



AVALONIA LAND CONSERVANCY, Inc.  
P.O. Box 49,  
Old Mystic, CT 06372

# Paffard Marsh Preserve

## Property Management Plan

Stonington Road (Route 1)  
Stonington, New London County, Connecticut

Stonington Town Committee is responsible  
for the stewardship of this property

Plan Prepared by:  
Richard Newton & Beth Sullivan  
Fall 2015

Approved by Stonington Town Committee: \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Approved by Stewardship Committee: \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_



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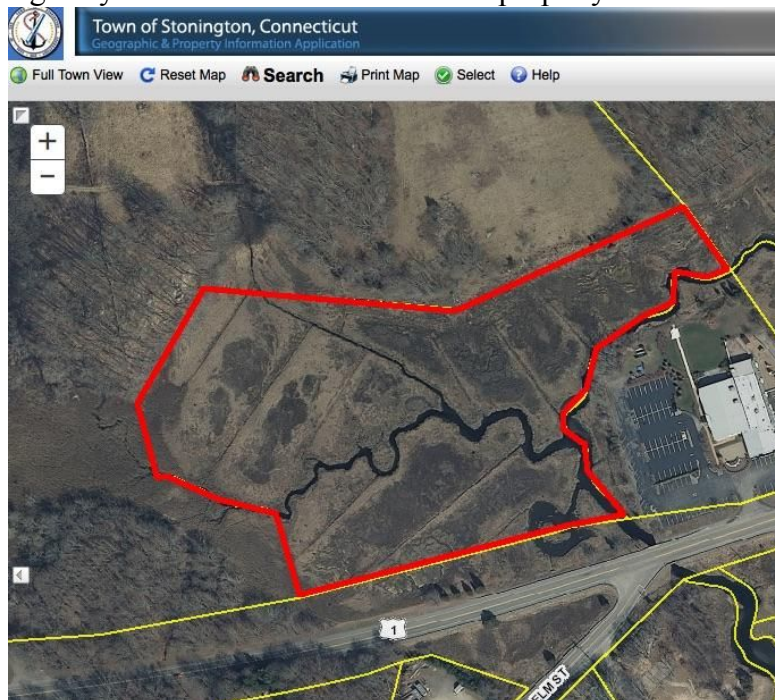
## SUMMARY

This plan is for one property on Stonington Road (Route 1) in Stonington, CT. This is a non-trailed property mainly consisting of salt-water marsh. Access is limited due to it being sensitive marshland. See the photos and map that follows. Visitors are welcome.

Property is owned by Avalonia Land Conservancy, Inc., P.O. Box 49, Old Mystic, CT 06372. Avalonia Land Conservancy (ALC) can be reached by email at [avalonialc@yahoo.com](mailto:avalonialc@yahoo.com), by phone at 860-884-3500, and has a website at <http://www.avalonialandconservancy.org>.

## HISTORY

The Paffard Marsh Preserve is located in the Town of Stonington south-central area of town. A stable and pastureland to the north and west, commercial development to the east and State Highway Route 1 to the south abut the property.



## SITE INFORMATION

### The property

A parcel map of the property from the Town of Stonington GIS database is shown to the left. The property is identified as Map/Book/Lot/Unit 75/1/7. GIS acreage is roughly 9.2 acres.

### Acquisition history

Donation to the Mashantucket Land Trust was from Frederick C. Paffard, the estate of Helen A. Paffard and Stone Acres Trust in

December 1969.

Mashantucket Land Trust was renamed Avalonia Land Conservancy, Inc. in September 1995.

## Land use history

The land has always marshland and the surrounding properties have been developed into a variety of uses as described above.

## **Neighborhood Change in Connecticut, 1934 to Present**

Want to compare 1934, 1990, 2004, 2006, 2008, and 2012 using a transparency tool? [Check out our Connecticut Aerial Photography Interactive Map Interface](#)



Attention ArcGIS and other GIS software users! The 1934 Aerial Photography layer is available via [MAGIC's WMS](#).

**Use the search box below to locate an address in Connecticut.**

06378

**Toggle map layers**

CT Towns

1934



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Satellite



Import Auto  
Cove Ledge Package Store  
The Meadows  
Black Bear Traditional Martial Arts Center  
Americas Best Value Inn  
Cemetery Rd  
Saltwater Farm Vineyard

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## Public use resources

The property is open to the public for all standard Avalonia passive recreational activities, though in practice the only activity is wildlife observation. The property provides wildlife habitat for typical salt marsh inhabitants and easy opportunities for public observation.

Public benefit of the protected property:

The property falls within a CT DEEP Natural Diversity Database area and provides access to a varied coastal habitat for passive recreation. People have been known to catch blue crabs near the highway bridge on Route 1.

The property is a significant natural area that qualifies as being preserved for a “conservation purpose” under 26 US Code 170(h)(4):

**(4) Conservation purpose defined**

**(A) In general**

For purposes of this subsection, the term “conservation purpose” means—

- (i)** the preservation of land areas for outdoor recreation by, or the education of, the general public,
- (ii)** the protection of a relatively natural habitat of fish, wildlife, or plants, or similar ecosystem,
- (iii)** the preservation of open space (including farmland and forest land) where such preservation is—
  - (I)** for the scenic enjoyment of the general public, or
  - (II)** pursuant to a clearly delineated Federal, State, or local governmental conservation policy, and will yield a significant public benefit, or
- (iv)** the preservation of an historically important land area or a certified historic structure.

Natural resources

The parcel is a healthy salt marsh ecosystem, typical of this area of coastal Connecticut.

Phragmites have become a major issue on the property and the abutting property to the west, thus the wetland habitats are becoming severely degraded. Natural diversity will remain diminished with this invasion.

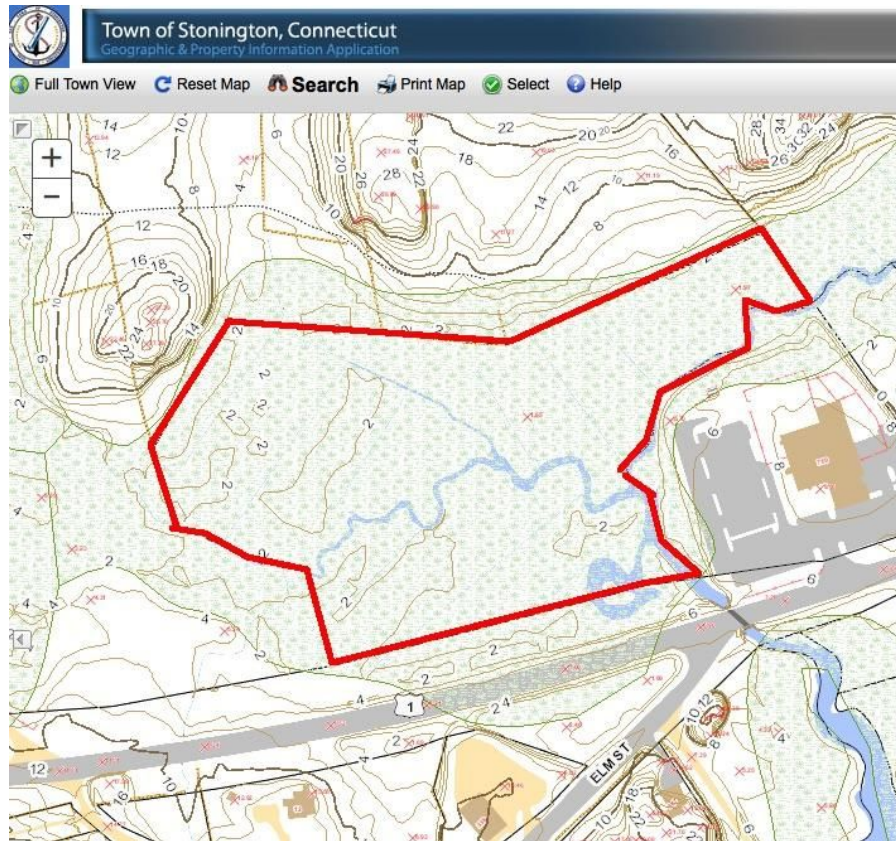
Egrets, several Heron species and Ibis feed here. An Osprey platform was erected in 2011. A NDDDB report required as part of the Osprey permit stated that Salt Marsh Sharp-Tailed Sparrows are believed to be resident on the marsh.

Potential threats to conservation values: Sea level rise will continue to eat away at the saltmarsh edges and flood the marsh and there are limited areas for marsh migration because elevations rise fairly quickly on adjoining properties.

Overgrowth of non-native and invasive plants could compromise the conservation value of the marsh and native coastal shrub habitat.



## ELEVATIONS / WETLANDS



## SPECIAL FEATURES AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

The property is in a CT DEEP Natural Diversity Database area (see above) and an active Osprey Platform exists. Donahue Brook the west and an unnamed brook from the east flow into Oxecosset Brook and out to Wequetquock Cove.

## MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

### Stewardship policies

Avalonia Land Conservancy Fee Land Stewardship Principles were approved on December 16, 2009 and the document is available at the Conservancy's office on Hatch Street in Mystic, CT.

This document sets forth the general principles governing stewardship of all Avalonia properties. The document or any approved successor is hereby incorporated as part of this management plan.

### Protection

#### Condition of Boundaries:

- Corner monuments/pins found
- Boundary signs posted

A roadside sign is present. Standard boundary signs have been posted but there are limited trees on which to post.

The management objective for this property is to leave it in its natural state as protected open space.

An annual walk around the boundaries of the properties is required. Some portions are inaccessible within Phragmites dominated area. Yearly surveillance should be conducted. All motorized vehicles are prohibited on the properties except for maintenance.

#### Maintaining properties appearance

Litter control.

#### Public use

The preserve is open to the public for passive recreational use though there are no trails. Access onto marsh is generally limited due to fragile nature of habitat. Motor vehicles, bicycle riding, and horseback riding are not permitted. Hunting and the use of firearms on the property including bow hunting and target practice are not permitted. Camping is not allowed. Dogs must be kept on a leash no longer than 7 feet long. Visitors are not allowed to pick vegetation or disturb wildlife excessively.

#### Enhancing wildlife habitat(s)

Need to identify if any additional endangered or threatened species or species of concern are present. Control spread of Phragmites to recreate better habitats.

#### Controlling invasive species

Removal of invasive species will be accomplished as resources permit. Work with DEEP to

manage Phragmites and to enhance wildlife habitat.

#### Erosion control and flooding

The property will flood with sea level rise.

#### Productive uses

Provides habitat for Salt Marsh Sharp-Tailed Sparrows and Osprey. Shore birds feed on the marsh. Waterfowl are common in breeding season as well as migration and overwintering. Herons, Egrets and Ibis use the channels and flooded marsh for feeding. Fish and crabs migrate up the brackish stream.

#### Scientific and educational activities

Botanists from New England Wildflower Society, Seeds of Success program, are allowed to use the marsh to collect seeds of salt marsh species for use on coastal restoration projects. UConn has studied Salt-marsh bird species. These efforts may continue.

#### Response to large natural disasters

Removal of any hazards will be undertaken as necessary.

#### Special management considerations

Town of Stonington provides mosquito control as needed to standing pools on marsh.

### IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN

#### Recurring and occasional requirements

Stonington Town Committee members visit the site on a limited basis. Assess condition of Osprey pole and platform.

#### Annual obligations

A boundary walk around the outside perimeter the property is required.

#### Short term plan (1 – 5 years)

Annual boundary walk. Post boundaries.

CT DEEP is undertaking a Phragmites control plan. Work to get cooperation with neighbors on this plan.

Long term plan (5+ years)

Monitor site. Control invasive plants. Neighboring property would be a valuable addition if it becomes available.

Schedule for revising this plan

This plan shall be reviewed at least every five years and updated as necessary.

APPENDICES

I. Zoning map for property and surrounding area is available at the Stonington Town Hall or online at <http://gis.stonington-ct.gov>.

Deeds are available in Avalonia files, Stonington Town Hall and online at <https://connecticut-townclerks-records.com/User/Login.aspx?ReturnUrl=%2fIndex.aspx>