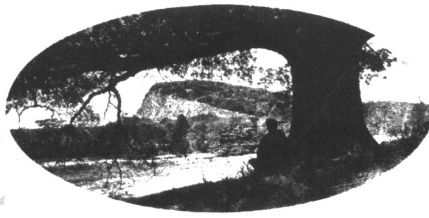


RIDGE LINES



Newsletter of the West Rock Ridge Park Association

Fall 2018

Summit Drive will be open daily 8 am - 6 pm through the last weekend in October

From the President:

At the recent annual meeting of Friends of CT State Parks, Susan Whalen, Deputy Commissioner for Environmental Conservation at DEEP, noted, “We consider that we are in the forever business - state parks and forests should be protected in perpetuity so that people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities can enjoy the lands set aside for conservation and recreation. We do this work so that future generations will have the same opportunities we’ve had to enjoy a sunset, walk a quiet trail in the woods, breathe fresh air, or camp under the stars. That’s our legacy to those who will come after us – that we protected these important spaces for their well-being, and that of all the creatures with whom we share the planet.”

We are grateful to the people whose vision 43 years ago helped create our park, to the Friends groups across the state who help sustain all the various parks, to the DEEP staff who maintain the parks, and to the Friends of Connecticut State Parks (FCSP) and Connecticut Forest & Park Association (CFPA). It is indeed a forever business.

We are grateful that our Park is home to numerous bird species – see photos below and article on page 7. We are grateful to volunteers and DEEP staff who care for our park year-round, and for their special efforts in the wake of the spring’s severe storms – see article on pages 6-7.

To ensure that all our of public state lands remain protected, it is important that we all vote on November 6th, and that we vote YES on referendum 2.

The wording of the referendum is complex, but the purpose is straightforward: to ensure that public lands – state parklands, state forest lands, and other public lands – cannot be given away, sold, swapped by the legislature without a public hearing. Please see articles on pages 2 - 4.

It is time for all of us to take a stand and do something to prevent our Public Land Holdings from being sold, traded, or given away by the General Assembly without public input.

VOTE ON NOVEMBER 6th VOTE YES on Ballot question #2

– Ted (Theodore B.) Lynn



Blue-winged Warbler, a probable breeder at West Rock Ridge, Block 80E of the Connecticut Bird Atlas.



Black-billed Cuckoo, a confirmed breeder in Block 95A New Haven for the Connecticut Bird Atlas.

Ridgelines, Fall 2018

Coming Events – Mark your Calendar

Monday, October 15, 10:00am

Heroes Tunnel Project team will be hosting a meeting to discuss the geotechnical investigation. This meeting will be held at the CTDOT District 3 Conference Room, 140 Pond Lily Avenue in New Haven. All attendees will be required to provide photo identification to enter the building.

CDM Smith, as part of the Heroes Tunnel Project team, is planning to advance exploratory vertical borings in West Rock Ridge State Park to assess geotechnical conditions near the existing Heroes Tunnel. The borings will be advanced along Baldwin Drive and the access road to the communication tower. The observations/data collected will be used to develop and assess alternatives and construction methods for the rehabilitation or replacement of the Heroes Tunnel.

Baldwin Drive will remain open to pedestrian and bicycle traffic for the entire duration of the drilling, with safety measures (cones and signage) in place to ensure a safe separation between visitors to the park and the drill operators. Enough of Baldwin Drive will remain open to allow emergency vehicles and other park equipment/vehicles to pass, if necessary. Therefore, no access impacts are anticipated. There will be increased noise and minor vibration while the borings are advanced.

It is anticipated that the exploratory borings will be advanced over a maximum of six weeks in October and November of this year. An email will be sent from the project team a minimum of two weeks before this work is scheduled to begin.

For additional information on the project and the geotechnical investigation please visit the project website, www.heroestunnelproject.com.

Sunday, October 21, 10am -Noon:

Fall Nature Walk on West Rock Ridge

Join us for an easy, autumn nature walk along Baldwin Drive on the northern end of West Rock Ridge State Park. Meet at the corner of West Shepard Ave. and Rayzoe Terrace in Hamden. Co-sponsored with the Hamden Land Conservation Trust, the West Rock Ridge Park Association and the West River Watershed Coalition. Rain cancels.

Field naturalist Jim Sirch, Education Coordinator at Yale Peabody Museum of Natural History, and President of the Hamden Land Conservation Trust will lead the walk. See photo at right.



Tuesday, November 9. Election Day

Please remember to vote. Vote yes on referendum 2 to ensure protection of public lands.

Under current law, public lands – Connecticut state parks, forests, and other valuable public lands – can be sold, swapped, or given away by the CT General Assembly to local or private interests without notification.

A YES vote on referendum 2 will ensure that our valuable public lands cannot be sold, swapped, or given away by the CT General Assembly to local or private interests before the public has been notified and the proper state agencies have approved.

If Question #2 passes with enough "Yes" votes, it would ensure that before your public lands could be sold, swapped, or traded away by the General Assembly, there must be:

- 1) a public hearing; and
- 2) a 2/3 vote on public lands held by the Department of Energy & Environmental Protection (e.g., state parks, forests, wildlife management areas, etc.), or by the Department of Agriculture (e.g., state-owned farmlands).

Without this necessary reform, your public lands will continue to be sold, swapped, or given away at the end of the Legislative session without public input.

Remember to vote on Tuesday, November 6th, and to vote YES on referendum 2!

Vote YES on Question #2 to Protect Your Public Lands

By Eric Hammerling, Executive Director of CT Forest & Park Association

You have something in common with all Connecticut residents -- we are all "public land owners."

That's right; state-owned public lands like West Rock Ridge and other state parks, forests, and other valuable public lands are part of your heritage and legacy.

And yet, under current law, these valuable public lands that you own can be sold, swapped, or given away by the CT General Assembly to local or private interests with no assurance of public input. That needs to change.

This June, you may have seen the Hartford Courant announcement that the Hartford Regional Market - the largest perishable food distribution center between Boston and New York - was transferred from the CT Department of Agriculture to the Capital Region Development Authority (CRDA) in the waning hours of the 2018 legislative session. This hasty land transfer left many local growers who rent space and sell fruit, vegetables, trees, and many other products at the market wondering about their futures.

Because this transfer happened in the last few hours of the 2018 session, very few people were even aware of the transfer until after it happened. Don Tuller, President of the CT Farm Bureau Association, responded in the first Courant article, "If this was such a great idea, why was it done this way?" and continued, "It was really done last-minute, in the dark of the night."

Don is absolutely right. Even if the CRDA winds up being a good steward of this property, this public land shouldn't have been transferred this way, and the giveaway of the Hartford Regional Market could have just as easily been the giveaway or sale of West Rock Ridge State Park or other irreplaceable public lands. There should always be a public hearing and an opportunity for the public to provide input on the giveaway of public lands before they are lost.

What can you do to better protect your public lands in the future? You will have the opportunity to vote YES on Question #2 on November 6th.

If Question #2 passes with enough "Yes" votes, it would ensure that before your public lands could be sold, swapped, or traded away by the General Assembly, there must be:

1) a public hearing; and

2) a 2/3 vote on public lands held by the Department of Energy & Environmental Protection (e.g., state parks, forests, wildlife management areas, etc.), or by the Department of Agriculture (e.g., state-owned farmlands).

Without this necessary reform, your public lands will continue to be sold, swapped, or given away at the end of the Legislative session without public input; and in the current era of perpetual budget deficits, we must be extra careful to ensure that a future bad idea to sell, swap, or give away public lands hatched in the middle of the night without public input doesn't happen.

The West Rock Ridge Park Association has actively supported this strongly bi-partisan effort to ensure transparency to protect your public lands, and we are glad to see this on the ballot on November 6th. After all, this is the first time that any environmental topic has been the subject of a statewide ballot initiative, and it would be great to start with a big win for your public lands!

If you are interested in more information on this topic, you can learn more at <http://protectctpubliclands.org/> the website of the Protect CT Public Lands Coalition, Inc. - a 501c4 advocacy group set-up to raise awareness and funding to pursue a YES vote for Question #2. You can also send an email to Eric Hammerling, Treasurer of the Protect CT Public Lands Coalition, Inc. as well as Executive Director of the Connecticut Forest & Park Association via protectctpubliclands@gmail.com.

Public Lands Need Your Vote

By Eric Lukingbeal, *Reprinted from The Granby Drummer, October 1, 2018*

We need to amend the state constitution to protect public lands. We will get the chance to do that on Election Day, Nov. 6, as an amendment will be on our ballots. Why do we need to vote “Yes”?

Currently, the state legislature can sell, swap or give away state parks, forest and farmland without first holding a public hearing. Virtually none of the land owned by the state has any restrictions that would prevent this. It could happen at Enders or Peoples or any state forests [*Ed. Note: or at West Rock Ridge*]. These public lands belong to all of us; we should have a say in how they are used.

The proposed amendment will give that voice. The amendment will appear as Question 2 on the ballot. It may be on the back side; ask an election official if you have trouble finding it. The wording of the question is legalistic and lengthy.

Here is an explanation of what it will provide if passed by a simple majority of voters.

If passed, a public hearing will be required before any public lands can be sold or given away. Following the public hearing, there will be a vote in both the senate and the house. A two-thirds vote in those bodies will ensure that state parks, forests, wildlife management areas and state-owned farmland cannot be sold, swapped or given away to private companies, local governments or anyone else. It will give you, the public and real owners of these properties, the chance to weigh in before anything happens to these valuable lands.

Why is an amendment to our constitution necessary?

Can't the legislature just pass a law to require a public hearing? An amendment is necessary because the legislature can ignore its own laws. Public lands are conveyed in a bill passed at the very end of a congressional session. The language in the bill always begins with “Notwithstanding any provision of the General Statutes....”. By using that language, the legislature has the power to ignore its own laws, but it cannot ignore the constitution.

Couldn't the legislature pass a rule requiring that all transfers of public lands receive a public hearing?

Yes, but the legislature suspends its rules late in the session, allowing eleventh-hour amendments to sell, swap or give away lands to be filed, so no public hearing gets to be held. Even the legislators themselves may not know about the amendment when they vote on the conveyance bill. These last minute amendments are known as “rats.”

Why should public lands be protected?

Two big reasons come to mind. For many of us, these lands are the only source of nearby open space for relaxation and enjoyment of nature. Also, public recreational land is a great investment. State parks and forests attract eight million annual visitors, generate one billion dollars in revenue and support 9,000 private sector jobs. They are a powerful economic engine both locally and statewide.

Is this a partisan issue? Who is behind it?

In order to get on the ballot, the legislature had to approve the amendment by a three-quarters supermajority in each chamber. The vote in the senate was 35-0; in the house, 118-32. The amendment is supported by over 130 conservation organizations, including the Granby Land Trust, the Farmington River Watershed Association, the National Wildlife Federation and the Connecticut Forest and Park Association.

Have any other states done something like this?

Yes. Similar constitutional protections have been enacted in Maine, Massachusetts and New York.

As voters, we have a chance to do a really good thing on Election Day: vote “Yes” on Question 2 and encourage others to vote “Yes” as well.

Retired attorney Eric Lukingbeal is the President of the Board of Directors of the Connecticut Forest & Park Association. This Op-Ed reprinted from The Granby Drummer, October 1, 2018.

Spread the Word -- Vote Yes on Question #2

If Question #2 passes with a YES vote on November 6th, it will protect public lands from being given away by the CT General Assembly without a public hearing (this poor practice happens today and must change).

Hopefully, you will talk to friends, family, colleagues, and others in your personal network about why voting YES on Question #2 is so important.

Here are a few things you can say about Question #2:

Keep it simple – “Voting YES would ensure that there is always a public hearing BEFORE the CT General Assembly could sell, swap, or give away valuable public lands like State Parks, Forests, or state-owned farmlands.”

Make it personal – “How would you feel if public lands like [pick your favorite State Park, Forest, Wildlife Management Area, etc.] were given away at the end of a Legislative session with no public input at all? Voting YES would make sure that this poor practice doesn’t happen anymore.”

Talk about benefits to the public – “Voting YES would keep public lands like State Parks and Forests open for everyone, and not just for politically-connected private interests.”

Talk about benefits to the economy and jobs – “Voting YES helps to protect the public lands like State Parks that provide over \$1 billion and sustain over 9,000 private sector jobs in Connecticut;” or note that “More jobs in Connecticut depend on outdoor recreation (69,000) than on the aerospace and defense industries (60,000).”

Protecting public lands is not a partisan wedge issue – “Strong bi-partisan support in both the House and Senate of the CT General Assembly was achieved to get Question #2 on the ballot.”

Emphasize transparency and accountability – “By requiring public hearings with community involvement, Question #2 will require government to be transparent and accountable on important decisions about the ownership and use of State Parks and other public lands.”

You can encourage others to join you in taking actions, such as:

1. Visit the website of [Protect CT Public Lands Coalition, Inc.](#) and make a contribution to support the ProteCT campaign (contributions are not tax deductible, but they are essential to the success of this effort);
2. Share or re-tweet messages about Question #2 posted on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) by the Connecticut Forest & Park Association;
3. Hand out palm cards (while supplies last) at events, post on community boards, and help spread the word. [Ask for some Question #2 “palm cards” at protectpubliclands@gmail.com](#)
4. Write a Letter to the Editor of your local paper(s). [Contact protectpubliclands@gmail.com](#) and they’ll follow-up with sample letters and other helpful information.

Whatever you do to support the effort is greatly appreciated, but keep in mind that time is short so take action today.

If you have questions, feel free to contact me at protectpubliclands@gmail.com.

All the best, Eric Hammerling, Volunteer Treasurer

Protect CT Public Lands Coalition, Inc.

Website: protectctpubliclands.org

P.O. Box 205 Middlefield, CT 06455

Email: protectpubliclands@gmail.com

Storms Deliver a Punch to West Rock

By Tom Ebersold, Volunteer Trails Manager

West Rock Ridge State Park experienced damage related to two storms in the spring, the March 7 northeaster and the May 15 thunderstorm. Damage from the two storms at West Rock was moderate, as compared to the devastation at Sleeping Giant State Park and on the Quinnipiac Trail from the thunderstorm-related microburst and tornado on May 15.

The northeaster was the first significant storm to affect the trails since Super Storm Sandy in 2012. Pine tree limbs were scattered across the Lake Wintergreen parking lot and the spruce tree in the center of the parking lot was snapped in half.

The hardest hit area was the Red Trail from Lake Wintergreen to Mountain Road, and in particular, the Red Trail from the Purple Trail north to the power lines. A series of trees on the opposite side of Wintergreen Brook crashed down across the trail, as they were growing in the soft soil along the top of the bank, and the weight of earlier heavy snow uprooted them. One oak tree completely blocked the trail, while other evergreen trees leaned at an angle with branches hanging down.

The other trails suffered the occasional blowdown, usually a combination of a small tree or shrub (four inch diameter) that snapped in half with the crown hanging over the trail, or a large tree (10 inches in diameter) that fell across the trail. The White Trail along Lake Wintergreen encountered this type of damage. Other trails were only lightly affected.

Over a series of visits with some help from others, we cleared most of the overhanging limbs, cut back some of the smaller trunks, and opened up some of the larger blowdowns. I also cut away one large hemlock. Weeks later the state cleared the rest of the trees along the Red Trail.

May 15, 2018 Thunderstorm, Tornado and Microburst

The second significant storm to affect West Rock was the thunderstorm on May 15, 2018, which in Beacon Falls, Bethany, and Hamden was an EF-1 tornado with 110 mile per hour winds. The tornado track passed about two miles north of West Rock, extending over to Sleeping Giant State Park and Wharton Brook State Park. Those parks suffered extensive damage, resulting in their closure to clear fallen and damaged trees. Sleeping Giant may not reopen until the winter 2018 or spring 2019, the damage is so extensive.

Dramatic drone footage of the parking lot damage at Sleeping Giant may be seen here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=trN7pxjbkyA>.

The Sleeping Giant Park Association has photos of the damage to the park with some 300 trees down, plus progress on the cleanup:

<https://www.facebook.com/Sleeping-Giant-Park-Association-SGPA-Official-Site-124405787638472/>

West Rock suffered scattered thunderstorm damage with some large trees down in the northern half of the park, but was relatively unscathed in the southern half from the South Overlook to the Purple Trail. I made 17 visits to the park from May 19 to July 5 to inspect trails and clear any damage, sometimes by myself, and other times with another person.

In the south end of the park as far north as the Purple Trail, the only real damage was a 12-inch diameter pine tree on the Red Trail at the south end of Lake Wintergreen that broke about 10 feet off the ground. Fortunately, only the crown fell on the trail, so another volunteer and I cleared it in a few minutes. The parking lot at Lake Wintergreen was fine with no evidence that anything had fallen, a change from the March storm when large limbs were scattered across the parking lot.

In the northern half of the park, other than the three sections discussed below, from the Purple Trail north to York Mountain, the trails encountered only minor damage. I cleared the occasional moderate sized tree or tree crown from the Regicides Trail, and there was nothing to clear on the Sanford Feeder. On the Red Trail between the two sections of Mountain Road, I cleared several small blowdowns (four to six inch diameter trees).

There were six large trees down on the Regicides Trail just north of the Yellow Trail, all of which Jeff Glans, a volunteer sawyer from the



CFPA volunteer sawyer Jeff Glans clearing trees on the Regicides Trail.

Connecticut Forest and Park Association (CFPA) cleared on May 31. These trees were either white pine trees or red oaks and they were uprooted by the wind, all of which fell from west to east. I am not a meteorologist, but I would guess this was caused by a downburst.

There was a large red oak across the Yellow Trail near Baldwin Drive that Mike Kulikowski and I cleared with hand tools. In the woods by the top of the Yellow Trail, a number of large oak trees also fell. Three large trees fell across Baldwin Drive, two in the vicinity of the Yellow Trail and one about a mile north of the Yellow Trail. Jeff cleared one, I cleared a second, and the state cleared a third. I cleared the crowns of two red oak trees near the north end of Baldwin Drive, again using hand tools.

Other people who helped me clear trails from the storm using hand saws included Donna Caraglio, Gordon Daniell, Keith Frost, Jeff Heath, Mark Kiley, Mike Kulikowski and Jack Spear.

In July, Chuck Hilton used his chainsaw to clear some large blowdowns remaining from the March storm. These were not a priority to clear because they were not blocking passage along the trail. One was an oak on the Red Trail that was easy to step over, another was an oak on the Red-White Trail near the Field of Dreams that was snapped high enough that people could easily walk under it, and there were three downed oaks to step over on the Regicides Trail.

Quinnipiac Trail Devastated by the Storm

As compared to the main section of West Rock, the Quinnipiac Trail on the west side of York Mountain which crosses a mixture of water company land, private property and isolated blocks of West Rock, suffered extensive damage, as did the dirt section of Downs Road on water company land. The trail in this area is about three-quarters of mile north of West Rock, so although it was more than a mile south of the tornado track, the strong and devastating winds extended well beyond the storm's path.

On a Trails Day hike on June 2, in a three-quarter mile section of trail, extending from Brooks Road east up the ridge toward the Regicides Trail, I counted about 15 blowdowns, many of them major. A dozen volunteers organized by Elizabeth Buckley, the CFPA Trail Manager for this section of the Quinnipiac Trail, cleared these blowdowns in the first two weeks of June.

According to Elizabeth, the Rocky Top section of the Quinnipiac Trail between Kimberly Rd and Rocky Top Road was also massively impacted by the tornado. She told the CFPA about 20 significant blowdowns blocking the trail. In response, CFPA staff member Colin Carroll and Al Sedor turned out on May 23, and cleared the whole of Rocky Top in one marathon day, allowing a June 3 Trails Day hike led by naturalist Jim Sirch to take place.

North of West Rock, the Quinnipiac Trail suffered severe damage between Mad Mare Ridge on the west side of Brooks Road to Downs Road. I led a hike through this area on July 26, 2018, when the trail was mostly cleared, and the devastation was truly unbelievable.

In some sections, large oak trees with diameters as large as 18 inches were blown down every 10 to 15 feet. We could not find our way through the section that had not been cleared and bushwhacked out to the powerlines, rejoining the trail where it had been cleared. According to Elizabeth, throughout this time period, Ralph Fink, the CFPA volunteer trail manager for this section, organized at least a dozen different work crews with CFPA trained sawyers and other volunteers to clear the trail. As of mid-August, the Q Trail was clear in this area.

Their efforts are much appreciated and I look forward to leading a hike on this entire section of the Quinnipiac Trail later this year.



West Rock Ridge Has Numerous Breeding Bird Species

by Stephen Broker, Atlas Coordinator for the Southwest-central Region (Greater New Haven)

The new Connecticut Bird Atlas has all but completed the first year of field work for the breeding bird portion of the atlas. Most Connecticut birds breed during the months of April, May, June, July, and August. Using the state's topographic maps, a total of 601 atlas blocks have been designated for survey work. West Rock Ridge is covered by atlas blocks 80E Mount Carmel and 95A New Haven.

Block 80E includes the ridge from just south of the power line cut northward to High Rock, as well as Lake Chamberlain, Lake Watrous, and the south end of Lake Bethany. Block 95A includes the southern terminus of the ridge north to short of the power line, and Lake Dawson, Konold's Pond, and Lake Wintergreen. I have concentrated my field work this breeding season on the West Rock ridge top and its western and eastern slopes. Other atlas volunteers have done extensive birding at the surrounding lakes, particularly Chamberlain and Bethany.

Our combined efforts have recorded 68 bird species with breeding evidence and 24 species as confirmed breeders in Block 80E, and 74 species with breeding evidence and 35 confirmed breeders in Block 95A. These are among the highest totals in the entire state for Year One of field work.

A set of breeding codes is used to establish possible breeding, probable breeding, or confirmed breeding, with the last category being the most significant. Possible breeding is determined by a male or female in suitable habitat or a singing male observed during the known breeding season. Probable breeding includes multiple singing males, a pair in suitable habitat, courtship or display behaviors, or a bird visiting a probable nest site. Confirmed breeding is achieved if an adult is seen carrying nest material, a nest is found containing eggs or young, adults are feeding young, or there are recently fledged young.

In Block 80E, species for which we have confirmed breeding thus far include Eastern Phoebe, Red-eyed Vireo, Tree and Cliff swallows, Wood Thrush, Cedar Waxwing, several warbler species, Scarlet Tanager, Northern Cardinal, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Red-winged Blackbird, and Common Grackle. In Block 95A, the confirmed breeders include Canada Goose, Mute Swan, Wood Duck, Great Blue Heron, Peregrine Falcon, Black-billed Cuckoo, four woodpecker species, Yellow-throated, Warbling, and Red-eyed Vireos, Common Raven, American Robin, Gray Catbird, Northern Mockingbird, and several warbler species.

The 2019 and 2020 breeding seasons will see continued field work as we seek evidence to upgrade possible breeders to probable breeders and probable breeders to confirmed breeders. My expectation is that blocks 80E and 95A will have evidence of confirmed breeding for at least 75 species by the time the atlas period is concluded.



Great Horned Owl photographed at the West River inlet on May 16, 2018 - survey work for the Connecticut Bird Atlas.



This Great Blue Heron was one of 14 pairs of adults tending young in nests at Konold's Pond, Woodbridge. Photo taken on May 16, 2018. This record went into Block 95A New Haven for the Connecticut Bird Atlas.

HOW THE PARK ADVISORY COUNCIL WAS BORN

By Peter B. Cooper

Remembering the origins of the Advisory Council to the West Rock Ridge State Park involves going back to events which occurred more than 40 years ago.

While the park's impressive list of scenic, scientific, ecological and historical elements represent a unique concentration of public values, all you really needed to do is look at this amazing ridge line and say, "Wow! This place has to be saved!" (Editor: especially when we learned a 1,000-ft TV transmission tower site was sought at the north end.) I believe the creation of an advisory council evolved logically from the preservation objectives which created the park in the first place.

The unifying geological feature of West Rock straddled four towns, each with quite different patterns of development in the mid-1970s. These ranged from the urban enter of New Haven to the most rural community of Bethany. The greatest risk to the retention of West Rock as a major, unbroken and unfragmented natural resource came from fast-developing Hamden to the east which, because of a comparatively modest grade to the summit, could have allowed the greatest inroads to West Rock's natural integrity. Woodbridge had its own exposure to development, with key pieces along the West River and Konolds Pond at risk at the western base of West Rock.

Many visionary people had a hand in saving this land and worked hard to preserve the individual pieces. In Woodbridge, where I was born, I can think of Katherine Nangle and Olive LeRoy. [In Bethany, the proposed TV site, the newsletter editor fought to uphold residential zoning.]

Dr. William Doheny of Hamden, ecologist Stephen Collins of Bethany and I, as an attorney, formed an alliance to move forward with this process. We had those who went before to guide us as we looked for ways to best insure the integrity of West Rock Ridge. We also had the good fortune of the mechanism involved at the Cape Cod National Seashore as a template. Consistent with the seashore's procedure, we delineated the optimum boundary, or conservation area, of the ridge for protection within each of the four towns, whether or not the properties were currently in public or private ownership.

Our approach was that whenever a piece of private land within this optimum conservation area came up for sale, the state of Connecticut would have to decide whether or not to move forward and use public funds to purchase that specific property.

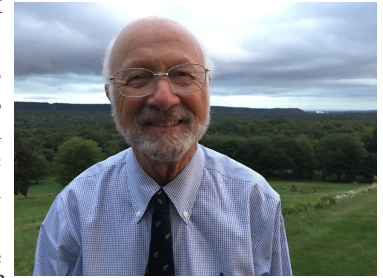
It is here where the creation of the Advisory Council with membership from all four towns came into play as a necessary part of the West Rock Ridge State Park legislation, and its subsequent success. This law is known as Special Act 75-80, and the reference to the Council is in the last paragraph. From the beginning in 1975, when the state General Assembly unanimously approved the legislation, this Advisory Council has show its enduring value.

Because of its local knowledge and grass roots origin, the creation of the Advisory Council is an integral part of the legislation establishing the park. The council is uniquely able to advise and assist the state in selecting the most significant and highest natural value private properties which have come up for sale within the conservation area. These properties are added to the park, moving incrementally toward the original objective of achieving the park's optimum boundaries. Approximately 1,800 acres have been added to the park by this process to date!

The Advisory Council keeps the original dream alive. While the state has responsibilities which range far beyond the well-being of West Rock Ridge State Park only, it is the Advisory Council which provides a continuing presence to promote the most pressing acquisition and maintenance matters facing the park's future development.

While others may exist, we do not know of any other state parks having advisory councils made up of members from the multiple towns located within that park's boundaries. The West Rock Advisory Council provides a continuing tool to help improve and maintain the quality of this extraordinarily regional natural asset.

It has worked. Together, we preserve.



Ed. note: This is the fifth in a series of articles on West Rock Ridge memories.

*If you would like to contribute an essay or article to this series,
please email us at wrrparkassoc@comcast.net.*

We would love to hear from you!

West Rock Ramblers, a recently-founded trail running group, has a Saturday run most weeks from Lake Wintergreen (usually 8 a.m. start at the parking lot), and often a Sunday run.

If you'd like to join in, please join the "West Rock Ramblers" Facebook group (no cost, no obligations, just a forum for communication).

WEST ROCK RIDGE PARK ASSOCIATION

Address: 648 Mountain Road,
Hamden, CT 06514
<http://westrockpark.wordpress.com>
wrrparkassoc@comcast.net

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NEW MEMBERS

We warmly welcome the following new members to the West Rock Ridge Park Association:

Frank Cochran and Stephanie Fitzgerald (New Haven)
DeWitt Allen (Hamden) (became Life member)

HOW TO JOIN OR RENEW

Send your name, address, phone number, and email address, along with your dues to:

WRRPA Membership,
648 Mountain Road, Hamden, CT 06514

Annual dues: \$10, Supporting: \$20, Life: \$150.

Make checks payable to:

West Rock Ridge Park Association

Please include your interests. We always need help!:

Programs, Trail Work, Newsletter,
Legislative/Political Action, Membership.

* Your membership helps improve the park! *

We welcome volunteers, on any committee!

Photo Credits: 1, 8 Stephen Broker; 6,7 Tom Ebersold;
9 Peter Cooper; 10 Cynthia Cooper

WEST ROCK RIDGE PARK ASSOCIATION

648 Mountain Road
Hamden, CT 06514

**FIRST CLASS
MAIL**



*Hikers at the big blow-down on the
Quinnipiac Trail, June 2018*

Summit Drive will be open daily 8 am - 6 pm
through the last full weekend in October