



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

July 2026

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

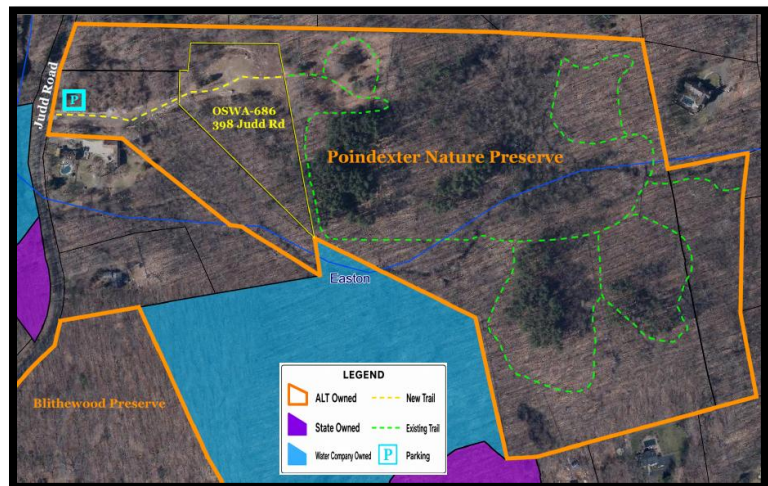
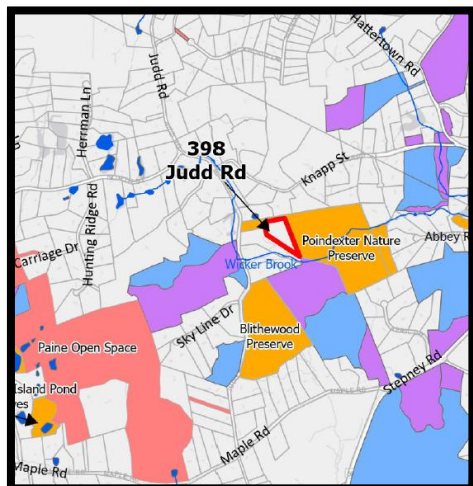
The Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Grant Program provides grants to municipalities and private nonprofit land conservation organizations for the acquisition of open space land and to water companies to acquire land to be classified as Class I or Class II watershed land. The State of Connecticut 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. Two Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Program grants were funded in July 2026. Additional information about the projects follows.

Sponsor	Project	Town	Acres Protected
Aspetuck Land Trust, Inc.	Poindexter Preserve Addition	Easton	3.5771
Avalonia Land Conservancy, Inc.	Bond Property	Montville & Salem	644.94

Aspetuck Land Trust, Inc.
Poindexter Preserve Addition, Easton
3.5771+/- Acres



This 3.5771-acre parcel will be added to ALT's existing Poindexter Preserve at 398 Judd Road, Easton. This addition will introduce essential amenities such as safe off-street parking, a new central trailhead and better access, maintaining and effectively doubling the existing grassland fields. It will enhance a migration corridor through interconnected State, municipal, Aquarion and ALT lands. It is a vital ecological asset in the Mill River's headwaters and serves as a riparian buffer for Wicker Brook, a cold-water stream. This acquisition safeguards diverse wildlife habitats, scenic rock walls, a wetland and grassland meadow cherished by nature enthusiasts.



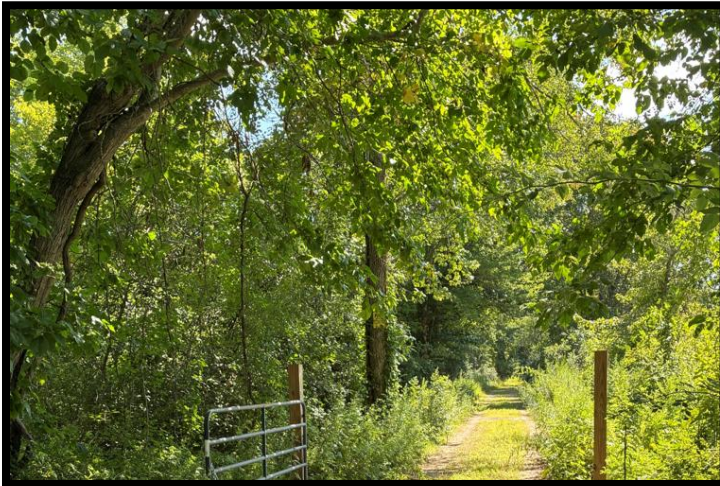
Avalonia Land Conservancy, Inc. (ALC)
Bond Property, Montville & Salem
644.94 Acres

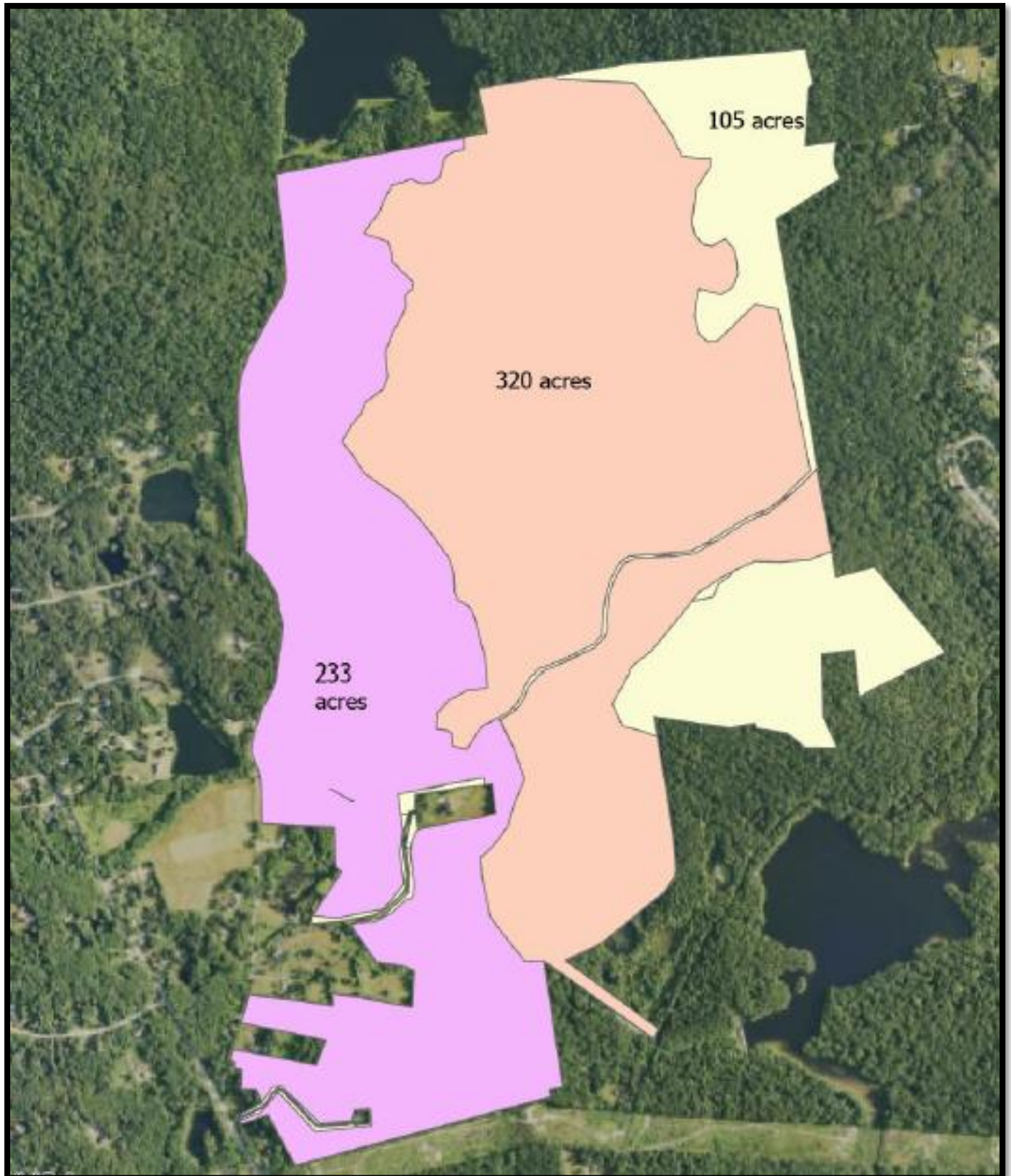


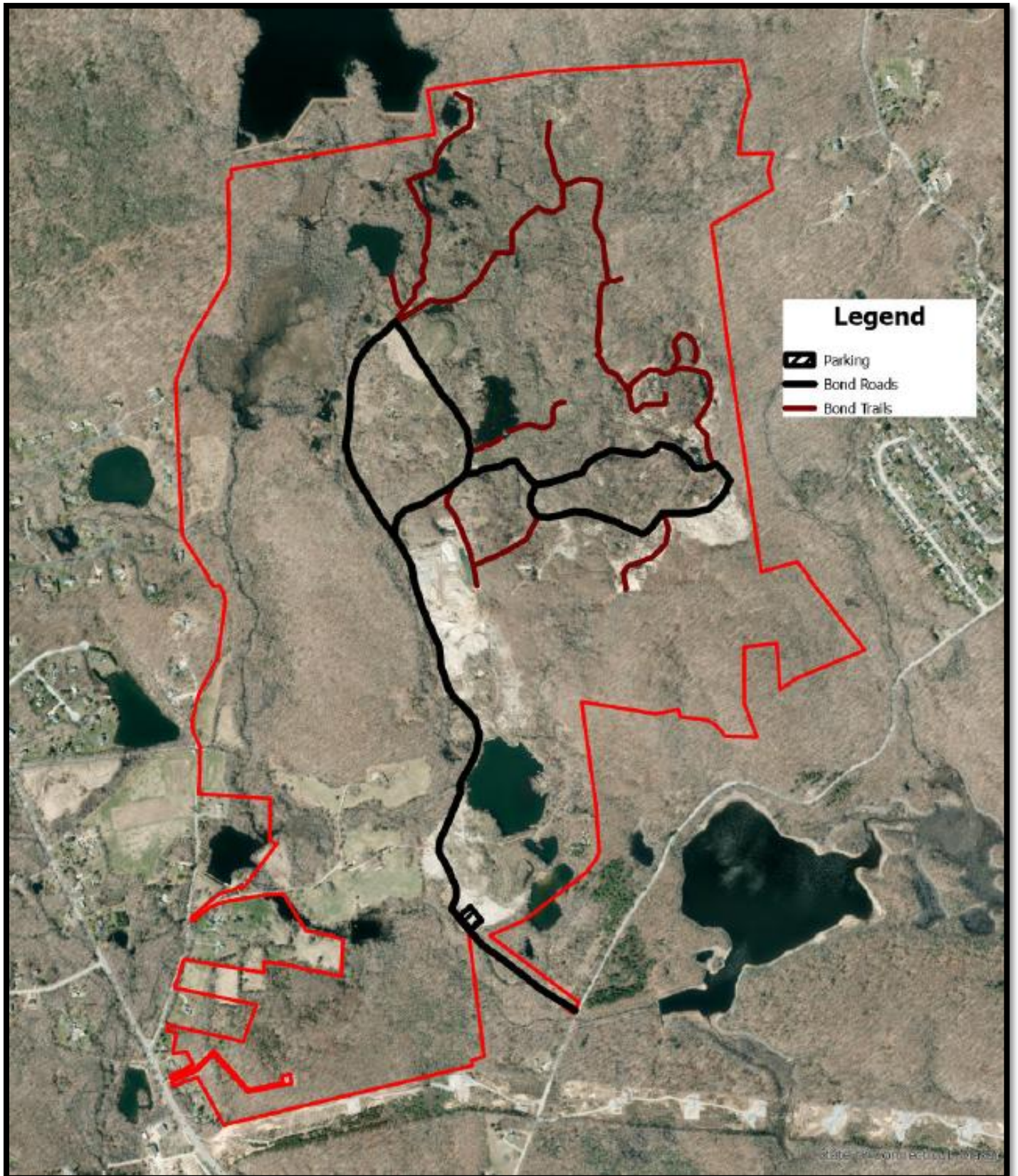
The 673.26-acre Bond property is located on the westerly side of Chesterfield Road in the Town of Montville and the easterly side of Beckwith Road in the Town of Salem. It features high value surface waterways and groundwater classifications. The property contributes to the Niantic River Watershed through Latimer Brook (one of two major tributaries) and has been identified within the Niantic River Watershed Protection Plan as including high priority conservation and restoration areas. The property is contiguous with two water utility and reservoir properties maintained as open space for watershed protection which feed the New London water system and is contiguous with at least 3,000 acres of core upland forest. The mosaic of habitats across the site includes forested uplands, forested and emergent wetlands, meadows, and shrubland which provide a wide range of habitats and edge conditions supporting a diversity of wildlife. This addition will connect over 2,900 acres of contiguous protected open space forming a wildlife corridor and high value watershed protection area. The CTDEEP Natural Diversity Database (NDDDB) has identified protected species or supporting habitat within the northwestern portion of the site.

The property will have a public parking area off Chesterfield Road in Montville with roads and public access trails offering a wide range of passive recreational uses such as bird and wildlife viewing, hiking, mountain biking, equestrian use, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, and the flooded quarry areas could provide paddle and fishing opportunities. Fish species including bass, bluegill, pumpkin seed and catfish have been documented in the deep quarry ponds, providing fishing opportunities.

This ALC purchase was a collaborative funding effort between CT DEEP OSWA and the US Fish & Wildlife Service, pursuant to a North America Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA) grant. DEEP & NAWCA will hold a 664.94-acre conservation easement. The State of CT Bond Commission provided additional funding for the purchase pursuant to Public Act 79-609. The U.S. Department of Agriculture will hold a 233+/- acre conservation easement on the westerly side of the parcel for agricultural use, by virtue of a National Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) grant.







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 July 2026. Additional information about the project follows.

Property Name	Town	Cooperators & Cost Share	State Share	Acres Protected	Purpose of Acquisition
P&J's Legacy LLC	Portland	\$0	\$73,500	18.69	Addition to Wangunk Meadows WMA

P&J's Legacy LLC

Wangunk Meadows, Portland

Wangunk Meadows Wildlife Management Area

18.69 Acres

The P&J's Legacy LLC property consists of three parcels of land totaling 18.69 acres located within the Wangunk Meadows in Portland. With the meadows being a patchwork of ownership, this acquisition follows the recent acquisition of 24 other properties in the area. The purchase expands DEEP's holdings in the area and helps streamline management of the WMA. Two of the parcels feature frontage on the Connecticut River, with the third just inland. Featuring a mix of fields and wetlands, the property will provide passive recreation opportunities for the public including hiking and hunting.

