



# BWLT NEWS

*Protecting The Land You Love*

December, 2024

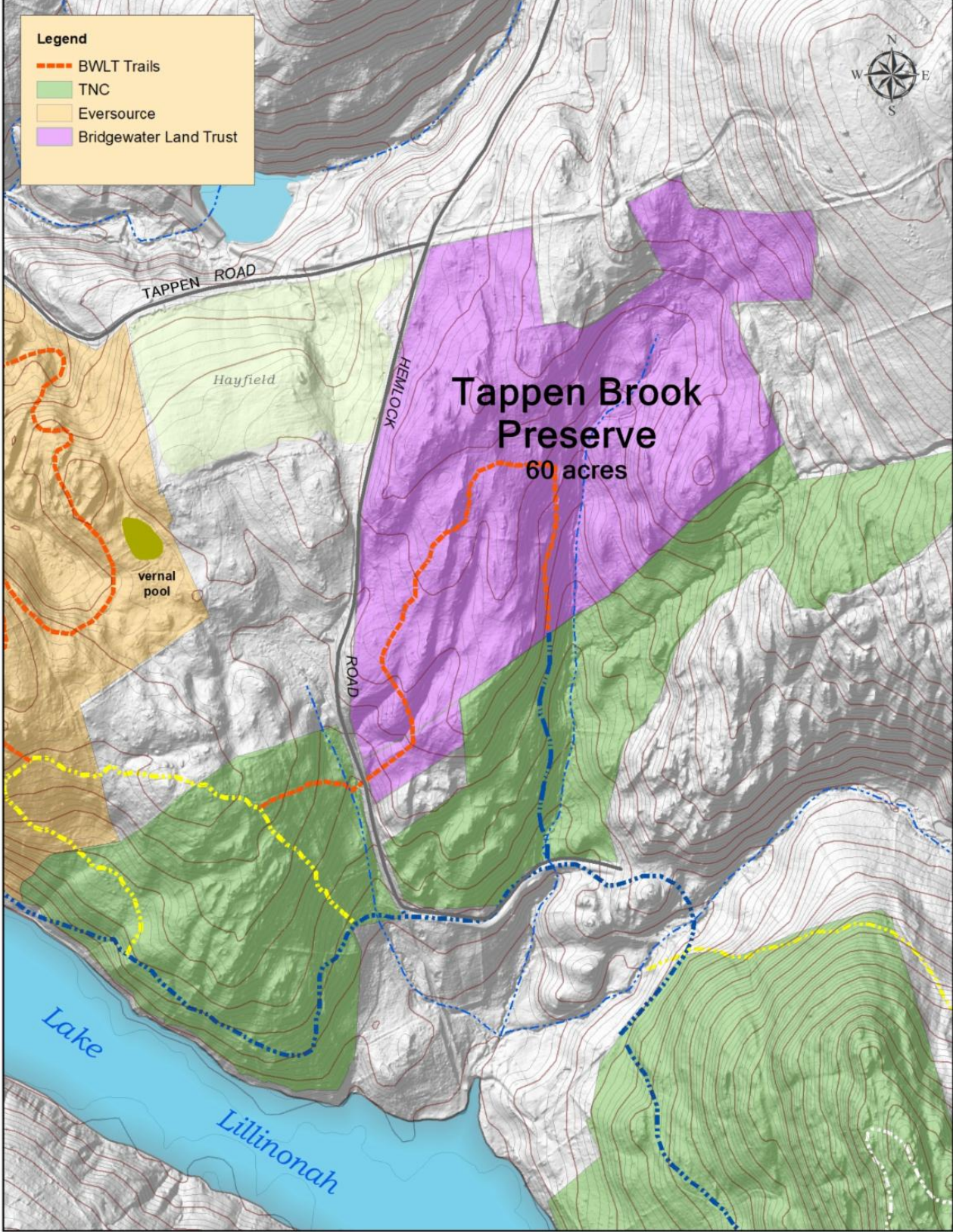
## **New Preserve Announced!** *Thank You To The Witkin Family*

The BWLT is capping off an amazing year of land preservation by announcing the permanent protection of 60 acres of forestland located along Tappen Road and Hemlock Road in Bridgewater (see map below). The land is being donated to the BWLT by Witco, an entity owned by Ed, Jane and Peter Witkin.

The Witkin Family has owned the Bridgewater property since 1951. The conservation value of this land is particularly high with several contiguous parcels that are already protected, thus extending a permanent greenway and wildlife corridor. The preserve will be called Tappen Brook Preserve and will be open to the public. There are trails on the property, traditionally used by horseback riders and now also used for other types of passive recreation. The BWLT's new 5K Course crosses through this land.

Ed Witkin shared his family's thoughts: "We have provided stewardship of this land as a home for plants, animals and people alike. We have enjoyed sharing this unspoiled refuge with anyone who craved a quiet walk in the woods. It brings us all joy to partner with the Bridgewater Land Trust in the creation of the Tappen Brook Preserve. Thanks to all at BWLT who helped make this happen".

Christian Feuer, president of the BWLT, recognized the impact of the incredible contribution made by the Witkins. "This generous land donation is the largest we have received in over 30 years. This helps immensely with our mission of conserving our precious Bridgewater land."





*A glimpse of Tappen Brook Preserve along Hemlock Road.*

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## **BWLT Receives Grant**

### *Thanks to Athletic Brewing Company*

We're excited to share that we've been selected as a recipient of @athleticbrewing's Two for the Trails grant! Through their Two for the Trails program, Athletic Brewing contributes up to \$2 million to groups annually to help protect, preserve, and maintain local trails. With our grant of \$2,000, we're planning to make improvements to our LeVailant Wildlife Preserve.



*The entrance to the Le Vaillant Wildlife Preserve on Christian Street.*

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## **FIELD NOTES**

### **Hay Storage Building Goes Up** *Project Is Now Complete*

The hay storage structure has been erected at our Town Line Farm Preserve in Roxbury. This building will impact the efficiency and sustainability of our farmlands by providing year-round storage and protection for the hay. This significant investment aligns with our mission of supporting local farms.



*Board member Kevin Cady (left) with the installation team from Lancaster, PA.*

## UPCOMING/RECENT EVENTS

### **Annual Meeting & Celebration** *An Enthusiastic Night for Land Preservation*

A sell out crowd filled the Hilltop Center in November to learn about and show support for land preservation in Bridgewater. Thank you to all of you who were able to join us. The event featured local farms and food, showcased through a newly produced video featuring several local farms and the food that they produce. Bridgewater resident Erik Landegren served as our on camera host and added his talent and energy to the film.

Many thanks to the Bridgewater Bistro who catered the delicious meal that evening. Also thanks to Bridgewater resident Monsie Hobbs for creating and donating beautiful centerpieces for the tables, Kathy Creighton and the staff at the Hilltop Center for their assistance, and many volunteers who pitched in to make the night a success.

Four residents received 2024 volunteer awards. Congratulations to Henry Gsell for his Eagle Scout kiosk project, trail monitors Mark Carlson and Joe Dolen for their significant

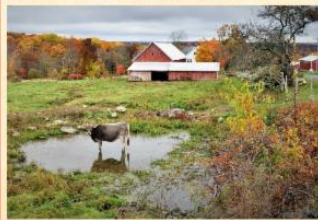
contributions to our trail maintenance, and Bill Stuart who received the Volunteer of The Year Award. Bill has been instrumental in land preservation for the BWLT since its founding in 1987.



## 2025 Calendar & Trucker Hats For Sale

*We Have Merch!*

With the holidays near, why not shop local? Bridgewater resident and photographers Joe Dolen and Julie Stuart have teamed up to offer a 2025 wall calendar with seasonal photos of local barns and farms (\$20). We also have new trucker hats (\$15). If anyone is interested, please contact Julie Stuart at [julie@bridgewaterlandtrust.org](mailto:julie@bridgewaterlandtrust.org). We accept cash, credit card and Venmo (@bridgewaterlandtrust).



# BARNs

In & Around BRIDGEWATER, CT

*A 2025 Calendar*

# BARNs

In & Around BRIDGEWATER, CT

*A 2025 Calendar*

*Photos by local photographers  
Joe Dolen and Julie Stuart*

8 1/2 x 11 Wall Calendar

\$20 each

Reserve/order:

[julie@bridgewaterlandtrust.org](mailto:julie@bridgewaterlandtrust.org)



[www.bridgewaterlandtrust.org](http://www.bridgewaterlandtrust.org)  
PO Box 8 Bridgewater, CT 06752





## **Jim Allen Tree Lighting**

Be sure to check out our impressive giant Fraser Fir at our Jim Allen Farm Preserve on Hut Hill Road this holiday season. Thanks in advance to Connor Dillon and his team from Dillon Excavating and Tree Service for mounting the lights for all to enjoy!





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## Winter Hiking Challenge

*Beat the Winter Blues And Stay Healthy*

We would like to contribute to your health and well-being this winter by offering a Winter Hiking Challenge. The challenge is simple: 20 miles per month for the months of January, February and March for a total of 60 miles hiked. You can go where you want, with who you want, when you want! The BWLT will hold a guided First Day Hike for those who want to

kick off the challenge on January 1st (see details below).

Participants will receive a hard copy tri-fold to help track your miles along with information on area hikes and prize opportunities. A Facebook group will be in place to share photographs and experiences. There will be a warm reward for all who complete the challenge.

Interested? Contact Julie Stuart at [julie@bridgewaterlandtrust.org](mailto:julie@bridgewaterlandtrust.org)



## Join Us On New Years Day

*Start 2025 On The Move!*

Usher in the New Year with some exercise and fresh air! This hike will be of moderate difficulty with a few steady climbs. Be sure to bundle up and bring water. If conditions are icy or there is heavy snow, we will cancel. This is a free event and open to all.

Please RSVP to Julie at [julie@bridgewaterlandtrust.org](mailto:julie@bridgewaterlandtrust.org)



# First Day Hike

Join us for a 2 hour trek  
up to Silica Mine Hill.  
Moderate difficulty.



**Wed., January 1st,  
at 10:30 AM**

**Tappen Brook Trails to Silica Mine  
Start and end at Bridgewater Town Park**

**GPS: Lake Lillinonah Rd. S then right on Tappen Rd.**

**Bad weather/icy conditions cancels**

**Questions/RSVP: [julie@bridgewaterlandtrust.org](mailto:julie@bridgewaterlandtrust.org)**

## Support Us

The Bridgewater Land Trust is a federally recognized 501(c) (3) charitable organization, and all your contributions are tax deductible.

**DONATE**

## Stay Social

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