Protecting our Environment

Our site property line runs through part of Lawton Valley, an inaccessible rocky gorge with waterfalls and old-growth trees. Because of its isolation, it has been mostly untouched and unmanaged. With developmental pressures at fever pitch, there are no guarantees that it will remain untouched. If Lawton Valley can be protected and be made responsibly accessible, the community would benefit along with wildlife. It is our goal to work with Raytheon and other owners of Lawton Valley, and together with the Aquidneck Island Land Trust, develop easements protecting Lawton Valley forever.

You Can Help

Consider joining REWHC. We could use your help! Please take a moment to complete the attached survey.

Welcome To REWHC

We are employees of Raytheon Company in Portsmouth, Rhode Island, making a difference in improving the environment around our workplace. As a member of the Wildlife Habitat Council (WHC), Raytheon encourages its employees to participate in "Wildlife at Work". This program brings employees together with local organizations to:

- Increase Biodiversity,
- Increase Environmental Awareness,
- Protect our Environment for Future Generations.
You may have noticed the addition of bird boxes, new trails, and people with binoculars and clipboards in the woods. Don’t be alarmed! They’re likely fellow employees participating in the Raytheon Employees Wildlife Habitat Committee (REWHC).

Raytheon is a member of the Wildlife Habitat Council (WHC), an international organization encouraging corporate environmental stewardship. Their Wildlife at Work program provides the framework for REWHC. An initial visit from a WHC biologist, provided us with awareness of our environmental possibilities. Starting with provided educational materials, we teamed with local organizations. We achieved certification with the WHC, having developed and successfully implemented our wildlife management plan.

Our website at www.rewhc.org, provides complete documentation of our activities and is our team collaboration tool. It enabled us to become the first WHC site to be certified based solely on website-based documentation. In the past, organizations compiled voluminous certification documentation, taking several months, which was obsolete soon after release. Our certification information is self-documenting and always current.

**Wildlife Management Planning**
We have set three main thrusts in our planning:

- **Increasing Biodiversity**, 
- **Increasing Environmental and Historical Awareness**, 
- **Protecting our Environment For Future Generations**.

All three of these goals are supported by our wildlife survey program which let us know what species we have where on our site and how that diversity changes over time.

**Increasing Biodiversity**
Increasing biodiversity means creating and maintaining an environment which encourages the largest number of species to thrive at our site. Not all species are created equal. Some are native to our area, and live in harmony with other native species. Others have been introduced, usually by people, which compete with our native species, causing their decline or destruction. At REWHC, we increase biodiversity through an aggressive bird nest monitoring program, the removal of invasive species such as bittersweet vines, the planting of wildflower, butterfly, and hummingbird gardens, and the controlled mowing in field where nesting could occur. Though our current focus is birds and plants, future plans include mammals, reptiles, amphibians, and insects. We have already created checklists and online databases for them.

**Increasing Environmental and Historical Awareness**
Causes and effects influencing the environment are not always apparent to the casual observer. Becoming sensitized to the natural world allows us to become better environmental stewards. Understanding local history helps us better appreciate both the process under which our ecosystem was born, and any artifacts we may see along the trail. At REWHC, we create interpretive trails and provide guided trail walks to scouting groups, local organizations, and employees. We also provide training and involve fellow employees in our nest monitoring program. Earth day and the company picnic, are a focus for our outreach to fellow employees, but outreach occurs year-long through a host of programs and events.

We perform historical surveys of the site, provide educational outreach via Earth day and company picnic activities, reach out to local historical organizations, and reach out through our website to the genealogical community. We have become a major source of web-based historical information on American poor farms with linking and a three thumbs up review from www.poorhousestory.com.

Through our trail-building efforts, we have become a role-model to local organizations.

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**REWHC Who?**

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**We Value Your Input**

Please take a moment to fill out this brief questionnaire. It will help us better manage the site and achieve our management goals. Your name, e-mail and phone number are optional, but include it if you wish to join and/or volunteer. We will not attribute any statistical results to any given individual.

1. Name (Optional)
2. E-Mail (Optional)
3. Phone (Optional)
4. I walk the trails on our site
   - Daily
   - Weekly
   - Monthly
   - Never
5. How many miles of trails are on our site?
   - 1 Mile
   - 2 Miles
   - 4 Miles
   - 6 Miles
6. I enjoy Earth Day Celebrations
   - A Lot
   - Some
   - Little
   - Not
7. I like the frequency of REWHC events
   - A Lot
   - Some
   - Little
   - Not
8. I recycle at home
   - yes
   - no
9. I have a bird house or feeder at home
   - yes
   - no
10. I’m a member of an environmental org.
    - yes
    - no
11. I’m currently a member of REWHC
    - yes
    - no
12. I’d like to become a REWHC member
    - yes
    - no
13. I’d like to become a REWHC volunteer
    - yes
    - no
14. Add me to your REWHC mailing list
    - yes
    - no
15. My impression of REWHC is
    - Great
    - Good
    - Fair
    - Poor
16. Comments

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