

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

January 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 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.

There were no Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition grants funded in January 2021.

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 closings January 2021.

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

February 2021

Overview

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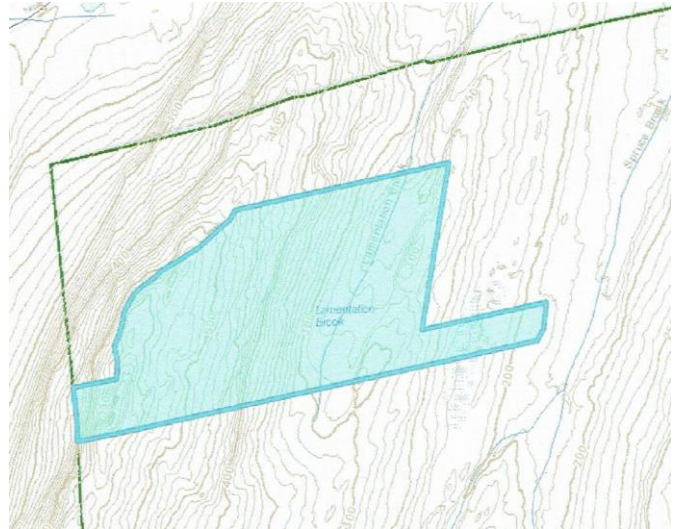
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One Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition grant was funded in February 2021. Additional information on the project follows.

Sponsor	Project	Town	Acres Protected
Berlin Land Trust, Inc.	Lamentation Mountain	Middletown	46.56

Berlin Land Trust, Inc.
Lamentation Mountain, Middletown
Fee Acquisition – 46.56 Acres



This parcel, at the northern end of Lamentation Mountain, is part of the Metacomet Ridge, which extends from Long Island Sound to the Vermont border. This property contains five critical habitats, three basalt ridges and provides easy access to the Connecticut Blue Blazed Trail System, managed by the Connecticut Forest and Park Association (CFPA) which describes this parcel as “perhaps the most scenic traprock ridge walk in the state”. CFPA will blaze and maintain the trails on this property. This is the last unprotected parcel in the Lamentation Mountain ecosystem consisting of 450+/- land trust or municipally owned acres, 190+/- privately-owned & undeveloped acres, and it protects the Lamentation Brook and the northern flowing Spruce Brook watersheds.

Recreation and Natural Heritage Trust Program

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There were no Recreation and Natural Heritage Trust Program closed in February 2021.

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

March 2021

Overview

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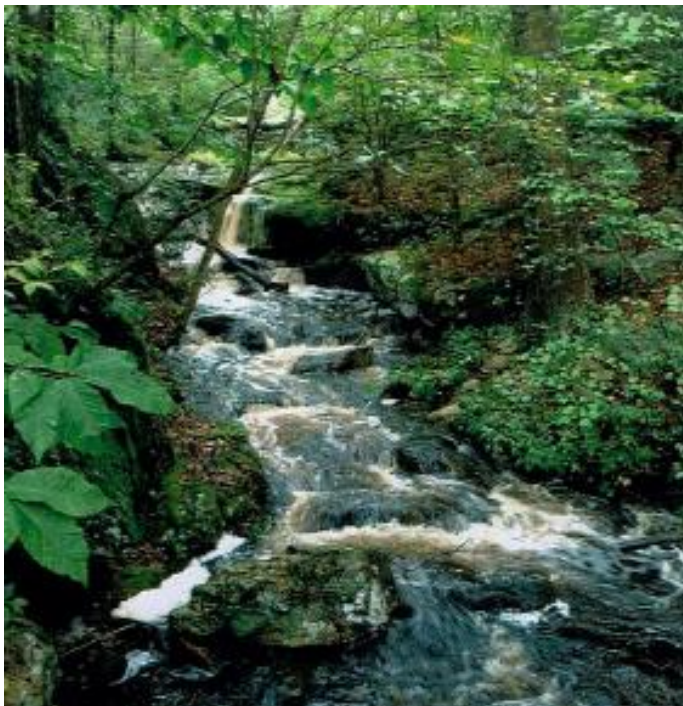
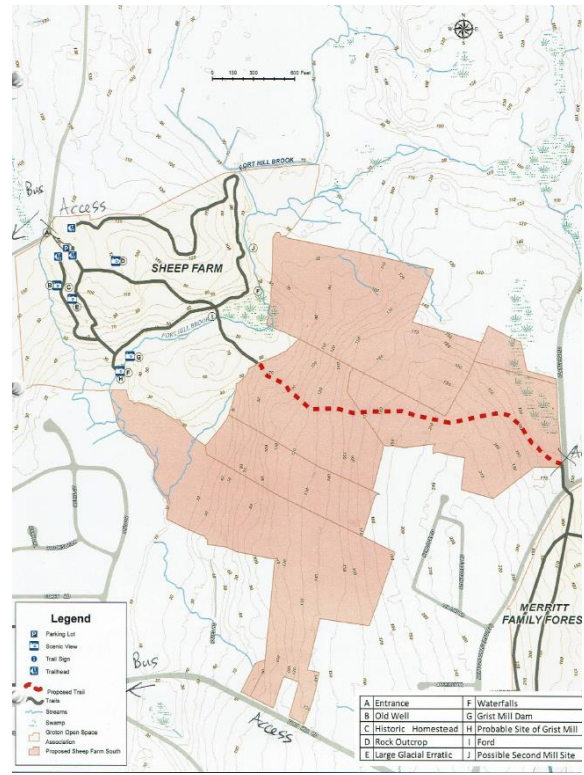
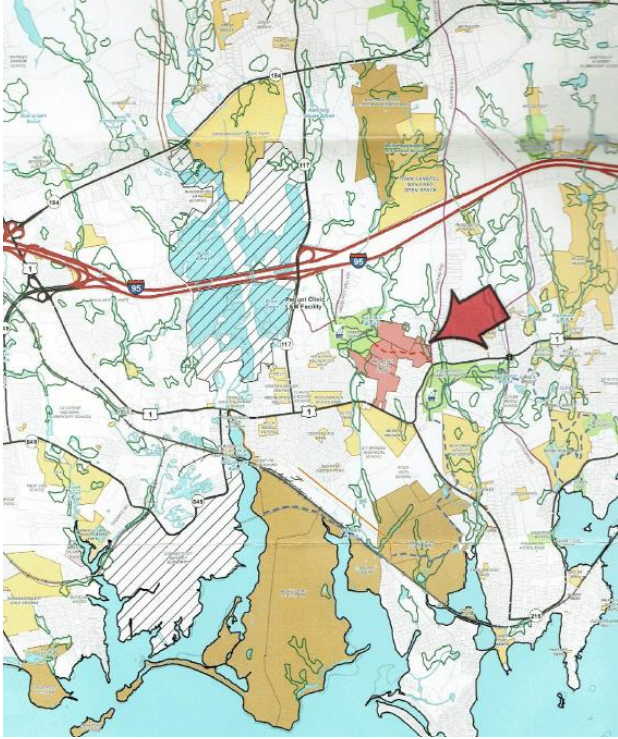
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There was one Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition grant funded in March 2021. Additional information on the project follows.

Sponsor	Project	Town	Acres Protected
Groton Open Space Association, Inc.	Sheep Farm South	Groton	103.32

**Groton Open Space Association, Inc. (GOSA)
 Sheep Farm South Property, Groton
 103.32 Acres – Fee Acquisition**



This property, with access on Fort Hill Road (Rte.1) and Flanders Road, is adjacent to two GOSA properties, the (initial) 62.75-acre Sheep Farm to the northwest and the Merritt Family Forest to the southeast, as well as the Town-owned Merritt Property to the south. The property features scenic overlooks, rock outcroppings, unique land formations and glacial erratic boulder fields. Fort Hill Brook flows through both Sheep Farm properties, protecting a string of productive vernal pools, high quality wetlands and several species of concern. A 10-foot waterfall barrier prevents fish from climbing up to the pools to prey on large numbers of egg masses and larvae of wood frogs and salamanders. Passive recreational uses include biking, hiking, walking, cross country skiing, snow shoeing, photography, wildlife and bird viewing, fishing, nature and history study of foundations, stone pens, stone heaps and geology.

Recreation and Natural Heritage Trust Program

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

	Town(s)	Cooperators & Cost Share	State Share	Acres Protected	Purpose of Acquisition
Szymanski Property	Winchester & Torrington	USFWS Highlands Grant \$110,000	\$110,000	74.75	Addition to Paugnut State Forest

Szymanski Property

74.75 Acre – Fee Acquisition

Winchester & Torrington



The Szymanski property features a diverse landscape, including sections of forest with areas of open pastures through the central and eastern portions. The western end of the property is bisected by the east branch of the Naugatuck River, which is a popular river for trout fishing.

The property abuts a section of Paugnut State Forest that had been essentially landlocked and under utilized by the public. The addition of the property will greatly enhance the accessibility to the larger forest for passive recreational uses including hiking, hunting, fishing, bird watching, etc.

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

April 2021

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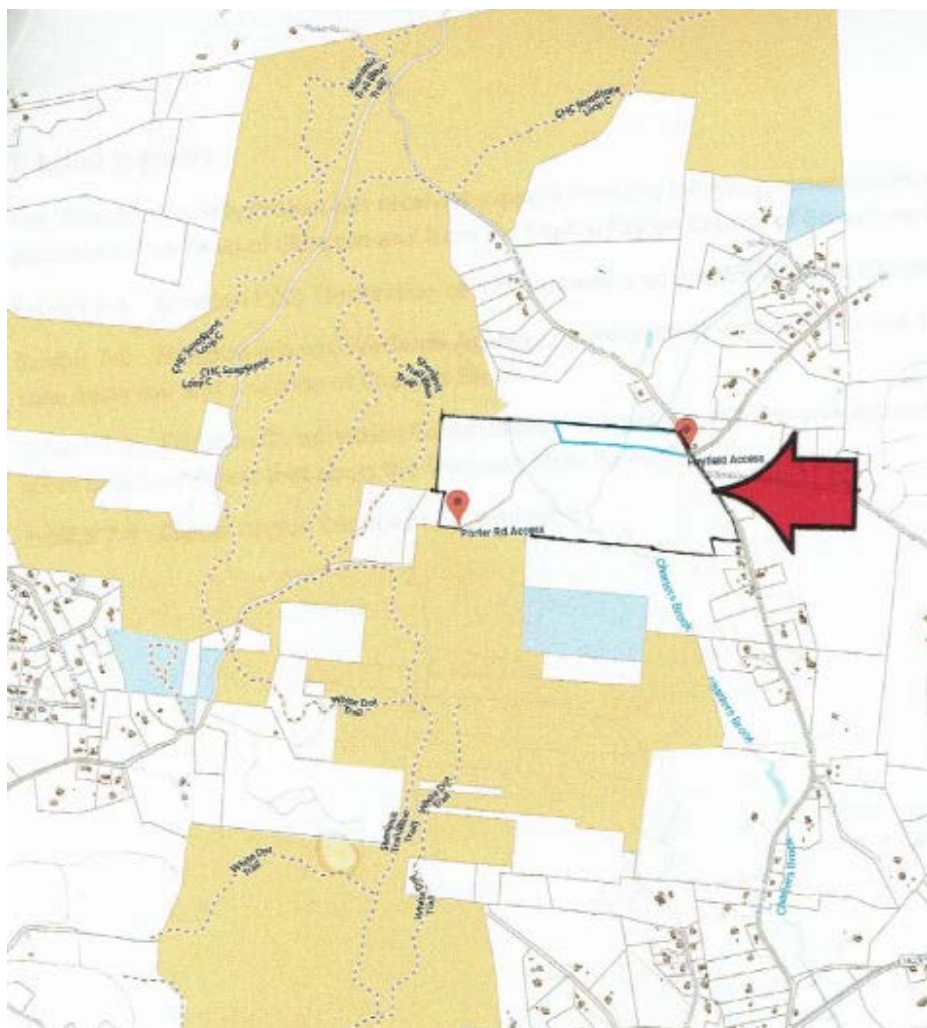
Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Grant Program

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One Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition grant was funded in April 2021. Additional information on the project follows.

Sponsor	Project	Town	Acres Protected
Northern Connecticut Land Trust, Inc.	Wraight Property	Ellington	116.434

Northern Connecticut Land Trust, Inc. (NCLT)
Wright Property, Ellington
116.434 Acres – Fee Acquisition



This mainly forested property includes 3.7 acres of hayfields and a small pond. Charters Brook runs north to south through the center of the parcel. A large wetland surrounds the brook and provides a significant source of water to the Shenipsit Lake Reservoir, which supplies drinking water to the surrounding towns. NCLT will clear the discontinued and abandoned section of Porter Road, enabling the public to hike from Webster road through the property to the Shenipsit State Forest, which abuts this property to the west containing the Shenipsit Trail. This property will complement existing open space, provide a source of recreation, protect wildlife habitat, a stream and important water supply and preserve an existing agricultural use.

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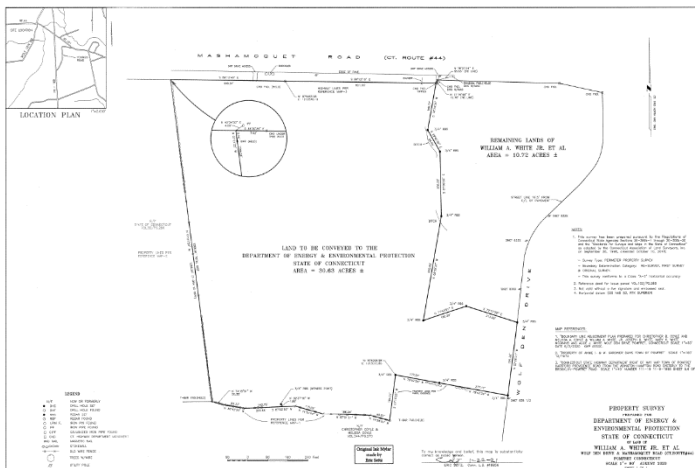
One acquisition closed in April 2021. Additional information on this project follows.

	Town(s)	Cooperators & Cost Share	State Share	Acres Protected	Purpose of Acquisition
White Property	Pomfret	None	\$200,000	30.63	Addition to Mashamoquet Brook State Park

White Property

30.63 Acre – Fee Acquisition

Wolf Den Drive, Pomfret



The White property consists of 30.63 acres that were part of a larger 51.3 acre parcel at 6 Wolf Den Drive, Pomfret. The property consists of a mixture of fields and forest and is being added to the Mashamoquet Brook State Park. It was historically associated with a dairy farm, and most recently the fields have been used for growing hay.

The acquisition will enlarge the popular park, provide habitat for wildlife that depend on open fields and field edges, and expand passive recreational uses including hiking and bird watching.

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

May 2021

Overview

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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

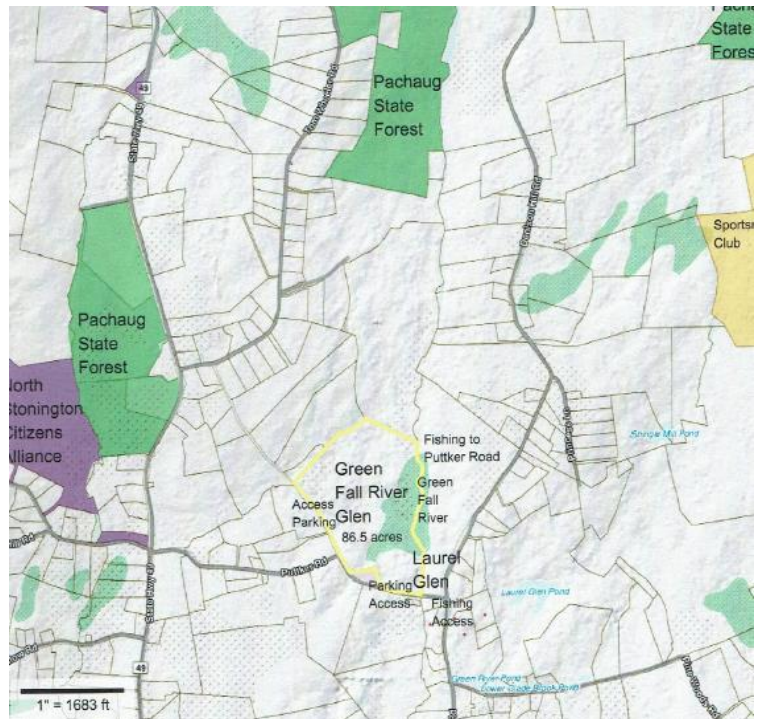


Two wooded parcels in the Marion District of Southington, contain a tributary of Judd Brook that runs across the parcels, wetlands and open fields suitable for quiet daytime hiking, and passive recreational uses. Preservation of these properties protects a riparian corridor and the town's water resources, 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.



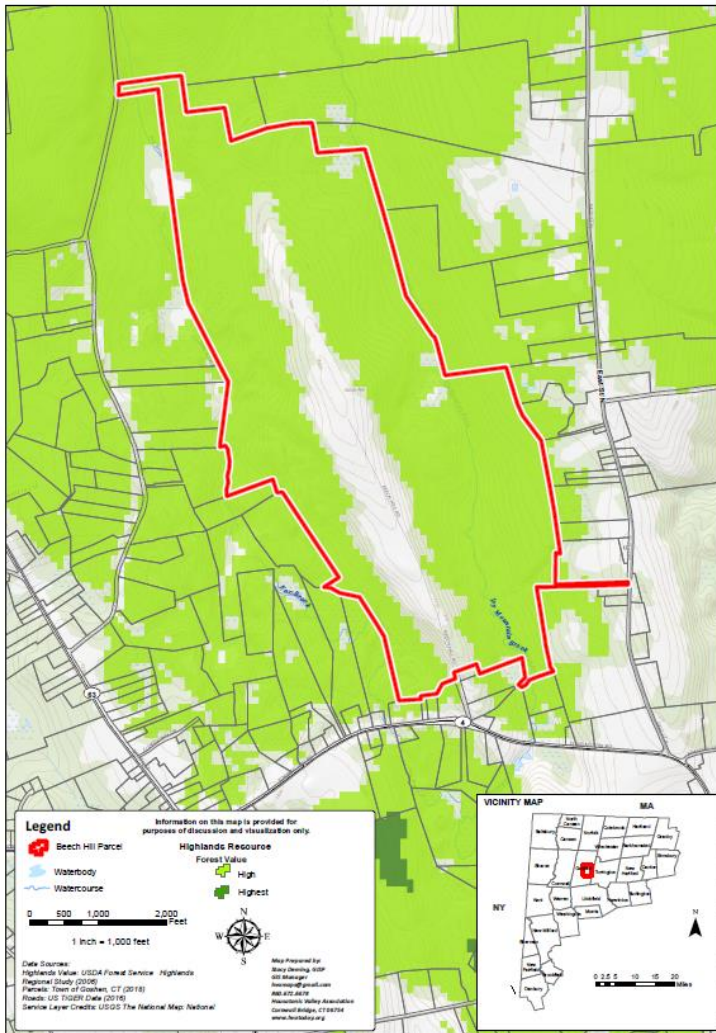
Recreation and Natural Heritage Trust Program

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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.

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June 2021

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Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Grant Program

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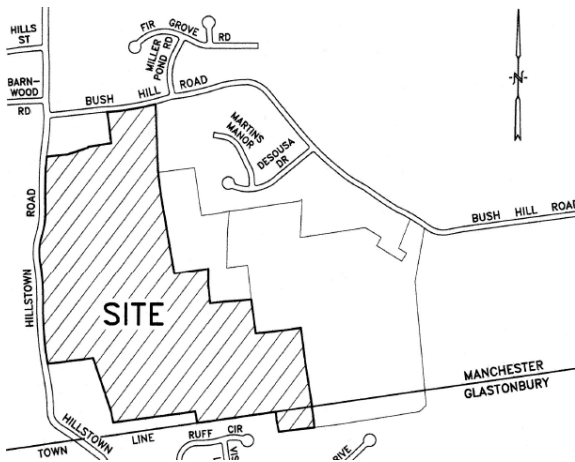
Sponsor	Project	Town	Acres Protected
Manchester Land Conservation Trust, Inc.	Lombardo Farm Property	Manchester & Glastonbury	102.096 Ac.

Recreation and Natural Heritage Trust Program

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There were no Recreation and Natural Heritage Trust Program closings January 2021.

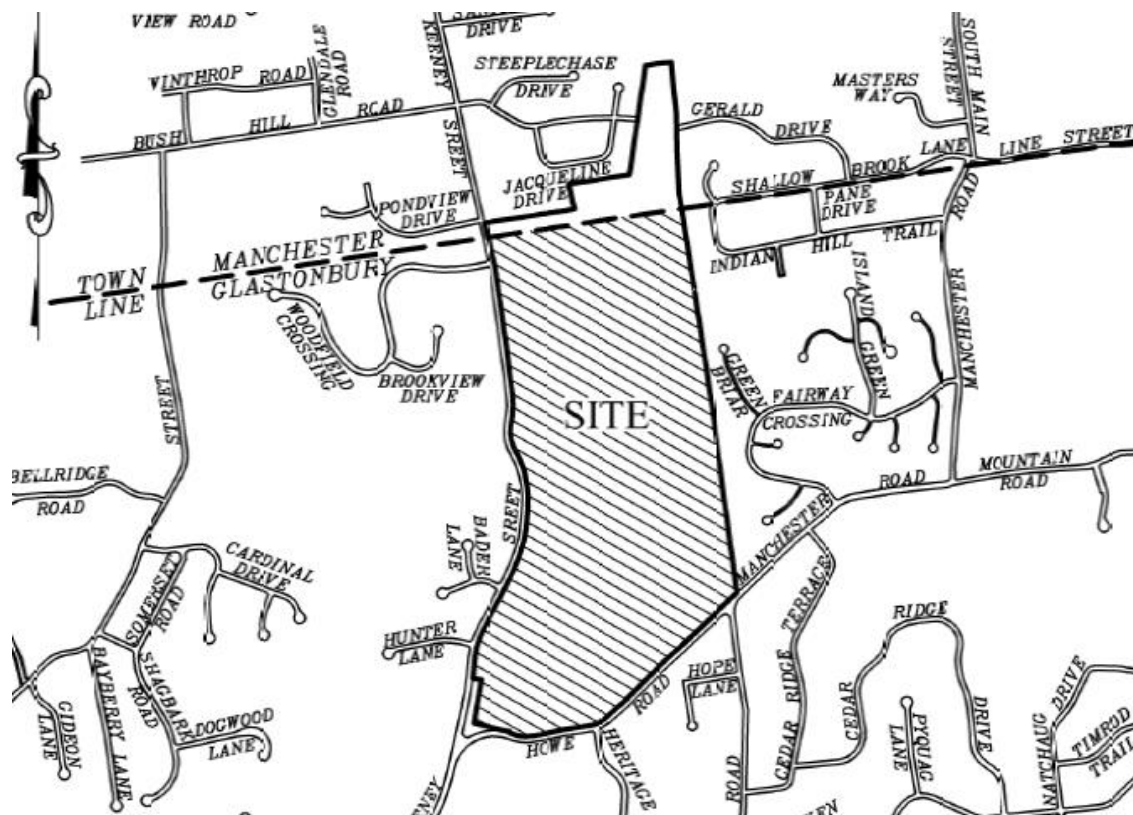
**Manchester Land Conservation Trust, Inc. (MLCT)
Lobardo Farm Property, Manchester & Glastonbury
102.096+/- acres - fee acquisition**



This 102+ acre, former farm was the last large open space property available in the Town of Manchester. It will be accessible from Hillstown Road with trails connecting to and expanding upon MLCT's Bush Hill Preserve to the east. Botti Farm (part of the Bush Hill Preserve) was also purchased with an OSWA grant in 2016. Hikers, bikers, cross-country skiers, bird watchers and nature lovers can now enjoy this 177+ acre preserve with ponds, meadows, trees and trails, providing clean air, clean water, and habitat for plants, animals and migrating birds. A mature forest and a small spring-fed pond provide wildlife habitat. This property is easily accessible to residents in Manchester, East Hartford and Glastonbury. The Town of Manchester also provided funding assistance for this purchase.

Other DEEP June 2021 Open Space Preservation

The State of CT DEEP awarded a grant of \$1,000,000.00 to the Town of Glastonbury toward the purchase and preservation of 542+/- acres of land formerly owned by the Metropolitan District. The State Bond Commission funded this grant pursuant to Public Act 2016-4, Section 9(b).



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

July 2021

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Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Grant Program

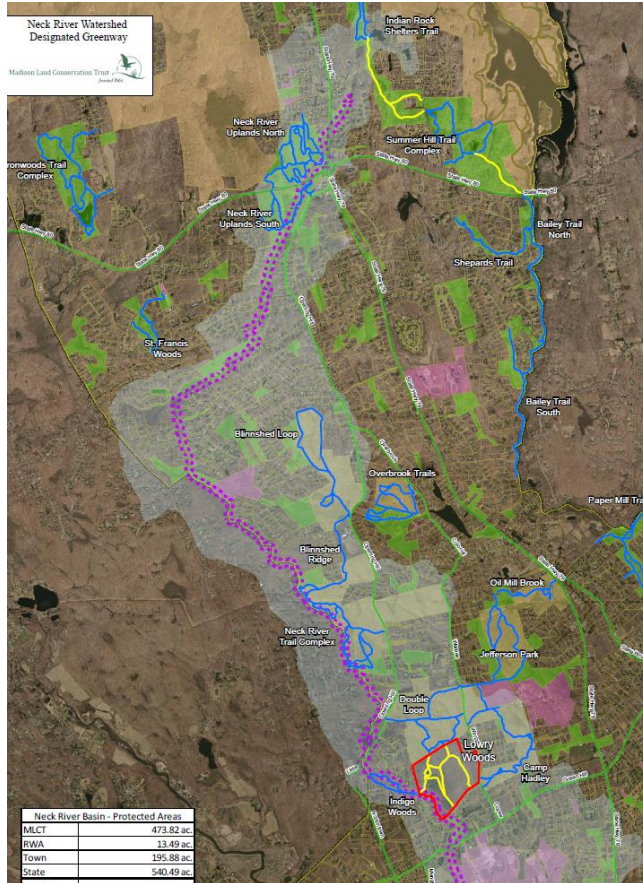
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Sponsor	Project	Town	Acres Protected
Madison Land Conservation Trust, Inc.	Lowry Woods Property	Madison	78.8328

Recreation and Natural Heritage Trust Program

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**Madison Land Conservation Trust, Inc. (MLCT)
 Lowry Woods Property, Madison
 78.8328 Acre – Fee Acquisition**



This 78 acre woodland purchase was a rare opportunity to protect open space in the Neck River watershed corridor. The property is located on Warpas Road in western Madison, just north of the Daniel Hand High School. Neck River runs along the western side of the parcel. This property abuts other lands owned by MLCT and the Cockaponset State Forest abuts the property to the north. This acquisition provides protection to several water-based wildlife habitats, ensures high water quality and contributes to a recognized greenway. This area contains a concentrated network of hiking trails and many opportunities for passive recreation. The conservation of this land is important to the long-term health of the river, ground water and ultimately, Long Island Sound.



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

August 2021

Overview

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Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Grant Program

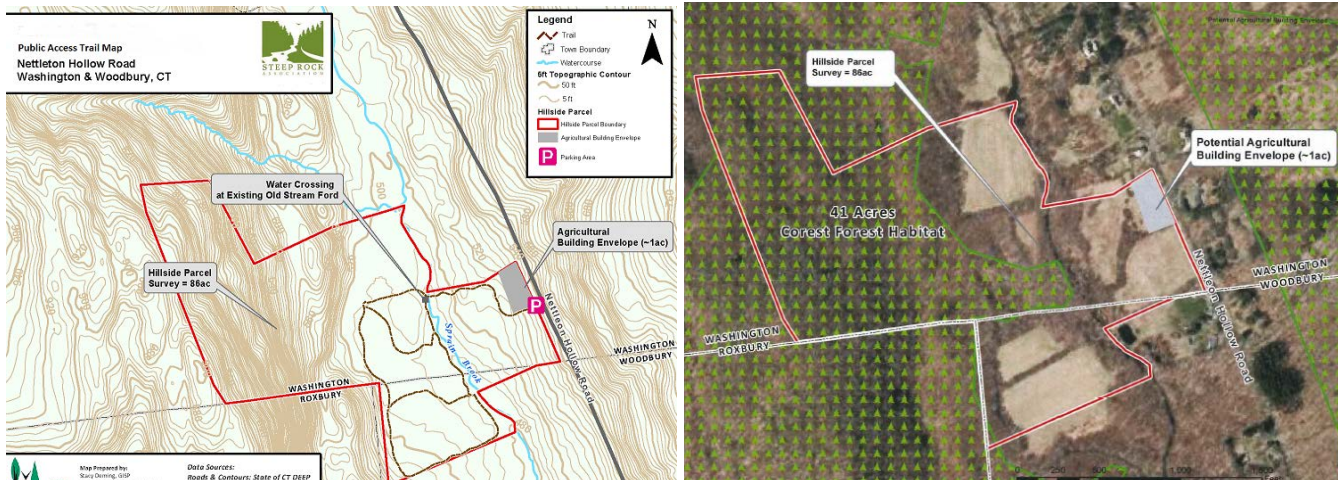
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Sponsor	Project	Town	Acres Protected
Steep Rock Association, Inc.	Hillside Farm	Washington & Woodbury	85.1

Recreation and Natural Heritage Trust Program

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Steep Rock Association, Inc.
Hillside Farm, Washington (72.19 ac.) & Woodbury (12.91 ac.)
Fee Acquisition



This farmland and intact core forest acquisition will offer an extensive trail system and permit continued agricultural use on Nettleton Hollow Road in the Towns of Washington and Woodbury, adjacent to the Town of Roxbury. The parcel contains 1,800 feet of frontage on Sprain Brook, a Class A cold-water stream. The site is less than 2 miles from the Audubon Society’s 13,800-acre Important Bird Area and part of a 450-acre intact core forest. There are three key habitats of Greatest Conservation Need on the property, the Appalachian hemlock northern hardwood forest, Laurentian Acadian wet meadow/shrub swamp/shrub thicket and circumneutral maple/ash basin swamp. Steep Rock Association plans to create a 1.5-mile hiking trail and will allow catch and release fly fishing. Thirteen acres will continue to be farmed for hay. This acquisition was a cooperative effort between Steep Rock Association, Inc., Connecticut Farmland Trust, Inc., DEEP and an Agricultural Land Easement was funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

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September 2021

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Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Grant Program

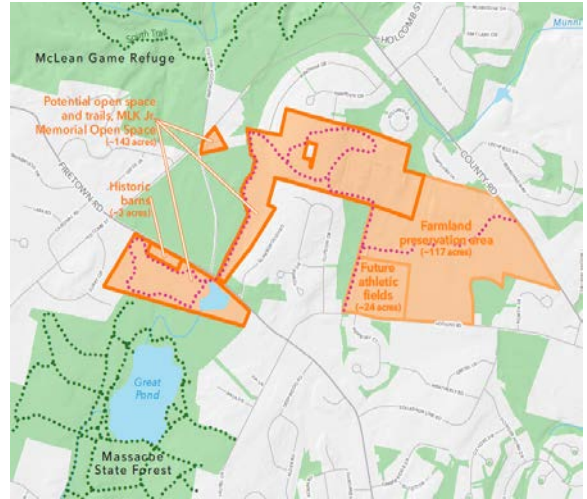
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Sponsor	Project	Town	Acres Protected
Town of Simsbury	Meadowood Property	Simsbury	130.73

Recreation and Natural Heritage Trust Program

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**Town of Simsbury
Meadowood Property
Fee Purchase 130.73 Acres**



The Town of Simsbury, with assistance from the Trust for Public Land, purchased a total of 285+ acres for open space, trails, historic and cultural significance, farmland and future athletic fields. The DEEP conservation easement protects 130.73 acres containing 2.5 miles of old farm roads that will be improved and maintained as hiking trails and a cultural and historically significant site where Martin Luther King, Jr. lived and worked during two summers in his early adult life through a Morehouse College work exchange program. Three large tobacco farm buildings on the property will be restored, with interpretive signage focusing on the historical significance and natural resource values. The State Historic Preservation Office received an American Civil Rights Grant to facilitate placing the property on the National Register of Historic Places. This property connects the 4,400-acre McLean Game Refuge with the Massacoe State Forest (Great Pond), both of which offer extensive hiking and pedestrian trail systems, creating over 25 miles of trails from North Simsbury to Granby and Canton. This purchase protects a mixture of forest, wetlands, open fields and early successional shrublands, providing nesting habitat for a variety of wildlife, especially ground nesting bird species depending on shrubby fields and thickets, 32 acres of primary town aquifer protection and recharge areas, 5.9 acres of freshwater forested/shrub wetlands, a 1.2-acre freshwater pond and 2.5 acres of freshwater emergent wetlands. A 138-acre Department of Agriculture easement will protect approximately 63 acres of prime and statewide important farmland soils. Additional funding was provided by virtue of a Highlands Conservation Act Grant, administered by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, and a George Dudley Seymour Trust Fund Grant.

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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 no Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition grants funded in October 2021.

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 closings in October 2021.

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

November 2021

Overview

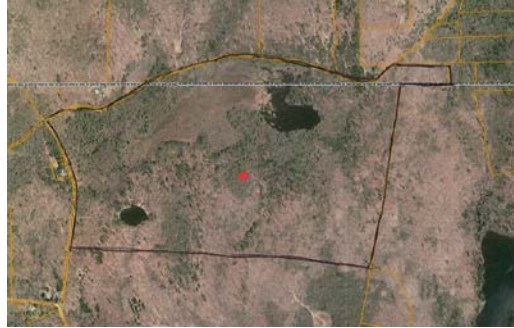
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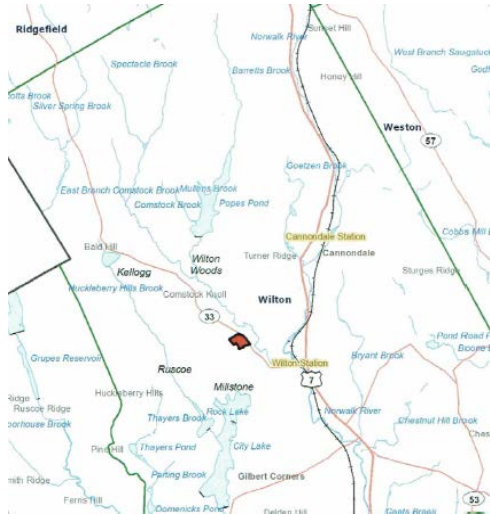
Sponsor	Project	Town	Acres Protected
Wyndham Land Conservation Trust	Townshend Property	Pomfret & Woodstock	364.25
Wilton Land Conservation Trust, Inc.	183 Ridgefield Road	Wilton	13.455

**Wyndham Land Conservation Trust
Townshend Property, Pomfret & Woodstock
364.25 Ac. Fee Acquisition**



This parcel, on the easterly side of Swedetown Road, Pomfret is surrounded by undeveloped land. Once acquired, there will be 1400 acres of protected land in the immediate area. According to the Nature's Network Core or Connector Map, half of the property is classified as Priority 1 habitat for terrestrial and imperiled species and the other half is classified as Priority 2 habitat. The property contains the headwaters to Nightingale Brook and a large, forested swamp containing native shrubs. Nightingale Brook flows into Mashamoquet Brook, which flows into the Quinnebaug River. It is part of a 3,000-acre core forest. The property can be accessed along Quarry Road with many places for cars to pull off creating recreational opportunities for the elderly and people with disabilities.

Wilton Land Conservation Trust, Inc.
183 Ridgefield Road, Wilton
13.455 Ac. Fee Acquisition



This purchase protects 13+ acres of open field habitat. The property runs parallel with Ridgefield Road and is about 1 mile outside the center of Wilton. There are 12 acres of Prime and Statewide Important Farmland Soils and 2 acres of forested wetland habitat. The open fields are in the center of the Wilton pollinator pathway. A drumlin landform is located on the site. The WLCT plans to create a trail that will be accessible for people with mobility challenges, as well as a wheelchair accessible gravel parking area. The site will have educational kiosks and opportunities for school groups to learn about that state’s agricultural history. This property is located within lower Fairfield County.

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 closings in November 2021.

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

December 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 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

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Sponsor	Project	Town	Acres Protected
Town of Sprague	Peltier Property	Sprague & Franklin	56.36

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 closings in December 2021.

**Town of Sprague
Peltier Property, Sprague & Franklin
56.36 Ac. Fee Acquisition**



This acquisition will secure the main access to the Sprague Land Preserve (SLP) off Holton Road in Franklin and become part of this 625+/- acre preserve funded by three OSWA grants. It is an undeveloped forested woodlot with wetland and farmland soils. About 25% is steeply sloped. There are five natural water features, including a natural spring, a vernal pool, two wetland areas and a 3-season stream. All waters feed into a largely secluded section of the Shetucket River (watershed). The SLP sits in the middle of a nearly 3,000-acre wildlife corridor of State and land trust preserved lands and is part of a federally recognized 35 town collaboration known as the Last Green Valley. This additional SLP acreage expands upon existing passive recreational activities for children, families, sportsmen and athletes. The Friends of the Shetucket River Valley was instrumental in the fundraising effort for this purchase and plans to blaze a new trail on this property in the Spring of 2022.

