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WEANTINOGE  
HERITAGE LAND TRUST



## OCTOBER NEWSLETTER

### Conservation Success! Working Farmland and Nature Preserve Protected

#### Comanche Hill Farm, Bridgewater

With Weantinoge's help, **Comanche Hill Farm on Stuart Road East in Bridgewater was permanently protected by its owner Bud Wright.** The farm, which includes 34 acres of prime farmland soils, is part of a swath of working agricultural lands that stretches from Northrup Street to Town Line Road and is key to Bridgewater's rural and agricultural character and heritage.



The farm was protected with a conservation easement through the **Connecticut Department of Agriculture's State Farmland Protection Program (FPP)**, which pays farmers for the development rights on their farms. FPP pays up to 100% of the value of the easement, as well as the costs of the acquisition. Farmers can use the income to pay down debt, buy equipment, invest in other farmland, or put towards retirement.

Weantinoge assisted Bud in the conservation process by preparing the application and maps, assisting him with the easement's configuration on the property, and monitoring the project with the Department of Agriculture until the

acquisition was complete.

Since 1965, **Weantinoge has permanently protected 29 farms and 3,000 acres of farmland soils** in Northwest Connecticut. Through its investment of resources and partnership with the Department of Agriculture, **Weantinoge has accelerated farmland protection in Litchfield County by enrolling eight farms, including Bud's, in the State protection program over the past two years alone.**

To read more about this conversation success story, please follow this link to a recent [News Times article](#).

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## Hallock Hills Nature Preserve, New Milford

**In September, two generous landowners donated 128 acres of hilltop forestland in northern New Milford, known as Hallock Hills.** This newly created nature preserve adds to over 350 contiguous acres protected by Weantinoge, which run from the western shore of Mud Pond to near the top of Rock Cobble Hill, a landmark visible from as far south as Weantinoge's Smyrski Farm Preserve in Merryall.

**Hallock Hills Preserve and other large blocks of forest, unbroken by roads, are important for public recreation, clean water, and wildlife.** Familiar animals like bobcats, coyotes, and [owls](#) thrive in these large forested areas, as well as lesser known birds like [wood thrush](#), [cerulean warbler](#), and [red-shouldered hawks](#); and plants such as rattlesnake plantain, pink ladyslippers, and Indian pipe. In the property's vernal pools, we hope to find Jefferson salamanders, which are on the endangered species list, and other amphibians. **Protecting these large forests is vital to safeguarding Northwest Connecticut's land, air, and water for people and wildlife.**

In the remaining months of 2018 , **Weantinoge is working with another eight landowners to conserve an additional 200 acres of forest and farmland in Litchfield County.** Much of this land is adjacent to already protected forests and will expand the natural lands permanently conserved. Stay tuned for more conservation success stories to come!

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## Fall Celebration

This was our most successful Fall Celebration ever. Thank you to the more than **550 people** who joined us for a day of fun at our Smyrski Farm Preserve! [Click this link for a video that captures the joy of that sunny day.](#)



## Upcoming Events

We hope you can join us at one of our upcoming events. **All events are free and open to the public.** If you have any questions and to register, please contact: [info@weantinoge.org](mailto:info@weantinoge.org).



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## Written on the Land: Connecticut's Changing Forests

**Date:** Saturday, October 27

**Time:** 2 to 3:30 PM

**Location:** Memorial Hall, New Milford  
Public Library, 24 Main Street  
New Milford

**RSVP:** [info@weantinoge.org](mailto:info@weantinoge.org)



Calling all lovers of history, animals, and Connecticut! Nora Hulton, a Connecticut Certified Master Wildlife Conservationist and teacher at Washington Montessori School, will deliver a visual presentation about Connecticut's rich natural history at the New Milford Public Library. This event is great for kids, pelts and skulls will be on display, and light refreshments will be served! [Click here to learn more about this fun, free event!](#)

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## Green Drinks

**Date:** Thursday, October 25

**Time:** 5 to 7 PM

**Location:** [Sunny Meadow Farm](#)

**Address:** 66 Northrup Street, Bridgewater

**Details:** Light refreshments will be served.



Weantinoge's Green Drinks is Litchfield County's monthly happy-hour for environmentalists, providing opportunities to make connections and exchange news about conservation initiatives, local farming, land use, and more. All are welcome, no reservations or RSVP necessary.

This month we are excited to be co-hosting with [Bridgewater Land Trust](#), [Brookfield Open Space Legacy](#), [Roxbury Land Trust](#), and [Steep Rock Association](#). Please take a moment to check-out the impactful and impressive work of these organizations. We hope to see you for another terrific evening of food, friendship, and warm conversation!

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## Weantinoge Annual Meeting and Holiday Party

**Date:** Saturday, December 8  
**Annual Meeting:** 3 to 4 PM  
**Holiday Party:** 4 to 6 PM  
**Location:** Kent Community House  
**Address:** 93 North Main Street, Kent



Free and open to the public. Please join us as we celebrate the end of year and new conservation successes!

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### Special Announcement Vote YES on Ballot Question Two

Did you know the Connecticut State Legislature can sell, swap, or give away your public lands without a hearing?

Voting **YES on ballot question two** this November will require a public hearing and a 2/3 majority vote by the General Assembly before it can give away the most important public lands, including state parks, farmland, and wildlife management areas.

**Public lands belong to all of us. This is your chance to make sure there is always an opportunity for the public's voice to be heard in the process.** If you are interested in learning more about this important issue, you can read more at [Protect CT Public Lands](#).

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