



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

August 2022

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.

One Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition grant was funded in August 2022. Additional information on the project follows.

Sponsor	Project	Town	Acres Protected
Ripley, Inc.	Horse Show Meadow	Litchfield	38.57

**Ripley, Inc. (a/k/a Ripley Waterfowl Conservancy) Horse Show Meadow
Brush Hill Road, Litchfield
38.57 Acre – Fee Acquisition**



This property abuts 110 acres of conserved land to the west and connects Ripley's 150-acre preserve to the north with the 4,000-acre White Memorial Foundation nature preserve to the south. It contains open fields and riparian woodlands. Two branches of Butternut Brook, both Class AA streams, run along each side of the property feeding Bantam Lake. According to the CT NDDB, the property contains alluvial marsh and six species of rare plant and animal species including American kestrel, Eastern meadowlark, New England sedge, Stiff gentian, and Pale green orchid. Thirty-two acres of the property contain USDA Prime or Statewide Important Soils. The meadows are hayed by a local farmer and will continue to be maintained that way after purchase. The White Memorial Foundation, adjacent to the property has over 246 recorded bird species. A hiking trail, boardwalk, and fishing stream will allow the public to enjoy the property. It is accessible from Route 202 and is less than 10 miles from the City of Torrington.

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 no Recreation and Natural Heritage Trust Program acquisitions funded in August 2022.