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January 31, 2010

To the Old Saybrook Planning Commission:

There were several questions regarding box turtles at the recent hearing regarding "The Preserve." I am writing to provide some information on that species.

I am the founder and director of the [Turtle Conservation Project](#), which works to protect New England's turtles and the habitats on which they depend. I am on the board of the [Turtle Survival Alliance](#), a member of the [IUCN](#)'s Freshwater Turtle and Tortoise Specialist Group, and I am the past Chair of NEPARC's Box Turtle Working Group. For the past thirty years I have explored our local forests, fields and waters, and have become familiar with our area's turtles.

The eastern box turtle, *Terrepenne c. carolina*, was documented in several locations within the proposed development during surveys which were completed for the applicant under supervision of Michael Klemens, Ph.D.

In recent years, radio-tracking studies have shown that box turtles' ranges can be quite large. A box turtle may stay within a 5 to 15 acre area for five years, yet the next year may travel far outside that area. Because of this behavior, large areas that have not been fragmented by roads are essential for this species' long-term survival. Fragmentation of habitat causes myriad problems for wildlife, as described in Dr. Klemens' own book, [Nature in Fragments](#).

Every study that I am aware of demonstrates a link between development and declines in box turtle populations. I sincerely believe that this last unfragmented coastal forest should be protected in its entirety. It is, after all, the last one.

The next page shows some of the box turtles I have encountered whose home ranges include the 1000 acre forest. I welcome any questions you may have about this or other turtle species. Thank you for considering this letter, and thank you for your volunteer service.

Sincerely,

Charles Landrey

**PLANNING  
COMMISSION  
EXHIBIT 93**





**Above:** male eastern box turtle found in forest 15 minutes from Wild Apple Lane.

**Below:** female box turtle with radio transmitter and antenna, near Bokum Road.







**Above:** male box turtle eating earthworms, in forest near top of Fox Hill Road

**Below:** male box turtle on edge of freshly mown roadside of Barley Hill Road. Mowing is a major cause of box turtle mortality.

