



STATE OF CONNECTICUT – COUNTY OF TOLLAND
INCORPORATED 1786

TOWN OF ELLINGTON

55 MAIN STREET – PO BOX 187
ELLINGTON, CONNECTICUT 06029-0187
www.ellington-ct.gov

TEL. (860) 870-3120 TOWN PLANNER'S OFFICE FAX (860) 870-3122

CONSERVATION COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING AGENDA TUESDAY, JUNE 11, 2024, 7:00 P.M.

IN-PERSON ATTENDANCE: TOWN HALL ANNEX, 57 MAIN STREET, ELLINGTON, CT
REMOTE ATTENDANCE: VIA ZOOM MEETING, INSTRUCTIONS PROVIDED BELOW

I. CALL TO ORDER:

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS (On Non-Agenda Items):

III. ACTIVE BUSINESS:

1. Review Plan of Conservation & Development, Chapter 4-Conservation Strategies, Natural Resource Preservation.
2. Report - Farmland Preservation Program.
3. Report - Open Space Preservation Program.
 - a. Notice of Special Town Meeting, June 10, 6pm, Ellington Town Hall to discuss and vote on the purchase of open space at 79 Kibbe Road.

IV. ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS:

1. FY 23-24 Budget & Expenditure Update.
2. Approval of May 21, 2024, Special Meeting Minutes.
3. Correspondence/Discussion:
 - a. Ad Hoc Ellington Trails Committee - Monthly Agendas/Minutes.
 - b. Beech Leaf Disease.

V. ADJOURNMENT:

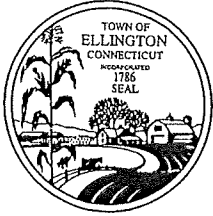
Next Meeting is July 9, 2024

Instructions to attend remotely via Zoom Meeting listed below. The agenda is posted on the Town of Ellington webpage (www.ellington-ct.gov) under Agenda & Minutes, Conservation Commission.

Join Zoom Meeting via Link:
<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82733721046>
Meeting ID: 827 3372 1046
Passcode: 383364

Join Zoom Meeting by Phone:
1-646-558-8656 US (New York)
Meeting ID: 827 3372 1046
Passcode: 383364

COMMISSIONERS: TO ASSIST IN ESTABLISHING QUORUMS REQUIRED TO CONDUCT MEETINGS, PLEASE CONTACT THE PLANNING DEPARTMENT IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO ATTEND A SCHEDULED MEETING.



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TEL 860-870-3100 FAX 860-870-3102

LORI L. SPIELMAN
First Selectman

DAVID E. STAVENS
Deputy First Selectman

JAMISON J. BOUCHER
MARY B. CARDIN
JAMES M. PRICHARD
RONALD F. STOMBERG
JOHN W. TURNER

Town Administrator
MATTHEW D. REED

NOTICE OF SPECIAL TOWN MEETING

TOWN OF ELLINGTON

June 10, 2024

Electors and citizens qualified to vote in Town Meetings of the Town of Ellington, Connecticut, are hereby warned that a Special Town Meeting will be held at the Ellington Town Hall, Nicholas J. DiCorleto Jr. Meeting Hall, 55 Main Street, Ellington, Connecticut and via ZOOM conferencing on Monday, June 10, 2024 at 6:00 pm prevailing time to discuss and vote upon the following:

- 2024 Connecticut Neighborhood Assistance Act (NAA) Program Proposal – Window Replacement, Ellington Congregational Church
- Consideration of Tax Abatement – Oakridge Dairy, LLC
- Purchase of Open Space at 79 Kibbe Road (\$300,000)

Any applicable supporting documentation is available for review in the Town Clerk's Office, First Selectman's Office and on the Town website at ellington-ct.gov.

All interested parties are encouraged to attend.

Dated at Ellington, Connecticut, this 29th day of May, 2024.

BY ORDER OF THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Lori L. Spielman
First Selectman

Journal Inquirer: June 4, 2024

Join via ZOOM Conference: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84910861491>

By Phone: 1 929 205 6099

Meeting ID: 849 1086 1491

Passcode: 764562

Town of Ellington

General Ledger - On Demand Report

Fiscal Year: 2023-2024

From Date: 7/1/2023

To Date: 5/31/2024

Account Mask: ?????00270???????

Account Type: All

Print Detail Include PreEncumbrance

Print accounts with zero balance

Filter Encumbrance Detail by Date Range

Budget Balance

Account Number / Description

Budget Range To Date

YTD

Balance

Encumbrance % Remaining Bud

1000.02.00270.10.50103	\$1,600.00	\$780.00	\$780.00	\$820.00	\$0.00	\$820.00	51.25%
Part Time---Conservation Commission--							

1000.02.00270.20.60221	\$400.00	(\$200.00)	(\$200.00)	\$600.00	\$0.00	\$600.00	150.00%
Advertising Printing---Conservation Commission--							

1000.02.00270.20.60222	\$1,350.00	\$960.00	\$960.00	\$390.00	\$0.00	\$390.00	28.89%
Dues & Subscriptions---Conservation Commission--							

1000.02.00270.20.60223	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Travel---Conservation Commission--							

1000.02.00270.20.60234	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Professional Development---Conservation Commission							

1000.02.00270.20.60250	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Contracted Services---Conservation Commission--							

1000.02.00270.20.60254	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
St of CT Surcharges---Conservation Commission--							

1000.02.00270.20.60341	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Office Supplies---Conservation Commission--							

1000.02.00270.30.60341	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Office Supplies---Conservation Commission--							

Fund: 1000	\$3,350.00	\$1,540.00	\$1,540.00	\$1,810.00	\$0.00	\$1,810.00	
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Town of Ellington

General Ledger - On Demand Report

Fiscal Year: 2023-2024 From Date: 7/1/2023 To Date: 5/31/2024

Account Mask: ??????00270???????

Print accounts with zero balance

Account Type: All

Include Inactive Accounts

Budget Range To Date

Grand Total:

\$3,350.00

\$1,540.00

\$1,540.00

\$1,810.00

\$0.00

\$1,810.00

End of Report



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CONSERVATION COMMISSION SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES TUESDAY, MAY 21, 2024, 7:00 PM

IN PERSON ATTENDANCE: TOWN HALL ANNEX, 57 MAIN STREET, ELLINGTON, CT
REMOTE ATTENDANCE: ZOOM MEETING
(ATTENDEES BELOW WERE IN PERSON UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED)

PRESENT: Chairman Rebecca Quarno, Regular Members James Gage and Robert Zielfelder (remote) and Alternates Ann Harford and Jon Kaczmarek

ABSENT: Vice Chairman David Bidwell, Regular Members Sean Dwyer, George Nickerson, and Laurie Burstein

STAFF: John Colonese, Assistant Town Planner and Nathaniel Trask, Recording Clerk (remote)

OTHERS

PRESENT: None

I. CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Rebecca Quarno called the Conservation Commission meeting to order at 7:05 PM.

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS (On Non-Agenda Items): None

III. ACTIVE BUSINESS:

1. Review Plan of Conservation & Development, Chapter 4-Conservation Strategies, Natural Resource Preservation.

Mr. Colonese said there are conservation strategies that the commission had discussed interest in pursuing, such as historic preservation, open space cluster development, and transfer of development rights.

Mr. Colonese said the Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) says one of the first strategies to historic preservation is to secure state funds and conduct a town wide historic resource inventory. He spoke with Mary Dunne at the State Historic Preservation Office. The inventory creates a record of historic buildings, sites, structures, and objects within a defined area and is completed by a historian. A \$20,000 grant is available, and funds are not required from the town. The town can apply for successive grants. He noted that Ellington center was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1990.

Chairman Quarno asked if there is another area the commission could target if there is already information on the historic buildings in the center of town. Mr. Colonese said the entire town could be inventoried, and he's unaware of there being one at this time. Commissioner Zielfelder asked what the inventory would do for the town, such as whether

the inventory would give the town resources to preserve land or structures. Mr. Colonese said the 2008 POCD says the inventory would provide other avenues to potential preservation programs, such as establishing a historic district, tax abatement programs, a demolition delay ordinance, and stewardship programs.

Chairman Quarno said it would not be a bad thing to have a historic preservation inventory, especially since there is state funding, and then decisions could be made to decide how to use the information thereafter. The grant from the state is \$20,000, and the State Historic Preservation Office says it covers about 100 buildings. Commissioner Zielfelder said the town should be efficient with the money.

Mr. Colonese said he would find information on how many potential homes and resources there are that would be included in the inventory and speak with Mary Dunne more about the program.

2. Review Sustainable CT Certification Action Overview Worksheet - Conservation Sections

Mr. Colonese said the Planning Department was notified on May 20 that the town received bronze certification from Sustainable CT. The town got a total of 485 points from 24 actions within 12 categories. Sustainable CT will be sending the town a communications kit, a press release, and a logo for the town's website. The town was also given a chart with a detailed description of which actions got points, how many points, and why points were given. Among the items submitted were the open space inventory, the POCD and Plan of Conservation, details on the town's sustainable snow management program, and silver designation with the SolSmart program. He added that the town is doing an extensive amount of recycling at the Public Works Department and that the high school is composting food waste with Blue Earth Compost.

The bronze certification from Sustainable CT is good for three years and will expire in December 2027. Chairman Quarno said if the historic resource preservation inventory is completed before the certification expires, then the town can submit that information when reapplying for certification.

The commission extended thanks to Lisa Houlihan, Town Planner, for her work on the Sustainable CT initiative.

3. Report - Farmland Preservation Program.

- a. Notice of Acquisition of Development Rights, Oakridge Dairy, Farm 2, for 101.98 acres, Recorded May 6, 2024.

Commissioners received the Notice of Acquisition of Development Rights for Oakridge Dairy, Farm 2, which is located between Meadow Brook Road and the high school. The closing is complete. There has been 1,181.45 acres of farmland preserved in Ellington.

- b. Farmland Preservation Brochure, Revised May 2024.

Mr. Colonese updated the farmland preservation brochure. Mr. Colonese asked the commission if they wanted to print 100 brochures to distribute at Ellington Farm Day in September and to keep them on the counter in the Planning Department. There is currently \$600 in the printing budget.

MOVED (GAGE) SECONDED (HARFORD) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO PRINT 100 FARMLAND PRESERVATION BROCHURES FROM THE CONSERVATION COMMISSION'S ADVERTISING AND PRINTING ACCOUNT.

- c. Open Space/Farmland/Recreational Assets Inventory, Revised May 2024.

Mr. Colonese updated the Open Space/Farmland/Recreational Assets Inventory spreadsheet including Oakridge Dairy, Farm 2.

4. Report - Open Space Preservation Program

The Board of Selectmen approved the purchase of the Brady property at 79 Kibbe Road for \$300,000. It is a 27-acre parcel. A special town meeting will be held on Monday, June 10 at 6:00 PM at the town hall. The funds for the purchase of the property will come from the open space fund, which has \$203,597 set aside as grant revenue from the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP), and the remainder will come from the committed fund balance. The purchase was accepted by DEEP.

Valerie Amsel, the Ad Hoc Ellington Trails Committee liaison, dropped off some edits to the open space brochure to Mr. Colonese, asking to add edits to public access at Metcalf Preserve, Crystal Ridge, and the Highlands. He said he would update the brochure accordingly. Mr. Colonese asked the commission if they wanted to print 100 open space preservation brochures with the edits and he said would update the open space brochure and the assets inventory when 79 Kibbe Road closes.

MOVED (GAGE) SECONDED (HARFORD) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO PRINT 100 OPEN SPACE BROCHURES FROM THE CONSERVATION COMMISSION'S ADVERTISING AND PRINTING ACCOUNT.

Mr. Colonese said he emailed the owner of 178 Crystal Lake Road. The owner had questions about potential funding opportunities for preservation of the parcel. Mr. Colonese responded, but he hasn't heard back yet. The property is now listed for sale for \$89,000 and is noted as sale pending. The state's blue Shenipsit Trail passes through the property.

Mr. Colonese reached out to landowners at the end of Green Road about selling their property for open space preservation. He spoke with George Grant, who owns a 31-acre parcel, who expressed interest. He also spoke with a realtor representing Barbara MacVarish, who owns a 28-acre parcel, interested in selling the land. He has a call into John Dehram who jointly owns two parcels totaling 25 acres. Ms. Houlihan, Town Planner, also spoke with Scott Brady in April about his two parcels on Green Road.

- d. Executive Session to Discuss Possible Open Space Purchases.

MOVED (GAGE) SECONDED (QUARNO) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO ENTER INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION AT 7:50 PM FOR THE PURPOSE OF DISCUSSING POTENTIAL OPEN SPACE ACQUISITIONS INVITING COMMISSION MEMBERS, THE RECORDING CLERK, AND THE ASSISTANT TOWN PLANNER.

MOVED (HARFORD) SECONDED (KACZMAREK) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO EXIT EXECUTIVE SESSION AT 8:02 PM. NO MOTIONS OR DECISIONS WERE MADE DURING THE EXECUTIVE SESSION.

IV. ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS:

1. FY 23-24 Budget & Expenditure Update.

There is \$390 in the Dues and Subscriptions account. Mr. Colonese said he would follow on the remaining amount. The commission has already paid for membership to the Northern Connecticut Land Trust and the Connecticut Land Conservation Council. The other current expenditure is for the services of the part-time recording secretary.

2. Approval of March 12, 2024, Regular Meeting Minutes.

MOVED (GAGE) SECONDED (QUARNO) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF MARCH 12, 2024, AS WRITTEN.

3. Correspondence/Discussion:

- a. Ad Hoc Ellington Trails Committee - Monthly Agendas/Minutes.

Commissioner Harford shared updates from the Ad Hoc Ellington Trails Committee. The Boy Scouts will help construct kiosks. The bridge at Kimball has been fixed, and the signs are posted leading into the different walking and hiking areas. Trail Day is coming up on Saturday, June 1.

- b. Northern Connecticut Land Trust Landmark Newsletter, March 2024.

- c. Oakridge Dairy receives CT Dept. of Agriculture Climate Resiliency Grant, Patch article dated April 17, 2024.

V. ADJOURNMENT:

MOVED (GAGE) SECONDED (HARFORD) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADJOURN THE CONSERVATION COMMISSION MEETING AT 8:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Nathaniel Trask, Recording Clerk



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**Ad Hoc Ellington Trails Committee
Regular Meeting Agenda
Wednesday, June 5, 2024 - 6:30 PM
Town Hall Annex, 57 Main Street**

- I. Call to Order
- II. Citizens' Forum
- III. Approval of Minutes
 - A. May 1, 2024
- IV. Old Business
 - A. Hockanum River Crew Report
 - B. Boardwalk
 - C. Conservation Commission Report
 - D. Kiosks
 - E. Emergency Signs
 - F. Maps
 - G. Road Signs
 1. Batz
 2. Windermere
 - H. Easements for West Road/Franklin Radio Station
 - I. Eagle Scout Projects
 - J. Batz Wildflower Field
- V. New Business
- VI. Subcommittee Reports
 - A. Treasurer
 - B. Maintenance
 1. Kimball
 2. Batz
 - C. Community Outreach
 1. Bird Walk at Batz
 2. CT Trails Day
- VII. Adjournment



TOWN OF ELLINGTON

Ad Hoc Ellington Trails Committee

55 MAIN STREET – PO BOX 187
ELLINGTON, CONNECTICUT 06029-0187

VALERIE AMSEL
JUDI MANFRE
DONNA ALLEN
LINDSAY NEUBECKER
BILL SCHULTZ
TOM PALSHAW
DAN CHAMBERLIN
ROBERT BARONE
ANN HARFORD

CHAIRMAN
LINDA ANDERSON

VICE CHAIRMAN
CYNTHIA VAN ZELM

SECRETARY
DEANNA WAMBOLT-GULICK

Ad Hoc Ellington Trails Committee
Regular Meeting Minutes
May 1, 2024
Town Hall Annex

MEMBERS PRESENT: Linda Anderson, Tom Palshaw, Robert Barone, Cynthia van Zelm, Valerie Amsel, Donna Allen, Ann Harford, Judi Manfre, Deanna Wambolt-Gulick

MEMBERS ABSENT: Lindsay Neubecker, Bill Schultz, Dan Chamberlin

I. Call to Order

Ms. Anderson called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

II. Citizens' Forum: No citizens wished to speak at this time.

III. Approval of Minutes

A. April 3, 2024

Changes were discussed, including adding "litter" to the Hockanum River Crew Report section, to read "Some trees were down and water was collecting *litter*." Another change was "Ms. Amsel put down *Preen* at the entrance of Metcalf" under the Maintenance Subcommittee Report, as well as adding Dan Chamberlin to Members Absent.

MOVED (PALSHAW), SECONDED (HARFORD) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE APRIL 3, 2024 MEETING.

IV. Old Business

A. Hockanum River Crew Report

Ms. Anderson mentioned that there is a makeshift swing hanging near some water on the trail, presenting a safety concern; she requested that it be removed.

Ms. Harford shared that they went down to the trail with Public Works members. There was a discussion of bringing stone in to help address a muddy area near some bricks; this will cover the bricks and hopefully solve the water issue. The Windermere walkway has been extended and a guardrail added. Fence posts were driven in to add sturdiness.

Ms. Anderson noted that Youth Services added painted rocks and laminated sheets for their walk activity; the Committee discussed checking that the signage specifically has been removed.

Ms. Harford noted that there are issues with dog poop bags being left by the kiosks and other areas of the trail.

Mr. Barone mentioned that there are people on four-wheelers and two-wheelers causing damage to the trail.

Ms. Harford noted concerns with knotweed and vines; they are working to keep these concerns maintained.

Mr. Palshaw added that they previously worked to remove some briars and poison ivy vines.

Ms. Anderson suggested that the Committee add some boundary signage to ensure that private property is more clearly marked. She will bring signs to the Hockanum River Crew so that they can add them to the trail where needed.

B. Boardwalk

Ms. Anderson shared that she met with Representative Foster about the project; they are looking at a day in June for Good Neighbor Day. Big Y is interested in participating as well. Ms. Anderson is hopeful that both Representative Foster and Big Y can participate in the project, which will hopefully be scheduled as Representative Foster becomes available.

C. Conservation Commission Report

Ms. Amsel noted that there was no meeting, and therefore no update to share.

D. Kiosks

Ms. Anderson shared that the Boy Scouts are planning to complete the project at Crystal Ridge and Kimball on May 11th after the Bird Walk. The Pinney kiosk is also planned, but Crystal Ridge and Kimball are the priorities.

E. Emergency Signs

Mr. Palshaw shared that there will be consistency for colors and numbers used on the signs. He noted differences that he is planning with the maps and discussed establishing common names for dispatch purposes. He noted that along the trails, emergency services may choose to access from different areas. However, there needs to be a specific address for dispatch. He has discussed this with John Turner to ensure that this gets established. Mr. Palshaw went on to explain that for any trails that have separate entrances and/or separate trails, there will be different addresses marked for dispatch and emergency services purposes. For Ellington Highland, the common name will be up on Stein Road.

The entire plan will be updated and complete rewritten. Mr. Palshaw noted that this doesn't affect the Committee's plans but emphasized that the names that the Committee use might need to be shifted to reflect the common names being established.

F. Maps, Including Crystal Ridge

Ms. Anderson shared that there have been some changes. Reflecting on the map, she noted the yellow highlight at the bottom. She also shared that a bird house icon has been added to Crystal Ridge, Windermere, and Batz. The Kimball map had a kiosk icon added. The frog platform has been added at Batz, as well as the "Decide to Be Kind" tree.

On Crystal Ridge Trail, Ms. Anderson had the parking moved over to the right side of the map, and the kiosk will be added. The Quartz Trail has been changed so it is more legible on the map. The Aborn Trail has also been changed so that it stands out better on the map.

There will be no additional work for now, pending the next budget cycle. At that point, Ms. Anderson anticipates that the Committee will be able to work on the Ellington Highlands map.

G. Road Signs

Ms. Anderson noted that the reception to the signs has been positive, as community members note that they are more aware of the trails now. Ms. Wambolt-Gulick commented the same, noting how excellent it was to see the Kimball sign. She also suggested that the Committee add more road signs, pending budget constraints.

1. Metcalf

Ms. Anderson suggested that the Committee not add a sign for this trail, as it would be directing hikers to a place with very limited parking.

2. Windermere Placement

Ms. Anderson will be meeting with Public Works to establish the placement for signage. The Committee considered putting signs on either side of Pinney Street. There are concerns about where to park or where to direct parking, aiming to limit wear and tear on nearby athletic fields.

Mr. Barone suggested establishing a path to allow hikers to walk around the Pinney Fields.

Mr. Palshaw noted that if the entrance is moved towards the fields, then the kiosk should be moved to ensure that it is still at the trail entrance.

3. Batz Placement

Ms. Anderson will be meeting with Public Works to establish placement for signage; the Committee considered putting signage up Mountain Road.

H. Easements for West Road/Franklin Radio Station

There was nothing new to report.

I. Eagle Scout Project

Ms. Anderson noted that the Eagle Scout reached out and wants to create a ground nest for bees over by the orchard heading towards the solar panels. She described the project, noting that it will require fencing in the project, adding sand, and putting up signage to alert hikers.

J. Ellington Highlands Bridge

Ms. Amsel shared that she and her son fixed the bridge that had been axed last year; there hasn't been any vandalism of it reported since. She noted that it could use some gravel, but it is functional. All debris was also removed.

Ms. Anderson shared that natural wood guardrails have been put up at the parking area at the Ellington Highlands Trail. She noticed that there are stakes and tape, so asphalt should be added soon. Once that is complete, the Committee can begin blazing.

K. Batz Wildflower Field

Ms. Anderson shared that the field has been rototilled and that the seeds are in; she is hoping to get a team together for next week to seed the field.

The trees had not been pruned, as previously shared, but they are pruned now. There are some concerns with the apple trees; there are some black knots that could be snipped off to bolster the health of the trees.

V. New Business

There was nothing to add at this time.

VI. Subcommittee Reports

A. Treasurer

Ms. Anderson shared that there is \$2,403.53 left in the budget. There are some invoices that are still outstanding, such as wood for the boardwalk at Windermere. Ms. Amsel estimated that this invoice will be around \$500.

Ms. Anderson noted that money will still need to be allocated for mulch, gravel, and maps. She suggested that money should then be allocated for road signs, which should bring the remaining balance down further.

B. Maintenance

1. Ellington Highlands

This item was discussed previously.

2. Clean-up Day at Crystal Ridge – Results

Ms. Amsel celebrated that 27 people came out to help with this project. The steps to the bridge are anchored, and the path that goes over to the bench has been dug out and flattened. There is still a bit of an angle, but it is greatly improved. The Boy Scouts put pavers off of the Quartz bridge, where it was wet. Drainage stones were also added to help.

Ms. Allen shared that the team of people with her worked to pry out an old man-made bridge that had been partially buried in the ground. They used what was pried out to line edges of the trail. Litter, such as old pallets and tires, was collected from the trail to be picked up for disposal. She noted that there is still some litter that has been swallowed up by bittersweet.

Ms. Anderson shared that additional teams cleaned out the Orange and Quartz Trails with blowers and clippers. They didn't quite finish Zach's trail, but it was cleaned up later by Ms. Allen and Ms. Anderson.

3. Kimball

Ms. Allen and Ms. Amsel went out and cleaned trails. It isn't done yet, but they are planning to finish it up within the coming weeks.

Ms. Amsel is concerned about a bridge there. It is becoming undermined which is dropping a corner of the bridge, which will need to be lifted back up. She asked how Mr. Barone fixed a similar bridge issue previously. Discussion was held on a potential fix to keep water from going under that section.

C. Community Outreach

1. Ellington Youth Services Walk

Their materials will likely be removed soon, if not already removed.

2. Earth Day – April 20th

This event was successful, especially given the overcast days. The Committee got ten signups and met with many new residents.

3. Ginny Apple Talk – Beavers/Minks/Otters/Muskrats

This was a great talk with 30 attendees. She will be back in September for some new talks.

4. Bird Walk at Batz – May 11th (rain date May 12th) at 7:30 am

Ms. Anderson referred the Committee to the flyer for this upcoming event.

5. CT Trails Day – June 1st, 10:00 am at Windermere, led by Donna Allen and Cynthia van Zelm

Ms. van Zelm shared that registration opens on May 8th. Ms. Anderson noted that the parking will be at the Pinney Fields instead of at the Y; this change has been indicated on the event website.

Ms. van Zelm inquired about how to communicate about this program. Ms. Anderson suggested putting a flyer up at the Library. Ms. Anderson also noted that she will send an email to the email list, letting people know how to sign up. A post can also be made on the Committee's Facebook page.

It was confirmed that there is no rain date for this event.

6. Astronomy Meteor Shower Watch at Pinney Field – August 12, after 9:00 pm to midnight

This event will coincide with an expected meteor shower. Ms. Anderson, Ms. Wambolt-Gulick, and Ms. Allen noted that they should be available to help with this event.

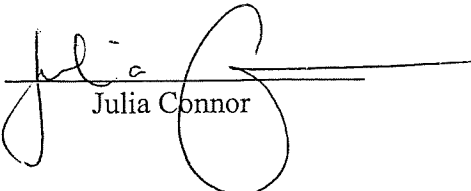
7. Other Event Coming – June or July

The Committee hopes to set up another event for astronomy and telescope usage in June or July.

VII. Adjournment

MOVED (ALLEN), SECONDED (WAMBOLT-GULICK) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADJOURN THE TRAILS COMMITTEE MEETING AT 7:41 PM.

Prepared by Deanna Wambolt-Gulick; submitted by


Julia Connor



CAES

The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station

Putting Science to Work for Society since 1875

Founded in 1875

Putting science to work for society

Dr. Yonghao Li

Department of Plant Pathology and Ecology

The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station

123 Huntington Street, P. O. Box 1106

New Haven, CT 06504

Phone: (203) 974-8601

Fax: (203) 974-8502

Email: Yonghao.Li@ct.gov

Website: <https://portal.ct.gov/caes>

BEECH LEAF DISEASE

Beech leaf disease was first discovered in Ohio in 2012. It has since been found in Pennsylvania, New York, and Ontario, Canada in North America. In Connecticut, this disease was first detected in August 2019 (Figure 1). The disease has been observed mainly in forests, but also in landscaped areas. Beech leaf disease causes premature leaf drop and thin canopies, and also makes the trees more susceptible to other pests.

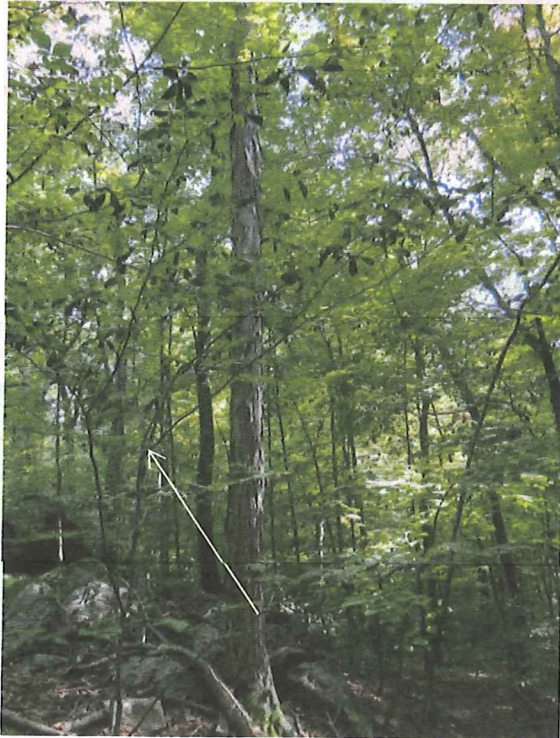


Figure 1. A beech sapling affected by beech leaf disease (arrow).

SYMPTOMS AND DIAGNOSTICS

Dark green striping between leaf veins is a characteristic symptom of this disease, which is especially noticeable when viewing upward into the canopy (Figure 2) or viewing against light (Figure 3). The symptom appears when leaves form in the spring. The initial symptoms are darkening and wrinkling of small portion of leaf tissues between veins (Figures 3 and 4). As disease progresses, the infected leaf tissues turn yellow, slightly raised, crinkly, and leathery (Figure 5). Heavily infected leaves are curled downward, shrunken, and are prematurely defoliated (Figure 6). Sapling and young trees are more susceptible to the disease and can die within three years after symptoms are observed, which can reduce the proportion of American beech in the affected forest areas. Symptoms of other



Figure 2. Dark green striping between veins on beech leaves.

pests, such as beech blight aphid, European beech scale, eriophyid mites, and anthracnose, can resemble beech leaf disease, which stresses the need for a laboratory examination.

DISEASE DEVELOPMENT

A foliar nematode species, *Litylenchus crenatae*, that was first described in Japan is associated with beech leaf disease and pathogenic to American beech (*Fagus grandifolia*), European beech (*F. sylvatica*), and oriental beech (*F. orientalis*). However, the origin of the pathogen and its distribution is unclear. Emerging leaves can be infected by the pathogen in the spring. But, survival and dissemination of the pathogens are unknown.

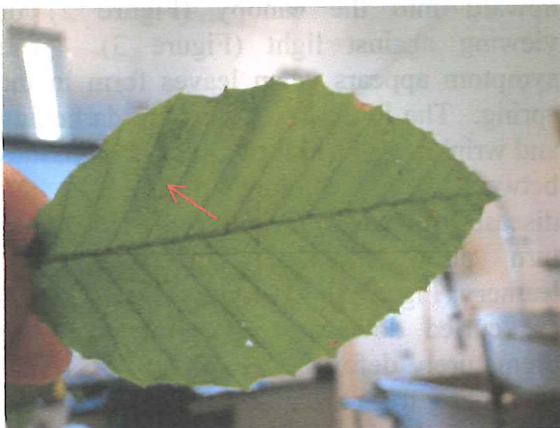


Figure 3. Darkening of leaf tissues between veins.



Figure 3. Wrinkling of leaf tissues between veins.

Beech Leaf Disease Y. H. Li

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DISEASE MANAGEMENT

Because little is known about the biology of the pathogen and epidemiology of the disease, no effective control or eradication measures have been developed. In general, the spread of invasive species can be prevented by restricting the movement of plant materials and monitoring trees closely for signs and symptoms. Beech leaf disease has spread very quickly eastward in the United States. Management efforts for the disease should focus on preventing the introduction of this invasive pathogen. Quarantines and regulations can be used to prevent further spread of beech leaf disease.

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Figure 5. Yellow striping between veins on the upper surface of beech leaves.



Figure 6. Curling and browning of leaves.

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Beech Leaf Disease: Management Options

Beech leaf disease (BLD) is a serious threat to our native American beech trees and ornamental European and oriental beeches. The disease has spread quickly from Ohio since first being detected in 2012. It is now found in 12 states and the province of Ontario. It's infecting beech in all New England states except Vermont. It was first found in CT in 2019, and in RI and MA in 2020 (Fig. 1). The American beech, *Fagus grandifolia*, is a foundational tree species in several important eastern forest types, and critical for the hard mast (beechnuts) eaten by wildlife and shade they provide.

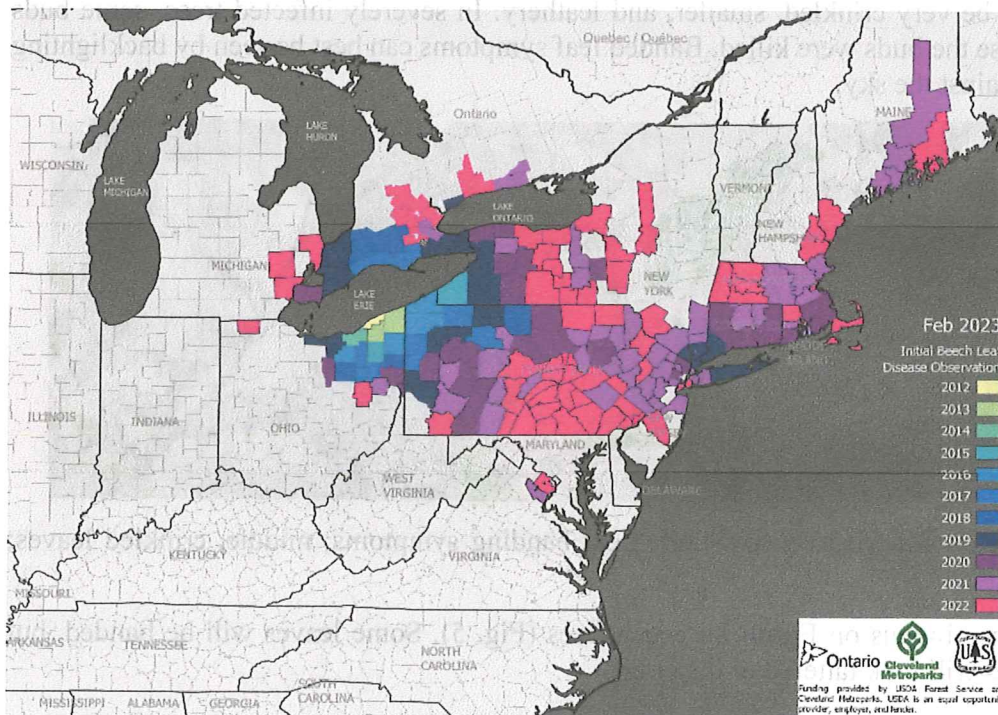


Fig. 1. Range expansion of beech leaf disease from 2012 to 2023.

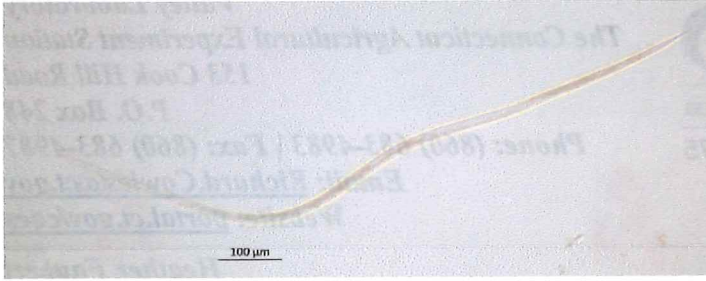


Fig. 2. Immature migrating female of *Litylenchus crenatae* ssp. *mccannii*. Photo by DeWei Li, CAES

Beech leaf disease is caused by a foliar nematode, *Litylenchus crenatae* ssp. *mccannii* (Fig 2.). Nematodes are microscopic worms that vary greatly in lifestyle and habitat, and not all are parasitic. We don't know where the nematodes came from, but growing evidence supports the hypothesis that this species is not native to North America. It has spread quickly, partly through rain splash, and likely also by hitchhiking on birds, squirrels, and insects. Peak emergence of nematodes migrating from leaves to buds occurs about the same time that beechnuts are ripening, which provides an opportunity for migrating nematodes to interact with animals that come to feed on these nuts. We do know that the nematodes spend the winter in beech buds, that beech leaves emerge fully symptomatic in the spring, and that no further symptoms appear during the growing season. Therefore, management of this disease needs to either prevent nematodes from entering the buds or prevent nematodes that enter buds from inducing changes in leaf development.

SYMPTOMS

It's easy to determine if American beech trees are infected with BLD (Fig. 4). In the spring when new leaves are emerging from buds, infected leaves will have some dark bands between leaf veins, or the leaves will be very crinkled, smaller, and leathery. In severely infected trees, some buds won't open because the buds were killed. Banded leaf symptoms can best be seen by backlighting infected leaves against the sky.



Fig. 4. Symptoms on American beech. Left, Leaf banding symptoms; middle, crinkled leaves; right, dead buds.

Symptoms are less obvious on European beech trees (Fig. 5). Some leaves will be banded, but many of the leaves will look tattered or distorted.

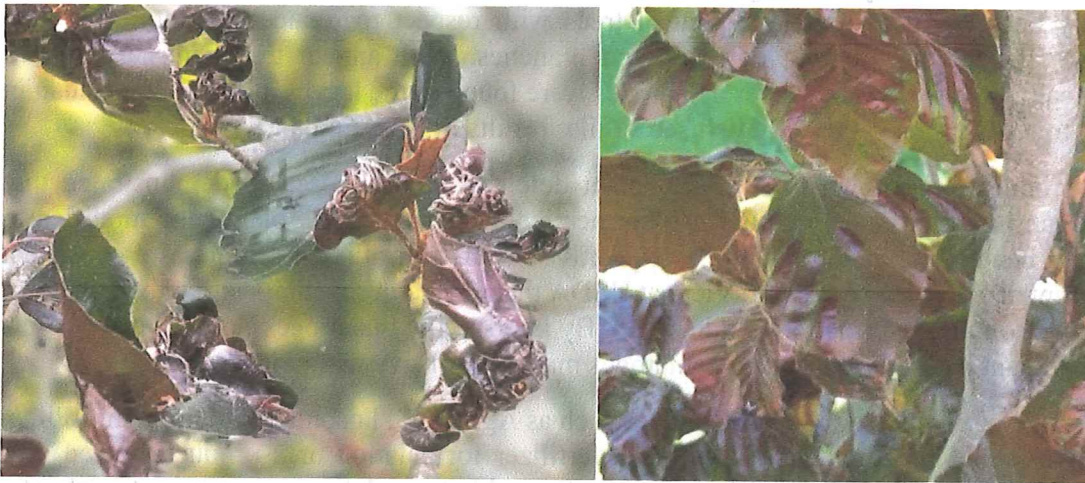


Fig. 5. Symptoms on European copper beech. Left, Tattered leaves; right, banded leaves.

On heavily infected trees many overwintering buds will be killed, and severely damaged leaves fall off soon after emerging in May. In late May or early June, many American beech trees produce new, second flush leaves in response to defoliation. These leaves are formed in newly produced buds. Second flush leaves don't have nematodes and do not show symptoms of BLD because they form in the absence of BLD nematodes. The new leaves are pale and thin when compared with normal, healthy leaves, and usually lack the toothed margins characteristic of first-flush leaves (Fig. 6).



Fig. 6. Refoliated (second flush) leaves are paler and less robust than normal, healthy beech leaves.

In Ohio, researchers are seeing some American beech trees, particularly younger understory trees, die in 6 – 10 years after infection. While we are seeing much faster progression of disease and decline in the Northeast, actual mortality has not yet been documented in Connecticut. However, we expect that some trees will succumb in as little as four years after the first appearance of symptoms.

MANAGEMENT

What can be done about BLD? In 2017, Ohio researchers associated with Davey Tree Expert Co., Cleveland Metroparks, and ACRT Services started treating the soil around small beech trees (2 - 4 inches in diameter) with a phosphite product sold as a potassium fertilizer. Such potassium phosphite and potassium polyphosphite fertilizers are made by several companies. The researchers

applied product twice each year and got encouraging results after the first year. Treated trees were significantly healthier than untreated control trees with respect to reduced symptoms of leaf banding, defoliation, and dieback of twigs and branches. With annual treatments, trees have remained healthy for five years. Fewer nematodes were found in the leaves of treated trees than in the control trees. Our hope is that we will see similar results in New England.

Phosphite products are known to stimulate plant defenses. Earlier research demonstrated that phosphites can interrupt gall formation by root nematodes, in which the plant cells modified to form the gall benefit nematode feeding. The positive results from the OH studies are consistent with the recent discovery by Dr. Paulo Viera at USDA that nematodes feeding within the bud cause tissue changes to initiate formation of a leaf gall. By interrupting this process, phosphite products can maintain plant health, even though nematodes may still survive within leaf tissues.

Many phosphite products are sold as fungicides such as Agri-FOS, Fosphite, Reliant, Fungi-Phite, and Prophyt. Beech trees treated with either a fertilizer formulation or a product labeled as a fungicide should respond similarly. When using a fungicide formulation, you may not apply at a higher dose than allowed on the label. However, multiple applications of products labeled for plant protection use should reach effective concentrations of phosphite in tree tissues. To use a phosphite product, plan to make at least two applications between the months of May and August. Mix 2 fl. oz. of phosphite product plus 14 oz. of water per inch DBH (diameter at breast height). So, a 4-inch diameter tree will require 8 oz. of phosphite fertilizer in 48 oz. of water. Pour this around the base of the tree (Fig. 7). If the soil is dry, moisten the soil first with water so that the solution can penetrate the soil.



Fig. 7. Drenching a phosphite product into soil at the base of a beech tree.

Research in Ohio was performed on small (2-4" diameter trees) trees. The rate of 2 oz. of phosphite fertilizer per inch DBH may not be enough to improve the health of larger beech trees. Bigger trees have more foliage than smaller trees, and to account for this difference you may need to increase the number of applications. Please recognize that potassium phosphate is a salt, which may damage roots if present in excessive quantities or under drought conditions. Concern over overloading the soil with salts implies that greater quantities of product should not be concentrated near the root

flare but should be applied over a larger area. Otherwise, we may damage the tree with too much fertilizer.

A fungicide/nematicide called Broadform, which has an ornamentals label, kills nematodes when sprayed on beech leaves – a job best left to professional arborists. Here are several considerations for deciding whether Broadform is an appropriate option:

- (1) Are there untreated beech trees nearby? Fluopyram sprayed on the foliage does not enter the buds. If nematodes migrate from neighboring untreated trees to the buds, where the damage occurs, then a fluopyram spray will be ineffective. Therefore, fluopyram should only be considered for treating trees isolated from other, untreated beech trees.
- (2) If the tree is less than 4 inches in trunk diameter, then the phosphite treatment can be effective as a stand-alone treatment, whether or not there are other untreated trees nearby.
- (3) If there are any bodies of water nearby, or hardscape leading to storm drains, then fluopyram products are inappropriate. Fluopyram is very toxic to aquatic organisms.
- (4) Can the foliage be sprayed? If the tree is very tall or if it overhangs a neighbor's property, it may not be possible to spray the foliage.

If appropriate, fluopyram application(s) should be made between late May and late August. It's currently unknown if more than one application of fluopyram is needed. Monitoring for the continued presence of nematodes by extracting them in water from leaves is a convenient method to determine whether foliar sprays with fluopyram have been effective. If live nematodes are not detected following overnight leaf extraction, then further sprays may not be warranted.

Another important concern is pesticide resistance. It seems likely that BLD nematodes will develop resistance to fluopyram if this product is overused.

How to test for nematode presence using bud or leaf extraction

Step 1. Preparing the sample for extraction

1a. During the dormant season, overwintering buds can be collected and tested for the presence of nematodes. To test buds, remove six buds from around the perimeter of a tree. With a needle, forceps (tweezers), probe, or fine scissors (nail scissors work well), cut the bud lengthwise and tease the scales and developing, tiny leaves open. Place the buds in a small shallow clear plastic or glass dish and cover with water. Proceed to Step 3.

1b. During the growing season, nematodes that cause BLD can be detected from leaves between late July through leaf fall. Attempts to extract nematodes before mid-July are unsuccessful, even though nematodes are present in the leaves! Pick several symptomatic leaves. Vigorously rinse the leaves off with a stream of water to remove any surface-dwelling nematodes. Pat the leaves dry. Manually tear out the symptomatic areas of leaves from between the veins. Shred these symptomatic portions into small pieces (1 cm square).

Step 2. Conducting the extraction

Submerge the sample from Step 1b into a shallow layer of water in a dish or pan in a cool location. Aluminum pie pans work well. The objective is to have a high surface area to volume relationship, so that the nematodes have enough oxygen to remain active. Hold the samples overnight.

Step 3. Observe the results

Remove the plant material from the water with forceps. Extracted nematodes can be seen easily with good magnification, either by using a dissecting microscope or a USB microscope (the cost is about \$60 from online retailers). They appear as highly mobile, thread-like animals (Fig. 2) with sinuous movements in the water. It is easiest to see them when the liquid containing them is held over a dark surface and the liquid is illuminated from the side.

Note: If a fluopyram treatment is effective and samples are evaluated within weeks of spraying, dead nematodes may be extracted with the procedure given above. They can be so numerous that dead nematodes can spill out of torn leaf tissue.

Note: Product trade names are used for convenience, and not to promote a product. Always read and follow pesticide label directions. The label is the law.