

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

May 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. No Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Program grants were funded in May 2026.

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 May 2026. Additional information about the project follows.

| Property Name | Town | Cooperators & Cost Share | State Share | Acres Protected | Purpose of Acquisition |
|----------------------|-------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Wright's Island Farm | Portland | None | \$199,000 | 86.44 | Addition to Wangunk Meadows WMA |

Wright's Island Farm LLC
Wangunk Meadows & Main Street, Portland
Wangunk Meadows Wildlife Management Area
86.44 Acres

The Wright's Island Farm property consists of 23 parcels totaling 86.44 acres within the Wangunk Meadows in Portland. Because the meadows are a patchwork of fragmented ownerships, this acquisition significantly expands DEEP's holdings and streamlines management of the Wildlife Management Area (WMA). Featuring a diverse mix of fields, wetlands, and Connecticut River frontage, the property will provide passive recreation opportunities for the public, including hiking and hunting.



