



Please complete and submit completed form via e-mail to dcanning@cfgnh.org at The Community Foundation for Greater New Haven by March 31, 2021 (or as otherwise stated on the terms of grant).

Date: 3/25/2020

Group/Organization Name: New Haven Land Trust

Address: 817 Grand Avenue

City, State, & Zip: New Haven, CT 06511

Telephone #: 203-562-6655

Project Name: Quinnipiac Meadows and Long Wharf Nature Preserves

Grant Number: 20190128

Name & title of person completing this form: Esther Rose-Wilen, Interim Grants Manager

E-mail address: info@newhavenlandtrust.org

Please respond to the following statements:

1. List the specific objectives/outcomes of the project and tell how they were met during the grant period. Also, provide an update on any special conditions of the grant (if applicable).

1. The design and development of a natural pollinator planting and nesting area at Q Meadows preserve.

Over the summer, we successfully designed and installed a natural pollinator garden at the Quinnipiac Meadows Nature Preserve in collaboration with the New Haven Garden Club and summer college-age interns. Please see the attached pictures.

2. Increased preserve management, to remove invasives, care for newly planted trees, remove trash and maintain the infrastructure that provides protection and public access to the Quinnipiac River watershed.

The Preserves Coordinator performed weekly preserves walks in order to monitor invasive species, new plantings, and overall site and trail upkeep. In response to any issues, she would organize either a large volunteer group to do trash cleanup and trail maintenance, or a small group of experienced volunteers to tackle a more complicated project. This level of dedication and care resulted in visible improvements to the aesthetic and ecological quality of the Quinnipiac Meadows and Long Wharf Nature Preserves.

3. Volunteer stewardship events that provide community members the opportunity to be involved in hands-on conservation work that helps to maintain the preserves and protect the watershed.

The Preserves Coordinator hosted a total of 9 large volunteer events at Q Meadows and Long Wharf, as reported in our “Events Log.” Volunteers reported having really positive experiences and social media postings about these workdays were the most “liked” and commented on of the year, showing the public’s appreciation for the hard work of our staff and volunteers. Additionally, the Preserves Coordinator hosted a similar number of small-group volunteer workdays open to a smaller number of experienced volunteers.

4. Public educational events that highlight the importance of Quinnipiac Meadows and Long Wharf Nature Preserves for maintaining ecological diversity and promoting watershed health, offering the community a chance to engage with the Quinnipiac River and its surrounding ecosystems.

The Preserves Coordinator hosted a total of 34 education events with local schools at Q Meadows and Long Wharf nature preserves. There were an additional 10 public educational events open to all ages with topics including tagging horseshoe crabs, learning about coastal and riparian birds of prey, and preserves walks with city Park Rangers.

5. Low income youth participating in summer camp programming, linking them to local ecosystems and conservation ideals through coastal exploration and learn to sail programming.

We reached our goal of approximately 50% of campers receiving full and partial financial aid to attend Schooner, with \$81,130 distributed in 272 camper scholarships! Of those families receiving scholarship monies, 73% were categorized as low income, 38% were below the poverty line, and 10% were on Section 8 public housing. For the 235 campers ages 9-14 enrolled in our learn to sail programming, 128 had never been sailing before.

6. Work toward acquisition of 26 acres of additional tidal salt marsh, coastal grassland, and coastal forest and the subsequent incorporation of this land into Quinnipiac Meadows Nature Preserve.

The Executive Director, Justin Elicker, following Interim Director, Gregg Davis, and the Preserves Coordinator, Cori Merchant, all spent an incredible amount of time working on the Q Meadows Acquisition in Spring 2019. Despite their many hours and dedication toward acquiring this valuable piece of land, the purchase was ultimately put off due to complications originating

from the property owner. However, based on the lengthy communications with the owner and his lawyers, and extensive research we did in the process, should the property owner produce sufficient proof of ownership in the future, we will be in a good position to jump back into that conversation and leverage the funding needed to acquire the property.

2. Please share your successes, challenges and any lessons learned through the implementation of your project. Were there any unintended consequences or lessons learned that may affect how you operate your program moving forward?

Certainly one of the challenges we ran into was the land acquisition process for expanding the Q Meadows Nature Preserve. However, we learned a lot in the process and the Interim Director at that time (Gregg Davis) included detailed notes in his transition document for future directors should the opportunity resurface.

One of our greatest successes was the series of field trips the Preserves Coordinator was able to do with local schools. 34 school field trips was an amazing feat, and sadly it looks like we will not be able to achieve the same quantity in 2020 due to the Covid-19 epidemic. However, we are working on developing ways we can promote independent learning out on the preserves and provide online content to schools and the public.

3. What are the opportunities and needs of your organization as it continues to move forward with its work to positively impact the Quinnipiac River?

We are extremely appreciative to have received 2020 funding from the Quinnipiac River Fund! We will be in touch shortly to discuss some elements of the projects described in that application that may be affected by the Covid-19 epidemic. However, we have the long-term goal of continuing to expand our education programming and event offerings to reach more New Haveners, and especially New Haven youth.

Also, please email a photo or image that can be uploaded along with your report to The Quinnipiac River Fund website to dcanning@cfgnh.org.