

Connecting People with Nature- Stout Fields - Wintonbury Land Trust

Wintonbury Land Trust
PO Box 734, Bloomfield, Ct. 06002



13.15 acres Acquisition Cost \$325,000. Wintonbury Land Trust Project

The Stouts' prime farmland has been hayed for years and is a testament to the agricultural heritage of the area. This beautiful parcel abuts property that was once a large farm. There is an old foundation of the original house on the site. The old tobacco barn on an abutting parcel is visible to hikers crossing Stout Fields to access Penwood State Park and the Metacomet Trail. Stone walls exist sporadically along the southern border of the property. The field edges have old agricultural fencing remaining. Conservation of these fields will enhance public access to key trails, including the New England Scenic Trail, and protect wildlife corridors.

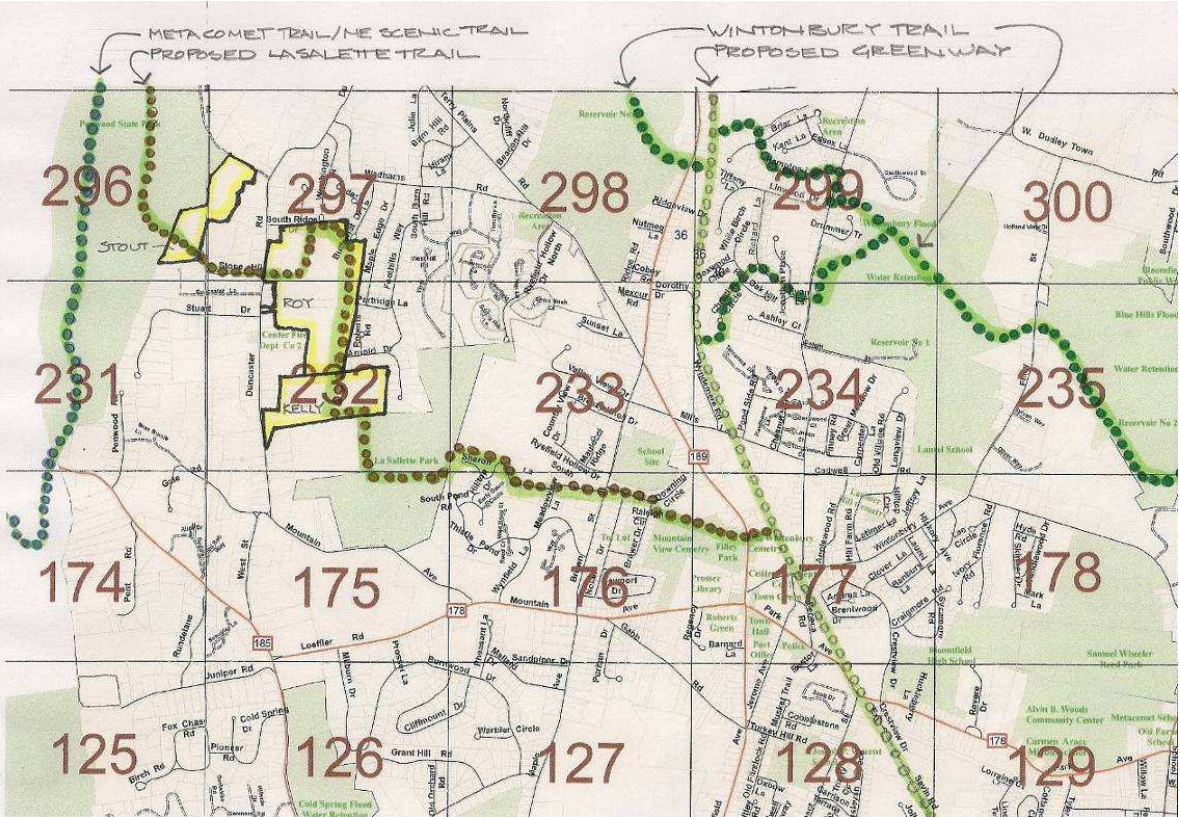
The owners of the Stout Fields, via a mowed path across the meadow from Stone Hill Road, currently provide the only neighborhood access to the Metacomet Trail (newly designated as part of the New England Scenic Trail, NET). Access to the NET via Simsbury Road (Route 189) is difficult for hikers and bikers, given heavy traffic. Acquisition of Stout's Fields will enhance Bloomfield public access to the NET, as well as Town access for through hikers.



- The LaSalette Trail will connect the 787 acre Penwood State Park to the 66-acre Sunny Field Farm and the 44 acre Hawk Hill Farm, one of Bloomfield's oldest farms, linking the 139-acre LaSalette Open Space (municipal) and Filley Pond Park (municipal) in the center of Bloomfield. This trail will cross only two community roads.
- Additionally, the LaSalette Trail will link to the master planned East Coast Greenway in the center of Bloomfield near Filley Park. The Greenway will connect the Eastern Wintonbury Trail, which crosses Flood Reservoirs 2 and 3, to the 3-mile LaSalette Trail.
- Hikers observe, from the Stout Fields park entrance, views of the neighboring farm and valley, as well as the secondary ridge and beyond, mist clearing from the Connecticut River Valley. The formations left by the receding of the glacier are evident in the formed landscape, providing wonderful educational opportunities.
- Along the LaSalette Trail the Hawk Hill Property rises to the boundary with LaSalette Park where there are extraordinary views of the Mount Holyoke Range to the north and LaSalette Open Space views of Hartford and Talcott Mountain Hueblein Tower.

Wildlife corridors run north and south along the NET ridge and through the secondary ridge to the east. Animals frequently sighted on the Stout Fields are bear, deer, coyotes, turkey, pheasant, owls and a variety of birds, including brown thrasher. Neighbors have heard a wood thrush in the park. A Bobcat with two offspring is currently in residence on the wooded wetland in the center of the first meadow. The streams and wetlands on the parcel have been attractive to wildlife. Eastern meadowlark has been seen at Sunny Field Farm. The parcel has been maintained as grassland, however mowing has not been consistently responsive to nesting cycles. The Wintonbury Land Trust will establish mowing schedules to protect grassland birds on the parcel.





The abutting Penwood Park has fields, new growth forest and mature forest. This abutting land is important when looking at Natural Diversity Areas. Note the number of Natural Diversity Studies within a mile of the property.

