



newsletter
Spring 2013
Issue No. 45

Native Earth Teaching Farm Goats to Restore Cedar Tree Neck

Faced with the knotty problem of eradicating the invasive, exotic bittersweet vine from the “neck” of Cedar Tree Neck, Director of Stewardship Kristen Fauteux chose an unconventional approach. Ms. Fauteux chose neither cutting, nor mowing, nor burning. Rather, Ms. Fauteux chose goats.

“Burning and mowing were not feasible here – grazing was the last option,” said Ms. Fauteux. “I expect the goats to knock down, but not eliminate, the bittersweet.”

Ms. Fauteux decided that goats could do the work of clearing bittersweet more effectively than could any of the more conventional options. The bittersweet vine that has throttled the very cedars of Cedar Tree Neck is yet another non-

native, invasive plant. The initial bittersweet vines at Cedar Tree Neck were actually planted there. These vines were recommended for planting in a management plan for the property that the Soil Conservation Service had written in 1962. The plan was followed, and bittersweet was planted along with other recommended plants. Unfortunately, in that era such recommendations were quite commonly given and followed all across the country. Only later did people come to understand the problems posed by such plants as bittersweet.

After deciding that goats may offer a unique solution to the bittersweet problem, Ms. Fauteux and Adam Moore met with Rebecca Gilbert of the Native Earth Teaching Farm to



Pygmy Goats of Native Earth Teaching Farm.

discuss the idea.

“I’m old enough to remember when the up-Island area was much more open than it is now,” said Ms. Gilbert. “I like

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NEW SIGNS



New sign on Main Street, Vineyard Haven.

Those traveling on any number of Island roads will notice handsome new signs marking Sheriff’s Meadow Foundation properties. All of the signs were designed by Foundation board member and graphic designer Alley Moore. The signs were made possible through the generous support of the Mabee Foundation and through a grant from the Permanent Endowment for Martha’s Vineyard.

The signs come in three sizes: small, medium and large. The signs themselves include two shades of green: a dark, forest green at the top of the sign where the Sheriff’s Meadow Foundation logo is found, and a lighter, emerald green where the property name is found. Each sign also includes the moniker “A Martha’s Vineyard Land Trust.” The signs are mounted on lap-jointed six-

inch by six-inch locust posts. The locust posts were milled to order by the Cataumet sawmill in East Falmouth.

“I love the new signs,” said Executive Director Adam Moore. “They mark the properties in a way that is attractive, yet still discreet. They make our lands a bit more prominent. In some cases people did not know that Cedar Tree Neck Sanctuary, for example, was a Sheriff’s Meadow Foundation property. That will no longer be the case.”

Accompanying the signs is a new, colorful Sanctuary Guide brochure. This brochure provides brief descriptions of the properties and directions to the properties. At present, Sheriff’s Meadow Foundation is preparing a second round of signs to be installed at additional properties across the Island.



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Spring Ephemerals

ADAM R. MOORE

The starflowers are everywhere.

In mid-May, along the blue trail at the Caroline Tuthill Preserve, the bright white blossoms of starflowers dapple the floor of the forest. Here, a starflower sprouts upward beside fallen maple leaves. From the emerald bed of a sphagnum bog, another starflower grows, a parasol for a courting frog. Like white ribbons on wooden pews, starflowers grace the sides of the path, growing next to bare oaks and ancient, gray-barked beetlebunges. Starflowers are sprinkled across the entire forest floor, right to the edges of the Sengekontacket salt marshes.

The starflower is a member of the Primrose family, and its Linnaean name is *Trientalis borealis*. The flower is lovely: white petals set among green leaves, with yellow anthers atop white stamens. Aside from its delicate beauty, the starflower is worth noting for the fact that its features appear in groups of seven. Seven petals, seven sepals, seven leaves and seven stamens make a starflower. Native bees pollenate these plants.

Starflowers are spring ephemerals. Spring ephemerals are native wildflowers of the woods. Such flowers blossom in the spring, and then are gone, fading into obscurity among the twigs and leaf litter of the forest floor. Spring ephemerals blossom in April, or in May or June, depending on the particular type of flower, and on the timing of the season of spring in a given region. Ephemerals take advantage of that brief interlude of spring sunlight in a forest of deciduous trees. The flowers bloom when sunlight shines directly upon the ground in the forest, just as the tree leaves are beginning to unfurl. The United States Botanic Garden, incidentally, has an excellent exhibit of photographs of the spring ephemerals of Shenandoah National Park. The photographs were taken by Jackie Bailey Liebovitz, and the photographs appear in a new book entitled *Understory*.

The best way to enjoy the ephemerals, though, is to take a walk and see them for oneself. I had my own experience with

spring ephemerals in April. In April, my family visited Shenandoah National Park in the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia. By mid-April, spring had come to the valley floors below, and the redbud trees stood out, draping the roadsides in cascades of purple flowers. Yet up in the mountains, spring had not yet ascended, and the ephemerals – the white bloodroot, the yellow trout lily, and more – stood out among the Appalachian rocks and the black birches and the bare stems of stout red oaks.

We hiked among the ephemerals, descending the mountain trails to waterfalls in the valleys. We hiked on the Appalachian Trail, which runs along the mountain spine of this park. We hiked beside the trout lilies on the way down to Rapidan Camp, the trout fishing camp of President Herbert Hoover. We crossed streams on wet stepping stones, an experience where I, not being nimble, crossed last, with my children on the opposite bank urging me on, with “come on, Dad!” and “you can do it!” I had never had that experience before: where my children led me, and encouraged me, and lent me a helping hand. That was, perhaps, a sign of age, a foretaste of the future.

At the end of the hike and the end of each day we were blessedly winded, ready for dinner. The children hiked without complaint. It was only a two-day visit to the park, a fleeting trip, a brief respite from a hectic family schedule of school activities and practices and scout meetings and Sunday school. Yet the walks among the spring ephemerals made our trip, perhaps, the most enjoyable vacation we had ever taken.

Such enjoyment of being outdoors in the spring – smelling the lilacs on the sidewalk in Vineyard Haven, spotting the lady's slippers at the Caroline Tuthill Preserve, walking amid starflowers in the gentle green of spring beside Sengekontacket Pond – makes one think about just what is really ephemeral. The starflower, for that matter, as delicate as it is, and as susceptible as it is to pernicious invasive plants, is a perennial plant. The seven-petaled blossom of the starflower disappears by summer, yet the plant persists. It grows beneath the surface of the ground, and

spreads through underground rhizomes. The rhizomes store energy through the year, allowing the flowers to burst forth in spring beauty once May has returned to Martha's Vineyard.

In a spring where the month of May may send gentle showers and warm breezes, but may also send forth tornadoes of deadly force and unthinkable destruction, one wonders, after all, just what is ephemeral? The very word “May” raises the question. What may happen? What may come?

For me, the starflowers are lovely, yet not truly ephemeral. The flowers do disappear, yet the plant itself thrives, and emerges again next spring. What is truly ephemeral is a carefree springtime hike with children by the trout lilies. What is truly ephemeral is a day spent in the out of doors, where everyone is happy. What is truly ephemeral is the sight of a child, skipping down the path, among the starflowers. The real spring ephemeral is childhood.

SHERIFF'S MEADOW FOUNDATION



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Elizabeth Bowie Hough

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TRAILS BLAZED AT CAROLINE TUTHILL PRESERVE

Sheriff's Meadow Foundation is pleased to announce that several new trails have been established at the Caroline Tuthill Preserve. Several trails provide connections to the bicycle path along Beach Road, while another trail has been designed specifically to make for a challenging and enjoyable ride for a bicyclist riding a mountain bicycle.

The first new trail curves its way over the rolling moraine on the southern section of Caroline Tuthill Preserve. The trail is open to walkers and bicyclists, yet for bicyclists, the trail offers a route that follows winding curves through the woods. The new trail was scouted by Foundation Board member Michael Berwind, and established through the hard work of Mr. Berwind, Bill Brine, David Weagle, David Berwind and Property Manager Bill Bridwell.

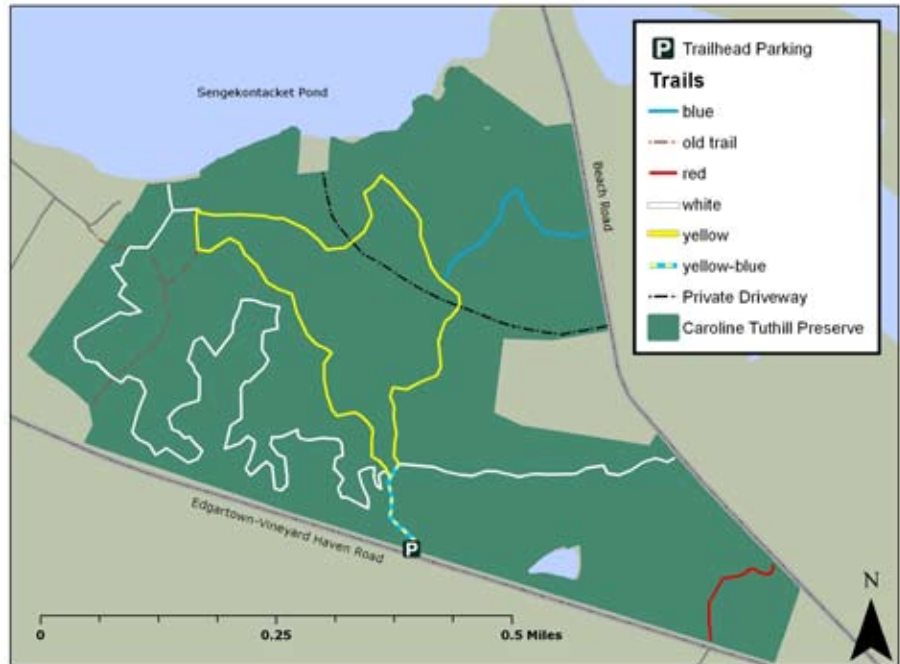
"With 1.6 miles of winding trail, including nearly 200 feet of elevation change, the new trail in the Caroline Tuthill Preserve promises to be a challenge for mountain bikers, and a beau-



New footbridge over stream.

tiful scenic walk for hikers," stated volunteer David Weagle. "I urge everyone to get out and give it a try!" Mr. Brine concurred, urging people to "get out and appreciate it!"

Another new trail, blazed in light



blue, connects the yellow, Garrett family trail loop with the bicycle path along beach road. Along the way, the trail crosses a stream and flanks the edge of a Sengekontacket Pond salt marsh. A footbridge helps pedestrians cross the stream, and a planked walkway and grate-covered viewing platform leads the visitor to a viewpoint on the edge of the marsh. Decking for the boardwalks and bridges is made of naturally rot-resistant black locust lumber.

Another new trail, blazed in white, connects the yellow trail to the bicycle path. The white trail, however, reaches the bicycle path at a point along the Beach Road that is directly across the street from Trapp's Pond Road. Just before the terminus of the white trail, a footbridge allows the walker to safely cross a concrete weir. This weir once controlled the flow of water into Trapp's Pond. Originating in the Lily Pond, the stream flowing beneath the white trail's footbridge could, at one time, be blocked or regulated through the insertion of planks in the concrete structure. According to Paul Bagnall, Shellfish Constable for the Town of Edgartown, this concrete structure once served as a "catching station" for a white perch fishery.

Yet another trail, this one blazed red,

crosses the meadow near the Triangle. This trail connects Pennywise Path, the end of which is found directly across the Edgartown-Vineyard Haven Road from the red trail, to the bicycle path on the other side of the meadow. A bench set



Viewing platform next to the salt marsh.

beside the path allows one to sit for a moment, rest, and admire the grasses and blossoming wildflowers.

To learn more about Caroline Tuthill Preserve and to obtain a trail map, please visit the Sheriff's Meadow Foundation website at www.sheriffsmeadow.org.

Restoration Continues at Sheriff's Meadow Sanctuary

The Foundation has just completed a second season of restoration work at Sheriff's Meadow Sanctuary in Edgartown. Over the fall and winter and into the early spring, the Foundation removed a variety of non-native and invasive trees, felled and removed trees that had toppled over in various of the fall and winter windstorms, reopened views of Sheriff's Pond, Eel Pond and Nantucket Sound, and replaced a tangled mess of porcelain berry, privet, yews and bittersweet with a planting of native eastern red cedars, viburnums, blueberries and clethra.

Most of the tree work was conducted by Tom Robinson and his employees at Island

Timber. Donaroma's Landscaping Services performed the invasive plant removal and native tree and shrub planting along the boundary shared with the Edgartown Yacht Club tennis center. Volunteers also helped. On May 11, 2013, volunteers pulled garlic mustard, clipped vines, pruned branches and dragged brush as the local Yale Day of Service event. The following Saturday, May 18, 2013, the Martha's Vineyard Cub Scout Pack raked woodchips and planted little bluestem seeds in two restored meadow areas. In the fall, volunteers from the Sierra Club planted a variety of native shrubs.

Over the summer, staff and volunteers will continue to tend to the Sanctuary. The Foundation now has permission from the Edgartown Conservation Commission to trim view channels once per month during the season. Such maintenance is essential if the Sanctuary's views are to be enjoyed by visitors during the Sanctuary's busiest season. Staff will continue to replace pieces of the boardwalks as the planks splinter or rot.

Come fall, the final season of major restoration work will begin. A privet hedge that defines one property boundary will be removed and replaced with something native, perhaps bayberries. Invasive willows, invasive dogwoods and invasive hollies will be removed to give room to native plants, such as highbush blueberry and red maple. Little bluestem seeds will be sown in meadow areas. Finally, all of the boardwalks will be removed and replaced with sturdier, slightly elevated wooden walkways on sure footings.



Above, the invasive plants to the right of the trail were replaced with native trees and shrubs, below.



Sheriff's Meadow Foundation still needs financial support to complete this project and to make it a success. Those interested in contributing the restoration effort are encouraged to contact Executive Director Adam Moore at moore@sheriffsmeadow.org or at (508) 693-5207.



Ingrid and Huck Moore pulling garlic mustard.



Flowering Dogwood (*Cornus florida*).

Programs Held in Boston and New York

In April 2013, Sheriff's Meadow Foundation held two programs on the subject of the restoration of the Hancock Mitchell House of Quansoo Farm. The first program took place on April 3, 2013 at the Somerset Club on Beacon Street in Boston, and the second took place on April 10, 2013 at the Century Association on West 47th Street in New York City. Brian Cooper of Early New England Restorations was the featured speaker at each event.

Executive Director Adam Moore spoke prior to Mr. Cooper. Mr. Moore described the Foundation's plans to restore the Hancock Mitchell House and outlined the general plans for use of the building, once restored. Mr. Moore stated that the Foundation would conduct a capital campaign in order to be

able to accomplish the restoration.

Following Mr. Moore, Brian Cooper delivered a presentation about the Hancock Mitchell House. Narrating a series of slides, Mr. Cooper led guests on a virtual tour of this antique house. The program began with a pen-and-ink sketch of the house as it may once have appeared, with diamond-pane casement windows. Mr. Cooper then described each room of the house while displaying a corresponding set of slides. He highlighted all the features of this historic building, including the hurricane braces, the signatures inscribed in the paneling, the drawings of ships carved into the walls, and the wattle and daub construction of the earliest part of the building.

Following Mr. Cooper's talk in Bos-

ton, Michael Steinitz from the Massachusetts Historical Commission rose and spoke to those assembled. Mr. Steinitz stated that he had just reviewed and approved Sheriff's Meadow Foundation's application to list the Hancock Mitchell House on the National Register of Historic Places. Mr. Steinitz stated that the house ranks as a building of statewide significance in Massachusetts.

The Somerset Club event was arranged by Sheriff's Meadow Foundation Director Christian Halby and co-hosted by Kim Burns and David Malm. The Century Association event was arranged and co-hosted by Susannah and Brian Bristol.

Sheriff's Meadow Foundation expresses its gratitude to all those who took the time to attend these events.



Southern Twayblade (*Neottia bifolia*).



Smooth Shadbush (*Amelanchier laevis*).



Wild Geranium (*Geranium maculatum*).

Cedar Tree Neck School Curriculum Underway

BY REBECCA SOLWAY

The development of a school curriculum for Cedar Tree Neck Sanctuary is well underway. The curriculum has two major components, "Explorer's Backpacks" and "Curriculum Units." The Explorer's Backpacks include tools such as magnifying glasses, binoculars, field guides, species identification cards and even "bingo" sheets tailored to the unique species found at Cedar Tree Neck Sanctuary.

The Curriculum Units include programs entitled "Change in Nature," aimed at students in Kindergarten

and first grade, "Mapping Cedar Tree Neck," aimed at students in the second through the fourth grades, "Mammals of Cedar Tree Neck," for the fourth grade, and "Soils," for the fifth grade. These units incorporate photo documentation, wildlife cameras and Google Earth. An educational Google Map of the property will permit classes to post photos and observations of seasonal change and ecological change over time. The Curriculum Units were created with input from teachers at various grade levels across the Island.

The school curriculum for Kindergarten through Grade 5 is currently being presented to teachers and administrators within the school system. This work will be presented to teachers through a series of events this spring and summer. These will include a teacher day at Cedar Tree Neck Sanctuary on June 9, 2013 and teacher workshops at Cedar Tree Neck Sanctuary in July and August.

The Sheriff's Meadow Foundation education program has been made possible through a generous grant from the Edey Foundation.

Native Earth Teaching Farm Goats to Clear Cedar Tree Neck

From Page One

the old-fashioned look of grazing as a part of the landscape.”

Ultimately, Sheriff's Meadow Foundation entered into an agreement with the Native Earth Teaching Farm under which a few purebred pygmy goats from the Farm would come to Cedar Tree Neck for the summer. Sheriff's Meadow Foundation and the Native Earth Teaching Farm will build a small, wooden shelter out on the Neck. The goats shall spend the night in the shelter, and it is there that food and water will be provided daily. Each morning, the Cedar Tree Neck Ranger shall hike out to the shelter, and in shepherd fashion, lead the goats to the fenced-in work area for the day. The work area will be enclosed with a wire fence to prevent the goats from wandering off. The fence shall also ensure that the goats eat all of the vegetation within the pen, as otherwise the animals might wander off and consume only the plants that they like the most.

Ms. Gilbert is quite enthusiastic about this effort. She has termed the experiment, “Herbivores, Not Herbicides,” and has lent her considerable

knowledge to the task.

“I think grazing offers a lot of advantages over chemicals and even over machinery,” said Ms. Gilbert, adding that such a partnership between farming and conservation leads to a “more sustainable economic and ecological system.”

Ms. Gilbert further noted that a conservation organization, such as Sheriff's Meadow Foundation, approaches grazing from a very scientific perspective. Indeed, Ms. Fauteux will scientifically study the effects of goat grazing as part of the research she is undertaking for her master's degree at Antioch University New England.

“I think that we will learn how effective goats are at managing bittersweet,” said Ms. Fauteux. “We will also learn about the feasibility of using goats in a

remote location.”

Ms. Fauteux encouraged volunteers to come forward and help with this effort.

“We need volunteers to help with



Young Shepherd Eli Bryant petting pygmy goats.

feeding, watering, moving, cleaning and getting the goats used to people.”

Those wishing to help mind the goats for a day are encouraged to contact Ms. Fauteux and make arrangements.

Leave a Legacy

Land lasts. Conservation is perpetual, and so also is Sheriff's Meadow Foundation's obligation to care for the lands entrusted to it.

You can make a very significant difference in Sheriff's Meadow Foundation's ability to be a good steward of its lands, and to continue to conserve land for future generations, by leaving a bequest to Sheriff's Meadow Foundation. If Sheriff's Meadow Foundation properties have made a positive difference in your life, please consider the Foundation as you go about planning your estate. By recognizing the Foundation in your will, you will help to leave a legacy of conservation that lasts far into the future. We believe that our perpetual stewardship responsibility makes the Foundation a natural match for a conservation bequest.

If you are interested in leaving a bequest, or creating a planned gift with Sheriff's Meadow Foundation, or giving the Foundation land subject to a



Starflower (*Trientalis borealis*).

life estate that you retain, or if you are interested in any other type of estate planning, please contact us to learn more. We can provide you with sample language that you can discuss with your attorney or adviser. We can also provide helpful examples, and can explain some of our conservation needs to you, in hopes that our goals will align with yours.

If you let us know that you have recognized Sheriff's Meadow Foundation in your will, we will be pleased to enroll you – if you like – in our Heritage Society. The Heritage Society is a group of loyal, dedicated Sheriff's Meadow supporters who have indicated that they intend to leave a bequest to Sheriff's Meadow Foundation.

We thank all of you for considering Sheriff's Meadow Foundation as you think about the kind of legacy that you can leave.

Summer Benefit to be Held at Nat's Farm and Misty Meadows Farm

From Page Eight

grass-leaved ladies' tresses (*Spiranthes vernalis*), an orchid that the Massachusetts Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Programs has listed as "threatened." The land itself includes trails that are open to walkers, bicyclists and pedestrians. The trails offer links to the bicycle paths and long-distance trails in the Manuel F. Correllus State Forest and to the nearby West Tisbury School.

The July 15, 2013 benefit shall be held on the Misty Meadows Farm portion of Nat's Farm, and the event is jointly hosted by Sheriff's Meadow Foundation and by Jerome and Carol Kenney. Guests shall have the opportunity to walk the trails on the property and view both the North and the South Pasture. The evening will begin with a reception and hors d'oeuvres. It should be noted that, due to local regulations, beer and wine will be available at the reception, but no other alcoholic beverages will be available. Dinner on the evening of the 15th shall be prepared by Truly Scrumptious and dessert prepared by Cakes by Liz. The dinner will feature food from North Tabor Farm and Mermaid Farm. Following the dinner, Sheriff's Meadow



Nat's Farm, photo by Bob Avakian.

Foundation President John Schaefer and Executive Director Adam Moore will address the guests. Guests will conclude the evening with dancing beneath the stars to the music of Johnny Hoyer & the Bluefish.

Sheriff's Meadow Foundation offers benefit sponsorships at multiple levels, and also offers sales of individual tickets. Sponsorships and tickets may be purchased at the Sheriff's Meadow Foundation website at www.sheriffsmeadow.org, or by telephoning the office at (508) 693-5207.



Nat's Farm, photo by Bob Avakian.

Summer Activities

Sunday, June 9, 2013

Time to be announced
Teacher Training Workshop
Cedar Tree Neck Sanctuary
Free.

Monday, July 15, 2013

6:00 pm to 9:30 pm
Annual Summer Benefit
Nat's Farm
Please call (508) 693-5207
or visit our website at
www.sheriffsmeadow.org
to purchase tickets.

Friday, July 19, 2013

9:00 am
Henry Beetle Hough Society Walk
Cedar Tree Neck Sanctuary
Free – please call to pre-register.

Wednesday, July 24, 2013

7:30 pm
Speech by Dr. David Foster,
Director of the Harvard Forest
Old Whaling Church, Edgartown
Free.

Friday, August 2, 2013


9:00 am
Guided Trail Walk
Caroline Tutbill Preserve
Meet at Edgartown-Vineyard
Haven Road trailhead
Free.



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Summer Benefit to be Held at Nat's Farm and Misty Meadows Farm

Sheriff's Meadow Foundation is pleased to announce that the 2013 Summer Benefit will be held at Nat's Farm and Misty Meadows Farm in West Tisbury. The Summer Benefit is the chief fundraising activity for Sheriff's Meadow, and it has grown successfully over the years. This year, the benefit will be held on Monday evening, July 15, 2013 from 6:00 pm to 9:30 pm.

Nat's Farm is a 56-acre expanse of West Tisbury farmland found along the Old County Road. Leona and Alexander Langmuir gave the property to Sheriff's Meadow Foundation for conservation in 1989 and 1990. The Langmuirs set aside Nat's Farm as the conservation part of a 100-acre subdivision that was created with the help of the Vineyard Open Land Founda-

tion. Along with donating the fee interest in Nat's Farm to Sheriff's Meadow Foundation, the Langmuirs also donated a conservation restriction over the property to the Town of West Tisbury.

Local farms lease much of the land at Nat's Farm. Most of the South Pasture is leased by Misty Meadows Farm, a horse farm owned by Jerome and Carol Kenney. Approximately half of the North Pasture is leased by a partnership of North Tabor Farm and Mermaid Farm. Matthew Dix and Rebecca Miller own North Tabor Farm, and Allen Healy and Caitlin Jones own Mermaid Farm. Together, these farms grow hay on the North Pasture of Nat's



Nat's Farm, *photo by Bob Avakian.*

Farm. The sections of the North Pasture that have not been leased for farming are being maintained as a natural meadow because these areas contain

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