

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

December 2024

### 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.

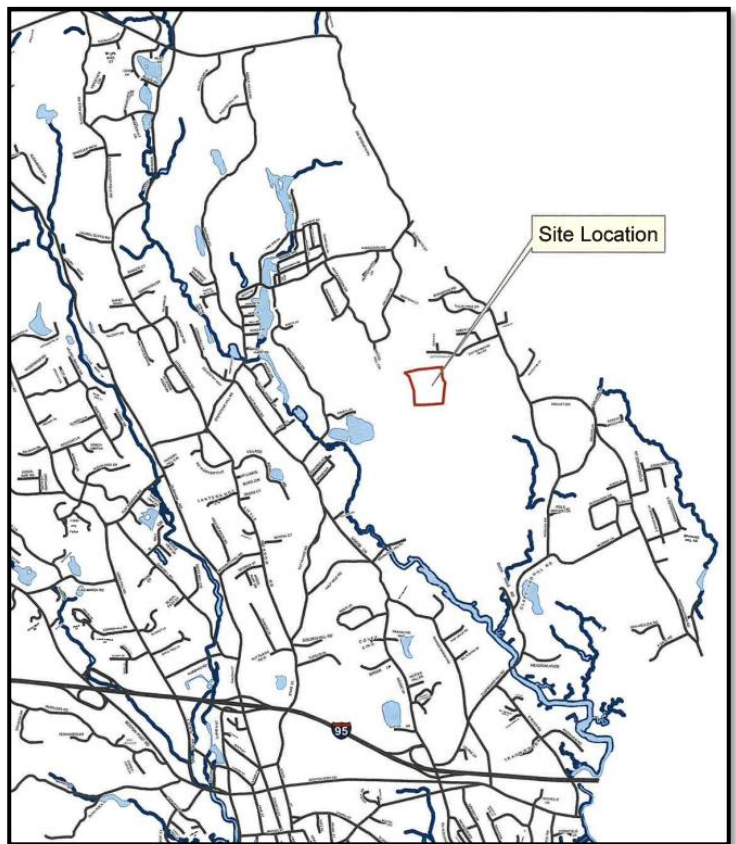
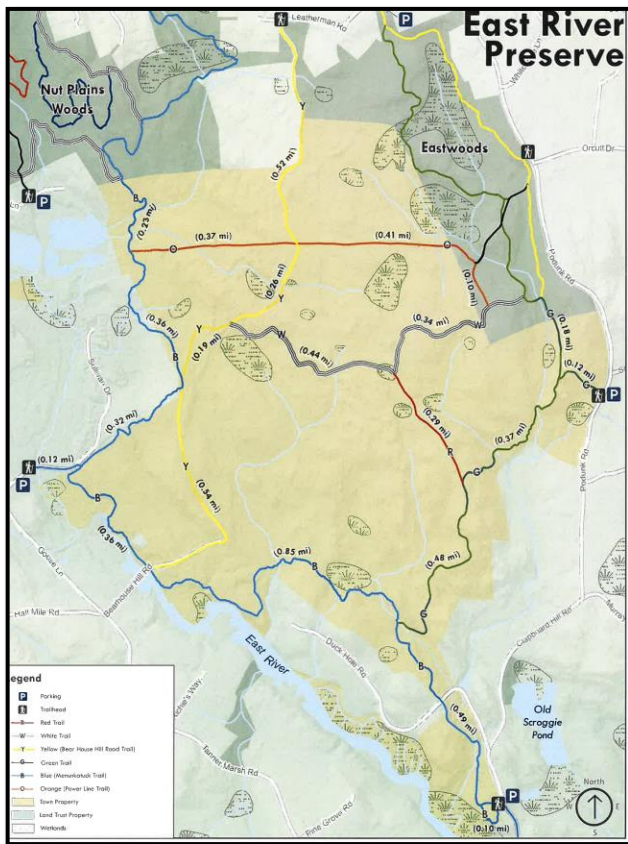
### Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Grant Program

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 Program grant was funded in December 2024. Additional information about the project follows.

Sponsor	Project	Town	Acres Protected
Town of Guilford	East River Preserve Northern Inholding	Guilford	27.65

## Town of Guilford East River Preserve Northern Inholding 27.65 Acres

This Town of Guilford inholding compliments existing open space and trails at the adjacent Town-owned 583-acre East River Preserve and Guilford Land Conservation Trust's 95-acre Eastwoods property. There is an extensive, popular trail network with multiple access points. A good distance of the New England Trail is along the northwest corner of the property. The Town is considering the creation of a new trail, bisecting the property. It is forested with approximately 10 acres of inland wetlands, including a natural spring. Swamp white oak, a very uncommon tree species, was documented during a vegetation survey by a licensed forester with the CT Agricultural Experiment Station. A preliminary NDDB review shows the property could be capable of hosting spotted, wood and Eastern box turtles. The property will be incorporated into the East River Deer Management Program, which was implemented to allow for limited hunting under a lottery system due to high deer browse affecting ecological integrity and growth of ground layer vegetation.





### 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 Recreation and Natural Heritage Trust Program project closed in December 2024. Additional information about the project follows.

Property Name	Town(s)	Cooperators & Cost Share	State Share	Acres Protected	Purpose of Acquisition
White	Stafford	None	\$0 Donation	4.99	Addition to Nipmuck State Forest

**White property**  
**Buckley Highway, Stafford**  
**4.99 Acres**

Jeremy & Rachael White generously donated their 4.99 acre parcel of land to the State of Connecticut to expand Nipmuck State Forest. The land contains a mixture of forest and wetlands and is bisected by Roaring Brook. The addition helps expand this small section of state forest.

