

OLD LYME OPEN SPACE COMMISSION

WALKING TRAILS

Please note that new trails have been opened up on many of the Town-owned properties. It is wise to have your GPS with you.

The 105 acre **Bartholomew Open Space** property is located just north of the railroad overpass on Buttonball Road. The loop trail is easy walking and takes about twenty minutes. Parking for two or three cars is available at the trail entrance.

The 195 acre **Ames Family Preserve**, which includes the Noyes parcel, has two entrances. The main entrance is located across the street from Pfeiffer's garage on Whippoorwill Road and about one hundred yards north of the bridge over I-95. Parking for several cars is available just north of the parking area for Pfeiffer's garage. Be careful crossing the street as sight lines are poor. Several hundred yards in there is a stream crossing that is flooded in the spring because of beaver activity. Boots are needed. The second entrance is at the end of Evergreen Trail (off of Boggy Hole Road).

The entrance to the 204-acre **Champlain Farm South** property is located at the end of Meetinghouse Lane where there is parking for several cars at the cul-de-sac. A large sign showing the trails is at the entrance. There are several trails including a loop trail with connections to Library Lane and Whippoorwill Road. Hikers have the choice of following the old roadway or walking the loop trail that does have a few steep spots that may be slippery when wet. The ridge trail parallels the old wood road.

The entrance to the 65-acre **Champlain Farm North** property is located just north of the Old Lyme Inn by way of Wyckford Road. There is parking in front of the gate for two or three cars. The trail starts here and follows the wood road to the Barbizon oak (16.5 feet in circumference, one of Connecticut's largest oaks). From the big oak there is a perimeter trail (orange markers) that heads north from the big oak to the stone wall marking the northern boundary, then it follows the stone wall to the east to a ridge where it turns south along the ridge all the way to the fence separating the property from I-95, then west along this fence, to the foundation of a huge barn, then back to the big oak. Much of the trail is rocky. Keep in mind that the ridges run north and south and that I-95 is the southern border of the property. The power line runs generally east and west. The perimeter trail takes an hour

A tiny parcel called **Lords Wood B** provides access to the 185 acre Lay Property owned by The Nature Conservancy. Two parking places are located on the right side of Lord's Meadow Lane in a designated graveled lot

up against a wooden rail. Please do not block the private driveway.

The **Four Mile River Road** property of almost 30 acres has no designated trails, but you can hike in under the power line to the top of the ridge for a challenging walk.

The US Fish and Wildlife Service will soon be building trails on a 50 acre parcel once owned by famed ornithologist Roger Tory Peterson at the headwaters of the Lieutenant River with access from Saunders Hollow Road.

You can learn about other interesting trails in town owned by the Old Lyme Land Trust, at their website <http://www.oldlymelandtrust.org>.

Trail Rules

Please bring out what you bring in, including all trash.

Please be sure dogs are under your control at all times (on leash).
Clean up after your pet.

Properties are accessible from dawn to dusk. Close at sunset.

No motorized vehicles are allowed on any property, especially ATVs

No fires are allowed.

No hunting or firearms are permitted.

No cutting or removal of any living thing, without written permission from the Open Space Commission.

Please respect the property of adjoining private landowners. Some properties are not well marked, and it is advisable to stay on the trails to avoid trespassing and other hazards of the woods including snakes and ticks.

LAND ACQUISITION HISTORY

Name	Address	Year	Acreage Open Space
Ames, Deborah and Edward	129-1 Whippoorwill Road	2003	76.29
Ames, Steven	8-1 Evergreen Trail	2011	70 11
Ames, Steven	41 Whippoorwill Road	2011	38.22
Bartholomew	71 Buttonball Road	1998	107
Champlain North	91 Lyme Street	2004	64.5
Champlain South	245 Whippoorwill Road	2004	204
Cross Lane - w/o Somerset	14 Cross Lane Deed restriction w/ State	1984	24
Cross Lane-Somerset		1994	13.3
Eklund	316 Ferry Road	2010	7.6
Evergreen Trail	10-1 Evergreen Trail	1992	1.14
Four Mile River Road	174-3 Four Mile River Road	1974	29.3
Lord's Woods - Parcel "A"	24 Lords Meadow Lane	2006	4.89
Lord's Wood - Parcel "B"	33 Lord's Meadow Lane	2006	0.31
Noyes	28 Boggy Hole Road	2002	24.32
			675.87
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Town Owned Open Space Habitat Analysis

Town Owned Open Space - Old Lyme			FOREST	SHRUB	GRASS	INLAND	TIDAL	COASTAL	TRAIL	STEEP	CULTURAL	ENDANGERED	OTHER	WITHIN	RECOMMENDED	
Acres	Address		LAND	LAND	WETLAND	MARSH			CONNECT	SLOPES	HISTORIC	RARE		GREENWAY	USE	
												THREATENED				
Jeborah and Edward	76.29 129-1 Whippoorwill Road		X			X						X		Vernal Pools	Trails, Passive Recreation	Wildlife Habitat, Forest
Steven	81 8-1 Evergreen Trail		X			X			X	X					Trails, Passive Recreation	Wildlife Habitat, Forest
Steven	38.22 41 Whippoorwill Road		X			X									Trails, Active, Passive Recreation	Wildlife Habitat, Forest
Tomew	107 71 Buttonball Road		X	X	X	X								Vernal Pools	Trails, Passive Recreation	Wildlife Habitat, Forest
Wain North	64.5 91 Lyme Street		X	X	X	X			X	x		X		Vernal Pools	Trails, Passive Recreation	Wildlife Habitat, Forest
Wain South	204 245 Whippoorwill Road		X	X	X	X			X			Near		Large Pond	Trails, Passive Recreation	Wildlife Habitat, Forest
Wane Recreation Area/Somerset	37.3 17 Cross Lane		X	X	X	X			X					Vernal Pools	Trails, Active, Passive Recreation	Wildlife Habitat, Forest
	7.6 Ferry Road		X			X		X				X		Large Pond	Wildlife Habitat	
Wain Trail	1.14 10-1 Evergreen Trail		X			X			X	X		Near			Trails, Passive Recreation	Wildlife Habitat, Forest
Wale River Road	29.3 174-3 Four Mile River Road		X	X		X			possible	X				Vernal Pools	Trail Connect	Wildlife Habitat
Woods-PARCEL A	4.89 Lords Meadow Lane		X	X	X	X									Wildlife Habitat	
Woods-PARCEL B	0.31 Lords Meadow Lane		X						X	X					Trail Connect	Wildlife Habitat
	24.32 28 Boggy Hole Road		X			X			X						Trails, Passive Recreation	Wildlife Habitat, Forest

A Brief History of Old Lyme's Open Space Program

The concept of setting aside open space has a long history going back to Colonial times, but the 1965 Town Plan of Development got the ball rolling by stating: “The general intent of the Plan is to retain the rural character of as much of the Town’s area as possible. The Plan proposes that considerable areas of land should become public open space, including all the wetland, salt marshes, and swamps, as well as extensive areas of rugged land in the interior. In addition, the future development of houses should be of the cluster type, so that each group or small colony can have some open space.” The Plan suggested the establishment of a town forest in the north part of the Town, additional beach area, recreational lands, and a Town marina. The Commission recommended the establishment of a land acquisition fund and an annual appropriation of one mill on the tax rate.

The 1975 Plan of Development stated that about 68% of the land in Town was undeveloped. This situation presented an ideal opportunity to establish both passive and active open space to protect natural resources and enhance recreational opportunities. Public response to a Planning Commission questionnaire rated natural resource protection, development of a town beach, and control and direction of population of highest importance. Again one mill was called for to finance open space acquisition.

In 1995 the Planning Commission created an Open Space Committee, a sub-committee of the Conservation Commission, charged it with the task of writing an Open Space Plan, and requested that one mill be set aside for the

acquisition of open space in a permanent fund. The Open Space Committee finished its Open Space Plan in 1997 and it was adopted as part of the Town of Old Lyme's Plan of Conservation and Development.

An ordinance establishing a permanent open space fund was passed in Jan. 1998, and \$75,000 was deposited in the account. Each year since that time, the town has chosen to renew that contribution. The Open Space Committee became a Commission in 2011.

Successful Partnerships

The Open Space Committee has worked closely with The Nature Conservancy, the Old Lyme Land Trust, the Gateway Commission, and the State of CT, through its municipal grant program. The Bartholomew family gave the Town its first protected parcel in 1998 with the gift of 105 acres on Buttonball Road. The Bartholomew's also gave a Conservation Easement to the Old Lyme Land Trust over 23 acres on Old Shore Road to preserve the beautiful open vista overlooking Long Island Sound with a single tree in the center.

Dave McCulloch and his family, working with The Nature Conservancy, placed a conservation easement on over 400 acres of their land on the east side of Whippoorwill Road. The Nature Conservancy and the Old Lyme Land Trust, with the assistance of a municipal grant acquired the 185-acre Lay property, also in the Whippoorwill Road area. The Open Space Committee partnering with the Old Lyme Land Trust, negotiated a bargain sale for the 25-acre Noyes parcel.

Old Lyme and Lyme worked together to make possible the State's acquisition of the 180 acre MacCurdy-Salisbury property on the east side of Town Woods Road. The Town and the State contributed to the acquisition of the 56-acre Roger Tory Peterson property. The Nature Conservancy sold the property to US Fish and Wildlife service in 2011. They will install a handicapped accessible trail to view the headwaters of the Lieutenant River.

The town also received contributions from the state and The Nature Conservancy to acquire the 269-acre Fairfax property, known today as the Champlain Farm North and South. The Town, with the support of Old Lyme Land Trust, has purchased almost 200 acres from Steve Ames, with the most recent acquisition in 2011.

Land Stewardship

With special thanks to George James for all his work to clear, establish and maintain the trails throughout Old Lyme.

The Open Space Commission's work is moving into a new phase. Now that we have acquired land for both passive recreational use and natural resource protection, the Open Space Commission has the task of land habitat assessment and land management. Trails need to be easily identified and regularly maintained. The commission hopes to create habitat management plans for its properties to maximize wildlife habitat while responsibly managing our mostly forested acres. We would like to engage the community in providing it with their observations of interesting flora and fauna. The commission keeps a list of bird sightings and is working to make all information accessible on the Town's website. We will be updating our signage as part of a trail mapping project underway. Volunteers are working on updating our trail data and will post trail maps as we complete them.

Open Space Land Acquisition Priorities

1. Add to the Peterson, Champlain and McCulloch Greenways linking areas of Open Space and adding adjacent properties to form large, unfragmented tracts of field and forest.
2. Add properties that will connect existing public trails to provide a town-wide system for hiking, bicycling, jogging, bird watching and nature study.
3. Provide points of access to the shoreline and tidal waters for canoeing, kayaking, fishing, crabbing and other water related activities. Add to or provide additional public beach areas.
4. Protect and preserve the habitat of various wildlife species, including endangered, threatened and species of special conservation need as identified in the State of Connecticut's Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy
5. Protect and preserve wetlands, tidal marshes, streams, ponds, lakes, vernal pools, water recharge areas and aquifers.

6. Preserve and protect historical, archeological and scenic sites to protect the Town's rich heritage.
7. Preserve and protect the remaining farmland in Old Lyme.
8. Establish a town forest.
9. Protect land that has special educational, aesthetic, scientific and/or recreational value.

Options for Land Protection/Acquisition by Town of Old Lyme

In order of Preference

1. **DONATION TO THE TOWN**
 - a. outright donation
 - b. donation upon death of donor
 - c. donation with donor retaining lifetime use (retained life estate)-tax deduction while alive, owner pays property tax, reduces estate value)
 - d. life income gifts: charitable annuity/remainder trusts
2. **CONSERVATION EASEMENT IN FAVOR OF THE TOWN:**

Landowner continues to own land, paying reduced taxes, while agreeing, through a legal document that land will be permanently preserved in its natural state. Town has right of inspection.

 - a. Flexible as to uses that can be retained; to get income tax deduction, has to meet conservation purposes test and be irrevocable
 - b. New 97/98 tax law allows post mortem easements, Executor can take additional 40% of residual value from estate tax
3. **BARGAIN SALE** (part donation, part sale)

Landowner sells to town below fair market value. If there is a low basis, uses adjusted basis to offset capital gains taxes. Gets tax deduction between fair market value and donation.
4. **LONG TERM LEASE** (5 to 10 years)

Used to protect rare species

5. **STATE MUNICIPAL GRANT PROGRAM MATCHED BY TOWN FUNDS.** Landowner and town come to agreement on purchase price based on appraisals that must be approved by State as part of matching grant program. State can contribute up to 40%. Land must be open to public.
6. **PURCHASE OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS**
7. **LIKE KIND EXCHANGE**
8. **DEED RESTRICTIONS**
9. **RIGHT OF FIRST REFUSAL**
10. **15%-40% SET ASIDE AT TIME OF SUBDIVISION/PRCD/MULTI-FAMILY APPLICATION.**
11. **OUTRIGHT PURCHASE:** Open Space Commission has an established protocol including appraisals, property walks, approval by various boards and commissions, including approval at Town Meeting.

For more information, to volunteer or to discuss permanently protection your property, please call Open Space Commission Chairman Diana Atwood Johnson at 860-434-9383 or Vice-Chairman Peter Cable at 860-434-1510.

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