

Belding Wildlife Management Area in Vernon Dedicated

Belding Trust Fund established to protect, preserve, and manage use of 282-acre property previously donated by family



Maxwell Belding and Ruth Belding Nardini (Maxwell's daughter) pose in front of the dedication monument placed at Belding Wildlife Management Area in Vernon.

The Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection held a special ceremony on August 24, 2005, to honor Maxwell M. Belding for funding a program to protect, preserve, and manage the use of 282 acres of land in Vernon he had previously donated to the State of Connecticut.

During the ceremony, which was held on the property, located off of Bolton Road in Vernon, DEP Commissioner Gina McCarthy said, "Max Belding and his family have demonstrated a real commitment to make a lasting contribution to our state. First, they donated this beautiful and important wildlife area for all of us to appreciate and enjoy. Now, they have taken steps to guarantee that this property is properly managed and preserved so that it will be here for the benefit of future generations."

Establishing a Trust

Mr. Belding, who donated the land in 1981, and his daughter, Ruth, have established a charitable trust that will support natural resource management, conservation activities, and educational programming on the property.

Well known for many philanthropic activities, Mr. Belding has historic connections to the Vernon area. His grandfather owned the Belding Silk Thread Mill that was part of the once-thriving textile industry in Rockville.

"We are indebted to Max Belding for allowing us to establish and preserve the Belding Wildlife Management Area," continued Commissioner McCarthy. "His generosity ensures the proper use and protection of land that has remained relatively pristine – despite the population density of the Greater Hartford area."

Oversight of the land will be provided by the DEP and a three person Board of Trustees. Members of the board include Ruth Belding Nardini, Max Belding's daughter, and a representative of the Connecticut Forest and Park Association, as well as a representative of Bank of America, which manages the trust account.

Day-to-day supervision of programs and activities on the property will be directed by a full-time steward, as well as a seasonal employee. Both positions are being

funded through the Belding trust. DEP Wildlife Division technician Jane Seymour of Vernon is now serving as the steward.



Maxwell Belding shakes hands with DEP Commissioner Gina McCarthy as Maxwell's daughter Ruth and grandson Max look on.

You can go to following link for more info.

<http://www.ct.gov/Dep/cwp/view.asp?A=3605&Q=438726>

<http://www.ct.gov/dep/cwp/view.asp?A=2723&Q=326218>

http://rockvillect.us/Vernon_Rails-to-Trails.pdf