

May 13, 2026

Dear Loyal Members of Colchester Land Trust,

For more than 25 years, you have been the heart of this organization. You have walked our trails, attended our events, supported our work, and trusted us to protect the land and open spaces that make Colchester home. That trust means everything to us – and it is exactly why we are writing today.

We are excited to share an important and positive development: Colchester Land Trust and our close neighbor, Salem Land Trust, are entering into an alliance with Avalonia Land Conservancy.

Our mission has never been stronger, and our love for the land has never wavered. But like many small, all-volunteer organizations, we have reached the limits of what we can accomplish on our own. The conservation projects ahead of us are larger, the legal and stewardship obligations more complex, and the demands greater than one all-volunteer board *alone* can manage.

After two years of careful research, conversations with peer organizations, and guidance from the Connecticut Land Conservation Council, we found our answer: *Avalonia Land Conservancy*.

Founded in 1968, Avalonia has been protecting the lands of southeastern Connecticut for more than 50 years. They conserve over 5,700 acres across 97 preserves, and like Salem and Colchester Land Trusts, are accredited by the Land Trust Alliance. They are proficient at acquiring grants from prominent conservation agencies that are dedicated to the preservation of open space. Most importantly, Avalonia and Salem Land Trust share our deep belief that protecting natural resources is essential to healthy, livable communities.

They know our region. They share our values. And *together*, we are *stronger*.

Here is what this alignment means to *you*.

- Our local presence and focus do not change.
- Properties we have helped to protect, together, remain protected and managed locally.
- We gain professional staffing, legal expertise, and additional financial infrastructure to grow – enabling the preservation of more open space here in Colchester, and beyond.
- A larger community of conservation-minded neighbors working toward the same goals.

We will be the same dedicated presence familiar to you, guiding you on preserving your land, stewarding protected lands and farms here in town, working the Farmer's market, leading hikes and events, and cheering on runners at the Salmon River Road Race.

We are not going, we are *growing!* This land, and this community, deserve the strongest, most agile organization possible - one that can rise to the challenges of the future.

We need you with us. We welcome your questions, thoughts, and your continued support. Please use the QR code below, or the link on our website, to access additional information, and do not hesitate to reach out to us at the email address or phone number below.

With deep gratitude,

The Colchester Land Trust Board of Directors

colchesterlandtrust@gmail.com

David Levine, Co-President – 860-334-2444

QR Code to Merger Information:



Link to website folder with Merger information:

<https://www.colchesterlandtrust.org/merger>

For more information and to ask questions:

May 28, 2026: Board members will be available between 2 p.m. – 7 p.m.

Carl Guild & Associates
392 S. Main St., #2
Colchester CT

June 2, 2026: ***Member Vote*** by ballot to be held at the Annual Meeting at Carl Guild & Associates, from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Light refreshments to be served at meetings.