



Trail Markers



See our home page at <http://www.westonforesttrail.org>

Trail Walk and Annual Meeting Sunday May 1, 2011

Our 66th Annual Meeting will take place at 4:00 p.m. , at the Weston Scout House on School Street, across from the Weston Public Library. You can park in front of the Scout House or in the Library parking lot (at the back, please, to leave room for the normal library patrons).

At 2:00 p.m. prior to the Meeting our usual Sunday guided walk will take place, covering Chestnut Street and the Case Estates. It will be led by Mary Ann Pappanikou (see our home page for details).

Kids and dogs are welcome, but the latter should be leashed.

Refreshments will be served at the Scout House after the walk, and prior to the Annual Meeting.

The brief business meeting will be followed by a slide presentation by

Michele Grzenda, Conservation Commission Administrator for the Town of Weston

“Weston’s Woodland Vernal Pools”

What are they, and why should we protect them?



During the end of the last ice age, retreating glaciers carved some of New England's most unique habitats, vernal pools. These seasonal wetlands harbor an array of plants, invertebrates, reptiles, amphibians, and other wildlife.

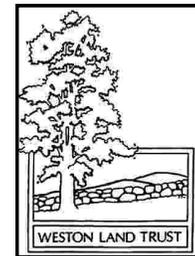
Michele will begin with an introduction to the ecology of these pools and discuss the natural history of the organisms inhabiting them. Michele will also teach us how to identify frogs by their ‘trills’ and ‘croaks’. There may even be a special guest appearance of a vernal pool creature!

Since 2008 Michele has worked as Weston’s Conservation Administrator. Her role includes reviewing applications for work near wetlands, drafting permits, and monitoring construction activities to ensure compliance with the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act. In addition, Michele provides education and outreach material on the wetland permitting process for residents, administers a number of land management contracts, and conducts baseline documentation and inventories of Weston’s Conservation Land. Michele Grzenda is a recognized vernal pool expert and naturalist. Her formal education began with a bachelor’s degree in environmental science and wildlife management from the University of New Hampshire. Yet her passion for nature began much earlier. Growing up beside a wetland in southern Massachusetts, there was always opportunity and curiosity to explore this diverse habitat. She has spent 30 years wading waist deep in the vernal pools. First as an investigative child, then later as a professional, studying and certifying vernal pools for Massachusetts Audubon Society, Sudbury Valley Trustees, and various environmental consulting firms. Michele has over 15 years of experience blending the fields of environmental regulation, land management, and education.



WFTA and WLT working on a proposal to join forces to protect and enhance Weston's open space

Combined organization to focus on encouraging the use, on planning and on protection for Weston's woods, fields, outlooks and trails in concert with the Conservation Commission and other Town organizations and committees.



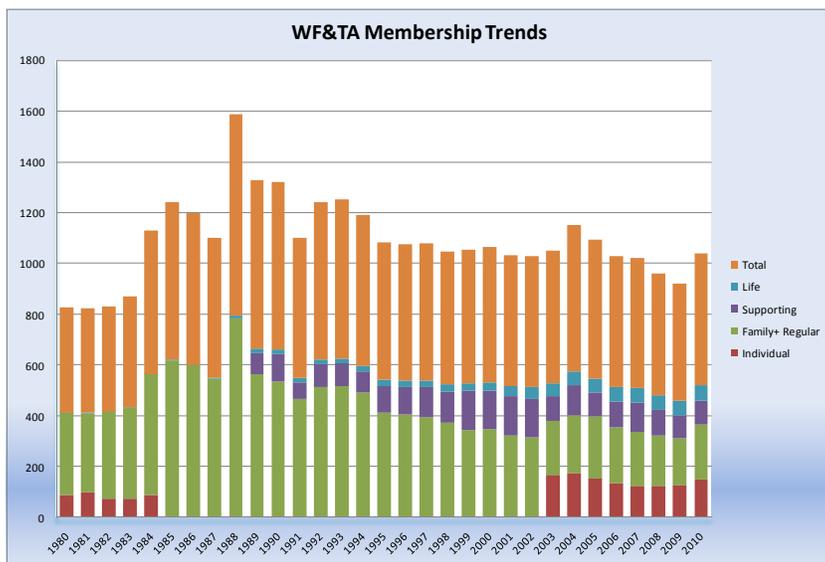
Since the start of the year, Trustee representatives from the two major environmental organizations in Town, the Weston Forest and Trail Association and the Weston Land Trust have been meeting to work out the best way for the two entities to merge and thereby create a single, strong organization devoted to maintaining and enhancing Weston's open spaces, which add so much to the rural character of our Town. We anticipate that our Trustees will vote on the details of this merger this spring and if they approve, the remainder of the work will be completed over the summer, so that an announcement and a suitable occasion can be scheduled for the fall. The WFTA/WLT committee tasked with developing the proposed merger arrangements drafted a suggested mission statement, which reads as follows:

We are a private, non-profit, volunteer organization founded to ensure the preservation, protection, and enhancement of Weston's natural resources and rural character. We will promote awareness and appreciation of these resources in collaboration with Weston's Conservation Commission and other municipal and community organizations. Our goals are:

- To preserve and protect the open space in Town, including forests, meadows, trails and outlooks.
- To provide for proper stewardship, monitoring, management, maintenance and improvement of the trails and open space for safe use by the public in an ecologically sound manner.
- To encourage the use and enjoyment of the trails and open space in Weston, and to promote awareness and appreciation by residents of the Town of the advantages and benefits of maintaining a large portion of the Town as open space.
- To educate the public on current land-use and conservation issues facing the Town presently and in the future.
- To promote responsible development and facilitate creative solutions for future acquisitions and protection of open space.
- To solicit and accept gifts of land, easements, and other rights and assets to add to or improve open space and protection of natural resources and monitor, and if necessary enforce, the obligations inherent in such donations.
- To assure the continuity and financial viability of the organization by soliciting and accepting donations to support the mission and goals of the organization.

Nice increase in Membership in 2010

Thanks to the effort of the revived Membership Committee of Ann Wiedie, Fred Cabot and Marcy Lee — as well as the efforts of a number of the Trustees—the slide in membership over the past few years has been reversed, and in 2010 our membership increased by 13.4% over 2009, as shown in the chart on the right. We are still not at the levels reached in the past, so further work is needed. The merger with the Weston Land Trust, when it takes place, will no doubt result in an increase for the combined organization, and enable us to maintain a strong voice on behalf of the open space in Town.



**Weston Forest & Trail Association, Inc.
Operations – 2010**

Cash & Cash Equivalents 1/1/10 \$20,785.84

Receipts:

Dues	\$ 23,933.05	
Endowment Fund	24,532.06	
Gifts	23,000.00	
Map sales	1,233.00	
Book sales	240.00	
Interest	862.93	
Operations Fund	11,583.00	
Weston Reservoir Fund	4,332.00	
Miscellaneous	<u>17.00</u>	

Total Receipts 89,733.04

Disbursements:

Office Expense	\$ 11,380.16	
Insurance Expense	2,427.36	
Accounting	1,600.00	
Maintenance:		
Land's Sake	\$32,475.00	
Other	<u>26,244.34</u>	58,719.34
Weston Reservoir Fund	3,173.58	
Case Fund	2,000.00	
Surveying	796.00	

Total Disbursements (80,096.44)

Cash and Cash Equivalents 12/31/10

Checking Account	\$17,314.28	
Vanguard GNMA Fund	<u>13,108.16</u>	

Total Cash and Cash Equivalents \$ 30,422.44*

*This total includes Restricted Funds as follows:

Restricted:

Operations Fund (2011)	\$ 400.00	
Weston Reservoir Fund	<u>4,839.81</u>	

Total Restricted \$ 5,239.81

**Weston Forest & Trail Association, Inc.
Endowment Fund - 2010**

Balance 1/1/10 \$869,400.91

Receipts & Disbursements

Contributions	\$ 25,563.64	
Income and Capital Gains	<u>101,922.15</u>	
	Net change in Value of fund	<u>127,485.79</u>

Balance 12/31/10 \$996,886.70*

The average market value of the Fund in 2010 not including contributions received during the year was \$920,369.99. The Cost of Living Index for all Urban Consumers in the Boston Area increased 0.6% during the year ended November 2010. 0.6% of \$920,369.99 is \$5,522.22. Real income from the Fund in 2010 is calculated as follows:

Income and Capital Gains	\$ 101,922.15	
Less inflation adjustment	<u>(5,522.22)</u>	
	Real Income or (loss)	<u>\$ 96,399.93</u>

\$96,399.93 is 10.47% of the average market value of the Fund in 2010. The average real rate of return on the Fund starting in 1989 is 3.10%.

*This amount includes \$25,563.64 which was deposited to the Endowment Fund at year end, but which is not included in the attached statement from the Cambridge Trust Co.





Weston Forest and Trail Association, Inc.
266 Glen Road, Weston, MA 02493

Annual Meeting Sunday May 1, 2011
4 P.M.
The Scout House, School Street

Non-Profit
U.S. Postage
PAID
Boston, MA
Permit No. 59119

Annual Meeting Topic:
Weston's Woodland Vernal Pools
By
Michele Grdnza,
Conservation Commission Administrator, Town of Weston

Please Join the Association:

- Individual membership \$ 25
- Family membership \$ 50
- Supporting membership*** **\$ 100 *** (recommended)
- Leadership Support \$ 1000*
- Life Membership** \$ 2,000 or more**

Note that all membership contributions are fully tax-deductible

* If you wish to receive the exclusive, unique WF&T coffee mug, please check here

** Life Members will receive a framed certificate of appreciation, unless checked here

Also, please send me copies of **"Walks on Weston Conservation Land"** by Elmer E. Jones @ \$ 15.00 each, plus \$ 2.00 for postage and handling. This book is also available at Dragon Books in the Town Center. **Maps of the Weston Trail System** are available for \$ 10.00 at the Conservation Commission office, in the Town Hall. **All can also be purchased on the WF&TA website at www.westonforesttrail.org**

CHECK HERE () TO GET IT ALL:

Supporting Membership + Trail Map + Trail Guide + coffee mug for \$ 125.00

Name: _____

Address: _____

Please make checks payable to the **Weston Forest and Trail Association, Inc.** and mail, together with the above form, to Mr. George Bates, Treasurer, 266 Glen Road, Weston, MA 02493. You can also join over the web at www.westonforesttrail.org

