

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

**June 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.

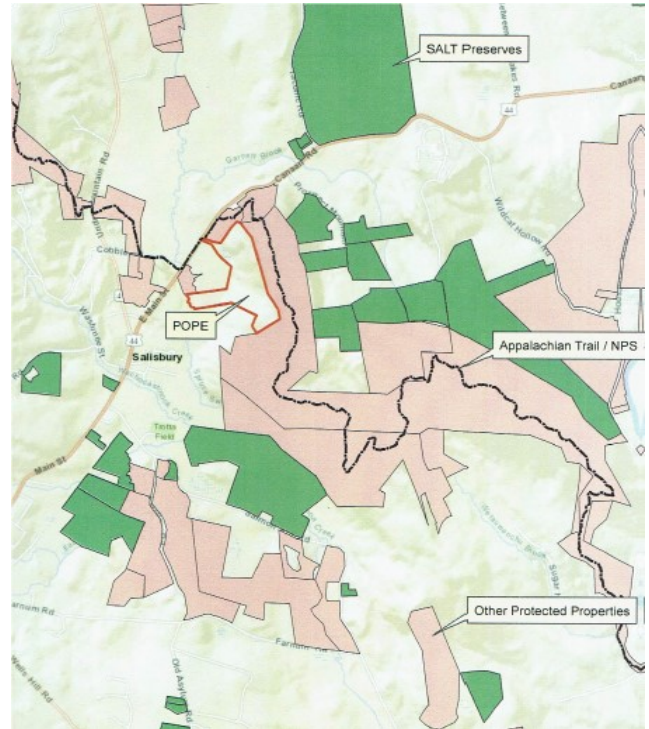
The following Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Grants closed in June 2020. Additional information on the projects follows.

<b>Sponsor</b>	<b>Project</b>	<b>Town</b>	<b>Acres Protected</b>
Salisbury Association, Incorporated	Pope Property	Salisbury	78.993 acres
Salisbury Association, Incorporated	Yoakum Property	Salisbury	241.17 acres

**Salisbury Association, Incorporated**  
**Pope Property**  
**78.993 Acres**

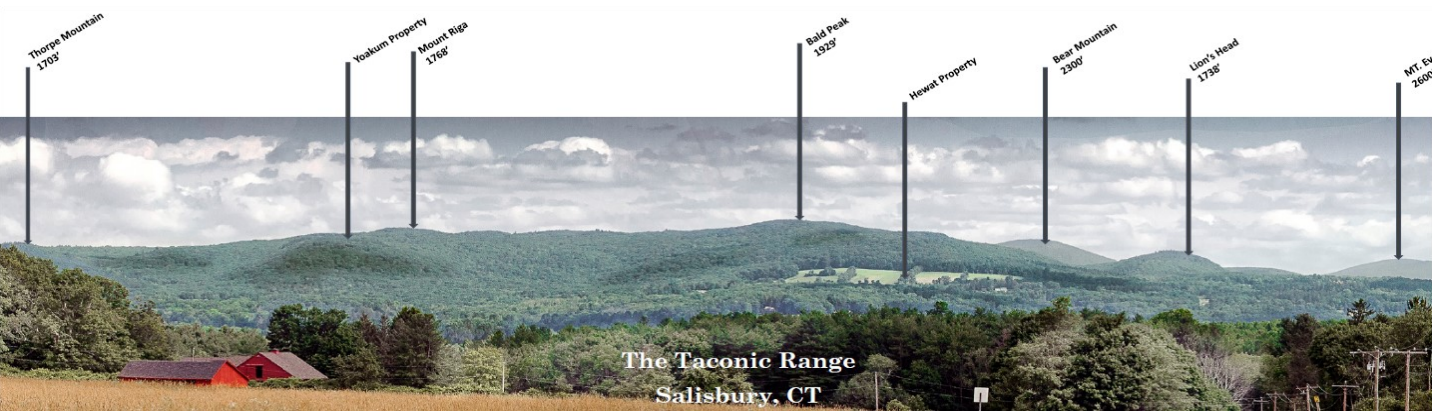


This 79+/- acre property is located on the beautiful Wetauwanchu Mountain, abutting the 2,200 mile Appalachian Trail corridor. It is part of a 2,000 acre forest block with an interesting mix of habitats containing upland and bottomland forest, shrub swamp, brook, farm field, and steep slopes with bedrock exposures and boulders. It has prime statewide-important farmland soils and eight state-listed NDDDB species have been documented on or near the property. This property protects Aquarion's public drinking water wellheads and Spruce Swamp Brook, a Class AA stream designated as habitat for fish and other aquatic life, which passes through the parcel and drains into the Salmon Kill a tributary of the Housatonic River. The property is bordered on three sides by the Appalachian Trail corridor. Salisbury Association, Incorporated plans to create a scenic trail (shown in second pic above, in yellow), leading to a scenic overlook with a spectacular view of Salisbury. The property will be open for hiking, birdwatching, snow-shoeing, fishing, and cross-country skiing.





Salisbury Association, Incorporated  
Yoakum Property  
241.17 Ac.



The 241.170 acre Yoakum Core Forest property in Salisbury, is located in one of the largest forest blocks (more than 14,000 acres) in the CT-MA-NY region of western New England. The property has ridgelines and several secondary summits of Mount Riga, 600 linear feet along Pettee Brook, a pristine trout stream. The property abuts and drains to 350 acres owned by TNC that surround Salisbury’s drinking water reservoirs. The property provides ideal habitat for a rich variety of wildlife, with two types of rare natural communities (acidic rocky summit/outcrop) and four rare species (timber rattlesnake, golden-winged warbler, cerulean warbler, and yellow banded bumblebee) documented in the NDDB.

This project was a cooperative effort between the Salisbury Association, Incorporated, DEEP’s Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Grant Program (\$650,000) and a United States Fish & Wildlife Service Highlands Conservation Act Grant (\$250,000).



## 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 Recreation and Natural Heritage Trust Program projects closed in June 2020. Additional information on the projects follow.

Property Name	Town	Cooperator	State Share	Acreage	Purpose of Acquisition
Markell	Columbia & Lebanon	NPS Land and Water Conservation Fund Town of Columbia Town of Lebanon Trust for Public Land	\$278,980.57	303.1 acres	Addition to Mono Pond State Park Reserve
Inzinga	Columbia	NPS Land and Water Conservation Fund Town of Columbia Trust for Public Land	\$70,870.19	99.5	Addition to Mono Pond State Park Reserve
Molodich	Sterling	N/A	\$350,000.00	103.26	Addition to Pachaug State Forest

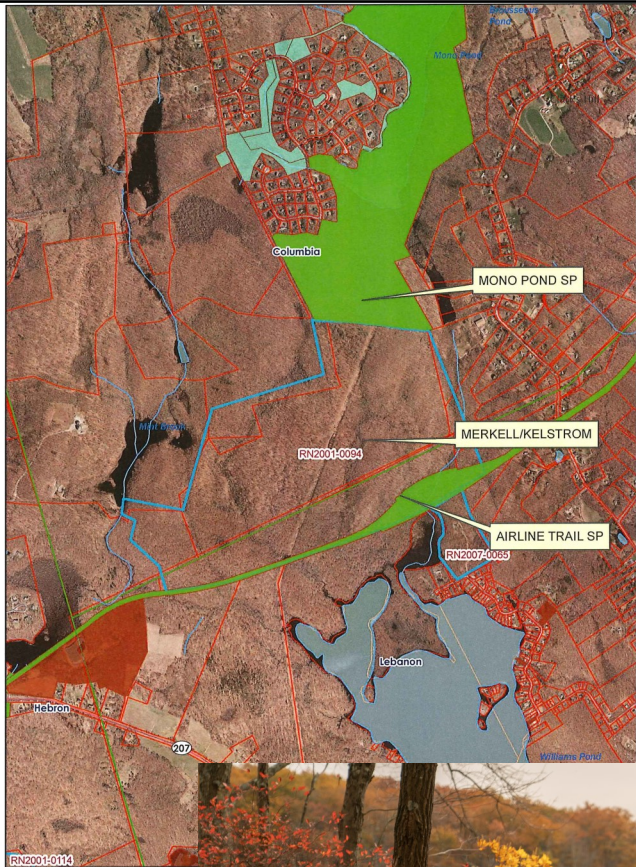


**Markell Property**  
**Leonard Bridge Road**  
**Mono Pond State Park Reserve**  
**303.1 Acre Fee Acquisition**

This 303.1 acre property is a key linkage in a nearly pristine habitat corridor situated between two state parks and over 200 acres of preserved farmland. It contains a mixed hardwood forest with a series of wetland areas providing habitat for migratory bird species, amphibians, and forest dwelling mammals.

This acquisition was a strategic recreational investment that has more than doubled Mono Pond State Park Reserve. It will connect trails from Mono Pond to the Airline Trail State Park. The public can enjoy the property via a series of old carriage roads, remnants of an 1820's settlement that was abandoned in the early 20th century.

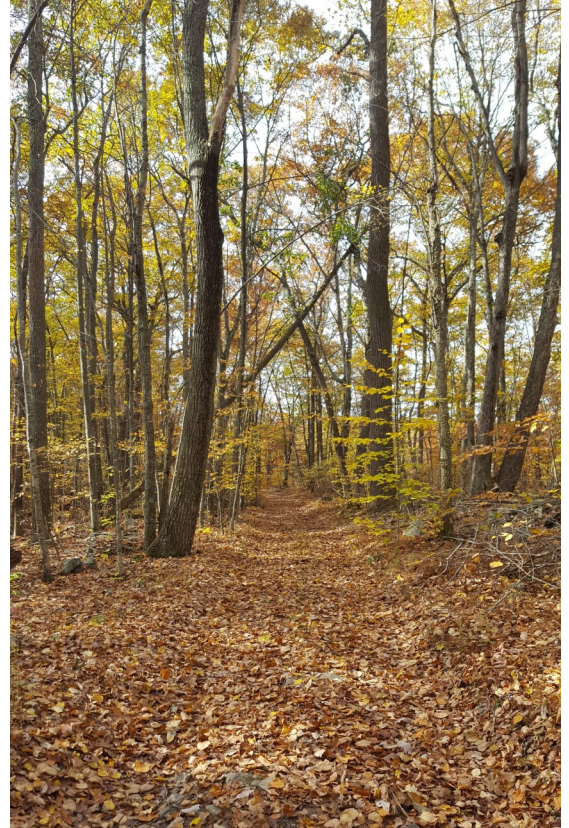
The project was a collaborative effort between federal, state, and municipal forces as well as the Trust for Public Land.





**Inzinga Property**  
**Wells Woods Road**  
**Mono Pond State Park Reserve**  
**99.5 Acre Fee Acquisition**

The State also purchased the 99.5 acre Inzinga property as an addition to Mono Pond State Park Reserve. The Inzinga property is almost entirely forested, contains productive wetlands, is part of the pristine Mint Brook corridor feeding the Salmon River Watershed, and has incredible scenic and wildlife viewing opportunities. Of roughly 20 acres of wetlands, most are freshwater forested/shrub wetlands, characterized by a dense thicket of highbush blueberry and other native deciduous species providing important habitat to many terrestrial species. A small portion of the wetlands are emergent, likewise offering important habitat to a variety of waterfowl, migratory birds, and amphibians. The property contains roughly 2 miles of trails that will connect to trails on the Kellstorm property and the rest of Mono Pond State Park Reserve.





**Molodich Family Limited Partnership Property**  
**Porter Pond Road, Sterling**  
**Pachaug State Forest**  
**103.26 Acres Fee Acquisition**

The acquisition consists of two parcels on Porter Pond Road. The 58.66 acre parcel on the west side abuts Pachaug State Forest and creates additional access and road frontage. The parcel on the east side of Porter Pond Road is 44.6 acres and has historically been hayed by the Molodich Family. This purchase protects the headwaters of Cedar Swamp Brook, has possible farm field habitat and is a potential habitat for green snake, tree bat and Atlantic white cedar swamp (NDDB). This acquisition was funded by DEEP's Recreation and Natural Heritage Trust Program.

