

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

**May 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. There were two Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Program grants funded in May 2024. Additional information on the projects follows.

| Sponsor                                      | Project                | Town                | Acres Protected |
|--|------------------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| Northwest Connecticut Land Conservancy, Inc. | Ledges Preserve        | Brookfield          | 45.288          |
| City of Middletown                           | Majestic Oaks Property | Middletown & Durham | 83.659          |

**Northwest Connecticut Land Conservancy, Inc. (NCLC)**  
**Ledges Preserve, Brookfield**  
**45.288 Acres**

This entirely forested property features 33 acres of a greater, 524-acre forest block, Dingle Brook and 15+/- acres of inland wetlands. It is contiguous with the Town of Brookfield's 116-acre Burr Farm. This purchase will protect an intact wildlife corridor with bobcat, black bear and fisher sightings in and around the parcel. The wetlands and watercourses drain into a stream which feeds Latimer Brook, headwaters of the Niantic River Watershed, and Lake Lillinonah. NCLC will create a small parking area on Banquo Brae Road and a public access trail for passive recreational and environmental education uses. The trail will cross Dingle Brook and connect to the abutting Burr Farm. The property offers good hiking opportunities with some steeper areas and outcrops to challenge hikers and nature enthusiasts.

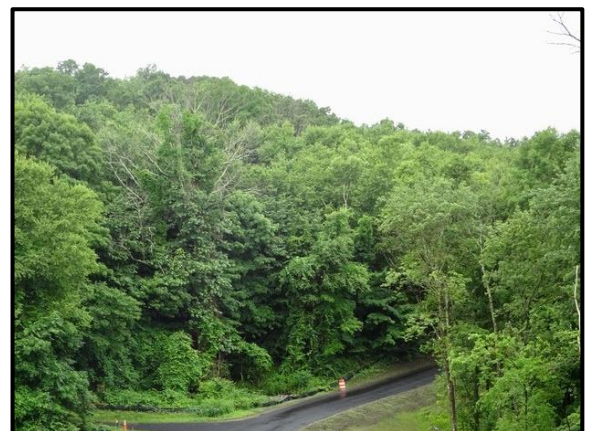
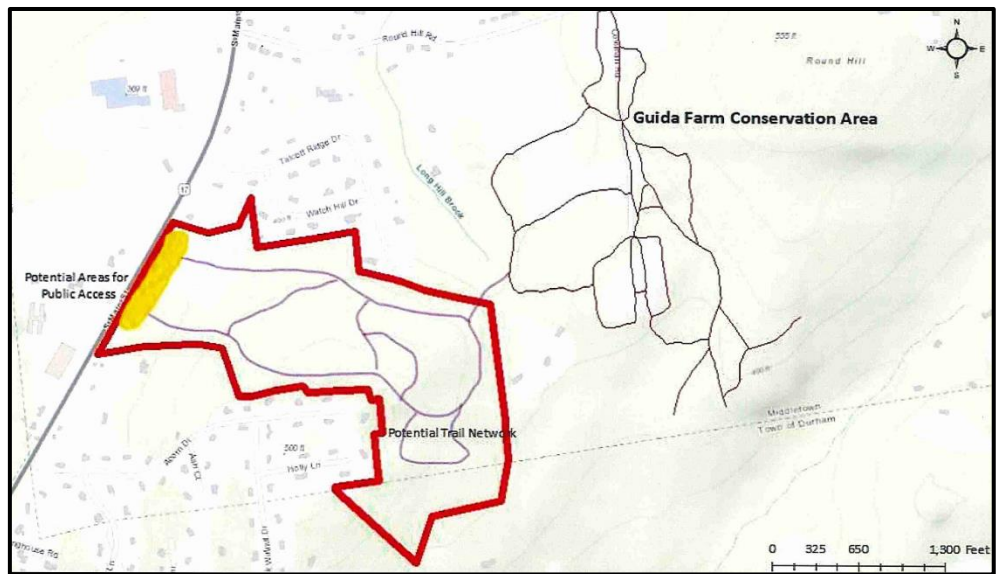
Additional funding was provided by the U.S. Dept. of the Interior, Fish & Wildlife Service, Office of Conservation Investment.





**City of Middletown**  
**Majestic Oaks Property, Middletown & Durham**  
**83.659 Acres**

The Majestic Oaks Property will add an additional 83+ acres to the 99-acre Guida Farm Conservation Area. The property is in a core forest area with a tree canopy consisting of oak, birch, white birch, hickory, black cherry, and maple. Other features include overgrown fields, wetlands, vernal pools, and prime and important farmland soils. The property has frontage on South Main Street (Route 17) which will provide an off-street parking area and two trail heads for passive recreational use. It provides an open view to the west of Powder Ridge.



### 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 was one Recreation and Natural Heritage Trust Program closings in May 2024. Additional information about the project(s) follows:

| Property Name       | Town(s) | Cooperators & Cost Share | State Share | Acres Protected | Purpose of Acquisition           |
|---------------------|---------|--------------------------|-------------|-----------------|----------------------------------|
| Morehouse-Tenenbaum | Sprague | None                     | \$140,000   | 28.43           | Addition to Mohegan State Forest |

**Morehouse-Tenenbaum  
Scotland Road, Sprague  
28.43 Acres**

The Morehouse-Tenenbaum property consists of 28.43 acres of land located on the western side of Scotland Road, just south of the Scotland town line. The land extends down to the Shetucket River and is bisected by the Providence & Worcester rail line. The eastern portion of the property features about 10 acres of fields, while the western end is mostly forested. The property is being added to the Mohegan State Forest. Acquisition of the land will provide passive recreation activities including hiking, bird watching, and fishing opportunities.





