

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

July 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 July 2025. Additional information on the project follows.

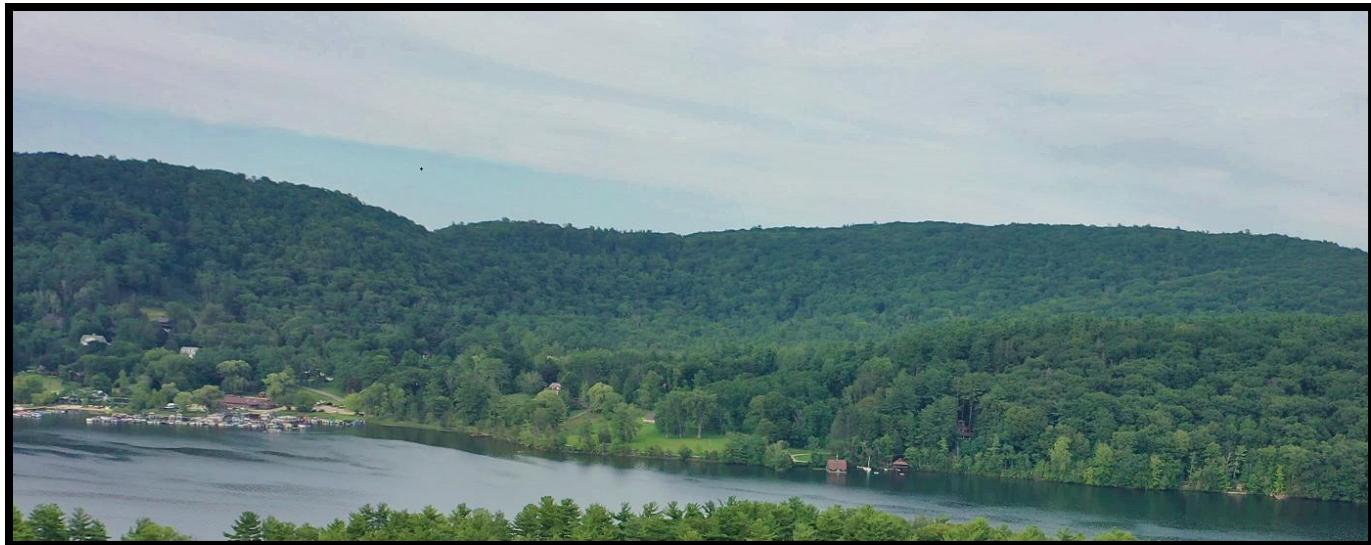
Sponsor	Project	Town	Acres Protected
The Salisbury Association, Incorporated	Tom's Hill	Salisbury	275.596

The Salisbury Association, Incorporated

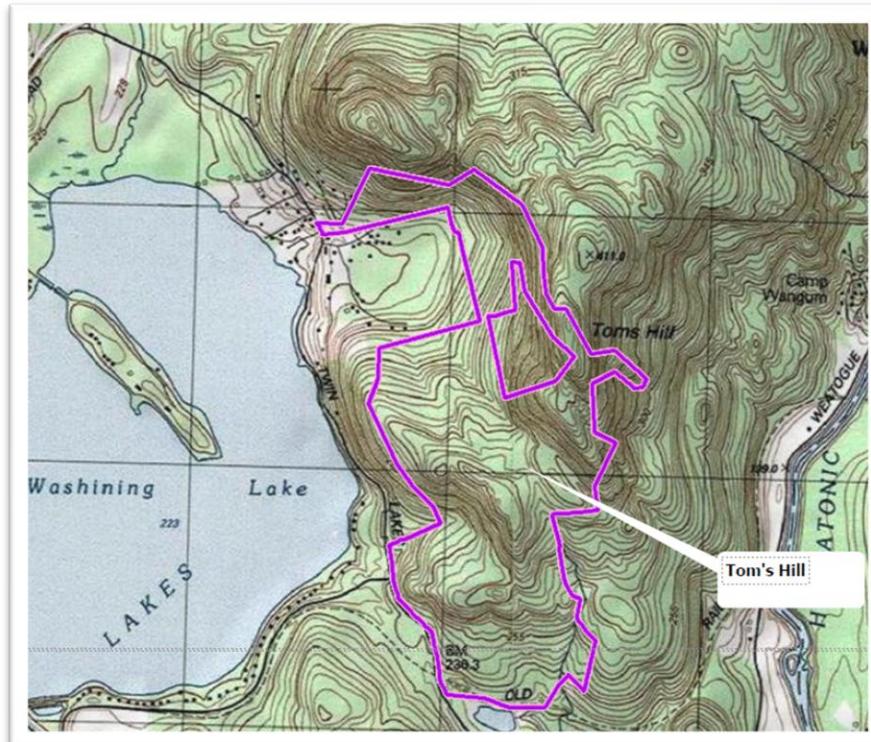
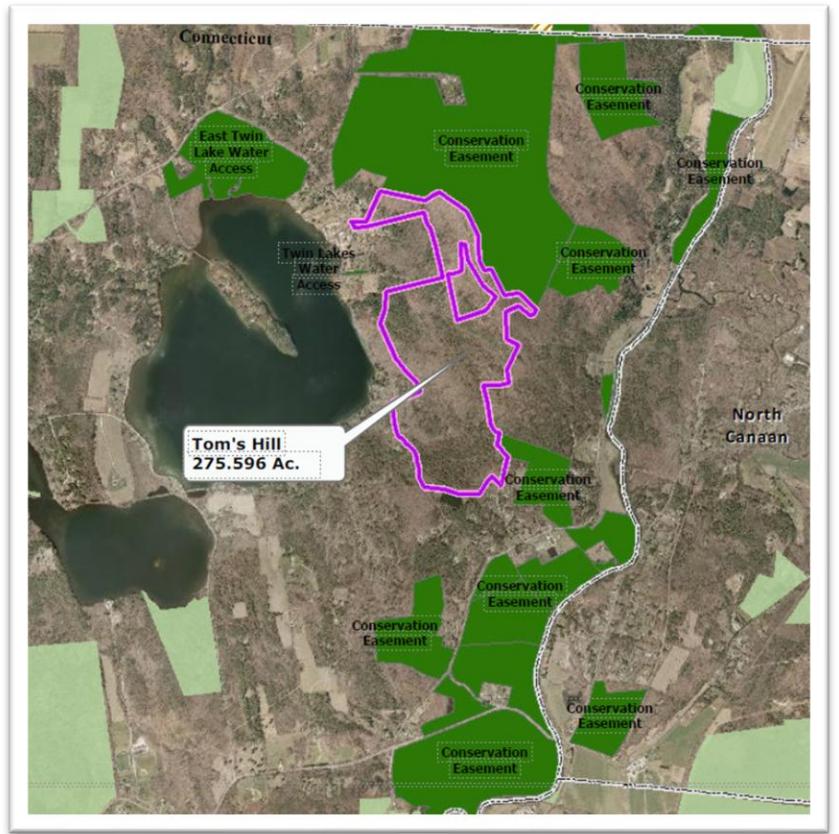
Tom's Hill, Salisbury

275.596 Acres

Tom's Hill lies easterly of Salisbury's "Twin Lakes" and westerly of the Housatonic River, rising above Lake Washining (East Twin Lake) and contains the Tom's Hill summit. The parcel abuts large blocks of protected land (540 acres to the northeast & 418 acres to the southeast) that link the property to the Housatonic River. It contains outstanding viewsheds, scenic vistas, and ridgelines and provides excellent recreational opportunities for scenic hiking, with complex terrain, ridges, knobs, cirques, benches and ravines. There will be a parking area and public access trail on Twin Lakes Road. The property is almost entirely core forest, with a mix of northern transitional hardwoods and conifers and includes at-risk habitats such as forested swamps, freshwater wetlands, and riparian lands adjacent to cold water streams. The property contains three miles of streams and riparian corridors that drain to Lake Washining, an important fishery resource in the Housatonic River Watershed. Additional Highlands Grant funding was provided by the U.S. Department of the Interior, Fish & Wildlife Service, Office of Conservation Investment.



View of Tom's Hill from Lake Washining



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 July 2025.