

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

July 2016

Overview

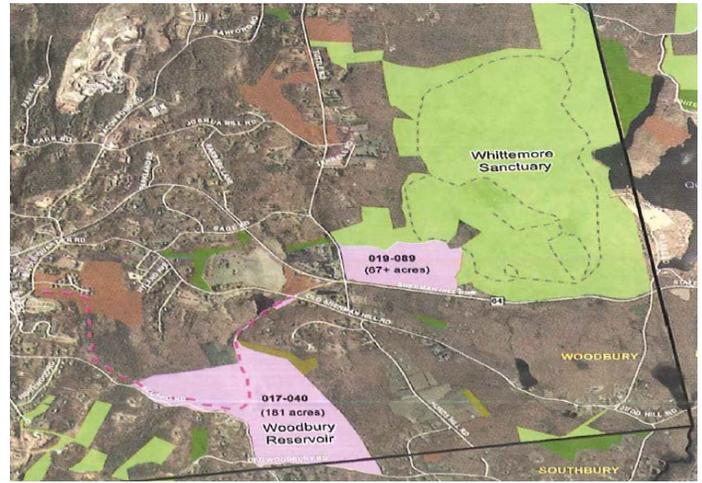
Section 22a-6v of the General Statutes of Connecticut requires the Commissioner of the Department of Energy & Environmental Protection to submit a report to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to finance, revenue and bonding and to the State Bond 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 July 2016. Additional information on these projects follows.

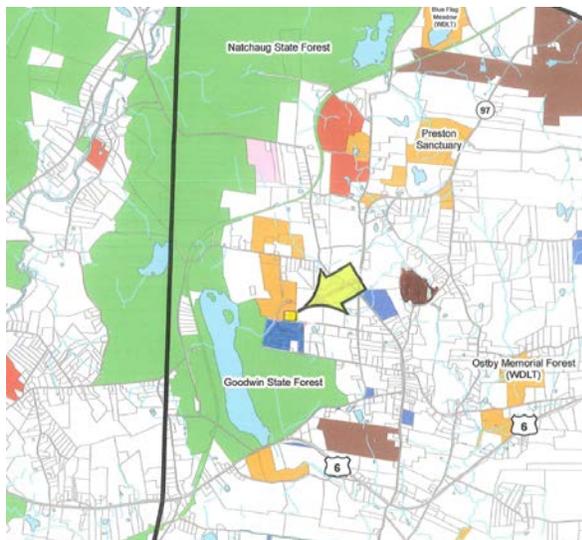
Sponsor	Project	Acres
Town of Woodbury	Aquarian Water Company Land	245.5
Town of Hampton	Edwards Preserve	6.45
Town of East Haddam	Zeleznick Property	19.423
Old Lyme Land Trust, Inc.	106 Four Mile River Road, Old Lyme	40.76

Town of Woodbury
Aquarion Water Company Land
Fee Acquisition



This two parcel acquisition inter-connects other Town-owned open space parcels and trails within the Pomperaug River Greenway. The northerly 67± acre parcel is adjacent to the Whittemore Sanctuary, a 696 acre property with a network of well-marked and maintained trails with year round passive recreation including walking, hiking, wildlife observation, photography, snowshoeing and cross-country skiing. The larger, 180± acre southerly parcel contains the 8.5 acre Woodbury Reservoir (disconnected in 1977). It is bisected by the former Trolley Line Trail Bed, which extends to other town-owned open space parcels. Both parcels contain wetlands and watercourses and the larger parcel contains forested uplands, steep slopes, ledges, outcrops and a significant pine stand. Both parcels will expand upon the existing sanctuary and enhance the existing pedestrian-only passive recreational opportunities. Other multi-purpose trails for equestrian and/or biking use and greenways for wetland and wildlife habitat protection may also be created.

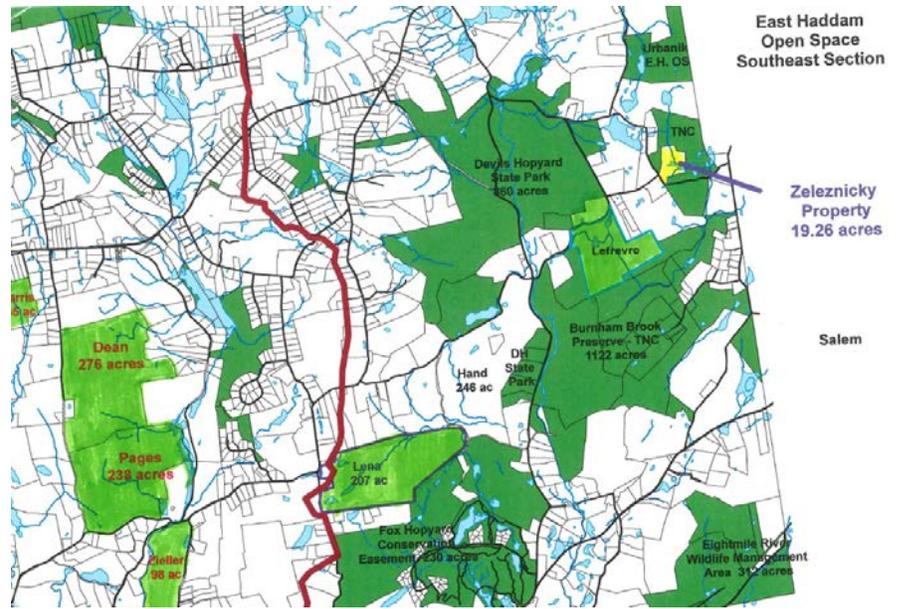
Edwards Preserve
Town of Hampton
Fee Acquisition



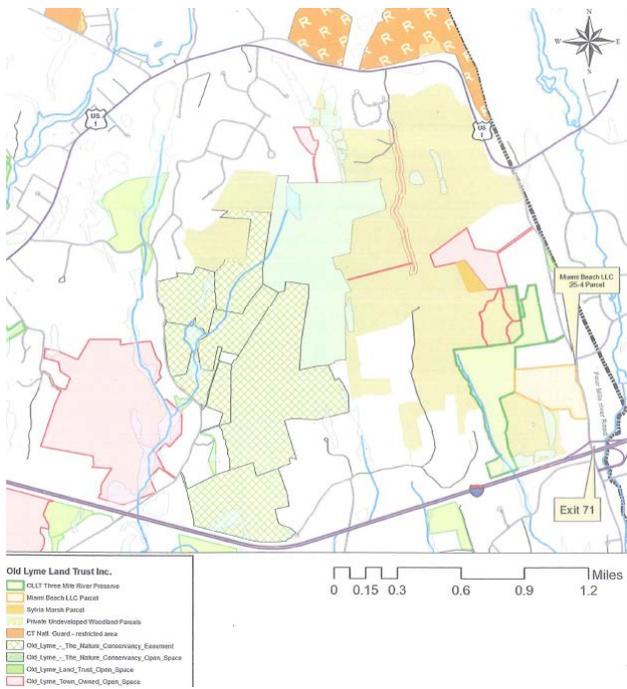
This parcel abuts a 50.8 acre tract purchased by the Town in 2013 with the support of a DEEP Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Program grant. It is adjacent to existing protected open space and will be contiguous with the James L. Goodwin State Forest. The parcel is mostly wooded and is ideal for hiking, snowshoeing, cross country skiing, birding, picnicking and landscape viewing. It is located on a discontinued road which can now be used as another pedestrian, bicycle and horse access point to the Goodwin State Forest trail system.

Zeleznick Property
Town of East Haddam
Fee Acquisition

This property is surrounded on three sides by The Nature Conservancy's Burnham Brook Preserve and contains 1,000 feet of Burnham Brook frontage on both sides. Burnham Brook is an important tributary to the Eightmile River. The parcel is forested and its protection will add to the large network of conserved properties in this area which together, contribute to the overall health and integrity of this Wild and Scenic River.



106 Four Mile River Road, Old Lyme
Old Lyme Land Trust (OLLT)
Fee Acquisition



For years, the OLLT has purchased parcels in this wildest and most undeveloped part of town, to protect the headwaters of the Three Mile River, an important feeder brook to Rogers Lake. Over several years they purchased parcels and this acquisition increases the size of this wooded watershed, now referred to as the Upper Three Mile River Preserve, to 147 acres. The property provides significant road frontage, enabling much needed public access to the Preserve. One of the OLLT goals is to create a town-wide system of walking trails. This parcel is an important link for this initiative, providing a trailhead in this southeast section of town, which will eventually connect to the center of Old Lyme with approximately 5 miles of trail.

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 acquisitions were closed in July 2016. Additional information on these projects follows.

Property Name	Location	Cooperator	Match Share	Fee Acreage	Easement Restrictions or R.O.W.	State Purchase Price	Purpose of Acquisition
Soltes	Cornwall	U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service	50%	55.65	-	\$250,000	Add to Wyntenok State Forest
Zachem	Ledyard	U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service	75%	54.24	-	\$300,000	Add to Rose Hill Wildlife Management Area

Soltes Property

Town of Cornwall

Fee Acquisition



The Soltes property consists of 55.65 acres of land located off of Dark Entry Road, Cornwall. The land is near the top of the road, just beyond the intersections of Route 4 and Route 7, and will be added to the Wyantenock State Forest. One of Connecticut’s Blue Blazed trails runs up Dark Entry Road into the forest. Acquisition of this property helps protect the trail and provides habitat protection for birds, amphibians, reptiles, mammals, and other wildlife. Fifty percent of the funding for this acquisition was through a Highlands Conservation Act grant administered by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

**Zachem Property
Town of Ledyard
Fee Acquisition**



The Zachem property consists of 54.24 acres of land located at 61 Mathewson Mill Road, Ledyard. The property abuts the Rose Hill Wildlife Management Area. It's a generally rectangular shaped parcel with nearly a half mile of frontage on both Mathewson Mill Road and Rose Hill Road. The land is a mixture of forest and fields, and the acquisition will provide additional passive recreational uses including hiking, hunting and bird watching. Seventy-five percent of the funding was through a Pittman-Robertson grant administered by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.