TO: WCSU University Senate  
From: Mitch Wagener, Director, Westside Nature Preserve (WNP)  
Subject: Annual WNP Report (2015-2016)  
Date: 8 April 2015

Maintenance

Signs, benches and the two informational kiosks have suffered the indignity of vandalism in the form of scribbles of paint. On the kiosks, the paint was placed on the transparent doors, partially obscuring the information presented there. We have made an effort to scrape the paint, with limited success. We continue to look into potential methods to clean up the paint. Unfortunately we have no way to keep the vandalism from recurring. During the Day of Service in September, three biology faculty members and 10 students replaced broken boards in the walkway. A trail blocked by a fallen limb was also cleared.

The WNP display case in the science building is updated with a collection of insects collected in the nature preserve over the years. WCSU alumna and current volunteer, Sharon Smith Delisle, put together the insect display. We hope to change the display in the future to include other organisms found in the nature preserve.

Recent Developments

1) In Fall 2015, the Westside Nature Preserve Center (WNPC) was renewed by the BOR for another 7 years.
2) Biology faculty Josh Cordeira, Rachel Prunier, Ed Wong, and emeritus Frank Dye have agreed to serve on a committee to assist director Mitch Wagener in managing the WNPC.

Research

Research continues on the quality of the surface water on the WNP. Other projects are in the planning stage.

Teaching

A number of Biology courses, including BIO 100 Concepts of Biology, BIO 103 General Biology I, BIO 200 Ecology, BIO 311 Developmental Biology, and BIO 470 Entomology include field trips on the WNP, making it a living laboratory.
Community Outreach

Our updated, multicolored, brochure has been distributed to various venues, including the Connecticut Welcome Center at Exit 2 (East-bound) on Interstate 84.

Financial Statement

The WNP Center continues to be financially solvent. With the exception of occasional help with trail maintenance, the Center is self-supporting. Thanks to the generosity of Friends of the Westside Nature Preserve, our operating budget is several thousand dollars. The exact amount varies year-to-year, but has always been sufficient for our needs. Our endowment continues to grow as interest generated by the endowment continues to be added to the principal.

Respectfully submitted,

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