

I wanted to provide you with a quick update on our efforts as we continue to address issues related to the potential sale of our East Haddam property. I also continue to ask for your active participation, support and engagement, as needed, in local areas where some confusion on the sale may still exist, at the request of and on behalf of your colleagues on both the State and Regional Boards.

In general, we are seeing a positive turn in perceptions because of the thoughtful and coherent approach by Connecticut Audubon Society to both the press and concerned constituents.

- Since we last met, the press entities which were focused on our plans for the East Haddam property have provided much more balanced coverage. This is a direct result of numerous conversations with our State Staff. Attached is an Opinion Editorial (Op-Ed), with my signature, which was sent to the Hartford Courant last month. While the Courant declined our request to print it, we feel this is a clear and concise position statement that can be effectively used should any Board member be engaged in a conversation about this potential sale. If future conditions warrant, we will submit this as a letter to the Editor to the appropriate press.
- All correspondence we receive from concerned individuals - and we are aware that many of you have also been the recipient of many of these letters - is responded to with a full and clarifying response immediately from the Connecticut Audubon Society's State office - also attached. We have found this response to be reassuring to many of the writers. In fact, we have been thanked for our responsiveness and commended for our plan to continue to provide superior environmental care for the property.
- In order to address our membership, we have posted our "Fact Sheet" - the third attachment - about the sale, on our new website and which each Center has been instructed to distribute to concerned members.

Even with these positive steps, we acknowledge that this remains a very sensitive topic, and that in some localized areas, there remains confusion about this potential sale.

This is where we need your help. If you are asked about this sale, please use the attached information to address any questions AND please contact Heather Siano immediately with the names and contact information for those members, donors, etc. who have contacted you. The State team has been trained specifically in these types of communications and is working diligently to address each and every concern. They have had tremendous success when given the opportunity to work the questions directly with concerned institutions, the press or key individuals.

As always, I thank you for your support and attention to this important topic, our plans regarding any and all aspects of our mission to educate, advocate and conserve. We look forward to our September State Board meeting where we look forward to reviewing in full our progress against our mission to educate, advocate, and conserve with integrity and passion.

Barbara Jack Strickland