

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

**May 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.

<b>Sponsor</b>	<b>Project</b>	<b>Town</b>	<b>Acres Protected</b>
Watertown Land Trust, Inc.	Franson Farmland	Watertown	24.8 acres
Guilford Land Conservation Trust	Interior Westwoods Parcel	Guilford	32.2 acres
Canton Land Conservation Trust	45 West Road Rear	Canton	12.1 acres
Avalonia Land Conservancy, Inc.	Atkinson and Dirlam Properties	Ledyard	228.4 acres

**Watertown Land Trust, Inc.**  
**Franson Farmland**  
**24.8+/- acres in fee acquisition**



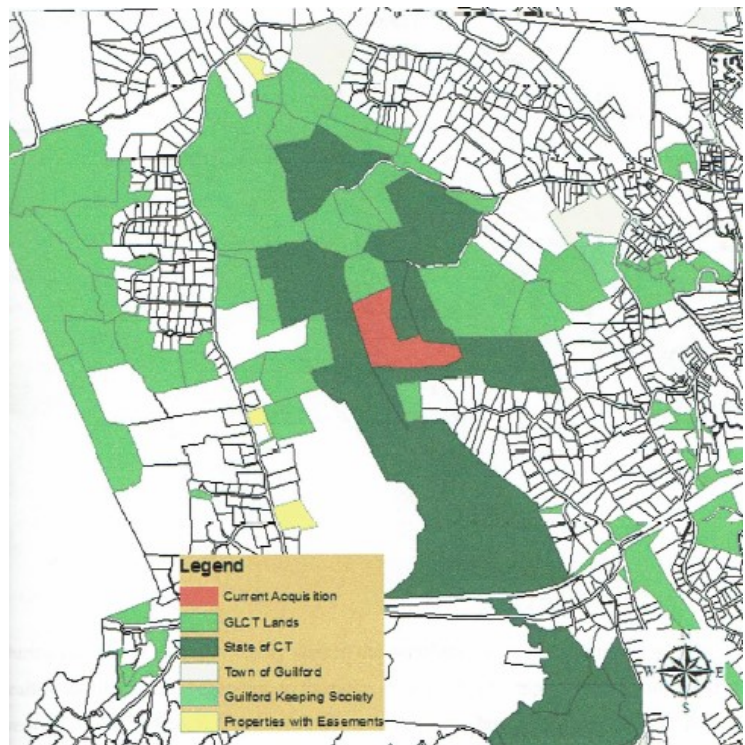
Half of this 24.8 acre property is part of Peck's Swamp, an extensive wetland system which provides habitat for amphibians, birds, and mammals. The other half of the property contains a meadow which will continue to be hayed by the Franson family.

The Watertown Land Trust will develop a trail system around the meadow and down to the edge of the swamp where the public can enjoy unobstructed views to the north and east of meadows and woodlands. This property provides important drinking water protection for the City of Waterbury and Watertown while sustaining local agriculture and passive recreation.

**Guilford Land Conservation Trust**  
**Interior Westwoods Parcel**  
**32.2 acres in fee acquisition**

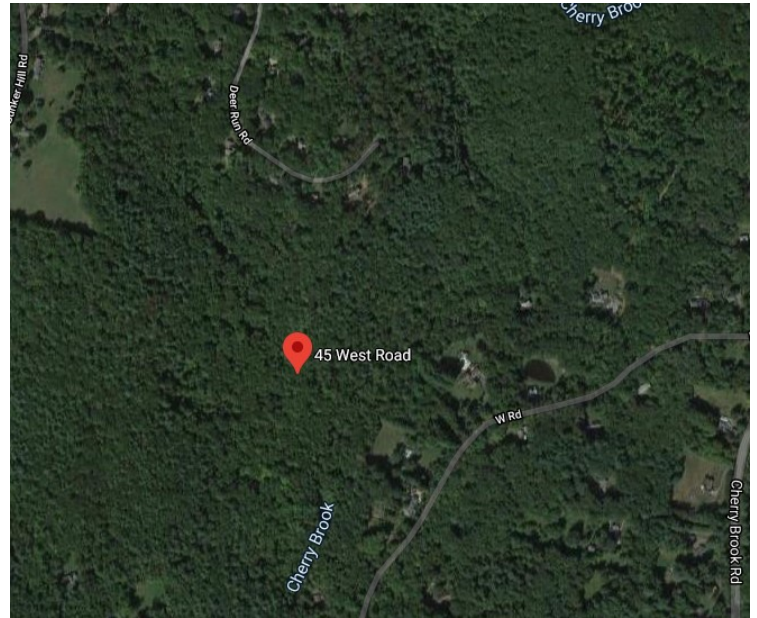
This 32.2 acre property is the final inholding at the center of a protected forest block covering hundreds of acres. As part of the greater Westwoods open space tapestry, this healthy forest will open up more miles of trail for passive recreational opportunities and provide habitat for interior forest species.

This property is located within the South Central Shoreline Drainage Basin, an important area effecting the water quality of the Long Island Sound. It contains wetland areas dominated by sweet pepperbush and rocky outcroppings made of granite.



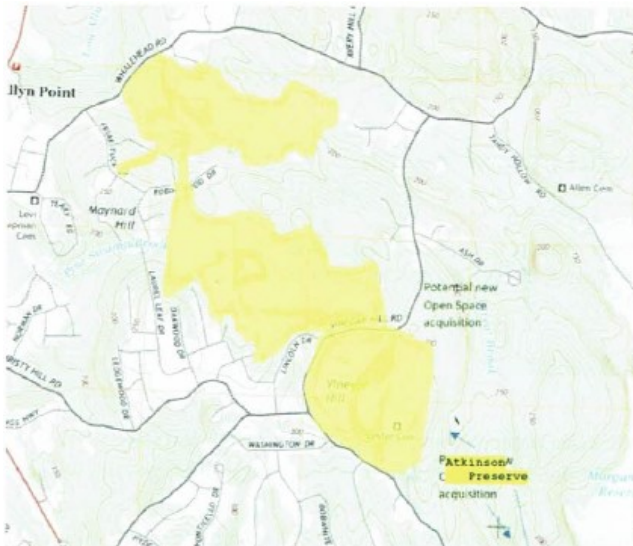


**Canton Land Conservation Trust**  
**45 West Road Rear**  
**12.1 acres in fee acquisition**



This parcel is located adjacent to a 39 acre parcel of land owned by the Canton Land Conservation Trust (CLCT) known as the “Sweeton Pasture Lot”. With over 680 feet of frontage on Cherry Brook, this newly acquired parcel will allow the CLCT to extend its hiking trail from the Sweeton Pasture Lot to this major tributary of the Farmington River. The public will be able to enjoy the property’s serene forest setting while taking advantage of its passive recreational opportunities.

**Avalonia Land Conservancy, Inc.**  
**Atkinson and Dirlam Properties**  
**228.4 acres in fee acquisition**



This large acquisition by the Avalonia Land Conservancy, Inc. (ALC) will expand the 400 acre Great Oak Greenway by more than 200 acres. The properties contain over five miles of wide, compacted woods roads and single track trails making various forms of public recreation immediately available. The Great Brook Watershed is located within the boundaries of these properties providing protection for the Ledyard Reservoir. Surrounded by town and ALC owned lands, this property is part of the largest intact coastal forest in Connecticut.

The headwaters of Thompson Brook are located on the property as well as significant wetlands and vernal pools. The public will be able to access the property off of Long Cove Road.

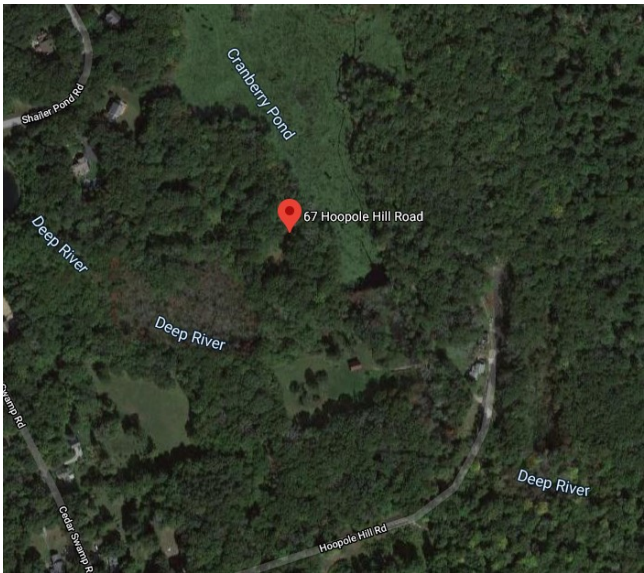


Recreation and Natural Heritage Trust Program

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.

Property Name	Town	Cooperator	State Share	Acreage	Purpose of Acquisition
BMC Land Management	Deep River	BMC Land Management	\$0	12.5 acres	Addition to Cockaponset State Forest

**BMC Land Management Property**  
**67 Hoopole Hill Rd. Deep River**  
**Cockaponset State Forest**  
**12.5 Acre Fee Donation**



This property was donated to DEEP by BMC Land Development, LLC. It’s a forested parcel that totals 12.55 acres and is located along Hoopole Hill Road in Deep River. It abuts the Cockaponset State Forest and will provide additional access to the forest by the public in turn increasing passive recreational opportunities.