# Housatonic River Basin Natural Resources Restoration Project ral Resources Trustee SubCouncil for Connection Request for Supplemental Information (RSIN) INSTRUCTIONS Natural Resources Trustee SubCouncil for Connecticut

# PART A: SPONSOR AND PROJECT SUMMARY FORM

Please read "Request for Supplemental Information (RFI) OVERVIEW" and this document, "Request for Supplemental Information (RSI) INSTRUCTIONS" before completing this form.

Part A must be completed using this "Sponsor and Project Summary Form"

SPONSOR INFORMATION Type of Entity Check the be		
☐ Private individual ☐ Non-profit organization ☐ State government ☐ Federal government ☐ Tribal government	☐ Municipal ☐ Corporati ☐ County go	I government on or Business overnment or Institution
Authorized Representative o		Contact Person (if <u>different</u> from Authorized Representative):
Name Curtis S Read	O.	Name
Title Chairman of the Board		Title
Address 1185 New Litchfield Street		Address
City Stat	te <b>Z</b> ip	City State Zip
06790 Phone		Phone
860 626 7222		Email
Email cread@lablite.com		

Project Name Provide a brief working name:	
Indian Fields Wildlife Preserve	
Project Location	
Attach an 8.5 x 11-inch map or copy of an aerial pl topographic and geographic information, a scale, at	notograph showing project location and extent. Include pertinent nd north arrow.
State(s), Municipality/ies: Housatonic Riverfr	ont in New Milford, CT.
Longitude for approximate center of project area:	73 25' 5.62"
Latitude for approximate center of project area:	41 34' 36.57"
project location(s) will be selected.	n selected yet, include in Part C a narrative describing how
Restoration Priority Category See Appendix Descriptions	C of these Instructions for Restoration Priority Category
Primary Category. Check the restoration category. Check one box.	y that is the primary goal of the project.
<ul> <li>□ Aquatic Natural Resources Restoration/Enhanc</li> <li>□ Riparian &amp; Floodplain Natural Resources Restoration/Enhancement of Recreational Uses</li> </ul>	oration/Enhancement
Secondary Categories. Check all relevant boxes.	
<ul> <li>         \[             \] Aquatic Natural Resources Restoration/Enhance         \[             \] Riparian &amp; Floodplain Natural Resources Restoration/Enhancement of Recreational Uses     </li> </ul>	pration/Enhancement
List Specific Injured Natural Resources and Project	or Impaired Natural Resource Services to Benefit from
bird and wildlife habitat, floodplain resources	re and enhance significant riparian resources including and native plant communities that were damaged or promote opportunities for river related recreation and

#### **Project Budget Summary**

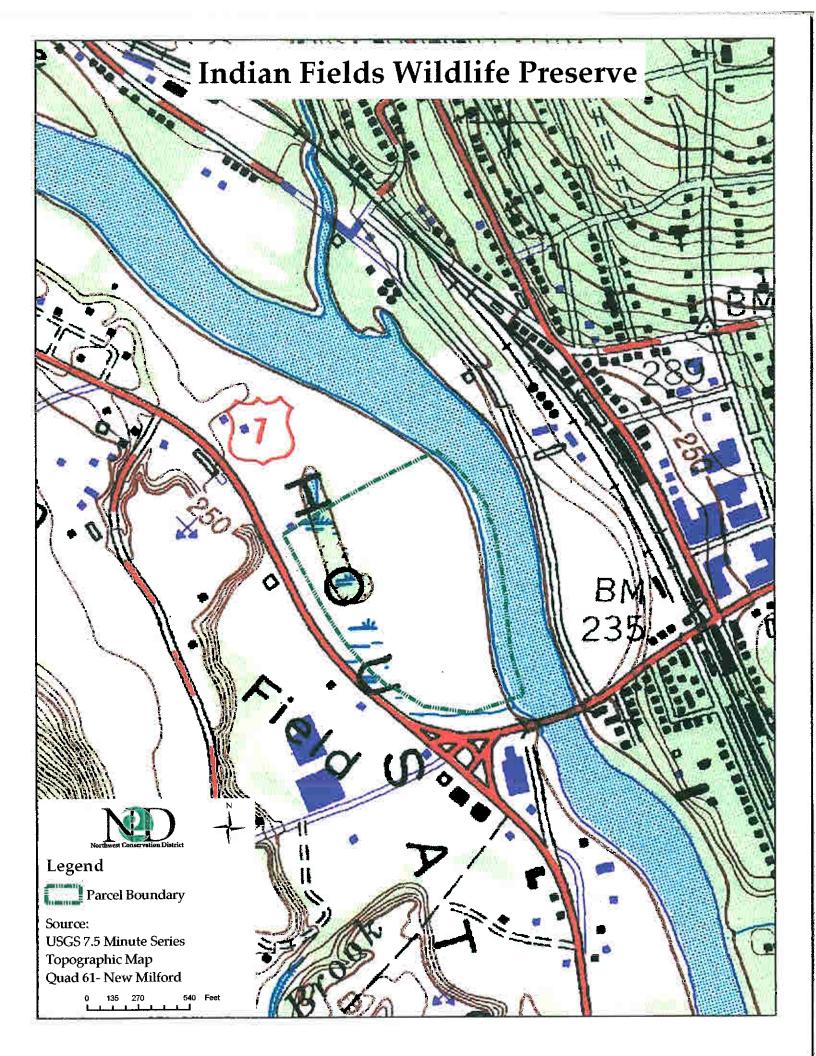
Complete the table below to summarize the budget information that is detailed in Part D: Project Budget Narrative and Forms. Sponsors are advised to complete Part D (Project Budget Narrative and Forms) before filling in the table below.

Housatonic River NRD Funds – Requested	Other Contributions (Committed)	Other Contributions (Not Committed)	Total Project Cost (boxes 1+2+3)
1. From Part D, Table 2, Box 5 \$348,500	2. From Part D, Table 2, Box 6 \$112,729	3. From Part D, Table 2, Box 7	4. From Part D, Table 2, Box 8 \$ \$461,229
	Considered as Cost	Contributions to Be t-Matching to NRD Request	
	5. \$112,729		

# **Authorizing Statement**

I hereby declare that the information included in this project submission and all attachments is true, complete, and accurate to the best of my knowledge, and that the proposed project complies with all applicable state, local, and federal laws and regulations.

Certis Stead	6-18-07
Signature of Sponsor or Sponsor Representative	Date
Northwest Conservation District, Inc	
Name of Sponsor or Sponsor Representative	
(Type or print clearly)	



#### PART B. PROJECT ABSTRACT

The Indian Fields Wildlife Preserve fulfills almost all desirable elements of the NRD Trustee's evaluation criteria. It will provide an incalculable benefit to the natural resources of the Housatonic River and will be a highly visible and permanent project that is large enough to offer landscape scale protection for the wildlife, underlying groundwater resources and the functioning floodplain. It will be accessible to scientists and will educate the general public on conservation values.

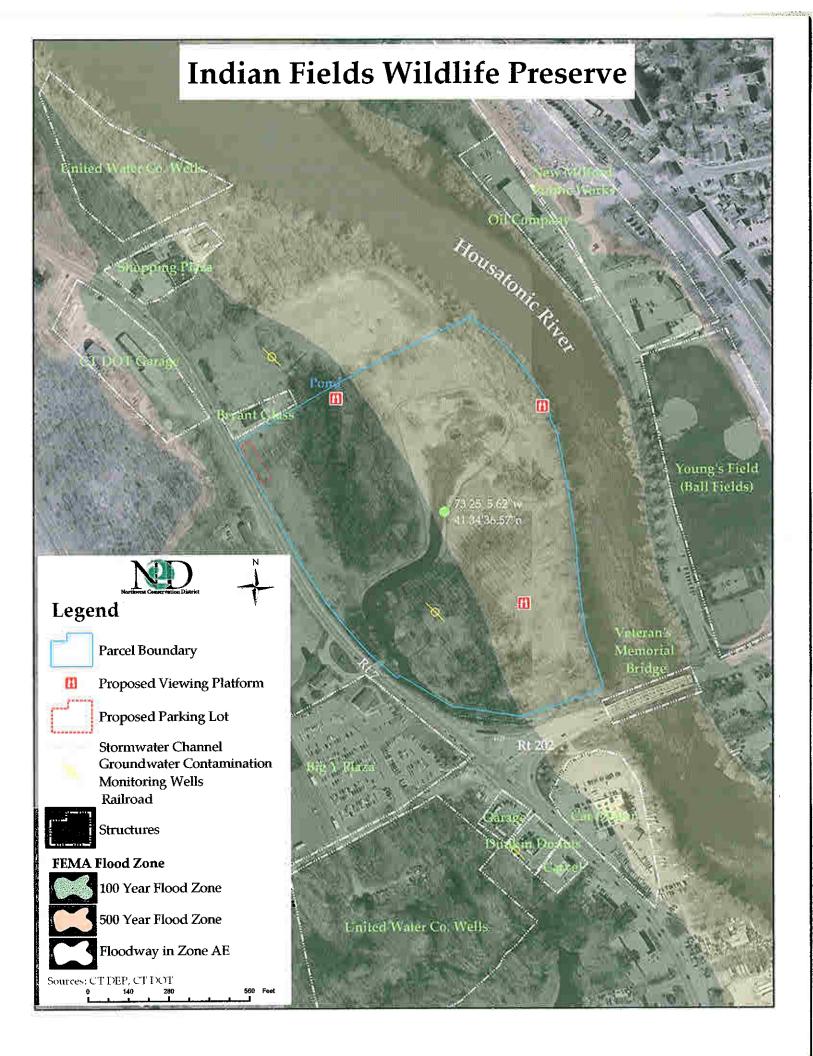
The Northwest Conservation District, Inc. (NCD) would manage this restoration project with the involvement of several partners. The 25 acre tract, astride the main stem of the Housatonic River, is currently owned by an estate which has agreed to sell Indian Fields to the NCD for \$250,000 contingent upon a timely and positive decision by the Restoration Fund Trustees. The Town of New Milford supports the Indian Fields project and is willing to take title to the property with restrictions after completion of the restoration work within four years. Some benefits of this land acquisition include:

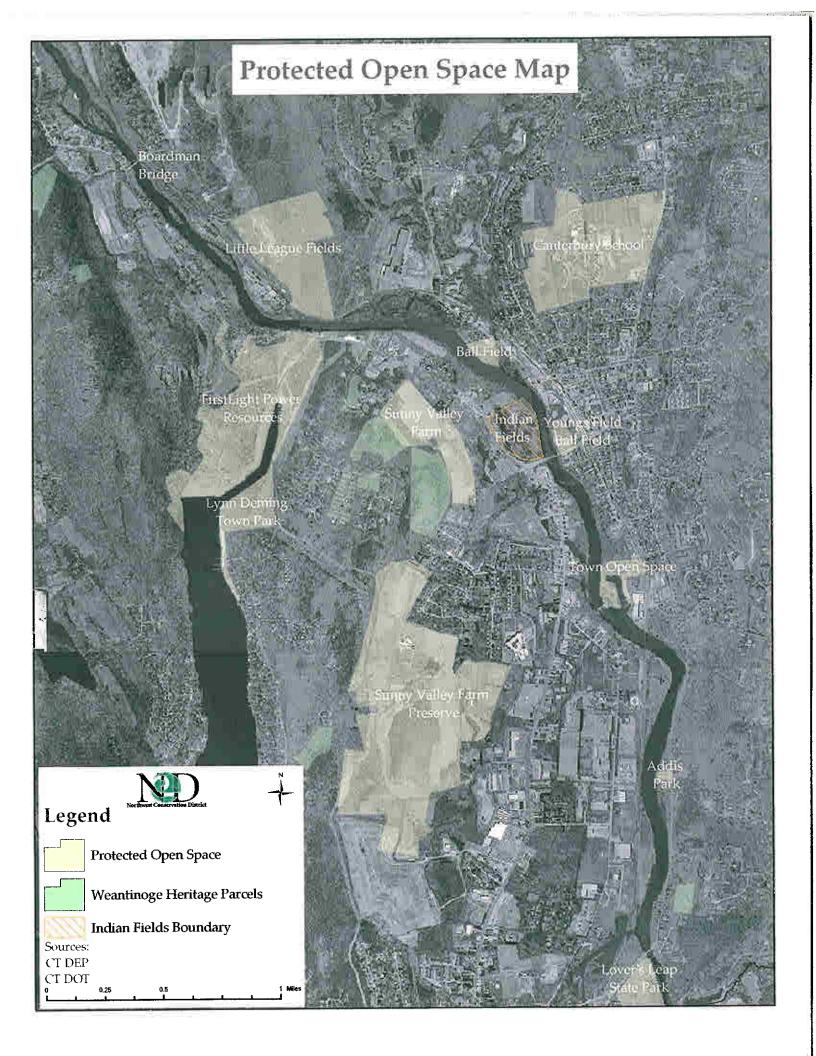
- o Enhance bird habitat for breeding and migratory species
- o Provide refuge and habitat for additional riverine wildlife
- O Protect floodplain & aquifer functions in highly vulnerable area
- Create passive recreation, handicap accessibility, interpretive trail, educational conservation resource
- Remove of non-native invasive plants and replacement with native species beneficial to wildlife
- o Stabilize riverbank with tenacious native tree and shrub plantings
- o Work with DEP Wildlife Division, Audubon & others
- O Preserve open space in New Milford (lowest % in region)
- Improve New Milford and Rt. 7 viewscape
- Create natural gateway to the upper Housatonic River Watershed.



View south on Housatonic Riverbank

The NCD strongly urges acceptance of the Indian Fields concept into the Restoration Plan. It is a remarkable and unique opportunity that will provide a myriad of benefits for both man and nature.





### PART C. PROJECT NARRATIVE - GENERAL DESCRIPTION

Imagine walking through meadows along the banks of the Housatonic on an early summer morning. Warblers and other songbirds are plentiful. We see flycatchers along the tree lines and kingfisher from the riverbank blind; wood ducks are nesting in the dead snags. Bobolinks are foraging for insects in the tall grasses.

School groups, scout troops or research scientists might also be visitors this week enjoying the level paths around this 25 acre parcel hidden in the heart of New Milford. The historic Indian Fields are comprised of floodplain and wetland soils with over 1400 feet of river bank, native plant communities including temporarily flooded grasslands and a floodplain forest with a remnant oxbow.

This property will be restored and enhanced by the Northwest Conservation District, Inc. (NCD) and eventually owned by the Town of New Milford after restoration work is completed. Not only will the Indian Fields be a vital link in the biotic corridor along the Housatonic and at the base of the Aspetuck Watershed, it will offer protection to the public water supply wells to the west and north and continue to function as floodplain protection for shopping centers, car dealers, gas stations and one of the busiest traffic intersections in western CT.

Indian Fields is a keystone property for wildlife, people and commerce. Its preservation may be the most visible and important project involving land acquisition by the NRD Trustees. It will serve as an oasis of valuable wildlife habitat in the midst of an urbanized environment. It will also as the gateway to the Litchfield Hills and the upper Housatonic corridor while providing a myriad of benefits for future generations.

The Northwest Conservation District and its partners are proud to present this application and hope the NRD Trustees will enable the historical preservation and ecological restoration of the Indian Fields for the people of our region.



Indian Fields (looking north)

#### 1.1 Project Goals and Objectives

The goal of the Indian Fields proposal is to secure funds to acquire twenty-five acres of land situated on the banks of the Housatonic. Once the land is held by the NCD (501C3-non-profit) the restoration work will be completed in a logical phased approach within four years. By then the wildlife preserve will be a haven for birds and other species. People and scientists will be able to visit Indian Fields only at permitted hours along the prescribed paths. It will be a necessary link in an ecological chain that stretches northward to the upper Housatonic and Aspetuck valleys.

Some of the objectives include:

- o Increase various bird and wildlife habitats along the Housatonic River
- o Protect contributing aguifer for United Water supply wells to north and west
- o Protect the floodplain and thereby commercial activity and state highways
- o Increase open space and passive recreational opportunities in Town of New Milford
- Create a site for school field trips, bird counts and nature walks on handicap viable paths and raised viewing platforms/blinds
- o Enhance perception of river restoration on highly visible property
- Protect the property from negative development pressures in the future (golf course) or residential housing

#### 1.2 Project Scope and Project Implementation Plan

The overall approach will be to take advantage of NCD staff expertise, various consulting partners and a professional engineer to first document existing conditions and draft an implementation plan for review and revisions. The final plan will become the basis for permit applications from appropriate agencies. Once permits are obtained site work will commence in year two to remove invasive plant species, plant wildlife friendly and native species, construct at grade handicap accessible paths, field and riverbank viewing stations, interpretive signage and a perimeter fence and parking lot. It is anticipated that in year three or four the NCD work will be completed and the property will be donated with conservation restrictions to the Town of New Milford.

# b. Project schedule:

- O Year 1 (2009): survey current condition, plan restoration measures with partners.
- Year 2 (2010): refine plans based on partner input and apply for permits (DEP general floodplain, Army Corps and local wetlands and zoning.
- Year 3: Construct paths, platforms/blinds, signage, fencing, parking area, remove invasive species, plant wildlife attracting or food species.
- Year 4: apply restrictions to deed and donate property. Open preserve with public participation. Document and measure restoration activity and establish plan for future monitoring.



Pond and wetlands habitat in historic river channel

c. Discussion of major project phases and milestone tasks or activities comprising each phase through project completion.

#### Phase I – Finalize Purchase of Indian Fields

Representatives of the Estate of Clifford St. John & Sons have agreed to a purchase price of \$250,000 which is below the assessed value of \$470,000. The land is classified as "vacant river front, flood plain land in PA 490/open space, LL1 wet with 0.30 acres taken by State DOT for a Rt. 7 stormwater ditch to the Housatonic River on the south perimeter of the property. The lawyers for the St. John estate, Frank Murphy and James Tucciarone, have indicated their willingness in writing to sell the property to the NCD. The estate also owns a commercially zoned and approved lot (6 acres) stretching from Rt. 7 to the river on the northern edge of the targeted 26 acres. This adjacent lot can be filled back 100 ft from Rt. 7 according to New Milford's Wetlands enforcement officer, Jim Ferlow. Practically speaking there is not much the current estate ownership can do to develop the 26 acres although they have plans for a nine hole golf course (see maps). The NCD has already negotiated a lower purchase price than originally quoted by suggesting a "bargain sale" where the difference between the appraised value and the sale price becomes a "write-off" to the estate. The current market value will be determined by securing an appraisal immediately after notification by the NRD Trustees that the project could be approved for purchase. The estate sales terms and timeframes are defined in a copy of correspondence attached.

# Phase II - Survey and Map Existing Conditions

Upon approval for purchase by the NRD Trustees, a Class A-2 survey will be done. There are recent surveys of abutting properties by James Osborne, L.E. and the DOT which should be helpful in this process. It may be possible to get a reduced rate on the survey as a donated service. The NCD will concurrently make detailed GIS maps of the Indian Fields. Important features will be recorded by a GPS capable camera in order to get an accurate map and visual record before restoration work begins.

#### Phase III - Develop Restoration & Enhancement Plan

The NCD has visited the Indian Fields property with experts from several disciplines. It is important to become familiar with the property and visit it during different seasons, especially the summer when invasive species are most evident. It is also important to be familiar with the historic use. For instance, the name Indian Fields dates back to the early 1700's when this land was retained by the resident native Americans as the agricultural land for their large settlements in the New Milford Valley. They refused to sell this tract to the earliest white settlers due to its value for farming. In later years the land was used for tobacco, corn and hay. Since 1980 it has been vacant and left alone except for studies of salt and gas contamination from the CT DOT garage west across Rt. 7 and some unauthorized excavation during the recent widening of Rt. 7. Indian Fields is currently an example of succession and invasive plant colonization. We regard this site as the perfect canvas for rehabilitation and enhancement to benefit wildlife and waterfowl. It will always function as floodplain and is vitally important for aquifer protection. The property is still known for this function on USGS Topos as the Indian Fields Aquifer. The NCD will consult and coordinate a host of people including state, regional and our own experts to delineate a viable plan for the property. We estimate this planning phase to take at least one vear.

## Phase IV - Plan Refinement and Permitting Process

Once the initial plan is finalized, it will be sent out for review and comment by the NRD Trustees, the CT DEP, United Water Company, Audubon, Livingston Ripley Waterfowl Sanctuary, Nature Conservancy and other selected experts. The plan to develop Indian Fields into a public access wildlife preserve will be subject to changes suggested by those consulted. The refined plan will be submitted to the NRD Trustees for final approval and release of the second round of funding. (first round of funds for purchase of property). The permitting process requires a final approved plan. The NCD will apply to the CT DEP for a floodplain permit. According to Jeff Caiola of the CT DEP, only a "general permit" should be required since no excavation is anticipated. We will also seek permission to conduct regulated activities within the floodplain from New Milford's Inland Wetlands Commission. Our professional engineer does not anticipate that the proposed activity in the floodplain will require a permit from the Army Corps of Engineers. This process can always take some time for preparation and meetings. We will have the assistance of our professional engineer to obtain the necessary permits within 4-8 months.

#### Phase V – Implement Plan

The NCD has a general vision for the property as described above. The key elements of implementation include removal of invasive plant species by acceptable techniques whether grubbing or spot treatments with glyphosphates or similar low risk permitted herbicides and planting wildlife friendly and native plants to enhance food sources and seasonal appeal to migratory birds. (species to be identified).

Construct trail loops out of a stable gravel material that are handicap accessible. The idea would be to keep most monitored visitors on the paths and out of sensitive habitats in meadows or on the riverbank. These trail loops would feature three viewing platforms anchored and elevated so as not to be impacted by any flooding less than the 100 year event. The recent flood in April, 2007 caused flooding up to five foot depth in the center of the property. There would also be appropriate signage along the trails to educate the public about the property, wildlife and the Housatonic River. The views around and from the Indian Fields are outstanding.

The last implementation element is to construct perimeter fencing and a permeable pavement parking area for access. It is imperative to protect the site to minimize unauthorized entry yet the fence can be hidden by hedge plantings to enhance appearance from Route 7, Route 202 and Veteran's Bridge. We estimate that approximately 3,000 linear feet of fence treatment will be necessary. We will seek donations from local nurseries and recruit volunteers to help plant appropriate species.

Phase VI - Property Transfer

Once the Indian Fields restoration is performed, The NCD work will be complete and we will transfer title to the Town of New Milford for ongoing management. The Town will want to use the preserve for school tours and passive recreation for local residents as well as maintaining the floodplain and aquifer protection functions. The loss of tax revenue will be minimal according to the Assessor's card. It is appropriate that the Town of New Milford own this property as it is situated in the center of downtown. Deed restrictions will prevent future development.



CT DOT Garage to the west across Rt. 7

d. Identify any property access agreements, easements, rights-of-way, other agreements – The CT DOT has "taken" a 0.30 acre strip of land on the southern line next to Veteran's Bridge for the purpose of drainage of Route 7 stormwater. This ditch is lined with landscape fabric and discharges directly into the Housatonic under the bridge.

e. Identify if the project will require any regulatory approvals. CT DEP Flood plain "general" permit and New Milford Inland Wetlands Permit.



CT DOT Stormwater Drainage abutting Rt. 202 to south

#### 2.0 EVALUATION CRITERIA NARRATIVE

#### 2.1 Relevance and Applicability of Project

# 2.1.1 Location of Project

The Indian Fields property is located along the banks of the main stem of the Housatonic River. The Aspetuck River Tributary confluence is located just north of the property on the east side of the Housatonic River. The property is floodplain and is accessible and visible from downtown New Milford.

#### 2.1.2 Natural Recovery Period

The Indian Fields are in the process of slow recovery from intensive agriculture, excavation from Route 7 construction in 2004-05, and historic groundwater contamination (gasoline and salts) from the CT DOT garage to the west. Invasive plants and general neglect by absentee estate owners have left the property in a vulnerable state. The NCD proposal will accelerate and enhance the natural recovery period to 3-5 years instead of decades or never if the property becomes a golf course.

#### 2.1.3 Sustainable Benefits

Project will provide long term sustainable benefits to injured natural resources. Benefits include floodplain protection, river bank stabilization, aquifer protection, habitat for native and migratory species, landscape level conservation, site for scientific research, conservation education for future generations, public awareness and appreciation of the Housatonic River.

# 2.1.4 Magnitude of Ecological Benefits

The Indian Fields Wildlife Preserve will be one of the few areas of its kind along the whole Housatonic. It will have acres of unmowed meadows and plantings that will attract breeding and migratory species. Most of the property will be undisturbed except for limited and supervised

public access on designated paths. It will not be a park or ball fields, but rather a refuge unlike any other fields up and down the river. This should provide excellent habitat for eagles, osprey and kingfishers that were all damaged by the release of PCB's. Other bird species will be attracted to the tree lines and meadows as well as to the unique pond onsite which appears to be a vestige of a historic river channel. Mammals, insects and invertebrates will also thrive here in an area protected from domestic dogs and cats but open to 1,400 ft of riverbank.

# 2.1.5 Magnitude of Recreational Benefits

The Indian Fields Wildlife Preserve should help overcome the public's indifference to conservation. Everybody will know it is there and passing motorists will see the property. They will want to go there. Their children will go there on field trips. Their visits in the form of passive recreation will be informative and provide an education in conservation helping to instill respect for the river and nature. We believe that over time this project will be a source of pride for the region, an island of nature in an ever increasing landscape under development pressure.



Passive Recreation – Restoring a Conservation Ethic

#### 2.2 Technical Merit

# 2.2.1 Technical/Technological Feasibility

This project will employ proven technologies for habitat enhancement and educational and interpretive techniques. This project requires technical sophistication in the planning and implementation phases, but nothing the NCD and their partners have not previously had experience with. Removal of invasive plant species, planting, fencing, trail layout and construction are all very feasible. We do not have any concerns about the technical aspects of this project.

#### 2.2.2 Adverse Environmental Impact

None, if the public access is limited and food and garbage are not allowed on site.

#### 2.2.3 Human Health and Safety

Visitors to the Preserve will be limited to paths and handicap accessible platforms with railings. There will be no direct or permitted access to the river for swimming or boat landings. The risks to health and safety are minimal. The general public will not have access to the property until the Town of New Milford has possession after the restoration phase is completed. The Town will then be in charge of public access and insurance. The proximity of the property to local services will enable easy monitoring of ongoing safety concerns.

#### 2.2.4 Measurable Results

The NCD will document certain parameters that can be used to measure the recovery and enhancement of Indian Fields. The first will be the species growing now (including invasive plants) compared against the new wildlife friendly planting. The comparative metric is considered a "structural parameter". A second measure of success or "functional parameter", are bird counts pre vs. post restoration work. This will become the ongoing metric of improvement to be accomplished with spring and fall bird counts by Audubon volunteers. These counts should show increasing diversity and populations on site over time (monitoring plan). The counts from Indian Fields will be compared to other sites in Northwest Connecticut where spring and fall counts are routinely performed. These remote counts will provide reference values for comparative metrics.



Area to be planted with wildlife enhancing species

# 2.3 Project Budget (see Part D below)

# 2.3.1 Relationship of Expected Costs to Expected Benefits

A straight cost/benefit analysis does not really apply for the Indian Fields project when measuring hard dollar costs for land acquisition and necessary improvements against the intangible benefits of wildlife habitat restoration, public education and enjoyment, aquifer protection and floodplain integrity. On the one hand, we expend some monies from the fund, while on the other, there are immeasurable positive benefits. We believe the expected long term benefits far outweigh the expected reasonable costs.

#### 2.3.2 Implementation Oriented

The attached budget is strictly implementation oriented as laid out above in the project phases descriptions. The NCD believes that all the budget items are necessary to ensure project success. The NRD funds will be used for property purchase, supplies, materials and equipment on the Indian Fields Wildlife Preserve.

The project team has extensive experience in land planning, management and conservation problem solving (soils, erosion, wetlands) as well as a strong in house GIS department and Web Development expertise. We have used GPS and GIS technologies to develop and map trails for many clients including the Town of New Milford (Reservoir Property), Pratt Center, Cornwall Conservation Trust, Naromi Land Trust, New Hartford Open Space Commission as well as private land owners.

#### 2.3.3 Budget Justification and Understanding

See Part D Budget Narrative for detail on budget tasks and property tax assessment

#### 2.3.4 Leveraging of Additional Resources

The project has substantial committed in kind matching funds from the NCD. This project also has the commitment of a number of environmental professionals. Expertise includes designing engineer, ornithologists, water fowl expert from Livingston Ripley Water Fowl Sanctuary and biologist.

The NCD will solicit volunteer support from various groups: Audubon, Scouts, Garden Clubs, Master Gardeners, Conservation organizations, etc. Matching funds from Federal grant opportunities such as WHIP, Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program grants will also be pursued.

# 2.3.5 Comparative Cost Effectiveness

In reviewing the initial list of projects, no project listed appears to provide the same or similar benefits.

#### 2.4 Socioeconomic Merit

- 2.4.1 Community Involvement and Diversity: The public would be integrally involved in this project during the anticipated four year restoration phase and ongoing thereafter.
  - The NCD will seek the help of Eagle Scouts and local contractors in building the three proposed viewing platforms.
  - Local birdwatchers will undertake the bird counts anticipated in the Spring and Fall for the monitoring program.
  - Local garden clubs, master gardeners and other volunteers will be tapped for plant donations and time planting wildlife habitat enhancement plantings.
  - o Local volunteers will provide labor for erecting the fencing.
  - The NCD has an active group of volunteers who work at our annual plant sale. Some of these will be asked to help remove invasive plants and aid in new plantings.

#### 2.4.2 Adverse Socioeconomic Impacts: None anticipated.

2.4.3 Coordination and Integration – The Indian Fields project is consistent with local, regional and CT DEP Wildlife plans. Indian Fields will carry out many of the goals set forth in the CT DEP 2004 publication on wildlife habitat: <a href="Connecticut">CONNECTICUT'S COMPREHENSIVE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION STRATEGY</a>. The project directly addresses many of the identified threats to species of Greatest Conservation Need. Indian Fields will create a unique urban preserve to carry out many of the Priority Research/ Survey/ Monitoring Needs for Forested Inland Wetland Habitats as listed below.

"Connecticut's DEP Bureau of Natural Resources Mission: To conserve, improve, and protect the natural resources and environment of the State of Connecticut and to do this in a way that encourages the social and economic development of Connecticut while preserving the natural environment and life forms it supports in a delicate, interrelated and complex balance to the end that the state may fulfill its responsibility to the environment for present and future generations."

The most significant threats to Connecticut's land and waterscapes include habitat loss, degradation, and fragmentation from development; changes in land use; and competition from non-native, invasive species. Other threats include insufficient scientific knowledge regarding wildlife and their habitats (distribution, abundance and condition); the lack of landscape—level conservation; insufficient resources to maintain or enhance wildlife habitat; and public indifference toward conservation.

# Threats to Species of Greatest Conservation Need. (GCN species) All species:

☐ Insufficient scientific knowledge regarding wildlife, as well as freshwater, diadromous and marine fish species, and their habitats (distribution, abundance and condition)
☐ Loss, degradation, or fragmentation of habitats from development or changes in land use
☐ Degradation of habitats by non-native invasive species (e.g., <i>phragmites</i> , purple loosestrife, mute swan)
☐ Lack of resources to maintain/enhance wildlife habitat
☐ Lack of landscape-level conservation efforts
☐ Public indifference toward conservation
☐ Delayed recovery of species with depressed populations due to limited
reproductive potential, dispersal ability, or other factors
Terrestrial species:
☐ Loss of early successional habitats through natural succession
☐ Lack of wildlife conservation on most private lands
☐ Illegal collection/poaching of wildlife species
☐ Lack of data exchange (access to and submission of information) for the public
and scientific community

Floodplain Forests have well-drained, nutrient rich soils, including stream bottom forests, floodplain forests, and periodically flooded alluvial swamps adjacent to rivers or streams. This forest typically includes bitternut hickory, silver maple, cottonwood, pin oak, green ash, sycamore, box elder, sensitive fern, white snakeroot, and false nettle. These temporarily flooded,

deciduous forests vary in the diversity of shrub and groundcover layers. Low floodplains and levees along major rivers include silver maple, cottonwood, sensitive ferns, and nettles. Alluvial flood plains of small and mid-gradient rivers include pin oak, green ash, sycamore, boxelder, white snakeroot, sensitive fern, and false nettle.

4-24 Threats Affecting GCN Species in Forested Inland Wetland Habitat ☐ Insufficient scientific knowledge regarding wildlife species (distribution, abundance, and condition). ☐ Loss, degradation, or fragmentation of habitats from development or changes in ☐ Degradation of habitats by non-native invasive plants and wildlife (e.g., phragmites, purple loosestrife, mute swan). ☐ Loss of wetland habitat from historic filling, dredging, and ditching. ☐ Loss of habitat value due to hydrologic impacts from development, new roads, impervious surfaces, and culverts. 4-25 Priority Research/Survey/Monitoring Needs for Forested Inland Wetland Habitat ☐ Monitor population trends of GCN bird species (e.g., cerulean warbler) that are not well covered by BBS efforts. Measure: number of species added to improved monitoring protocols. ☐ Determine the population status, distribution, and breeding success of the American woodcock. Measure: quantify and map breeding population of American woodcock and produce and update conservation plans. ☐ Enhance inventory and conservation efforts for butterfly species. *Measure*: number of new monitoring sites or species protocols established. ☐ Determine the distribution, abundance, and breeding success of American black ducks and assess winter habitat use. Measure: quantify and map breeding population and winter habitats of American black ducks and produce and update conservation plans. ☐ Determine the population status and distribution of yellow-billed and black-billed cuckoos. Measure: number of GIS data layers produced of all known nesting sites; develop effective monitoring protocols. ☐ Monitor GCN freshwater wetland birds in coordination with Partners In Flight and Colonial Bird Monitoring protocols. Measure: number of sites monitored in Connecticut. Determine distribution, abundance, habitat requirements, and demography of southern bog lemmings. Measure: number of GIS data layers produced; number of areas surveyed; number of populations located; compilation of new data collected. Determine the life history, abundance, distribution, and habitat requirements for GCN bat species, especially Indiana bats. Measure: number of GIS data layers produced; number of life history measures established. ☐ Determine and map the distribution of blue-spotted salamander (diploid) populations. Measure: number of GIS data layers produced. ☐ Determine eastern box turtle distribution, habitat use, and demographics, as well as identify core populations and evaluate their long-term viability. Measure:

number of GIS data layers produced; number of acres surveyed; number of new

sites surveyed; compilation of new data collected on distribution; number of eastern box turtles located; number of life history measures established.

Determine distribution and abundance, habitat requirements, and demography of northern water shrews. *Measure*: number of GIS data layers produced; number of areas surveyed; number of populations located; compilation of new data collected.

#### 2.4.4 Public Outreach

There will be great local interest in the Indian Fields Wildlife Preserve. There has already been front page coverage on the concept in two regional newspapers. The NCD will cover the restoration process with timely press releases and web content on <a href="www.conservect.org">www.conservect.org</a> as well as on New Milford's official website. We have included an opening ribbon cutting event in 3-4 years when the preserve is ready to transfer to the Town of New Milford. We also plan to inform scientific experts who may want to study the property before and during restoration. The restoration process of plant removal and re-planting will be an excellent example for regional property owners. The NCD will design workshops around what is learned and will publicize these in our newsletter, website and press releases.

#### 2.5 Applicant Implementation Capacity

2.5.1 - Technical Capacity of Applicant and Project Team Project Manager

Steve Trinkaus, P.E., BS Forest Management, UNH. Nineteen years experience as consulting engineer. Manages Trinkaus Engineering, LLC based in Southbury with focus on low impact development planning.

Elizabeth Corrigan, BS in Biology from Southern CT State University. Ten years experience as field biologist for the Northwest Conservation District (NCD) and 6 years as a seasonal Botanist for University of Connecticut Department of Plant Science. Co-chair of the CT Invasive Plant Working Group.

Sean Hayden, BA., University of Connecticut, Soil Scientist, Land Use Specialist in Erosion and Sediment, Low Impact Development, , twenty years experience in Environmental Consulting and Non-profit settings, eight years experience as Lead Educator and Naturalist at Lost River Reservation in New Hampshire

Shane Kramer, BA Central CT State University GIS Manager, GIS Cartographer, , four years varied experience using GIS for land planning and environmental problem solving.

Kristen Ponak, BA University of Connecticut, Web Designer, GIS Cartographer, three years experience in Web Development for non profit environmental groups. Currently develops and maintains websites for five CT Conservation Districts, the Connecticut Envirothon, CIPWG CT Invasive Plants Working Group

#### 2.5.2 Administrative Capacity of Applicant and Project Team

Curtis S Read, Chairman of the Board, Northwest Conservation District

Founder & Principal of Lablite, LLC and Hydro Technologies, Inc. (lab)

President of Little Simon Properties, Inc (2,600 acres in Adirondacks)

BA, Hamilton College

Masters of Agriculture, WVU

Thirty years experience in agriculture and water quality issues

Jean Cronauer, Executive Director, Northwest Conservation District

BA, Marvgrove College, Michigan

Twenty-five years experience in public education and administration in both business and non profit sectors.

2.5.3 Project Commitments – The project engineer, Steve Trinkaus, P.E. has agreed to be available for all the planning and implementation tasks noted above. The Mayor and Town Attorney have orally agreed to be the eventual recipient of the Indian Fields, but will await NRD Fund decision before seeking approval from the Town Council. Also, Kathleen Johnson from the regional USDA/NRCS office has offered support for the project receiving WHIP grant funding for invasive removal and wildlife enhancing plants and practices. The seller of the property has made the commitment to sell the property to the NCD provided prescribed timelines are met. (see letter attached)



View across Housatonic of downtown New Milford)

# 3.0 LAND AQUISITION PROJECTS

Archeological History of Indian Fields

According to Nicholas F. Bellantoni, PhD the Connecticut State Archaeologist working out of the Connecticut Archaeology Center, Russ Handsmen with the Institute in Washington has conducted a number of surveys in that area and located a number of archeological sites on the property. Before any construction occurs the NCD will submit a formal request to the Connecticut Archaeology Center and to the Institute in Washington to get the results of archeological surveys preformed on and adjacent to the property.

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#### TIERNEY, ZULLO, FLAHERTY AND MURPHY, P.C.

ATTORNEYS AT LAW

134 EAST AVENUE

POST OFFICE BOX 2028

NORWALK, CONNECTICUT 06852-2028

THOMAS TIERNEY (1930-2002)
FRANK N. ZULLO
THOMAS A. FLAHERTY
FRANK W. MURPHY
GARY LORUSSO
ANDREW E. KORDAS
BARBARA COUGHLAN°
ARTHUR E. MILLER
LIZABETH A.B. SUCHYS
KARA A.T. MURPHY

\* ALSO ADMITTED IN NY

(203) 853-7000 TELECOPIER (203) 838-4829 E-MAIL: tierneyzulloflaherty@snet.net

> DIANE M. ALLISON Of Counsel

June 8, 2007

Mr. Curtis S. Read LabLite LLC P. O. Box 1206 8 South Main Street New Milford, CT 06776

RE: Clifford St. John & Sons, LLC: New Milford Property

Dear Mr. Read:

Subsequent to the receipt of your email dated June 6, 2007, I discussed the matter with my clients. The real estate in New Milford consists of two parcels. The northern most parcel is the former Whitlock property consisting of a little more than six (6) acres. The second parcel to the south is bounded on the north by the former Whitlock property, on the east by the Housatonic River, on the south by the approach to the bridge over the river, and on the west by U.S. Route 7 and consists of approximately twenty-six (26) acres. My client is willing to sell the southerly twenty-six (26) acres for preservation subject to the following terms and conditions:

- 1. The purchase price will be in the amount of \$250,000.00.
- 2. The acquisition of the twenty-six (26) acre parcel will not include any rights of ingress or egress across the former Whitlock property, will not include the right to park any motor vehicles on the former Whitlock property and will not encumber the former Whitlock property in any way.
- 3. The Northwest Conservation District will make prompt application to the GE/PCB Restoration Fund Trustees for approval of the project and funding of the project. Prompt and timely written notice of the action of the Trustees shall be given. If the Trustees fail to approve the project by October 31, 2007, this offer shall automatically terminate and shall be withdrawn.

Mr. Curtis S. Read LabLite LLC June 8, 2007 Page Two

- 4. In the event that the project is approved for funding on or before October 31, 2007, a contract for the sale and purchase of the real estate containing mutually acceptable terms and conditions shall be executed on or before December 31, 2007. If a contract is not executed on or before December 31, 2007, this agreement shall terminate.
- 5. The closing of the transfer of title and the payment of the sum of \$250,000.00 will be made on or before October 31, 2008. In the event that a transfer of title and payment of \$250,000.00 is not made on or before October 31, 2008, this agreement shall terminate. Time is of the essence with regard to the date of the closing and the conditions of this agreement.
  - 6. This offer is not assignable.
- 7. The real estate shall be conveyed in an "as is" condition as of the date of closing by Quit Claim Deed.
- 8. As a condition of this agreement, it is understood and agreed by the Northwest Conservation District that St. John will continue to market the former Whitlock property and the twenty-six (26) acre parcel. If a purchaser is obtained prior to the entry of a formal contract of sale, this offer to sell may be withdrawn at any time at the sole option of St. John.

If the above arrangement is acceptable, please endorse a copy of this letter and return it to me.

CLIFFORD ST. JOHN & SONS, LLC

Frank W. Murphy, Its Attorney

Accepted this 12 day of June, 2007

NORTHWEST CONSERVATION

DISTRICT

Curtis S. Read

# **Budget for Indian Fields Wildlife Preserve**

<u>Item</u>	NRD Fund Share	<u>Notes</u>	In Kind Contribution
NRD Application Preparation Phase I - Purchase of 26 acre parcel + closing costs (\$2,500) Phase II - Document Existing Conditions &	\$252,500	1	\$7,500
A-2 survey (\$5,000) & appraisal (\$1,500)		2	\$9,000
Phase III - Restoration & Enhancement Plan Phase IV - Plan Refinement & Permitting		3	\$12,500
Process		4&5	\$12,500
Phase V - Implement Plan		6	
Removal of invasive plant species Plant wildlife friendly & native			\$21,540
plants			\$2,689
Construct trail loops	\$15,000		
Construct viewing platforms (3)	\$18,000		\$12,000
Interpretive signage	\$4,000		\$1,000
Construct perimeter fencing	\$34,000	7	\$21,000
Permeable pavement parking area	\$25,000		\$3,000
Sub Total	\$96,000		\$61,229
Phase VI - Property Transfer		8	\$1,000
Easement Language			\$1,500
Legal Work			\$2,500
Publicity & Opening Event			\$5,000
Totals	\$348,500		\$112,729

#### **Notes:**

- 1. 120 hours of NCD staff and engineer's time expended at rate of \$62.50/hr
- 2. 40 hours of NCD staff time at \$62.50/hr (includes GIS maps)
- 3. 200 hours at \$62.50/hr of NCD staff time for actual work and coordination of partners
- 4. 80 hours of NCD staff time at \$62.50/hr
- 5. Legal and Engineering fees for application preparation and meetings
- 6. Includes use of subcontractors and volunteers for actual implementation
- 7. Perimeter fencing will be 8' high green plastic coated chain link with roadside plantings to hide fence. We estimate 3,000 linear ft @ \$18/ft + gates installed.
- 8. Property transfer work includes legal services of New Milford Town Attorney. Press releases, maps & opening ribbon cutting ceremony

# PART D. BUDGET NARRATIVE AND FORMS

Pre-application expenses - This line item covers all costs associated with preparing this application including Property Inspections, Property Sale Negotiations, Project Planning Meeting, Solicitation of Bids to Accomplish Specific Tasks in Draft Proposal Preparations and Property Appraisal.

#### Phase I. PROPERTY PURCHASE

Purchase Price of the 25 acre parcel Bounded by Route 67 to the South, Route 7 to the East, 1400 feet of shoreline on the Housatonic River to the West and a recently subdivided parcel to the North. The firm asking price is \$250,000.00 (see Part C, Section 1.2c Phase I for details on this transaction).

#### Phase II. DOCUMENT EXISTING CONDITIONS

Creating accurate maps and a survey of the property will be important to accurately plan any enhancements. A "Class A-2 Survey" will be accomplished by licensed surveyor for the entire parcel. The NCD will concurrently make detailed GIS maps of the Indian Fields. Important features will be recorded by a GPS capable camera in order to get an accurate map and visual record before restoration work begins. GIS map themes will illustrate:

- a) important natural resources on and adjacent to the site.
- b) existing vegetation and eco-regions on the property.
- c) current land use adjacent to the site.
- d) relation of property to other open space parcels in New Milford.

#### Phase III. DEVELOP IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

This property has been unmanaged in recent years and will require a number of management activities to improve site conditions to increase the diversity of wildlife that will use the site and to provide access to the public.

#### Wildlife Enhancements

Included in the cost of this phase will be design time and planning to remove non-native invasive plants, interval mowing and the establishment of native plant communities that will attract a diversity of birds and other wildlife. Consultation with ornithologist, herpetologist, wildlife biologist and other experts will guide best plan to implement these enhancements. The goal is to diversify wildlife food sources and provide vegetative cover for wildlife, particularly avian species.

#### Public Access Control and Enhancements

Included in the cost of Phase III is all the planning and design cost associated with making the property safe and enjoyable to the visiting public. Public access design elements will include a 15 space parking area, path design and layouts, viewing platforms, points of interest and a fence to minimize disturbance of sensitive areas. Natural history and ecology signs will be designed to interpret both the human history of the property and important natural features. Included will be any design planning needed to stabilize erosion caused by runoff from adjacent impervious surfaces.

#### Phase IV. PLAN REFINEMENT AND PERMITTING

The entire property design plan will be reviewed by appropriate professionals (see Part C, Section 1.2c Phase IV) for details on reviewers. This will ensure that all the design elements will work in harmony with all planned enhancements. For example, an ornithologist will review the path layout to ensure that the public will not interfere with sensitive nesting areas associated with avian species benefiting from the wildlife enhancements.

Permitting is an inevitable task when proposing any activity in a floodplain / wetland soil area. All necessary permitting will be accomplished prior to the implementation of any enhancements. All property enhancement elements are being designed specifically to have minimal environmental impacts. Minimizing disturbance will facilitate a more immediate increase in the diversity of species occupying the site. In addition, by minimizing disturbances our hopes are that the project will not trigger any CT Department of Environmental Protection or Federal permitting requirements. Regardless, it will still be necessary to apply for a number of municipal permits and one CT Department of Transportation (DOT) including:

- a) The New Milford Inland Wetland and Watercourses Agency
- b) The New Milford Planning Commission
- c) The New Milford Zoning Commission
- d) Connecticut DOT (Parking area creation off state highway).

#### Phase V IMPLEMENT PLAN

Implementation of Wildlife and Public Access Enhancements. There are a number of individual task that will require field work to ready the site for public access and improve habitat conditions to increase species diversity on the property. The following is a list of Tasks and their associated costs (see Part C, Section 1.2c Phase V for details on these activities).

- 1) Remove all infestations of non-native invasive plant species and communities.
- 2) Add highly preferred native shrub and tree species to enhance existing native plant communities and improve species diversity.
- 3) Construct property access foot paths
- 4) Construct view areas and viewing platforms
- 5) Produce and install interpretive signs
- 6) Construct perimeter public access control fence
- 7) Construct Permeable Pavement Parking Lot

# Detailed Discussion of Invasive Plant Eradication and Native Species Re-planting

Woody invasives will be sawed and stump-treated by "painting" with a concentrated glyphosate product, such as Round-Up in late summer/early fall to maximize effects. New growth on plants that re-sprout will be sprayed at same or lesser concentrations depending on the species. Herbaceous "winter biennials" (e.g. garlic mustard) will be sprayed during fall or early spring warm spells (for maximum kill) when other herbaceous vegetation is dormant to prevent native plant casualties. The wetland plants, Common reed and yellow-iris, will be treated by a licensed pesticide applicator.

Invasives to be removed include: Tree of Heaven (Ailanthus altissima), Amur Honeysuckle (Lonicera maackii), Bell's Honeysuckle (Lonicera x belli), Japanese Barberry (Berberis thunbergii), Burning Bush (Euonymus alatus), Oriental Bittersweet (Celastrus orbicularis), Siebold's Viburnum (Viburnum seiboldii), Garlic Mustard (Alliaria petiolata), Dame's Rocket

(Hesperis matronalis), Bittercress (Cardamine impatiens), Creeping Jenny (Lysimachia nummularia), Common Reed (Phragmites australis), Reed canary Grass (Phalaris arudinacea)

This work will be directed by NCD Invasive Plant Specialist supported by NCD staff and volunteers. Home owner-available, "over the counter" herbicides e.g. Round-up will be applied. A licensed pesticide applicator will be hired for regulated pesticide use in wetlands. In addition to labor cost, the invasive removal program will require some equipment and materials including and herbicide, spray unit and sponge applicators.

Native shrubs will be plants along inner (meadow) edge of riverbank community to create an ecotone. A few "islands" of shrubs will be added to the wet meadow to provide bird perching areas and cover in an otherwise "open" environment. Wildflowers will also be planted in the meadow to attract butterflies and other insects for a diverse avian food source. NCD employees will plant the following native species, Speckled Alder, Gray Dogwood, Red Osier Dogwood, Red Elderberry, Carolina Rose, Swamp Milkweed, New York Ironweed and Blue Vervain. Equipment and materials will include wood stakes and deer exclusion fencing.

# Phase VI. PROPERTY TRANSFER

The costs associated with transferring ownership of the property to the town are included in this phase of the budget. There are two main tasks which need to be accomplished to transfer the property. The first is to have the legal paperwork drafted to transfer ownership of the property to the Town of New Milford. Second, is to draft and approve a conservation easement to be held by Northwest Conservation District or a similar land conservation entity to control the development rights on the property, ensuring its open space character, ecological benefits and public educational value into perpetuity (see Part C, Section 1.2c Phase VI for details of property transfer issues this).

TABLE 1. HOUSATONIC RIVER NRD FUNDING ALLOCATION BY FISCAL YEARS <sup>1</sup>

PROJECT TITLE:	India	Indian Fields Wildlife Preserve	Pres	erve				
SPONSOR NAME:	Nort	Northwest Conservation District, Inc.	Dist	rict, Inc.				
EXPENSE CATEGORY (See App. A)	FISC	FISCAL YEAR 1	E	FISCAL YEAR 2	FIS	FISCAL YEAR 3	FISCAL YEAR 4	4
	Housz	Housatonic River NRD Funds	H <sub>O</sub> N	Housatonic River NRD Funds	Hou	Housatonic River NRD Funds	Housatonic NRD Funds	River
A. SALARIES			8:_				B	
B. OVERHEAD AND BENEFITS								
C. CONTRACTED SERVICES								
D. SUPPLIES, MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT		\$250,000				896,000		
E. TRAVEL							is.	
F. OTHER - Legal & Recording Fees w/transfer of property		\$2,500						
G. OTHER (LIST)								-
TOTAL BY FISCAL YEAR	1	\$252,500	2	0	က	896,000	0	
GRAND TOTAL (sum of boxes 1+2+3+4) [This sum is the total NRD fund request and should match Part A, Budget Summary, Box 1]	s 1+2+ uest an ary, Bo	3 <b>+4)</b> d x 1]				\$348,500	,500	

<sup>1</sup> The fiscal year is July 1 – June 30. If the proposed project will be completed in one year, fill in only the column titled "Fiscal Year 1."

TABLE 2. PROJECT BUDGET SUMMARY BY TASK AND FUNDING SOURCE

PROJECT TITLE:		Indian Fields Wildlife Preserve	serve				
SPONSOR NAME:	Nor	Northwest Conservation District	strict				
TASK <sup>2</sup>	Н	HOUSATONIC RIVER NRD FUNDS	OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS	TRIBUTIONS		TOT	TOTAL COST BY TASE
			COMMITTED	NOT COMMITTED	(MITTED		
Application Preparation			\$7,500				87,500
Phase I - Purchase price of 25 acre parcel		\$252,500					\$252,500
Phase II - Survey & Map of Existing Conditions			\$9,000				89,000
Phase III – Develop Implementation Plan			\$12,500				\$12,500
Phase IV - Permitting and Plan Review			\$12,500				\$12,500
Phase V - Implement Plan		896,000	\$61,229				\$157,229
Phase VI - Legal Cost of Property Transfer & Pub.	-		\$10,000			13	\$10,000
TOTAL BY FUNDING SOURCE	5	\$348,500	6 \$112,729	7		œ	GRAND TOTAL \$461,229
TO THE CAMPOINT		. F. C	11 m '1' m '1'	t		*	4

Summary, Box 2. Box 7 above should match Part A, Budget Summary, Box 3. Box 8 should match Part A, Budget Summary, Box 4 NOTES: Box 5 should be the same as the Grand Total indicated in Part D Table 1. Box 6 above should match Part A, Budget

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> The listed tasks should correspond with information provided in the Project Implementation Plan.

ARE SOLICITING
PROPOSALS
TO DEVELOP A 3! ACRE
RECREATIONAL
COMPLEX
ATTHE
JUNCTION OF ROUTES # 7
AND 202 IN
NEW MILFORD, CT

Clifford St. John & Sqir Tel/fax (203) 853-9744

