

**Town of Tolland, Connecticut
Conservation Commission
Campbell's Peaceful Valley Conservation Area
Management Plan
273 Hunter Road, Tolland, CT**



A Passive Open Space Conservation Area

Adopted by Commission: February 28, 2008; Revised March 14, 2013; Use change March 13, 2014; Revised April 23, 2020

Adopted by Council: April 22, 2008

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Town of Tolland
Conservation Commission Property Management Plan
Campbell's Peaceful Valley Conservation Area, 273 Hunter Road

Background – The Tolland Conservation Commission is responsible for overseeing properties purchased by the Town of Tolland for conservation purposes and preparing management plans based on the environmental characteristics of each property. Each plan includes a property description, analysis of unique characteristics, acceptable public uses of the property, and a management program. The management program outlines property improvement needs, individuals and organizations designated to manage the property, available resources for management and recommendations for ecological protection specific to the site. Management plans are developed following the Commission's established management planning process.

I. PROPERTY DESCRIPTION, RESOURCES, POTENTIAL, AND PROBLEMS

Property Description - The Campbell Peaceful Valley Conservation Area is a 70 acre parcel of land on the west side of Hunter Road in the northwest section of Tolland. Purchased in 2003 from Beatrice and Clarence Campbell with assistance from a grant from the State of Connecticut Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition program administered by the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection (DEP, now the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP), it is a woodland area with a unique bluff and rock outcrop on the north side of the site. The Town of Tolland Open Space and Conservation Plan (map 12) indicates the property is within an Important Wildlife Area and Corridor and is in close proximity to four other conservation properties: Stopplesworth, Schindler Schmidt, Palmer and Knofla. The property abuts the Stopplesworth Conservation Area to the north. In combination with the Stopplesworth Conservation Area, there are a total of 6,000 feet of undeveloped, scenic land along the western side of Hunter Road and 125 acres of continuous open space available to the residents and wildlife alike.

The original Campbell Farm was 85 acres and 15 acres were purchased by the Town and used for agriculture. This 15 acre parcel is directly south of the Campbell Conservation Area and is not open to public use. It contains a small farm pond about 0.6 acres in size.



Oak Tree



View to Shenipsit Lake

The Campbell Farm, known as “Peaceful Valley” has a pastoral setting with over 3,000 feet of frontage on Hunter Road offering a valley vista to the south. The open pasture, brook, and wet alder shrub lowlands rise steeply about 150 feet to a ridgeline of exposed ledge at an elevation of 850 feet above sea level. From knobs on the ridgeline, one can view the Connecticut Valley and Shenipsit Lake to the southwest. The exposed ridgeline on the property is a remnant of a historic fault line. The property is a diverse wildlife habitat and wetland, uplands and an exposed ledge. Species found include, but are not limited to, bluebirds, herons, songbirds, turkeys, woodcocks, fox, deer, bobcats, and bears.

The property is within the Shenipsit Lake Watershed area, part of the Connecticut Water Company public drinking water supply system. It is suitable for passive recreation including hiking and viewing unique geological features.

Potential Uses – In accordance with the DEEP grant conditions, use of the property is restricted to passive recreation which includes hiking, maintaining habitats for plants and animals, and studying existing habitats and wildlife. The hiking trail system connects to the hiking trails of the town owned Stoppleworth Conservation Area to the north. By crossing to the other side of Hunter Road, a hiker can continue on the hiking trails of the town-owned Knofla Conservation Area on Bakos Road. Accepted uses include:

- Hiking
- Snowshoeing and cross-country skiing
- Dog walking under owner’s control; Town Ordinance requires dogs to be on a leash. Leashes must be held by a person responsible for the dog’s behavior.
- Mountain biking except on red trail from southern end of field to blue trail connection and on north approach of yellow trail to scenic overlook
- Habitat and wildlife studies
- Nature study

Use Restrictions – With the transfer of this property to the Town there are inherent restrictions which derive from use of conservation bond funds. This funding source and restrictions due to the DEEP grant require that the property must be used as a passive open space conservation area in perpetuity.

Use Restrictions and Visitor Responsibilities – Visitors are reminded to use the property in a manner consistent with land use guidelines and protecting open space resources. The following guidelines are the standards for use and are supported by signage on the property:

- Town Ordinance requires dogs to be on a leash. Leashes must be held by a person responsible for the dog’s behavior.
- Leave no trace.
- No littering. Carry out what you carry in.
- No motorized vehicles or other means of motorized transport.
- No horseback riding.
- No mountain biking on the red trail from the southern end of the field to blue trail connection and on north approach of yellow trail to scenic overlook.
- Do not disturb vegetation or wildlife.
- Stay on marked trail and roads.

- No hunting or firearms allowed.
- No setting of fires.
- Respect the rights of other visitors.
- Area closes at sunset. Night use is by permit only.
- Notify the Conservation Commission of organized group activities.

II. OPEN SPACE MANAGEMENT PLAN

Management objectives – The principal objectives are to conserve the property and protect wildlife habitat while providing access and passive recreational opportunities for the general public. While the Conservation Commission, acting as an agent of the Tolland Town Council, is ultimately responsible for property management, implementation of a management program is a shared responsibility with the Tolland Conservation Corps, property steward(s), and a variety of Town agencies and resources in accordance with the *Open Space Management Guideline and Process*.

Specific objectives for this parcel include:

- Follow best property management processes.
- Maintain the open fields.
- Maintain the trail system.
- Maintain the parking lot.
- Conduct a natural resource inventory.
- Preserve the view and rock outcroppings.
- Pursue educational, documentation, and protection opportunities for habitat, wildlife, and unique features.
- Maintain the woodlands by managing it using forest management practices, in consultation with a professional forester.
- Maintain brook crossing and benches.
- Control invasive species.
- Reestablish the meadow connector trail between the Knofla and Campbell properties.

It is not the intention of the Conservation Commission to manage this property for timber production. However, it may be necessary to carry out certain silviculture practices to maintain the health of the forest or to maintain the property in a particular stage of succession in order to encourage a particular habitat. The Commission will consult with professional forest managers to ensure that the appropriate practices are implemented.

Management Plan and Program – Tasks required to assure that management objectives are achieved shall be overseen by the Conservation Commission and implemented by the head steward and the property steward(s). Tasks include:

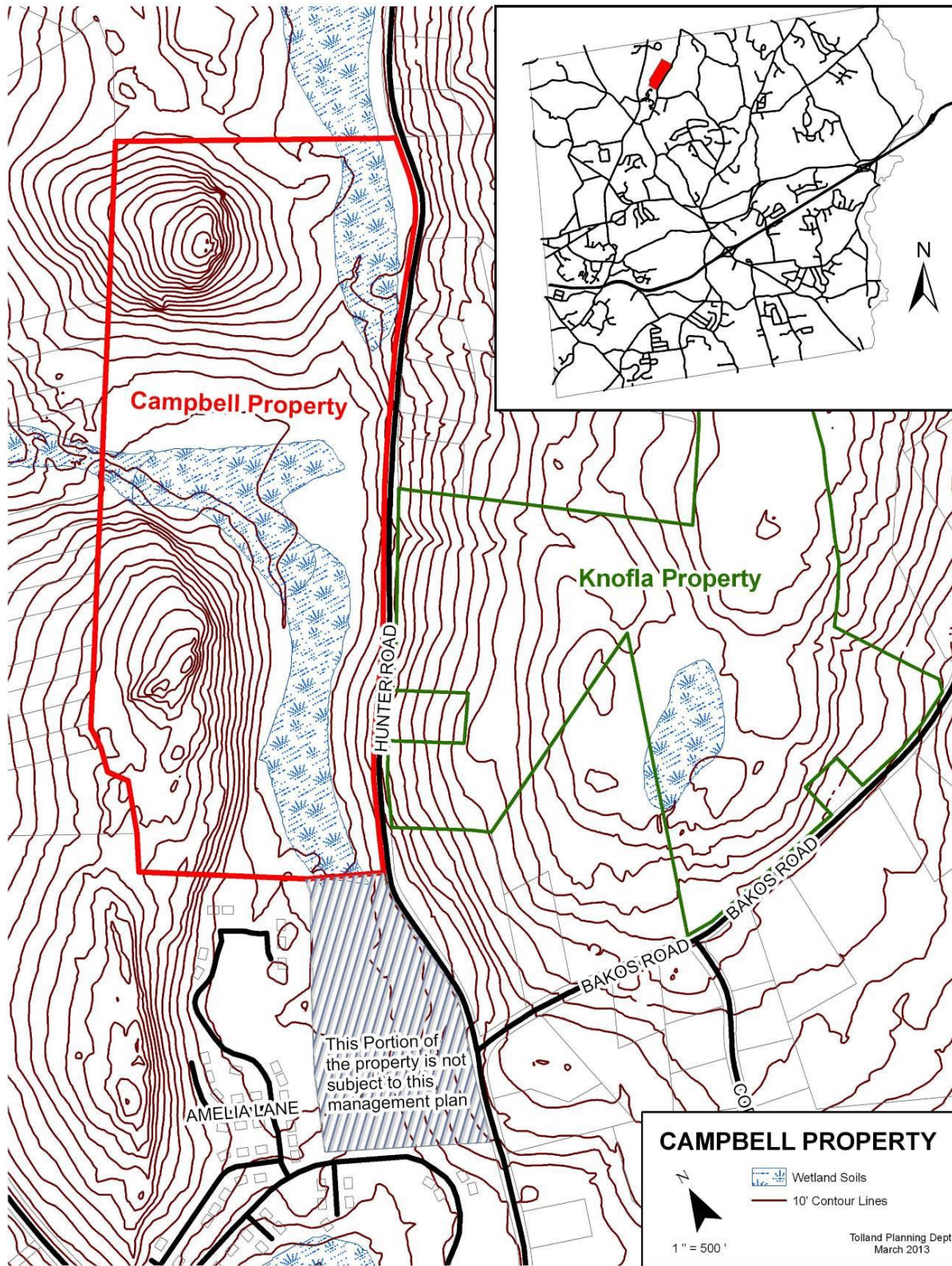
- Conduct a natural resource inventory.?
- Maintain the trail system.
- Maintain trail markings and signs.
- Maintain map containers and keep supplied with property brochures.
- Perform litter patrol as needed.

- Remove paint, graffiti, and fire pits as needed.
- Prune/cut trees to preserve the view, the rock outcrop, and other needs consistent with this plan.
- Maintain parking lot and access fence.
- Install and maintain property boundary markings.
- Establish educational trail markers highlighting unique features of property.
- Maintain brook crossing and benches.
- Continue to control invasive species.
- Regularly mow or hay the fields.

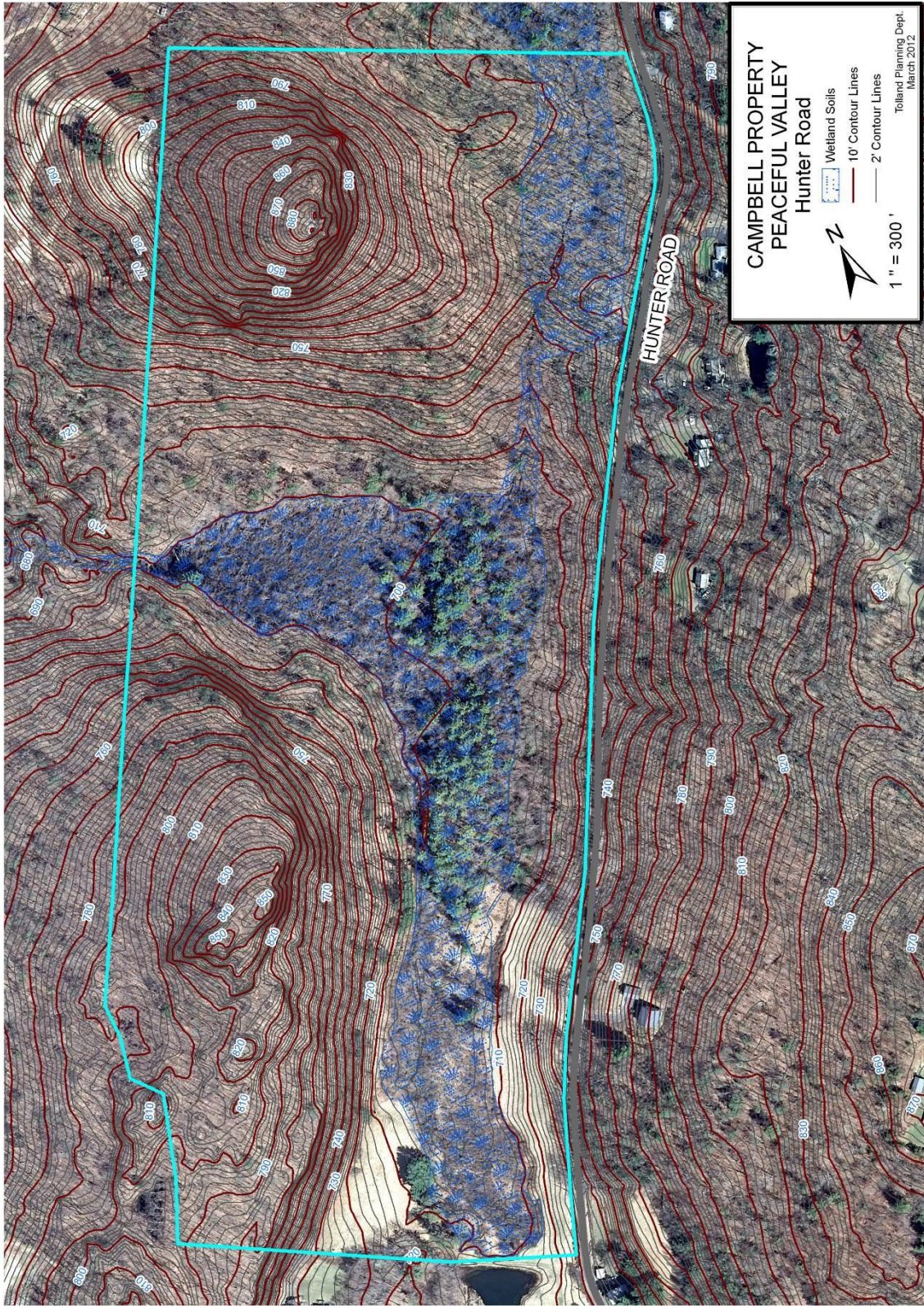
The stewards of the property are Chris Beaudoin and Rich Audette.

Note: *A BRIEF GEOLOGICAL GUIDE TO CAMPBELL'S PEACEFUL VALLEY* by Anthony R. Philpotts is located on the Conservation Commission website.

Appendix A. Parcel Map with Location Map Insert



Appendix B. Topographical Map



Appendix C. Trail Map

