

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

October 2016

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. The following grants were closed in October 2016. Additional information on these projects follows.

Sponsor	Project	Acres
Town of Hamden	100 Brooksvale Ave Rear, Hamden	15.415
Town of East Haddam	Lena Property, East Haddam	209.269
N.E. Forestry Foundation	Gurley Brook Preserve, East Lyme	166.2
Goshen Land Trust, Inc.	Fisher Property, Goshen	127.33

Town of Hamden

100 Brooksvale Avenue Rear, Hamden

Fee Acquisition

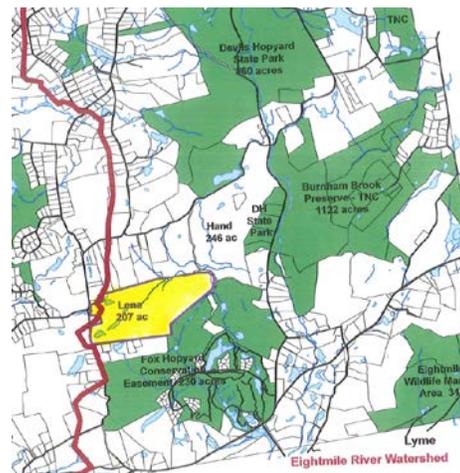


This property is a welcome addition to the Town's largest park, Brooksvale Park, adjacent to Naugatuck State Forest, linking existing park and open space together and forming an interconnected greenway. Brooksvale Park is one of the most heavily used parks in Hamden for recreational hiking and wildlife observation. Each year, all Hamden elementary 4th grade students visit the park to learn about the local environment. This acquisition protects surrounding natural drainage areas, waterways, wetlands, floodplains and potential public drinking and groundwater supplies.

Town of East Haddam

Lena Property, East Haddam

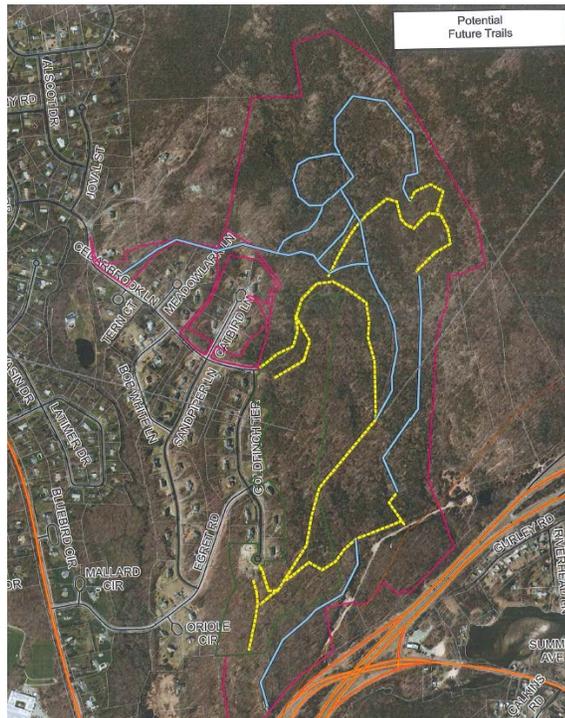
Fee Acquisition



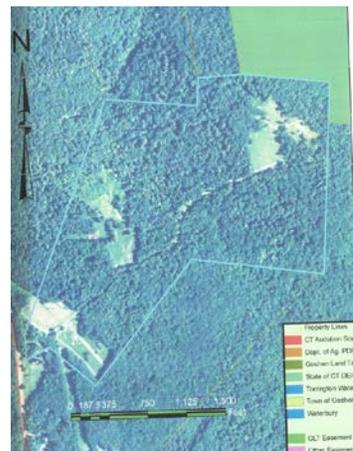
This parcel adds to the Federally-designated Eightmile River Wild & Scenic Watershed. The watershed has 80% forest cover and is part of a green belt running from Hamburg Cove in Lyme, through the Eight Mile River watershed, to the Salmon River Watershed in Colchester. The Devils Hopyard State Park (1,000 acres) is to the north, Burnham Brook Preserve (1166 acres owned by The Nature Conservancy) a 230 acre golf course (protected by a conservation easement) is to the south. The forested land has small streams, wetlands and vernal pools that feed the Eightmile River, a cold water stream that supports native brook trout. The area has been designated a Key Bird Habitat and a major forest block by the Connecticut Audubon Society. This parcel has been actively forested in the past and will continue to be a productive forest area once preserved.

New England Forestry Foundation, Inc.
Gurley Brook Preserve, East Lyme
Fee Acquisition

This forested parcel, containing Gurley Brook, is located in the Niantic River watershed at the head waters of, and overlooking the Niantic River. It is within a contiguous forest block and greenway with unique geologic features, cultural and historic value. This acquisition will promote active and passive recreation opportunities such as fishing, hiking, show shoeing, geo-caching, hunting and birdwatching, and scientific study and education of trees, plants, animals, birds, fish and other wildlife.



Goshen Land Trust, Inc.
Fisher Property, Goshen
Fee Acquisition



This is a pastoral, forested parcel which slopes upward from the access on Route 63 to a summit at the rear. It contains shrub land and grassland ecosystems housing vulnerable species, riverbed and swamps in the heart of the parcel. It lies in the watershed of the Hollenbeck River which flows through the Hollenbeck Preserve and Robbins Swamp and abuts DEEP's 860 acre North Goshen Wildlife Management Area which has about 50 acres specially cleared for a New England Cottontail Rabbit habitat. The aesthetic value of the property includes a stunning view of the Berkshires to the north. It will provide recreational opportunities, protect wildlife habitat and preserve ridgelines, summits and watersheds. Goshen Land Trust has plans to use an existing farm road to create handicapped access to this overlook.

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. The following acquisition was closed in October 2016. Additional information on this project follows.

Property Name	Location	Cooperator	Match Share	Fee Acreage	Easement Restrictions or R.O.W.	State Purchase Price	Purpose of Acquisition
Newtown Fish & Game Club, Inc.	Canaan	U.S. Fish & Wildlife	100%	85.53	--	\$315,000.00	Addition to Robbins Swamp WMA

Newtown Fish & Game Club Property

Town of Canaan

Fee Acquisition



The Newtown Fish & Game Club, Inc. property consists of 85.53 acres of land located at the intersection of Routes 7 & 63 in the town of Canaan. The land will be added to the Robbins Swamp Wildlife Management Area. The property consists largely of open fields, with the meandering Hollenbeck River forming the northeast boundary. Acquisition of this property will provide additional passive recreation and hunting opportunities. Funding for this acquisition was through a Pittman-Robertson grant administered by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.