

Connecticut College Arboretum

Recreation Policy

The Connecticut College Arboretum Mission Statement specifies seven topics or areas of activity: Teaching, Research, Conservation, Plant Collections, Cultural Resource Stewardship, Public Education and Recreation. Policies provide history, context, management guidance and goals for Arboretum staff, College community and others. The portion of the mission related to recreation is:

“To provide a place where people from the College and the community may enjoy passive recreation and where they may come to learn, reflect and renew themselves through contact with the natural world. The Arboretum enhances the quality of life both for the constituents of the College and the citizens of southeastern Connecticut.”

The Arboretum mission statement was originally written prior to the designation of all campus lands as being part of the Arboretum in 1996. The reference to passive recreation refers primarily to Natural Areas and college lands west of the main campus. Passive activities include walking, dog walking, birding, plant identification, photography, picnicking, sunning, reading, etc.

Active recreation is clearly appropriate on athletic playing fields and on designated jogging trails for example, which are all to the east of Williams Street and west of the railroad tracks.

It is especially important to keep human influences to a minimum in the Arboretum’s designated Natural Areas (Bolleswood, Goodwin and Mamacoke) which are the location of many long and short term research projects. The Arboretum and the Office of Facilities Management Grounds Crew together maintain about 3 miles of jogging (and walking) trails through forests and fields, starting at the Athletic Center. This area between Route 32 and the railroad tracks is all zoned as Arboretum managed lands and is available for more intensive uses like jogging on trails and sports in designated fields.

Team and other intensive but informal sporting activities are only appropriate on designated playing fields and at a few other open areas on the main campus.

There are some activities that are not appropriate on any college property unless specifically authorized, including camping, fires, bicycling and the use of motorized vehicles on unpaved surfaces, rock climbing, personal boating, target practice with firearms or archery equipment, and freshwater fishing.

Well behaved dogs on leashes are welcome and owners are responsible for cleaning dog waste.

Buck Lodge and the Outdoor Theater are available for some kinds of college and community events by arrangement with the Arboretum office and the Office of Events. Buck Lodge is typically used by college departments, committees and clubs for picnics, retreats, and meetings.

During part of the summer it is used by Flock Theatre for storage of costumes and props when they are in residence rehearsing and performing.

The Outdoor Theatre is reserved by Flock Theater for their summer Shakespeare in the Arboretum productions, and for occasional music concerts and occasional weddings.

GOALS

- Effectively and regularly communicate with the college community about appropriate activities and locations for them.
 - Collaborate with the Athletic Department and Office of Communications to develop strategies to better inform the community.
- Explore different communication methods beyond paper maps and signage.
- Enhance Buck Lodge so it is more user friendly year-round.
- Evaluate the jogging trail system and develop erosion control strategies.
- Improve the jogging trail marking system