



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

The Mitchell Preserve

Property Management Plan

Includes The Gibson/Mckain Songbird Tract,
The Greenwood Tract, The Green Falls Five Tract,
and the Mains Brook Tract. Listed in Preston/North
Stonington as the Reed-Mitchell Preserve

Two entries: off Northwest Corner Road and off Lake of Isles Road
Preston, New London County, Connecticut

Preston Town Committee is responsible
for the stewardship of this property

Plan Prepared by:
Margaret Gibson
Fall - 2015

Approved by Preston Town Committee: _____

Date _____

Approved by Stewardship Committee: _____

Date _____



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SUMMARY

The Mitchell Preserve, listed with the Reed Preserve in North Stonington, consists of 6 contiguous properties (4 tracts). The Mitchell Preserve, 74.97 acres, was acquired in 2000 and is largely hardwood forest with rugged topography, cedar-topped rock outcroppings and promontories, with wetlands and portions of Mains Brook. The Mitchell Preserve is located at Lat 41 30'44.8" and Long 71 57'19.7". One hiking trail is accessed through the Reed Preserve, entering from Northwest Corner Road one mile from Route 164. The other hiking trail is accessed through the Greenwood Tract, located off Lake of Isles Road in Preston. The Gibson/McKain Songbird Preserve, acquired in 2008, consists of 9.22 acres of wetland and deep woods songbird habitat. The Greenwood Tract consists of 24.22 acres, acquired in 2011. It is a deeply wooded songbird habitat with wetlands, meandering streams, and a portion of an old logging road. The Green Falls Five consists of 4.98 acres, wooded upland with a portion of Mains Brook included, acquired in 2009. Mains Brook Preserve is 20.21 acres, acquired in 2005, includes wetland and wooded terrain and steep slopes.

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

HISTORY

The Mitchell Preserve was donated by Hobart and Jean Mitchell in 2000, adjacent to the Reed Preserve in North Stonington. The tracts were added in subsequent years, tract by tract, a "green necklace." The Gibson/McKain Songbird Preserve was donated by Margaret Gibson and David McKain; The Green Falls Five was donated by Green Falls, as was the Mains Brook Tract. The Greenwood was purchased by Avalonia Land Conservancy as a property in tax default in the Town of Preston.

SITE INFORMATION

See attached map and deeds.

CONSERVATION VALUES:

The Mitchell Preserve's conservation values are its varied ecosystems and rich woodland and wetland habitat: extensive undisturbed wooded areas, meandering streams, wetlands, and steep rocky promontories. As these second growth woods continue under preservation, there are hardwoods, oak, shagbark, black cherry, beech, swamp maple and many others. In the woods off Watson Road, the cedars (remnants of old fields) are falling and could be used for building material within Avalonia. The preserve is rich in bird life: hawks, owls, migrating birds such as scarlet tanager, wood thrush, veery. Bobcat have been observed, as well as otter and mink, deer, wild turkey, coyote, and fisher cat.

Public use resources: The property is open to the public for all standard Avalonia passive recreational activities. Educational programs and walks are encouraged.

Public use restrictions: Standard restrictions apply. See attached deeds.

POTENTIAL THREATS TO CONSERVATION VALUES:

Invasive plants (barberry, Japanese bittersweet) need to be controlled. Monitoring for ATV activity encouraged, especially off Lake of Isles and into the Greenwood Tract.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

Overall objectives: to maintain property, to open it to the public for educational and passive recreational purposes; to let the woods thrive. Clearing the paths of fallen trees, maintaining signage and trails. There could be a way of uniting the two trails, via the Mains Brook Tract, but there needs to be a bridge or raised walkway and platforms, since the area connecting the Gibson/Songbird Tract and the wooded of the Mains Brook Tract is wetland with deep water in some areas.

Productive uses: Habitat for neighborhood birds, mammals, insects and plants.

Scientific and educational activities: None known or anticipated.

Response to large natural disasters: None anticipated. May have to address trees damaged from a windstorm.

Special management considerations: There are no special management considerations at this time.

IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN

Recurring and occasional requirements: Roadside cleanup along Watson Road, Lake of Isles Road. Monitoring for ATV use at the entry off Lake of Isles Road.

Annual obligations: A boundary walk around the outside perimeter the property is required to look for intrusions and to ensure that the boundary is marked with Avalonia Land Conservancy signs.

Preparer Certification: I hereby certify that I (or another member of the Preston Town Committee) have personally inspected the property that is the subject of this management plan, and I have personally prepared and / or reviewed the maps, photographs, and other information contained in this file.

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____

Printed Name: _____