



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

November 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.

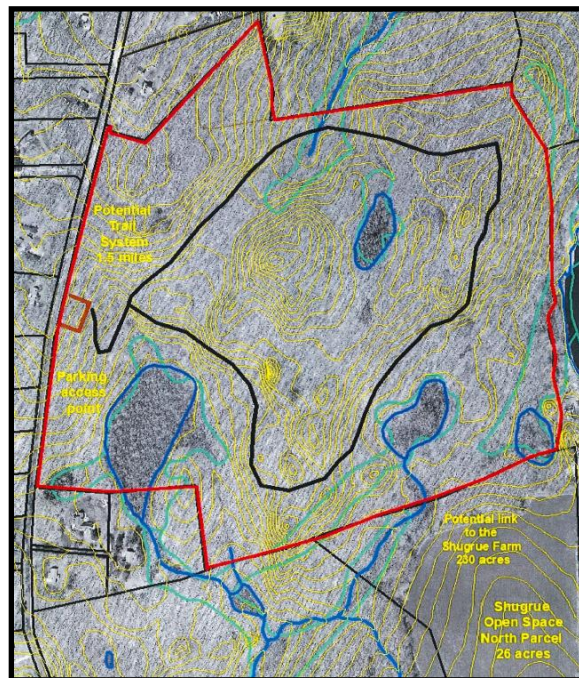
Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Grant Program

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 November 2025. Additional information on the projects follows.

Sponsor	Project	Town	Acres Protected
Town of East Haddam	Hayward Property	East Haddam	102.734

Town of East Haddam
Hayward Property, East Haddam
102.734 Acres

The Hayward Property is mostly forested with oak trees but also has maple and beech trees. It contains a large red maple wetland and at least one large vernal pool. It is located at the headwaters of the Eightmile River Watershed. It abuts the Shugrue Farm and Town-owned open space properties and is part of an extensive greenbelt that extends from Hamburg Cove in Lyme through the Eightmile River watershed to the Salmon River Watershed. The parcel is part of the Lyme Forest Block Important Bird Area and supports a variety of woodland-nesting bird species. The Town will create a 1.5-mile loop trail with public access and parking on the east side of O'Connell Road Extension.



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 two Recreation and Natural Heritage Trust Program closings in November 2025. More information on the projects follows.

Property Name	Town	Cooperators & Cost Share	State Share	Acres Protected	Purpose of Acquisition
Ayer	Franklin	None	\$0 (donation)	13.87	Addition to Franklin WMA
Hamden Historical Society	Hamden	None	\$0 (donation)	6	Addition to West Rock Ridge State Park

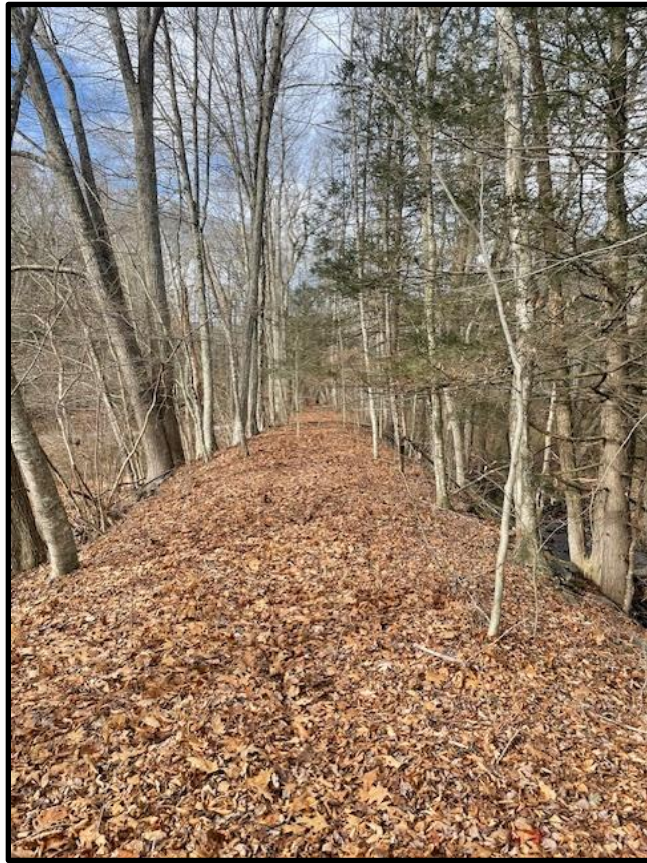
Ayer Property

Pond Road & Under the Mountain Road

Franklin

13.87 Acres

The Ayer property consists of 13.87 acres of land that were generously donated to the State by the Ayer family. It's a portion of a larger 33.46 acre parcel located at the intersection of Pond Road and Under the Mountain Road. The land features a mix of forest and wetlands and contains the remnants of a former trolley line. It will be added to the Franklin Wildlife Management Area.



Hamden Historical Society Property
Joyce Road
Hamden
6 Acres

The Hamden Historical Society property consists of 6 acres of land that was generously donated to the State. It's a rear parcel of forested land that will be added to the West Rock Ridge State Park. The property will provide passive recreational opportunities including hiking and bird watching.

