

D A R I E N



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June 27, 2019

Cori M. Rose
Senior Project Manager
US Army Corps of Engineers
696 Virginia Road
Concord, MA 01742

Dear Ms. Rose:

The Darien Land Trust, a 501c3, permanently preserves and restores open space in Darien, Connecticut, providing one of the most densely populated communities in the state with environmentally rich habitats, scenic vistas, opportunities for educational experiences and the quiet enjoyment of nature.

The Darien Land Trust now owns or has conservation easements over more than 200 acres in Darien. Our activities have permanently protected, restored and now maintain diverse natural environments such as wetlands along the Stony Brook, Five Mile and Noroton Rivers, Long Island Sound salt marshes at Holly Pond and Scott's Cove, upland forests in Dunlap Woods, and 19 acres of meadow habitats at Mather Meadows, Fox Run, Brendan's Meadow, Goodwives, and Round Meadow.

The Darien Land Trust embraces a proactive philosophy towards its stewardship activities which are dependent on the financial support and in-kind contributions of our board, and the greater Darien community. Special projects such as the habitat restorations along the Noroton River at Olson Woods, Stony Brook at Valley Forge, and salt marshes at Holly Pond and Scott's Cove require significant upfront investment to launch effective remediation and habitat restoration. As a result, such projects are generally dependent on larger contributions solicited in the form of financial grants from public and private organizations. Over the past 10 years we have collaborated with Family Offices, Corporate donors, the Audubon Society, the Long Island Sound Study, the Connecticut Fund for the Environment, the Connecticut DEBP and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) for technical and financial assistance with a variety of inland and coastal remediation and enhancement projects. In most cases, to apply for and qualify for grant funding our organization must sure and demonstrate the ability to provide "match" funding which is calculated both as cash and in-kind contributions.

For example, in 2008, through its generous in-kind contribution of equipment and manpower to remove previously abandoned construction debris and invasive vegetation, Baywater Properties played a meaningful role in helping the Darien Land Trust launch the restoration of our 17-acre Olson Woods Sanctuary. Demonstrating its ability to undertake such a largescale habitat project on its own was instrumental in gaining the support from other organizations as the project progressed. The significance of this habitat is enhanced by a 6-acre lake and with up and down stream frontages to the Noroton River which flows on to Long Island Sound. The proximity to open water and the diverse habitat characteristics of this site prompted a 10 yearlong collaboration with the CT DEEP-Inland Fisheries Division, NOAA, and CT Fund for the Environment, among others, to construct a fish ladder downstream at the I95 culvert to restore legacy spawning migrations of alewives, an important low-level species in the marine food chain. The fish ladder is complete and fish stocking by DEEP is now an annual event. Opening the fish ladder and stocking the lake is just the beginning, our work to maintain Olson Woods, the lake and surrounding habitat is an ongoing responsibility the Darien Land Trust takes seriously and is committed to. Having recently acquired a 2.5-acre lot that is adjacent to the sanctuary has added the potential to expand an existing nature trail network and develop additional meadow habitat. There is much more to do at this one location and we are excited by the prospect of once again working with Baywater to move this and other projects forward.

We believe a closer examination of our stewardship activities, remediation projects, and history of successful collaboration with both public and private organizations will confirm the merit of future support from others as we move forward with projects benefiting the greater Darien environment.

We are happy to provide additional information regarding our stewardship activities as well as references to the individuals and organizations we have collaborated with over the years.

With best regards,



Denis Frelinghuysen
Darien Land Trust Stewardship Committee
Darien Land Trust; <https://www.darienlandtrust.org>
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