



May 10, 2023

Dear Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in the Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition (OSWA) Program. This is the twenty-sixth OSWA grant round, and so far, OSWA has helped to protect over 42,000 acres of open space throughout the state. The program provides financial assistance to municipalities and non-profit land conservation organizations to acquire land for open space and to water companies to acquire land to be classified as Class I or Class II water supply property.

Projects are evaluated by statutorily defined parameters and ranked based on many factors including public recreational benefits, environmental justice and equity, climate change benefits, natural resource value and past grant compliance.

Please read this year's application carefully. We have made changes over the years in response to public comments and feedback from our OSWA review board. Please only submit applications for projects that can close within an 18-month period, so the easement can be recorded, and the public access components (signage, trails, and parking) can be completed within two years.

The Department is currently accepting applications under this program. Please submit applications, a property appraisal prepared in accordance with the Uniform Standards for Federal Land Acquisitions (UASFLA a/k/a "Yellow Book"), and an appraisal review (stating the appraisal was prepared in accordance with Yellow Book), by October 2, 2023. Please review the attached materials carefully as they will guide you in completing your application.

Protecting open space improves air and water quality and helps mitigate the devastating impacts of climate change. Passive recreational opportunities are required at all OSWA preserved properties, promoting healthy lifestyles, enhancing our neighborhoods, attracting tax paying businesses and visitors to our state. Revitalization of our urban neighborhoods provides equitable access to open space, adds value to communities, enhances connectivity and preserves historical and cultural heritage. Thank you for partnering with us to protect open space for all Connecticut residents.

Sincerely,

Katie S. Dykes
Commissioner