

# Rattlesnake Gutter Trust Monitoring - RGT-Owned Property Form

**1. Property Name:** East Leverett Meadow      **Year:** 2016

**2. Date of Monitoring:** December 17, 2016

**Recommendations from last year's monitoring:**

Boundary Markers: use a GPS on a snowless day to establish the four corner boundary points as nearly as possible. GPS was used to monitor the meadow, but five of the boundary corners were not found (NW, both southeast to Truehart property, SW corner on Cushman Road and SW corner adjacent to Roaring Brook). Return trip next monitoring will establish GPS coordinates of corners.

Perimeter path: flexible white fiberglass stakes were placed to mark the western boundary of the trail.

Bridge over Roaring Brook: recommendation to have inspected; not done; warning signs for slippery conditions not done

Old distillery sites: interpretive signs still needed

Further recommendations are summarized in attached management plan that was submitted to the Board in 2015 and was approved. Several of these management goals (brush hogging of one-third of the meadow in late fall, goat work, establishment of refugia areas, wood turtle survey, pruning of apple trees in NE orchard area, mowing gridded areas as needed for management activities, have been completed (see attachment)

**3. Monitors:**

Sheila Seaman

**4. Describe the monitoring route briefly (also draw on map):**

Began in the parking area along Cushman Road. Searched for SW corner marker. Failed to find it. Returned to trail. Searched for, and found SE marker on Cushman Road. Followed trail into property and across bridge. Followed trail to SW corner near Sincuk house. Left trail, followed Roaring Brook west to approximate location of SW corner adjacent to brook. Did not locate corner. Back to trail. Followed trail along the western boundary and toward the NW corner. Again, failed to locate the NW corner..thick vegetation. Returned to the trail and followed it past the beaver pond, along the northern boundary to the NE corner, where the marker was located. Returned to trail, followed it to the two markers on the SE corners of the property north of the Seaman-Williams property (see map). Neither corner marker located! Followed the trail back to the bridge and to the parking area.

**5. Action Items requiring attention:**

A sign at the old distillery site would be helpful. We also need signage with stricter wording regarding the prohibition of dogs from March to September.

Need sign indicating slippery nature of the bridge, and a general inspection of the bridge by a qualified person for safety.

GPS coordinates need to be re-done for all corners

Mailbox that is kept stocked with brochures just north of the bridge rotted a ground level and needs to be re-installed. New base has been purchased; installation will take place when ground thaws.

Management goals summarized in the attachment that have not yet been completed include: light strip disking in goldenrod-rich strips that were mowed in the fall (this will be done in early spring), prescribed burns (planned for a small area in fall, 2017, possibly preceded by test burn on neighboring Seaman-Williams property), hand-trimming of goldenrod (this will be attempted in spring, 2017), install nest

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boxes for local bumblebees, and continued attention to removing invasives from the borders of the meadow.

One goal in the management plan, establishment of a pollinator garden on about 1.5 acres in the northeast corner, may not be carried out in light of recommendations of pollinator conservation advisor Jarrod Fowler of the Xerces Society, who suggested that the vegetation mix currently on that site is already good support for pollinators. However, an additional management goal, which, along with mowing one-third of the grassy part of the meadow per year, arose from our consultation with Mr. Fowler, is the suggestion to diversify our flowering plants in the meadow, with the goal in particular of establishing some spring-blooming varieties. To this end, we will seed the lightly disced strips with a mixture of native flower and warm season grass seeds in early spring.

### 6. List any problems with monitoring map or photos:

No problems

### 7. Describe alterations. Draw on map, take photos.

Natural

None Observed:

Human Made

None Observed:

One-third of the meadow was brush-hogged in November, 2016. 50' wide, north-south-trending strips alternate with 100'-wide unmowed strips.

### 8. Monitoring recommendations for next year:

Use a GPS, monitor prior to snow fall, and clearly and abundantly mark the corners

### Stewardship Plan for Upcoming Year:

#### 9. Last Year's Stewardship Plan / Goals / Accomplishments:

Please see attachment

#### 10. Last Year's Actual Costs ~\$1700

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### 11. Goals, planned activities to meet those Stewardship goals and timeline for the coming year:

Please see #5 above, and attachment

### 12. Anticipated costs (both on-going and for this next year):

Brush-hogging, early November: ~\$1200

Strip disking goldenrod-rich parts of meadow, early spring: ~\$500

Path mowing: \$200

Signed:

Date Signed: December 29, 2016

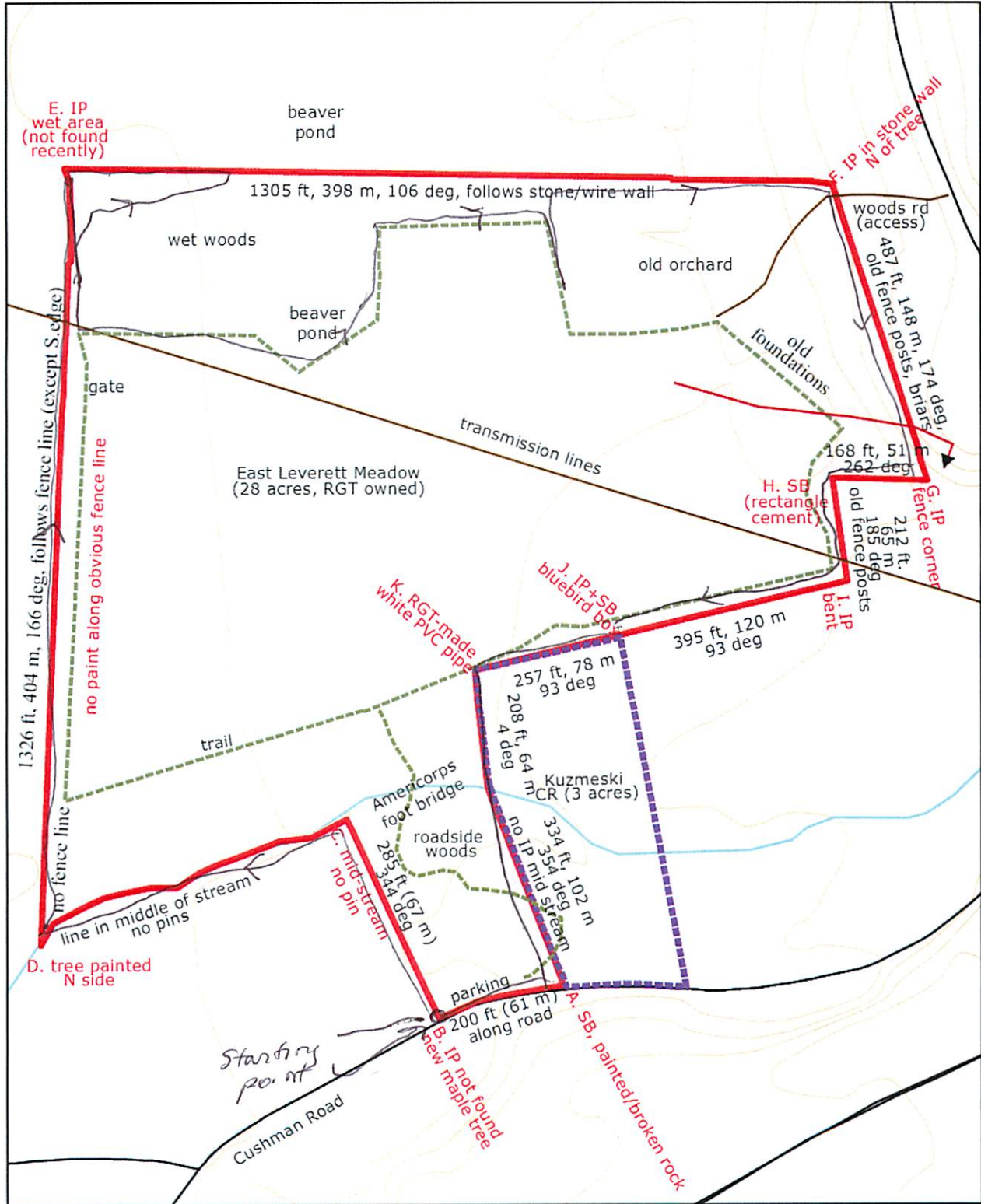
Still to do:

- Ask to present this report at the next RGT Board Meeting
- Print out and sign 3 copies:
  - 1. Put one in the Green Field Notebook
  - 2. Give one to the person who puts the reports in the Blue Archive Notebook at the Leverett Family Museum.
  - 3. Mail (or give) a copy to the land owner(s)
- Send an electronic copy of this report to the person who puts it on the Board-only section of the RGT website.

**2016 ELM Maintenance Plans**

| <b>Goal</b>   | <b>Purpose</b>  | <b>Labor and Materials</b>  | <b>Timeframe</b>  | <b>Budget Allowance</b> | <b>Goal Accomplished?</b>   |
|---|---|---|---|-------------------------|---|
| <b>Establish a grid of 200' x 400' rectangles</b>   | create areas for different management trials  | metal posts and paint   | Spring  | \$275                   | Limited grid established to define mowing and refugia areas                                       |
| <b>Bush hog the meadow once a year</b>              | control goldenrod consistent with turtle survival                                     | arrange a long term contract with Greg Rawls or others            | every November  | \$1,500                 | One-third of meadow was brush-hogged in November as result of consultation with pollinator expert |
| <b>Light strip disking (In select areas)</b>        | Control goldenrod, increase plant diversity   | Rocky's tractor   | Spring, in parallel strips 25' x 400'. On a rolling basis.                    | \$200                   | Will be done in early spring, 2017  |
| <b>Prescribed burns (In select areas)</b>           | Control goldenrod, increase plant diversity, diminish thatch from annual bush hogging | TBD   | Spring. On a rolling basis. No area to be burned more than once every 3 years | TBD                     | Will be attempted on a pilot basis in fall, 2017  |
| <b>Hand trimming goldenrod (In select areas)</b>    | Non-mechanical control  | volunteers...   | several times during the growing season                                       | None                    | Will be done in spring, 2017  |
| <b>Try goats again (In select areas)</b>            | Try a small area earlier than last year when goldenrod is young                       | Goat Girls  | late May, early June for a week, once, as a test                              | Sheila?                 | Done; goats were hired for one week in early June.  |
| <b>Maintain "refugia" areas</b>                     | keep some areas free of activity, as control zones                                    | none  | Mow in Nov w/ the rest of the meadow  | None                    | 50' x 50' refugia were established on each corner of the meadow in fall, 2016                     |
| <b>Survey for turtles</b>                           | find and mark wood turtles  | Patrick Roberts   | as soon as Spring temps rise, for several weeks? Repeat for 2-3 years?        | \$900                   | Completed in May and June, 2016. No turtles found.  |
| <b>Plant a local pollinator garden in North end</b> | increase beauty and diversity   | turn over soil 2-3 times this year                                | plant in the Fall   | \$200                   | Not done. Under discussion for the future but present vegetation is good pollinator habitat       |
| <b>Prune and maintain apple trees in NW</b>         | return this orchard to health, add beauty to the meadow                               | one or more mowing/bush hogging per year, misc pruning            | already underway with Joe Sincuk's help                                       | None                    | Done in spring, 2016  |
| <b>Nest boxes for local bumblebees</b>              | encourage pollinators   | buy and place simple containers, monitor                          | buy this year (George), and install early next Spring                         | ?                       | Will be done in spring, 2017  |
| <b>Better signage at both entries to ELM</b>        | tell visitors what we're trying to do in ELM. Make kiosks attractive and updated      | Rocky and others to build these, Julie C to write and illustrate? | Sometime this summer  | \$300                   | Not done; also need signage regarding dogs in the meadow between March and September              |
| <b>Control invasives around the borders</b>         | continue Pete and Molly's recommendations   | annual work parties   | Fall  | None                    | Not done in 2016; efforts in fall, 2015 were effective, but work will continue in 2017            |

# East Leverett Meadow Boundaries for Monitoring



IP - iron pin (surveyor's pin)  
 SB = stone bound  
 lines and corners painted red  
 some RGT metal tags

