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CARLISLE
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Branching Out

News from the Carlisle Conservation Foundation | carlisleconservationfoundation.org | 12.24



Dear Friends,

The Carlisle Conservation Foundation continues to expand its work with landowners, the state, the town of Carlisle and others to protect and manage fields, woods, trails and scenic vistas, and to promote education on wildlife and conservation for the benefit of all. In 2023 we assessed three new opportunities and continued work to finalize conservation restrictions for three properties. This fall we are partnering with the heirs of a local family, the town and the state to secure a new property as part of a drive to enhance trail connectivity and land protection. The 24 properties totaling over 230 acres, owned or protected through CCF's efforts, with five more in progress, are a testimony to how the ongoing work and past investments of this organization benefit today's residents and future generations for a legacy of public good.

Open space, scenic vistas, preservation of natural habitat and access to trails continue to be critically important to the Carlisle community, enhancing the natural beauty and the sustained health of local species. Please give generously to CCF this year. Your contribution will help to continue these important efforts.

Sincerely,

Melinda

Melinda Lindquist, *President*
Carlisle Conservation Foundation



What CCF Does

CCF continues to flourish, with a hardworking volunteer board, clear mission, and strong relationships with other conservation-focused organizations in Carlisle and surrounding towns. CCF has no employees, so the work is done by board members and other volunteers. Over the past year, the CCF board focused on several priorities: land protection, land management, outreach and education, and operations, laying the groundwork to enhance our capabilities and prioritize our activities.

The **land protection team** has prioritized and is assessing opportunities to acquire or protect properties and public access throughout the town, tapping our own knowledge of the town, trails, and the Sudbury Valley Trustees regional maps. The **land management team** organized multiple work days to remove invasives, particularly at Spencer Brook, and continues to evaluate ways to more effectively prevent invasives, especially climbing vines, from overwhelming conserved properties. The **outreach and education team** has led and organized Walk and Talk wildlife education sessions, supported the Blandings Turtles program at the Carlisle Schools for 15 years (our support ended in 2024), and promoted Trails Month with the Trails Committee in June. The **operations team** led the organization to update its Bylaws and Articles of Incorporation for more efficient

management, created a new website, and updated our records storage, web hosting, email, and investment management.

In 2024-5 we are assessing several new opportunities for land protection, addressing two areas of land incursion by abutters, finalizing several conservation restriction documents with the State, expanding our outreach and education programming and, most of all, continuing our outreach to landowners interested in partnering to conserve open space and access for future generations.



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How to Donate

CCF relies on the generosity of our donors to help instill a responsibility for environmental stewardship by understanding the unique ecosystems within our town and the significance of preserving open spaces. We are in a unique position to address some of the challenges facing Carlisle by working with private landowners and other entities to protect land, maintain open space, and educate the community about conservation. Please consider a tax-deductible contribution today!

Help us conserve paper and postage by donating online by using the code below.

If you prefer to send a check, mail your tax-deductible gift to: Carlisle Conservation Foundation, P.O. Box 300, Carlisle, MA 01741.



Case Study: Woodward Property

Helping one family achieve their conservation and financial goals through creative planning and conservation restriction

Since 1960 CCF has acted to preserve the scenic vistas and natural areas we value and enjoy in Carlisle. Many different approaches and partnerships have been used as each conservation opportunity is unique. One recent example is the Woodward properties on Bedford Road and Maple Street. Walter and Kay Woodward bought the historic 1731 Blood House on Bedford Road and 56 acres of fields and forest in 1959 and raised their family there. The land was passed on to their children who in turn planned for the future of the property. Following years of informal contacts, the Woodward family came to CCF for advice on options for a large 42-acre plot of their land. They wanted to preserve most of the land in its natural condition but to develop some of it near Bedford Road for family-friendly housing. The Senior Residential Open Space Cluster zoning bylaw was the closest option under Carlisle zoning but was for senior housing only. CCF Board member and former Planning Board chair David Freedman took the lead in

crafting a new Residential Open Space Cluster bylaw that would permit a cluster of all-age dwellings with a large area of surrounding conservation land. He shepherded the proposal through various Town boards and committees and it was passed at Town Meeting in 2017. The result is Woodward Village, 18 high-efficiency homes around a village green with 32.4 acres of conservation land given to the Town. Trails in the development, accessed by public parking in Woodward Village, connect to the extensive trail network in Great Meadows, Greenough, and Foss. The family was able to meet its goals and the Town benefited from new conservation land and a different housing option. CCF will continue to be involved as holder of the Conservation Restriction on the Town land, insuring that the land always remains in conservation.

Also in 2017, two house lots were carved off another piece of Woodward land and a sale agreement was reached with a developer. The land, at the

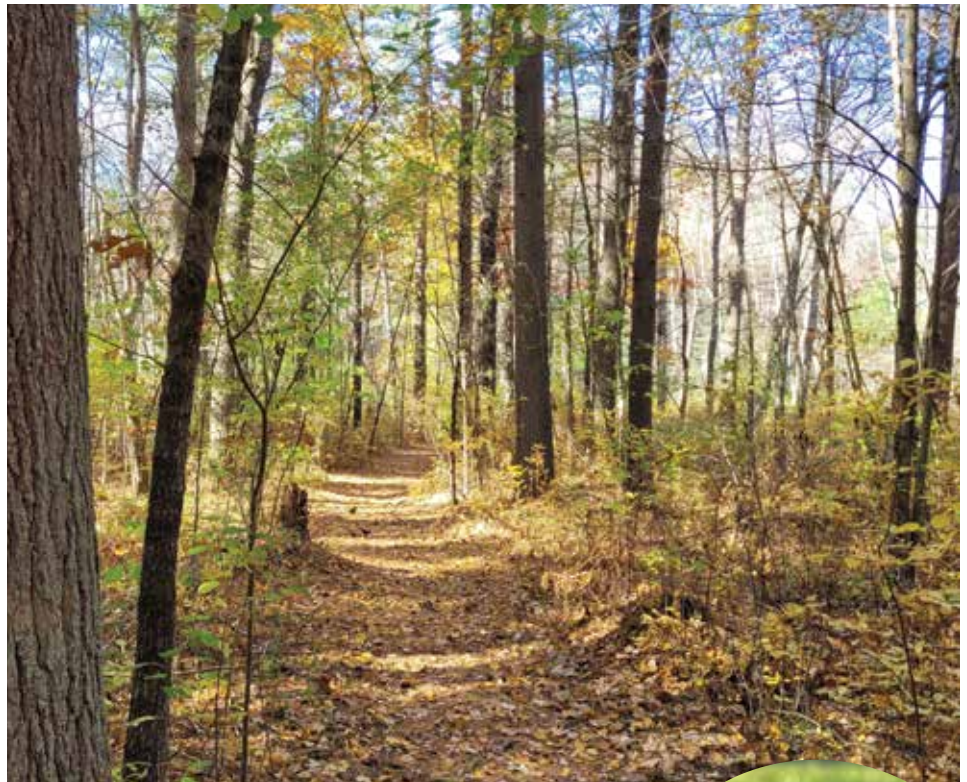


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corner of Bedford Road and Maple Street, was an open agricultural field, a highly prized landform in maintaining Carlisle's rural aesthetic. At the urging of CCF, the Town exercised its right of first refusal under Chapter 61A and matched the developer's offer with \$250,000 from CCF's reserves and \$500,000 in Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds, thereby preserving a large agricultural field and trail connections to Great Meadows. CCF is holder of a Conservation Restriction on the 6 acres of new Town conservation land. As a historical note, CCF was instrumental in having the Town adopt the CPA and in fending off several attempts to repeal it, so it was doubly involved in this purchase of conservation land.

CCF continues to work with landowners to creatively meet their conservation and financial goals. Please contact us if we can help you.



There are many ways CCF can help you protect your land in perpetuity:

Outright Gift of Land: Protect land and receive real estate tax benefits.

Donate Land by Bequest: Donate land in a will for permanent restriction.

Reserved Life Estate: Donate land but continue to use it while receiving a charitable donation depending on life expectancy.

Some Massachusetts landowners reduce local real estate taxes by putting land in a Chapter 61 program that allows owners of working farms, forests, and recreation land to pay reduced property taxes in exchange for keeping the land undeveloped for a specified period.

Contact CCF to discuss the many options available to Carlisle landowners.

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A Momentous Mating Discovery

by Matt Kamm *(Reprinted in part courtesy of Zoo New England)*

During our focused Blanding's turtle roundups at the end of summer this year as part of our fecal sample study, we happened to find two turtles mating at Great Meadows. That's not so unusual in and of itself, but what made the find truly extraordinary was that the male turtle of the pair was an alumnus of our HATCH program! This lucky event marks the first documented mating of any of our headstarted turtles – a moment more than fifteen years in the making.

The turtle in question (originally notched #2, now re-christened #2082 to avoid confusion with another turtle) was raised by students at the Carlisle School in the 2009-2010 school year. They named him "Chubby Oreo," and his weight when released in June of 2010 was an impressive 182.8 grams. Chubby Oreo was tracked for more than a year before his radio malfunctioned late in 2011 and he disappeared into the depths of the swamp. Eleven years later, in 2022, he was caught again during a trapping survey, now tipping the scales at a generous 882 grams. He was relieved of his old radio, which amazingly had remained attached all those years despite its transmitter dying, and outfitted with a new one. Over the next two years he continued to show remarkable growth, exceeding 1000 grams and reaching full adult size by the spring of 2023.

Chubby Oreo's mate was the mysterious female #2067. First caught by our team in 2020, 2067 was already a mature and experienced female weighing in at 1288 grams. Although we have tracked her every season, we have never found 2067's nest, nor have we ever seen her come out to search for a nest site or felt eggs within her abdomen during laying season. It's possible 2067 had not mated for some years until her rendezvous with 2082, but we will be watching her closely in the summer of 2025, because her clutch next year may contain the first offspring of a headstarted HATCH turtle!



What is a CR and why should I consider one?

CCF can help you decide if permanent conservation restriction makes sense for your property



Conservation Restriction Basics

Landowners who wish to protect their land permanently without giving up ownership may choose to place a Conservation Restriction on their property. A Conservation Restriction, or CR for short, is a voluntary legal agreement between a landowner (the “Grantor”) and a qualified conservation organization, such as the Carlisle Conservation Foundation, The Trustees of Reservations, or Sudbury Valley Trustees, or a government entity, such as the Town of Carlisle (the “Grantee”). Under the terms of a CR, the Grantor relinquishes certain development rights to the property forever, and gives the Grantee the right and responsibility to monitor the property and defend the terms of the CR. (In most other states, the CR is known as a “Conservation Easement.”)

Under the CR, the land may be sold, bequeathed, or given to any party the owner chooses. The CR goes on record at the Registry of Deeds and becomes a permanent part of the property’s title, binding all future owners of the land. The public has no right to use the property unless the right is specifically granted in the CR.

Landowners typically put CRs on their land for two reasons. First: they wish to see the land protected over time, and second: they would like to benefit from the tax advantages associated with CRs. When land is being passed on from one generation to another, estate taxes can occasionally force the sale of the land in order to satisfy the tax burden. A CR can provide substantial estate tax relief, allowing the family to avoid selling the land.

How does CCF assist in the CR process?

- CCF will visit your property and discuss the benefits of preserving your land. CCF will also document the property with photographs, maps, and sketches as a baseline for the project, and assist in securing an updated survey that complies with state regulations.
- CCF board members will assist the property owner in preparing and submitting the necessary application and support documents to the state, and will help answer any questions that might arise during the process. CCF does recommend that property owners consult an experienced accountant or tax advisor about the impact on your personal finances and be represented by an experienced attorney throughout the process.
- As grantee, CCF becomes steward of your protected land and has a legal responsibility to monitor your CR in perpetuity. This includes annual site checks to ensure the the CR is being respected and the land used appropriately, as well as conversations with property owners about management or changes or plans for land use.

For information or to speak with a CCF board member, contact Melinda Lindquist at president@carlisleconservationfoundation.org.



Make your tax-deductible gift today to support the CCF mission to protect open space for wildlife habitat, passive recreation, and scenic vistas; to provide education on local species; and to promote responsible development practices in Carlisle.



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