

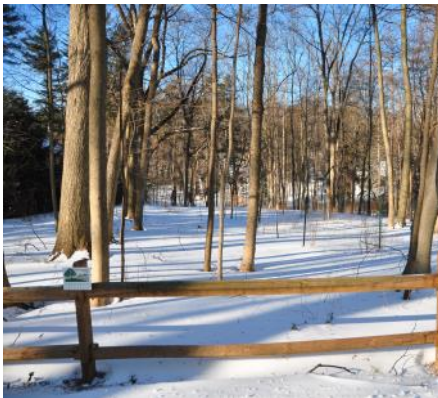


GREENWICH LAND TRUST

Notes from the field: The Ruth Thompson Preserve

The Ruth Thompson Preserve is a fine example of Greenwich Land Trust protecting natural spaces of all sizes throughout the Greenwich community. At just over an acre and a half, this small preserve packs loads of habitat value and provides permanent natural character to a residential area.

Situated on a steep slope, the Ruth Thompson Preserve prevents erosion to the pond be-



low. A small forest of hickory, maple, pine, and larch stabilizes the soil and feeds a wide variety of wildlife. The pond is home to green frogs, turtles, herons, and even the occasional family of itinerant river otters!

In the early 1900s, Ray Thompson acquired 50 acres off Parsonage Road. Much of



the land was cleared and replanted with 16,000 pine trees. The pond on the property was the center of family activities including camping, fishing and ice skating. When Mr. Thompson's widow died, the estate was subdivided and sold. But Ruth Thompson, one of Ray's daughters, cared deeply about the land and gave this preserve to the Land Trust to be protected forever.

After being ravaged by Hurricane Sandy in 2012, Greenwich Land Trust initiated a full restoration plan. Trees over 90 feet tall had been toppled by the storm and large light gaps had opened on the forest floor promoting growth of invasive plants that had arrived from neighboring landscapes.

Greenwich Land Trust stewardship staff worked with community volunteers to greatly improve the ecology and aesthetics of the

property. A local chapter of the Student Conservation Corps removed invasive plants and a damaged chain link fence. Greenwich Academy students planted native understory shrubs.

Trevor Webb installed a beauti-



ful split rail fence, foot bridge, and additional plantings as part of his Eagle Scout project. Today, the Ruth Thompson

