TO: WCSU University Senate  
From: Mitch Wagener, Director, Westside Nature Preserve (WNP)  
Date: 8 May 2017

**Maintenance**

The WNP has a new set of partners to help with periodic and routine maintenance. Coach Jenn Thomas and the WCSU women’s lacrosse team have adopted the nature preserve as an ongoing service project. During the Day of Service in September, coach and the team, three biology faculty members and 10 students repositioned walkways and replaced broken boards, cleaned kiosks, and cleared fallen branches. The vandalism from years past has not recurred this year. The metal handrail near the bottom of a section of steep trail was expertly repaired by the WCSU maintenance crew. We are grateful for their help.

**Continuing Status**

1) Biology faculty Josh Cordeira, Rachel Prunier, Ed Wong, and *emeritus* Frank Dye serve on a committee to assist director Mitch Wagener in managing the WNPC.

2) The trails near and traversing the gas pipeline right-of-way were closed or had limited access during summer 2016 while the pipeline was being upgraded. All trails reopened in late summer

**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**

Scheduled for May 19, 2017, Wagener and assorted students will conduct a nature activity on plant dispersal and biomes for 2nd grade students at the WCAIS-Magnet School adjacent to the WNP.
Financial Statement

The WNP Center continues to be financially solvent. With the exception of occasional help by WCSU Maintenance 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,

Mitch Wagener, Ph.D.
Professor of Biology
Director, Westside Nature Preserve (www.wcsu.edu/wnp)
Department of Biological & Environmental Sciences
Western Connecticut State University
181 White Street
Danbury, CT 06810
203-837-8790
203-837-8769 (fax)
wagenerm@wcsu.edu