



**US Army Corps
of Engineers** ®
New England District
696 Virginia Road
Concord, MA 01742-2751

PUBLIC NOTICE

Comment Period Begins: August 16, 2016
Comment Period Ends: September 15, 2016
File Number: NAE-2010-02215
In Reply Refer To: Michael S. Wierbonics
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The District Engineer is soliciting comments on the eight projects which have applied for funding through the National Audubon Society program's Connecticut In Lieu Fee ("ILF") program. The National Audubon Society, Inc., through its Connecticut program (Audubon Connecticut) is the sponsor of the Connecticut ILF Program which serves as an alternative form of compensatory mitigation for aquatic resource impacts authorized by the New England District, Army Corps of Engineers (the "Corps"). A copy of the signed ILF agreement entitled "*Final Instrument for the Audubon Connecticut In-Lieu Fee Program Sponsored by National Audubon Society, Inc.*" dated August 21, 2013, includes details about the ILF Program goals and objectives in general and can be found at the following link:

<http://www.nae.usace.army.mil/Portals/74/docs/regulatory/Mitigation/CTILFProgramInstrument.pdf>

The Connecticut ILF Program accrued funds that were made available through a competitive grant process for the preservation, restoration and enhancement of wetland and watercourse resources and associated upland buffers in the State of Connecticut. The District Engineer has received applications to conduct work in waters of the United States from various applicants who have applied for 2016 funding under the ILF Program.

The funds currently available are:

Connecticut River Service Area	\$321,614
Housatonic Service Area	\$711,920
South Central Service Area	\$ 84,500
Southeast Coast Service Area	\$ 0
Southwest Coast Service Area	\$ 46,245
Thames Service Area	\$528,700

Attached are the proposed project descriptions and locus maps for the eight applications.

The decision whether to approve funding for projects will be based on an evaluation of each proposed activity and how and where it will compensate for aquatic resources lost through authorizations issued under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act and/or Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act. The decision will reflect the national concern for no net loss of aquatic resources. The benefit that may reasonably accrue from each proposal must be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments and/or its appropriateness considering the ecological needs of the service area in which it is located.

CENAE-R-B
FILE NO. NAE-2010-02215

The Corps of Engineers is soliciting comments from the public; Federal, state, and local agencies and officials; Indian Tribes; and other interested parties in order to determine the most appropriate projects to receive funding from the ILF Fund. Any comments received will be provided to the Project Advisory Committee which makes recommendations to the Interagency Review Committee, including the Corps of Engineers, and will be considered in the evaluation of the projects and the determination of which will receive funding. To make this decision, comments are used to assess impacts on endangered species, historic properties, water quality, general environmental effects, and the other public interest factors. Comments are also used to determine the need for a public hearing and to determine the overall public interest of the proposed activity.

ESSENTIAL FISH HABITAT

The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, as amended by the Sustainable Fisheries Act of 1996 (Public Law 104-267), requires all federal agencies to consult with the National Marine Fisheries Service on all actions, or proposed actions, permitted, funded, or undertaken by the agency, that may adversely affect Essential Fish Habitat (“EFH”).

The District Engineer has made a preliminary determination that the site-specific adverse effect will not be substantial. Further consultation with the National Marine Fisheries Service regarding EFH conservation recommendations is being conducted and will be concluded prior to the final decision.

SECTION 106 COORDINATION

Based on his initial review, the District Engineer has determined that the proposed projects may affect properties in, or eligible for listing in, the National Register of Historic Places. Additional review and consultation to fulfil requirements under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, will be ongoing as part of the proposal review process and the permit review process for those requiring Corps authorization.

ENDANGERED SPECIES CONSULTATION

The New England District, Army Corps of Engineers, has reviewed the list of species protected under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended, that might occur at the project sites. It is our preliminary determination that the proposed activity for which funding is being sought is designed, situated or will be operated/used in such a manner that it is not likely to adversely affect any federally listed endangered or threatened species or their designated critical habitat. By this Public Notice, we are requesting that the appropriate federal Agency concur with our determination.

COASTAL ZONE MANAGEMENT

The State of Connecticut has an approved **Coastal Zone Management Program**. Coastal Zone Management consistency will be required for some of the individual proposals and by this public notice we are requesting the state provide any applicable comments at this time.

In order to properly evaluate the proposal, we are seeking public comment. Anyone wishing to comment is encouraged to do so. **Comments should be submitted in writing by the above date.** If you have any questions,

CENAE-R-B
FILE NO. NAE-2010-02215

please contact Michael Wierbonics at (978) 318-8723, (800) 343-4789 or (800) 362-4367, if calling from within Massachusetts.

Any person may request, in writing, within the comment period specified in this notice, that a public hearing be held to consider the projects. Requests for a public hearing shall specifically state the reasons for holding a public hearing. The Corps holds public hearings for the purpose of obtaining public comments when that is the best means for understanding a wide variety of concerns from a diverse segment of the public.

The initial determinations made herein will be reviewed in light of facts submitted in response to this notice. All comments will be considered a matter of public record. All comments will be considered a matter of public record.

Jennifer L. McCarthy
Chief, Regulatory Division

If you would prefer not to continue receiving Public Notices by email, please contact Ms. Tina Chaisson at (978) 318-8058 or e-mail her at bettina.m.chaisson@usace.army.mil. You may also check here () and return this portion of the Public Notice to: Bettina Chaisson, Regulatory Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, 696 Virginia Road, Concord, MA 01742-2751.

NAME: _____
ADDRESS: _____
PHONE: _____

PROJECT PROPOSALS

Audubon Connecticut administered the competitive grant funding program, and solicited Letters of Intent (LOIs) for wetland and watercourse restoration, enhancement, creation and/or preservation. The Request for LOIs included the criteria used to evaluate projects, the information required for a proposal, and other related information. The Request for LOIs was issued on February 4, 2016, and the LOIs were due by March 5, 2016. Because no LOIs were received for the Thames Service Area, the due date for that area was extended May 1, 2016. To be eligible to receive Connecticut ILF funding, project applicants had to first submit their LOIs comprised of a summary of the proposed project, and a map of the project location.

A summary of these proposals is as follows:

Proposed Projects and Location	Latitude & Longitude coordinates	Applicant	Fund Request	Funding Match	Service Area
Restoration of Upper Pond along the Goodwives's River – Darien, CT	N 41° 03' 59.82" W 073° 28' 27.34"	Friends of Gorham's Pond	\$25,000.00	\$10,000.00	Southwest Coast
Restoration of Salmon Kill Creek – Salisbury, CT	N 41° 58' 02.75" W 073° 24' 13.08" and N 41° 57' 40.88" W 073° 24' 09.48"	Trout Unlimited	\$122,302.00	\$57,418.00	Housatonic
Stratford Point Living Shoreline – Stratford, CT	N 41° 9' 14.68" W 073° 6' 17.60"	Sacred Heart University	\$250,000.00	\$220,000.00	Housatonic
Indian River Culvert Replacement – Orange, CT	N 41° 17' 06.72" W 073° 00' 58.69"	Town of Orange Conservation Commission	\$8,282.00	Matching Labor and Equipment Rental costs	Southcentral Coast
Zemko Preserve Expansion – Salem, CT	N 41° 30' 30.33" W 072° 15' 56.46"	Town of Salem Land Trust	\$15,000.00	\$35,825.00	Connecticut River
Spice Brook Restoration and Preservation – Tolland, CT	41.8429653 -72.396984	Town of Tolland	\$350,000	\$50,000	Thames
Willimantic River Restoration and Dam Removal – Willimantic, CT	N 40° 42' 42.16" W 72° 13' 06.14"	Eastern Connecticut Conservation District	\$445,000	\$80,000	Thames
Lukaszek Preservation – Thompson, CT	42.024430 -71.822641	Wyndham Land Trust	\$250,000	\$55,000	Thames

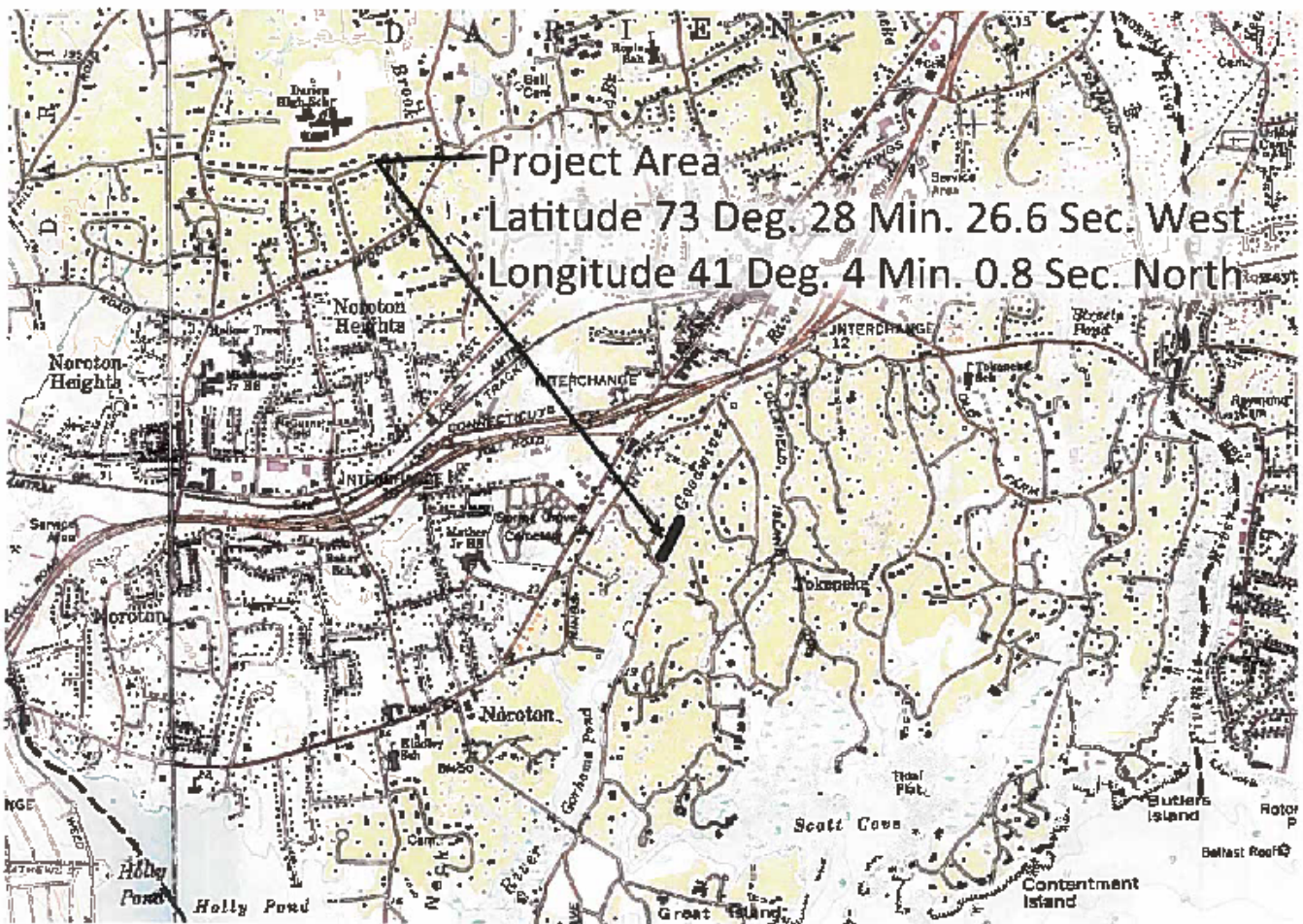
A summary of each proposed activity, its purpose and intended use, including maps and a description of the type of structures, if any, to be erected within the jurisdictional areas is provided below.

Upper Pond Restoration – Goodwives River in Darien CT (Southwest Coast Service Area):

The Friends of Gorham’s Pond in Darien propose to dredge four acres of Upper Pond along the Goodwives River. Upper Pond is an impoundment that has been created by a former and now newly re-constructed dam that impounds the river at a location just north of Goodwives River Road. The purpose of the proposed dredging is to remove historical accumulation of road sands and other debris that has accumulated on the upstream side of the dam. A watershed management plan previously prepared for the Goodwives River recommended the removal of the accumulated sediment and dredging to construct a forebay to prevent future sediment from being transported downriver to Gorham’s Pond.

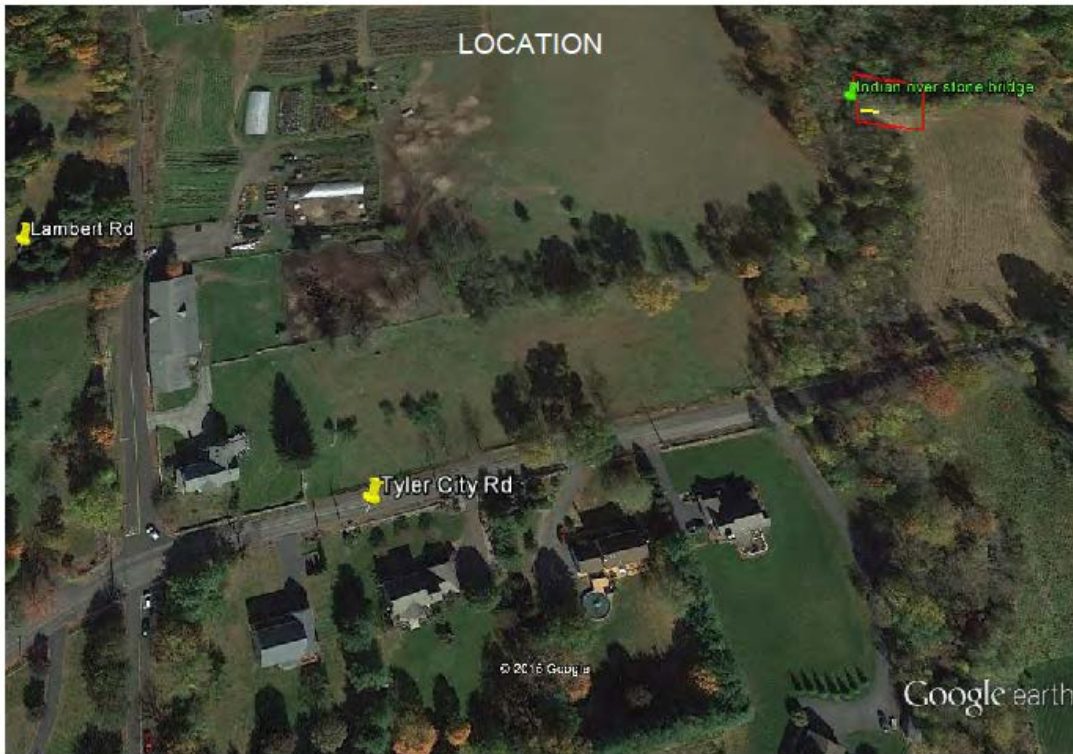
The dredging portion of this project will impact approximately 5 acres of riverine habitat. Loss of this habitat may adversely affect *diadromous fisheries resources* such as American Eel and river herring species. However, the District Engineer has made a preliminary determination that the site-specific adverse effect will not be substantial. Further consultation with the National Marine Fisheries Service regarding EFH conservation recommendations is being conducted and will be concluded prior to the final decision.

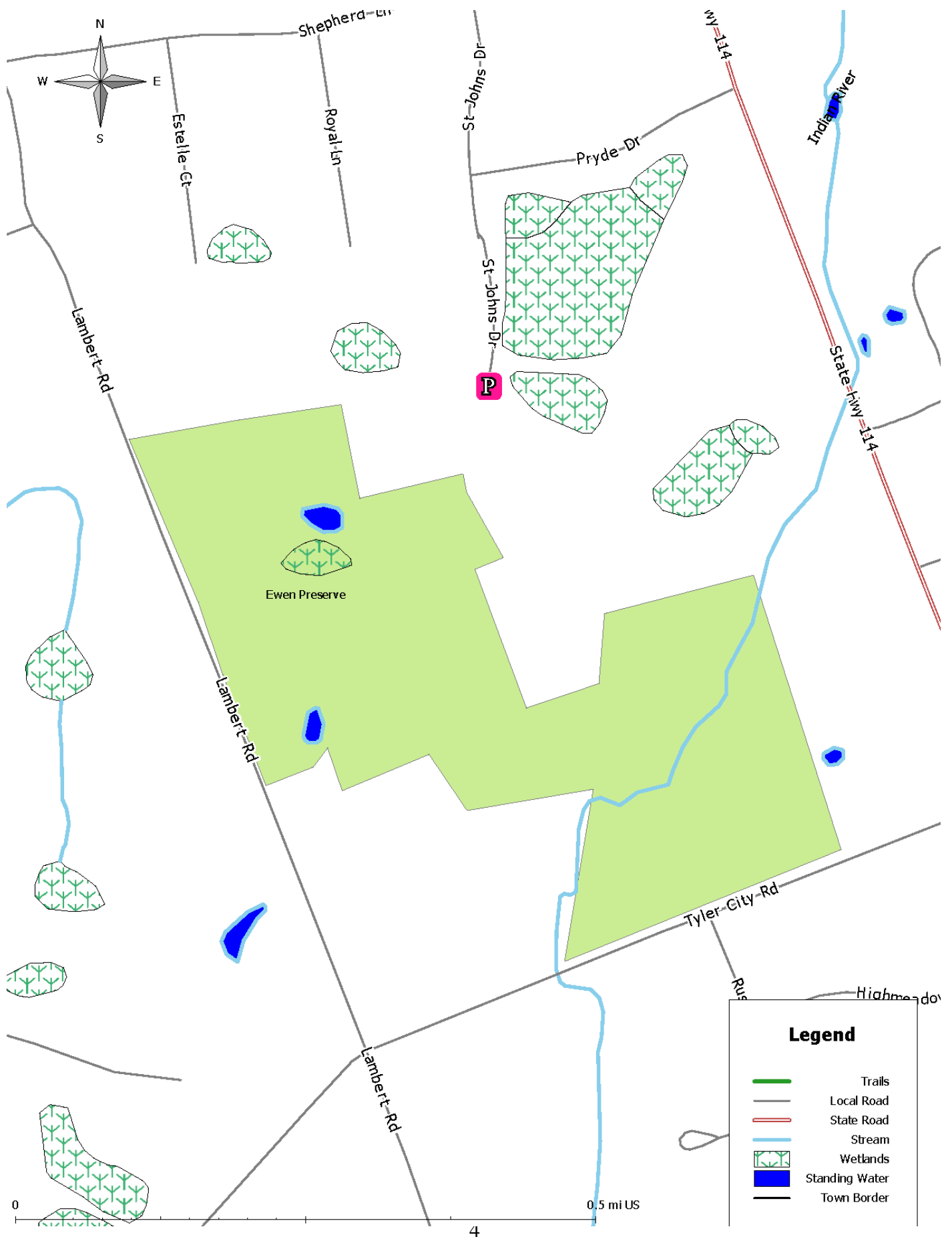
The dredged material disposal is proposed for upland disposal at an out of state permitted dredge disposal facility, and therefore the dredged material disposal will have no impact on Essential Fish Habitat for the fisheries at the site or elsewhere.



Indian River Culvert Replacement Project in Orange, CT (Southcentral Coast Service Area)

The Town of Orange Conservation Commission proposes to remove culverts from the Indian River at the Ewen Preserve off of Tyler City Road and replace them with a wooden bridge. These culverts are undersized and thus periodically accumulate debris in the spring and during large storm events causing the stream to jump its channel and flow across the adjacent field which is part of the Town of Orange's Ewen Preserve. Removal of these culverts would also remove an impediment to Brown Trout and other fish movement within the Indian River system. The Conservation Commission has a conditional approval from the Inland Wetlands Commission to approve the project once an engineering design is completed so that the bridge is designed and constructed properly.





Stratford Point Living Shoreline project in Stratford, CT (Housatonic River Service Area)

Sacred Heart University (SHU) seeks funds from the Connecticut ILF Program to restore intertidal habitats from low marsh on the seaward end to coastal dune habitat at the landward end along the Housatonic River Estuary shoreline at Stratford Point. These endpoints are integral components of a larger Stratford Point restoration plan prepared by Connecticut Audubon Society in 2011. SHU seeks ILF funding to be used to procure and plant the following intertidal plants along the shoreline: Tall smooth cordgrass (*Spartina alterniflora*) in the lower elevation zones, and short smooth cordgrass and saltmeadow cordgrass (*Spartina patens*) in the upper intertidal zone. Beachgrass (*Ammophila breviligulata*), switchgrass (*Panicum virgatum*), and other native species would be planted as well adjacent to the extreme upper limits of the intertidal zone in an attempt to restore the coastal dune. Upon completion, the project will provide critical ecosystem services that have been degraded or lost at the site, and throughout the region, including improved water quality via nutrient uptake and retention, atmospheric carbon storage, decreased erosion and restoration of natural sediment transport dynamics, enhanced ecosystem resilience to severe storms and sea level rise, abiotic and biotic habitat for federally- and state-listed fish and wildlife species (and other species of regional conservation concern), connectivity between the upland and aquatic habitats at the site, connectivity between two units of the Stewart B. McKinney National Wildlife Refuge and several other natural areas in the region.

This project will impact approximately 4.1 acres of marine lands designated as, or directly hydrologically connected to, Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) for various species and their life stages under the management purview of the New England or Mid-Atlantic Fisheries Management Councils. The project site lies within a greater area that is designated as EFH for the following fish species: adult Whiting (*Merlangius merlangus*); juvenile and adult Pollock (*Pollachius virens*); egg, juvenile, and adult Red Hake (*Urophycis chuss*); all life stages of Windowpane (*Scophthalmus aquosus*) and Winter Flounder (*Pseudopleuronectes americana*); juvenile and adult Atlantic Sea Herring (*Clupea harengus*), a variety of shark and skate species, and one or more life stages of the following fish species: Summer Flounder (*Paralichthys dentatus*), Scup (*Stenotomus chrysops*), Black Sea Bass (*Centropristis striata*), Bluefish (*Pomatomus saltatrix*), Atlantic Surfclam (*Spisula solidissima*), Atlantic Mackerel (*Scomber scombrus*) and Butterfish (*Peprilus triacanthus*). Several other species of economic concern are also found in waters of or adjacent to the site, including glass eel and elver stages of the American Eel (*Anguilla rostrata*), “river herring” (Alewife, *Alosa pseudoharengus* and Blueback Herring, *Alosa aestivalis*), and Spiny Dogfish (*Squalus acanthias*). This habitat consists of intertidal and subtidal habitat consisting predominantly of cobble imbedded in fine sands and silt, interspersed with shell hash and marine algae, predominantly *Ulva*. Alteration of this habitat may adversely affect the various species and their life stages, nearshore forage fish, and marine invertebrates found in this habitat. However, the District Engineer has made a preliminary determination that the site-specific adverse effect will not be substantial. Further consultation with the National Marine Fisheries Service regarding EFH conservation recommendations is being conducted and will be concluded prior to the final decision.

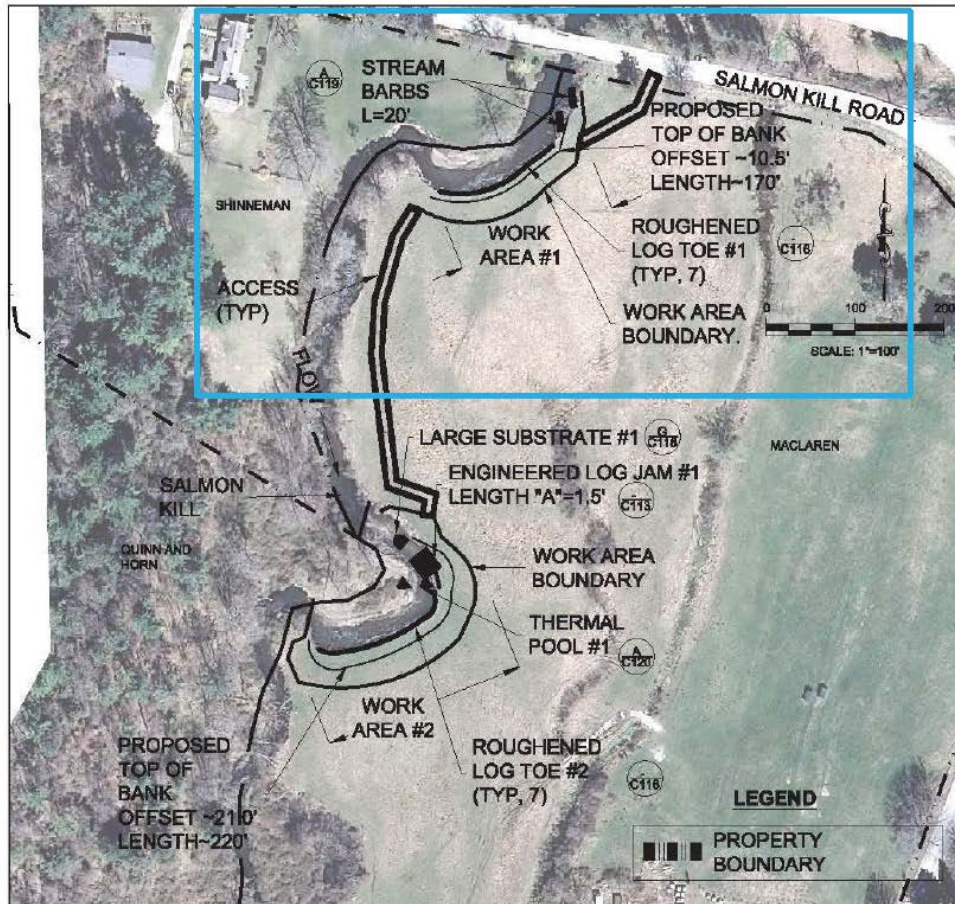
Restoration of Salmon Kill Creek in Salisbury CT (Housatonic River Service Area)

The Salmon Kill Restoration Project is the continuation of a multiphase project initiated by Trout Unlimited to restore reaches of the Salmon Kill, a third order upper perennial watercourse in north-western CT. Restoration measures are proposed to address habitat fragmentation issues for native Brook Trout (*Salvelinus fontinalis*) – a keystone coldwater fishery species for this riverine system. Various wood treatments, plantings, and channel modifications are proposed to stabilize bank erosion, provide habitat cover, and create other stream attributes conducive to trout and the suite of other coldwater fisheries species within Salmon Kill Creek. The proposal submitted to the ILF Program requests funding to implement the proposed restoration measures at two local stream reaches totalling 270 linear feet of stream bank.

Appendix B: Watershed Map

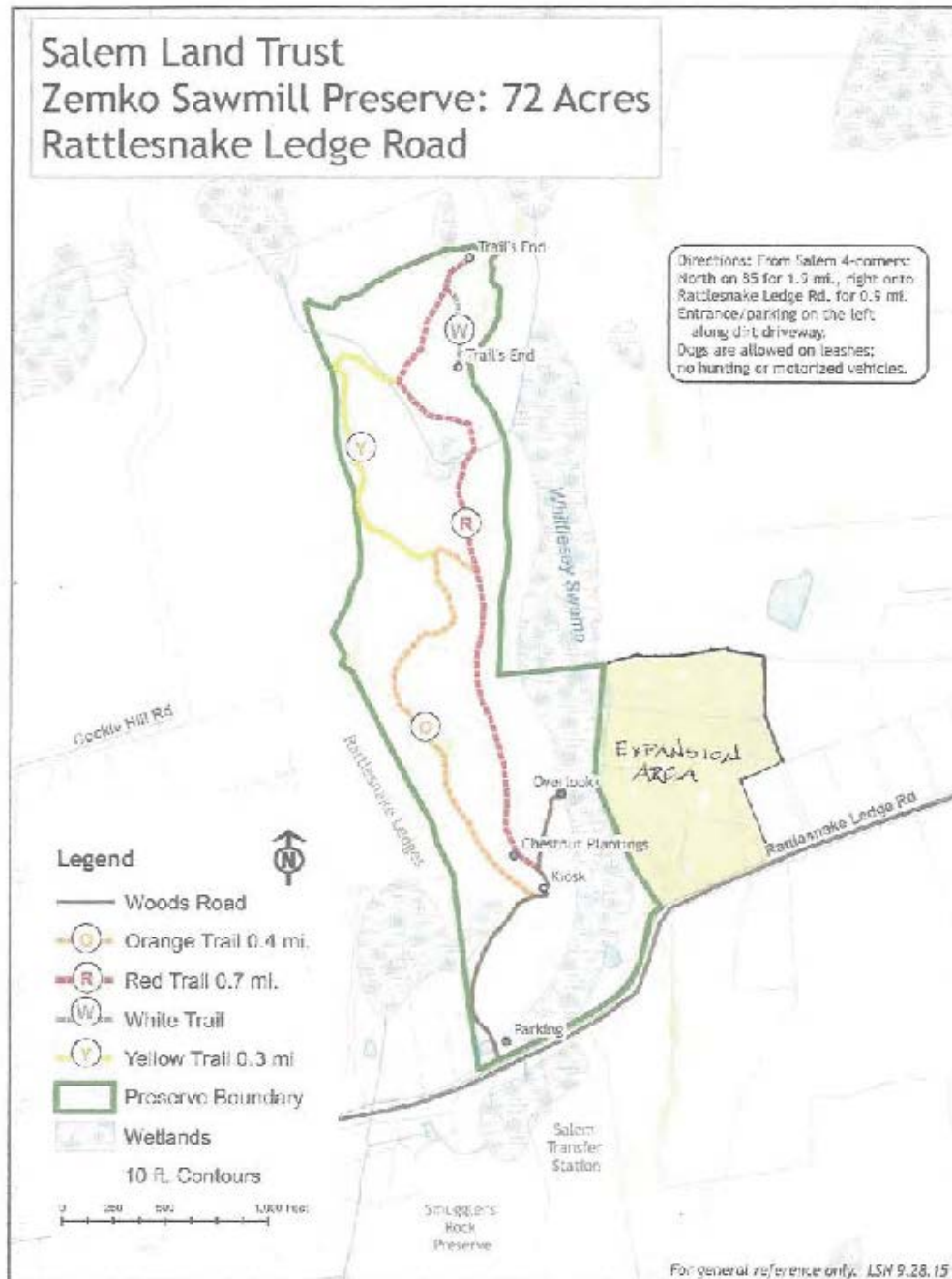


Appendix D Site Plans



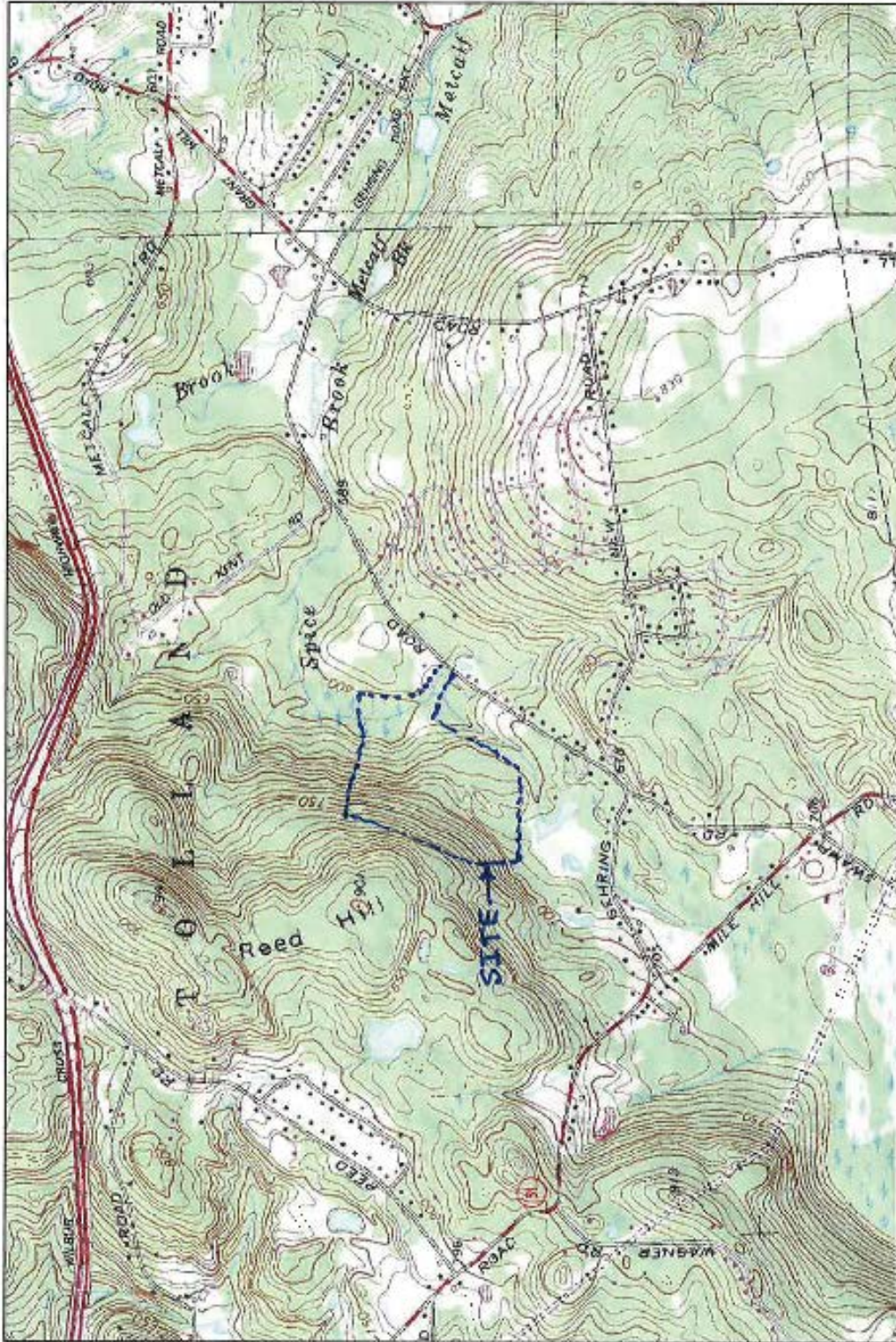
Zemko Sawmill Preserve Expansion in Salem, CT (Connecticut River Service Area)

The Salem Land Trust (SLT) is requesting funding via the ILF Program to purchase four contiguous forested parcels available for sale by a private land owner adjacent to the SLT's existing Zemko Preserve. The four contiguous parcels provide a wooded buffer to a palustrine wetland system (Whittlesey Swamp) on the adjacent Zemko Sawmill Preserve, and contain a palustrine forested wetland system themselves, drained by an intermittent stream that contributes flow to the East Branch of the Eight Mile River. The SLT seeks funding from the ILF Program to partially fund the cost of acquisition.



Spice Brook Restoration and Preservation – Tolland, CT (Thames Service Area)

The project Site consists of wetlands restoration, invasive species eradication/management and preservation of wooded uplands adjacent to Spice Brook in Tolland, CT. Approximately 64 acres of land are for sale in the Town of Tolland that could potentially be developed with multiple single family homes. If development is allowed to occur, tree cutting and other land disturbance will likely result in loss of “key habitat” areas for birds and degradation of wetlands on the Site which have already been impacted by an access road to the rear wooded portions of the property. Since the Site is within the Bolton Range/ Cockaponset Boundary, a key habitat for birds would be preserved along this important upland corridor. Also, some 83 acres of adjacent land is already being conserved by the Northern Connecticut Land Trust. Preservation of the Site will allow for a significantly larger, continuous, upland forest habitat and adjacent wetland habitat to be preserved within the Bolton Range/Cockaponset Boundary. The Project would also restore damaged wetlands that are present in the southern part of the property adjacent to Spice Brook, which is a tributary to the Skungamaug River and is found on the western edge of the Thames River Basin (Audubon Thames Service Area). Removal of the existing access road will allow for wetland restoration. The access road is near the headwaters of Spice Brook, which joins Metcalf Brook and then the Skungamaug River to the east. Significant wetlands along these waterways support abundant wildlife and it is likely that endangered/threatened species identified on the CT-ECO website along Metcalf Brook, east of the Site, are potentially present in Spice Brook wetland areas and on the Site. Finally, since invasive plant species including multi-floral rose and autumn olive have been identified along the access road that crosses the wetlands, the Project will include eradication of those invasive plant species and three years of follow up control of those invasive plants, along with planting of native species that support native wetland wildlife. Long term management of the Site will be provided by the Town of Tolland through the Conservation Commission and the Tolland Conservation Corp. The Tolland Conservation Commission plans to use the Site only for passive recreation by establishing a hiking trail (foot traffic only) across upland portions of the property.



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Map provided by MyTopo.com

Willimantic River Restoration and Dam Removal – Willimantic, CT (Thames Service Area)

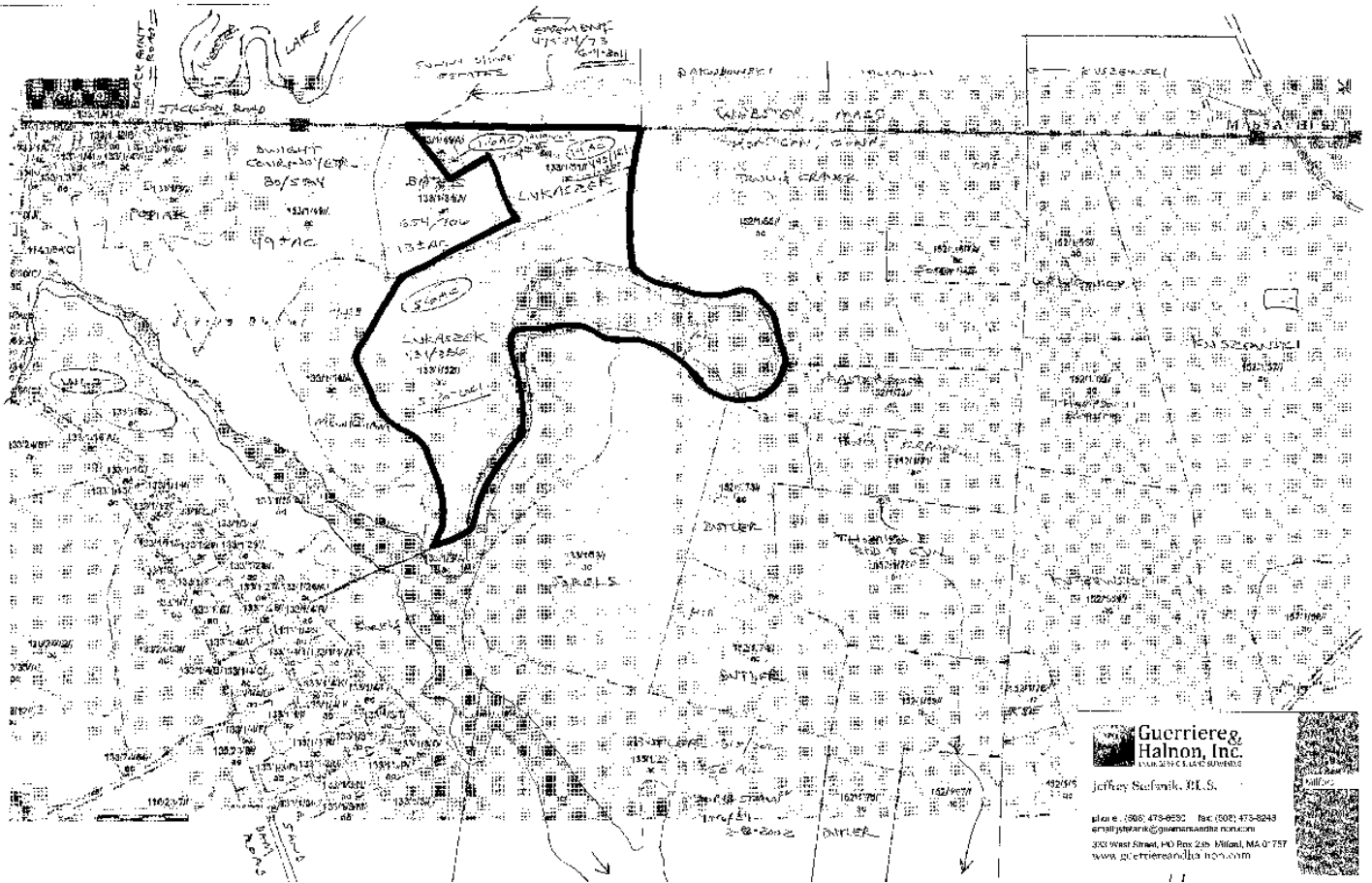
The proposed project comprises a design and build approach for restoration of a reach of the Willimantic River in Willimantic, CT (28 Bridge Street, Willimantic, CT). Previously, a feasibility study was conducted to assess fish passage and whitewater boating opportunities (*Fish and Kayak Feasibility Study Bridge Street Dam*, Milone & MacBroom, 2008; this study is available upon request). The current proposal involves conducting follow-up data collection for developing engineered designs, developing engineered designs and completing and submitting all required permitting documents, as well as de-construction of the dam and possibly riverbed modification of a low-head weir (i.e. the location of a former dam) to facilitate movement of native fish from the lower reach of the project area to upper reaches of the Willimantic River, all the way to the Eagleville Dam in Coventry about 7 miles upstream. The project as designed and built will also accommodate targeted migratory fish species including river herring, American Shad and American Eel. The long-term goal, in addition to restoring this reach of river for native fish, is to restore migratory fish to the Willimantic River.



Lukaszek Preservation – Thompson, CT (Thames Service Area)

The Wyndham Land Trust is interested in purchasing 76.6 acres of land in the Long Pond area of Thompson. The property is part of the source of the Five Mile River and has been identified as an important aquifer. Since, it has the only easy access to Long Pond this property is the keystone property to protect in order to conserve the entire Long Pond area and source of the Five Mile River, all the other abutting parcels are landlocked. In 2008 a report by the Eastern Ct Environmental Review Team found 7 listed species in the area of Long Pond. One fish (banded sunfish), one butterfly (Persius Duskywing), and five plants (Bog Aster, Hare's Tail, Dwarf Huckleberry, Water Penny, and Shining Rose). They also found two rare habitats: Atlantic White Cedar Swamp and Poor Fen, both are on this property. Few invasive plants were observed on the property. Spotted Knapweed is the most common, found mainly in the recovering gravelled area. Japanese Knotweed and Purple Loosestrife were also observed in the formerly gravelled area. The land around the pond and river looks pristine and has wide areas of emerged shrubs. Only a couple of places to access pond were observed. Several acres of the property were illegally gravel many years ago. They're in the process of recovering with white pine, gray birch, and sweet fern colonizing that area. The property is on the market and could easily have houses built on it, particularly the northern part. The owner has a layout of potential house lots.





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