

2012 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE UPTON LAND STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE (ULSC)

In 2012 the ULSC continued with the implementation of the Land Stewardship Plan for the Former Stefans Farm Parcel. Wetlands were identified in preparation for filing a Notice of Intent for work to be done at water crossings. Discussion has begun with an Eagle Scout candidate to construct one of these crossings in 2013.

We received a report prepared by Mike Sawyers, a wildlife biologist from MassWildlife. The report offers suggestions in the managing of the Former Stefans Farm property to encourage wildlife many of which we hope to implement.

Plots at the community garden were once again made available to Upton residents at no cost. Culinary students at Blackstone Valley Technical High School used one of the plots to grow organic produce for their restaurant. The Community Garden Coordinator, Matthew Bachtold continued to co-manage the tasks associated with the garden.

A number of grant proposals had been submitted requesting funds in support of trail work at Sweetwilliam Farm (SWF). Since none resulted in an award to the town, the Land Stewardship Committee, in partnership with the Metacomet Land Trust (MLT) began a fundraising campaign to complete the trails and the North Street parking area. Over \$13,000 was raised by MLT and a \$2500 grant was awarded by the Appalachian Mountain Club, Worcester Chapter toward the construction of the fence along the SWF pasture which was completed in December. In June a bridge was built across a stream on this same trail as an Eagle Project developed by Chris Dumas of Upton Troop 132. Development of the parking area is scheduled for 2013.

A Second Eagle Project crossing the Mill River near the Peppercorn Hill Conservation Area was completed in October. The bridge replaced a dilapidated structure and was on land owned by National Grid. Nolan Hobart, the scout leading the project, opened a dialog with representatives of National Grid who, with Blythe Robinson, Town Counsel and ULSC

member, Bill Taylor negotiated an agreement allowing the construction and public access across the National Grid land.

Existing trails have been maintained and new trails have been completed to connect the west side of the Whitney Conservation Area to the Warren Brook Watershed Conservation Area (WBWCA). A trail which may pass through private land abutting WBWCA was re-routed to stay within the boundaries of WBWCA

Discussion has begun to comply with the Department of Justice ruling that trails be made accessible to individuals with mobility impairments using wheelchairs and other devices.

Thanks goes out to Milford Cub Scout Pack 67 who picked up litter at the Peppercorn Hill Conservation Area. In addition to the many hours contributed by the Boy Scouts, volunteers and committee members contributed over 400 work hours to develop the community garden, map and enhance trail networks, negotiate various documents and prepare grant proposals.

Respectively submitted,

Matthew Bachtold-Community Garden Coordinator

Scott Heim

Mike Penko-Secretary

Marcella Stasa-Chairperson

Cathy Taylor

William Taylor