened our understanding of the watershed that provides our fresh water. Panelists described the nature and scope of the Weir River Watershed, rules guiding annual withdrawals, and the importance of land management along with other steps we can take as a community and as residents to ensure the sustainability of this critical resource. (Panelists identified in photo above.)



Joining us for the HLCT 2017 annual meeting was State Representative Joan Meschino.

SOME OF WHAT WE LEARNED:

- The Weir River Watershed is the LAND that catches the water that is then stored in ponds, wetlands or the ground water, or drains into the Weir River Basin. (A map showing the extent of the watershed is posted on the HLCT website, at the 2017 annual meeting tab.) This watershed supports both humans and wildlife—including more than 100 species of birds.
- The Accord Pond reservoir supplies 15-20% of our water, while 11 wells (drilled 60-80 feet into the gravel/sand/water mixture of the aquifer) supply 80-85%. This water is all piped to a treatment plant before entering the water supply.
- State regulation limits us to using no more than 3.51 million gallons/day (annual average). (3 golf courses in Hingham are separately permitted by the state.) During 2016, a time of extreme drought conditions, there was good compliance with water restrictions, and the system (Hingham, Hull and 300 North Cohasset customers) withdrew 90% of the regulated limit, an improvement over the withdrawals of 97-99% in prior years.
- Should it become necessary to seek a permit for withdrawals above the registered limit, mitigation steps would be critical to the state analysis—including actions taken by both the water company and the community dating back to 2005, such as reduction in “unaccounted-for water,” conservation steps, and protection of open space for recharge of the watershed.
- The Hingham Water Supply Committee drafted a proposed bylaw in 2009 that would have required irrigation systems to incorporate certain conservation features. Such a bylaw proposal may be revived, given the 2016 drought experience.

Prior to a lively Q and A session, we also heard from State Representative Joan Meschino who discussed how Smart Growth Planning across the region must incorporate water supply considerations.

A replay of the “Understanding Our Watershed” program, recorded by H-CAM, is available at www.hinghamlandtrust.org.



After more than 25 years as both a member and long-time chair (2002-2013) of the HLCT Board of Trustees, Kathy Reardon stepped down as an active board member earlier this year. HLCT members in attendance at our annual meeting on March 30th joined the board in applauding Kathy's dedication both to the mission of our land trust and to the Town of Hingham.

Kathy joined the HLCT board in 1991, shortly after completing her final project for a Certificate in Landscape Design from the Radcliffe Seminars Program. In her early years with the board, Kathy worked closely with Mary Niles and Suvia P. Whittemore, two of Hingham's most generous and conservation-minded residents, to protect the unmatched beauty of Eel River Woods and Whortleberry Hollow. Kathy also played a key role in making these properties, along with Jacobs Meadow and Turkey Hill, accessible for public use. Most recently, Kathy was among

the leading advocates for the Town's acquisition of the Lehner property, guaranteeing the protection of more than 50 pristine acres of meadow, wetland and woodland critical to the aquifer that supplies much of Hingham's water.

Kathy has created a model for service that will be hard to match. The HLCT and the citizens of Hingham have benefitted from her thoughtful advice, and enjoyed her unflagging enthusiasm. On a personal note, although I joined the Board with my own passion for conservation and outdoor recreation, working with Kathy has further impressed on me the importance of protecting Hingham's prized open spaces. Kathy has helped to solidify the foundation for the HLCT and the Town of Hingham to appropriately prioritize land conservation, both for environmental stewardship and recreational enjoyment. Thank you, Kathy! 🍷



Kathy Reardon, lower right, in 1994 with some of the founders and early Trustees of the HLCT: back row, l to r: Monique Lehner, Martha Horn and Ginger Winslow. Lower left: Sally Goodrich.



In recognition of the HLCT 40th anniversary in 2012, Kathy Reardon enjoyed the celebration at "The Orchard," home of Monique and Philip Lehner.



Kathy "in the field" for HLCT in early 2017, discussing signage at Jacobs Meadow with Hingham Conservation Commission's Loni Fournier and HLCT fellow board member Don Kidston.



Trustee News

Patty Krumholz, together with her husband Josh and 3 children, has lived in Hingham since 1993. Hingham's treasure of open spaces has provided the backdrop to the family's years here, including birthday parties in Jacobs Meadow, camping in Wompatuck, and Quests in Bare Cove Park.

Patty works for *Beyond Words Proofreading* and is a girls' tennis coach for Hingham High. Patty also recently fulfilled one of her bucket-list items by joining the ranger team at World's End.

Rick Rohleder along with his wife, Lori, and 2 sons moved to Hingham in 2002. The family resides in Hingham Centre. Rick is a commercial operations executive with more than 25 years in the biotechnology and pharmaceuticals industry.

Rick served as a youth coach for multiple seasons with Hingham Youth Sports, t-ball, soccer and ice hockey. He also held leadership roles with the Boy Scouts of America in town for more than 12 years. Currently, Rick is involved in the Hingham Police Department Citizens Police Academy Alumni Association and serves as a member of the Hingham Community Emergency Response Team. 🍷



Lehner Property Update

- The Town of Hingham completed the acquisition of the Lehner property in January 2017. The purchase, using CPA funding, was approved at Hingham Town Meeting in 2016, and we featured this important acquisition in the cover story of last year's newsletter—available on our website.
- *What's Next?* The Hingham Conservation Commission (HCC) plans for the property include formally naming it at the 2018 Town Meeting, followed by creation and installation of a road-side property sign. Also planned is the establishment of formal parking off South Pleasant Street, subject to Town approvals and funding, and harvesting hay or corn on some, or all, of the fields. In the near term, the fields will be mowed on a regular schedule.
- To access trails now, use informal street-side parking near the property entrance at 32 South Pleasant Street. In addition, on days when there is no nursery school in session at the Wilder Building on Main Street, parking and access to the Lehner property is available behind the building by way of Jacobs Meadow. 🍷



Boy Scouts Help with Trail Maintenance

Boy Scouts from Hingham's Troop 1 spent Saturday afternoon, September 23rd, clearing trails at Eel River Woods. The volunteers trimmed paths, cut back tree branches and brush, cleared the roadside and entrance area and picked up litter, all under the guidance of Scout Leaders Mark Murphy, Gary Gorczyca and Dan Power.

Eel River Woods is a 12-acre property, given to the Hingham Land Conservation Trust by Mary Niles. The property has trails and benches for woodland walks and enjoyment of views by the public. The entrance is on Cushing Street across from Pioneer Road.

Leland Franz, a Boy Scout from Troop 1, is pursuing an Eagle Scout Project to improve a trail through a low-lying area of the site. Leland is creating a new boardwalk to replace an existing damaged boardwalk. The project, approved by the HCC and Boy Scout officials, should be completed in late fall.



Among the hard-working scouts were (l to r) Luke Chipman, Cameron Santarelli, Jake O'Neill, Kevin Porter, Conor Power and Colton Chipman. Not pictured: Scouts Alex Gorczyca, Brendan Power and Aidan Murphy.



Parklands Map Update

In support of the Grade 5 Field Science Program in Hingham, the HLCT provides each student with a copy of our popular *Parklands for the Public* map of Hingham's open spaces. (PHOTO: Some East School 5th graders after receiving their maps this Fall.) Hingham K-5 science specialist Brian Conroy uses the maps to help students find their school nature trail and other "green spaces" close to their school. About the Field Science Program, Brian reports: "Recently, we used field microscopes to observe milkweed leaves that were infested with aphid eggs. Students could see hatching aphids, juveniles, and adults. We learned that this can be a problem, because the presence of aphid eggs on the plants keeps butterflies from laying their own eggs on the milkweeds. All this ties into the butterfly life cycle that students will study in the spring."



The HLCT is pleased to announce that an updated (6th Edition) *Parklands for the Public* Map will be available by year-end.



Philip O. Swanson Scholarship

Congratulations to Maxwell (Max) Giarrusso, our 2017 Philip O. Swanson Scholarship recipient. Max is a 2017 graduate of Hingham High School, where, since his freshman year, he was an enthusiastic member of the school's award-winning Green Team. Max became its president in spring of his junior year. Max also exhibited his leadership skills as president of the class of 2017, and as vice president of the high school's Mock Trial team. In the summers of 2016 and 2017, Max joined assistant principal Richard Swanson to deliver a presentation to a large group of educators from other schools at a graduate program ("Teaching for Global Understanding in the 21st Century") held at Regis College. In the presentation, Max helped share best practices that helped Hingham High to earn distinction as one of the "greenest" schools in Eastern Massachusetts. Recalling that presentation, Richard Swanson said, "Inspired by an authentic passion for sustainability, Max always rises to the occasion."



Trails Plan Update

- This spring, Information Kiosks were installed at 12 HCC and HLCT properties. Trail maps also have been printed for fall 2017 posting in the kiosks.
- In the near term, the HCC's focus is on clearing and maintaining existing trails and installing trail markers. The HCC is budgeting for trail maintenance and marking supplies (tools as well as paint). The HLCT board has begun discussions to enlist local Boy Scout troops in some of this trail work.
- With the focus now on getting current trails cleared and well signed, new trails recommended in the 2015 Hingham Comprehensive Trails Plan (posted at: hingham-ma.com/446/Comprehensive-Trails-Plan) will be considered in the future.

Why Join the Hingham Land Conservation Trust?

The HLCT conserves land to protect our water supply, wildlife habitats and freshwater ponds and streams, while preserving passive recreational uses. Your gifts fund mowing to preserve open meadows, surveys to define property boundaries and other essential organizational needs. Presently we own 65 acres and hold conservation restrictions on 40 acres in the town of Hingham.

All contributions to HLCT are tax-deductible, including land and conservation easements. Your gifts contribute to the quality of life in Hingham now and for generations to come.

The Trustees of the Hingham Land Conservation Trust invite your membership, participation and comments. Mail in the enclosed envelope or write to:

Hingham Land Conservation Trust
PO Box 10
Hingham, MA 02043

For further information go to www.hinghamlandtrust.org or find us on Facebook

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2016 Financial Summary

Income	\$ 27,467
Expenses.....	22,988
Net Income	4,479
Cash Assets	\$162,936



2017 HLCT WALKS



ABOVE AND LEFT: Our Spring Walk explored Wheelwright Park and trails through the adjacent Holly Hill Farm and Barnes Wildlife Sanctuary in Cohasset. Some highlights from our walk through this diverse parkland, shown here, as described by HLCT Board member Don Kidston: As we arrived at the Ice Pond, our guide Steve Ivas noted that ice was harvested from the farm from the 1860s into the 1940s. The ice was stored in sawdust and used in the local area during the summer. The backdrop for the ice pond is a beautiful escarpment, or long cliff, created by a rising rock wall and/or settlement of the adjacent land along a geological fault. Steve pointed out that the vegetation on the wall demonstrates an evolution in plant growth. As the walk continued through the Barnes Wildlife Sanctuary, we observed the first butterfly of spring. Full description and slide show from the walk are available at hinghamlandtrust.org.

RIGHT: A brief rain shower did not deter the 45 walkers who joined HLCT for our Fall Walk at Osprey Overlook Park on Saturday October 14th. The guide for our fascinating 90-minute walking tour was Andrew Hultin, program coordinator for Weymouth's Recreation Department. Most of this new park, adjacent to Great Esker Park, with spectacular views of the Back River and sea grass marshes, was previously home to a land fill and adjacent incinerator (long-closed, but still standing, from the 1960s). Andrew noted that the estuary, or area of the river that is influenced by salty tide-water, extends inland to the crossing of the Greenbush Line train tracks at the East Weymouth Train Station. As an example of the impacts of salinity on vegetation he pointed out 2 types of grass, one standing and one lying flat, the difference being their tolerance to salt in the water. We learned that four osprey couples nest here each year from March through September, some on manmade pole-supported platforms. The osprey winter in Cuba and Brazil and return in time for the annual herring run, with herring their primary food source during the early spring. The herring return from warmer climes at that time to spawn in Weymouth's Whitman Pond. — by Nick Sowles. More photos on our Facebook page and at hinghamlandtrust.org.

