

**The President and DEEP Message**  
**Dr. John E. Flaherty**  
**Field Trial Clubs Association, Inc.**

On behalf of the Flaherty Field Trial Association, I welcome you to the Dr. John E. Flaherty Field Trial Area in East Windsor, Connecticut. The 500+-acre property is the State's premier field trial site and provides high quality habitat for wildlife. The area was acquired by the State of Connecticut in multiple transactions dating back to 1947 and has a long history of use as a field trial area. Based upon this historical use and the intent of the transfer of ownership from the Pelton family to continue field trial activities, the area has been managed to provide and enhance these activities, along with other compatible wildlife-based recreation. The most prominent feature of this management area is the large expanse of open fields that serve as critically important habitat for wildlife in a heavily developed industrial and residential community.



Since its inception, the Flaherty Field Trial Area has been a work in progress. For the past 77 years, the Association and the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) have enjoyed an excellent working relationship that is essential to our success. A management plan, revised in 2013 through a collaborative effort between the DEEP and the Association, continues to guide the management activities carried out on the property each year. The ten-year plan reviews the attributes and history of the area and established the following goals: (1) Maintain and enhance the property to assure its continued status as a premier field trial area; (2) Maintain and enhance the large expanses of grassland habitat for field trial activities, outdoor recreation, and natural resource values; (3) Maintain and develop a diversity of other wildlife habitats including shrubland-old fields, forest and wetlands; and (4) Enhance opportunities for public use in a manner that is compatible with field trial activities and consistent with sound natural resource management.

The DEEP has remained committed to working in partnership with the Association to maintain the Flaherty grounds and keep them up to the standards we have come to enjoy. The DEEP Wildlife Division oversees the administration, habitat management and facility maintenance work completed on the property working in cooperation with the DEEP Field Support Services (FSS) Division. The DEEP's work annually includes herbiciding invasive plants, habitat mowing and grounds maintenance (lawn mowing, brushwork, sign posting).

Continuing the Association's history of making improvements, in 2019 we installed our well-received front door, built a new roof on the wood storage room, remodeled the back room and placed our history in pictures on the wall. The DEEP placed gates at three locations in the main entrance area and developed a project proposal to upgrade the property's 3.5 miles of interior service road. The work will be completed in 2020 by DEEP Eastern District FSS staff and equipment as weather, schedules and other Wildlife Division priorities permit. In January of 2020, DEEP replaced the lighting in the Clubhouse with LED lighting.

In the fall of 2019, we partnered with the DEEP to hold a Junior Hunt Day and a Women's Hunt Day. Cory Roy chaired the events for the Association and both were a great success. Henry Wierzbicki represented the Association at the Discover Outdoor Connecticut Day at Hammonasset Beach State Park. Henry and his team were well received and the event was a great success. We will continue to support the DEEP for 2020 hosting hunting events and supporting Discover Outdoor Connecticut. The Association continued its yearly donation to the East Windsor Ambulance and this year we also donated to the East Windsor Police Department to help purchase dog food for the new canine officer.

Our Executive Board, Cory Roy, Janice Gregory, Sarah Conyngham, Bob Fleury, Rich Garini, Tom Mercier and Rich Murphy, continues to support the Association with their knowledge and their time.

Without the dedication of this team, we would not be able to continue to improve the grounds and the experience for the participants.

Our sixteen-member Clubs hosted thirty-two high class events this year, numerous being one-hour championships. The events were run by Clubs supported by the American Field and the AKC. If you have never attended an event, all of our events welcome spectators. Please come out and enjoy the spectacle of high-quality bird dogs doing what they were bred for.

My continued request for this year is please respect the grounds and leave the grounds as clean as when you arrived or better. We are acting as ambassadors to the sport whenever we are at any field trial. Treat everyone you encounter with respect and understanding, be a good sportsman, and be helpful to your fellow competitors. Lastly, be a mentor to a new competitor; it will help to grow our sport.

The DEEP is focused on bringing in new hunters and revitalizing hunters that have stopped hunting through a comprehensive planning effort to Retain, Recruit and Reactivate licensed hunters; a program referred to as R3. The Association supports the DEEP in this endeavor. We all need to find a way to bring new sportsman into our ranks... neighbors, friends or even a young adult that needs a mentor. For anyone that uses the grounds, I urge you to get a Connecticut hunting license if you are an active field trialer, AKC Pointing or hunting test participant, or just a hiker, biker or dog walker; the licenses help support the grounds. If you prefer, you can go to the DEEP hunting license website and make a donation in lieu of a hunting license.

In conclusion, the Association would like to wish all the competitors that will attend the field trials and hunt tests on our hallowed grounds best wishes and thank you for continuing the tradition.

Dick Frawley, President  
Ann Kilpatrick Biologist DEEP State of Connecticut