disturbing their habitat. It is basically a wilderness – a natural patch of earth that will, with your help, remain alive and intact.

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

Viney Hill Brook Park is bottom land, sandy and rocky, atop the Mud River aquifer. The water in the streams and ponds is crystal clear. There is great conservation value in protecting this area because the surface water percolates down and recharges the aquifer. The preserve was mostly wooded prior to 1950 and may have been cleared for agricultural purposes from time to time. For many years the property was quarried for sand and gravel. Today the property can be divided into three habitats: areas of young vegetation, the upland woods and the wetlands.

PLANTS AND ANIMALS

Recent studies have identified 22 tree, 25 shrub and 25 wildflower species due to the variety of soil and moisture conditions in the preserve. Generally, the woodlands range in age from 80–100 years. A two-acre stand of red oak is close to 100 years. Other common tree species include black and white oak, red cedar, black birch and red maple. Commonly found mammals include white-tail deer, gray fox, raccoon, opossum, gray squirrel, chipmunk, white footed mice, deer mice, otters and several species of turtles. Common birds include woodpeckers, cardinals, mourning doves, jays, grouse, chickadees, tufted titmice, kingfishers, ducks, and other waterfowl. Springtime brings in warblers, native sparrows, thrushes, vireos and flycatchers. Hawks, owls and eagles are found occasionally.

WALKING TRAILS

There are seven color-coded trails in the passive recreation area passing through a variety of habitats that connect some of the most interesting parts of the preserve. These include: upland hardwoods, meadowlands, lowland woodlands, water courses, ponds and the former sand and gravel quarries.

VISITING THE PARK

You are welcome to visit the park during daylight hours. The passive area is a nature preserve with posted guidelines to protect it. The trails are maintained for foot traffic only. Prohibited activities include fires, camping, smoking, collecting flora, hunting, trapping or firearm use. Motorized vehicles, bicycles, mopeds and horses are prohibited because of their impact on the trails. Dogs on leash or at heel are permitted. Your cooperation is appreciated and helps to maintain the natural character of the preserve.

ENTRANCES

Passive Recreation Entrance: This entrance is located at the end of Cedar Grove Terrace. From Route 154 take Gates Road to Cedar Grove Terrace. Park in designated area at head of trail, not on Cedar Grove Terrace or on the unpaved right-of-way road.
Active Recreation Entrance: The entrance is located at the end of Hillside Drive. Directions: At end of Cedar Grove Terrace (see above), turn right onto Hillside Drive and proceed through the park gates to end. Passive area trails can be accessed from the active area via the path around Wollock's Pond.

SUGGESTIONS AND CAUTIONS

The trails are well identified throughout the park, but from time to time may become obscured by foliage. Some trails are quite rugged and can present hazards. Plan ahead to avoid darkness and watch for slippery conditions in snowy, freezing and wet weather. The trail map on the reverse side identifies compass points and should help guide you along the paths and back to the parking lots.

Brochure and map downloadable
from www.essexct.gov

June, 2012
Printed on recycled paper

VINEY HILL BROOK PARK

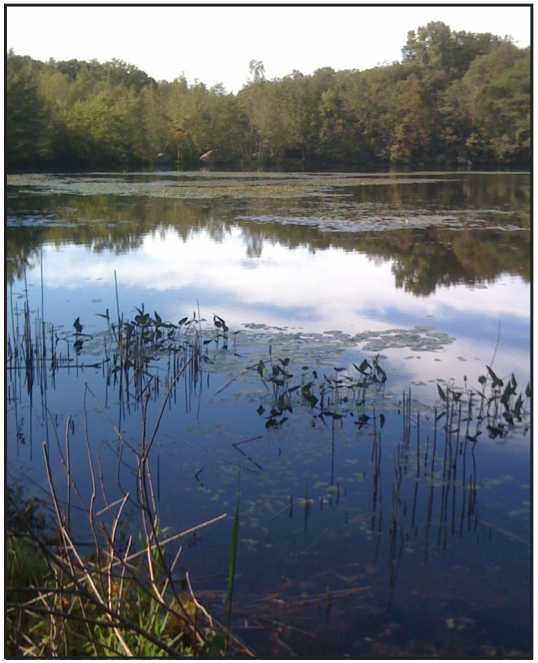


Photo by Jeff Lovelace

Viney Hill Brook Park, located off Cedar Grove Terrace in Essex, was purchased by the Town in 2001 for the purpose of active and passive recreation. The park totals 104 acres, 30 of which are devoted to active recreation. The remaining 74 acres are for quiet enjoyment and exploration.

ACTIVE RECREATION

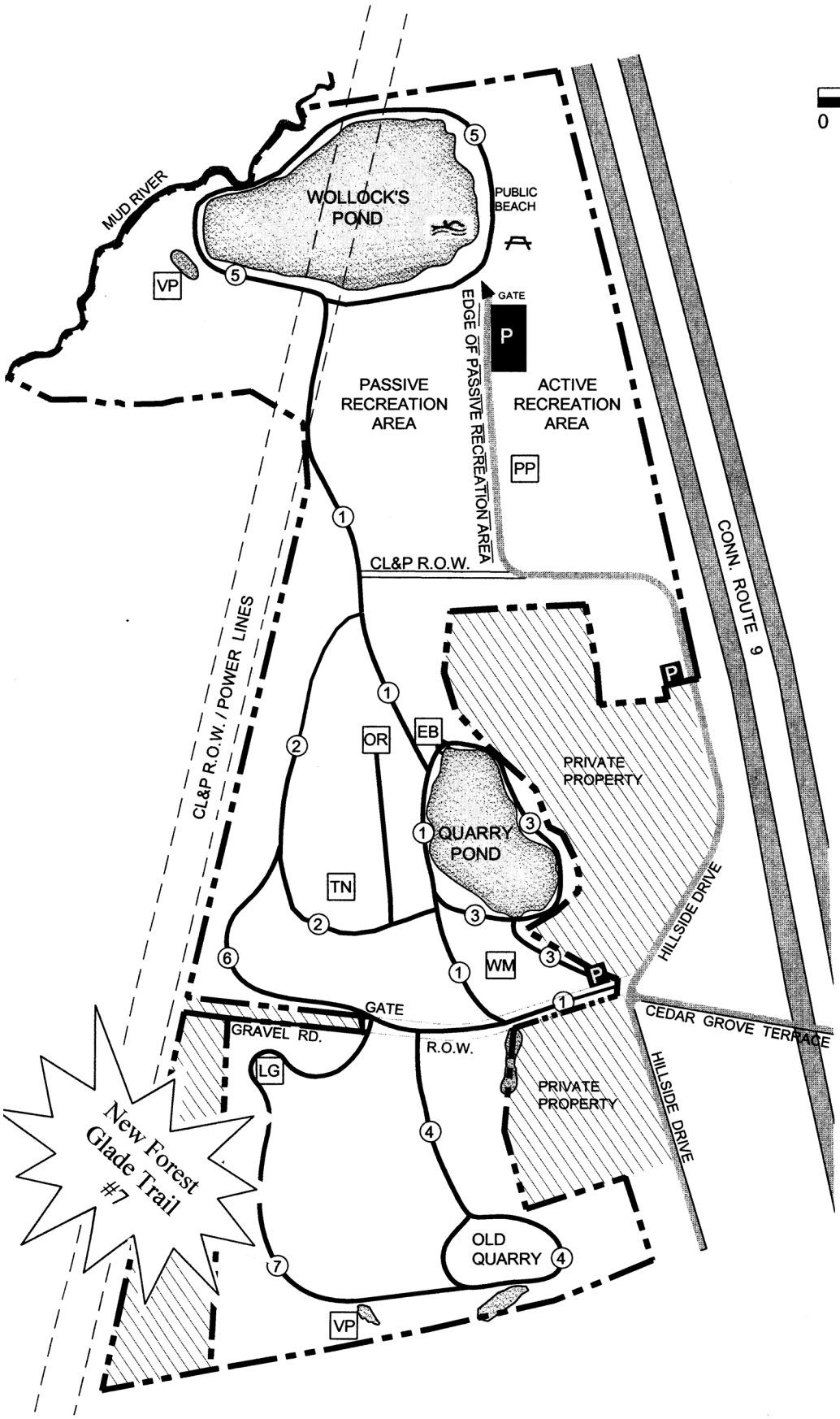
The active recreation area of the park, managed by the Essex Parks & Recreation Commission, consists of a swimming area, picnic tables and a paw park for the off-leash recreation of our canine friends. Please observe and follow the posted guidelines.

PASSIVE RECREATION

The passive recreation area of the park, managed by the Essex Conservation Commission, is open to the public for walking and hiking. It is not a playground, hunting area, bike path or campground. The area is a place where people can enjoy native plants and animals without altering or

VINEY HILL BROOK PARK / PRESERVE

ESSEX CONSERVATION COMMISSION
ESSEX, CT



0 $\frac{1}{8}$ MI $\frac{1}{4}$ MI

N

LEGEND

PROPERTY LINE	
EXISTING TRAILS	
PRIVATE PROPERTY	
WATER BODY	
PARKING	P
TRAIL ACCESS	◀
PICNIC TABLES	
PAW PARK	PP
SWIMMING AREA	

TRAILS TRAIL NUMBER (1) (TYPICAL)

(1) ORANGE / BROAD WALK
(2) RED / TURTLE TRAIL
(3) BLUE / QUARRY POND TRAIL
(4) YELLOW / OLD QUARRY TRAIL
(5) GREEN / WOLLOCKS POND LOOP
(6) WHITE / UPLAND WOODS TRAIL
(7) PURPLE / FOREST GLADE TRAIL

POINTS OF INTEREST [OR] (TYPICAL)

WM WILDFLOWER MEADOW
OR OBSERVATION ROCK
TN TURTLE NESTING AREA
VP VERNAL POOL
LG LEDGE
EB EAGLE SCOUT BRIDGE

MAP CREATED BY:
ANNE PENNIMAN ASSOCIATES LLC
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS