

BUCKSKILL NATURE PRESERVE: **MANAGEMENT PLAN**

Prepared by the Management Plan Subcommittee of the
Town's Nature Preserve Committee

(The attached is a management plan for the Buckskill Preserve located
between Sag Harbor Turnpike (Route 114) and Stephen Hands Path.)

Zachary Cohen, Len Czajka, Paul D'Andrea, Terry Ganley,
George Larsen, Bill Lundin, Gene Makl, Kurt Pfund, Ed Porco
and Mitch Yates

June 27, 2002



TABLE OF CONTENTS

- I. Introduction**
- II. Description of Site**
- III. Management Goals and Issues**
- IV. Access**
- V. Usage**
- VI. Maintenance and Recommended Improvements**

APPENDIX

- I. Tax Map List**
- II. Tax Maps**
- III. Color Aerial Photo**
- IV. Map**

VII. INTRODUCTION

NAME AND OWNERSHIP

On November 22, 2001, the Town of East Hampton created the Buckskill Nature Preserve. This Preserve comprises one large triangular property of 140.7 acres, several small parcels of 32.5 acres. All of these parcels are owned entirely by the Town of East Hampton. This management plan also covers a contiguous large parcel of 178 acres owned by Suffolk County.

LOCATION AND SIZE

Buckskill Preserve totals 351.2 acres. It is anchored at its southeast corner by a large triangle parcel that begins at the intersection of the Sag Harbor Turnpike (Route 114) and Stephen Hands Path. The Preserve continues North and Westerly along these two roads for several hundred yards in each direction. The third leg of this triangle is contiguous with the large parcel owned by the county. These two parcels, which make up about 90% of the total acreage, stretch westward towards Daniel's Hole Road though the predominant boundary is Wolf's Hole Road, an unopened trustee road.

The smaller parcels in the Buckskill Preserve are typically isolated purchases that lie to the North and West towards Good Friend Park. Several of these touch Daniel's Hole Road. The Town of East Hampton also owns several acres on the eastern side of Route 114, across from the large triangular piece. These are not currently included in this management plan but may be in the future. A complete list of the properties and a map is annexed to this plan.

REASONS FOR NATURE PRESERVE DESIGNATION

The large parcels and most of the smaller parcels were purchased and granted Nature Preservation status to protect East Hampton's water supply. The Town of East Hampton's largest water recharge zone is directly beneath these undisturbed Pine Barrens.

The Buckskill Preserve also provides a habitat for mammalian wildlife common to East Hampton as well as birds that are both common to the area and those found only in pine barrens.

Some of the smaller parcels act as buffers and further the Nature Preserve goals of other parcels.

HISTORY

The origin of the name Buckskill is not clear. In early records the name appears as Buck's Kiln but there is no history of a kiln ever existing on the property. *In South Fork Place Names (1995)*, William Mulvihill claims that the name comes from the Manhasset Indian word buc-usk-kill, which means "resting place".

EXISTING STUDIES

In the year 1999, the Open Space Advisory Committee prepared a draft of a management plan for the Buckskill area that included most of the properties that now make up the Buckskill Preserve. The Buckskill Preserve had not yet been accorded Nature Preserve status and the management plan was neither finished nor approved. Some of this plan includes information taken from the prior study.

VIII. SITE DESCRIPTION

Buckskill is the largest undeveloped Pine Barrens woodland in East Hampton. The forest consists mostly of pitch pine but there are also three varieties of oak mixed in: white, scarlet and black. The ground cover consists of blueberry, huckleberry, dwarf oak, mountain laurel, sheep laurel and some inkberry. This all sits on top of one of the largest water recharge areas in East Hampton.

There are no paved roads in the Preserve. There are some dirt access roads, which only go a short distance into the Preserve. There are also one or two East Hampton Town Trustee roads. There is an extensive trail system crisscrossing the Preserve. The only commercial venue in the Preserve is LIPA power lines, which need to be accessed for maintenance and emergencies. The overall terrain is basically flat and the soil consists of coarse sand and fine to medium gravel.

The inhabitants of the Preserve consist of mammals, reptiles, amphibians, and birds. Whitetail deer, raccoons, gray and red fox have been know to take up residence. The rare birds that have been spotted are the red-breasted nuthatch, the pine warbler, the black and white warbler, the ovenbird, the eastern blue bird, and the rufous-sided towhee. Also, there are the usual birds such as robins, finches, blue jays, etc. The spotted salamander exists near Daniel's Hole. Garter and milk snakes have been known to help eliminate the vole population. Frogs, although not in great numbers, are also part of the wildlife population.

This is truly one of East Hampton's jewels!

III. MANAGEMENT GOALS AND ISSUES

The Buckskill Preserve is part of the largest, contiguous block of undeveloped Pine Barrens woodland in East Hampton and sits atop the largest water recharge area in Town. The terrain is basically flat and referred to as an "outwash plain". There are no structures (other than power line towers) or paved roads in the interior, although it is crisscrossed by several trails and a power line.

The primary goal for this Preserve is to protect the ground and drinking water from any and all forms of pollution. Therefore, care for its ecology must be exercised at all times to preserve the water, as well as the vegetation and wildlife resources. In order to insure this protection, there should be no paving, construction, clearing of trees or high impact use of the land. However, low impact activities such as nature studies, hunting, hiking, biking and horseback riding should be permitted to the general public. Adjoining parcels owned by Suffolk County offer opportunities for expanding low impact usage.

Fire safety and emergency access should be adequate since the property is bordered by Sag Harbor Turnpike (Route 114) on the North, Stephen Hands Path on the South, Goodfriend Park on the West and Wolf's Hole Road, which extends from the railroad crossing on Stephen Hands Path to the southern end of Goodfriend Park. In addition, the power line road cuts through the parcel. Also, MTA and LIPA should be encouraged to participate in and contribute to a fire protection plan for the area.

There are some critical issues which need to be addressed quickly and are covered in other sections of this Plan. Just to name a few: repair of ruts in the power line road, cleanup dumped debris, enforcement of Town dumping code and enforcement of no motor vehicles code.

IV. ACCESS

1. The main part of the Preserve is bounded by the LIRR tracks to the south, Stephen Hands Path to the east, and Route 114 to the north. There is an access dirt road that divides the Town from the County preserves and it is called Buckskill Road.
2. The Preserve (both Town and County) contains already many miles of trails and is well known to hikers, bikers, and horseback riders. Illegal off-road-vehicle (ORV) use, per East Hampton Town Code, is a problem that must be addressed more vigorously.
3. There are several points of entry into this extensive trail system including:
 - Buckskill Road at Route 114
 - Buckskill Road at Stephen Hands Path
 - Stephen Hands Path at the power line road
 - Daniel's Hole Road near the LIRR
 - Daniel's Hole Road at the power line road
 - Wainscott NW Road north of power line road
 - Route 114 just north of the intersection with Stephen Hands Path
 - Parking exists at all access points. Cars usually park off the road.

V. USAGE

Suggested Activities in This Preserve Include:

- Hiking
- Passive family recreation
- Bird watching
- Bicycling
- Nature studies
- Hunting as per E.H. Town and DEC regulations

Restricted Activities in This Preserve Include:

- Illegal off-road-vehicles (ORV) per East Hampton Town Code
- Digging and artifact recovery
- Woodcutting
- Removal of vegetation
- Abandonment of pets and other domesticated animals
- Dumping

Signage and Enforcement of Restrictions:

East Hampton Nature Preserve signs, as designated by the Nature Preserve Committee and approved by the Town Board, shall be posted about the perimeter of the Preserve to notify the public of its Nature Preserve status. Signage shall also be placed at the primary trail access points identifying the Preserve for public use.

Fines and Penalties:

All existing sections of the Town Code apply to this Preserve.
All fines and penalties should be assessed at the maximum amount.

VI. MANAGEMENT PLAN

MAINTENANCE:

The Town should schedule or work with other groups for clean-up days within the preserve.

Trail access and roads should be maintained and properly posted.

Possible patrols (see enforcement)

The Preserve should be left as pristine as possible.

RECOMMENDED IMPROVEMENTS:

East Hampton Nature Preserve signs, as designed by the N.P.C. shall be placed about the perimeter of the Preserve to notify the public of its nature preserve status.

The Town should have all the parcels making up the Preserve surveyed, showing accurate boundary lines and ownership.

The trails should be maintained and properly posted.

There are several points of entry into the Preserve, some of which is from the extensive trails system in this area. Parking is usually off the shoulder of the roads and no parking fields need be created. These entry points include:

- Buckskill Road at Route 114
- Buckskill Road at Stephen Hands Path
- Stephen Hands Path at the power line road
- Stephen Hands Path just north of the LIRR
- Daniel's Hole Road near the LIRR
- Daniel's Hole Road at the power line road
- Wainscott Northwest Road just north of the power line road
- Route 114 just north of the intersection with Stephen Hands Path

The Town, as well as the members of the Nature Preserve Committee, should take an active role in the oversight of the properties. Reporting activities and usage that are not allowed under current code or regulations.

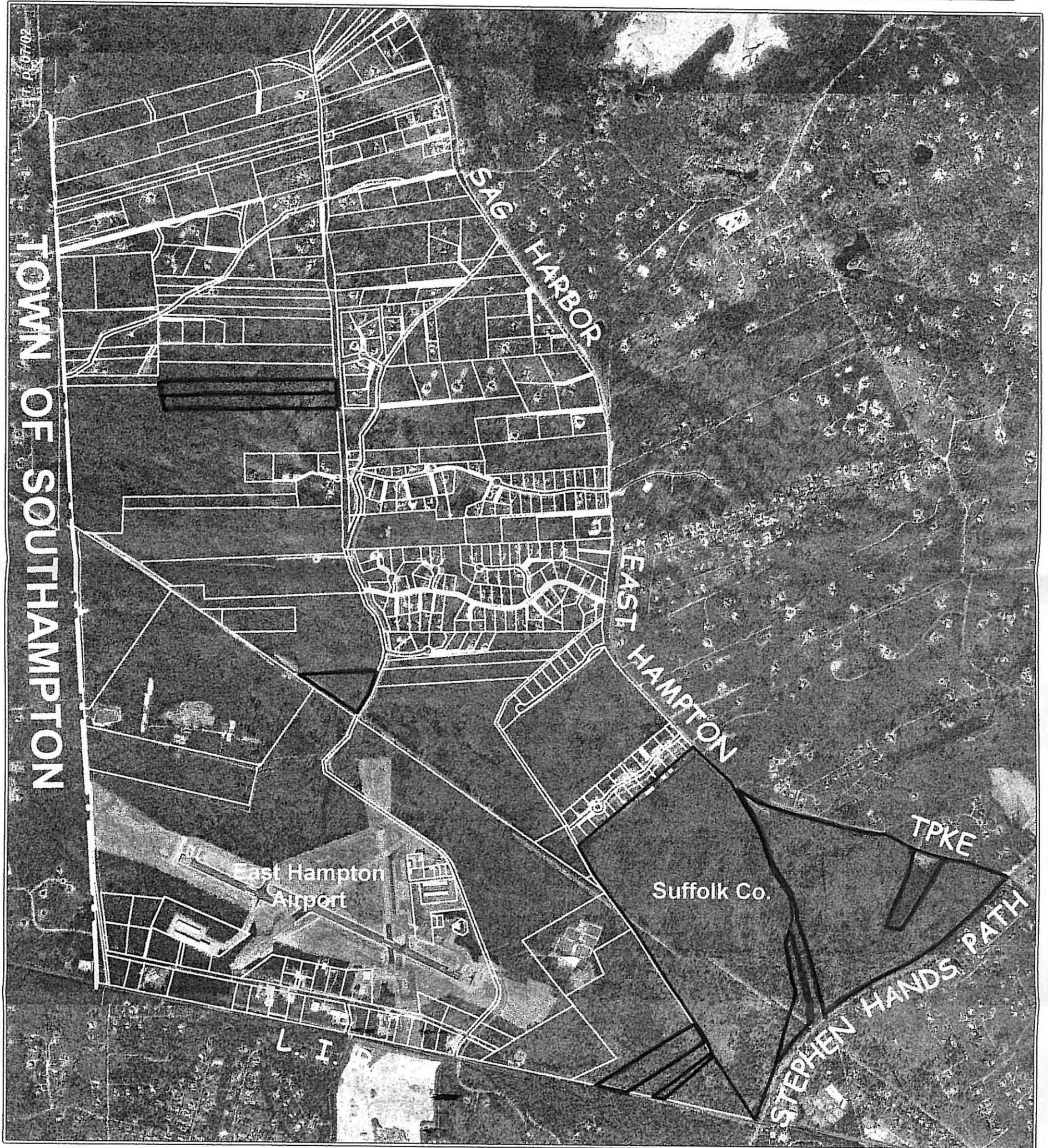
The Town **must** find a way to enforce the "*no motorized vehicles of any kind*" statute as exists in Town Code.

APPENDIX

BUCKSKILL NATURE PRESERVE
SUFFOLK COUNTY TAX MAP LIST

<u>SCTM # 300-</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Criteria for Inclusion*</u>
155-1-17	Borders County Preserve	11.0	H – Water Recharge
155-1-29	Borders County Preserve	10.2	H – Water Recharge
180-1-6	Borders Buckskill	7.1	H – Water Recharge
184-1-1	Buckskill woodland	7.3	H – Water Recharge
184-1-2	Buckskill woodland	102.7	H – Water Recharge
184-1-3	Buckskill woodland	7.9	H – Water Recharge
192-3-1	Buckskill woodland	2.1	H – Water Recharge
192-3-3	Buckskill woodland	10.1	H – Water Recharge

* From "Criteria for inclusion in the Nature Preserve"



NATURE PRESERVE LAND
Buckskill Area



SCALE: 1" = 2,000 FT



**Nature Preserved Land
Buckskill Area**