

Open Space Report to the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee and the State Bond Commission

January 2018

Overview

Section 22a-6v of the General Statutes of Connecticut requires the Commissioner of the Department of Energy & Environmental Protection to submit a report to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to finance, revenue and bonding and to the State Bond Commission each month. The report provides information on the acquisition of land or interests in land by the state, a municipality, water company or nonprofit organization using funds authorized for the Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Program established under Sections 7-131d and the Recreation and Natural Heritage Trust Program established under Sections 23-73 to 23-79 of the Connecticut General Statutes.

Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Grant Program

The Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Grant Program provides grants to municipalities and private nonprofit land conservation organizations for the acquisition of open space land and to water companies to acquire land to be classified as Class I or Class II watershed land. The State of Connecticut receives a conservation and public access easement on property acquired to ensure that the property will be protected and available to residents of Connecticut as open space in perpetuity.

There were no open space and watershed acquisition grants closed in January 2018.

Recreation and Natural Heritage Trust Program

The Recreation and Natural Heritage Trust Program is the State of Connecticut's primary program for the acquisition of lands for the beneficial use and enjoyment of the public as additions to the State's system of parks, forests, wildlife, fisheries and natural resource management areas. The program acquires land that represents the ecological diversity of Connecticut, including natural features such as rivers, mountainous areas, coastal systems and their natural areas, in order to ensure the conservation of such land for recreational, scientific, educational, cultural and aesthetic purposes.

There were no Recreation and Natural Heritage Trust Program acquisitions closed in January 2018.

Open Space Report to the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee and the State Bond Commission

February 2018

Overview

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Sponsor	Project	Acres
Town of Coventry	Williams Property, Coventry	55.75
Winchester Land Trust	Tor-Win Farm, Torrington & Winchester	118.60

Williams Property, Coventry
Town of Coventry
Fee Acquisition



The Williams property has significant frontage on the Willimantic River by Eagleville Pond, protecting the Willimantic River corridor, a State-recognized Greenway.

The property possesses an extensive hiking trail which connects to the adjacent Joshua's Trust Property. Multiple Joshua's Trust properties are further south and the Town is hoping to purchase additional land that will provide an extensive open space corridor.

A majority of the property is forested and contributes to a 225+ acre unfragmented forest block.

The property frontage possesses prime important farmland soils with a long standing history as a hay field for production as well as pasturing for livestock.

This purchase will provide passive recreation opportunities on established trails and provide river access for fishing, canoeing, kayaking and wildlife viewing.

**Tor-Win Farm, Torrington and Winchester
Winchester Land Trust (WLT)
Fee Acquisition**



This 118 acre property, straddling the Torrington and Winchester town line, protects and compliments a large wilderness corridor with a headwater wetland and a stream, which flows through Paugnut State Forest and into Burr Pond.

This property has a fascinating history dating back to the 1800s, when it was owned by Gail Borden, of condensed milk fame. After the flood of 1955, the owners made the fields into an airstrip, which was used to bring in supplies.

The property is beautiful with 22 acres of grassland bordering the roadway and mature trees beyond. It presents a beautiful vista for passing motorists. The large grassland provides habitat for bobolink, woodcock, turkey and other wildlife.

The scenery and gentle terrain are perfect for passive recreation. WLT intends to create a loop trail on the property and hopes to one day link the loop trail to the Paugnut State Forest to the north and south.

This acquisition will protect nearly 100 acres of intact mature forestland and wildlife that require large areas of intact forest such as neotropical migrant birds, large mammals and other wildlife that depend on pristine wetlands and coldwater streams.

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Open Space Report to the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee and the State Bond Commission

March 2018

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There were no open space and watershed acquisition grants closed in March 2018.

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Open Space Report to the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee and the State Bond Commission

April 2018

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There were no open space and watershed acquisition grants closed in April 2018.

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There were no Recreation and Natural Heritage Trust Program acquisitions closed in April 2018.

Open Space Report to the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee and the State Bond Commission

May 2018

Overview

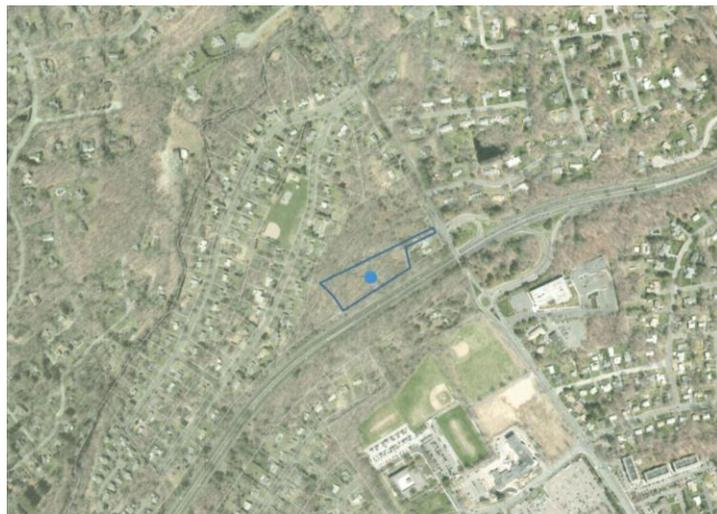
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Sponsor	Project	Acres
Town of Fairfield	5655 Park Avenue, Fairfield	2.8
Town of Suffield	Lefcheck Farm, Suffield (Easement)	30.277
South Central CT Regional Water Auth.	Luft Property, Madison	43.24

5655 Park Avenue, Fairfield
Town of Fairfield
2.8 Acres Fee Acquisition



This parcel is adjacent to the Merritt Parkway and abuts a 7.23 acre parcel of undeveloped land owned by the Department of Transportation (DOT). The Town of Fairfield will create a loop trail on the parcel for passive recreational activities. This acquisition will protect existing wildlife habitat and wetlands which discharge into the Mill River, a Class A trout stream located one-half mile north of the parcel. The Town is discussing acquisition of the adjacent DOT property at a future time, which would serve to protect a total of approximately 10 acres in an area experiencing high development pressure.

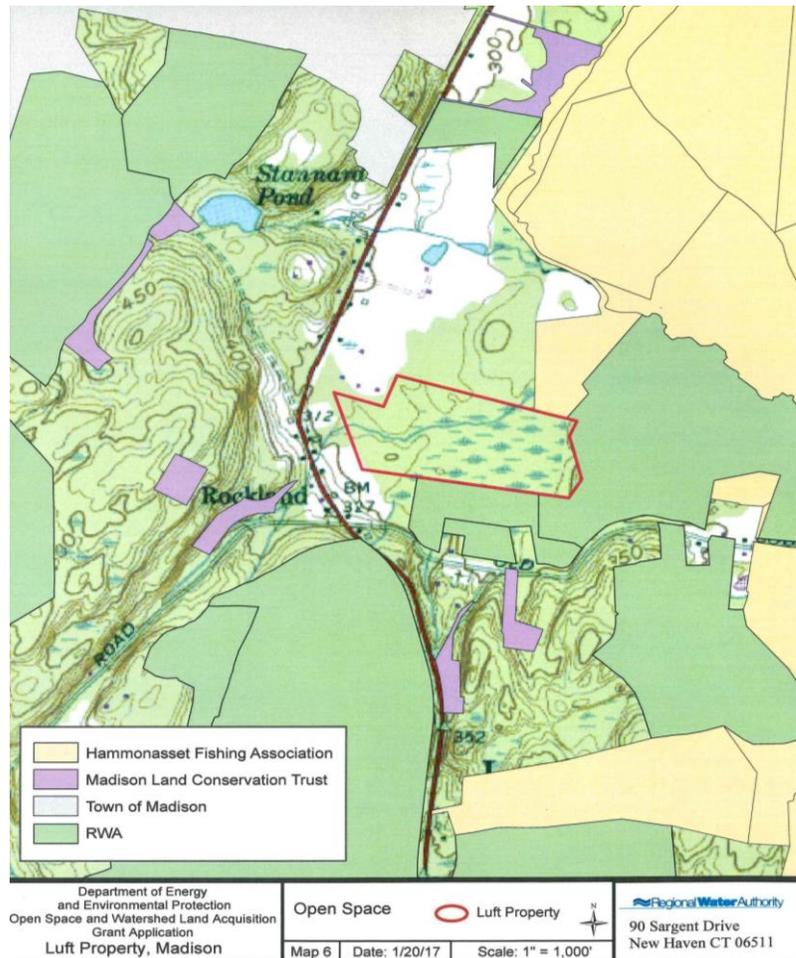
Lefcheck Farm, Suffield
Town of Suffield
30.277 Acres Conservation Easement

This property provides a vital linkage to existing preserved open space and agricultural land, totaling 280 contiguous acres. It has been farmed by the same family for over 100 years for hay and recently a small herd of beef cattle. A majority of the property contains prime and important agricultural soils. There are nine vernal pools within the wooded areas. A public trail for passive recreational uses will be added, with access from Wisteria Lane.



Luft Property, Madison
South Central Connecticut Regional Water Authority (RWA)
43.24 Acres Fee Acquisition

This property, located easterly of Durham Road (Rte. 79) in northern Madison, is within the public water supply watershed of Lake Hammonasset. It will protect several small streams that flow through this property and drain into the Hammonasset River. It was purchased for watershed protection purposes. About 29 acres of this property will be designated Class I watershed land, and about 14 acres will be designated Class II watershed land. The RWA will evaluate this acquisition to determine appropriate public recreational uses that can be permitted on this property, subject to DPH approval. The RWA owns 120 acres adjacent to the east and south.



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There were no Recreation and Natural Heritage Trust Program acquisitions closed in May 2018.

Open Space Report to the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee and the State Bond Commission

June 2018

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Sponsor	Project	Acres
Town of Sprague	Bombero Property	100.6

Bombero Property
Town of Sprague
100.6 Acres Fee Acquisition



This property, with 3,190 feet of frontage on the west bank of the Shetucket River (stocked by DEEP with trout and salmon), is heavily fished by members of the community, Trout Unlimited, and the Sprague Rod and Gun Club. Together with riverine habitat, the property also contains large open fields, swamp grasses, and deciduous forest. It is home to many types of plant, bird, and other wildlife. It offers passive recreational opportunities including fishing, hunting, hiking, running, cross country skiing, mountain biking, canoeing, tubing, horseback riding, and nature observation and education.

The property is situated nearby the Sprague Land Preserve (OSWA grant-funded Mukluk, Watson, and Robinson Properties), DEEP's Salt Rock and Mohegan State Forests, Joshua's Trust Merrick Brook Wildlife Area, and The Nature Conservancy's Bailey's Ravine. The Town of Sprague's long-range conservation plan is to connect this property to the Sprague Land Preserve, along the river, via a network of open space acquisitions, easements, river trails, and agreements with various land owners.

Recreation and Natural Heritage Trust Program

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Property Name	Location	Cooperator	Cooperator Share	Acreage	State Share	Purpose of Acquisition
Pellici Property	529 Millbrook Road, Middletown	N/A	\$0	12.07	\$90,000	Crystal Lake Dam Repair

529 Millbrook Road

Middletown

12.07 Acre Fee Acquisition



DEEP acquired this high-priority property in order to repair and maintain the Crystal Lake Dam. The Dam is in critical need of repair and this property provides essential access from Millbrook Road for present and future operations by DEEP's Dam Safety Unit. Other feasible passive recreational opportunities are being evaluated for the property. Prior to this acquisition, DEEP's only access was across a right-of-way through the neighboring property. Access over this property would have required expensive roadway and switchback construction, tree and building removal, site restoration, and more. DEEP will continue to utilize the existing right-of-way for alternate access purposes.

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July 2018

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Sponsor	Project	Town	Acres
Avalonia Land Conservancy, Inc.	Tri-Town Ridgeline Forest	Preston, Griswold, North Stonington	409.00

Avalonia Land Conservancy, Inc.
Miller Road, North Stonington
409 Acres Fee Acquisition



This 409-acre property is located in the three towns of North Stonington, Griswold, and Preston. It connects existing conservation lands to create 1,500 acres of contiguous open space, including a 213-acre portion of Pachaug State Forest. The property features unfragmented core forestland, wetlands, and headwater streams to Miller Brook and Broad Brook, providing habitat to native trout, state-listed breeding birds, and other wildlife. It hosts several miles of scenic, stone-walled trails which take hikers through valleys, over rolling hills, and along rocky ridgelines and outcrops.

Recreation and Natural Heritage Trust Program

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Open Space Report to the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee and the State Bond Commission

August 2018

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Recreation and Natural Heritage Trust Program

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Property Name	Location	Cooperator Share	Acreage	State Share	Purpose of Acquisition
Vagliano and A2V, LLC	Norfolk	<u>Pittman-Robertson Act:</u> \$725,000 <u>Highlands Conservation Act:</u> \$637,000 <u>Greenprint Partners Pledge Fund:</u> \$250,000	420	\$387,500	Addition to Housatonic State Forest

Vagliano and A2V, LLC Property

Route 44, Norfolk

420 Acres Fee Acquisition



Photo by Matt Starr

This 420-acre property is located southerly of Route 44 in Norfolk and abuts the Housatonic State Forest and is a portion of the viewshed for Haystack Mountain State Park. It is a key open space link from Canaan Mountain to the Blackberry River, and features forested land with spectacular views, pristine, cold water streams, and abundant wildlife. This acquisition provides the public with new opportunities for passive recreation, hunting, and fishing. Funding for this acquisition was provided by a US Fish and Wildlife Pittman-Robertson grant, a US Forest Service Highlands Conservation Act grant, State bond funds through the Recreational and Natural Heritage Trust Program, and a generous private donation through the Housatonic Valley Authority's Greenprint Partners Pledge Fund.

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September 2018

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Sponsor	Project	Town	Acres
Wyndham Land Trust	Bull Hill Preserve	Thompson/Woodstock	284.36
Northern Connecticut Land Trust	Bellante Preserve	Ellington	35.76
Branford Land Trust	Warner-Hull Property	Branford	29.00

Wyndham Land Trust, Inc.
Bull Hill Preserve, Bull Hill Road, Woodstock
284.36 Acres Fee Acquisition



© Jim Wheeler



This property is comprised of several inholdings and was acquired as a keystone to the Wyndham Land Trust's effort to preserve an open space corridor within a 3,000-acre forest located in Thompson and Woodstock. The 284-acre property offers miles of developed hiking trails and a scenic overlook from the ridgeline summit. This acquisition also serves to protect lands in the Little River watershed (Putnam's public drinking water supply) and habitat for uncommon nesting songbirds, box turtles, and mammals.

Northern Connecticut Land Trust, Inc.
Bellante Preserve, Sandy Beach Road/Route 140, Ellington
35.76 Acres Fee Acquisition



This parcel abuts another Northern Connecticut Land Trust preserve that is situated next to over 300 acres of State Forest land, helping to create a large open space corridor in the Eastern highlands section of Ellington. The parcel contains an extensive mountain laurel stand and provides habitat for forest breeding birds and other wildlife such as deer, turkey, rabbits, and bear. The Land Trust has plans to create a small public parking area on Route 140 and build trails which will connect with trails on its adjacent preserve.

Branford Land Trust, Inc.
Warner-Hull Property, Red Hill Road, Branford
29 Acres Fee Acquisition



This 29-acre parcel is located within the Hoadley Creek and Jarvis Creek watersheds and adds to nearly 1,000 acres of protected open space in the Branford and Guilford area. Its acquisition serves to protect coastal forest watershed land which drains to productive estuaries and the Long Island Sound, as well as habitat for several documented state-listed plant and animal species. The property expands and protects existing trail systems for public passive recreation and scenic views of ledge and rocky outcrops.

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Property Name	Location	Cooperator	Cooperator Share	Acreage	State Share	Purpose of Acquisition
Vynalek	Haddam View Heights, Haddam	Donation	\$4,610*	1.7 ac.	\$0	Donated addition to Ruddy Creek Wildlife Management Area

* approximate fair market value of donated property

Vynalek Property

Haddam View Heights, Haddam

1.7 Acres Fee Acquisition



This landlocked parcel abuts the Ruddy Creek Wildlife Management Area to the north and the Connecticut Valley Railroad State Park to the east. Should undeveloped land to its south become available for purchase, the parcel can be an important corridor for future State open space. The parcel is submerged and its acquisition serves to protect valuable marshland habitat for bald eagles, beavers, and other wildlife species. Its acquisition will also help DEEP to maintain its State Park property should it be in need of repair or maintenance for railroad passenger safety purposes.

Open Space Report to the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee and the State Bond Commission

October 2018

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Sponsor	Project	Town	Acres
Town of North Haven	182 Kings Highway	North Haven	29.08

Town of North Haven
182 Kings Highway, North Haven
29.08 Acres Fee Acquisition



Courtesy of Town of North Haven



The acquisition of this property protects inland wetlands and intact woodlands from the pressure of development in a high-density residential area. It will be left in its natural state to provide the public and local residents with opportunities for walking and other outdoor passive recreation. The Town of North Haven plans to clear brush from two entry points on Kings Highway and Hartford Turnpike to provide visitors with access to the property.

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Property Name	Location	Cooperator	Cooperator Share	Acreage	State Share	Purpose of Acquisition
Kaszney	Harwinton	US Fish and Wildlife Service, Pittman-Robertson Act	\$655,000	72.9 ac.	\$0	Addition to Roraback Wildlife Management Area

Kaszney Property

172 Whetsone Road, Harwinton

72.9 Acres Fee Acquisition

The acquisition of this property serves to protect a variety of cover types, including a mix of open fields, forest, and scenic brook lands. The eastern boundary of the property is Leadmine Brook and abuts a portion of the Roraback Wildlife Management Area. Also abutting Town of Harwinton parks and recreation land, this property expands the area's public hiking, hunting, and fishing opportunities. The project was fully funded with a US Fish and Wildlife Pittman-Robertson Act grant.



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Sponsor	Project	Town	Acres
Town of Hebron	Calvin Fish Property	Hebron	47.53
Old Lyme Land Trust	Denison Property	Old Lyme	10.72

**Town of Hebron
Calvin Fish Property
Gilead Street, Hebron
47.53 Acres Fee Acquisition**



Photo courtesy of Town of Hebron

This wooded property includes about 950 feet of Fawn Brook and adds to the Town of Hebron's Fawn Brook Greenway. Being a tributary to the Salmon River and mostly uninterrupted by land development, the protection of this parcel helps preserve Fawn Brook's high quality water resources. The parcel enhances existing local open space and provides new public fishing access. Located behind the Gilead Hill School, it also presents new, natural resource-based outdoor educational opportunities through the expansion of nearby school trails.

**Old Lyme Land Trust
Denison Property
Short Hills Road, Old Lyme
10.72 Acres Fee Acquisition**



Photos courtesy of Old Lyme Land Trust

The protection of this forested parcel increases the size of the Old Lyme Land Trust's existing Upper Three Mile River Preserve to 150 acres, further protecting unique coastal resources and growing local outdoor recreational opportunities. It expands upon the existing open space buffer to the Three Mile River, a creek that flows several miles south into the Long Island Sound. It contains a unique network of intact, historical stone walls. A new trail will follow these walls and old cart paths to link visitors to adjacent and nearby protected open space, including the 1,000-acre Preserve.

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Open Space Report to the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee and the State Bond Commission

December 2018

Overview

Section 22a-6v of the General Statutes of Connecticut requires the Commissioner of the Department of Energy & Environmental Protection to submit a report to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to finance, revenue and bonding and to the State Bond Commission each month. The report provides information on the acquisition of land or interests in land by the state, a municipality, water company or nonprofit organization using funds authorized for the Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Program established under Sections 7-131d and the Recreation and Natural Heritage Trust Program established under Sections 23-73 to 23-79 of the Connecticut General Statutes.

Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Grant Program

The Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Grant Program provides grants to municipalities and private nonprofit land conservation organizations for the acquisition of open space land and to water companies to acquire land to be classified as Class I or Class II watershed land. The State of Connecticut receives a conservation and public access easement on property acquired to ensure that the property will be protected and available to residents of Connecticut as open space in perpetuity. The following grant was closed in December 2018. Additional information on these projects follow.

Sponsor	Project	Town	Acres
Town of Lyme & Lyme Land Conservation Trust	Johnston Preserve	Lyme	250.04

**Town of Lyme & Lyme Land Conservation Trust
North Woods (Johnston) Preserve
194 Norwich-Salem Road, Lyme
250.04 Acres Fee Acquisition**



Being a part of the River-to-Ridgetop greenway, the federally-recognized Eight Mile River Wild and Scenic watershed, and the Audubon Connecticut Lyme Forest Block Important Bird Area, this acquisition has for decades been a high conservation priority for the Town of Lyme. It consists of a rugged landscape with varied habitats hosting unique plants and forest interior-breeding bird species. The property contributes to over 1,700 acres of adjacent protected open space. The Town will develop a small parking area to provide visitors with access and linkage to more than 12 miles of existing recreational trails.



Photos courtesy of Town of Lyme

Recreation and Natural Heritage Trust Program

The Recreation and Natural Heritage Trust Program is the State of Connecticut's primary program for the acquisition of lands for the beneficial use and enjoyment of the public as additions to the State's system of parks, forests, wildlife, fisheries and natural resource management areas. The program acquires land that represents the ecological diversity of Connecticut, including natural features such as rivers, mountainous areas, coastal systems and their natural areas, in order to ensure the conservation of such land for recreational, scientific, educational, cultural and aesthetic purposes. The following acquisition was closed in December 2018.

Property Name	Location	Cooperator Share	Acreage	State Share	Purpose of Acquisition
Gallup	Voluntown	N/A	162.87	\$790,000	Added to Pachaug State Forest
Castle	Pomfret	N/A	34.25	\$165,000	Added to Natchaug State Forest

(Additional information on next pages)

Gallup Property

860 & 860A Pendleton Hill Road, Voluntown

162.87 Acres Fee Acquisition



The Gallup Property features 162.87 acres of wide open fields, woodlands, and a small pond and scenic views. Being added to Pachuag State Forest, this acquisition expands passive recreation and hunting opportunities for the public.

Castle Property

374 & 400 Brooklyn Road, Pomfret

34.25 Acres Fee Acquisition



The Castle Property is mostly forested and hosts a small pond and existing recreational trails. Both the Harris Brook and Blackwell Brook flow through the property. This acquisition adds new public passive recreation and fishing and hunting opportunities to a large block of the Natchaug State Forest.