



*Waldingfield Farm and Solley Family Conservation Easement on Horse Heaven in Washington*

## **This Land Grows More Than Beauty**

Farming has been an essential part of Washington throughout its history. In addition to providing food and forage, farms keep the air and water clean, provide vital wildlife habitat, and preserve the rural character that defines our community. Yet across Connecticut, productive farmland is being lost at an alarming rate. Coupled with rising land prices (\$13,900 per acre), it's increasingly difficult for farmers to acquire or maintain their land and protect the productive soils that are permanently lost when developed. At Steep Rock, conserving agricultural soils and farms is just as important as saving our forests and waterways. We proudly protect 2,376 acres of farmland soils, including 1,111 acres on our own preserves. Of these, 138 acres are actively leased to local farm families who manage hayfields, cornfields, and pastureland. In addition, we protect 1,265 acres of farmland soils under 48 conservation easements. And Judea Garden is a regional leader in providing residents in need with access to healthy, fresh fruits and vegetables. Together with our local farmers, Steep Rock is showing that agriculture and conservation contribute significantly to our thriving community. For more information our efforts and our partner farms, visit <https://steeprocksassoc.org/farms/>

See you on our Trails...  
Brian Hagenbuch, Ph.D.  
Executive Director

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## Give Local - Thank You!

**You Helped Make Something Beautiful Happen.** *Give Local* was a big moment for Steep Rock—and for everyone who loves this land. Our goal was to raise \$100,000 in celebration of our 100th year. Thanks to 220 generous souls, we didn't just meet that goal—we soared past it, raising \$158,306 for local conservation. If you gave, shared, or simply rooted for us—thank you! You helped make trails safer, forests stronger, and this special corner of the planet even more extraordinary.

## Get Your Bird On

As warblers return for the summer and others pass through on their way further north, we find ourselves serenaded by buzzes, whistles, and chirps while strolling about in the preserves. Now is the time to grab [The Birds of Steep Rock Field Checklist](#) and start keeping track of your observations. How many do you think you can spot? Begin your SRA Bird Life List now, with this checklist! A big thanks to our very own Peary Stafford for his expert update of this impressive inventory.

## Seniors in Steep Rock Volunteer Day Event: May 9!

Learn new skills, meet new friends, get active, and help Steep Rock achieve its goals. Volunteering opens a new world of opportunity for you while supporting your local community. Join Steep Rock Association at their office for coffee and pastries and learn about the many ways you can volunteer to

help the land trust. Afterwards, you'll have an opportunity to contribute to the important work Steep Rock does in Judea Garden, their office, the Camp House Museum, or maybe even on a trail. [>more](#)

## Don't Miss the Rossiter Run 5K on May 18!

Our Fifth Annual Rossiter Run 5K is extra special this year, in celebration of our Centennial! The race course follows a scenic route along the Shepaug River with a gradual incline in the stunning Steep Rock Preserve, gifted by our founder, Ehrick Rossiter, in 1925. Are you up for the challenge? [>more](#)

## Passport to the Trails Launch on June 1

Join us as we launch our brand-new **Passport to the Trails** Program—designed by students from Shepaug Middle School and Henry Abbot Technical High School! Be among the first to receive a Steep Rock Passport Booklet. Explore the trails, collect impressions at designated stations, and work your way toward earning a special prize when your booklet is complete! This program encourages youth and families to get outdoors, learn about nature, and engage with the incredible trail systems throughout Steep Rock's preserves.  
[>more](#)

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## Upcoming Events

**Thank you donors and sponsors for making our hikes and programs free!**

- 5/3 - [From Carriage Roads to Trails at Hidden Valley](#)
- 5/9 - [Seniors Volunteer Day](#)
- 5/10 - [Spring Wildflower Walk - SOLD OUT](#)
- 5/10 - [Trail Work Party](#)
- 5/10 - [Judea Garden Spring Planting Day](#)
- 5/18 - [Rossiter Run 5K](#)
- 5/21 - [Spring Saunters - Steep Rock Preserve](#)
- 5/31 - [Judea Garden Summer Planting Day](#)
- 6/1 - [Judea Garden Summer Planting Day](#)
- 6/1 - [Passport to the Trails Launch](#)

**SAVE THE DATE! Our Family Fun Summer Kick-off is June 28!**

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**Our Contact Information**

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\*{{Organization Website}}\*  
  
\*{{Unsubscribe}}\*

