

TOWN OF TOLLAND, CONNECTICUT
CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Sage Meadow Conservation Area Management Plan

Sage Meadow Drive



A Passive Recreation Open Space Conservation Area

Adopted by Tolland Conservation Commission: 9/24/2015
Endorsed by Joshua's Trust: 9/10/2015
Adopted by Tolland Town Council: 10/13/2015

**Town of Tolland
Conservation Commission
Sage Meadow Conservation Area Management Plan
Sage Meadow Drive**

Background - The Tolland Conservation Commission is responsible for overseeing properties purchased by the Town of Tolland for conservation purposes and for preparing a management plan for each property. The management plans are based upon the environmental characteristics of the property and 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 the property management and improvement needs; the individuals and organizations to manage the property; and protection needs related to the site. Each management plan is developed under the Commission's management planning process which requires a five year review. This plan was prepared as a joint effort by the Tolland Conservation Commission and Joshua's Trust.

I. PROPERTY DESCRIPTION, RESOURCES, POTENTIAL, AND CONCERNS

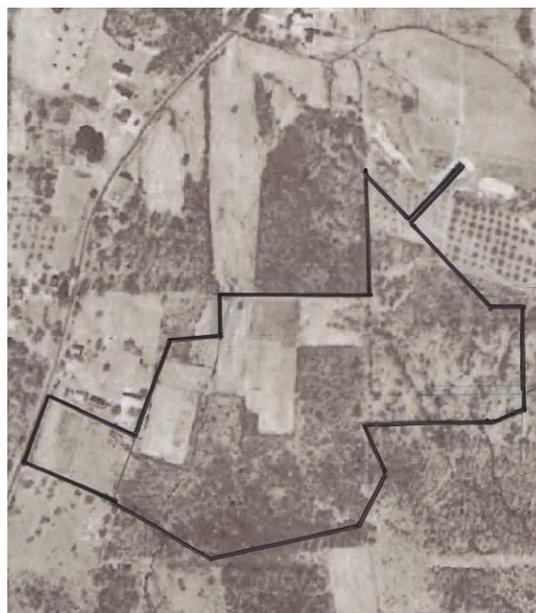
Property Description - The Sage Meadow Conservation Area is a 23 acre property obtained in connection with the development of Sage Meadow Subdivision, an 11-lot development. It is situated east of Old Stafford Road, and north of Torry Road. The Town purchased a 2 acre lot known as Lot # 11 on August 19, 2002 from the subdivision developer and obtained a second parcel consisting of 21 acres of open field and forest land when the Tolland Planning & Zoning Commission approved this parcel as Open Space on September 4, 2002. This conservation area has frontage on Old Stafford Road but the access to the open space is via a narrow right-of-way located between #26 and #36 Sage Meadow Drive.



Conservation Restriction - The Town entered into a Conservation Restriction with Joshua's Tract Conservation and Historic Trust, Inc. ("Joshua's Trust") on April 1, 2005, encompassing the dedicated open space portion of the property. This easement excludes Lot 11. An Open Space Management Plan was recorded as a part of this Restriction. This August 2015 management plan is an amendment of Exhibit A in the Conservation Restriction (section III.C.) In a 2015 supplement to the easement, haying in the meadow is allowed. The easement and supplement are included in the attachments at the end of this document.

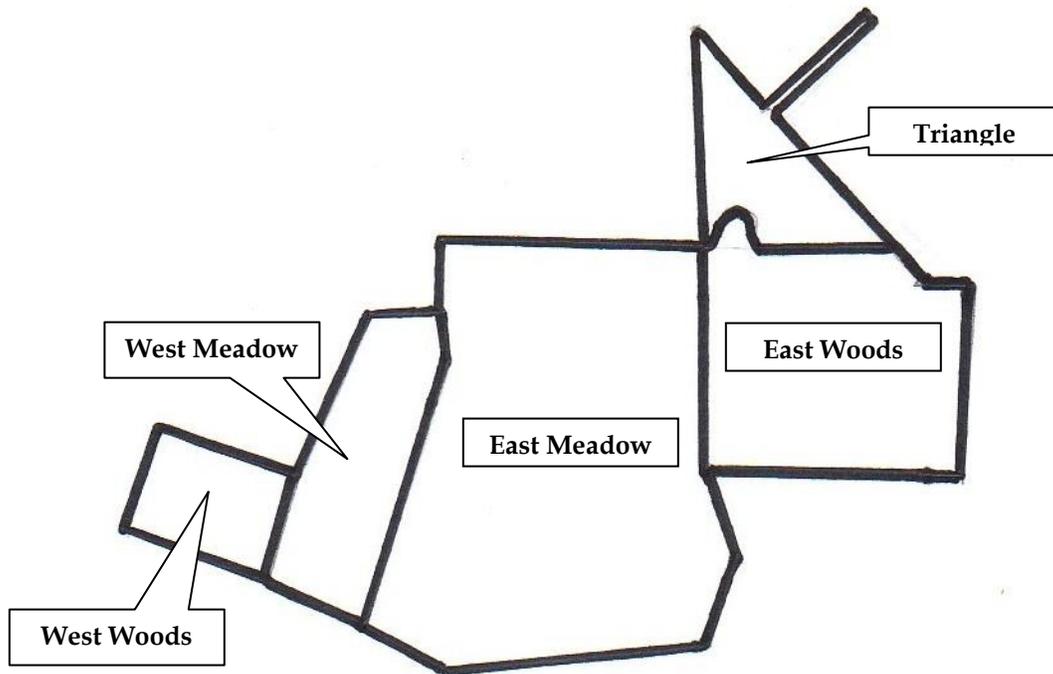


Historic Use of Property - The property was used for agriculture until 2002. A 1934 aerial photo of the property depicts not only the area now dedicated as open space, but the entire surrounding area, in agricultural use. The large meadow was divided between hay and pasture. The pasture was in successional growth at the time. The area of the subdivision appeared to be in hay and orchard. The east section of open space was in pasture as well.



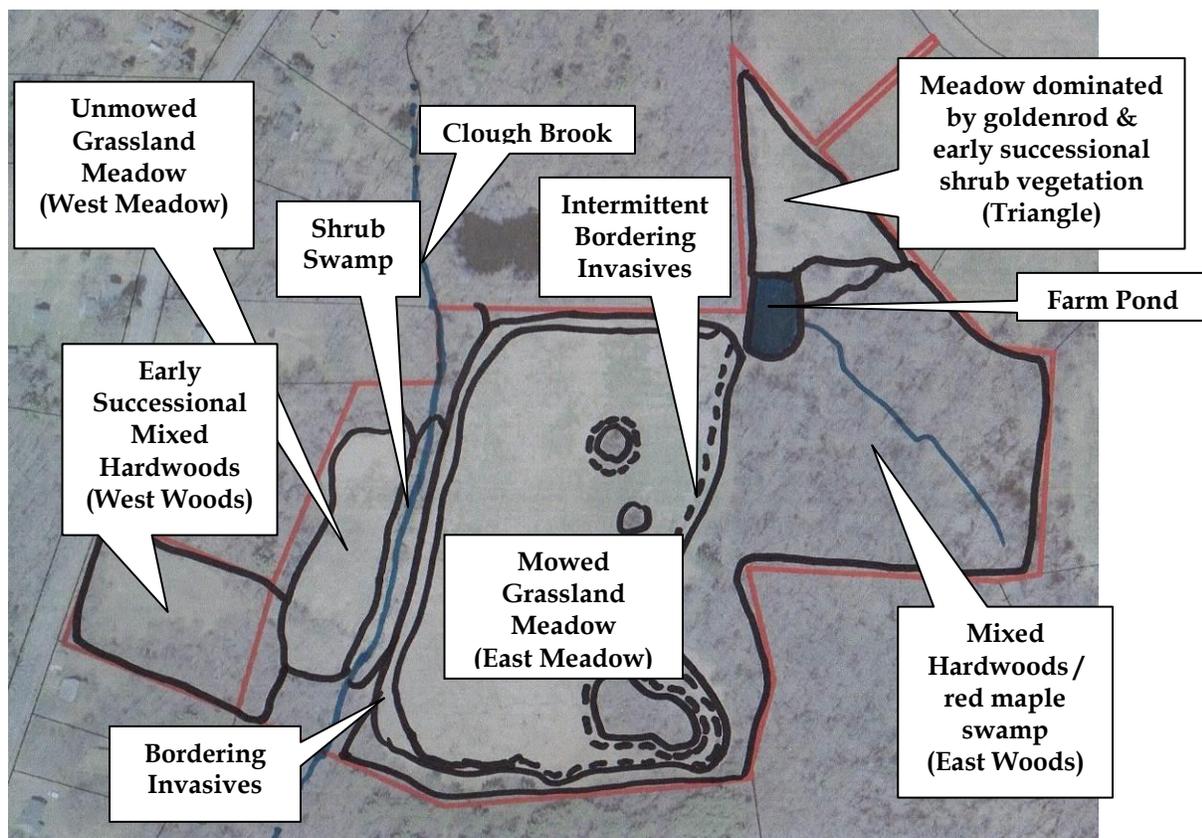
Agricultural Land Use (1934 Aerial Photo. Source: MAGIC Maps)

Description of Environmental Features - For purposes of this Management Plan, the Sage Meadow Open Space has been divided into 5 units. The environmental features and characteristics of this property are described as follows:



- The **Triangle** (northeast section of the site), approximately 2.2 acres, consists of open field, sloping south and southwest towards the meadow, with a narrow access between two subdivision lots on Sage Meadow Drive. This area is an open field dominated by goldenrod and some emerging multiflora rose. A small open marsh wetland is found at the base of slope at the interface between this unit and the East Woods.
- The **East Woods** is approximately 5.3 acres, and consists largely of red maple swamp, with some upland hardwoods. A small farm pond, approximately .25 acre in size, constructed in the 1950's, occupies the northwest corner at the interface between the Triangle Lot and the East Meadow. This pond is the headwaters of a small tributary to Clough Brook.
- The **East Meadow** is approximately 10.83 acres, and is largely an open, level, mowed meadow, with a few isolated trees. The entire meadow has been identified as a wetland. The field is bounded on the west by Clough Brook, tributary to the Skungamaug River, and a small bordering shrub (largely alder) wetland. The entire west boundary of the meadow abutting the Clough Brook corridor is overrun with invasives consisting primarily of multiflora rose and oriental bittersweet. These same invasives are found in proximity to the isolated trees in the meadow, and sporadically along the east and south boundaries of the meadow.

- The **West Meadow** is approximately 2.65 acres, and is separated from the East Meadow by Clough Brook, and its bordering shrub swamp. This is also an open meadow, identified as wetland. There is currently no practical access to this isolated meadow, and has apparently not been accessible for mowing for some years. Some incipient successional vegetation is in evidence, as well as some invasives along its margins.
- The **West Woods**, also known as “Lot 11” from its designation as a subdivision lot, consists of 1.68 acres, and has approximately 232 feet of frontage on Old Stafford Road. It slopes gently from the road towards the West Meadow. It consists of successional hardwoods.



Potential Uses - Consistent with the restrictions enumerated in the Conservation Easement, uses of the property are limited to the following:

- Hiking, not in the spring bird nesting season
- Snowshoeing and cross-country skiing
- Habitat, wildlife and nature studies

Use Restrictions and User Responsibilities – The following are use restrictions for visitors consistent with the conservation easement

- No dogs allowed.
- Leave no trace.
- No motorized vehicles or other means of motorized transport.
- No horseback riding or mountain biking.
- 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.
- Respect the privacy of abutting landowners.
- No activities on or in the pond year round.
- Area is closed from sunset to sunrise. Night use is by permit only.
- Notify the Conservation Commission of organized group activities.

Dog walking is not permitted due to the disturbance to wildlife living in the meadow. Due to the prevalence of wet areas and lack of trails, horseback riding and mountain biking are not permitted.

II. OPEN SPACE MANAGEMENT PLAN

Management Objectives – The principal objectives are to conserve the Sage Meadow Conservation Area and protect wildlife habitat while providing access and passive recreational opportunities for the general public. The conservation easement states the desire to preserve the protected property in its natural state. 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, and a variety of Town agencies and resources in accordance with the *Open Space Management Guideline and Process*.

Concerns – The water in the pond is currently a green color, indicating that it suffers from eutrophication. The pond needs to be improved for amphibian and fish habitat. Barley straw bales will be investigated as a possible method to control algae and restore the oxygen supply. Entrance through Lot 11 is impractical due to the slope of the land and the high volume of traffic and lack of safe access on Old Stafford Road. The trees in the West Woods will be allowed to grow since cutting/thinning is difficult and impractical. The trees in the East Woods will be allowed to grow due to the prevalence of wet areas. A variety of invasive species are spreading and need to be removed. Hopefully haying/mowing can widen the East Meadow and help eliminate the invasive species growing along the edges. There is no reasonable access to the West Meadow, so clearing would have to be done with smaller machinery that can be carried across the brook. Farm implements that reflect the rural nature of the landscape should be retained, if a liability is not posed.

Specific objectives for this parcel include:

- Follow best property management processes.
- Pursue educational, documentation, and protection opportunities for habitat, wildlife, and unique features.
- Maintain property boundary markings.
- Manage the woodlands following the guidance of a professional forester.
- Enhance and maintain the health of the pond.
- Maintain the East Meadow by annual haying or mowing. This will occur during a time period with no adverse effects on ground nesting birds.
- Maintain the West Meadow if possible by occasional brush hogging.
- Maintain the Triangle by annual mowing.
- Maintain a public information board or map board at the entrance.
- Develop a plan to control invasive plants.

Although it is not the intention of the Conservation Commission to manage the Sage Meadow Conservation Area 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 that management objectives are achieved shall be overseen by the Conservation Commission and implemented by the Head Steward and the Property Steward with monitoring by Joshua’s Trust. Tasks include:

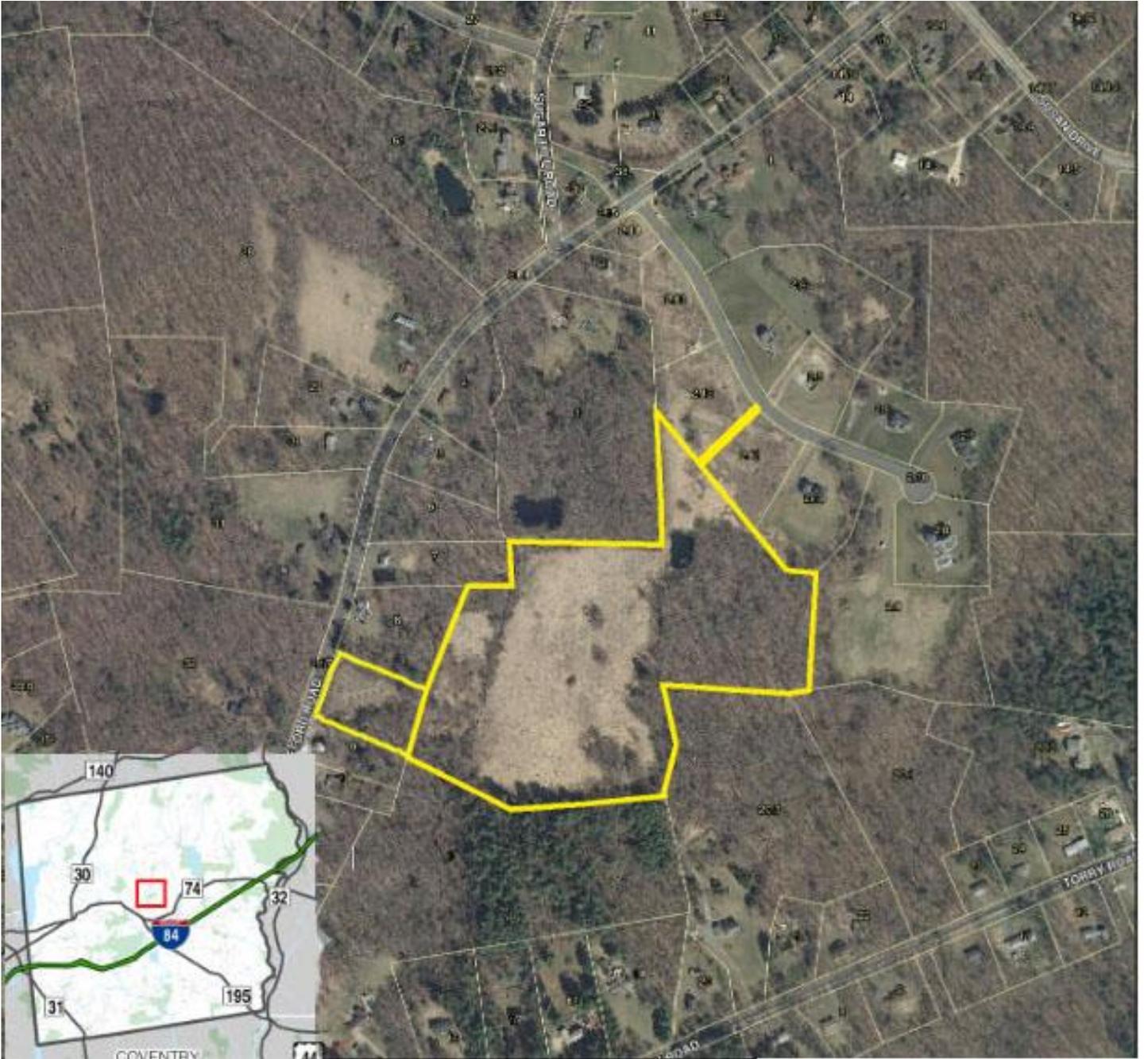
- Maintain signage at the entrance to the property.
- Post signage announcing nesting season.
- Maintain markings delineating the access path.
- Mark and maintain property boundary markings. Walk the property line on an annual basis.
- Assist with oversight of the health of the pond.
- Assist with oversight of the haying/mowing contractor. Approve the first mowing/haying occurrence each year by surveying for ground nesting birds.
- Follow the invasive plants control plan.
- Periodically remove trash.

Attachments

- 2012 Aerial Map with Location Map Insert
- Topographical Map
- Wetlands Map
- Conservation Restriction, Exhibit A, and Supplement
- 2015 Bobolink Assessment by the Conservation Coordinator for Joshua's Trust.
- Trail map/sign

The steward for this conservation area is Stan Tetrault.

2012 Aerial Map with Location Map Insert



Wetlands Map



0962 PAGE 337
JOSHUA'S TRACT CONSERVATION AND HISTORIC TRUST

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DEED OF CONSERVATION RESTRICTION

This Conservation Restriction is made this 1st day of February, 2005, between THE TOWN OF TOLLAND, hereinafter called the "Grantor," and JOSHUA'S TRACT CONSERVATION AND HISTORIC TRUST, INC., a Connecticut non-profit corporation having its headquarters at 898 Stafford Road, Mansfield, Connecticut, with a mailing address of P. O. Box 4, Mansfield Center, Connecticut 06250-0004, hereinafter called the "Grantee."

WITNESSETH:

WHEREAS, the Grantor is the owner in fee simple of certain real property in the Town of Tolland, County of Tolland, and State of Connecticut, consisting of approximately 23 acres of land more particularly described in "Schedule A" attached hereto (hereinafter referred to as the "Protected Property"), which Protected Property consists of woodland swamp, brook, meadow and a pond; and

WHEREAS, the Protected Property possesses ecological, aesthetic, open space (collectively, "conservation values") of importance to the Grantor, the people of Tolland and the State of Connecticut; and

WHEREAS, JOSHUA'S TRACT CONSERVATION AND HISTORIC TRUST, INC. is a non-profit corporation incorporated under the laws of Connecticut, whose purposes include conservation of land area, having the power to acquire interest in land; and

WHEREAS, both the Grantor and Grantee desire to preserve the Protected Property predominantly in its natural state by means of a conservation restriction pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes Sections 47-42a et seq, as amended.

NOW, THEREFORE, Grantor hereby gives, grants and confirms to the Grantee, its successors, and assigns, a Conservation Restriction in perpetuity upon the Protected Property, of the nature and character and to the extent hereinafter set forth. All terms, covenants, and conditions contained herein shall run with the land.

- I. Purpose. It is the purpose of this Conservation Restriction to assure that the Protected Property will be retained forever predominantly in its natural and scenic condition and to prevent any use of the Protected Property that will significantly impair or interfere with its conservation values.
- II. Rights of the Grantee. To accomplish the purpose of this Conservation Restriction, the following rights are conveyed to the Grantee by this Conservation Restriction:

- A. The right to preserve and protect the Protected Property;
 - B. The right to enter the Protected Property at all reasonable times and, if necessary, across other lands of the Grantor, for the purpose of:
 - 1. inspecting the Protected Property to determine if the Grantor, and her assigns, are complying with the Covenants and purposes of this Conservation Restriction;
 - 2. enforcing the terms of this Conservation Restriction;
 - 3. taking any and all actions with respect to the Protected Property as may be necessary or appropriate, with or without order of the court, to remedy or abate violations hereof;
 - 4. maintaining and/or replacing boundary markers of the Protected Property.
 - C. The right, whether exercised or not, to monitor the condition of any rare or endangered plant and animal populations and plant communities in the Protected Property, and to manage them, if necessary, for their continued survival and quality in the Protected Property.
 - D. The right to enforce the covenants contained herein pursuant to Section 47-42a, et seq. CGS, and/or other provisions of the Connecticut General Statutes. Nothing herein shall be construed to entitle the Grantee to institute any enforcement proceedings against the Grantor for any changes to the Protected Property due to causes beyond the Grantor's control, such as floods, fire or storms.
- III. Grantor's Reserved Rights.
- A. The right to make use of the Protected Property for any and all purposes which are in keeping with the stated intent of this Conservation Restriction and which shall in no way endanger the maintenance and conservation of the Protected Property in its natural state.
 - B. The right to sell, give or otherwise convey the Protected Property, provided such conveyance is subject to the terms of this Conservation Restriction.
 - C. The right to create and administer, in cooperation with the grantee, a management plan for the protected property, a copy of which plan is attached hereto and labeled Exhibit A which plan shall remain in effect until amended by mutual agreement of the parties.

- D. The right to place bridges and other structures to provide normal access to the property, and temporary platforms, dock, blinds or other such structures for the study of wildlife.

IV. Covenants. The Grantor makes the following covenants:

- A. The Protected Property may not be divided, partitioned, or subdivided, nor conveyed except in its current configuration as an entity.
- B. There shall no permanent buildings located on the property.
- C. There shall be no farming or removal of topsoil, stonewalls, sand, gravel, rock, minerals or other substances. There shall be no excavation except for pond maintenance or new pond installation.
- D. There shall be no dumping or storing of soil or other substances or materials and no storage or disposal of vehicles, vehicle parts, or wastes of any kind.
- E. There shall be no hunting or trapping, except for collection done for scientific purposes with the express permission of the grantee.
- F. There shall be no billboards or advertising signs.
- G. No motorized vehicles shall be allowed on the premises except those needed to carry out maintenance consistent with the management plan.
- H. There shall be no tree stand improvements.
- I. There shall be no logging of the premises, except that consistent with good forestry practice.

Haying will be permitted.

- V. Hazardous Waste. The Grantor has no knowledge of the deposit of hazardous waste (Sec. 22a-113(1), CGS) or the presence of underground storage tanks on the protected property.

- VI. Assignment. This Conservation Restriction is transferable and may be assigned by the Grantee, with the written consent of the grantor in its sole discretion (which shall not be unreasonably withheld), provided that such assignment is to a non-profit entity qualified under Connecticut General Statutes, Sections 47-42a through 47-42c, to hold conservation restrictions and having the resources to enforce this Conservation Restriction.

**Sage Meadow Property- Town of Tolland
OPEN SPACE MANAGEMENT PLAN**

I. PROPERTY DESCRIPTION, RESOURCES, AND POTENTIAL

A) OVERVIEW

DESCRIPTION: The "Sage Meadow Estates sub-division open space" was deeded to the Town of Tolland as Open Space. The 21.5 acre parcel of land is located in the northeastern part of Tolland, along Old Stafford Road. The open space consists of an open field of about 15 acres, 4.9 acres forested and a 1.6 acre approved lot (i.e. #11) from that sub-division that the Town purchased from the developer.

RESOURCES AND POTENTIAL: Preservation of this parcel accomplishes the following:

- Protects a property that contains a mix of open and wooded habitats having easy access to the public
- Protects an expansive view of rural landscape along a well traveled road within the town's borders

B) DETAIL

DESCRIPTION, RESOURCES, AND POTENTIAL:

(Add a more detailed overview of the open space resources and value, if available.)

Sage Meadow Property- Town of Tolland

- A. The open grass field is the centerpiece of this open space. Tall grass habitat is becoming rare in Connecticut, as are the animals that require this habitat. This rural landscape is viewable from along Old Stafford Road.
- B. Islands of shrubs and trees within the grassland area serve as perches for the birdlife that depends upon tall grass habitat for nesting and food supplies.
- C. Clough Brook provides a year round source of water for animals, ultimately flowing into the Skungamaug River which empties into the Willimantic River.
- D. The property includes a pond that offers aquatic habitat.
- E. Access to the open space is provided via Lot 11 that opens unto Old Stafford Road. A parking lot would be required. The addition of a trail that circles the field would provide passive recreation opportunities (e.g. walking and bird-watching).

II. OPEN SPACE MANAGEMENT PLAN

A) PROBLEMS, NEEDS & CONCERNS

- Clean up discarded items (e.g. tires) on the property (*Note: farm implements that reflect the rural nature of the landscape should be retained, if a liability is not posed*)
- Clean trash from the pond and dredge it of nutrient rich benthic muck, thus decreasing the rate of eutrophication (i.e. the filling in of plant material)
- Periodic burning of the field to encourage the growth of grasses versus re-forestation and invasive woody species

B) OPPORTUNITIES IDENTIFIED

- The tall grass field is the centerpiece of this open space
- The view of the rural open space from Old Stafford Road
- Public access for hiking, bird-watching, or educational/research activities
- The pond which once cleaned and dredged will have improved water quality and provide a more diverse aquatic habitat
- Clough Brook as a year round source of water for animals.

C) PLANNING OBJECTIVES AND TIMELINES

- Burning 1/3 of the field (but not the islands of shrubs and trees)- starting spring '04 and annually thereafter
- Plan, blaze and clear a hiking trail- spring '04
- Appointment of an open space steward- spring/summer '04
- Design and construct a parking lot (on Lot #11) to enable access- fall '04
- Mowing of the area around the parking lot- periodically during the summer/fall
- Construction of a footbridge over Clough Brook, linking the parking area to the trail- fall '04 (coordinated with the parking lot construction)
- Erect signs regarding the open space, trail, and permitted usage- summer '04
- Selective cutting of trees to maintain the view into the space from Old Stafford Rd- summer/fall '04
- Create a "parcel pamphlet" that contains a map and relevant species information- late 2004
- Dredging of the pond and repairing the dam as necessary- between '05-'09

D) TECHNIQUES AND RESOURCES

- Management of the tall grass habitat requires burning of 1/3 of the field each spring (or late fall once the field ceases to be an important habitat for the target species). This approach provides viable tall grass habitat at all times. *Note: Burning is the preferred treatment for this area because it: eliminates dead vegetation that may hinder new plant growth and the movement of small animals; is the natural process for grass evolution; releases available nutrients into the soil quickly; and decreases the tick population*
 - The Tolland Fire Department has agreed to coordinate these annual burns
 - The Town should notify neighbors of the planned burn, preferably about 2 weeks before the burn
- Trail planning/blazing/cutting: A trail should be created that leads around the property to show its features. It should enter the field to present a contrast between the different habitats, while minimizing species disruption within the grassland. "Viewspots" should be incorporated as appropriate.
 - Recommend Steve Lowrey, Wetlands Agent, Tom Ainsworth, Recreation Director, or department rep coordinate the efforts of volunteers
- A steward should be appointed from a pool of candidates to be developed using advertising (e.g. Tolland Monthly) and other outreach efforts, coordinated by the Conservation Commission and Town department reps.
- Design and installation of a parking lot (i.e. Lot #11) to provide access should be coordinated by the Public Works department, or vended out to a contractor if department workloads impact the target date. If the slope and other factors permit, a gravel surface is recommended.
- Mowing should also be managed by the Public Works department
- Footbridge construction to be coordinated by Tom Ainsworth, using volunteers (e.g. Conserving Tolland, Boy Scouts, etc.). If feasible, the design should accommodate wheelchair access, with a "jog" to preclude ATV access.
- Signage installation to be arranged by Conserving Tolland
- Selection of trees for cutting should be by Steve Lowrey, schedule permitting, or a licensed forester or landscape designer; tree-cutting to be performed by the Public Works department
- Parcel pamphlet development to be coordinated by the Conservation Commission
- Dredging to be performed by the Public Works department- once budgeting is set
- *NOTE: Trail features, footbridge design, and selective cutting may require the services of a landscape designer to develop an integrated plan*

E) REPORTING AND COMMUNICATION OF PLAN

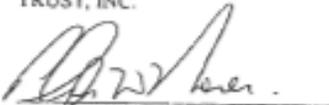
- TCC representative(s) will monitor progress on the OSMP Objectives and report to the Town Council by the 4th quarter of 2004
- TCC will contact the (to be appointed) parcel steward to confirm preservation of the RESOURCES AND POTENTIAL, and report the status to the Town Council on an annual basis.

IV. PROPOSED STEWARDSHIP CONTRACT

OBJECTIVE	TARGET DATE	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	RESULT	NEXT STEP
Approval of OSMP	March 2004	Tolland Town Council		OSMP Objectives
Burning % of field	Spring 2004	Tolland Fire Dept		Annual Burn
Plan, blaze, and cut a hiking trail	Spring 2004	S Lowrey- Wetlands Agt or T Alasworth- Rec Dir, or Dept Rep to plan; cutting by volunteers determined by them		TCC annual assessment of trail condition
Appoint a Steward	Spring/summer 2004	TCC in coordination with Town reps, to select a volunteer		Train the steward to accomplish the duties
Design & construct parking	Fall 2004	Public Works dept., or contracted out		Mow area around the lot as needed
Construct a footbridge over brook	Fall 2004	T Alasworth-Rec Dir to coordinate volunteer work (eg Boy Scouts)		Install signage
Erect signage	Fall 2004	Conserving Tolland		TCC annual assessment of condition
Selective tree cutting	Summer/fall 2004	S Lowrey- Wetlands Agt or forester or designer to select trees; Public Works dept to cut		
Create pamphlet	Late 2004	TCC		Make copies available at the Town Hall
Dredge pond and repair dam	TBD 2005-2009	Public Works dept, once budgeting set		
Report on OSMP progress	4 th quarter 2004	TCC to Town Council		Update as needed
Report on parcel preservation	Annually	TCC to Town Council		Address problems noted

TOWN OF TOLLAND TRUST, INC.

JOSHUA'S TRACT CONSERVATION AND HISTORIC



By: Philip Moresche
Chairman, Conservation Commission



By: Hill Bullard
Its: President

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10:57 a.m. AND RECORDED IN
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PAGE(S) 337-347
Suzanne M. [Signature]
TOWN CLERK

JOSHUA'S TRACT CONSERVATION AND HISTORIC TRUST
SUPPLEMENT TO CONSERVATION RESTRICTION

THIS SUPPLEMENT TO CONSERVATION RESTRICTION is made this day of OCTOBER , 2014, between The Town of Tolland, Tolland, CT, hereinafter called the "Grantors", and JOSHUA'S TRACT CONSERVATION AND HISTORIC TRUST, INC., a Connecticut non-profit corporation having its headquarters at 898 Stafford Road, Mansfield, Connecticut with a mailing address of P.O. Box 4, Mansfield Center, Connecticut 06250-004, hereinafter called the "Grantee".

WITNESSETH:

WHEREAS, the Grantors and the Grantee executed a "Deed of Conservation Restriction" dated as of February 1, 2005, recorded in Volume 962 at Page 337 of the Tolland Town Records, referred to herein as the "Original Deed", and

WHEREAS, the Grantors and the Grantee have noted certain ambiguities in the Original Deed that in their opinion require clarification,

NOW, THEREFORE, the Grantors and the Grantee agree as follows:

1. Defined Terms. All terms defined in the Original Deed shall have the same meaning in this Supplement.
2. Supplemental Provision. Paragraph IV. C. of the Original Deed, entitled "Covenants" is hereby amended to read:

(C.) There shall be no farming "**except the haying of the meadow.**" "**There shall also be**" no removal of top soil, stonewalls, sand, gravel, rock, minerals or other substances. There shall be no excavation except for pond maintenance or new pond installation.

3. Effect of Supplement. The Original Deed as amended by this Supplement, taken together, contain the terms of the conservation restriction as if the terms of this Supplement had been included in the Original Deed from the outset and shall be effective when this deed is recorded.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Grantors and the Grantee have executed this Supplement on this day of October, 2014.

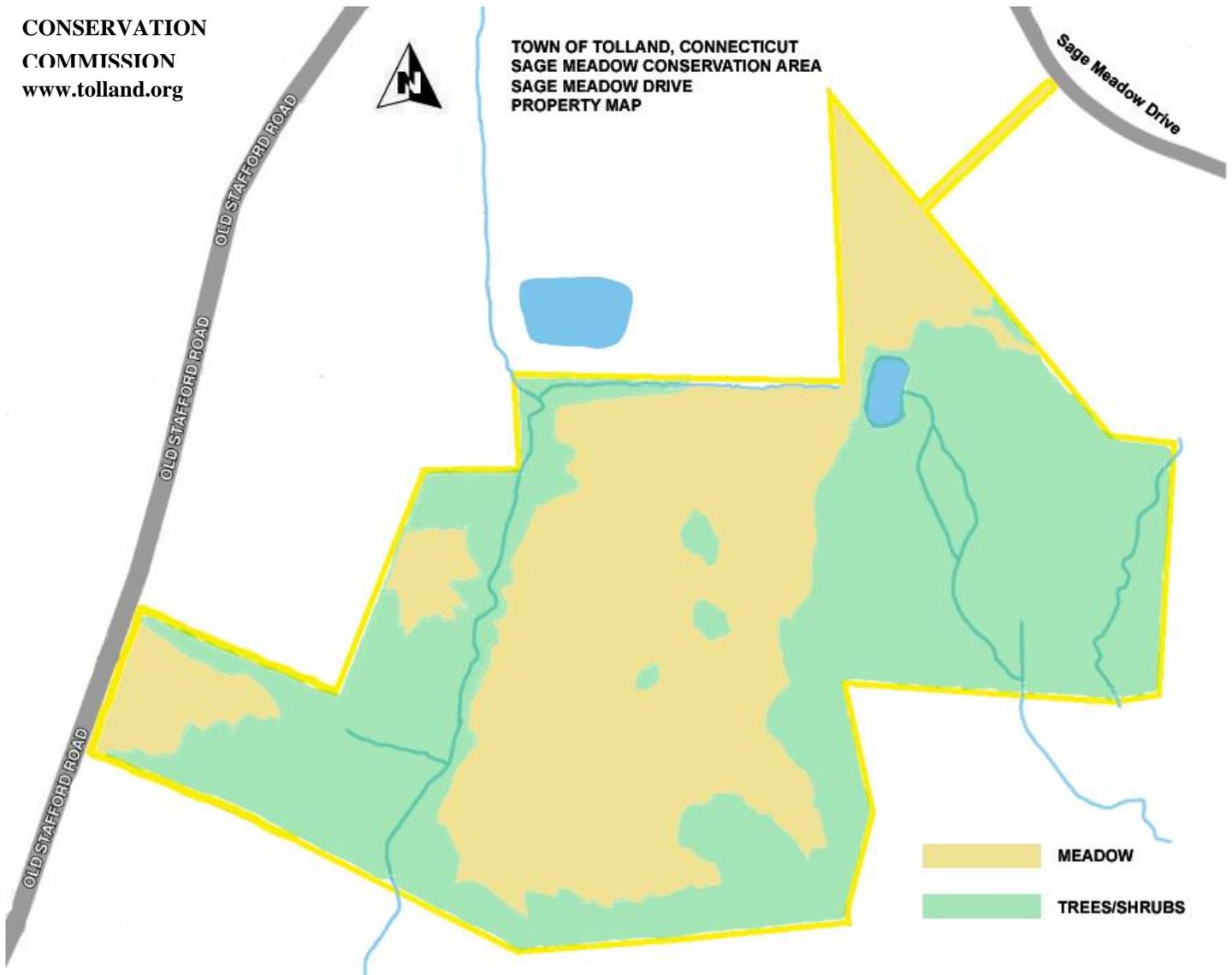
2015 Bobolink Assessment by the Conservation Coordinator for Joshua's Trust.

This morning, myself and another grassland bird surveyor did not detect any Bobolinks. There are many other species thriving among the couple of large trees and one large fallen tree within the field. We heard or saw several shrubland and edge habitat bird species including Warbling Vireo, Red-eyed Vireo, Baltimore Oriole, Blue-winged Warbler, Yellow Warbler, Common Yellow-throat Warbler, Red-winged Blackbirds, a Mockingbird up by the houses, and the many Tree Swallows using the nest boxes. We also heard house sparrows, which are quite a troublesome, invasive bird because they compete with Tree Swallows and Bluebirds for the boxes. In fact, sadly, house sparrows will enter the boxes and kill any native species using the box in order to take them over.... so, perhaps we can keep an eye on those this season to evict any bad birds. They're European birds and are not protected by US laws prohibiting their extermination.

Anyway, I think we have a good sense of what's going on in terms of the Bobolinks. There are likely none nesting at the field. From an aerial and landscape perspective, the field is isolated: the highway and several built up areas are in close proximity to the field, while there are few if no other hayfields nearby that could potentially draw Bobolinks to it.

Characterizing the field itself, the field is borderline "good" grassland bird habitat. Good grassland bird habitat is at least 10 acres or larger in close proximity to other open fields, dominated by grasses with few trees or shrubs, and square-like in shape. This field is on the smaller end and it has a couple large standing trees and one fallen tree near the middle of it. In the eyes of a Bobolink high in the sky, these trees make the field seem even smaller and would deter them from nesting there. This field *might* draw Bob's if one were to cut down the trees and remove the dead fallen one, but I can't guarantee they'd find and use it based on my previous words about the field being small and isolated.

On the other hand, the open fields, the tall standing trees, and the one felled tree with rose growing up around it are doing very well to support other shrubland and edge habitat bird species. It will continue to do so as long as the field is kept in an open state via mowing, including the field up by the roadside. We also noted sign of mammals using the fields: three deer ran through the field as we approached to do the Bobolink survey, and we crossed coyotes scat.



The Sage Meadow Conservation Area is a 23 acre property obtained in connection with the Sage Meadow Subdivision in 2002. The access to the open space is via a strip of land located between #26 and #36 Sage Meadow Drive. The Town entered into a Conservation Restriction with Joshua’s Trust in 2005. The principal objectives are to conserve the area and protect wildlife habitat while providing access and passive recreational opportunities for the general public. The conservation restriction states the desire to preserve the protected property predominantly in its natural state. Maintenance is provided by Tolland Conservation Corps.

PLEASE...

- Hiking allowed, but not in the spring bird nesting season.
- Snowshoeing and cross-country skiing allowed.
- Habitat, wildlife and nature studies allowed.
- No dogs allowed.
- Leave no trace.
- No motorized vehicles.
- No horseback riding or mountain biking.
- Do not disturb vegetation or wildlife.
- No setting of fires
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- No littering. Carry out what you carry in
- Respect the rights of other visitors
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