

Preserving Our Legacy

FARMINGTON LAND TRUST

Wilcox-Bushley Homestead
Capital Campaign



A FUTURE FOR OUR FARM



A Place of Learning, Fellowship and Refuge.

We have an extraordinary opportunity to create a community learning center and establish permanent Farmington Land Trust headquarters at the Wilcox-Bushley Homestead. Located in the Unionville section of Farmington, the 24 acres of land surrounding the farmhouse were gifted to the Land Trust in 1995 and the farmhouse was donated to the Land Trust in 2019. By renovating the property, we hope to honor its history and promote a legacy of preservation in our community. Our vision is to create a place of learning, fellowship and refuge for all ages to enjoy.



Fostering Stewardship Through Environmental Education.

A love of the land and the desire to protect it starts with education. The indoor classroom space with adjacent kitchen will allow for interactive educational programs. The renovated barns will be transformed into open classrooms where students will learn about conservation and conduct scientific research in hands-on environmental experiments. The surrounding forests, fields and pond offer limitless educational opportunities and room to explore.

In addition, we will continue to run educational programs for members and the greater Hartford region such as birding, guided nature hikes and beekeeping.



"We are so excited about the Farmington Land Trust renovating the Wilcox-Bushley House and establishing a Learning Center across the street from West District School. This will provide numerous opportunities for Farmington students to learn about the environment and conservation. They will be able to participate in hands-on learning, explore trails, fields and the vernal pond, and experience the wonder of nature."

~ Kelly Sanders, Principal, West District School

A Headquarters for the Land Trust. A Refuge for All.

Renovating the farmhouse will honor the history of farming in our community and allow us to tell the story of the homestead through artifacts and tours. Establishing a permanent headquarters here enables us to invite the community to gather and experience the joy of preservation with us. We will be able to host events, share our love for the land and seek refuge in the tranquility of the outdoors – together. The farmhouse will be our bridge to the future as we deepen existing relationships, gain new members, and advocate for the continuation of our mission in a more unique and familial way.



“As a twelfth generation Farmington resident, preserving and protecting the beauty and heritage of Farmington is important to me. Our heritage is tied to the land. The Farmington Land Trust has been the leading force in the protection of our open spaces since 1971. With the addition of the Wilcox-Bushley Homestead, the Land Trust will be better able to share the history of the land and educate us why our open spaces are important.”

~ Ted Sanford, FLT Member

Help Us Build a Future for Our Farm. Give to Our Capital Campaign.

OUR \$ 1.3 MILLION CAMPAIGN INCLUDES:

- Reviving the Homestead.** The renovation will result in a green building consistent with our environmental philosophy, and will include:
- > The Farmington Land Trust headquarters which includes an office and conference room, an education room, an ADA accessible bathroom, and a small kitchen on the first floor.
 - > Climate controlled archival storage space and a one-bedroom apartment (to help offset long-term expenses) on the second floor.
 - > An outdoor classroom space.

Preserving our legacy. A commitment to expanding our membership through enhanced communications and staffing so that we may continue to protect open space and offer educational programs that enrich preservation and environmental awareness for future generations.

A refuge for our community. The Wilcox-Bushley Homestead will serve as a place of rest, reflection and community. Here, we will gather to enjoy the beauty of the property, honor our farming history and entrust our love of the land to others.

A secure future. A portion of the funds raised will be added to The Landmark Fund, our endowment, to help support the ongoing mission of FLT well into the future.

The History of the Wilcox-Bushley Homestead

In 1804, Isaiah Rowe was granted a deed for 100 acres of land on what is now called Coppermine Road. The Rowe farm was one of the most successful farms in the area, well known for the high quality of its apples, cherries, pears and plums.

Jerry Wilcox of North Canton bought the farm in 1869, and so began four generations of the Wilcox-Bushley family raising cows, pigs, and chickens, plowing the fields to plant corn and vegetables, harvesting their wood lot for their kitchen fires and doing what good farmers have always done and continue to do – take care of the land to preserve their livelihood. The farm remained in the family (Pyatts and Bushleys) until it was given to the Farmington Land Trust.

Born in the 1920s, the Bushley sisters Ruth and Mary spent their childhood on this land. But decades have gone by since they were sent to the pasture to call in the cows for milking.

Preservation was what Wilcox descendants Mary Bushley and her sister, Ruth Bushley Childs, had in mind when they donated this property to the Farmington Land Trust. “If you offered me one hundred million dollars, I wouldn’t take it”, Mary Bushley once declared. “The land is destined to be saved.”

In 1995, Mary and Ruth donated the 24 acres that make up what we now call the West District Nature Preserve. In 2013, they gave the Land Trust their childhood homestead, the barns and the immediately adjacent land. Mary continued to call this place home until her death in the spring of 2019. The house is surrounded on three sides by 24 acres of land, including a farm pond. Most of the pasture land is now forested with fieldstone walls running throughout.



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“The Wilcox-Bushley Homestead is a jewel with many facets. Historically, it represents the many small farms that once made up our town. The historic house and landscape is polished with the patina of over 200 years of farming life, from roads worn into the ground by hay wagons to tin buckets which carried animal feed. As a natural landscape, the property bursts with the living resources which sustained farming families and brought them limitless pleasure. This is our opportunity to preserve this wonderful site and continue its usefulness to our community by restoring the house as the headquarters and education center of the Farmington Land Trust.”

~ Lisa Johnson, Farmington Town Historian



Farmington Land Trust – Protecting Open Space for 50 Years.

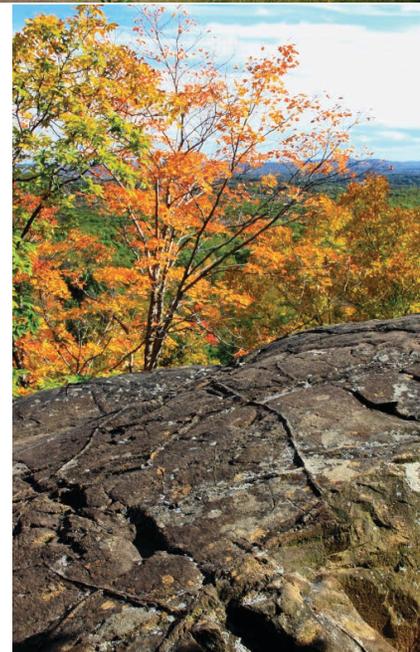
The Farmington Land Trust has a single mission: to protect open space in perpetuity. We do this through acquisition, stewardship, education and advocacy. Thanks to the generosity of its donors, the Land Trust now protects over 300 acres of fields, forests, wetlands, scenic vistas, historic sites and wildlife habitat in the town of Farmington. Established in 1971 by a group of conservation-minded residents, Farmington Land Trust is one of the oldest in Connecticut.

Our Future is Possible with Your Support.

We are on our way to reaching our goal, but we need your help. 100% of our Board Members have made a financial commitment towards our campaign. Funding from state and federal grant programs is underway. Consistent with strong support that Farmington has always given the Land Trust, our community has already made a very strong commitment toward the project.

It would be our honor if you could help us build a future for our farm.

To contribute, go to www.farmingtonlandtrust.org, scan QR code below, or contact our Executive Director at: ed@farmingtonlandtrust.org.





“For 50 years, the Farmington Land Trust has been a community organization of volunteers committed to the preservation of land in perpetuity. Not only has it secured more than 300 acres of diverse landscapes and habitat held in fee or conservation easement by the Land Trust, but it has also been a crucial organizing and advocating force behind the Town of Farmington’s many open space bond initiatives and acquisitions that now total more than 3,000 acres.

On this 50th Anniversary, we celebrate Mary and Ruth Bushley’s generous gift of their family’s homestead. While the gift of the historic home and ecologically diverse land is amazing on its own, it is so much more than that. This gift will enable the Farmington Land Trust to step into its next 50 years and become a regional institution for the preservation of open space today, while also educating the land stewards of tomorrow.”

~ Liz Dolphin, Executive Director



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