

# Conservationists Reveal Plan for 42-Acre Site

By SAM HOFFMAN

CHICOPEE — Ambitious plans for the development of a nature study area at Buena Vista, a 42-acre, city-owned tract near Slate Road, were revealed by Leslie A. Fournier, chairman of the Chicopee Conservation Commission.

Fournier outlined plans after the Board of Aldermen approved Mayor Richard H. Demers' recommendation to transfer jurisdiction of the land to the commission.

"The tract is ideally suited for nature study and conservation because it is an extension of hundreds of acres of 'green area' in the

state park, municipal golf course and Oregon Sportsmen's Club land," declared Fournier.

"The area runs along the east boundary of Westover Air Force Base, from Chicopee well into the town of Ludlow," he noted.

## First Project

The first project, Fournier said, will be the development of a nature trail from the comparatively small 42-acre tract into the state park. Permission will be sought from the state Department of Natural Resources to make use of its land for this purpose.

The trail will be marked

with signs indicating various species of trees, shrubs and plants, as well as areas where certain birds and animals may be seen at times.

He said several Boy Scouts already have volunteered to assist the commission in laying out the trail and erecting signs. A minimum of tree cutting will be done in order to keep the trail in as natural a state as possible.

Work will begin in the Spring, with a June target date for completion, Fournier said.

Eventually, he said the commission hopes to sponsor a monthly program probably on a Sunday afternoon, when naturalists, bird experts and others in the outdoor field

will be invited to conduct public tours.

"I feel this program, a first for Chicopee, would attract many persons, both young and old, for the commission has found there are many in the city vitally interested in the natural world around them," he declared.

He said the area is attractive and convenient in its location near Slate Road and Sheridan Street, but the soil is sandy and supports scrub pine and other poor vegetation.

As part of the nature preserve development, Fournier said, the commission intends to plant as many varieties of trees, shrubs and flowers it can muster.

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