



Putting Connecticut First.

**CONNECTICUT AUDUBON SOCIETY
BIRDCRAFT MUSEUM**
314 Unquowa Road
Fairfield, CT 06824-5000
203/259-0416

**CONNECTICUT AUDUBON SOCIETY
COASTAL CENTER AT MILFORD POINT**
1 Milford Point Road
Milford, CT 06460
203/878-7440

**CONNECTICUT AUDUBON SOCIETY
ECOTRAVEL**
35 Pratt Street, Suite 201
Essex, CT 06426
860/767-0660 800/996-8747

**CONNECTICUT AUDUBON SOCIETY
CENTER AT FAIRFIELD**
2325 Burr Street
Fairfield, CT 06824-1806
203/259-6305

**CONNECTICUT AUDUBON SOCIETY
CENTER AT GLASTONBURY**
1361 Main Street
Glastonbury, CT 06033-3105
860/633-8402

**CONNECTICUT AUDUBON SOCIETY
ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS**
118 Oak Street
Hartford, CT 06106-1514
860/527-6750

**CONNECTICUT AUDUBON SOCIETY
CENTER AT POMFRET**
P.O. Box 11
189 Pomfret Street (Rt. 169)
Pomfret Center, CT 06259
860/928-4948

**CONNECTICUT AUDUBON SOCIETY
AT TRAIL WOOD**
93 Kenyon Road
Hampton, CT 06247
860/928-4948

Connecticut Audubon Society manages 19 sanctuaries around the state, preserving over 2,400 acres of open space.

VISIT US AT:
www.ctaudubon.org

Connecticut Audubon Society STATE OFFICE

2325 Burr Street • Fairfield, CT 06824-1806 • 203/259-6305 • Fax: 203/254-7673
15 August 2005

Ms. Christina E. Clayton
25 Talcott Road
Old Lyme, CT 06371

Dear Ms. Clayton:

Thank you for your correspondence regarding our property in East Haddam. As I am sure that you are aware, Connecticut Audubon Society is a statewide, non-profit, membership organization providing excellence in environmental education, encouraging conservation of the state's natural resources and advocating enlightened public policy on ecological matters.

The 25,000 members, board members and staff of the Connecticut Audubon Society live this mission every day. The Society delivers the highest quality environmental education programs to more than 200,000 children and adults each year. For more than 30 years, in cooperation with other partners, it has worked to assist the State Legislature to enact sound environmental policies, establish appropriate funding levels for environmental protection and preserve open space. Connecticut Audubon Society is the steward for more than 2,600 acres at 19 sanctuaries throughout the state – many of which are open to the public year-round.

All Connecticut Audubon Society's lands have been donated with funds or the income potential necessary to properly maintain them – all except for a parcel in East Haddam, known as the Harlo N. Haagenson Preserve, which was donated to us on an unrestricted basis. The donor could not provide an endowment for the property, and due to its unique natural habitat, it does not have the potential for an income-producing nature facility.

The donor understood the financial challenge we faced in maintaining the property. To offset these costs he granted the Society the right to maintain a home on the property and to sell two additional parcels of the land. The Connecticut Audubon Society will not sell those additional parcels because we do not believe that action would best serve the land or people of Connecticut.

For the last 16 years we have maintained the property without benefit of an endowment, but tough financial times have forced us to revisit that operating expense. Like other non-profit organizations throughout the country, we have had to make tough decisions to exercise the fiscal responsibility our members and donors expect. Allowing the potential reestablishment of a house on the East Haddam property is one of those very tough decisions.

Our preference is to sell the land to a conservation organization. Though the land has been on the market for almost one year, we have had no offers from such an organization. If one does not step forward, we will consider a private buyer to raise sufficient funds to permanently endow most of the parcel as a wildlife sanctuary.

This sale of the land would be predicated unequivocally on the establishment of one home, replacing the original donor's house, which we removed in 1996. The land will be preserved in perpetuity under deeded conservation restrictions managed by the Connecticut Audubon Society. We are working with the Attorney General's Office in full compliance and disclosure of all aspects of such a sale.

It is clear that the Connecticut Audubon Society is the best organization to maintain this property, and it will do so forever through legally binding easements attached to the deed forever. The property will always remain a wildlife sanctuary which the Connecticut Audubon Society will maintain. We are confident that this commitment not only satisfies the donor's intentions – it surpasses his expectations.

The Connecticut Audubon Society has never been a real estate developer, and it never will be one. Our plan for the Haagenson Preserve is based on our commitment as environmental stewards in the state of Connecticut and to preserve the natural habitat of this beautiful property.

I invite you to visit one of our sanctuaries or many preserves across the state to experience the way that the Connecticut Audubon Society is living its mission and for 108 years has served the land and residents of Connecticut.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'RM', with a large, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Robert Martinez
President

cc: Barbara Strickland, Chairman Connecticut Audubon Society