

**Town of Tolland, Connecticut
Conservation Commission
Nedwied Conservation Area Management Plan
Fox Ridge Lane, Tolland, CT**



A Passive Recreation Open Space Conservation Area

Adopted by Commission – 6/9/2016

Adopted by Town Council – 6/28/2016

Town of Tolland

Conservation Commission Property Management Plan

Nedwied Conservation Area, Fox Ridge Lane

Background – The Tolland Conservation Commission is responsible for the management and oversight of properties obtained by the Town of Tolland for conservation purposes and for preparing a management plan for each property. The management plan is based upon the environmental characteristics of the property and is used to determine appropriate conservation and usage. Each plan includes a property description, an analysis of the unique characteristics and acceptable uses of the property, and a management program. The management program outlines property management; improvement needs; the individuals and organizations that manage the property; and protection needs related to the site. Each management plan is developed under the Commission's management planning process.

I. PROPERTY DESCRIPTION, RESOURCES, POTENTIAL, AND CONCERNS

Property Description – The 15 acre Nedwied Conservation Area consists of 2 adjoining parcels of land with access between #106 and #116 Fox Ridge Lane and from the King Riverside Conservation Area to the south. It is located in the southeast corner of Tolland near the Willimantic River. This conservation area expands the connection between the Becker Conservation Area and the King Riverside Conservation Area that are part of the Willimantic River Trail running through Tolland, Coventry and Mansfield. Visitors can continue north on to Fox Ridge Lane and then into Tolland's River Park and Becker Conservation Area. Crossing the bridge to the south, visitors can continue on the King Riverside Conservation area and crossing Route 195, use local roads to continue to Coventry's Riverview Park and Mansfield's Merrow Meadow Park and River Park.



The southern parcel is 4 acres that was obtained as subdivision set-aside in March of 2001. It is 430 feet above sea level in its southwest corner, sloping down to 360 feet above sea level at Newcomb Brook, then increasing back up to 410 feet above sea level as the property follows the old Nedwied Road northward. Newcomb Brook crosses this parcel twice before continuing under the 20 foot wooden bridge on the King Riverside Conservation Area, where it joins the Willimantic River. Because of the steep slope, there will not be trails south of Newcomb Brook.

The northern parcel is 11 acres that was purchased from the Claude W. and Sandra M. Blackington Trust in June of 2015, using Town of Tolland passive open space bond funds. The land is flat with a gradual sloping downwards towards Newcomb Brook. There are many stone walls that form the boundaries of this parcel and also cross the interior. There is a stone foundation along one of these walls. Along another stone wall is a circular stone construct.

The Nedwied Conservation Area is within an *Important Wildlife Area and Corridor* as designated by the Town of Tolland Open Space & Conservation Plan (map 12). Newcomb Brook is a *Surface and Stream Water Quality Class A* brook (Town of Tolland Open Space & Conservation Plan, map 5). The Willimantic River is a *Surface and Stream Water Quality Class B* river (Town of Tolland Open Space & Conservation Plan, map 5).

The Willimantic River Greenway was designated as an official Connecticut Greenway in 2003 by the Connecticut Greenways Council. The Willimantic River Greenway is a long-term project to link existing open spaces, to improve the existing canoe/kayak route, to protect natural resources and to extend walking trails and bike routes along the 25-mile length of the river. The Willimantic River Alliance proposed the greenway nomination to the nine towns adjacent to the river and submitted the nomination to the Greenways Council. The

nine towns are Columbia, Coventry, Ellington, Lebanon, Mansfield, Stafford, Tolland, Willington, and Windham. These towns have committed to including the greenway in each town's Plan of Conservation and Development and to pursuing projects to enhance natural resources and recreation along the river.

In 2012, U.S. Secretary of the Interior, Ken Salazar, announced that the 21-mile Willimantic River Water Trail was designated a National Recreation Trail (NRT). The Willimantic River Alliance applied for this national recognition in cooperation with The Last Green Valley (TLGV).

Potential Uses – In accordance with the purchase funding, uses of the property must be limited to passive recreation. Accepted uses include:

- Hiking.
- Snowshoeing and cross-country skiing.
- Dog walking on leash and under owner's control; town ordinance requires dogs to be on a leash.
- Habitat, wildlife and nature study.

The Tolland *Conservation Commission Standards for Mountain Biking and Horseback Riding Use of Trails* must be met. Horseback riding is not allowed because the following standards for horseback riding are not met: trails to be at least eight feet wide. Mountain biking is also not allowed because the following standards for mountain biking are not met: trails to be at least 4 feet wide, consistency with permitted and non-permitted activities on abutting conservation properties.



Use Restrictions –The purchase of this property by the Town was funded by passive open space bond funds. This funding source requires that the property must be used as a passive open space conservation area in perpetuity.

Use Restrictions and Visitor Responsibilities – Visitors are to use the property in a manner consistent with land use guidelines for the protection of open space resources. The following guidelines are the standards for use and are identified on parcel signage:

- Dogs must be leashed and under control.
- Leave no trace.
- No horseback riding or mountain biking.
- No motorized vehicles or other means of motorized transport.
- Visitors shall stay on marked trails.
- Do not disturb vegetation or wildlife.
- No setting of fires.
- No hunting or firearms allowed.
- No littering. Carry out what you carry in.
- Respect the rights of other visitors.
- Area is closed from sunset to sunrise. 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 in accordance with the *Open Space Management Guideline and Process*.

Specific objectives for this parcel include:

- Follow best property management processes.
- Construct and maintain the approved trail system.
- Conduct a natural resource inventory.
- Pursue educational, documentation, and protection opportunities for habitat, wildlife, and unique features.
- Protect the brook, stonewalls and foundation.
- Clear the foundation of invading plant growth.
- Install and maintain map containers, trail map, directional signs, and name sign.
- Research the history of the stone walls and foundation area.

Although it is not the intention of the Conservation Commission to manage this property for timber production with periodic commercial harvests, it may be necessary, from time to time, to carry out certain silviculture practices to maintain the health of the forest or to encourage a particular habitat. Such management activities, if deemed necessary, will be done in consultation with a professional forester to ensure that the appropriate practices are implemented.



Management Plan and Program – Tasks required to assure management objectives are achieved shall be overseen by the Conservation Commission and implemented by the Head Steward and the Property Steward. Tasks include:

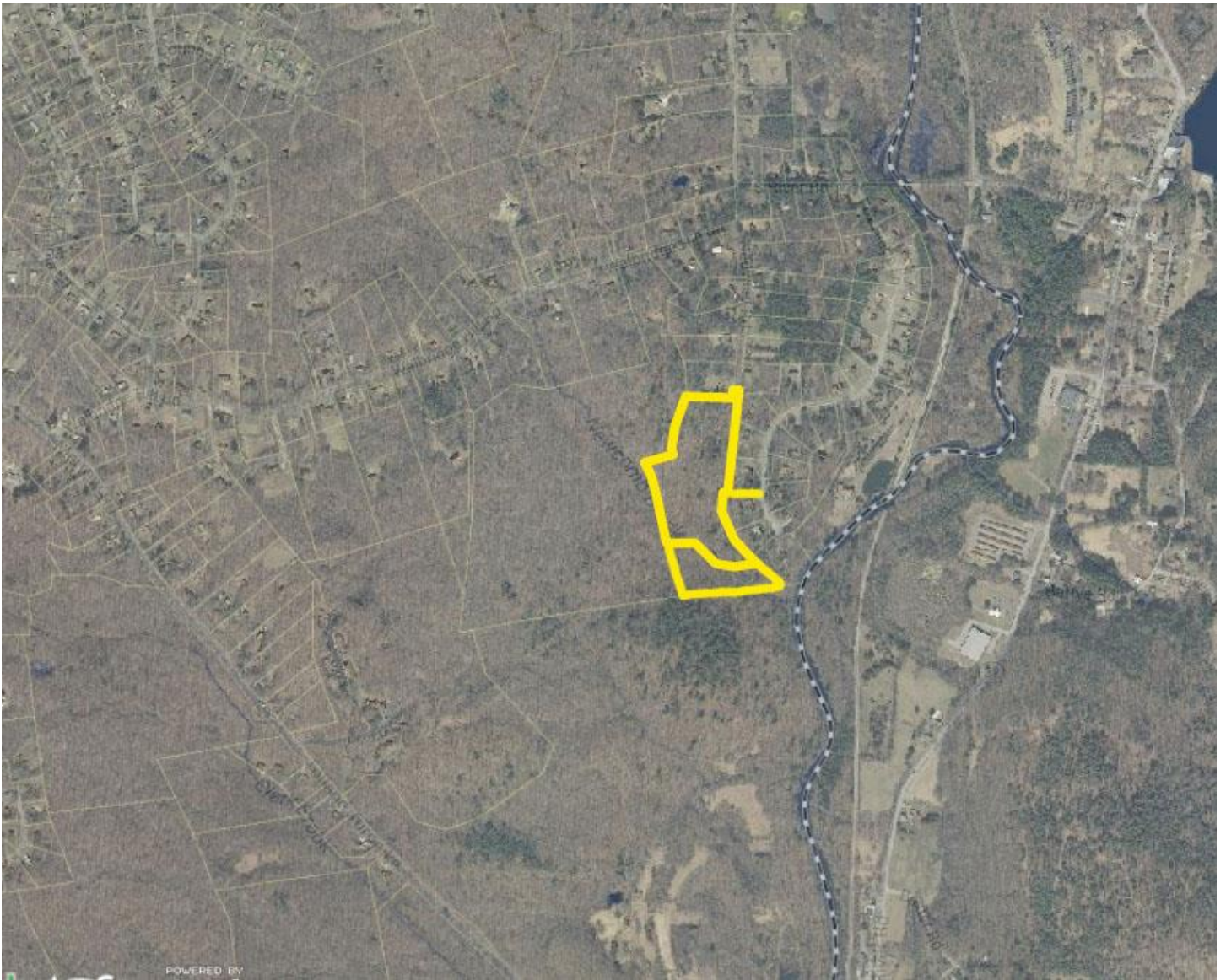
- Maintain the approved trail system.
- Maintain trail markings and signs.
- Maintain map containers and keep supplied with property brochures.
- Protect the brook, stonewalls and foundation.
- Perform litter patrol as needed.
- Maintain property boundary markings. Conduct a yearly walk of the boundaries.
- Keep the old Nedwied Road clear for emergency access.

Attachments

- 2012 Aerial Map
- Topographical Map
- Wetlands Map
- Trail Map
- Connector map showing Willimantic River trail in Tolland – Coventry – Mansfield

The steward for this property is Ute Winebrenner.

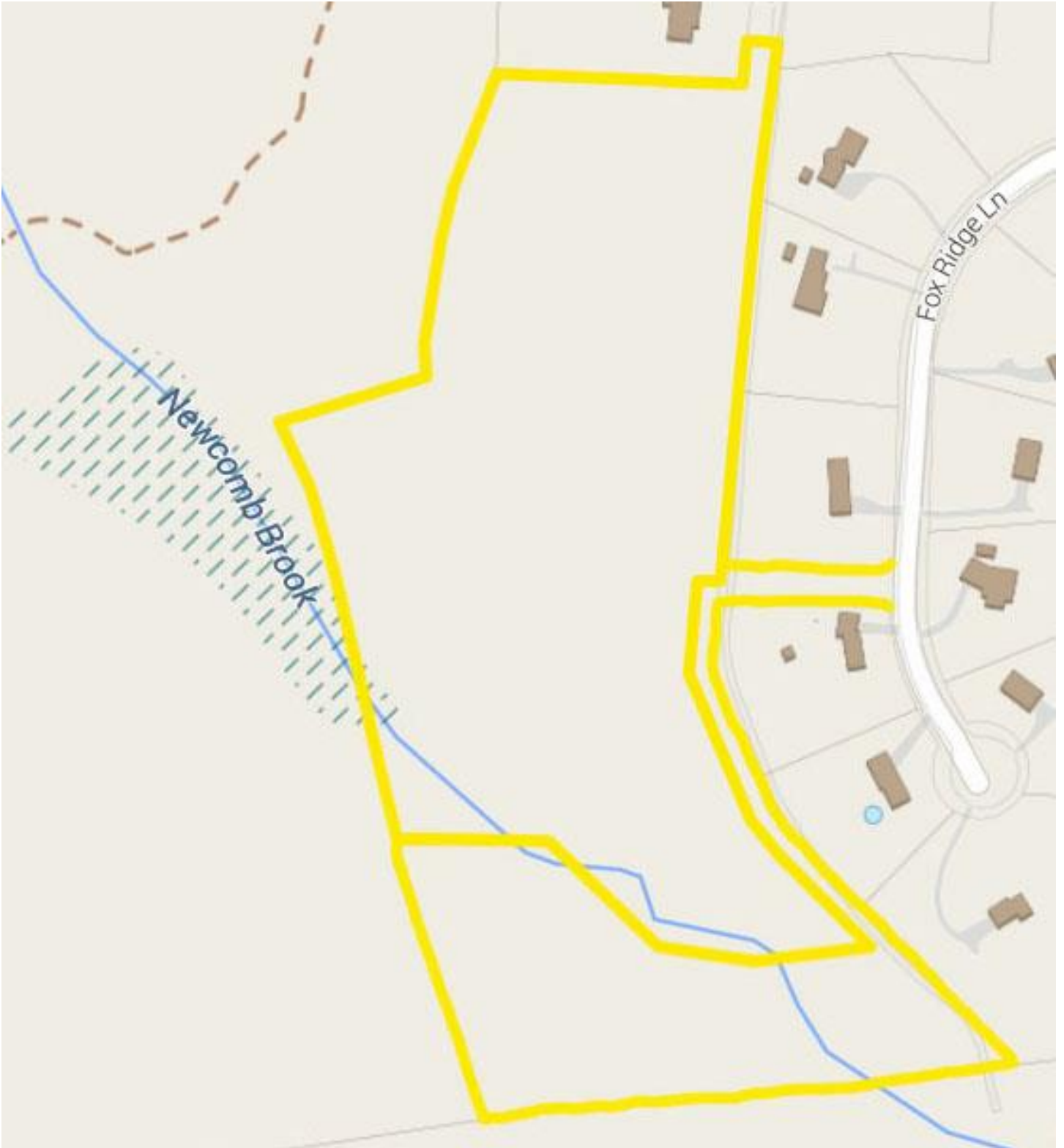
2012 Aerial Map



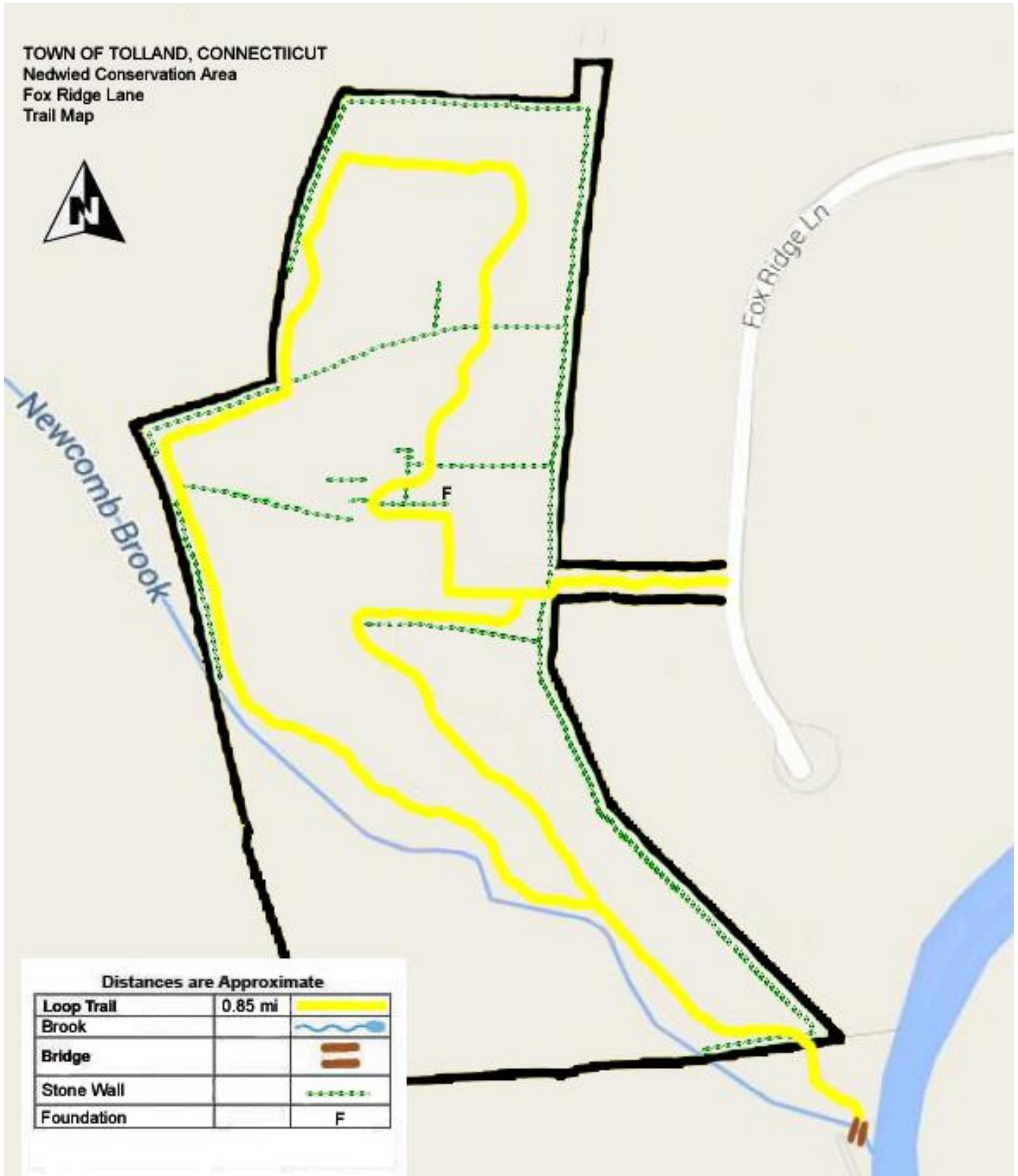
Topographical Map



Wetlands Map



Trail Map



Connector map showing Willimantic River trail in Tolland – Coventry – Mansfield

