



# **Machuga Property Acquisition**

**Torrington,  
Connecticut**

**April 2004**

## **King's Mark Environmental Review Team Report**

**King's Mark  
Resource Conservation & Development Area, Inc.**

# **Machuga Property Acquisition Torrington, Connecticut**



## **Environmental Review Team Report**

Prepared by the  
King's Mark Environmental Review Team  
of the  
King's Mark  
Resource Conservation and Development Area, Inc.

for the  
Parks and Recreation Commission  
Torrington, Connecticut

April 2004

Report No. 324

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## **Acknowledgments**

This report is an outgrowth of a request from the Torrington Parks and Recreation Commission to the Northwest Conservation District (NWCD). The NWCD referred this request to the King's Mark Resource Conservation and Development Area (RC&D) Executive Council for their consideration and approval. The request was approved and the measure reviewed by the King's Mark Environmental Review Team (ERT).

The King's Mark Environmental Review Team Coordinator, Elaine Sych, would like to thank and gratefully acknowledge the following Team members whose professionalism and expertise were invaluable to the completion of this report.

The field review took place on Wednesday, January 21, 2004.

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I would also like to thank Kim Barbieri, certified zoning and wetlands enforcement officer, Richard Kalarko, director of parks and recreation, and Arthur Pettit, representing the Machuga Family, for their cooperation and assistance during this environmental review.

Prior to the review day, each Team member received a summary of the proposed project with location and soils maps. During the field review Team members were given additional information and related documents. Some Team members made separate or follow-up visits to the site, while others conducted a map review only. Following the review, reports from each Team member were submitted to the ERT coordinator for compilation and editing into this final report.

This report represents the Team's findings. It is not meant to compete with private consultants by providing site plans or detailed solutions to development problems. The Team does not recommend what final action should be taken on a proposed project - all final decisions rest with the town and landowner. This report identifies the existing resource base and evaluates its significance to the proposed use, and also suggests considerations that should be of concern to the town. The results of this Team action are oriented toward the development of better environmental quality and the long term economics of land use.

The King's Mark RC&D Executive Council hopes you will find this report of value and assistance in the review of this proposed property acquisition.

If you require additional information please contact:

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# **Introduction**

## **Introduction**

The Torrington Parks and Recreation Commission has requested Environmental Review Team (ERT) assistance in reviewing a proposed property for purchase for use as a city park.

The 30.95 acre site is located on Winsted Road, about half way between Kennedy Drive (a connection to downtown and near the east side) and Greenwoods Road (an easy connection to the quickly developing east Torrington). Machuga Road, the access to the site, has one private residence located on its south side.

The study site contains about 16 acres of upland soils. Two brooks cut across the site from Route 8 and flow into the Still River. The site was a farm in the past and still contains two residences and several outbuildings and barns. Several field areas exist as well as woods and wetlands.

The site is bordered on the east by +9 acres of state land that contains the Still River and surrounding wetland habitat. The parcel is classified as part of Paugnut State Forest and is not actively managed. Adjacent to the state property is a CL&P/railroad ROW that is currently being looked at for Phase 2 of the Sue Grossman Still River Greenway project. The acquisition of this parcel could would provide a terminus for the greenway and could provide parking for individuals that use the greenway or the park. The western site boundary is Route 8. The area is zoned industrial and has industrial buildings located to its north.

The City of Torrington is interested in the parcel for active and passive recreation use - primarily soccer fields, picnicking, walking trails and connection to the greenway multi-purpose trail.

### **Objectives of the ERT Study**

The Torrington Parks and Recreation Commission has requested the ERT to assist them in determining if the property is suited for their recreation purposes. The professional opinions of the ERT Team will assist them to proceed confidently with the purchase, or if the use is not appropriate to the site, the City can pass on the property without spending limited taxpayer resources. The Team has addressed as many of the concerns and questions outlined by the city as possible since actual development plans were not available and the acquisition is still in the planning stage.

### **The ERT Process**

Through the efforts of the Torrington Parks and Recreation Commission this environmental review and report was prepared for the City of Torrington.

This report provides an information base and a series of recommendations and guidelines which cover the topics requested by the city. Team members were able to review maps, plans and supporting documentation provided by the applicant.

The review process consisted of four phases:

1. Inventory of the site's natural resources;
2. Assessment of these resources;
3. Identification of resource areas and review of plans; and
4. Presentation of education, management and land use guidelines.

The data collection phase involved both literature and field research. The field review was conducted on Wednesday, January 21, 2004. The emphasis of the field review was on the exchange of ideas, concerns and recommendations. Being on site allowed Team members to verify information and to identify other resources.

Once Team members had assimilated an adequate data base, they were able to analyze and interpret their findings. Individual Team members then prepared and submitted their reports to the ERT coordinator for compilation into this final ERT report.



Figure 1

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Location/Topographic Map

Scale 1" = 2000'



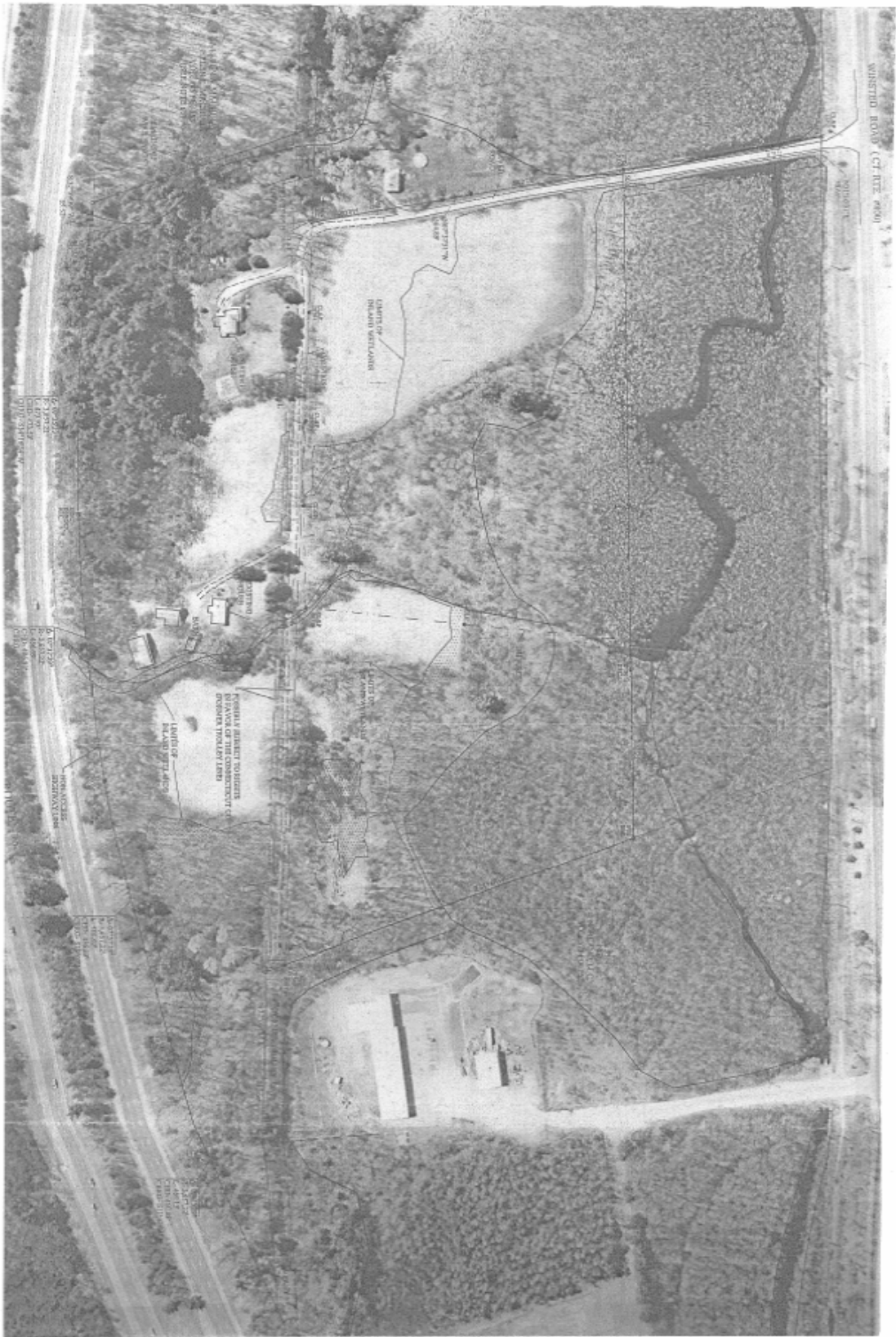


Figure 2

Aerial View

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# **NORTHWEST CONSERVATION**

## **DISTRICT REVIEW**

The Northwest Conservation District (NCD) appreciates this opportunity to comment on the environmental issues associated with the purchase and creation of a recreation area on the Winsted Road in Torrington. In the application to the Kings Mark Environmental Review Team (ERT) the following questions were asked. This Team member provided details on these questions as a soil scientist and a wetland scientist.

### **Are the soils suitable for field development and recreational needs?**

To assess the soil types on site this Team member used the updated soil maps (United States Department of Agriculture, 1970 (revised 2002), Soil Survey of Litchfield County, Soil Conservation Service, USDA, Washington D.C). There have been some soil map updates accomplished on the study parcel (i.e. there are some soil type map unit changes between the USDA-1970 data and the most recently published 2002 data). Therefore, this soils type discussion may differ from soil information submitted with the ERT application. Two soils series make up most of the upland soil types on site. There appears to be significant wetland soils on site also and these will be discussed later in this section. The two major upland soil types on this property are of the Hinkley and Merrimac soil series. Both these soils are nearly level to gently sloping and excessively well drained and droughty (i.e. drain rapidly even during larger storm events) and do not hold water for long periods of time. They are dry because they form on deep deposits of stratified glacial drift made up of mostly sorted coarse sand, gravel and cobbles. This Team member was unable to determine the depth of stratified

drift on site. However, a few strategically placed bore samples would reveal the type and amount of loose stratified material below the site. Core samples will be a very important piece of information because, given the potential texture of the stratified drift there may be no reason to import or export raw material to create any type of field desired. Sands, gravel and cobbles could all be used as raw material when grading fields, roads, drainage swales and stormwater runoff management structures. Proposed ball field creation on this site can be accomplished in an environmentally compatible way and construction grading will be minimal because of the nearly level to gently sloping terrain. In summary, given the soils, this Team member believes that the proposed activities for the site are completely appropriate.

### **What hydrological concerns may arise with park development?**

Because the property is just below a 1/4 mile section of State Route 8 (a total of six travel and 2 breakdown lanes) there is considerable runoff. This, combined with the slopes above Route 8, contribute much of the water that runs across the property all year long. From the site walk it appears that there are well-established perennial and intermittent streams that carry the water across the site and into the headwater wetlands of the Still River. Given the extremely high permeability of the soils and sub-soils of the site, large deep cuts during grading could potentially intercept ground water flow. If there were to be any large cuts, proper drainage design would negate any problems with excess groundwater seepage.

An additional hydrologic concern is with maintaining vegetation on these soil types during dry periods. Given the depth of rapidly draining soil material that the field will most likely be developed on, conditions could be excessively dry during parts of the year making it tough to maintain a dense vegetative cover.

This is a field design concern that could easily be addressed during the grading design plans (and potentially irrigation system plans) that will be drafted for this project.

**What water quality concerns exist  
with the adjacent river and wetlands, with  
respect to the maintenance of soccer fields?**

Maintaining a healthy dense growth of grass on an athletic field may require the occasional application of fertilizers and potentially other compounds. Stormwater runoff will carry these materials off the fields and into adjacent waterways. The soils of the site make it extremely easy to abate any negative effects of materials used to maintain the fields. Vegetated swales and infiltration basins can be designed to catch the stormwater runoff as it leaves the fields and absorb it into the ground. The soils will strip most compounds out of infiltrating stormwater before it reaches free flowing streams and watercourses surrounding the site. A dense vegetated buffer between any maintained areas and the wetland would also be protective of the wetland on site. Please note the Still River Water Quality Rating as it passes the site is "A." This is a high water quality rating (assigned by the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection) and must be maintained at this level "A." Given the proposed activities and the soil structure that exists, maintenance of the excellent water quality rating adjacent to the site will not be a problem, especially if a well thought out plan-of-development is implemented properly.

The wetland on site is part of a much larger wetland system. Given the large size of the wetland system, it is mostly responsible for the good water quality ratings on the property and for at least a mile down stream. Properly designed athletic fields on the uplands of this property can be built to be protective of wetland and water quality.

### **What recreational aspects can be supported by the wetland on site?**

The unique location of this property affords an excellent wetland education opportunity. The property will no doubt have heavy public use for the following reasons, and therefore create many opportunities to educate the public about headwater wetlands and how they benefit everyone.

- This property lies at the southern terminus of a (purchased, approved and funded) greenway corridor that will connect the two largest metropolitan centers in Northwest Connecticut.
- This property is almost exactly halfway between the two largest population centers in Northwestern Connecticut.
- This property is very close to two separate exits on Route 8 (one North and one South of the property).
- This property will create passive and active recreational resources for the City of Torrington.
- There is currently a marked shortage of ball field space in the City of Torrington. Current game requests greatly exceed the carrying capacity of current recreational facilities (phone conversation with the Superintendent of Park and Recreation for the City of Torrington March 3, 2004.)
- The large contiguous wetland system that this property is part of is prime migratory bird habitat. The creation of a park adjacent to the wetland will provide excellent bird watching opportunities.
- The wetland on site is both biologically diverse and will be highly visible and accessible to the public. Being closely linked to a large marsh will provide many environmental education opportunities.

## **What is the quality of the wetlands (directly adjacent to the site)?**

The wetlands on the property are approximately 15 acres. The wetland is part of larger (200 acre) interconnected wetland system along the Still River that is recharged by a ~2,000 acre watershed above the site. During this Team member's site visits he walked the entire perimeter (15+/- acres) of the wetland. To assess wetland quality he considered the entire Still River Watershed (approximately 2,000 acres or 3+/- square miles) that feeds into this wetland.

### **Impervious Surfaces Within the Watershed**

It appears that the watershed consists of approximately 10 percent impervious surfaces. Research has shown that water quality and aquatic habitats become impaired when more than 10 percent of the watershed has been developed. (Source: Center for Watershed Protection ([www.cwp.org](http://www.cwp.org)) from research funded by the United States Environmental Protection Agency). Further, impervious surface development in this watershed will degrade water quality in this important headwater wetland. This project will do little to increase the impervious surface cover and therefore have little influence on surface water quality degradation caused by impervious surface runoff. The greatest negative impacts on water quality of streams and ponds here in Connecticut are; soil erosion and sedimentation, storm water drainage systems, septic systems, landscaping activities, agricultural and livestock operations (Natural Resource Defense Council, 1999. Storm Water Strategies, Community Response To Runoff Pollution, Natural Resource Defense Council Inc.), most of which will occur on this site. However, there are multiple measures and practices that can be employed to minimize the negative affects of these activities.

### **Species Diversity**

This Team member was only able to assess the biodiversity of this wetland in winter. However, he did notice a wide variety of woody vegetation species. Given the wetland systems large size and the diverse woody vegetation, he would suspect, with further study, this wetland would rank very high in individual species numbers. Species would include herbaceous vegetation, birds, mammals and herpetofauna.

### **Flood Control**

The wetland and stream system that contains the wetland on site plays an important role in reducing flow during flood events. The flood plain is fairly wide through this area and flood waters are able to access the flood plain. The proposed project will do little to effect this valuable aspect of the Still River valley.

### **Environmental Education Opportunities**

The headwater wetland system on this site is part of a semi-metropolitan/educational wetland. There is development (industrial, residential and recreational) up gradient of the site and water flowing through the site is being renovated. With the establishment of a town park the wetland on site will provide a plethora of environmental education opportunities.

### **Wetland Quality Conclusions**

The wetland onsite keys out to be very valuable (Method for the Evaluation of Inland Wetlands in Connecticut, 1986, CT DEP Bulletin #9). It has many qualities that make it excellent at performing the many functions that protect



water quality and water resources down gradient of the site. It also has the potential of being an excellent environmental education resource.

### **A Wider Look at the Environmental Issues Surrounding the Site**

The Still River is a major tributary to the Wild and Scenic portion of the Farmington River. The Still River also empties into the Farmington River just above a Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection "Trophy Trout Management Area." This stretch of the river is one of the premier trout fishing spots in all the United States. The environmental management goals for this section of the Farmington River include extending the fishing season and improving the overall fishing experience for anglers. Extending the fishing season depends on increasing fish population. This will be accomplished by preserving favorable fish habitat and water quality. The large system of wetlands which include the wetland on site, play an important role in maintaining good water quality in the system. So is the wetland on site valuable? Yes. Can it be protected and enhanced by the proposed project? This Team member believes it can.

### **This property is zoned industrial. Is a park the best use of this property?**

Given that this property is zoned "Industrial" the NCD strongly supports the City of Torrington's plan to purchase this property for the purposes of developing a passive and active outdoor recreational facility. An outdoor recreational facility would have much less impact on valuable natural resources on and off-site as compared with the construction of a large industrial complex as evidenced by industrial activities in the Still River Valley. NCD also would welcome the opportunity to review the plan-of-development (once drafted) to ensure that

construction activities, maintenance activities and continued use of the facility are protective of the valuable natural resources surrounding the site. This appears to be one of the few occasions where a proposed land development project is an excellent fit to a specific property's capabilities and limitations. The NCD is looking forward to providing continued assistance on this project and helping the City of Torrington with their sustainable development goals.

## **The Natural Diversity** **Data Base**

The Natural Diversity Data Base maps and files regarding the project area have been reviewed. According to our information there are no known extant populations of Federal or State Endangered, Threatened or Special Concern Species that occur at the site in question.

Natural Diversity Data Base information includes all information regarding critical biologic resources available to us at the time of the request. This information is a compilation of data collected over the years by the Environmental & Geographic Information Center's Geological and Natural History Survey and cooperating units of DEP, private conservation groups and the scientific community. This information is not necessarily the result of comprehensive or site-specific field investigations. Consultations with the Data Base should not be substituted for on-site surveys required for environmental assessments. Current research projects and new contributors continue to identify additional populations of species and locations of habitats of concern, as well as, enhance existing data. Such new information is incorporated into the Data Base as it becomes available.

# **AQUATIC RESOURCES**

## **Site Description**

Portions of the 30.95 acre Machuga Property have been previously developed for agricultural use. Four fields currently exist on the parcel along with two residential dwellings and several outbuildings. The aquatic resources of the Machuga Property include two unnamed streams which are tributary to the Still River.

A substantial cover of ice and snow (at the time of the site visit) precluded a visual assessment of the stream's physical habitat, however, dense growths of hardwoods and woody shrubs predominate as riparian vegetation along the streams. Physical in-stream habitat is likely to be provided primarily by water depth in pools, boulders, undercut banks and fallen or overhanging vegetation.

The Department of Environmental Protection classifies the unnamed streams on the Machuga Property as *Class A* surface waters. Designated uses for surface water of this classification are potential drinking water supply, fish and wildlife habitat, recreational use, agricultural and industrial supply and other legitimate uses.

## **Aquatic Habitats and Resources**

The Inland Fisheries Division has never conducted fish surveys of the two streams on the Machuga Property. A representative of the property owner reports that the streams support a population of brook trout (*Salvelinus fontinalis*). Brook trout are commonly associated with coldwater streams in Connecticut. Blacknose dace (*Rhinichthys atratulus*) are also routinely found in streams containing brook trout.

### **Impacts**

The City of Torrington Parks and Recreation Commission has stated an interest in purchasing the Machuga Property for a park. The preservation of the property as open space in a park will assure the long term viability of the aquatic habitats and resources found within two unnamed streams.

### **Recommendations**

The City of Torrington Parks and Recreation Commission has stated intended uses of the Machuga Property for passive recreation (picnicking, walking) as well as active recreation (playing fields). The following measures are recommended for incorporation into the future management plans for the property:

1. The playing field(s) fields should be located on an area(s) of the property previously modified for agriculture.
2. Any access road(s) should be kept to the most minimal width allowed by local regulation.
3. The access road(s) and parking lot(s) should be constructed of gravel or a permeable pavement to allow precipitation to infiltrate into the soil.
4. Stormwater from access road(s) and parking lot(s) should be directed by sheet flow to vegetated swales rather than being collected in a piped drainage system.
5. Grass lined swales should be constructed around the playing field(s) perimeter to collect stormwater which may be laden with fertilizer.
6. Land alteration should not occur within 100 feet of the unnamed streams.

7. Establish comprehensive erosion and sediment control plans with mitigative measures (detention-infiltration/water quality basins, haybales, silt fence, etc.) to be installed prior to and maintained through all phases of site development. Land clearing and other disturbance should be kept to a minimum with all disturbed areas being protected from storm events and being restabilized in a timely manner.

## **Archaeological Review**

The Office of State Archaeology and the State Historic Preservation Office have reviewed the State of Connecticut Archaeological Site Files and Maps, which show no known archaeological sites within the proposed park area. However, well-drained soils adjacent to the wetland system to the west suggest a moderate-to-high sensitivity for undiscovered prehistoric Native American sites. In addition, the ruins of the historic Winchester-Torrington Railroad trolley line (1840-1909) are in place and should be preserved in any plans for the park. Creation of a potential Rails-to-Trails walking/running/biking system should be considered linking other areas of town. Interpretive signage can heighten public education of the park and its past railroad history.

The Connecticut State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and Office of State Archaeology (OSA) recommends that a reconnaissance survey be professionally undertaken in order to locate, evaluate and responsibly consider all archaeological resources should plans call for and use activities that would strip topsoil or remove portions of the trolley line. All archaeological studies must be carried out pursuant to the *Environmental Review Primer for Connecticut's Archaeological Resources*.

The SHPO and OSA offices are prepared to offer the Town of Torrington any technical assistance in conducting the recommended survey, as well as developing educational opportunities. They further recommend that the Torrington Historical Society be brought in to interpret the past trolley history of the property.

# **Recreation** **Planning Review**

The purpose of this ERT review is to evaluate the suitability of the Machuga Property as a possible acquisition by the City of Torrington. The tract in question contains 30.96 acres located in the Still River Valley in the Burrville section of northern Torrington, between Winsted Road and new Route 8 with access off the former road.

## **Physical Description**

Occupying a rather deep natural trough, the soils of the Still River Valley are in sharp contrast to the surrounding upland till-based soils. Between Winsted Road and Route 8, the following north-south trending features or physical site types are seen from west to east:

1. the former rail right-of-way (R.O.W.) adjoining Winsted road;
2. the +9 acre state owned parcel purchased from the Machuga's containing the Still River and adjoining wetlands (the Machuga family refers to this parcel as a "bird sanctuary", which also extend into #3 and to a lesser extent into #5 below;
3. an area of moderately well drained and nearly level glacio-fluvial soils (Sudbury and Tisbury);
4. the former trolley R.O.W./access road;
5. gently to moderately sloping and well drained kame terrace soils extending uphill to Route 8;

The basic soil types influenced the historic use of the property. Thus the wet western section containing peats and mucks remained in scrub woodland and wetland vegetation. The central portion, although now experiencing reversion



to scrub, contains the most level and best farmland and therefore was the center of agricultural activity. East of the former trolley R.O.W., now partially occupied by the extension of the access road, lies the higher kame terrace area containing two residences (the northern house abandoned), barns and outbuildings and grading from pasture to woodland to the east.

Other noteworthy features in or adjoining the property which influence its potential significance include:

1. the former rail R.O.W. bordering the east side of Winsted Road which is the proposed route of the planned Sue Grossman Still River Greenway connecting Winsted and Torrington and which offers non-vehicular linkage potential to the subject property. However, an as yet unresolved physical blockage south of the Machuga parcel currently serves as an obstacle with linkage to downtown Torrington.
2. the remains of the previously mentioned trolley R.O.W., offering some potential for trail extension, especially to the south where it could serve as a bypass around the problem noted in #1 above.

### **City Plans and Proposals**

According to City staff, the Burrville area contains no park or recreation facilities, despite considerable residential development in the nearby Torrington Road area to the east. Soccer fields in particular are needed and the City also recognizes the potential of the Still River Greenway. Fortunately Greenwood Road provides ready vehicular access from the developing Torrington Road area. Thus a property with a physical potential for ballfields and parking is sought.

## **Recreation Planners Comments**

1. **Geographical Location** - Property is well located to serve the recognized recreational needs of northern Torrington.
2. **Physical Character** - Despite considerable wetland, the property contains sufficient acreage of nearly level, moderately well drained soil to support a number of ball fields. Test pit holes showing no ledge to nine feet plus the early stage of reversion to woodland also indicates that development of ball fields should not face significant engineering or development costs.
3. **Use Recommendations**
  - Promote and develop the facility as key link serving intertown greenway.
  - meet neighborhood recreational needs with ballfields west of trolley R.O.W./access road, especially in the existing field in the bend of the access road in first stage of development. Sites for additional fields also seem feasible if and as needed.
  - Locate parking east of trolley R.O.W./access road, probably between existing homes, to serve both ball fields and greenway users.
  - Determine the best use of the homes, perhaps placing a caretaker in the presently occupied structure and demolishing the abandoned structure.
  - Existing wooded wetland areas abutting DEP land should be left as is.
  - Wooded area along eastern border of property should be left as is for a visual/noise barrier to Route 8.
  - Consider Park Director Kalarko's suggestion to develop a one way traffic system entering on the access road, then south along the old trolley R.O.W. and back out to Winsted Road via Harris Road.

# **PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

## **Consistency of Project with State and Regional Plans**

The Connecticut Conservation and Development Policies Plan, 1998-2003 classifies the wetland portion of the subject site as "Preservation Area," and the upland soil areas as "Growth Area." The State Plan advocates the protection of the significant resources within "Preservation Areas" (e.g. wetlands and floodplains) and discourages structural development in these areas except as directly consistent with the preservation values. When a development project is proposed within or adjacent to a "Preservation Area," the State Plan calls for incorporation of site planning and design controls, such as buffers, to protect and manage the area.

The State strategy for "Growth Areas" is new urban growth at a comparatively high density. These areas have existing or planned water or sewer services, potential or existing public transportation services, and the potential for future mixed use and intensive development of areawide significance. While new development for jobs and housing is the focus for "Growth Areas," the State Plan does acknowledge the importance of recreational land uses and calls for them to be integrated with economic and housing plans. One of the specific goals for urban areas under the State Plan is to "revitalize the quality of life for the residents of our urban areas by insuring . . . adequate recreational facilities....."

The Growth Policy Map of the Litchfield Hills Council of Elected Officials (LHCEO) classifies the subject site into the same basic categories as the State Plan. The wetland portion of the property is classified as a "Sensitive Resource Area," and any future use of this area should be consistent with the conservation value

of the land. As stated in the Regional Plan, "Strict limitation should be placed upon development to insure that environmental quality is strictly maintained."

The upland portions of the property are classified as "Primary Growth Areas" under the LHCEO's Growth Policy Map. While potential recreational use of these areas is not specifically addressed, the LHCEO report does state that "providing for more intensive growth (i.e. for new jobs and dwellings) in these areas will balance the less intensive land use policies appropriate in outlying low density neighborhood and rural areas."

The proposed acquisition and recreational use of the property by the City of Torrington is generally consistent with the development policies outlined in these advisory regional and state plans provided 1) care is taken to protect wetlands and the associated floodplain resources, and 2) the City determines that recreational use of the property is appropriate and will complement the overall economic development and housing plans for the community's defined growth areas.

### **Access Considerations and Surrounding Land Use**

The sightlines at the intersection of the access road to the property (Machuga Road) and Winsted Road (Rte 800) are excellent and should facilitate safe turning movements both to and from the property. Consideration should be given to improving the grade and extending the length of the landing pad at Machuga Road however to enhance safety.

The existing 16-foot width of Machuga Road is inadequate for safe two-way vehicular travel. Prior to property acquisition, the City should assess the feasibility of widening this road and the impact of road widening on the adjacent

wetlands. An alternative to widening Machuga Drive is to create a one-way loop road through the property. This would necessitate research on the potential use of the old trolley line in the property and/or acquisition or use of neighboring properties. One advantage of a loop road with City acquisition of the property is that it would provide an alternate means of accessing the site in the event of an emergency.

The average daily traffic along Winsted Road in the vicinity of Machuga Road is about 7100 trips according to ConnDOT statistics. Rural two-lane, two-way roadways such as Winsted Road can typically handle about 1,400 passenger cars per hour before congestion begins to be a problem. Thus there appears to be substantial reserve capacity on Winsted Road to handle the traffic generated by the proposed project.

The proposed use appears to be generally compatible with surrounding land uses, with Route 8 located immediately to the east of the site, an industrial facility to the north, and scattered residential, commercial and open space uses to the south and west. Excellent potential appears to exist for complementing the Still River Greenway Trail in this area by creating a supplemental trail loop through the subject property.

# **About the Team**

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The King's Mark Environmental Review Team (ERT) is a group of environmental professionals drawn together from a variety of federal, state and regional agencies. Specialists on the Team include geologists, biologists, soil scientists, foresters, climatologists and landscape architects, recreational specialists, engineers and planners. The ERT operates with state funding under the aegis of the King's Mark Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) Area - an 83 town area serving western Connecticut.

As a public service activity, the Team is available to serve towns within the King's Mark RC&D Area - *free of charge*.

## **Purpose of the Environmental Review Team**

The Environmental Review Team is available to assist towns in the review of sites proposed for major land use activities or natural resource inventories for critical areas. For example, the ERT has been involved in the review of a wide range of significant land use activities including subdivisions, sanitary landfills, commercial and industrial developments and recreation/open space projects.

Reviews are conducted in the interest of providing information and analysis that will assist towns and developers in environmentally sound decision making. This is done through identifying the natural resource base of the site and highlighting opportunities and limitations for the proposed land use.

## **Requesting an Environmental Review**

Environmental reviews may be requested by the chief elected official of a municipality or the chairman of an administrative agency such as planning and zoning, conservation or inland wetlands. Environmental Review Request Forms are available at your local Conservation District and through the King's Mark ERT Coordinator. This request form must include a summary of the proposed project, a location map of the project site, written permission from the landowner/developer allowing the Team to enter the property for the purposes of a review and a statement identifying the specific areas of concern the Team members should investigate. When this request is reviewed by the local Conservation District and approved by the King's Mark RC&D Executive Council, the Team will undertake the review. At present, the ERT can undertake approximately two reviews per month depending on scheduling and Team member availability.

For additional information regarding the Environmental Review Team, please contact the King's Mark ERT Coordinator, Connecticut Environmental Review Team, P.O. Box 70, Haddam, CT 06438. The telephone number is 860-345-3977.