

RGT Stewardship Plan

Site: Scheffey Conservation Area

Plan for year: 2012-2013

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

This 13-acre property, donated by Andrew Scheffey in 1998, is located on the south side of Shutesbury Road at the town line. Steep and north-facing with 0.5 miles of road frontage, the land provides commuters a view shed along this busy road. There is limited parking at the eastern corner which is also the Shutesbury line.

or same as last year

2. Site Significance:

Roaring Brook runs north of Shutesbury Road; the Scheffey Conservation Area is a half-mile of wooded hillside on the south side of the road. Originally this parcel protected Scheffey property to the south from development along Shutesbury Road, but recently that land was placed in a CR held by the Franklin Land Trust. It still provides a half-mile of forested landscape along a busy road. (It also seems to serve as place to toss beer cans, lottery tickets and fast food containers along the roadside.)

or same as last year

3. Deed Restrictions/Responsibilities:

An earlier deed from the Scheffeyes to the Raymonds (0169, p. 60) grants an easement to Bertrand and Barbara Raymond to access their land through the NE corner of Scheffey property.

~~Raymond, / their heirs and assigns~~ Granting also to the said Bertrand Raymond and Barbara J. portion of said old woods road which abuts the hereinbefore described parcel of land for all purposes for which said ways are generally used.

By the terms of the Scheffey deed to RGT (3366, p. 26), the Scheffey Conservation Area is restricted to conservation use: forestry, wildlife management, and enjoyment of recreation consistent with conservation for such portion of the public as RGT deems appropriate. RGT can elect to have utility structures, toilet facilities, trails and the like. However, subsurface easements are not permitted. There are no other restrictions in the deed except to maintain the land as a conservation area.

or same as last year

4. Site Restrictions/Limitations:

The property is very narrow at the eastern boundary which is also the Shutesbury line. There are at best two parking spaces there. The steepness of the land does not invite trail development. Any trail would need to be entirely on the property – the road is too busy. Annual monitoring/trash pick-up has to be scheduled for a Sunday morning to avoid traffic.

or same as last year

5. Plant Communities, Wildlife Communities, Natural Features:

The property is on a north-facing, steep slope. It does not extend to the flat hill crest to the south.

The property is almost completely forested. Overall the forest overstory is dominated by hemlock with occasional hardwoods. Hemlocks have eliminated understory shrubs except along the road. (See Scheffey Description of the Vegetation 2012, for more information.)

Because the large parcel of Scheffey land to the south is now protected with a CR, this area has become an important part of a larger habitat area and wildlife corridor. Across the road forested land which is under Chapter 61 extends the wildlife corridor to the north, including a deer crossing. A small stream crosses the road to join Roaring Brook. (Before the present road was built, the property lines extended to the center of Roaring Brook.)

or same as last year

6. Historic Land Use and Cultural Resources:

The land was originally divided into 3 properties. The Appendix to the Baseline Report tracks early ownership by the Fitts and Turner families. These lots went to the stream (the road to Shutesbury was to the south). While the land was surely logged, it might also have been cleared for grazing. However, the only stone wall is east-west where the land levels out near the present road (property would probably have gone to the stream at the time it was built). The wall could have been associated with earlier edge of wetland and therefore might have Native American origin. There is no indication of structures in deeds or on the ground. (There were a series of mills on Roaring Brook downstream, but not up this far.)

or same as last year

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

The property committee walks the boundary every year. It is uneven, steeply sloping land. A warren of old logging roads crosses the southeast area and a lovely little stream flows down under the road to Roaring Brook. If a trail were put on the Scheffey CR to the south, this land could be part of those trails, but by itself, with the busy road, it seems unappealing – except to the deer who have made a side-hill trail.

or same as last year

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

The neighbor to east (Bertrand Raymond) tends to expand the entrance area (his legal access) to include parking for tractors and school bus. We try to talk briefly with him each year so that he knows property is monitored. Should the Raymond property be sold, clear rules should be stated about the access use. The boundary line is well-painted and marked by metal boundary tags, but needs to be checked each year and redone as necessary. Trash pickup is necessary at least once a year (sometimes twice). Lite beer wins, even over lottery tickets.

Across the road to the north is the Allen Smith woodlot which is in chapter 61. Mr. Smith is

elderly and not interested in having a CR on his land. His nieces, Nancy and Ellen, own their father's David Smith CR (held by RGT) and are in touch with their uncle.

The eastern boundary just touches the Shutesbury line and land is owned by Cows (not included in the recent Paul Jones Working Forest CR). The line to the south is with the Scheffey CR held by Franklin Land Trust.

Roaring Brook and tributaries do not seem to have a large enough catchment area to pose flooding threat. While land is steep-sided, it is also rocky and tree-covered, so little erosion occurs.

or same as last year

9. Management Goals Last Year (2011) and Accomplishments: (all have been accomplished)

1. Protect this already-conserved land
 - a. Boundary markers (metal tags and paint) are already in place. Earlier we walked CR boundary with FLT representative Will Sloan Anderson, and gps-ed/mapped the property.
 - b. Continue annual, informal conservations with Mr. Raymond (can check on problems when driving by also).
 - c. Continue annual trash pickup.
2. Provide information to the public about the conservation status of the property
 - a. There are already metal tags along Shutesbury Road (as well as along other borders which are never seen). Check and replace as necessary.
 - b. There is already a property description/pictures on the website. Update as necessary.
3. Provide Board with information about the property on the website – both in the public area of the web and in the Board-only section.

10. Compare last year's budget with actual costs:

a. Estimated every-year costs:

Almost no cost – at most a can of spray paint

b. Estimated single-year costs:

None

c. Unanticipated costs:

None

11. Management Goals This Year (rest of 2012 and 2013):

1. Continue conservation protection by monitoring the condition of the land, checking on boundaries and on neighbor's use of access area, and picking up trash along the road.

2. Continue to provide public information about the property and protected view shed through the website and metal tags along roadway.
3. Ensure that members of the Board are knowledgeable about the location and characteristics of property, both for general information and so they can monitor the property when they drive Shutesbury Road.

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

- 1a. Annual monitoring (usually fall). On that Sunday morning:
 - check metal tags and paint
 - look for unanticipated problems
 - try to talk with Mr. Raymond (or come back for some reason to do that)
 - pick up trash along road
- 1b. Drive-by monitoring throughout the year due to the heavy use of the road. Board members passing the property should keep an eye out for any problems.
2. Update website as appropriate.
3. Bring as many Board members as can come to the property so they are familiar with the location and the land itself.

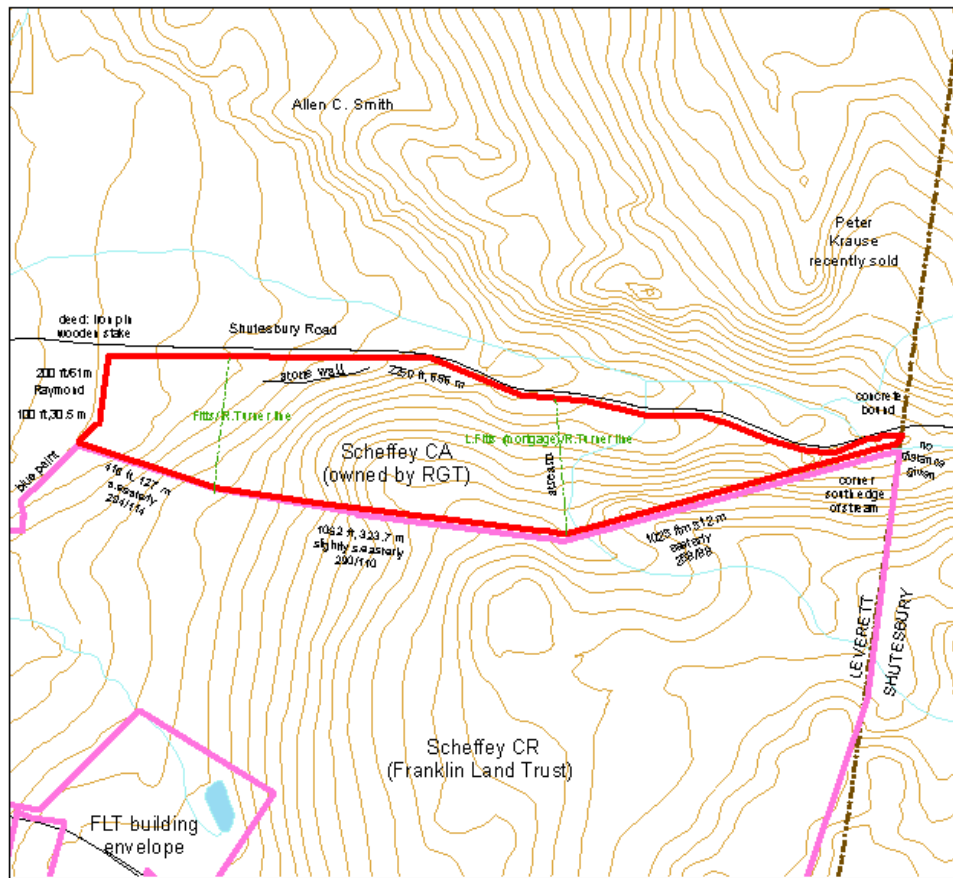
13. Budget: Description	Estimated cost	Estimated Total
a. Costs every year	0	0
b. Costs just this year	0	0
(Total for this year)	0	0
<i>c. Anticipate additional costs next year</i>	0	<i>(do not add to total)</i>

Plan completed by: Mary Alice Wilson and Joan Godsey

Accepted by the RGT Board July 10, 2012

Special thanks to the East Quabbin Land Trust for their help with creating this format.

Note: Since there is no trail, there is no Trail Assessment for this property.



Scheffey Conservation Area (RGT) for Monitoring



0 0.05 0.1 Miles

NE corner: 42.4497, -72.4511
 back S E corner: 42.4488, -72.4548
 back S W corner: 42.4491, -72.4587
 S W corner: 42.4496, -72.4604
 S Mid point: 42.4497, -72.4602
 NE corner: 42.4503, -72.4600

Wedge stone wall: 42.4501, -72.4583
 E end stone wall: 42.4502, -72.45717

South and East boundary blazed with red paint, 4/2/2010