

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

May 2021

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 two Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition grant funded in May 2021. Additional information on the projects follow.

Sponsor	Project	Town	Acres Protected
Town of Southington	136 School Street & 1205 Marion Ave	Southington	5.5
Avalonia Land Conservancy, Inc.	Green Fall River Glen	North Stonington	86.5

Town of Southington
136 School Street & 1205 Marion Ave
5.5 Acres – Fee Acquisition

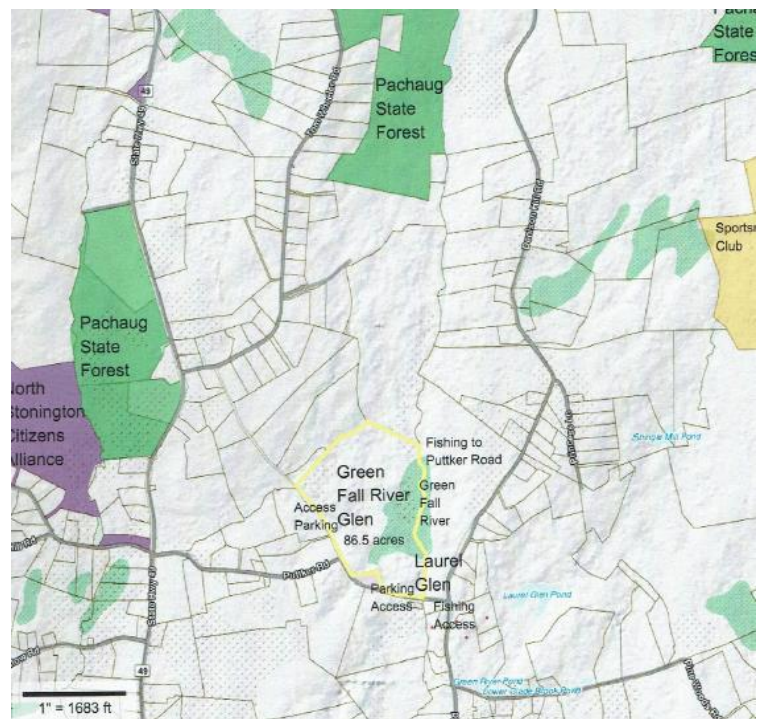


Two wooded parcels in the Marion District of Southington, contain a tributary of Judd Brook that runs across the parcels, wetlands and open fields suitable for quiet daytime hiking, and passive recreational uses. Preservation of these properties protects a riparian corridor and the town's water resources, within a part of the Aquifer Protection District. The brooks flowing through the sites offer fishing opportunities, bird watching and wildlife observation.

Avalonia Land Conservancy, Inc. (ALC)
Green Fall River Glen, North Stonington
86.5 Acres – Fee Acquisition



The sense of history is immediate when you enter the old woolen mill site with changing topography, numerous streams, the beautiful Green Fall River, evidence of historic settlements and two large dams, one of which you can walk across. The eastern side of the property has ½ mile of frontage on Green Fall River, which is stocked by DEEP with brook and brown trout. ALC will design a universally accessible parking area at the southerly Puttler Road entrance, providing access to fishing across old stone bridges and historic sites. Another parking area on Lion Hill Road will provide access to the northern boundary trail and a fishing area at the northeast side of the parcel. The property is listed on the north Stonington Plan of Conservation and Development as an Aquifer Protection Area, forming part of the Pawcatuck River Basin. ALC's goal is to add to the Green Fall River greenway to the north until connected with Pachaug State Forest. This acquisition was a cooperative effort between ALC, DEEP and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service with a North American Wetlands Conservation Act Ducks Unlimited Grant.



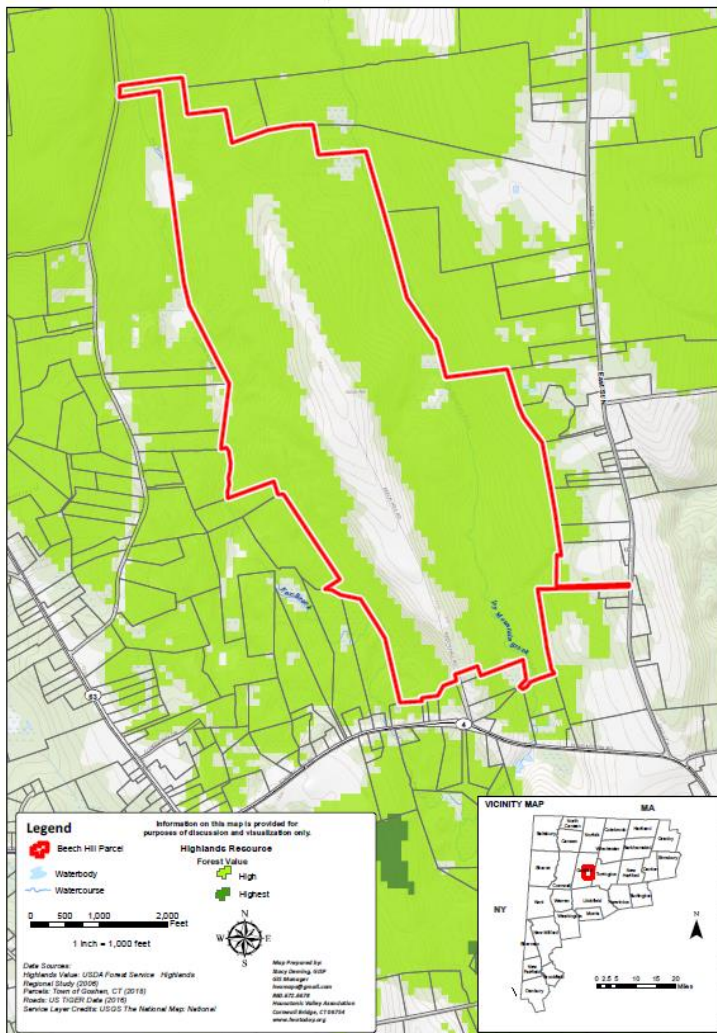
Recreation and Natural Heritage Trust Program

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.

One acquisition closed in May 2021. Additional information on this project follows.

	Town(s)	Cooperators & Cost Share	State Share	Acres Protected	Purpose of Acquisition
Beech Hill Road, LLC Property	Goshen	USFWS Highlands grant \$1,225,000	\$1,225,000	627.12	Addition to Goshen Wildlife Area

Beech Hill Road, LLC Property
627.12 Acre – Fee Acquisition
Goshen



This spectacular property is the largest undeveloped residential parcel in Goshen. It is ideally located near the center of Goshen and adds to the state of Connecticut's Goshen Wildlife Management Area. The acquisition will help protect populations of New England Cottontail in an area where habitat restoration for the species is already occurring. The land includes a diversity of habitats, including over 100 acres of tillable fields and 525 acres of mature forest that is part of a larger core forest. Two brooks flank either side of the parcel and provide habitat to locally known populations of brook trout. Additionally, the property contains Inland Forested Wetlands and Inland Shrub Wetlands, Key Habitats included in Connecticut's 2015 State Wildlife Action Plan.

Acquired with assistance from the USFWS, the property provides abundant recreational benefits to the public while also protecting natural resources that are the focus of the Highlands Conservation Act.