



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

Ram Point Preserve

Property Management Plan

End of School House Road
Mystic, 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 _____



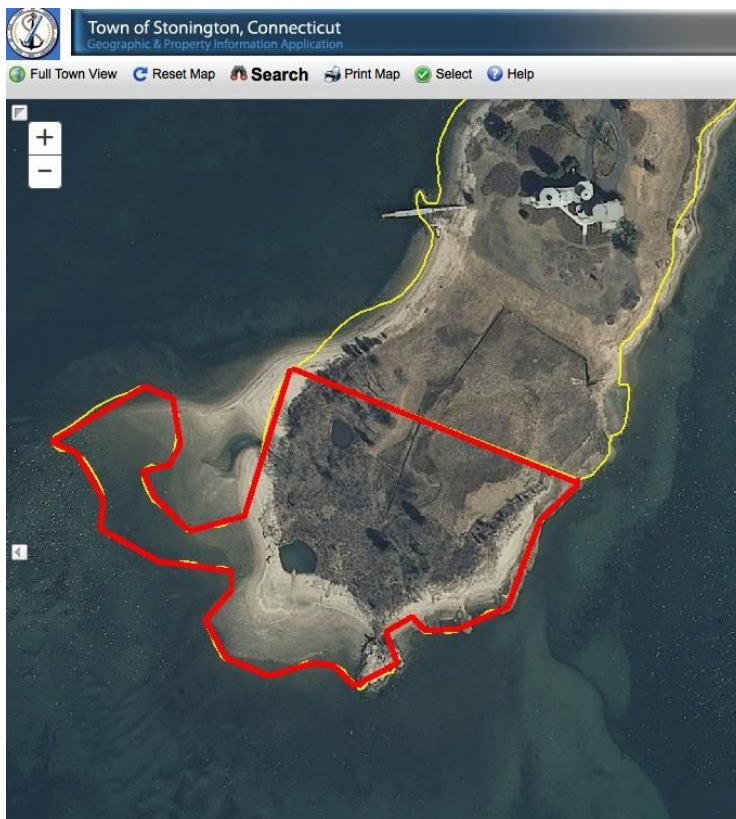
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SUMMARY

This plan is for one property at the end of School House Road in Mystic, CT. This is a non-trailed property at the tip of Mason's Island. Access is primarily from the water. 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, by phone at 860-884-3500, and has a website at <http://www.avalonialandconservancy.org>.

HISTORYThe Ram Point Preserve is located in the Town of Stonington southwest area of town. A residential property abuts to the north and the Mystic River / Fishers Island Sound surround on all other sides of 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 180/1/1. GIS acreage is roughly 4.6 acres.

Acquisition history

Donation from Masons Island Company to the Mashantucket Land Trust in October 1969. This was the first donation of land to the land trust. Mashantucket Land Trust was renamed Avalonia Land Conservancy, Inc. in September 1995.

Land use history

The land has always been open space with a small sand spit, rocky shoreline and marsh. It is highly susceptible to storms as can be seen in the photo below.

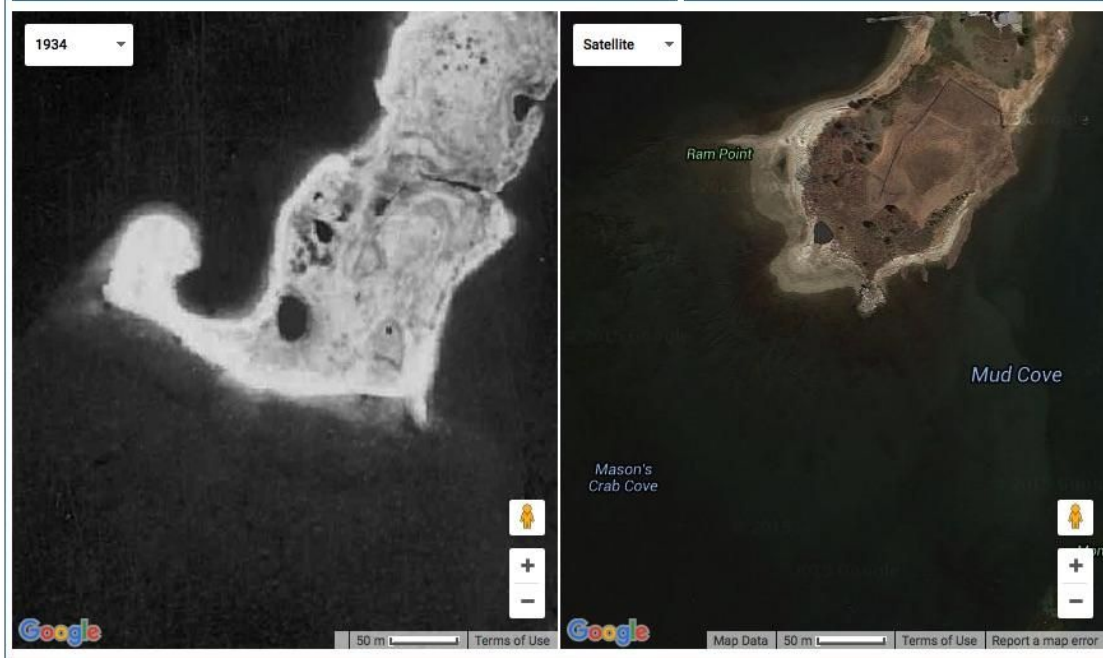
Neighborhood Change in Connecticut, 1934 to Present

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.
mystic, ct Find Address

Toggle map layers
 CT Towns



1934

Satellite

Ram Point

Mud Cove

Mason's Crab Cove

Google 50 m Terms of Use

Google Map Data 50 m Terms of Use Report a map error

Public use resources

This property provides public coastal access that is becoming harder to find in this developed coastal area. Access only by water and absence of true sandy beach will hopefully prevent overuse. Kayakers often use this rocky beach as a rest stop and for years the Mystic Seaport small boat rendezvous rowed out to the property from the Seaport early on a Sunday morning in June (the small boat rendezvous is no longer held).

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.

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 open to the public as are all Avalonia properties. Access is by water only as land access is through a private, gated-community property. For a small preserve the habitats are quite diverse and varied. The west side has a small sandy beach for landing kayaks but the rest is mainly cobbled rock shore. It is great foraging area for shorebirds in the seaweed wrack lines as well as among the rocks. Gulls use the area for resting and also bringing in crabs and shellfish for eating on shore. The southern tip is more solid rock, like a headland that protects and buffers the rest. The east side borders on a cove and is comprised of several pockets of saltmarsh and edges that support crabs, mussels and saltmarsh vegetation. It is apparent that the peat edges are being undermined.

There is one, somewhat unusual deeper pool at the south end. It appears too deep for a simple tide pool. May have some freshwater spring within it and it offers a different habitat for fish and other invertebrates.

The center portion of the island is a nice sized salt marsh with appropriate grasses and vegetation, with Groundsel and Marsh Elder growing in. A small area of Phragmites was noted and will bear watching, but is probably controlled by tidal flushing. There is also enough of an area of higher elevation to create a rocky “island” knoll which supports several large Oak, Sassafras and Tupelo trees. The shrub edge is composed of Bayberry, Groundsel and a large amount of Poison Ivy, all of which provide food and shelter for a large number of birds, especially during fall migration.

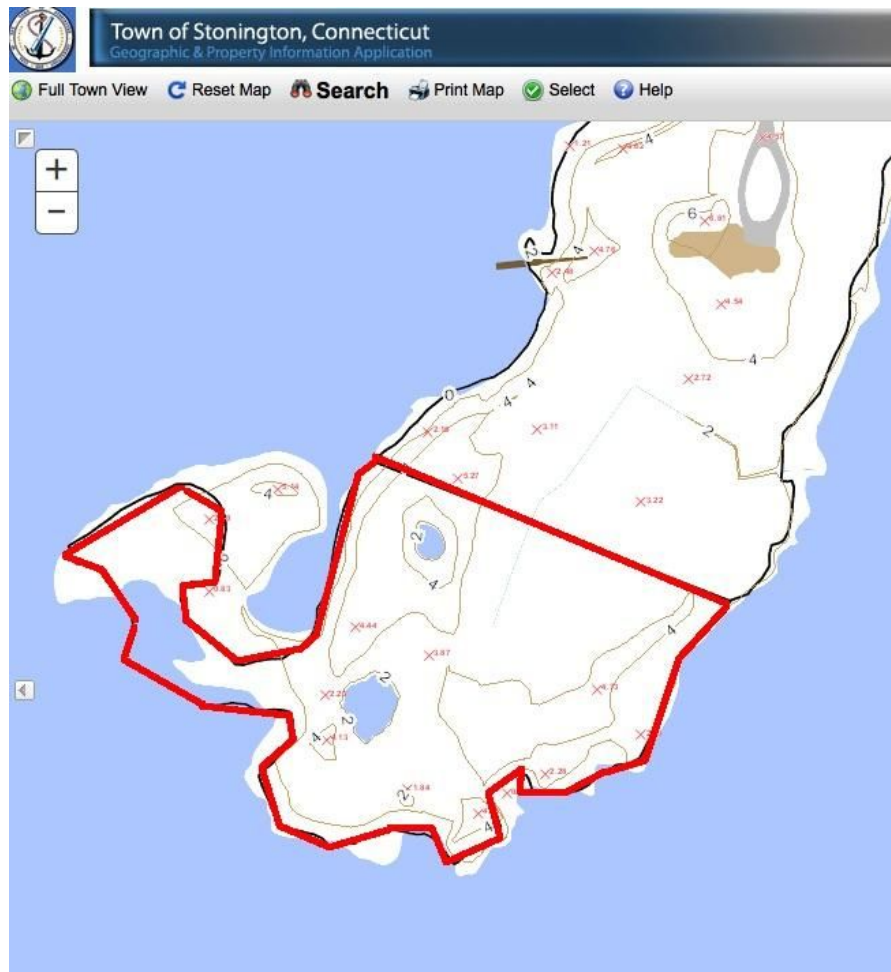
Egrets, Great Blue Herons and Ibis (most likely from the rookery on Ram Island) have been seen roosting in the trees and American Oystercatchers have been known to feed there. There are several Osprey nests in the area and the trees are used for roosting by these birds.

Potential threats to conservation values: Sea level rise will continue to eat away at the saltmarsh edges and there will be limited areas for marsh migration because of rocky elevations. The central wetland will remain salt marsh longer and could migrate farther north into mowed area of homeowner.

Monitoring needed of that border to insure owner is not mowing too far and into the preserve

Overuse and littering can have a detrimental effect. Overgrowth of non-native and invasive plants could compromise the conservation value of the native coastal shrub habitat.

ELEVATIONS / WETLANDS



SPECIAL FEATURES AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

The property is in a CT DEEP Natural Diversity Database area (as is most of the Mystic River) and also is labeled as Critical Beach-shore “B” (estuarine) Habitat by the CT DEEP.

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

No entrance / roadside sign at present. A few standard boundary signs have been posted but there are limited trees on which to post. Signs on signposts typically get destroyed or covered up during winter storms.

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. Yearly surveillance should be conducted. All motorized vehicles are prohibited on the properties except for maintenance.

Maintaining properties appearance

Litter control. Campfires have been an issue in the past so any campfire circles should be dismantled. As there is limited wood available onsite for burning, this has not been a major issue in recent years.

Public use

The preserve is open to the public for passive recreational use though there are no trails. Small boat landing most common. 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 endangered or threatened species or species of concern are present.

Controlling invasive species

Removal of invasive species by manual means will be accomplished as resources permit.

Erosion control and flooding

The property will flood with sea level rise. The southeast sand / pebble spit area erodes with storms. It may be possible to obtain funding of a soft shoreline protection project.

Productive uses

Provides habitat for transient shorebirds and migratory songbirds.

Scientific and educational activities

None planned.

Response to large natural disasters

Removal of any hazards will be undertaken as necessary.

Special management considerations

None.

IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN

Recurring and occasional requirements

Stonington Town Committee members visit the site on a limited basis. Permission to launch kayaks from Mystic River Marina may be obtained for easier and quicker access to the property.

Annual obligations

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

Short term plan (1 – 5 years)

Annual boundary walk. Post boundaries.

Long term plan (5+ years)

Monitor site. Control invasive plants.

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>