

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

February 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.

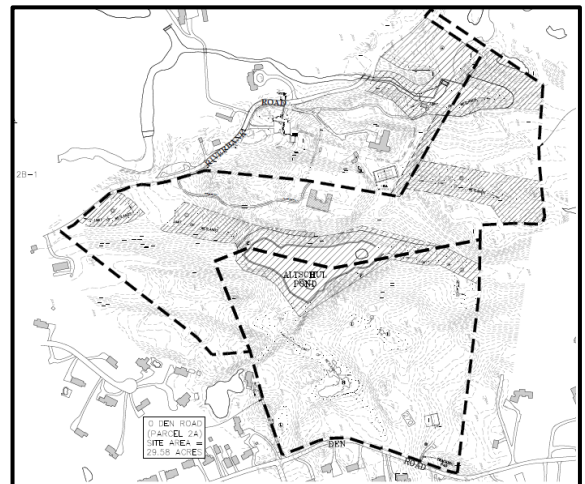
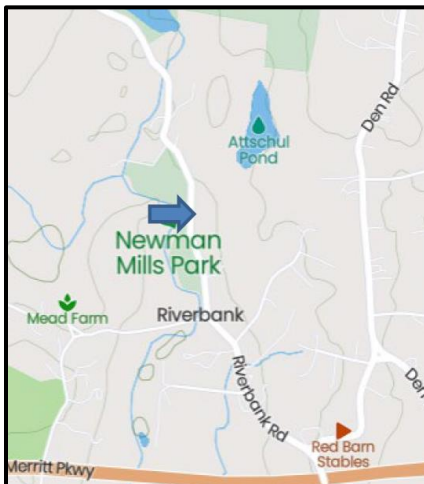
Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Grant Program

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. Two Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Program grants were funded in February 2024. Additional information about the projects follows.

Sponsor	Project	Town	Acres Protected
Stamford Land Conservation Trust, Inc.	Margaret Lang & Arthur Altschul Trust Properties	Stamford	64.2637
Avalonia Land Conservancy, Inc.	Glemboski – Ous Property	Bozrah & Montville	159.42

Stamford Land Conservation Trust, Inc.
Margaret Lang & Arthur Altschul Trust Properties, Stamford
64.2637 Acres

This acquisition, 4.9 miles north of the city, consists of two parcels with wooded areas and trails designed for hiking, walking and nature observation. The property contains a pond, creek bed, sloping topography, ridges and bedrock outcroppings. The northerly, Altschul parcel has frontage on Riverbend Road (across from Newman Mills Park) and the southerly Lang Trust parcel has frontage on Den Road. The parcels are within the Mianus River Greenway (MRG). The MRG protects the Mianus River entering Cos Cob Harbor and LIS. Altschul pond is located in between the two parcels. The pond provides a home for fish, salamanders, turtles, frogs and snakes. The property provides vital woodland protection for various forms of wildlife and migratory paths of songbirds and other native birds that follow the Atlantic Migratory Flyway twice a year. The purchase will benefit the local community through the protection of clean drinking water, increased recreation opportunities and support the native flora and fauna.

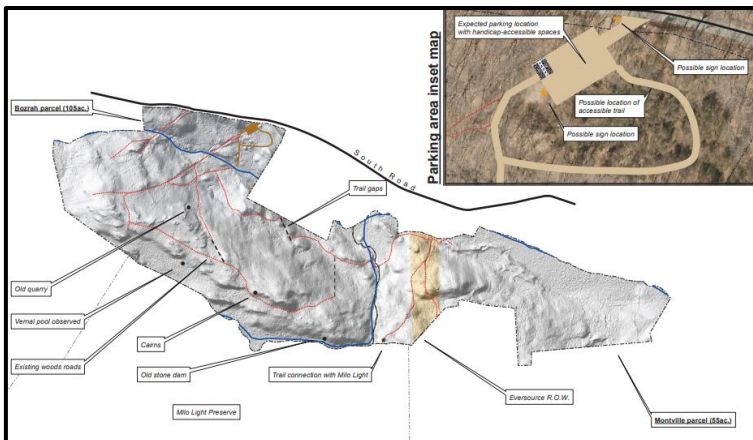
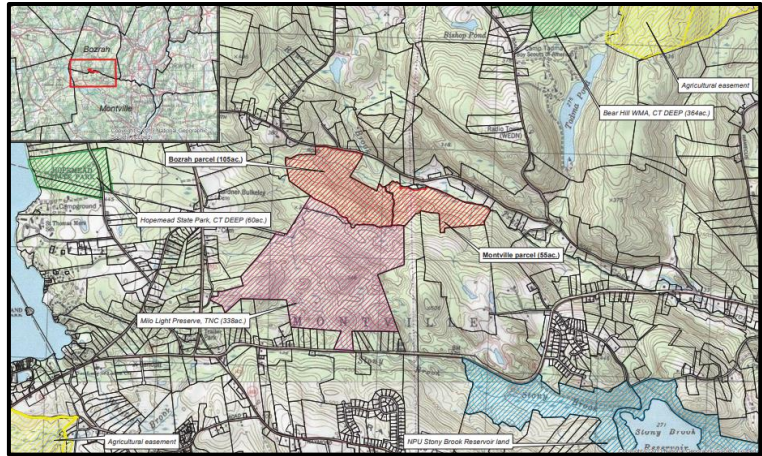


Avalonia Land Conservancy, Inc.

Glemboski – Ous Property

Bozrah (104.2 acres) & Montville (55.13 acres)

This property, at the SW corner of Bozrah and the NW corner of Montville, is mostly forested, containing scrub-shrub wetlands, large glacial erratics, vernal pools, wetlands and stone cairns, in the upper Trading Cove Brook Watershed. Trading Cove Brook is a Class A stream and cold-water habitat with gravel aquifers, being a large portion of the boundary between this property and TNC's 338-acre Milo Light Preserve (MLP). This acquisition extends a conservation corridor anchored by MLP, creating a nearly 500-acre contiguous block of preserved forest in a prime cold-water stream corridor. This property & MLP will provide a sturdy cornerstone for potential future conservation activities in this corridor primarily to the north and east. The property contains several key habitats identified in DEEPS 2015 Wildlife Action Plan: Upland Forest, Upland Woodland and Shrub, Upland Herbaceous, Forested Inland Wetland, Shrub Inland Wetland and Freshwater Aquatic. There are well-defined woods roads laying the framework for a trail system, connected to MLP. Several species on the NDDB are known to inhabit the property. 7.7% of the land consists of Statewide Important or Prime Farmland soils. Passive recreational activities include hiking, nature observation & photography, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, hunting and fishing. Mountain biking and equestrian uses will be considered during trail planning. The parking area will be on South Road in an area that appears to be a former agricultural field. A handicap-accessible stone-dust path is contemplated in a flat area containing a stand of red cedar trees and Trading Cove Brook.



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 February 2024.