



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

February 2025

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.

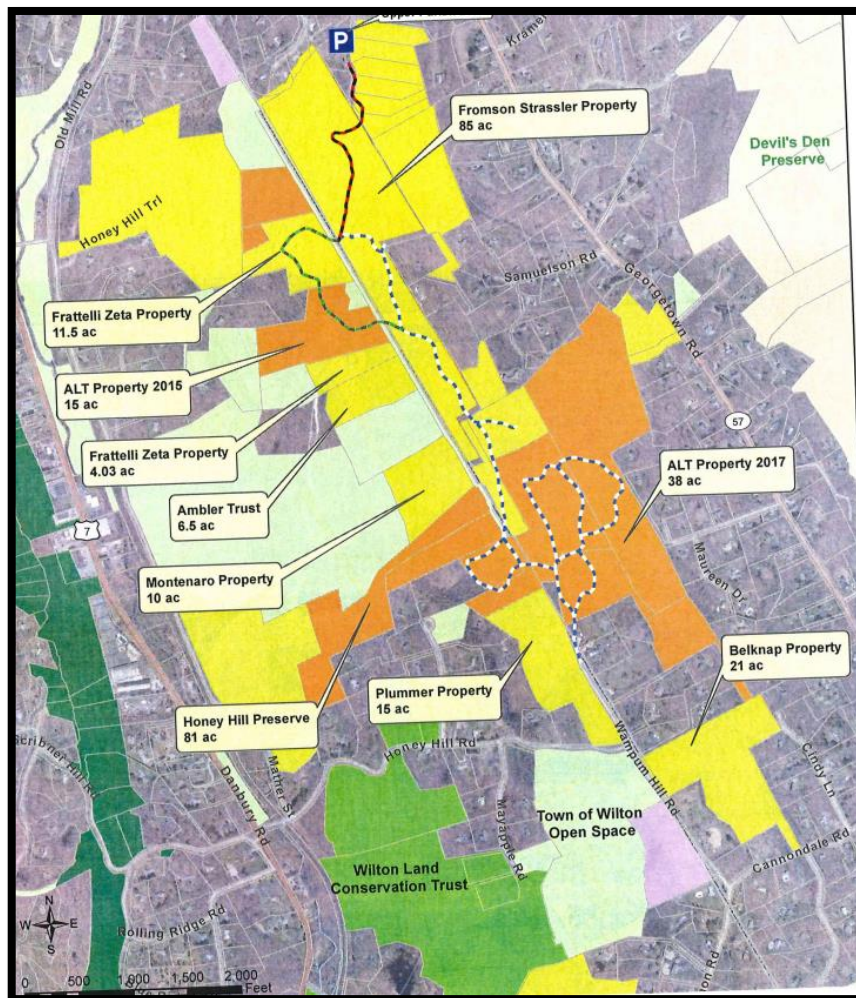
Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Grant Program

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 February 2025. Additional information about the project follows.

Sponsor	Project	Town	Acres Protected
Aspetuck Land Trust, Inc.	Fratelli Zeta Acquisition	Wilton	11.533

Aspetuck Land Trust, Inc.
Fratelli Zeta Acquisition, Wilton
11.533 Acres

This 11.533-acre property contributes to a 705-acre contiguous forest known as the Weston/Wilton Forest Block (containing several previously funded OSHA projects). Aspetuck Land Trust will create a recreational trail system through the Forest Block with public parking and a central trailhead on the adjacent Fromson Strassler property, at the upper end of Upper Parish Drive in Weston. The hiking trails in the forest block will be connected to the regional Norwalk River Valley Trail at the Cannondale Station in Wilton and to Huntington State Park in Redding via Georgetown Road. There are intermittent watercourses and seepage wetlands that contribute to the headwaters of the West Branch of the Saugatuck River, with an intermittent stream channel and bordering vegetated wetlands providing habitat for amphibians.





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 2025.