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

September 2026

Overview

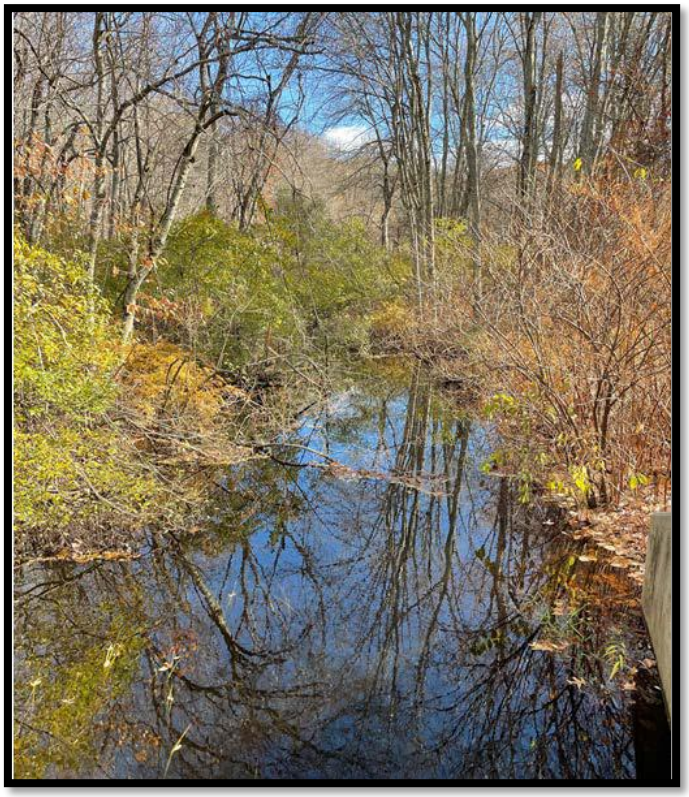
Section 22a-6v of the General Statutes of Connecticut requires the Commissioner of the Department of Energy & Environmental Protection to submit a report to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to finance, revenue and bonding and to the State Bond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

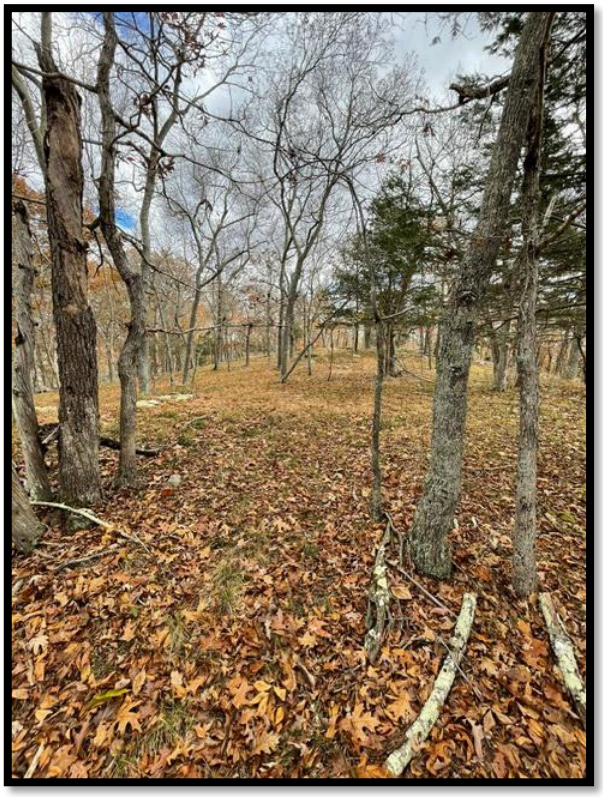
Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Grant Program

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. Four Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Program grants were funded in September 2026. Additional information about the projects follows.

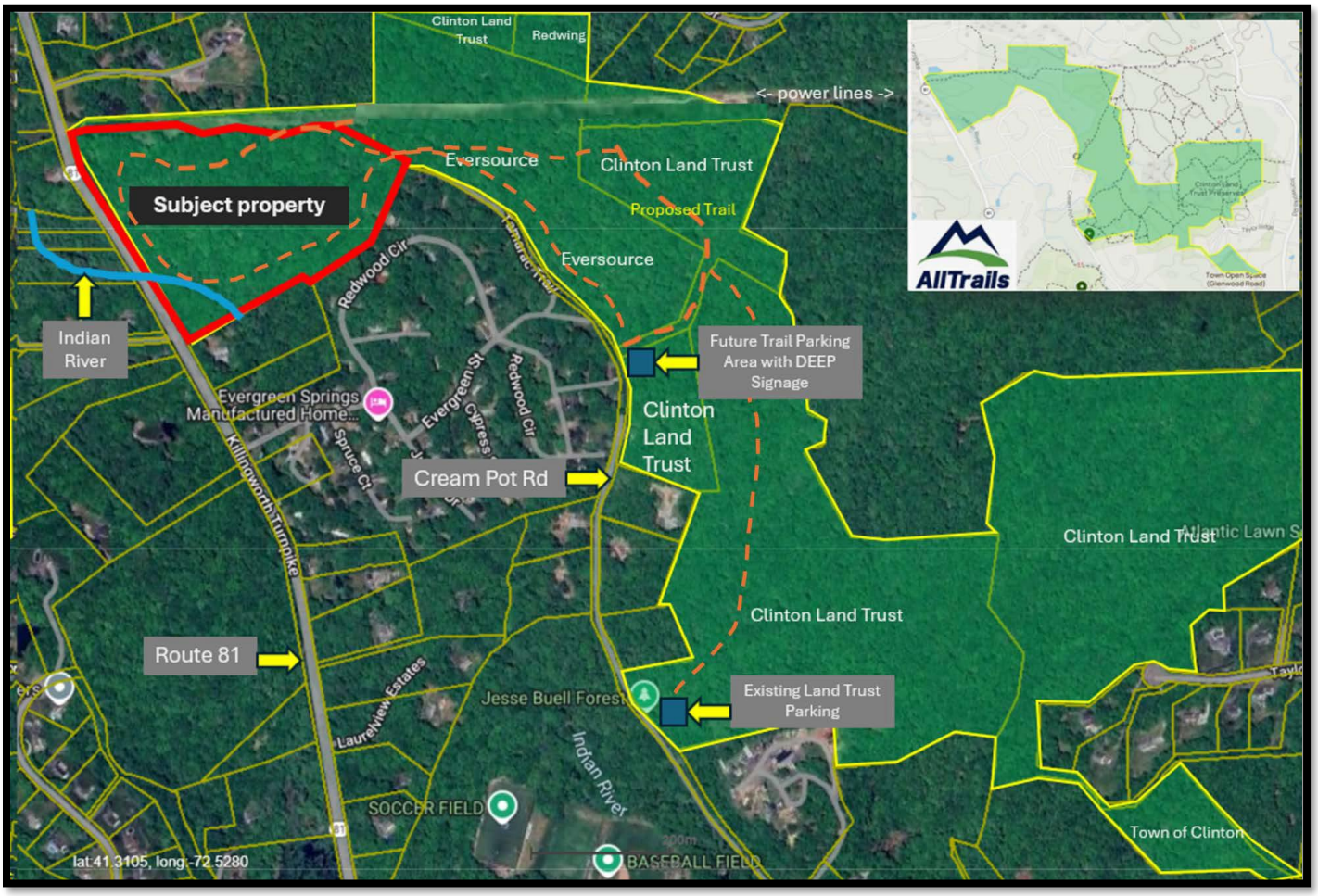
Sponsor	Project	Town	Acres Protected
Clinton Land Conservation Trust, Inc.	Killingworth Turnpike Open Space (Greystone) Property	Clinton	23.59
Town of Hebron	O'Connor Property	Hebron	115.336
The Salisbury Association, Incorporated	White Hollow Property	Salisbury	33.564
Aspetuck Land Trust, Inc.	Plummer Addition to Weston Wilton Forest Reserve	Wilton & Weston	15.838

Clinton Land Conservation Trust, Inc. (CLCT)
Killingworth Turnpike Open Space (Greystone) Property, Clinton
23.59+/- Acres





This property adds to an existing 150-acre open space corridor. It is adjacent to property owned by Eversource and other CLCT protected open space. Indian River flows through the southwest portion of the property, and it is in the Indian River Watershed. Preservation of this property protects the inland wetland resources that contribute to CT Water Company's public water supply. CLCT plans to create a loop trail on the property, which will pass through Eversource property and connect to other CLCT property and the designated parking area for this parcel. CLCT and Eversource are collaborating on the public access trail system. The property provides unique landscapes such as open areas with native grasses, rocky outcrops and a Class A waterbody, situated between two NDDB areas. It expands community access to large, uninterrupted natural areas and trails. The property abuts Route 81 along a public bus route, expanding access to visitors using public transportation.

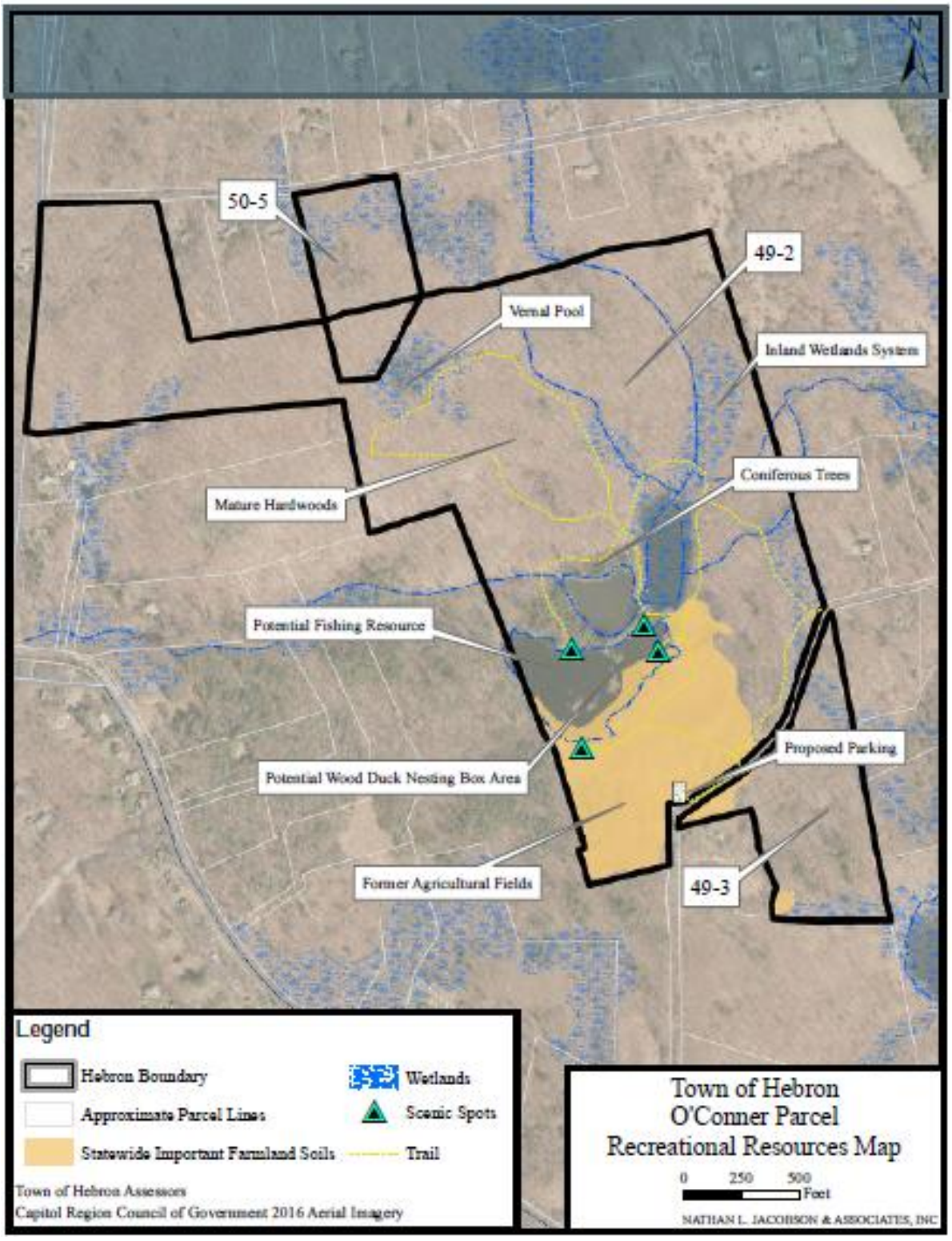

Clinton Land Trust
Redwing
<- power lines ->
Eversource
Clinton Land Trust
Subject property
Proposed Trail
Eversource
Redwood Cir
Tamarac Trail
Indian River
Future Trail Parking Area with DEEP Signage
Evergreen Springs Manufactured Home...
Evergreen St
Redwood Cir
Clinton Land Trust
Killingworth Turnpike
Spruce Ct
Cream Pot Rd
Clinton Land Trust
Clinton Land Trust
Route 81
Jesse Buell Forest
Existing Land Trust Parking
Laurelview Estates
Indian River
SOCCER FIELD
Town of Clinton
lat 41.3105, long -72.5280
BASEBALL FIELD
AllTrails

Town of Hebron
O'Connor Property, Hebron
115.336 Acres





The O'Connor Property is a large, undisturbed parcel with varying topography, comprised of mixed forest with inland wetlands, including oaks, hickories, yellow ash, beech, ironwood, and cottonwood trees, interspersed with highbush blueberry and spicebush shrubs. There are three interconnected shallow ponds that form outflowing streams which converge to form an unnamed tributary to the Blackledge River. The Property is located upstream to a DEEP Trout Management Area near Old Hartford Turnpike where several rivers, brooks, and streams converge and approach the Salmon River. An 1880's farm at the southeast side of the Property is evidenced by stonewalls and foundations, pond "gate", stone dam and possible mill race, farm well, and old-growth or "wolf" maple trees. The Property is located within the Town's strategic future open space greenway corridor. The Town intends to design and create trails leading around the pond's waterfront vistas. A public access parking area is proposed at Chittenden Road which runs through the southern end of the Property. Hebron sees high volume resident and visitor traffic to its many outside recreational areas including Gay City State Park, Salmon River State Forest, a segment of the Air Line State Park Trail, and Town-owned open spaces purchased with past grant funding assistance. Acquisition of this Property would further expand opportunities for resident and visitor passive recreation such as hiking, fishing, swimming, boating, waterfowl and other wildlife viewing.

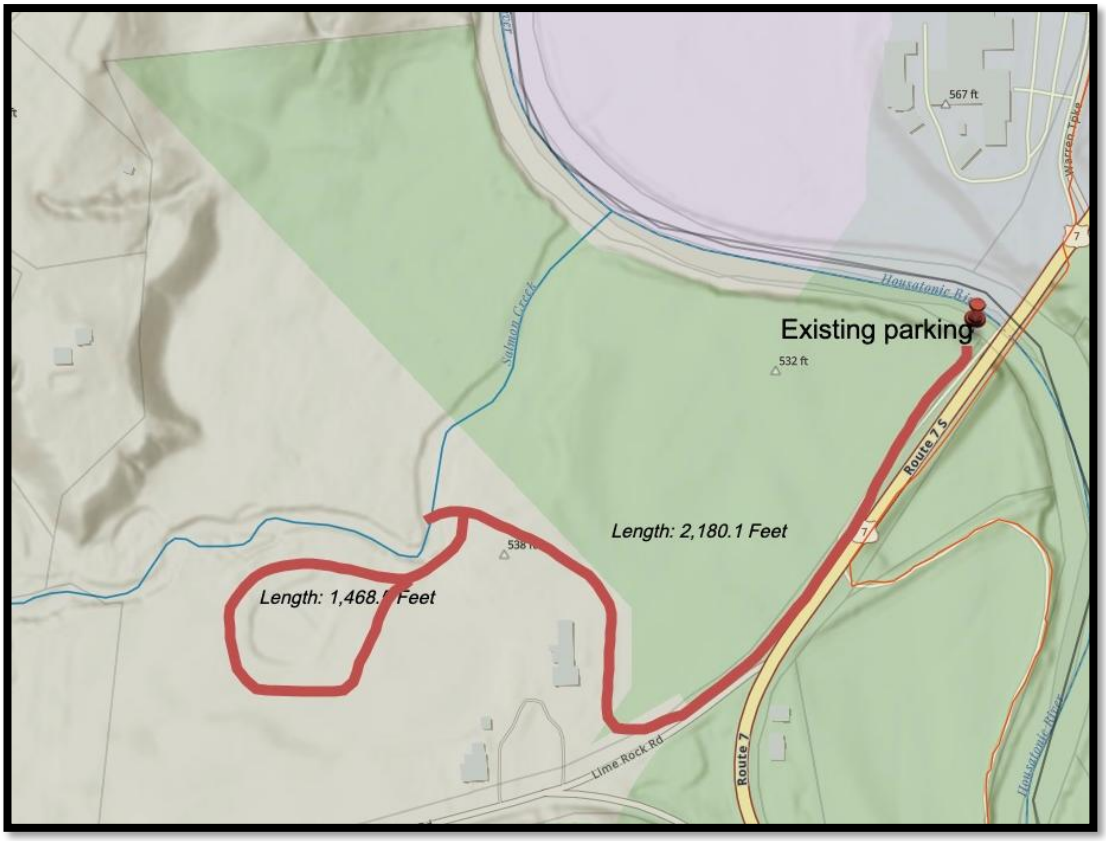

N
50-5
49-2
Vernal Pool
Inland Wetlands System
Coniferous Trees
Mature Hardwoods
Potential Fishing Resource
Proposed Parking
Potential Wood Duck Nesting Box Area
Former Agricultural Fields
49-3
Legend
Hebron Boundary
Approximate Parcel Lines
Statewide Important Farmland Soils
Wetlands
Scenic Spots
Trail
Town of Hebron Assessors
Capitol Region Council of Government 2016 Aerial Imagery
Town of Hebron
O'Conner Parcel
Recreational Resources Map
0 250 500
Feet
NATHAN L. JACOBSON & ASSOCIATES, INC

The Salisbury Association, Incorporated (SA)
White Hollow Property
33.564+/- Acres



SA purchased this 63.4-acre property on the Housatonic River between Dugway Road to the north and Lime Rock Road/CT Route 7 to the south. The property adjoins and is a part of the Appalachian Trail corridor, across from SA's Belter Lime Rock Preserve, which connects to other SA preserves and the Housatonic State Forest. A portion of the property is already subject to a conservation restriction so the OSWA Conservation Easement will encumber 33.564-acres. The property is almost entirely floodplain and mostly used for agriculture (hay & corn) providing meadow habitat. There are 53 acres of Prime farmland soils and 2 acres of Statewide Important farmland soils. The NDDB documents 11 State-listed species at or near this property. There is a pond and about 10 acres of forest. SA will provide a public hiking trail along the river with a much better boat access point near where the Salmon Kill enters the Housatonic and a loop trail on the DEEP Conservation Easement area. The new trail and river access will add a convenient and attractive option for recreation.

Supplemental funding (for the 63.4-acre purchase) was provided by the U.S. Department of the Interior and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Natural Resource Damages (NRD) fund as granted by the Trustee Sub-Council for the GE-Housatonic River Restoration Fund.


567 ft
Existing parking
532 ft
Length: 2,180.1 Feet
Length: 1,468.
Feet
Route 7 S
Route 7
Lime Rock Rd
Housatonic River
Salmon Creek





Aspetuck Land Trust, Inc. (ALT)
Plummer Addition to the Weston Wilton Forest Reserve
15.838+/- Acres

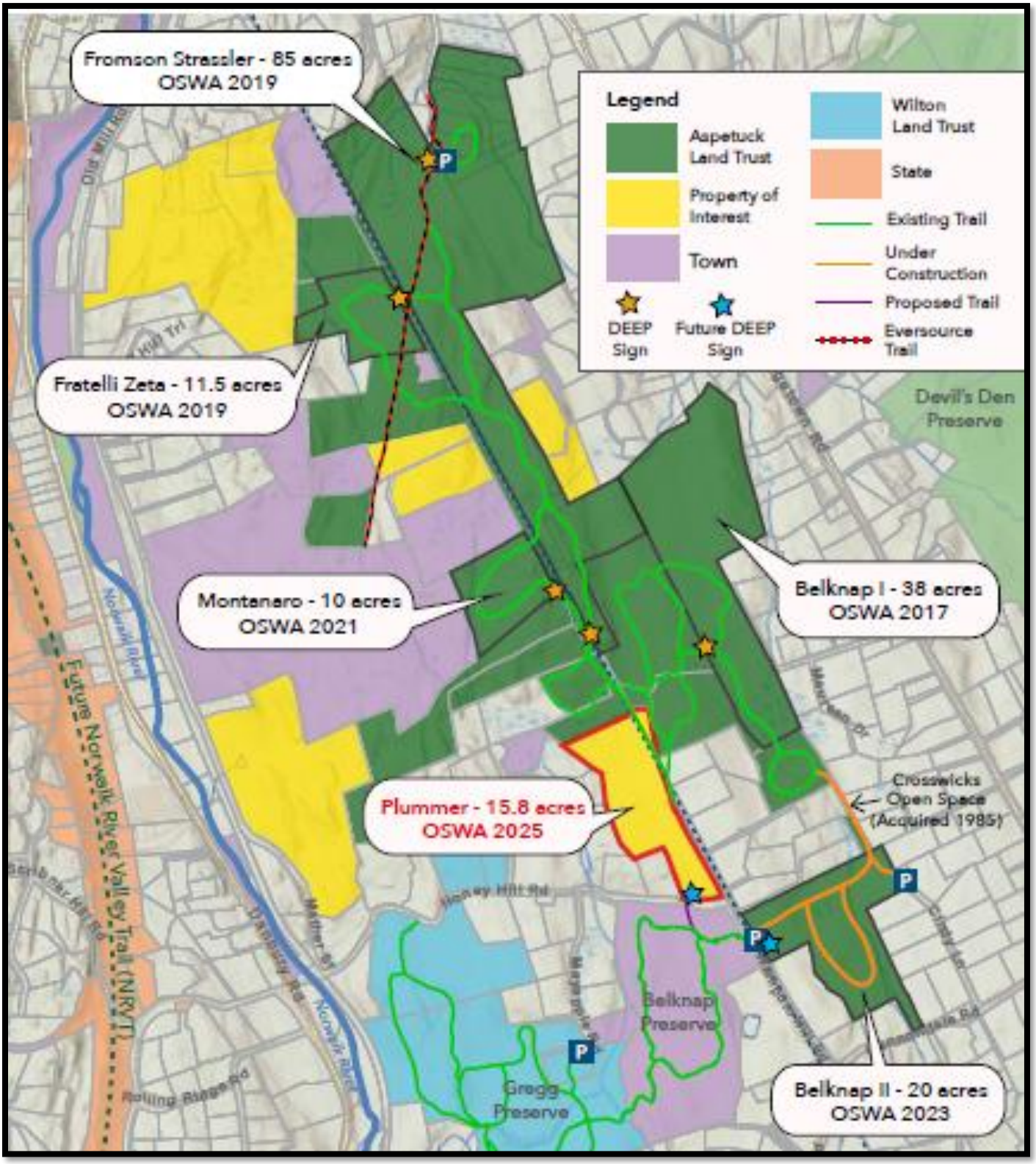


The Plummer Addition to the Weston Wilton Forest Reserve (WWFR), is located at the corner of Honey Hill Road and Wampum Hill Road. The property contains high-quality wetlands and uplands that contribute to the ecological integrity of this 750+-acre SA WWFR assemblage. Its acquisition will complete a vital segment of the WWFR's main hiking loop and enhance a regional trail corridor spanning state, municipal and land trust lands. The parcel links protected open space north and south, including access to the Norwalk River Valley Trail, making it a valuable public resource for passive recreation, outdoor education, and community wellness. The property supports extensive wildlife habitat and contains wetlands that feed Mayapple Brook, a Class A watercourse sustained by cool groundwater discharge. This stream contributes coldwater flow to the Norwalk River, a downstream coldwater fishery. Together with adjacent preserved lands, this addition would form a 200+-acre block. It is large enough to support area-sensitive wildlife like forest interior birds and to strengthen regional climate resilience by preventing habitat fragmentation. With open space in southwestern Connecticut rapidly dwindling, preserving this parcel addresses ecological, community, and climate priorities. It enhances public access to nature, improves trail connectivity, protects clean water resources, and provides lasting benefits for local residents and future generations.





Western view of the 2.4-acre scenic field


Fromson Stressler - 85 acres
OSWA 2019
Fratelli Zeta - 11.5 acres
OSWA 2019
Montanaro - 10 acres
OSWA 2021
Plummer - 15.8 acres
OSWA 2025
Belknap I - 38 acres
OSWA 2017
Belknap II - 20 acres
OSWA 2023
Legend
Aapetuck Land Trust
Property of Interest
Town
DEEP Sign
Future DEEP Sign
Wilton Land Trust
State
Existing Trail
Under Construction
Proposed Trail
Eversource Trail
Devil's Den Preserve
Crosswicks Open Space (Acquired 1985)
Belknap Preserve
Gregg Preserve
Future Norwalk River Valley Trail (NRVT)
Old Mill Rd
Hill Trl
Norwalk River
Rolling Ridge Rd
Hickory Hill Rd
Maplewood Dr
Meadow Rd
Crosswicks Rd

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 September 2026.

Property Name	Town	Cooperators & Cost Share	State Share	Acres Protected	Purpose of Acquisition
Nugent	Woodbridge	$0	$280,000	28.2	Addition to West Rock Ridge State Park
Caya Realty LLC	Tolland	$0	$25,000	4.98	Addition to Nye Holman State Forest

Nugent
1875 Litchfield Turnpike, Woodbridge
West Rock Ridge State Park
28.2 Acres

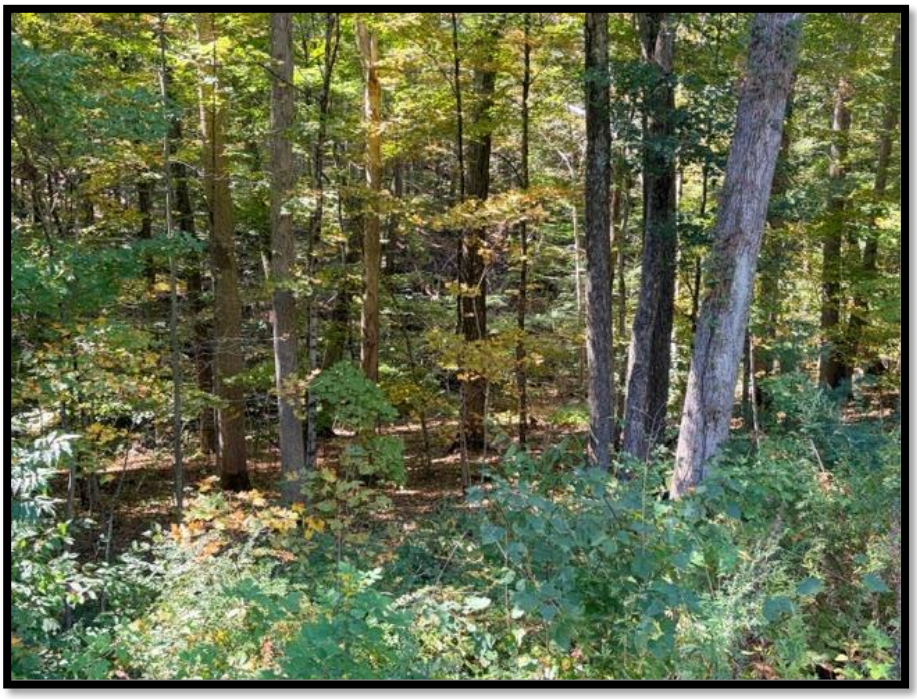
The Nugent property consists of a slightly irregular shaped parcel of land totaling 28.2 acres located at 1875 Litchfield Turnpike, Woodbridge. This vacant, wooded parcel features some rocky areas and sections of wetlands. The West River crosses the property. This acquisition helps fill in a gap in the park and will provide passive recreational opportunities including hiking and bird watching.

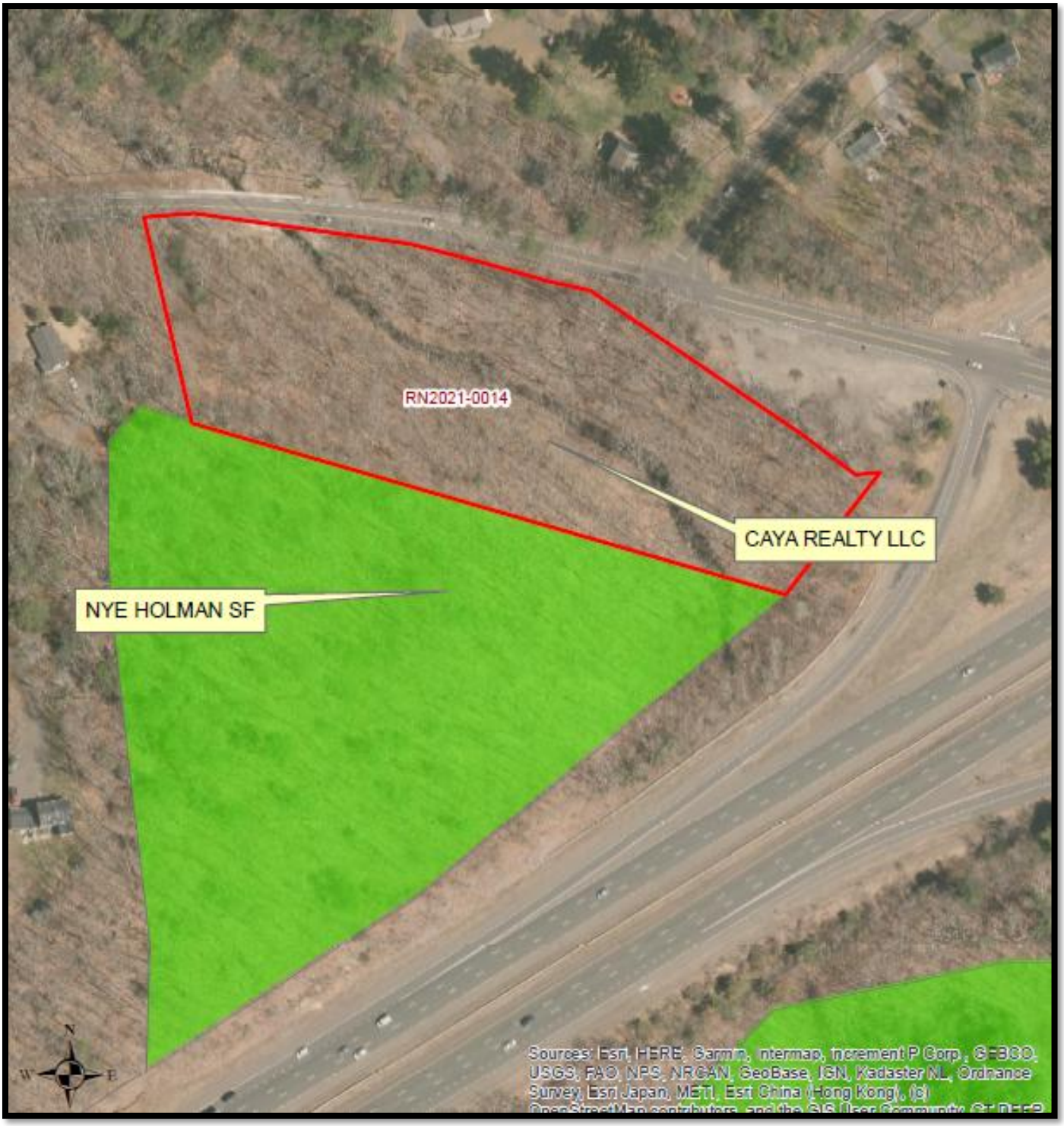




Caya Realty LLC
1408 Tolland Stage Rd, Tolland
Nye Holman State Forest
4.98 Acres

The Caya Realty LLC property consists of a parcel of land totaling 4.98 acres located at 1408 Tolland Stage Rd, Tolland, just off of I-84. This vacant, wooded parcel features rolling topography with a section of Grapevine Brook crossing the property. The acquisition helps by providing access to a landlocked section of Nye Holman State Forest that was cut off when the highway was built.




RN2021-0014
CAYA REALTY LLC
NYE HOLMAN SF
N
W
E
Sources: Esri, HERE, Garmin, intermap, increment P Corp., GEBCO, USGS, FAO, NPS, NRCAN, GeoBase, IGN, Kadaster NL, Ordnance Survey, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), (c)