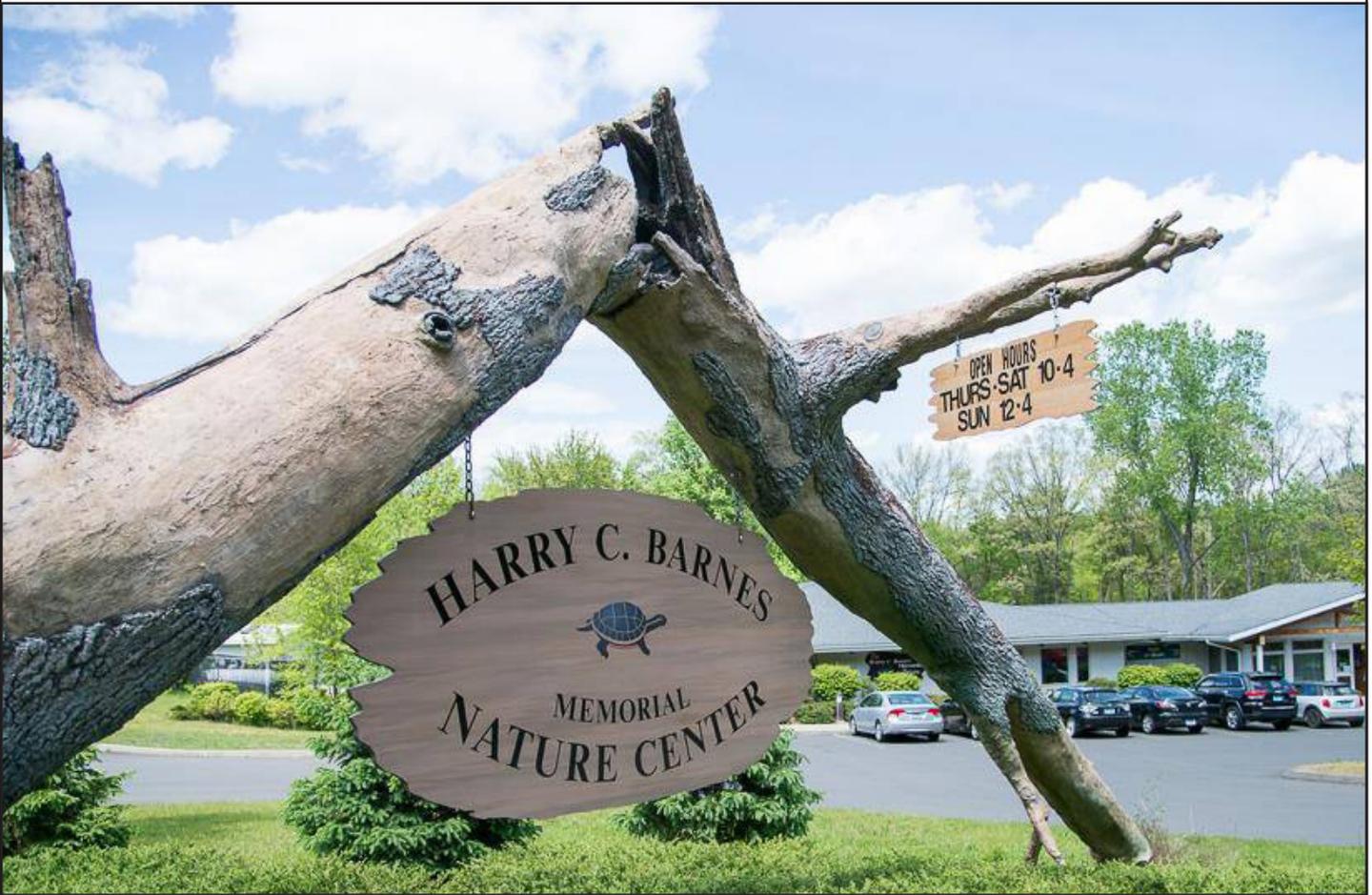




Blazing New Trails Campaign



Campaign Project: Save Pigeon Hill

Environmental Learning Centers of Connecticut
501 Wolcott Road, Bristol, CT 06010
(860) 583-1234 • www.elcct.org

Introduction

As ELCCT celebrates its 50th Anniversary, we are embarking on a capital campaign entitled *Blazing New Trails*. This name signifies ELCCT's path taken; the hundreds of thousands of children and adults educated about the importance of nature and our environment, the hundreds of acres of wildlife habitat protected, and the reputation gained, through hard work and the support of our community, as one of Connecticut's premier environmental conservation and education organizations.

This name also represents our path forward; taking ELCCT to a new level that exemplifies our commitment to our environment, and to our community and its residents. The Blazing New Trails Campaign has a goal of two million dollars. One million for its Indian Rock Nature Preserve, and one million for the Harry C. Barnes Memorial Nature Center.

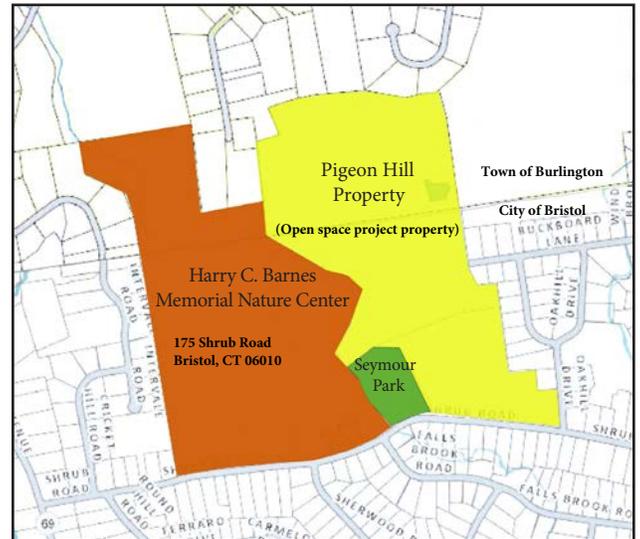
The projects for Indian Rock Nature Preserve include restoring the preserve's centerpiece- Indian Lake, completing the deck overlooking Indian Lake, installing solar panels and other energy-saving building improvements, and the creation of a three-season covered program space, or Education Pavilion, to meet the demand to host large groups.

The projects for the Harry C. Barnes Memorial Nature Center include creating an accessible trail on the original parcel, installing a nature play area in conjunction with the new trail and the Center's educational programs, installing solar panels and other energy-saving building improvements, and saving an adjacent 63.9 acres, "Pigeon Hill", from mining and development. The remainder of this document is focused on the *Save Pigeon Hill* project.



Saving Pigeon Hill

“Pigeon Hill” consists of 63.9 acres of land in Bristol and Burlington adjacent to the Harry C. Barnes Memorial Nature Center. Part of the property is currently being leased to a horse boarding operation. The rest of the property is open space and serves to enhance the land currently owned by ELCCT. The land gets its name from reports that Passenger Pigeons, now extinct, once roosted in large numbers on the glacial esker that is located on both the existing nature center property as well as the Pigeon Hill property. The esker was formed by sediment brought in by a river under the glacier that remained when the glacier melted centuries ago, leaving a tall meandering ridge; a local landmark. The owners have informed us of their intentions to mine the glacial esker for sand and gravel followed by the construction of 161 housing units.



Location of the NTH Property

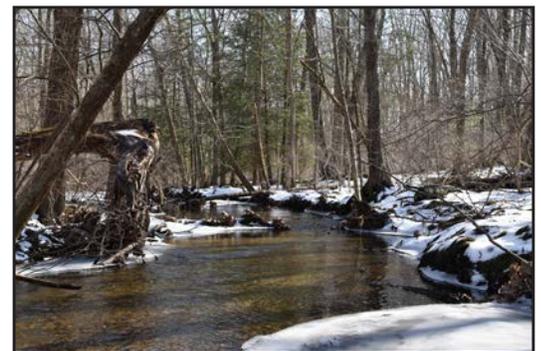


Though ELCCT is not inherently against sand and gravel extraction or development, in this case, this proposed plan would have a devastating effect on the neighborhood, would wipe out a geologically significant landform, degrade the quality of a pristine trout stream that bisects the property, and impair ELCCT’s ability to provide the education and conservation it has become known for. The alternative to this plan would be to protect the entire assemblage as open space and manage the habitats as an extension of the nature center property.

As a result, ELCCT has worked with the landowners, Barnes Nature Center neighbors, the State of Connecticut, the Town of Burlington, Burlington Land Trust, the City of Bristol, and many other partners, with the goal of purchasing the Pigeon Hill property as open space for the benefit of wildlife and the people of our surrounding communities.

The City of Bristol and ELCCT have been working together on this project and have secured a limited-time agreement with the landowners to purchase the property. The goal is that the property will be protected as open space. The City of Bristol will purchase the Bristol parcels and ELCCT will purchase the Burlington parcel. ELCCT will work with the city to help with the management of the entire assemblage including the restoration of portions that were already mined, the extension of nature center trails into the property, establishment of a diversity of wildlife habitats, and the development of research and educational opportunities for community members, school children and universities. The State of Connecticut has agreed that this plan is consistent with the State’s conservation and open space goals and has awarded ELCCT and the City of Bristol a grant of \$850,800 towards this project; the second highest award of all applicants.

As per agreement, each entity needs to purchase their respective parcels or no parcels will be sold. The city of Bristol is committed to purchasing the Bristol parcels through city funding and its share of grant funds. ELCCT has \$150,000 left to raise by September 30, 2020; \$125,000 to complete the purchase and \$25,000 to start the restoration.





Thank you so much for your interest in the Preservation of Pigeon Hill. Over the past few months we have all seen the power of open space to reduce stress and improve our quality of life. To make this acquisition possible, we need to raise the funds needed by September 30, 2020. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (860) 583-1234 (office), (860) 480-4787 (cell), or email me at sheth@elcct.org.

Scott E. Heth
Executive Director
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Mission

To inspire the appreciation and enjoyment of nature through education and conservation, fostering a healthy environment and an improved quality of life.

Core Values

Educate: We are committed to providing opportunities for all to learn about and experience the environment thus inspiring appreciation and enjoyment by present and future generations.

Protect: We are committed to fostering a safe and healthy environment through sustainable practices and promoting a culture that heightens awareness of conservation and preservation.

Respect: We are committed to respect for the environment, and to teach respect for all.

Collaborate: We are committed to engaging the power of an open and inclusive community to ignite creative thinking and solve problems to nurture a healthy environment and improve the quality of life.