

## RGT Stewardship Plan for First Year\* (as of 12/17/2013)

### **1. Description:** size, location, access, brief description

16 acres of woodland

Official address: Lancaster Pike (Old Lancaster Road)

3 access routes:

- a. on foot via Lancaster Pike (begins as January Road off Still Corner Road
- b. on foot via M-M (white dot) trail from Shutesbury Road through town-owned Roaring Brook Conservation Area
- c. on foot from bridge over Roaring Book, legal access through Connelly/Lockwood driveway (#167 Shutesbury Road) to old discontinued road

Description:

northeast section is wooded wetland, central and southwest is higher drier woodland

### **2. Site Significance:**

Property contiguous to Roaring Brook Conservation Area. Protected property continues across Shutesbury Road on David Smith CR, Mosher Conservation Area, and the Walter C. Jones Working Forest.

Property is uphill from the historic East Leverett village that in the 19th century had 17 mills - most of which used Roaring Brook waterpower.

### **3. Deed Restrictions/Responsibilities:**

Deed includes well rights for the Stetson Homestead across Shutesbury Road. The pipes were washed out in a flood, but well is still there (with a new well cover) and the rights remain in the deed.

### **4. Site Restrictions/Limitations:**

Only obvious restriction is the lack of vehicle access (4-wheel drive might get up from the Connelly/Lockwood (#167) driveway).

### **5. Plant Communities, Wildlife Communities, Natural Features:**

Property was cleared by the last half of 1800's - there are some stonewalls and more barbed wire. Fields grew up to pines and more recently hardwoods and hemlocks. Woodlot cutting was primarily on the southeastern part - trees are younger in this section. There is a considerable wetland in the northeast with mountain laurel and wetland plants that have not been surveyed.

**6. Historic Land Use and Cultural Resources:**

There is no indication that there was ever a house on the land. (See above for land use.) There was an active mill village along Roaring Brook. There are a few stonewalls, but no other stone structures have been found in this first year.

**7. Trails Present and Potential** (also complete/revise Trail Assessment on last pages):

A loop trail through the property and a spur trail to a knoll has been completed. The two access trails, while not on the property, are part of the trail system.

Another trail for the neighbors through the Campbell property may be created in the next year.

**8. Potential Threats:** (boundaries/access, unauthorized use, hydrology/wetlands, soil erosion/sedimentation, invasive species, sensitive resources)

Trail construction may encourage ATV use - which will not be easy to monitor. None other foreseen.

**9. Management Goals for This First Year**

1. Create a property committee involving both RGT Board members and the immediate neighbors (who have been very involved in helping during this first year).
2. Repair the bog bridges on the former M-M (white dot) trail so that the Shutesbury Road access can be encouraged.
3. Work with the neighbors to complete the trail through the Campbell property to the Knoll Trail.
4. Build and install a memorial bench to Donald H. Bates on the knoll.
5. Monitor the property and the trails.

**10. Schedule of Planned Activities (including monitoring) to Meet Goals:**

Spring (or winter if no snow): walk with the new members of the property committee, organize volunteers for bog bridges, bench, and Campbell Trail.

<b>13. Budget: Description</b>	<b>Estimated cost</b>	<b>Estimated Total</b>
<b>a. Costs every year</b>	none anticipated	
<b>b. Costs just this year</b>		
M-M bog bridges 5 sites x 3 bridges each x \$20	\$3	
Campbell bog bridges 3 x \$20	\$60	
<b>(Total for this year)</b>		\$360
<b><i>c. Anticipate additional costs next year</i></b>		<b><i>(do not add to total)</i></b>
	none anticipated	
<b>Plan completed by:</b>		
<b>Date:</b>		
<b>..... date presented to Board ..... date copies provided for archive/web</b>		

*Special thanks to the East Quabbin Land Trust for their help with this document.*

*\* There is a shorter Stewardship Form to use after the first year.*

## Trail Assessment

First year: complete. Attach map with appropriate notations.

Each following year: walk trail with previous Trail Assessment to review status; note changes or write "same."  
(Attach map if needed.)

*RGT thanks the East Quabbin Land Trust for sharing their assessment document..*

### **Types of access and use currently allowed on trails and facilities:**

Signage gives no restriction. Large tree left on Lancaster Pike to discourage ATVs.

### **Special Features** (including views, historic, and natural features):

woodland, view of wet woodland

### **Characteristics of parking and entry** (including gates, number of parking spaces):

All entry is by foot. Trail maps and website show access only via Lancaster Pike or M-M (white dot) Trail. Property Committee can access via discontinued road up Connelly/Lockwood driveway (#167 Shutesbury Road).

### **Characteristic width of existing trails:**

Narrow Foot Trail < 3 ft: Loop and Knoll trails on property, M-M trail access (not on property)

Trail > 5 ft: Lancaster Pike access (not on property)

Farm/Woods Road >10 ft:

### **Trail constraints** (gates, bridges (note width), topography, wetlands, stream crossings):

Bates trails (Look and Knoll): uneven forest floor, one small bridge on Knoll Trail.

Lancaster Pike: one large tree trunk to climb over (left in place to discourage ATV)

M-M (white dot) Trail. Americorps Bridge over Roaring Brook, 5 bog bridge crossings (all in disrepair), very steep hill between Shutesbury Road and Roaring Brook.

Discontinued Road access: need to be courteous to helpful neighbors, might be passible with 4-wheel drive vehicle, but, though legal, not intended as public access.

Potential Campbell/neighborhood Trail: bog bridges at beginning, steep slope on Campbell property, then relatively easy connection to Knoll Trail on the property.

### **Trail surface** (including surface material and any obstacles between specific stations on map):

dirt/forest floor cleared of branches, but will accumulate forest debris.

**Trail length** (total length and length to specific station such as bridge):

(Note all trails measure to the next tenth of a mile i.e. measurements generous)

Bates Loop Trail: 0.5 mile  
Bates Knoll Trail: 0.1 mile  
Lancaster Pike: 0.4 mile  
M-M (white dot) Trail: 0.4 milw

**Volume and signs of access** (Note signs of access by bicyclists, hikers, equestrians, ATV's )

Bates Traila (Loop and Knoll) were only completed in November, so no information. Both access trails seem to be kept open by use, but no more information.

**Trail surface** (including surface material and any obstacles between specific stations on map):

Bates trails just cleared path in the woods  
Lancaster Pike old woods road  
M-M (white dot) just cleared path in the woods. Bog bridges in need of repair.

**Trail grade** (between specific stations on map):

Bates Loop and Knoll Trails: gradual change of slope.  
Lancaster Pike, uphill but not steep (not on property)  
M-M Trail: steep between Shutesbury Road and Roaring Brook, uphill to Bates Trail, but not steep.(not on property)

**Hazards** (tree blowdowns, hanging limbs, loose rocks, rough terrain etc):

Trails on property: none known

**Safety constraints and requirements:**

None known

**Signs of vandalism:**

Not so far. Signage was put up the end of November.

**Risk of harm to natural and cultural resources:**

Trial on the property avoids the wetlands. There is one bog bridge on the Knoll Trail that was built by the Bates family to give access to woodlot cutting on the knoll.

**Recommendations to fix a problem on the trail** (including signs needed, brush clearing, erosion control, bridges or steps over wet section ):

Repair the M-M Trail bog bridges.

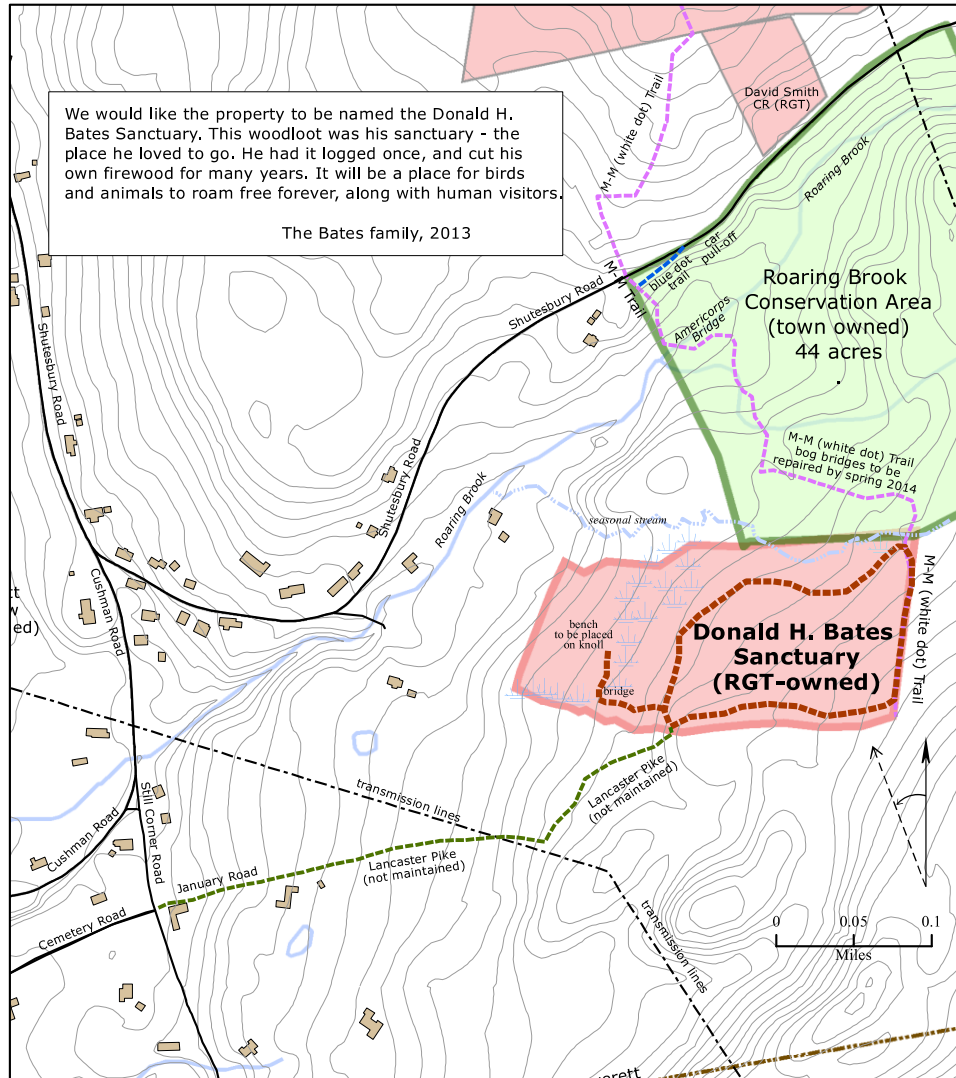
**Trail map attached highlighting sensitive areas and constraints:**

Wetlands are shown on the attached map.

**Assessment completed by:**

**Date:**

## Donald H. Bates Sanctuary Trails



### Directions to the Donald H. Bates Sanctuary Trail

Lancaster Pike Entrance: Park at the East Leverett Cemetery (next to the Transfer Station) on Cemetery Road. Walk west to Still Corner Road. Go straight on January Road. You are now on Lancaster Pike. Continue as it becomes a dirt road and crosses a powerline. The Bates Sanctuary sign is a bit beyond the tree trunk.

The M-M (white dot) Trail Entrance from Shutesbury Road will open next spring (2014) when the bog bridges are repaired.