



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

**November 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. No Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Program grants were funded in November 2024.

### **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 November 2024. Additional information about the project follows.

Property Name	Town(s)	Cooperators & Cost Share	State Share	Acres Protected	Purpose of Acquisition
Thompson	Colebrook	USFWS Highlands grant \$695,000	\$695,000	475.37	Addition to Algonquin State Forest

**Thompson property**  
**Simons Pond Rd, Colebrook**  
**475.37 Acres**

The Thompson property consists of two parcels of land containing 410.283 acres on the eastern side of Simons Pond Rd and 65.091 acres on the western side of Simons Pond Rd. Located near the Massachusetts State Line, the property will more than double this section of the Algonquin State Forest and provide passive recreational opportunities including hiking and bird watching. The acquisition ensures that a large, unfragmented block of interior forest continues to buffer water quality and provide vital wildlife linkages.



