

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

April 2020

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 (OSWA) established under Sections 7-131d and the Recreation and Natural Heritage Trust Program (RNHTP) 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 April 2020.

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 acquisitions closed in March 2020. Additional information on this project follows.

Property Name	Town	Cooperator	Cooperator Share	State Share	Acreage	Purpose of Acquisition
Zito Builders, Inc.	East Haddam	US Nat. Park Service Land & Water Conservation Fund & U.S. Nat'l Park Service Eight Mile River Watershed*	\$157,500 & \$10,000*	\$157,500	92.83 acres	Addition to Devils Hopyard State Park

*Grant administered by the Eight Mile River Wild and Scenic Watershed Coordinating Committee, Watershed Grant Program. Partially funded A2 survey cost.

Property Name	Town	Cooperator	Cooperator Share	State Share	Acreage	Purpose of Acquisition
Robinson & Lewis	Canterbury	US National Park Service Land & Water Conservation Fund	\$94,250	\$94,250	15.69 acres	Addition to Quinebaug River WMA
Sleeping Giant Park Association	Hamden	N/A	N/A	\$192,000	13.26 acres	Addition to Sleeping Giant State Park
Fracchia Phase II	Hebron	USFWS	\$0 **	\$720,000	178.83 acres	Addition to Bishops Swamp WMA

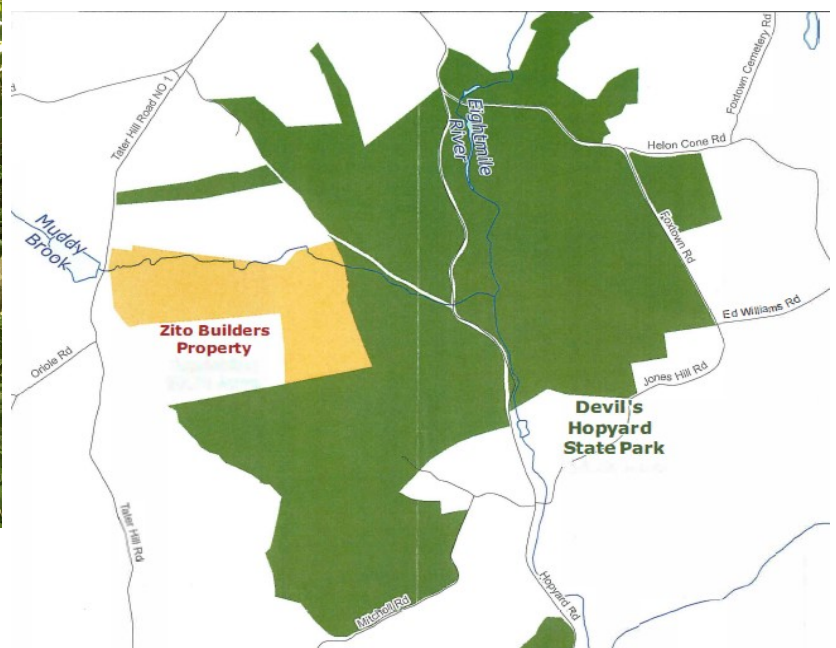
*Grant administered by the Eight Mile River Wild and Scenic Watershed Coordinating Committee, Watershed Grant Program. Partially funded A2 survey cost.

** Property is subject to USFWS Pittman-Robertson grant restrictions and will be used as land match towards future Pittman-Robertson projects

Zito Builders Inc. Property
Tater Hill Road, East Haddam
Devil's Hopyard State Park
92.83 Acre Fee Purchase



This acquisition protects a large area of ufragmented habitat within the Eight Mile River Watershed, one of seven federally recognized areas in New England that contains exceptional natural and cultural resources. The property features steep slopes, significant high quality wetlands, critical/imperiled habitats, high quality water supported by stream macroinvertebrate, and ideal for cold water stream temperature monitoring. Muddy Brook flows through the property. Devil's Hopyard State Park abuts the property to the east and south. The trail network is very close to the easterly edge of this property, providing improved recreational trail access and opportunities. The U.S. National Park Service Land and Water Conservation Fund funded half of the purchase price and an Eight Mile River Wild and Scenic Watershed grant contributed to the survey cost.





Robinson & Lewis Property
219 Wauregan Road, Canterbury
15.69 Acre Fee Acquisition

The Quinebaug Wildlife Management Area abuts this property to the east and south. The Quinebaug Valley State Trout Hatchery abuts the property on the southern side of the Quinebaug River in the Town of Plainfield. This acquisition protects 1100+/- feet of frontage on the Quinebaug River, a high quality watershed, in the Last Green Valley, a National Heritage Corridor in Canterbury and Plainfield. This purchase protects pitch pine and white pine sapling habitats, a possible riparian habitat for Natural Diversity Database protected mussels and dragonflies, a possible habitat for spadefoot and wintering eagles that roost in the vicinity, which would be otherwise hurt by development. This property will be open to the public for passive recreation to include fishing, hiking, hunting water access and wildlife observation. This acquisition was also funded, in part, by the U.S. National Park Service, Land and Water Conservation Fund.



Sleeping Giant Park Association Property
1020 & 1040 Mt. Carmel Avenue Rear, Hamden
15.69 Acre Fee Acquisition

The purchase of this property was a collaborative effort between the Sleeping Giant Park Association (SGPA) and DEEP who has been interested in purchasing the property since 1988.

The SGPA purchased the property in 2018 to prevent it from being developed. In an effort to merge these parcels with Sleeping Giant State Park and enable SGPA to purchase other property, DEEP purchased the property from SGPA in April 2020.

Sleeping Giant State Park abuts this property to the northwest, north and east. A public access trail from Chestnut Street provides improved public access to Sleeping Giant State Park.



Fracchia Phase II Property
239 North Street, Hebron
178.89 Acre Fee Acquisition

DEEP completed the second phase of the acquisition of the Fracchia property in Hebron. Located on the western side of North Street, the 178.89 acre property was improved with an old house and barns in poor condition which were generously removed by the sellers prior to closing. The land features a mixture of fields, forest, and a pond. The acquisition will provide additional protection to the Blackledge River watershed, along with passive recreational opportunities.

