

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

**October 2020**

### **Overview**

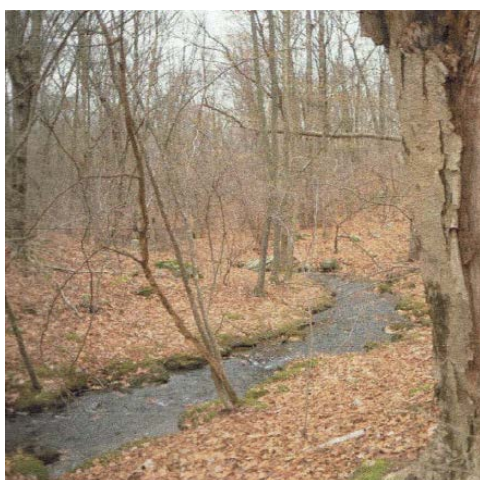
Section 22a-6v of the General Statutes of Connecticut requires the Commissioner of the Department of Energy & Environmental Protection to submit a report to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to finance, revenue and bonding and to the State Bond 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 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 two Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition grants were funded in October 2020.

| <b>Sponsor</b>                    | <b>Project</b>         | <b>Town</b> | <b>Acres Protected</b> |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------|-------------|------------------------|
| Sharon Land Trust, Inc.           | D'Alton Property       | Sharon      | 70.372                 |
| Cornwall Conservation Trust, Inc. | Furnace Brook Preserve | Cornwall    | 107.328                |

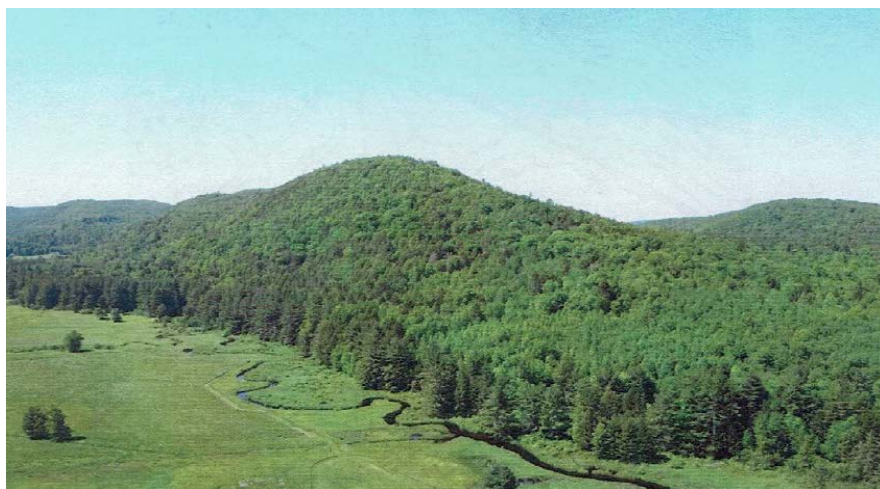
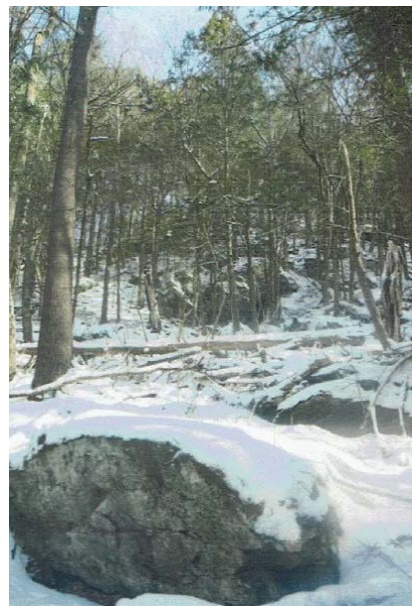
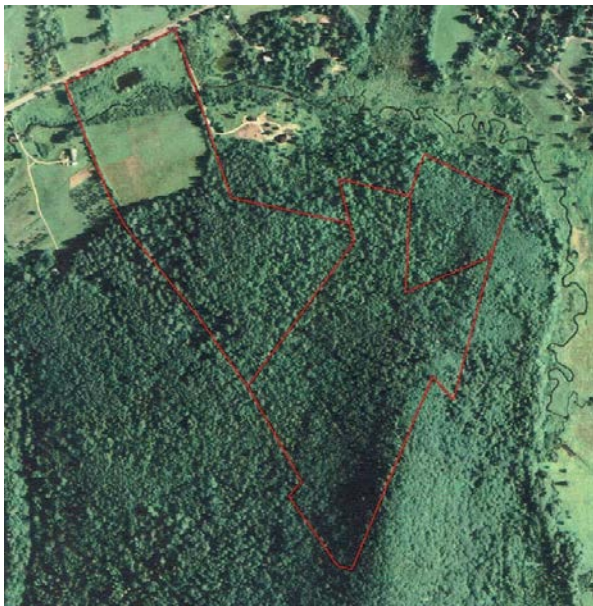
**Sharon Land Trust, Inc.**  
**D'Alton Property**  
**Fee Purchase 70.372 Acres**



This property abuts the 800-acre Skiff Mountain Wildlife Management Area, which links to the Skiff Mountain Preserves owned by Sharon Land Trust and Kent Land Trust, extending a protected forest block of more than 7,000 acres including the Appalachian Trail corridor and Macedonia Brook State Park. It has well maintained trails wandering through densely wooded hills and valleys suitable for equestrians, hiking birdwatching, snow-shoeing and cross country skiing. The property has a mile of frontage along Route 4 and two unnamed summits offering spectacular views to the Catskills in NY and Mt. Everest in MA. There are several wetlands and varied habitats for many plants and animals including core forest, bedrock outcrops, forested streams, shrub and open wetlands and dry summits. There is a large pond and the property is traversed by Guinea Brook, a headwater trout production stream that drains into the Housatonic. This project was a cooperative effort between Sharon Land Trust, Inc., DEEP's Opens Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Grant Program and the U.S. Dept. of the Interior Fish and Wildlife Service, Highlands Conservation Act grant program.



**Cornwall Conservation Trust, Inc.**  
**Furnace Brook Preserve**  
**Fee Purchase 107.378 Acres**



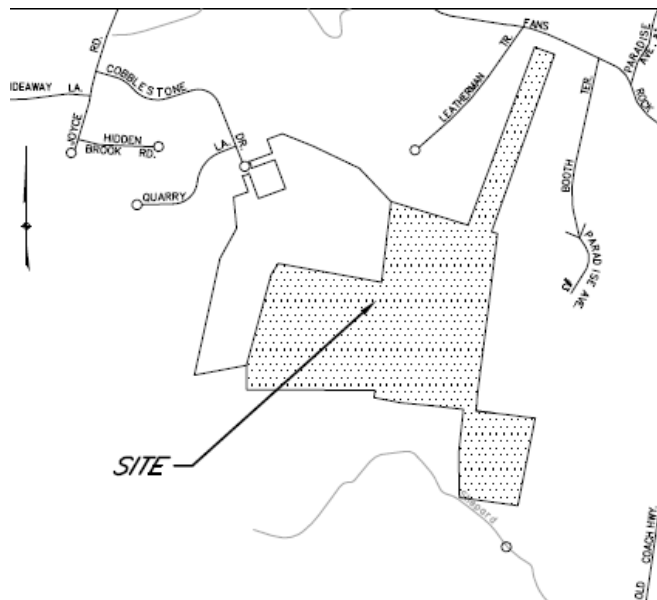
This acquisition protects the northern ridge and northwestern face of Coltsfoot Mountain and over 800 linear feet of Furnace Brook, an important tributary of the Housatonic River. The property shares almost a mile of common boundary with Wyantenock State Forest and abuts other Cornwall Conservation Trust Inc. preserved open space. This important watershed and headwaters land is in a large unbroken forest block (over 4000 acres) in the CT-MA-NY region of western New England. Over 80 acres of the tract are categorized as Core Forest habitat, 15 acres are wetland (8 forested and 7 open), 22 acres of USDA farmland soils of conservation significance, 9.3 acres is open meadow and there is a 1/2 acre pond. This acquisition was another cooperative effort between the DEEP, the US Fish & Wildlife Service Highlands Conservation Act Grant Program and Cornwall Conservation Trust, Inc.

## 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 two Recreation and Natural Heritage Trust Program closings in October 2020.

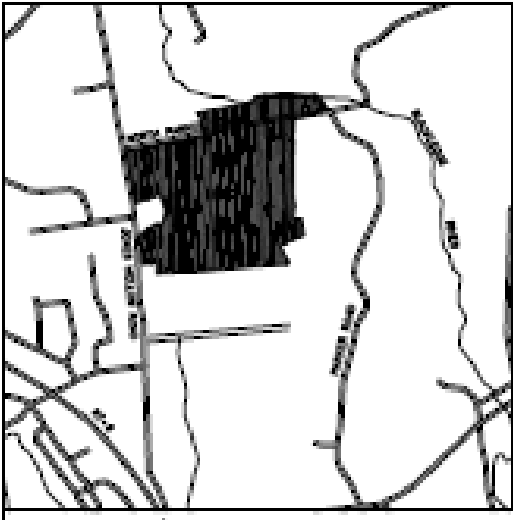
| Property Name             | Town        | Cooperator & Cost Share | State Share | Acreage | Purpose of Acquisition                 |
|---------------------------|-------------|-------------------------|-------------|---------|--|
| Stephens & Corsi Property | Hamden      | N/A                     | \$550,000   | 52.73   | Addition to West Rock Ridge State Park |
| Lord Property             | Marlborough | USFWS<br>\$932,000      | \$0         | 207.68  | Addition to Salmon River State Forest  |

### Stephens & Corsi Property 1790 Paradise Avenue, Hamden 52.73 Acres



This irregularly shaped parcel can be accessed from a discontinued section of Paradise Avenue (north of Laura Road). It abuts a Hamden Historical Society protected property (featuring the historic Leatherman's Cave) and will be added to West Rock Ridge State Park. According to DEEP's Natural Diversity Database, this property is a potential habitat for bats, saw whet owls, box turtles, ribbon snakes and spotted turtles.

**Lord Property**  
**Jones Hollow Road, Marlborough**  
**207.68 Acres**



The Lord property expands the Salmon River State Forest and provides an additional access point off of Jones Hollow Road. The land features a mix of fields and forest, and adds additional frontage along the Blackledge River. The property was acquired with assistance from a Pittman-Robertson grant administered by the US Fish & Wildlife Service. The property provides passive recreational opportunities including hiking and fishing.