

Guilford Conservation Commission  
Land Stewardship Committee  
Regular Meeting **REVISED** Agenda

**Monday, October 4, 2021, 7:00 – 8:30 PM – Leete Room, Guilford Community Center**

Join from PC, Mac, Linux, iOS or Android: <https://link.zixcentral.com/u/771682fb/mBJ-7Tli7BGqtUcRh3soMg?u=https%3A%2F%2Fyale.zoom.us%2Fj%2F91306154351%3Fpwd%3Da25RvNjCMGU3dXZpQndpcGpFV3Fpdz09>

Password: 938082

Or Telephone : 646 568 7788

Meeting ID: 913 0615 4351

**Members:** Heather Allore (secretary), Doug Clark (chair), Garrett Dell, Bob Lyons, Paul Mei, Lynn Saiers, Katrina Stewart.

**Alternates:** Bill Johnson

**Staff:** Kevin Magee, Michelle Nazario.

- I. Call to Order
- II. Approval of Agenda
- III. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting
- IV. Welcome Guests
- V. Mountain biking restrictions and signage in ERP (see memo from D. Clark on p. 2, map on p. 3)
  - A) Discuss memo & map
  - B) Vote on recommendation(s) to Conservation Commission
- VI. West River Preserve
  - A) Review trail plans and signage B. Johnson
  - B) Schedule work party
- VII. CFPA Liaison Report P. Mei
- VIII. Trail/section reports; scheduling work parties
  - A) East River (autumn olive removal?)
  - B) Timberlands
  - C) Braemore
  - D) Northwoods/James Valley/Meyerhuber
- IX. Remaining meeting for 2021
  - A) Monday, December 6, 2021, 7:00 – 8:30 pm



*Hay Bales, South Meadow, East River*

*Preserve 9/22/21*

September 27, 2021

*Doug Clark's Recommendations to the Land Stewardship Committee for Trail Designations in the East River Preserve*

The Conservation Commission has asked the Land Stewardship Committee to provide recommendations regarding mountain biking in the East River Preserve. In the course of this summer, I've walked the trails in the ERP, Nut Plains Woods, and Eastwoods several times. I've been in conversation with Heather and Kevin and Spencer Meyer about modifying the original ERP management plan to permit mountain biking on the White trail, a large section of the Blue trail, and the unblazed trail that provides a loop around the meadow. I've read most of the original documents relating to the acquisition and management of the East River Preserve; it's clear from these documents that conservation is the foremost value of the management plan for the Preserve. Here's how the original management plan addressed mountain biking trail use:

**Mountain Biking**

*Issues and Goals:*

- Mountain biking is a high impact activity which can result in trail damage and have accidental injuries to bikers. The goals are to restrict seasonally to certain multi-use trails (Bearhouse Hill Road and ROW); post signage with restrictions and clear indication of allowed trails; establish systems to control mountain bike access, while providing emergency response access.

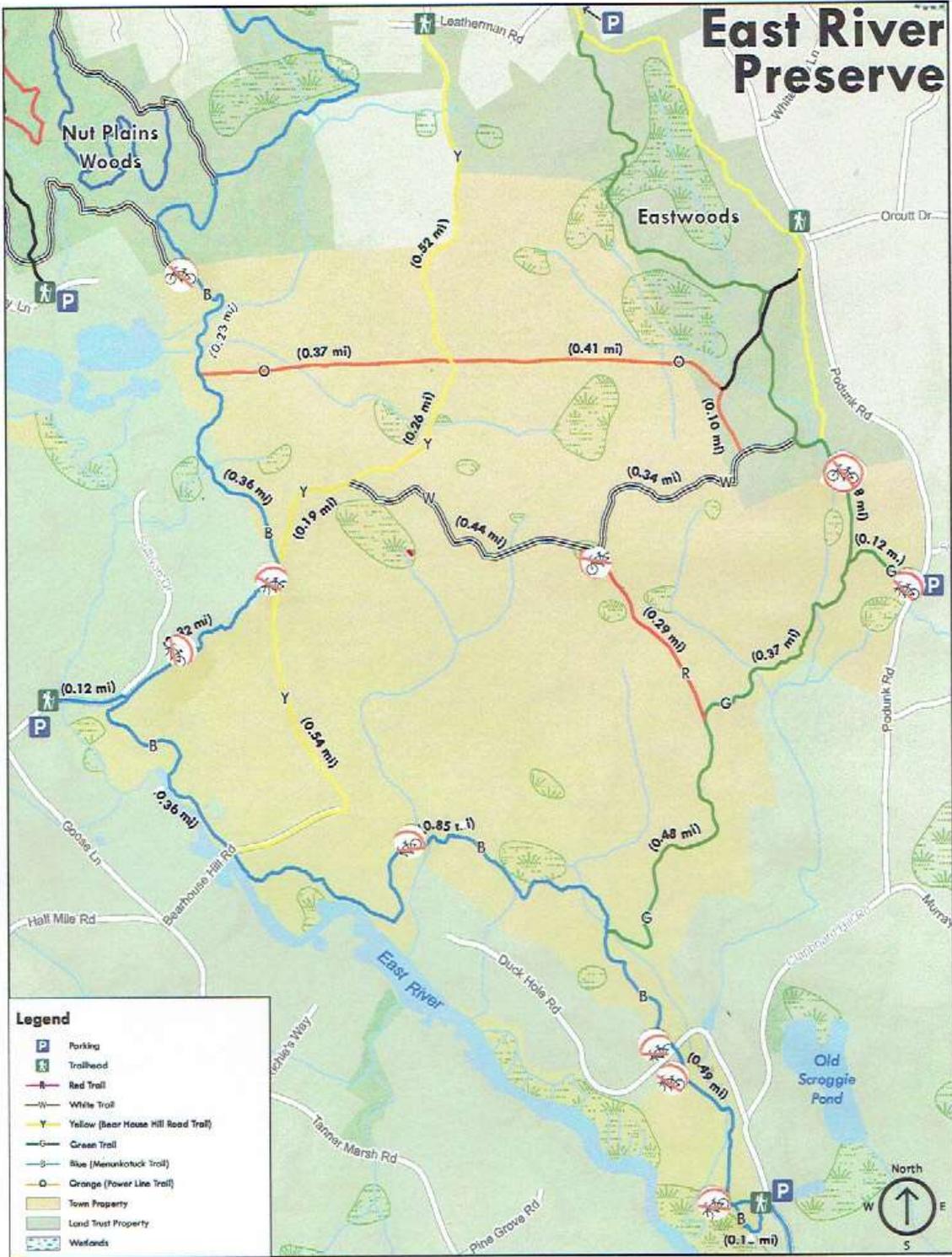
In the past couple of years, mountain biking activity in the ERP has increased significantly, not only on the Yellow and Orange trails, but on almost all of the trails in the Preserve. I think the Conservation Commission needs to strike a balance between conservation and passive recreation that would permit mountain biking on more than the Yellow and Orange trails, but also prohibit mountain biking on trails that cross sensitive wetland areas. These latter include the green and red trails, which would be marked with "No Biking" signs.

On the blue-blazed Menunkatuck trail, which is part of the New England National Scenic Trail in Connecticut and is managed by the Connecticut Forest & Park Association (CFPA), I recommend that CFPA's "Foot Travel Only" signs be installed at the following locations:

- At the Clapboard Hill Road trailhead (heading north)
- At the junction with Duck Hole Road (both directions)
- Just past where the trail leaves the south meadow and crosses an old woods road (heading south)
- Just past where the trail leaves the north meadow and separates from the popular unmarked biking trail (heading north)
- At the junction with the yellow trail (heading south)
- Just past the junction with the popular unmarked biking trail (heading north)
- At the boundary between Nut Plains Woods and the ERP (heading south)

If this plan is adopted, mountain biking would be seasonally permitted on the yellow, orange, and white trails, along with the trail that circles the meadows. These trails would provide mountain bikers with opportunities for a variety of loop rides.

# East River Preserve



**Legend**

- Parking
- Trailhead
- Red Trail
- White Trail
- Yellow (Bear House Hill Road Trail)
- Green Trail
- Blue (Menunkotuck Trail)
- Orange (Power Line Trail)
- Town Property
- Land Trust Property
- Wetlands

