



Good Evening. I'm Tom Hoagland and I am president of the Friends of Canonchet Farm I want to thank the Town Council, Jim Tierney, Steve Wright and the members of their staff for the opportunity to make this presentation tonight. I have prepared a few slides with some facts, figures, and pictures.

For the past five years, Friends of Canonchet Farm, under an agreement with Town Council signed in September 2016, has been tasked with removing Invasive plants from the shores of lake Canonchet and along the Nature trail that winds from the beach to the Community Center.

I am here tonight to ask for a renewal of that agreement that would extend our beneficial relationship with the Town for another 10 years.

As I know well how busy you all are and how long these meetings tend to last, my remarks will be brief but I do want to show you a short video at the end that we prepared over the winter for just this purpose that will illustrate the dedication of our volunteers and the amazing results they have achieved.

The Friends of Canonchet Farm Five Year Agreement Accomplishments

- ❖ FOCF volunteers maintain and restore lakesides for eleventh year and trail system for sixth year.
- ❖ 4,250 volunteer hours from 2016-2021.
- ❖ Received \$16,706 in grants for educational signing and environmental enhancements.
- ❖ \$77,965 In private donations to FOCF received and spent on behalf of the Canonchet Farm property.

Friends of Canonchet Farm was formed in 2007 by a group of concerned citizens who loved the property and were in opposition to the proposal at that time to develop the property as a polo field.

After the Polo Field proposal was defeated, the Friends of Canonchet Farm then evolved into an environmental organization devoted to restoring the natural ecosystem of the property by fighting the rising tide of invasive plants that were infesting the lake shores and interior nature trail.

This slide illustrates our major accomplishments over the lifetime of the initial five-year agreement between the Town of Narragansett and the Friends of Canonchet Farm.

We are entirely a volunteer organization and all of the monies we raise from our membership and from outside grants go directly to tools, maintenance and improvements in the property.

The 4,250 volunteer hours recorded during the period of the existing agreement is the statistic we are most proud of because it represents true citizen commitment to the environment and the town of Narragansett.

2016-2021 Grant Funds Expenditures

- ❖ **Educational signing along Nature Trail**
- ❖ **Restoration of Native Plant Gardens at South County Museum and removal of invasive shrubs**
- ❖ **Ongoing habitat restoration to remove invasive plants from Lake Canonchet, Little Neck Pond and the Canonchet Farm trail system**
- ❖ **Printing of free Geology and History Trail guides and new Invasive Plants Booklet**

There are three high quality, artistic and educational signs now installed on the property thanks to grants from the RI Foundation

The native plant gardens at the Museum were rehabilitated last October with a grant from the South County Garden Club. The new garden should be at its peak in September.

Legislative grants received from the R.I. State Senate presented by Senator Bridget Valverde's office paid for the professional treatment of invasive Phragmites reeds on the shores of Lake Canonchet in 2020.

We have distributed nearly 700 copies of our full-color Invasive Plants guide. It is free and available at local libraries, garden centers, Narragansett Town Hall, and the Community Center. It's development and printing were funded by private contributions in memory of our late Board member, Ray Kagels.

Our Partnerships:

- ❖ **South County Museum: Renovation of Native Plant Gardens-2020**
- ❖ **URI Women's Rowing Team: Teambuilding Days 2016, 17, 18 and 19**
- ❖ **URI Master Gardeners: Premier Habitat Restoration Project since 2014**
- ❖ **Joint sponsorship of "On Pettaquamscutt" Winter Speaker Series**
In conjunction with Narrow River Preservation Association, Maury Loontjens Memorial Library and South County Museum
- ❖ **Town of Narragansett**
 - ❖ Initial design from Beta Group for proposed Linear Park
 - ❖ Reroute of Western Trail segment to bypass eroded area
 - ❖ Comprehensive redesign of property map for Trail Kiosks

Friends of Canonchet Farm works hard at being a valuable community partner to multiple environmental and educational organizations in South County and we hope to broaden the scope of our partnerships in the years to come.

The long-anticipated plan for a Linear Park along the eastern shore of Lake Canonchet, as detailed in the 2010 Canonchet Farm Master Plan is moving along.

Volunteers recently completed a new trail segment near the Community Center that bypasses a badly eroded and hazardous section that abutted the South County Bike Path.

In cooperation with Narragansett Engineering Department, we now have a comprehensive, up-to-date map of the property at both trail kiosks.



The slide doesn't do the new map justice. Check it out instead at one of the kiosks at the West Parking lot or behind the Community Center. Our thanks to Glenn Blacklock of the town engineering department for his hard work and expertise.

The video I'm about to show you was filmed last October and illustrates the work of our dedicated volunteers and the impact they have had on restoring the habitat and the incredible natural beauty on the Canonchet Farm Nature Trail.

During COVID-19 the trail provided a safe outlet for recreation for many Narragansett and South County residents.

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Canonchet Farm Nature Trail after clearing invasive plants



Click this link to view a short video shown at the end of the presentation.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jTyPxxgHOa1E>

That concludes my presentation. My thanks to Steve Wright for being our champion and to the Town of Narragansett for preserving Canonchet Farm as a natural area and recreational resource for its residents. I humbly ask that the Narragansett Town Council renew the current working agreement with the Friends of Canonchet Farm. Thank you for your time.