



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

Continental Marsh Preserve

Baseline Documentation File / Property Management Plan

Off Greenhaven Road
Stonington, New London County, Connecticut

Stonington Town Committee is responsible
for the stewardship of this property

Plan Prepared by:
Richard Newton
Winter - 2011

Approved by Stonington Town Committee: _____

Date _____

Approved by Stewardship Committee: _____

Date _____



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SUMMARY

This plan is for a single property on off Brucker Pentway in Stonington, CT. The property is located on the east side of the Barn Island Wildlife Management Area. Visitors are welcome, but there are no trails and the habitat is sensitive – best access for viewing is by kayak or canoe.

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

John W. “Whit” Davis donated this 10-acre site to the Mashantucket Land Trust, Inc. in 1978. (Mashantucket Land Trust, Inc. is now Avalonia Land Conservancy, Inc.)

Nine generations of the Davis family have farmed on the land Osbrook Point after receiving it from the King of England. The Davis family figured prominently in the Continental Revolution that freed the states from English rule where the salt hay from the marsh was harvested to feed the horses and oxen of the Continental Army. Davis or any operator of his farm retains rights to harvest salt hay from the marsh.

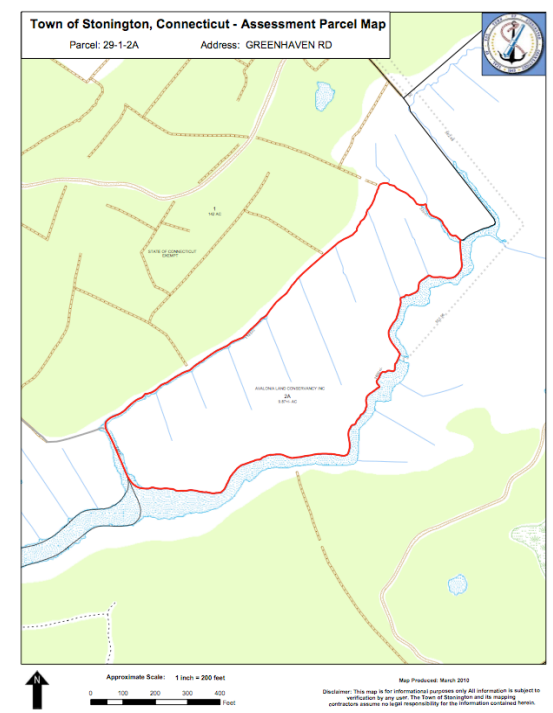
Davis disagreed with the impoundments the state built in the Barn Island Wildlife Management Area and hoped the land trust would keep the preserve free of impoundments.

In 2008, volunteers from Avalonia erected an osprey platform on the marsh that was occupied within two days.



SITE INFORMATION

The property: This plan covers the property on off Brucker Pentway in Stonington, CT. A parcel map of the property from the Town of Stonington GIS database is shown below. The property is identified as Map/Book/Lot/Unit: 29/1/2A/. Latitude: 41 33 4.371 Longitude -71 85 5.714



The size of the property is approximately 10 acres of marsh. There are no trails. The north, south and west is bounded by Barn Island Wildlife Management area. The rest of the marsh is bounded by water that leads to Little Narragansett Bay. Across the water to the east is property owned by the Davis family, much of which is protected from development via a conservation easement held by the State of Connecticut.

The Continental Marsh Preserve is an important migratory shorebird stop over and nesting site and has a remarkable variety of specie given the size of the property.

Acquisition history: Donated by John “Whit” Davis in December 5, 1978.

Land use history: Salt marsh. Newspaper articles state hay was harvested, but there has been no recent harvesting on the preserve (though the Davises do harvest the marsh on the east side of the inlet). Property is mostly undisturbed from humans due to remoteness.

Public use resources: The property is open to the public for all standard Avalonia passive recreational activities. Essentially the only activity is to view wildlife from a kayak or canoe or via foot through following deer trails.

Public benefit of the protected property: 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

ANIMALS, VEGETATION, INSECTS, AND BIRDS

Birds (observed):

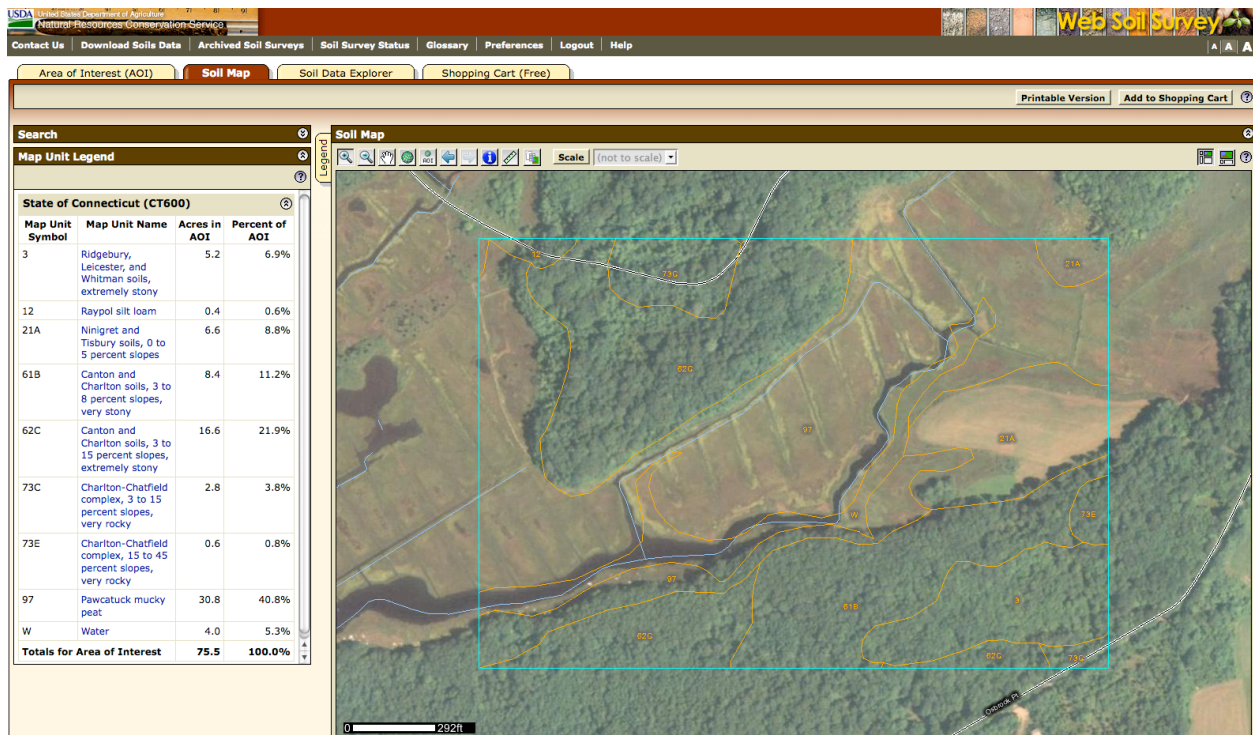
| | | |
|-------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------|
| Osprey | Great Blue Heron | Great Egret |
| Snowy Egret | Canada Goose | American black duck |
| Mallard | Northern Harrier | Greater yellowlegs |
| Lesser yellowlegs | Herring gulls | Glossy ibis |
| American bittern | Whip-poor-will | Saltmarsh sharp-tailed sparrow |
| Black rail | Red Wing Blackbird | |

Mammals: Data observations needed

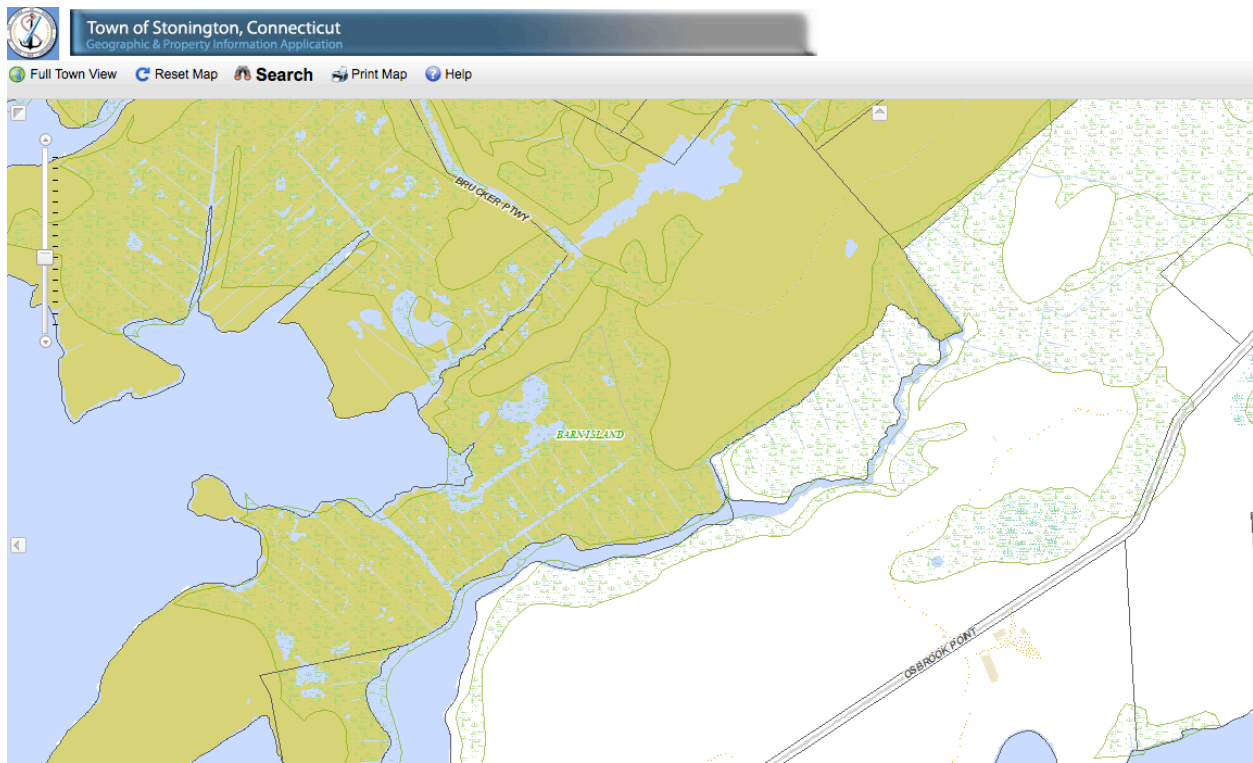
Vegetation: Data observations needed

Insects: Data observations needed

WEB SOIL SURVEY: 100% Pawcatuck Mucky Peat



HYDROLOGIC FEATURES – Wetlands soils



SPECIAL FEATURES AND CULTURAL RESOURCES: Osprey platform.

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: As with all Avalonia properties, the exterior boundaries of these preserves shall be marked with approved Avalonia Land Conservancy boundary signs following the guidance given in Avalonia stewardship policies.

Condition of Boundaries:

☐ Corner monuments/pins found

☒ Boundary signs posted

An annual walk around the boundaries of the properties is required to ensure that boundary signs are in place and that there are no intrusions. Other surveillance should take place using due vigilance on occasional visits to the property.

All motorized vehicles are prohibited on the properties except for farm vehicles and maintenance.

Hunting is prohibited and any violations should be reported to CT DEP enforcement.

Maintaining properties appearance: Not required at this time.

Public use: The preserve is open to the public for passive recreational use. 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.

There are no interpretive signs on the property at present. Such signs may be added in the future if found appropriate.

Enhancing wildlife habitat(s): Encourage scientific studies that will yield data to improve wildlife habitat.

Controlling invasive species: Invasive species are not a significant issue on the preserve, but the preserve should be monitored.

Erosion control: Natural erosion of marshland is a concern but generally cannot be controled as it is a product of climate change. Flooding due to tides and storms does occur, but there is no need to take special action as nature will take its course. The preserve is fairly well protected from boat wakes.

Productive uses: Farming of salt hay by operator of Davis farm is permitted as stated in deed.

Scientific and educational activities: None known but encouraged.

Response to large natural disasters: Only action would be to repair osprey platform or clean debris off marsh.

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

IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN

Recurring and occasional requirements: Monitoring of osprey platform with reports to CT DEP.

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.

Short term plan (1 – 5 years): None required at this time.

Long term plan (5+ years): None required at this time.

Schedule for revising this plan: This plan shall be reviewed at least every five years and updated as necessary.





Preparer Certification: I hereby certify that I have personally inspected the property that is the subject of this baseline documentation file / management plan, and I have personally prepared and / or reviewed the maps, photographs, and other information contained in this file.

_____ Date: _____

Name: