



PROTECTING & PRESERVING  
*Where the River Meets the Sound*

### Annual Fund Drive Letter 2022

The Old Saybrook Land Trust is 25 Years old this year!

Today's Old Saybrook Land Trust was re-incorporated in 1997 after a hiatus, in order to engage the community to help protect the 1000-acre Preserve. Over the past **twenty-five years** the Land Trust has initiated and participated in cooperative projects with the town and state, including the building of three fish passages in the Oyster River watershed, the acquisition and creation of two town parks (Great Cedars East and West), and the fifteen-year battle to protect the 1,000-acre coastal forest known today as **The Preserve**. Today we manage over 70 acres of land and have worked with local individuals, families, and kids on countless projects including native plant gardens, osprey platforms, trails, and horseshoe crab monitoring, to name a few.

The Land Trust is a uniquely **local** organization, operating on volunteer contributions of time and money to protect and enhance the natural assets that attracted us all to this special place.

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We are happy to share all of the changes, activities and news that has made 2022 so exciting.

Top among them is our anticipated acquisition in 2023 of an exquisite piece of land on Hyde Creek on the eastern edge of town. This tract includes the headwaters of Hyde Creek, and it meanders through private, state and town-owned tidal marsh before connecting, less than a half mile away, to the mainstream of the internationally recognized Lower Connecticut River estuary. This property will allow for the landward migration of tidal marsh as sea level rises, providing critical habitat for migratory and resident bird life and other wetland dependent species. It will add an additional eleven acres to the Land Trust's seventy acres in conservation ownership.

We look forward to and hope you will join us for a ribbon-cutting celebration early next year!\*\*

This year, John Ogren and Anna Termine were elected as co-presidents and several new board members were elected for a total of 13. Our members are Jeannine Breitenbach (Treasurer), Janet Adams, Barbara Guenther, Mary Hermann, Bob Lorenz, Karen Maines, Cathy Malin, Sue Petit, Judy Preston, Jan Sherwonit and Jim Sherwonit.

We are also pleased and proud to share that we have a new logo. This new logo represents all of the key aspects that make Old Saybrook unique, particularly our lighthouse and an Osprey in flight, and it makes clear our mission and goal as a land trust: *Protecting & Preserving Where the River Meets the Sound*.

In March, we held our **annual meeting** at the Acton Public Library, and we were pleased to host The Ferncroft Wildlife Rescue team, led by Bill and Pam Lefferts, as our guests. They gave an informal and educational slide show about Backyard Wildlife and spoke about the importance of opossums and how are wonderful they are to have in our back yards! The Lefferts are wildlife rehabbers specializing in the rescue and rehabilitation of Opossums. Bella and Mango were the two opossum ambassadors that came to our meeting and attendees were able to meet and pet them. The meeting was well attended and the children there were able to get up close to these cool little critters and learned a lot.

In July, our **annual guided kayak trip** in Plum Bank Marsh and around our Dunk Island property was held on a beautiful day! There is a lot of wildlife that breed and inhabit this marsh in the summer and being able to paddle around is a wonderful way to see and enjoy the incredible wildlife that call that area home.

In September we held our annual **Tree Swallow Sunset River Cruise**. The profits from this event will go toward our annual high school scholarship fund. OSLT offers scholarships to graduating seniors from the Old Saybrook

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High School each year. This year's cruise was spectacular with many seasoned cruisers saying it was one of the best ever!

Our **OAK (Outdoor Adventure Kids)** programs have been very busy! We had our annual horseshoe crab tagging event in June at Harvey's Beach and our annual Monarch butterfly tagging event in September at Founders Park where volunteers from Meigs Point Nature Center brought their Monarch expertise. The kids are amazed when they realize that horseshoe crabs are harmless and learn they were here before dinosaurs. They also learn about the incredible journey to Mexico that the Monarchs embark on and they truly loved the opportunity to see butterflies up close, help tag them and release them. These events are both popular and educational and it's a pleasure to have so many of our local families join us for this fun events.

Also, we have been busy creating citizen scientists to fulfill our mission and goal: Protecting & Preserving Where the River Meets the Sound. In October OSLT partnered with high school Early College Experience UCONN environmental science classes and the environmental field biology class under the leadership of educator Karen Carlone. Over several years the OSLT stewardship team has been clearing our Oyster River property of invasives. Local high schooler Tamzin Maines, who attends the Sound School in New Haven, received a \$400 FFA grant to purchase native species for the OSLT Oyster River property. OSLT members provided guidance on native plants. The local students visited the property and planted the native plants, then returned later to check on them and also learned how to identify many of our invasives. Land Trust members also educated the group on the importance of our local wetlands in sustaining our environment and ecology. We hope to continue collaboration with the high schoolers thus nurturing their environmental stewardship sensibilities and even influencing their friends and family to do the same!

As always, OSLT is dedicated to continuing its successful stewardship of its properties. **Stewardship** takes place the third Saturday of every month and locations are posted to the OSLT website. Stewardship is open to the public and we welcome anyone who wants to join us for fun and a little work!\*\*

Thank you to **you**, our members, for your continued support. We are excited to continue to protect and to preserve open space in Old Saybrook.

If anyone has property they would like to see protected for future generations, please contact us at [oldsaybrooklandtrust@oslt.org](mailto:oldsaybrooklandtrust@oslt.org).

The Old Saybrook Land Trust is a 501, tax deductible organization and we welcome donations. When making a donation, please indicate whether it is for purchase or stewardship for the Ayer's Point property or for our general fund.

Sincerely,

Anna and John

