

TAFT ORCHARDS
Pollinator Garden

A Community Project to Restore Vital Pollinators
to our Environment



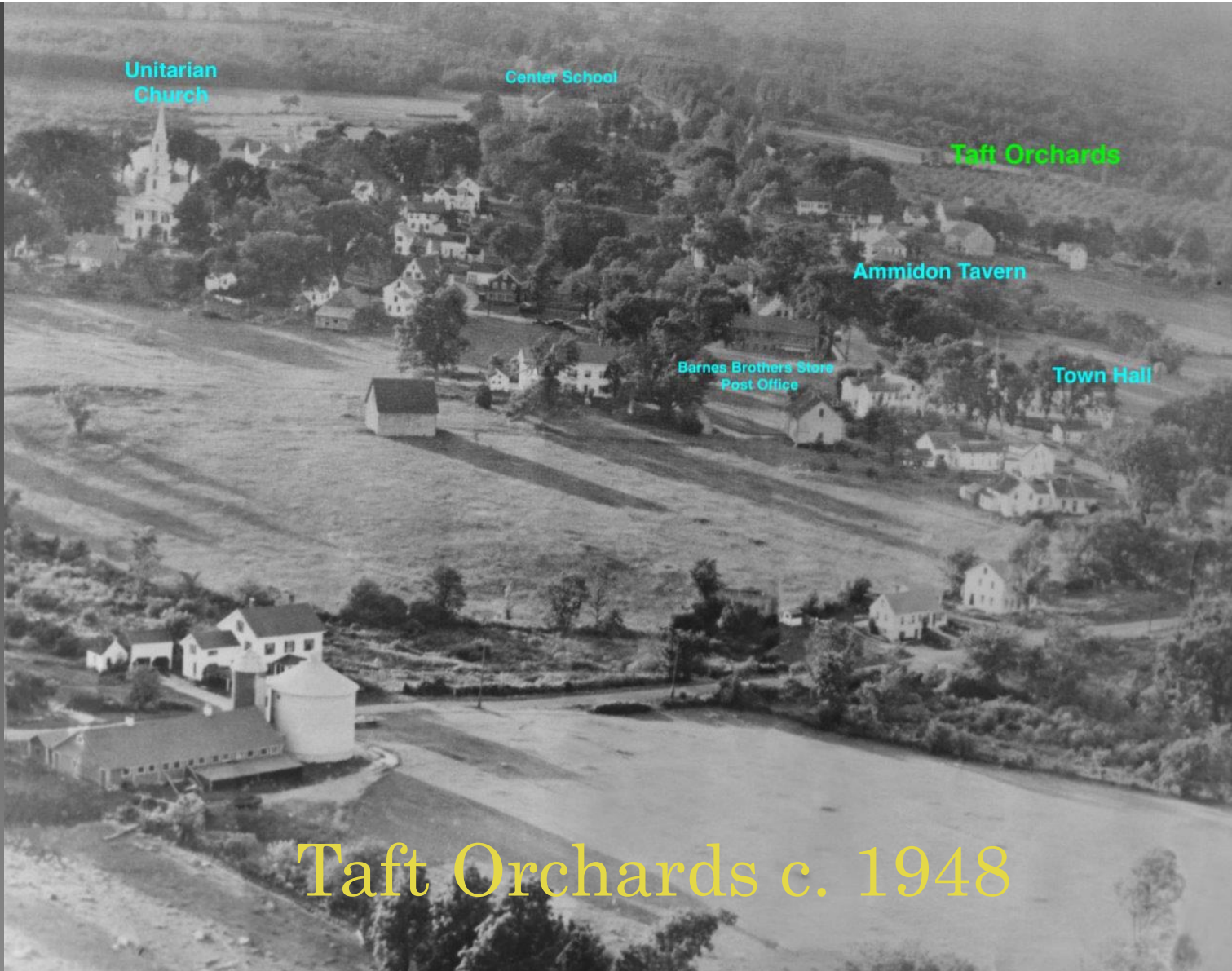
Our Future Flies on the Wings of
POLLINATORS

www.pollinator.org



UNITED STATES
BOTANIC GARDEN

FS-857
April 2006



Unitarian
Church

Center School

Taft Orchards

Ammidon Tavern

Barnes Brothers Store
Post Office

Town Hall

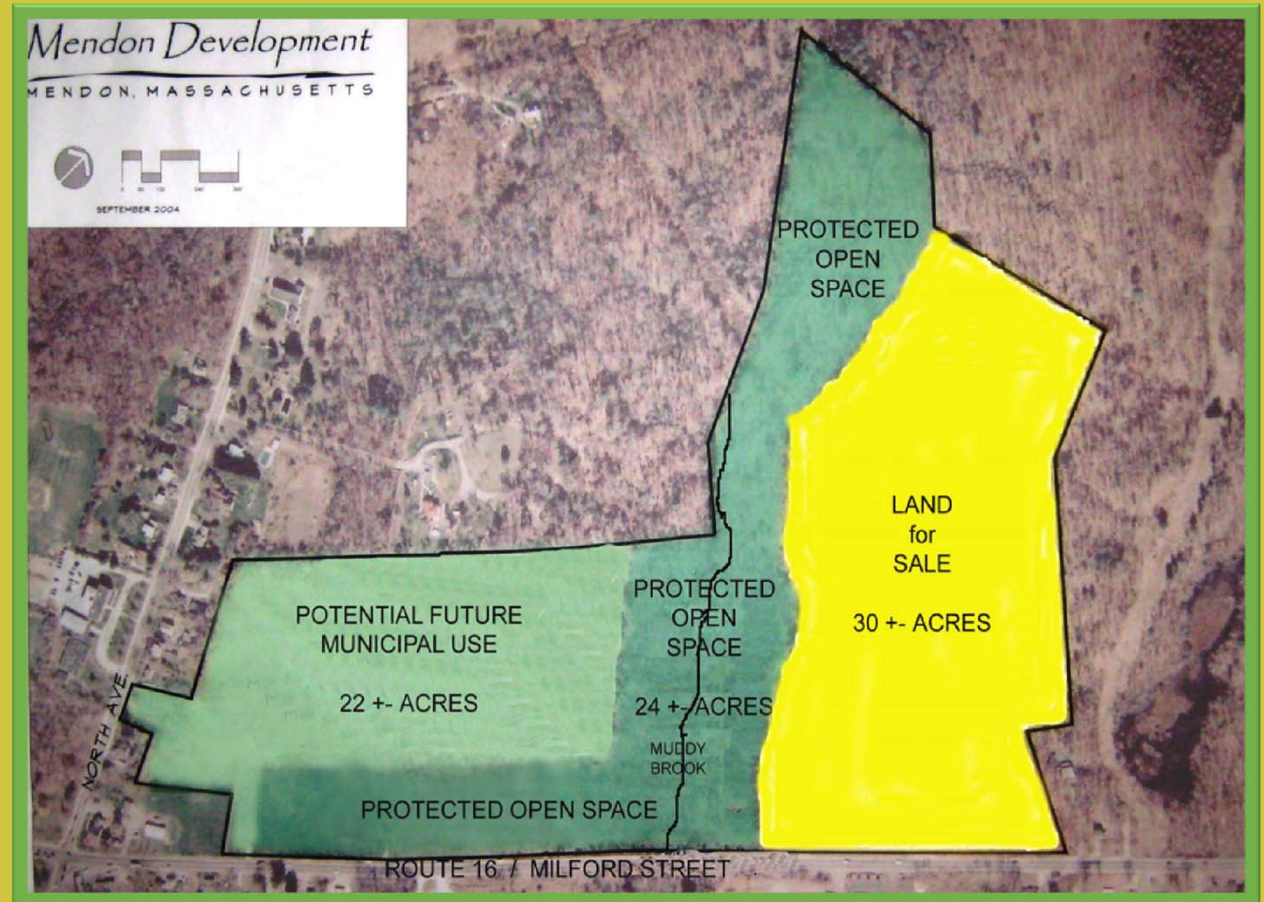
Taft Orchards c. 1948



Aerial View of Taft Orchards Today
2020

History of the 2004 Fino Land Purchase

- In 2004 the Town of Mendon purchased a 75-acre parcel to serve the future needs of our community. Those needs included space for municipal structures, athletic fields, safe pedestrian travel and open space and recreation. The Town is now in the process of identifying a comprehensive "Best Plan" for this property formerly known as the Fino Land.
- 24 acres in this parcel is protected open space along Muddy Brook and Route 16. Funding for a proposal to create a pollinator garden and trail in this currently unusable space is being presented to the voters of Mendon on June 29, 2020 for consideration. This project will not impact the development potential of the parcels on either side of the open space.
- The goal of this 5 year project will be to restore native plants that have been lost to development and land clearing practices. Over the past 10 years there has been a significant documented decline in the bee and pollinator populations. Restoring habitats with native plantings increases the chances of their survival. This decline has effected both our state and region and local communities are working to create solutions to address this issue.



Why its Important to Restore Native Plants

Definition:

Native plants are indigenous species of land and water plants that naturally occur in a particular region, ecosystem and habitat. North American native plants are those that were present prior to European settlement.

Benefits:

- Flowering plants produce breathable oxygen. With the increased burning of fossil fuels and destruction of vital forests, carbon dioxide levels have been rapidly increasing in the last century. Pollinators are key to restoring some of those native landscape plants. (USFS)
- Flowering plants purify water and prevent soil erosion. Pollinators are instrumental to making sure these plants can reproduce. (USFS)
- Providing a healthy native plant base for pollinators gives scientists and entomologists the opportunity to track their presence and study the possible causes for their population decline.
- Installing Pollinator Gardens can help increase their populations and return some of the native plant material lost to development.

Local Benefits:

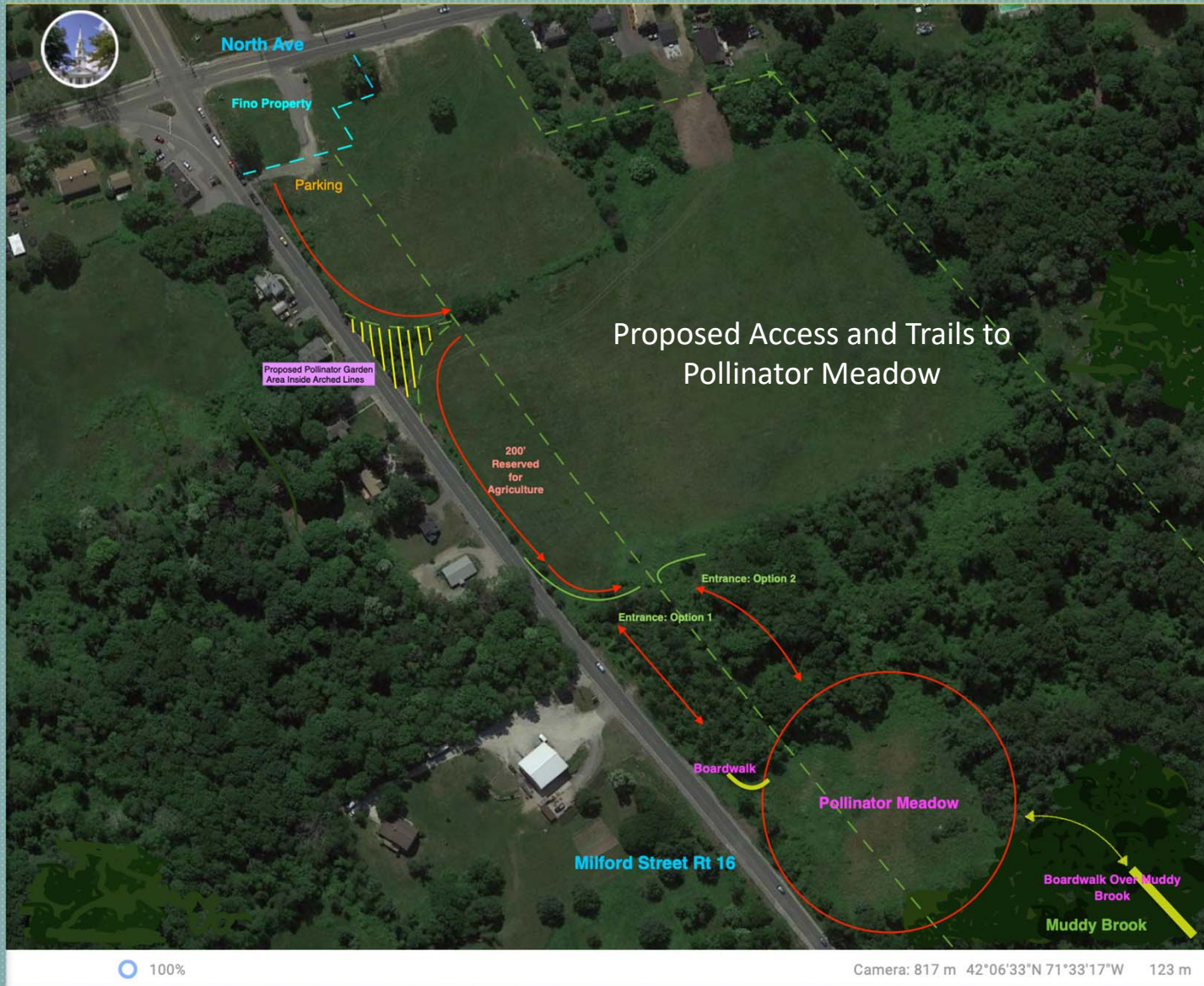
- Throughout the United States there is a growing trend to reintroduce home and community gardens. In Mendon we have several small-scale produce growers as well as fruit orchards. North Ave is home to a new community garden that was launched several years ago.
- Farmers in our community offer a host of products and many participate in local farmers markets. We are fortunate to have locally grown food available and expect to see this trend continue to grow.
- Part of their ongoing success will depend on the presence of pollinators in the environment.
- Familiar Crops That Depend on Pollinators:

Apples, Peaches, Plums, Pears, Black and Red Currants, Alfalfa, Okra, Strawberries, Onions, Green Beans, Cherries, Celery, Figs, Fennel, Quince, Carrots, Cucumber, Cantaloupe, Watermelon, Boysenberries, Beets, Broccoli, Cauliflower, Cabbage, Brussels Sprouts, Bok Choy, Turnips, Peppers, Eggplant, Raspberries, Elderberries, Blackberries, Clover, Cranberries, Tomatoes and Grapes and squash and potatoes.

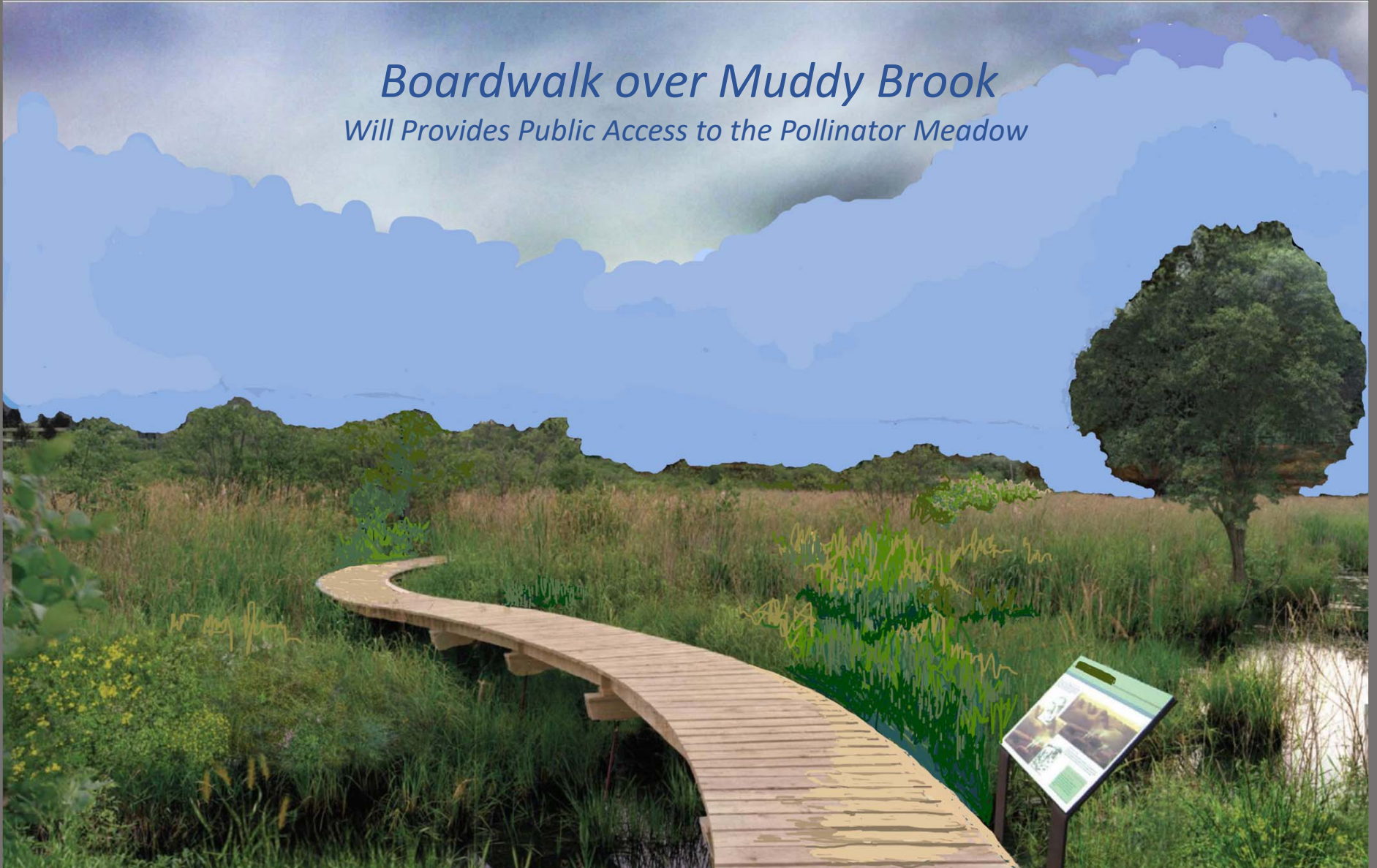
Why We Need Pollinators:

Of the 1,400 crop plants grown around the world that provide all of our food and plant based industrial products almost 80% require pollination by animals.

- More than half of the world's diet of fats and oils comes from animal pollinated plants (palm, canola, sunflower etc.)
- The work of bees and other pollinators result in larger, more flavorful fruits and higher crop yields.
- More than 150 food crops in the US depend on pollinators, including almost all fruit and grain crops.
- The USDA estimates that crops dependent on pollination are worth more than \$10 billion per year. ~US Forest Service



Boardwalk over Muddy Brook
Will Provides Public Access to the Pollinator Meadow



Pedestrian Access to the Pollinator Meadow

Low Maintenance Pollinator Friendly Trees and Shrubs Line a gravel path parallel to Route 16 (Milford Street) allowing access to viewing areas in the Meadow



The Taft Orchard Pollinator Garden project will take approximately 5 years to completion.

Components of the project will include the following:

- Removal and management of invasive species of plants and trees
- Development of pathways and trails in and out of the pollinator meadow
- Nature observation areas along Muddy Brook and the Taft Orchard Meadow
- Two boardwalk areas - one that will allow access over the wet areas of the meadow and a second boardwalk and footbridge over Muddy Brook
- Plantings of native shade and flowering trees and shrubs
- Planting native perennials to provide ongoing blooms and color throughout the seasons and vital nectar for native pollinators.

This project is a great opportunity to partner with schools, organizations and businesses in our community to teach the importance of creating a healthy balance in the environment. There are many opportunities available for volunteers including clearing trails, building boardwalks, building animal and bee habitats, planting, educating the public and enjoying a remarkable open space that is diverse and full of extraordinary wildlife.

For further information or to become a volunteer please contact the Mendon Land Use Committee Chair: amazar@mendonma.gov.

We hope that you will support funding for this
valuable community project and resource