



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

June 2025

Overview

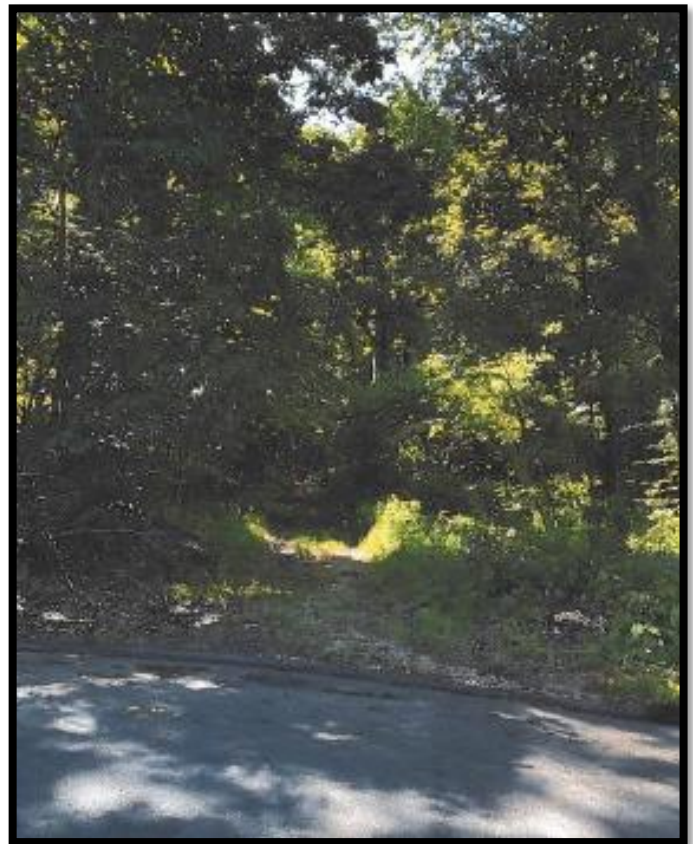
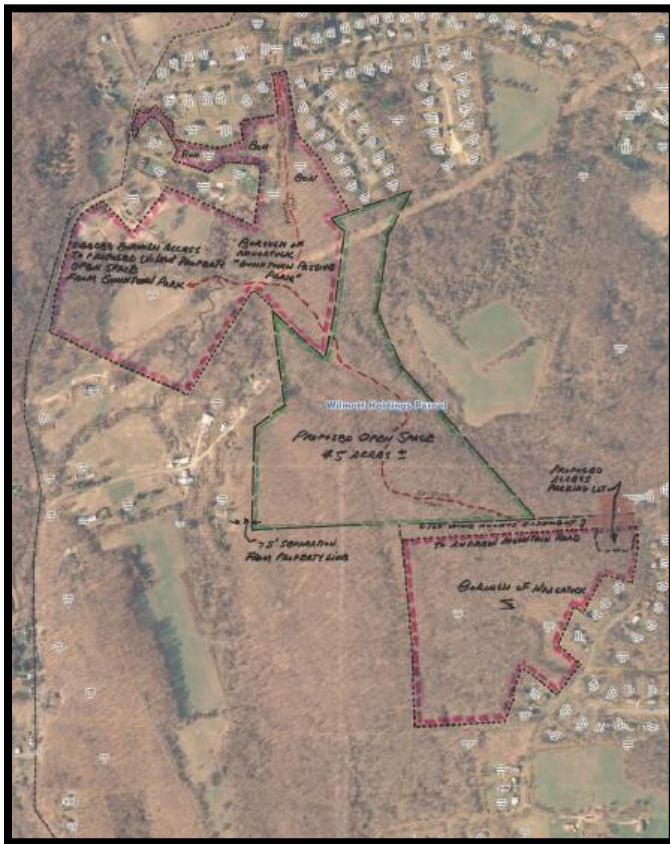
Section 22a-6v of the General Statutes of Connecticut requires the Commissioner of the Department of Energy & Environmental Protection to submit a report to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to finance, revenue and bonding and to the State Bond 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 June 2025. Additional information on the project follows.

Sponsor	Project	Town	Acres Protected
Borough of Naugatuck	Wilmot Property	Naugatuck	45.1841

This property is bordered by two Naugatuck open space parcels and is a key final gap in Naugatuck’s public trails network. The trail traverses Middlebury, Oxford, and Waterbury, as well as, DEEP’s Naugatuck State Forest and Larkin Bridle State Park Trail and the local “Mission 22 Trail,” which is dedicated to raising awareness of veteran suicide prevention. The property is steeply sloped, mainly forested and contains about 1.4 acres of inland wetlands. This acquisition will protect the water quality of the Long Meadow Pond Brook and support habitats associated with the state’s goal to reintroduce migrating diadromous fish from Long Island Sound to sub-regional basins of the Naugatuck River. It supports habitat and migration corridors for wildlife at the nearby Naugatuck State Forest and Audubon Bird Sanctuary.



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 closing in June 2025. Additional information about the project follows.

Property Name	Town(s)	Cooperators & Cost Share	State Share	Acres Protected	Purpose of Acquisition
Town of Hamden	Hamden	\$0	\$290,000	12.71	Addition to West Rock Ridge State Park

Town of Hamden
490 Main Street, Hamden
12.71 Acres

This parcel at 490 Main Street is surrounded on three sides by West Rock Ridge State Park and features over 1,100 feet of road frontage. The interior is mainly wooded with a small brook traversing the property. The land is located within the West Rock Ridge conservation area and the acquisition of this property provides additional passive recreation opportunities for the general public.

