

**Town of Tolland, Connecticut  
Conservation Commission  
Hovland Conservation Area  
Management Plan  
183 and 167 Anderson Road**



*A Passive Recreation Open Space Conservation Area*

**Adopted by Commission    12/12/2014**

**Adopted by Council        2/10/2015**

# **Town of Tolland**

## **Conservation Commission Property Management Plan**

### **Hovland Conservation Area, 183 and 167 Anderson Road**

**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 resource capabilities 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 PROBLEMS**

**Property Description** – The 8.23 acres Hovland Conservation Area is comprised of two parcels bought from Kenneth and Carol Hovland in June of 2001 with Passive Open Space Bond Funds. 183 Anderson Road is a 6.62 acre building lot along the Skungamaug River and 167 Anderson Road is a 1.61 acre lot of record, the latter of which was bequeathed to the Town by the Hovlands. The larger parcel has 63 feet of road frontage, whereas the smaller parcel has 200 feet of road frontage. A house with 250 feet of road frontage separates the two parcels.

The larger parcel's western edge includes approximately 590 feet of the Skungamaug River, up to but not including the western bank. The Skungamaug River also meanders along most of the southern boundary. There are wetlands along these western and southern boundaries. Near the southern boundary, there are parts from an abandoned car and a metal tank. There is a stone wall along the northern boundary and another stone wall angling off the eastern boundary. The highest elevation is 550 feet above sea level in the northeast corner by Anderson Road. The land drops down gradually and then more steeply as it gets closer to the river with an elevation of 514 feet above sea level.



There is an old road that roughly follows the perimeter of the larger property. This road is very overgrown and hard to follow in most places. There is a short spur road that leads to a stone abutment at the Skungamaug River. There is a matching stone abutment on the other side so at some point in time there was a bridge at this location spanning an approximate 20 foot river crossing. The old road is shown on maps continuing south through the Coventry Game Club property along the western edge of the Skungamaug River.



The smaller parcel is mostly wetlands, with only the land near Anderson Road not in the wetlands. Its elevation is 546 feet above sea level along the road frontage. The property drops down steeply off the road (guardrail) with a lot of thick underbrush. The back half of the property (wetlands) is very flat at around 520 feet above sea level.



Both properties are heavily wooded with wide-spread invasive species, especially Autumn Olive. They are shown to contain *Productive Forest Soils* (Town of Tolland Open Space & Conservation Plan, map 8).

The Tolland Marsh lies to the north of Anderson Road. The water from the marsh funnels through Anderson's Pond and Anderson's Mill dam site and continues on as the Skungamaug River. The river continues to wind through property owned by the Coventry Game Club down to the Donkeyville Mill on property owned by the Weigold Living Trust. Skungamaug River is *Surface and Stream Water Quality Class B/A* (Town of Tolland Open Space & Conservation Plan, map 5). The Skungamaug River flows into the Hop River in Andover and eventually into the Willimantic River.

In the listing of *Important Wildlife Habitats* (Town of Tolland Open Space & Conservation Plan, page 24), #2 specifically names *Riparian areas along the Skungamaug River*. Map 12 (Town of Tolland Open Space & Conservation Plan) shows these parcels to be in the middle of a substantial region of undeveloped land and as such, is an *Important Wildlife Area and Corridor*. The Hovland properties, along with the open space owned by the Town of Tolland on the west side of the Skungamaug River, provide an excellent river buffer and habitat for a wide variety of wildlife. There area has many open space or conserved properties.

**Future Plans** – The Conservation Commission sees this area's potential for public access in the future. However, this needs to be on hold pending 5 year review.

**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 requires that the property must be used as a passive open space conservation area in perpetuity. Until further review, public access is prohibited.



## 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, 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.
- Support appropriate scholastic research, documentation, and protection opportunities for habitat, wildlife, and unique features.
- Maintain property boundaries.
- Manage the woodlands following the guidance of a professional forester.

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 maintain the property in a particular stage of succession in order to encourage a particular habitat. Such management activities, if deemed necessary, will be done in consultation with a professional forester to insure 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. Tasks include:

- Install and maintain property boundary markings. Conduct a yearly walk of the boundaries.
- Manage the woodlands following the guidance of a professional forester.
- Conduct at least a yearly walk of the interior to ascertain the condition of the property.
- Clean up litter along Anderson Road frontage.

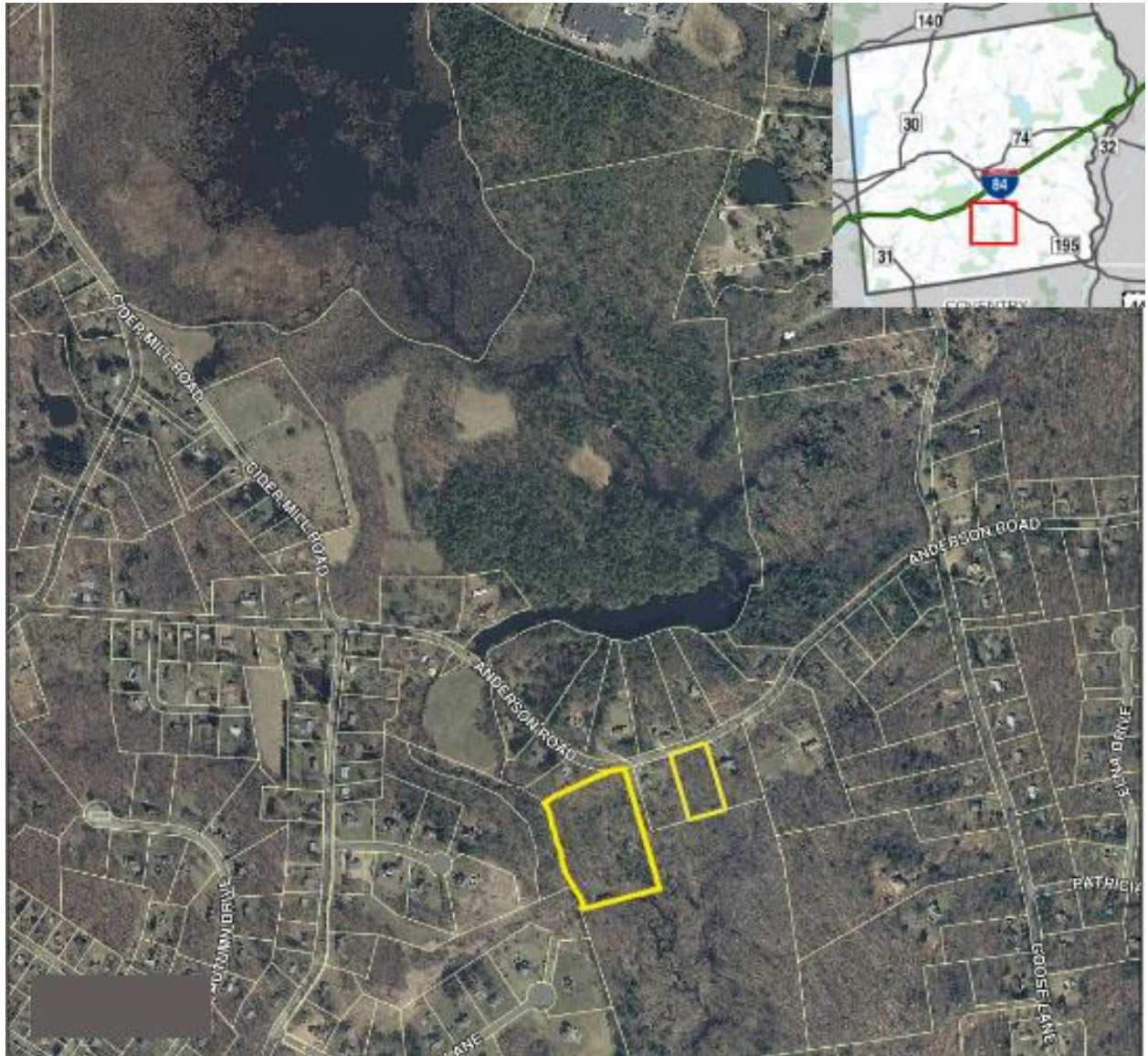
**Media** – At this time, there will not be a property brochure. The conservation area will not be shown in the “Tolland Conservation Areas” brochure. The conservation area will not be mapped or listed on the “Open Space Conservation Areas” webpage. It will not have a webpage. This Management Plan will be available via a link under the “Resources” section of the Conservation Commission homepage.

#### **Attachments**

- Aerial map with location map insert
- Topographical Map
- Nearby Conservation Areas
- Assessment Summary Sheet

The steward of the property is Rich Merritt.

2012 Aerial map with location map insert

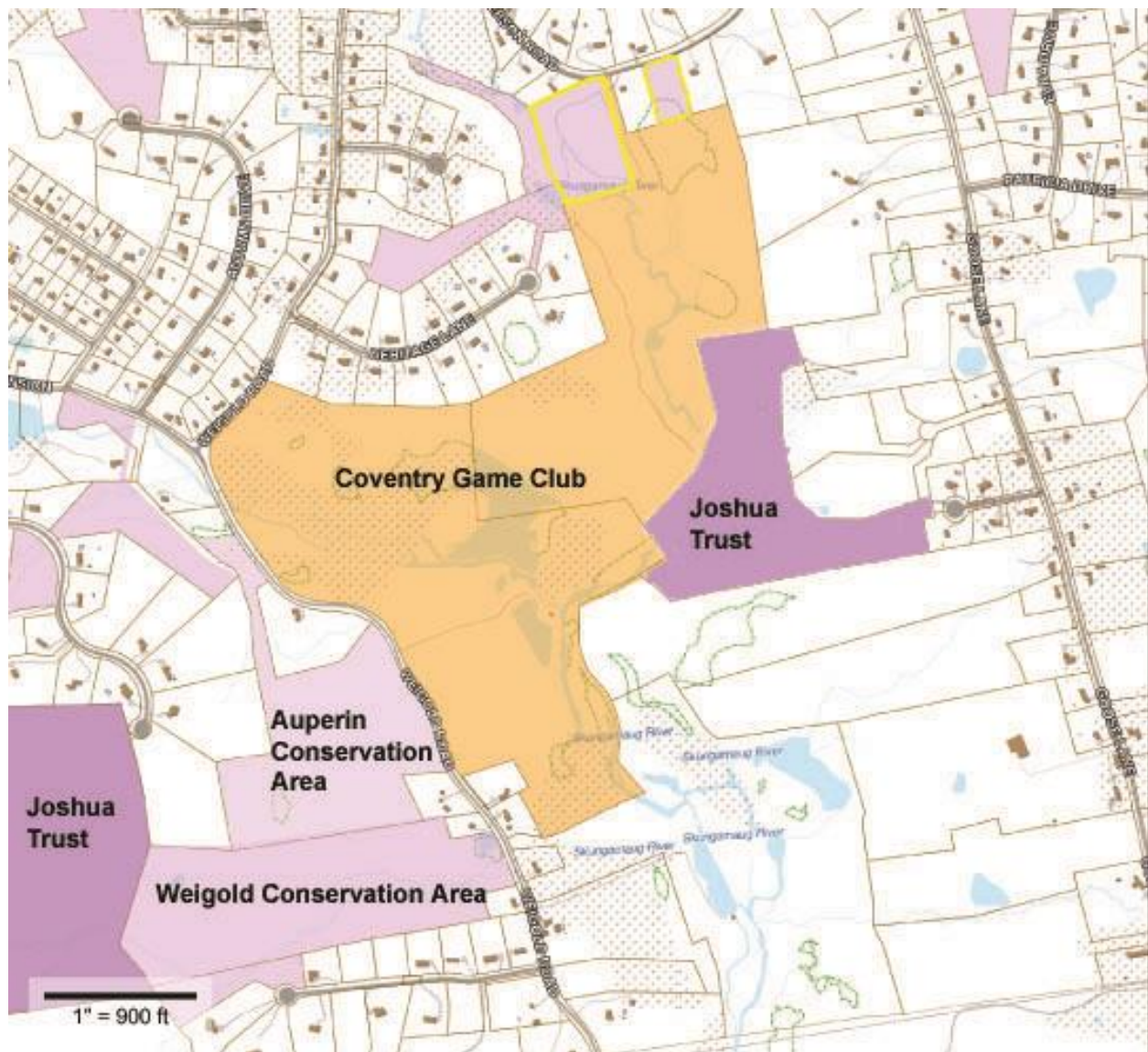




## Topographical Map



## Nearby Conservation Areas



## Summary Sheet for the Hovland Property on Anderson Road

Date evaluated: December 2, 2000

Description: 6.62 acres adjacent to Skunkamaug River

Value to the Town:

<u>Purpose</u>	<u>Rating</u>	
Habitat:	17	(desirable)
Passive Rec	12	(desirable)
Active Rec	5	(neither desirable nor undesirable)
Average	11	(a desirable property with diverse usage for the Town )

Scale:

- +18 to +28 (very desirable)
- +7 to +17 (desirable)
- 6 to +6 (neither desirable nor undesirable)
- 17 to -7 (undesirable)
- 28 to -18 (very undesirable)

### Conservation Commission Comments

1. Purpose:
  - Flat lot (for Active Rec) possible ball field
2. Location
3. Size
  - Borders Tolland open space and Fish & Game club
4. Topography
5. Wetlands
  - Frontage along the Skunkamaug River, prominent in Greenway Strategy
6. Environmental Protection
  - Easement along the river?
7. Buffer
  - Good buffer for river, upland wildlife habitat
8. Character Preservation
9. Access
  - Only access via Anderson Rd at a curve in the road
  - Parking could be difficult
10. Current condition
11. Property limitations
12. Liability
13. Maintenance
14. Other factors
  - Low connectivity, poor for passive rec
  - Residential uses on both sides, may require screening for open space uses