

= Haley Farm State Park =

Haley Farm State Park is a Connecticut state park preserving Colonial @-@ era farmland as open space in the town of Groton . It was the site of a dairy farm owned by Caleb Haley . The land was sold to A. C. White in 1953 who developed Mumford Cove and sold 198 acres to the State of Connecticut for \$ 300 @,@ 000 in July 1970 . In 1975 , a bike trail from Mystic to Noank was established and part of it goes through the Haley Farm State Park . Another 57 acres were purchased for a total of \$ 913 @,@ 300 and added to the park in 2002 . The Haley Farm State Park includes 267 acres that is directly connected to Bluff Point Coastal Reserve through a pedestrian bridge over railroad tracks . The park is reserved for activities such as bicycling and walking . The facilities only include pit toilets .

= History =

Land containing the acreage for Haley Farm State Park was part of a larger parcel granted to John Winthrop Jr . , in 1648 or 1649 . Winthrop , known better as " John Winthrop the Younger " , was governor of the Saybrook Colony and often recognized as " Connecticut 's first governor " . The land was later split up , and the piece which contained Haley Farm was designated Fort Hill Farm . The farm was purchased by Starr Chester in 1789 and passed to Noyes Barber in 1833 . The land was split again in 1852 with the farm being sold to Henry B. Lewis . Four hundred acres were sold to Caleb Haley in 1869 for the price of \$ 12 @,@ 000 . Haley farmed the land , built stone walls throughout the property and raced horses around " Racetrack Pond " . The land passed to his son , Samuel Haley , after his death in 1924 . Samuel Haley continued to operate the farm until his death in 1947 , when it was passed to his daughter Juliet Haley . The farm produced cream and milk that was shipped to Noank , West Mystic and Mystic . In 1953 , the farm was sold out of the Haley family to A. C. White who abandoned the farm to develop a gully called Mumford Cove . Mr. White placed the 250 @-@ acre parcel of land containing Haley Farm for sale . In 1960 , the homestead burned down and the other buildings eventually were demolished in 1973 after being documented for possible future reconstruction .

In 1963 , efforts were made to purchase the land to prevent it from being developed . The town opposed re @-@ zoning it to multi @-@ residential for Algernon @-@ Blair 's development plan . The land was sold from Alcor Inc. to O & G Construction Co. as a 250 acre parcel in 1966 . A total of 198 acres of land was returned to Mr. White after O & G Construction " were in arrears on their payments and back taxes " . In July 1970 , the state acquired 198 acres of Haley Farm from A. C. White for a total of \$ 300 @,@ 000 . The money was the result of federal funding for \$ 150 @,@ 000 , state funding for \$ 100 @,@ 000 , and the remaining \$ 50 @,@ 000 came from the Groton Open Space Association , a local organization that completed raising the required funds in early 1970 . At the time , the Park and Forest Commission said there were no plans to make it into a park . However , the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection recognizes that Haley Farm was officially made a Connecticut State Park in July 1970 .

In 1975 , a bike trail from Mystic to Noank was established and part of it goes through the Haley Farm State Park . In 1981 , a \$ 27 @,@ 000 planned improvement to enhance the trail with stone dust resulted in objections and concerns by locals . Objections were raised on the belief the project would increase motorbike traffic in the park which could pose a hazard to hikers and bicyclers . Riding motorbikes in the state park is illegal , but it was also noted that staff was unable to effectively to catch the bikers and had limited means to deter them . The concern of motorcycle collisions were not without merit as a fatal motorcycle @-@ to @-@ motorcycle crash occurred in September 1980 . The idea for trail barriers was rejected because the trail also needed to be able accommodate serve emergency vehicles which were already unable to access the trail effectively .

In 2002 , 57 acres were purchased for a total of \$ 913 @,@ 300 and added to the park . The first plot of land of the purchase was 49 @.@ 95 acres from GuerraDeAngelis Trustees (O & G) and another 7 @.@ 14 acres from Bowen Briggs . The funds for the purchase were from the State of Connecticut 's Recreation and Natural Heritage Trust Program . In 2001 , the " Racetrack Pond "

area was purchased from the Mumford Cove Association , resulting in Haley Farm State Park now totaling 267 acres . The park was directly connected to Bluff Point Coastal Reserve through a pedestrian bridge over railroad tracks , built atop the former Groton and Stonington Street Railway bridge .

= = Vegetation = =

According to Leary , " [t] he park is a mosaic of upland and wetland vegetation types . " Algae and intertidal plants can be found on the shore , including salt meadow grass , sedge and sphagnum moss . The swampy areas of Haley Farm State Park have red maple and tulip trees , but the uplands include cherry , hickory and shrubs . The history of the area and region have been revealed through the study of the trees . In 1973 , a white oak on the site was found to be 142 years old , in the upper end of the life expectancy of the species . The first 34 years of its life showed rapid growth , believed to have been a result of the 1815 New England hurricane which cleared out many of the older trees and opened the canopy . The rings show a widening in 1918 in response to the chestnut blight and further growth in response to the 1938 New England hurricane . The mid @-@ to @-@ late 1960s shows little growth and serves as evidence of the near @-@ drought conditions of New England . Haley Farm State Park is a rare habitat that " squeezes a great variety of biological diversity into a very small space . " The growth and composition of the forest changes based on the major storms and other biological intrusions that result in " constant change and continuous self @-@ adjustment " that allows the forest to thrive .

= = Activities = =

Haley Farm State Park has a 0 @.@ 8 mile bike trail that is part of a larger 7 @.@ 5 mile bikeway from Mystic to Groton . The park also supports jogging and hiking activities . Both the soil and bike trails are listed as " easy " difficulty by America 's State Parks website . As with other state parks , motorbikes are illegal and are not permitted to be used . Hunting and shooting is not allowed in the park as it is close to residences and a high school . The facilities only include pit toilets .