

**Town of Tolland, Connecticut  
Conservation Commission  
Auperin Conservation Area Management Plan  
Weigold Road, Tolland, CT**



*A Passive Recreation Open Space Conservation Area*

**Revised by Commission – April 28, 2016**

**Adopted by Council – May 24, 2011**

# **Town of Tolland**

## **Conservation Commission Property Management Plan**

### **Auperin Conservation Area, Weigold Road**

**Background** – The Tolland Conservation Commission is responsible for the management and oversight of properties obtained by the Town of Tolland for conservation purposes and for preparing a management plan for each property. The management plan is based upon the environmental characteristics of the property and is used to determine appropriate conservation and usage. Each plan includes a property description, an analysis of the unique characteristics and acceptable uses of the property, and a management program. The management program outlines property management; improvement needs; the individuals and organizations that manage the property; and protection needs related to the site. Each management plan is developed under the Commission's management planning process.

#### **I. PROPERTY DESCRIPTION, RESOURCES, POTENTIAL, AND CONCERNS**



**Property Description** – The Auperin Conservation area is a 28.1 acre parcel of land on the westerly side of Weigold Road in the south central part of Tolland near the Coventry town line. It is directly north and adjacent to the Weigold Conservation Area. The property was purchased in November 2008 from the Lincoln Auperin family, with a combination of Town funds and a grant from the State of Connecticut Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition program administered by the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection.

The forest ranges from thick underbrush to open park-like areas with light forest cover. Although previously logged, the property contains stands of white pine and mixed hardwood. The property contains a large vernal pool area, which is a breeding area for frogs and salamanders. There also is a small brook that flows downhill to the Weigold Conservation Area. It is located in the Skungamaug River watershed, an important component of the Willimantic River system. Combined with the Weigold Conservation Area and Joshua's Trust Tobiasson Memorial Forest, there are over 150 acres of open space to protect wildlife habitat, aquifers, and watersheds.

Access to the Auperin trail is through the Weigold Conservation Area. The Weigold Conservation Area provides parking, use signage, and maps. At the high point of the property, two log benches have been built that look down at the vernal pool to the west and the brook to the east.

**Problems and Concerns** – A deer stand has been removed from the property; continued attentiveness to illegal deer hunting is needed.

**Potential Uses** – In accordance with the DEEP grant conditions, uses of the property must be limited to passive recreation. Accepted uses include:

- Hiking.
- Snowshoeing and cross-country skiing.
- Dog walking on leash and under owner's control; town ordinance requires dogs to be on a leash.
- Habitat, wildlife and nature study.

The Tolland *Conservation Commission Standards for Mountain Biking and Horseback Riding Use of Trails* must be met. Horseback riding is not allowed because the following standards for horseback riding are not met: no bridges or boardwalks, not traversing frequently wet areas or watercourses, trails to be at least eight feet





wide, base to be a firm material. Mountain biking is also not allowed because the following standards for mountain biking are not met: trails to be at least 4 feet wide, no traversing frequently wet areas, consistency with permitted and non-permitted activities on abutting conservation properties.

**Use Restrictions** - With the transfer of the property to the Town, there are inherent restrictions under the State of Connecticut conservation easement. The conservation easement requires that the property be used as a passive recreation open space conservation area in perpetuity.

**Use Restrictions and Visitor Responsibilities** – Visitors are to use the property in a manner consistent with land use guidelines for the protection of open space resources. The following guidelines are the standards for use and are identified on parcel signage:

- Dogs must be leashed and under control.
- Leave no trace.
- No horseback riding or mountain biking.
- No motorized vehicles or other means of motorized transport.
- Visitors shall stay on marked trails.
- Do not disturb vegetation or wildlife.
- No setting of fires.
- No hunting or firearms allowed.
- No littering. Carry out what you carry in.
- Respect the rights of other visitors.
- Area is closed from sunset to sunrise. Night use is by permit only.
- Notify the Conservation Commission of organized group activities.

## II. OPEN SPACE MANAGEMENT PLAN



**Management objectives** – The principal objectives are to conserve the property and protect wildlife habitat while providing access and passive recreational opportunities for the general public. While the Conservation Commission acting as an agent of the Tolland Town Council is ultimately responsible for property management, implementation of a management program is a shared responsibility with the Tolland Conservation Corps, Property Steward(s), and a variety of Town agencies in accordance with the *Open Space Management Guideline and Process*.

Specific objectives for this parcel include:

- Follow best property management processes.
- Maintain the approved trail system.
- Conduct a natural resource inventory.
- Pursue educational, documentation, and protection opportunities for habitat, wildlife, and unique features.

Although it is not the intention of the Conservation Commission to manage this property for timber production with periodic commercial harvests, it may be necessary, from time to time, to carry out certain silviculture practices to maintain the health of the forest or to encourage a particular habitat. Such management activities, if deemed necessary, will be done in consultation with a professional forester to ensure that the appropriate practices are implemented.

**Management Plan and Program** – Tasks required to assure management objectives are achieved shall be overseen by the Conservation Commission and implemented by the Head Steward and the Property Steward.

Tasks include:

- Maintain the approved trail system.
- Maintain stream crossing in safe and serviceable condition.
- Maintain trail markings and signs.
- Maintain informational markers.
- Maintain wood benches.
- Protect vernal pool and stream resources.
- Protect unusual vegetation such as lady slippers.
- Perform litter patrol as needed.
- Install and maintain property boundary markings. Conduct a yearly walk of the boundaries.

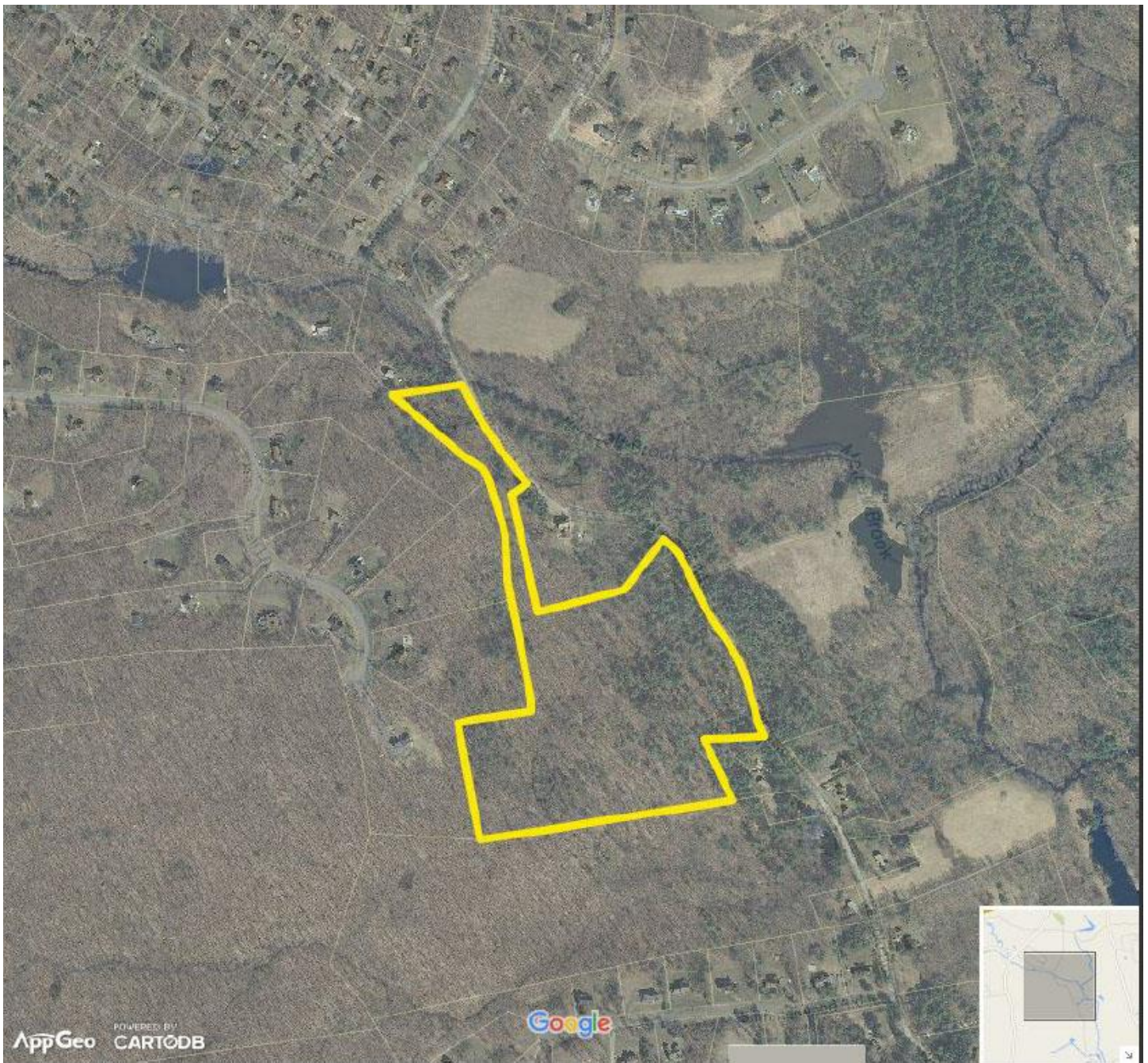
Attachments

- 2012 Aerial Map
- Topographical Map
- Wetlands Map
- Nearby Conservation Areas Map
- Trail Map

The steward for this property is Sharron Laplante.

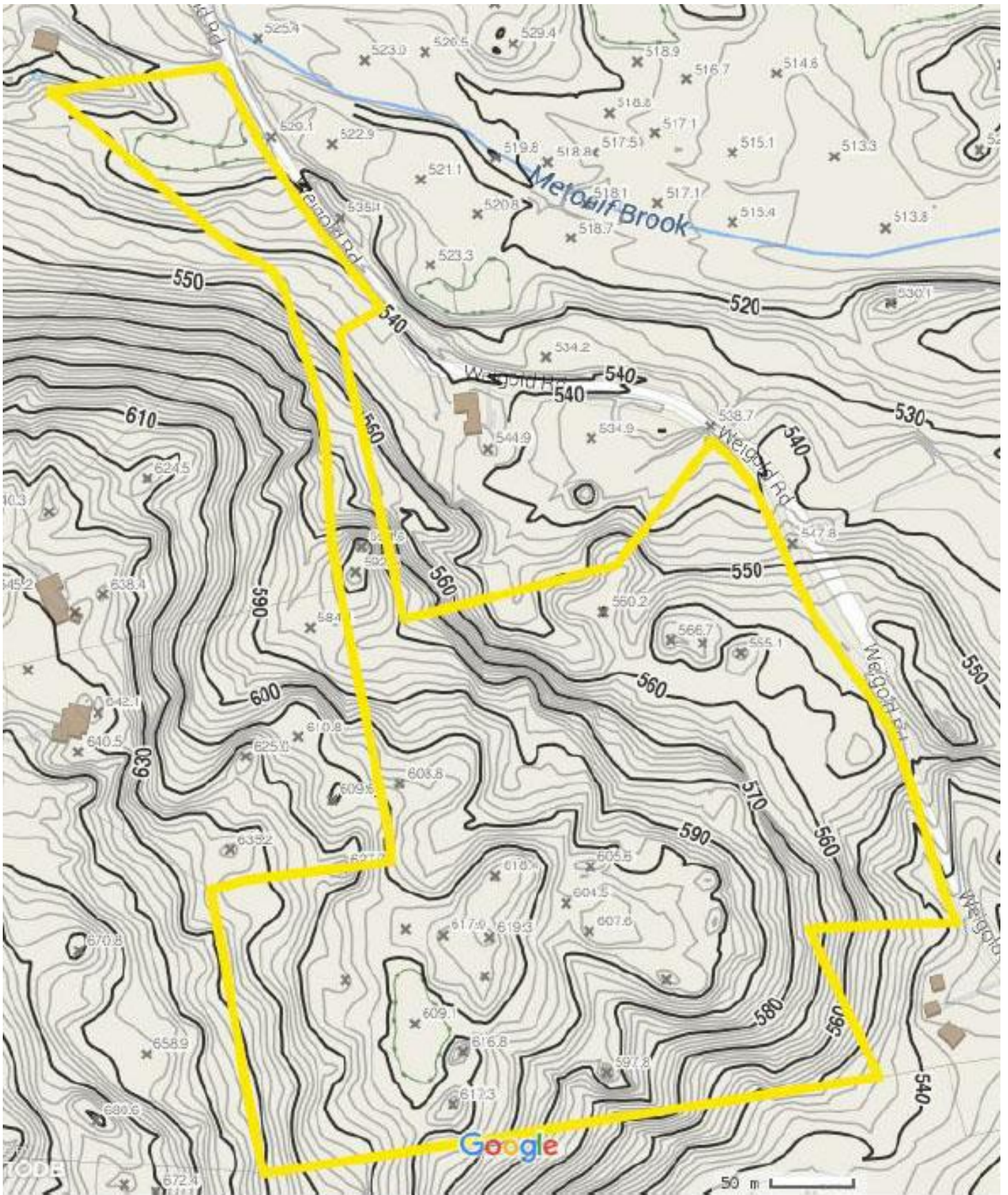


# 2012 Aerial Map



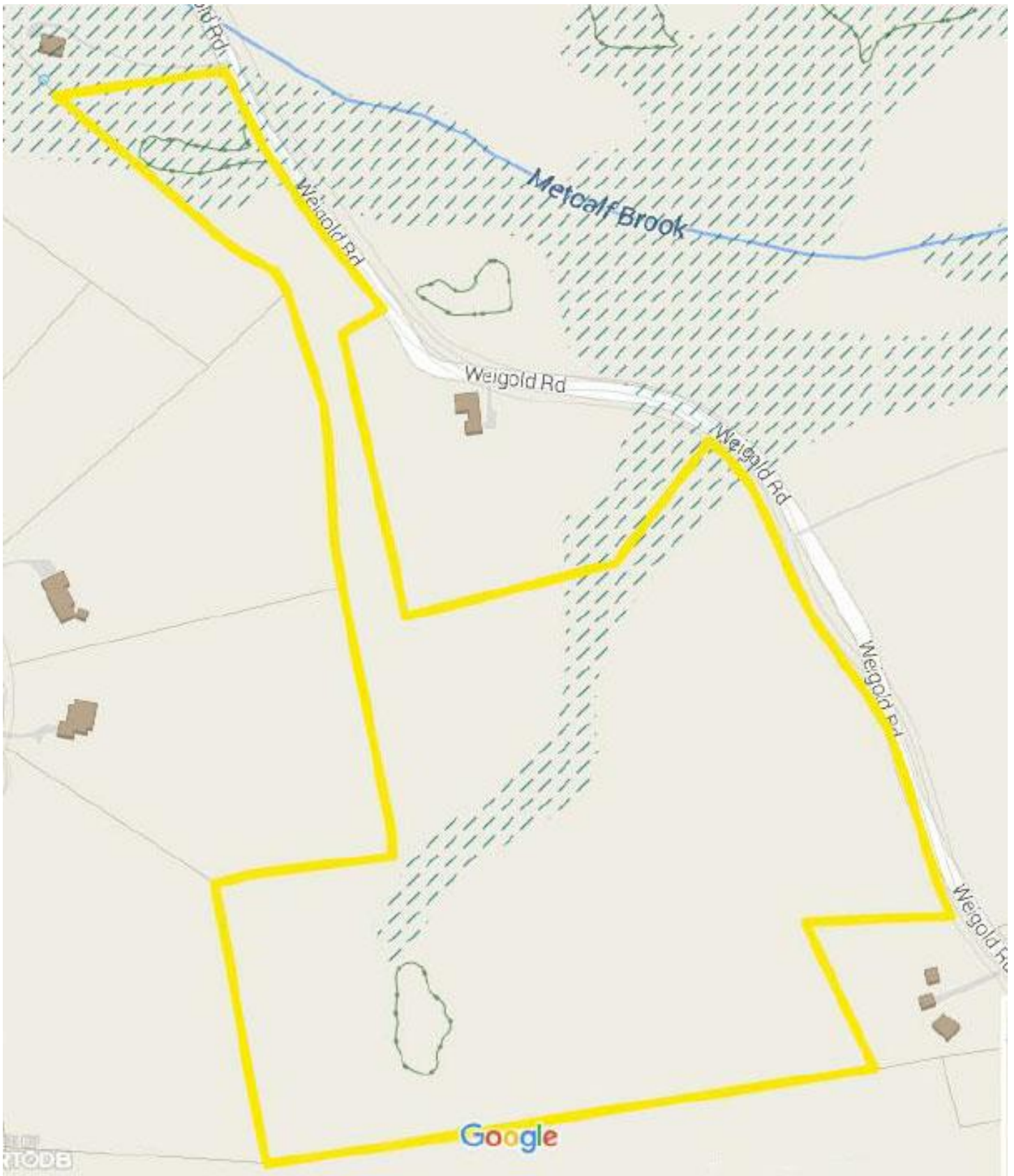


# Topographical Map

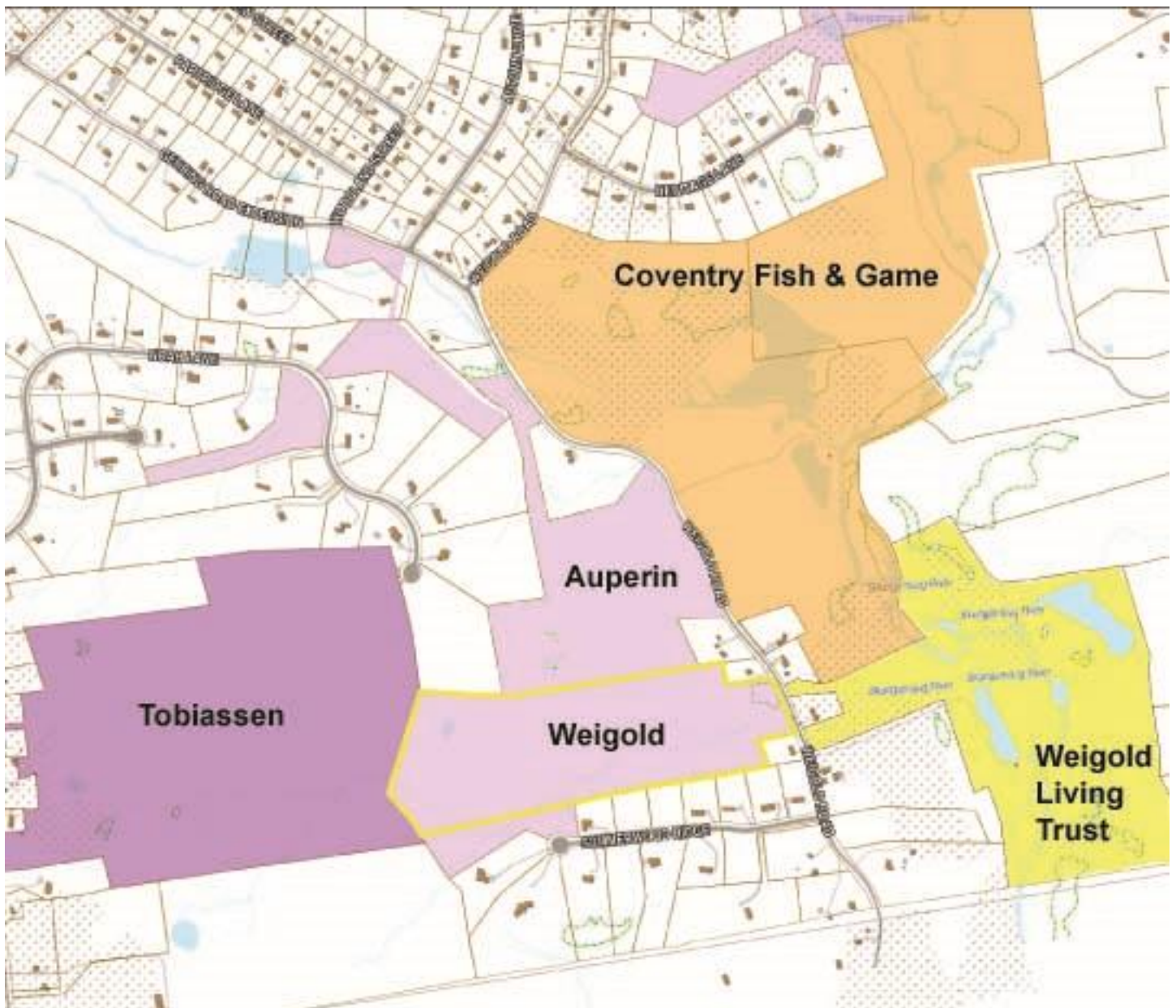




# Wetlands Map



## Nearby Conservation Areas Map





# Trail Map

