

COMMISSIONER OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

2002 ANNUAL REPORT
to the
ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

in compliance with

General Statutes of Connecticut
Section 23-8 (b) State Goal for Acquisition of Open Space

January 2003

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to the
ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
per
GENERAL STATUTES OF CONNECTICUT, SECTION 23-8(b)
STATE GOAL FOR ACQUISITION OF OPEN SPACE

GOAL

Section 23-8(b) of the General Statutes of Connecticut states that, "The goal of the state's open space acquisition program shall be to acquire land such that ten percent of the state's land area is held by the state as open space land and not less than eleven percent of the state's land area is held by municipalities, water companies or nonprofit land conservation organizations as open space land..."

The Commissioner of Environmental Protection is charged with the responsibility of developing a strategy for achieving the state's goal in consultation with the Council on Environmental Quality and private nonprofit land holding organizations.

STATUS

Connecticut has 3,205,760 acres. To have not less than ten percent of the state's land area held by the State as open space will require state ownership of 320,576 acres. To have twenty-one percent of the state's land preserved as open space will require 673,210 acres held by the state, municipalities, private land conservation organizations, and water companies as Class I and Class II watershed land.

The State has acquired approximately 230,930 acres as open space land in its system of park, forest, wildlife, fishery, and natural resource management areas. Thus, the Department of Environmental Protection currently has 72 percent of the 320,576 acres of open space land targeted for state acquisition.

It is estimated that nonprofit land conservation organizations own 51,200 acres in Connecticut. Municipalities in Connecticut are estimated to own 67,990 acres of land as open space. Class I and Class II water company lands in Connecticut currently total approximately 105,840 acres. Together, open space acreage held by these entities is 225,030 acres. Based on a target of 352,630 acres in total open space holdings for these entities, they currently hold 64 percent of their targeted open space goal.

The 230,930 acres of state open space represents 7% of Connecticut's land area, and the 225,030 acres of open space held by municipalities, non-profits and water companies is 7%. This results in a total of 455,960 acres held as open space, 14% of Connecticut's land area.

ACQUISITION NEEDS

To meet the goals set forth in statute, the State of Connecticut must acquire an additional 89,650 acres of open space and encourage the acquisition of 127,600 acres by municipalities, private nonprofit land conservation organizations and water companies.

ACTION 2002

I. Planning:

- A. During the summer of 2002, the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) contracted with Applied Geographics, Inc. (AGI), to visit all 169 Connecticut municipalities. Using each town's land records as a starting point, AGI will compile spatial and attribute data for all parcels that meet DEP criteria for protected open space. Included will be open space owned by (or easements held by) local, State, and Federal governments, land trusts and other private nonprofits, and water utilities. The data will be verified, automated as necessary, and standardized. The result will be a GIS (Geographic Information System) database of the state's open space resources that can be shared, used and updated in its computerized form, as well as to produce hardcopy maps and reports. This new inventory will help DEP measure the State's progress in meeting Connecticut's goal of preserving 21% of Connecticut's total acreage as Open Space by 2023. The information gathered will be a vital tool in the management of the state's environment, natural resources, and land use.
- B. The Recreation and Natural Heritage Trust Program review and evaluation process has been improved by DEP's implementation of computer technology. Previously, all properties considered for State open space acquisition had to pass through a review system that utilized paper and manual forms of information dissemination and collection. The improvements were achieved by developing a computerized Geographic Information System and corresponding database for the dissemination of information, review and evaluation.
- C. The Department of Environmental Protection coordinated the identification and review of over 850 properties owned by Connecticut Light and Power. The properties were evaluated for their natural resource value and 325 properties were chosen for inclusion on a "conservation list." CL&P agreed to notify the DEP if any of the properties became surplus to CL&P's need and to give DEP 60 days beyond the statutory required period for DEP notice of interest to acquire such lands. The conservation list properties represent 9,620 ± acres of significant open space resources located in 97 municipalities.
- D. Pursuant to PA01-024, the Department of Environmental Protection entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with Connecticut Water Services, Birmingham Utilities and Torrington Water Company to undertake an assessment and evaluation of each company's land holding to determine the desirability of

purchasing such property for public open space. The water companies agreed to a two-year moratorium on the sale of all undeveloped land holdings during the evaluation project.

II. Achieving State Goal:

- A. In 2002 the Department of Environmental Protection acquired properties in 47 municipalities. This represents 3,496 acres at a cost of \$10,803,380. Purchases were made through the Recreation and Natural Heritage Trust Program, the DEP's principal means for meeting the ten percent open space goal by acquisition of lands for Connecticut's system of parks, forests, wildlife, fisheries, water access and natural resource management areas. The land acquired represents the ecological diversity of Connecticut, including natural features such as rivers, mountainous areas, coastal systems and other natural areas, in order to ensure the preservation and conservation of the land for recreational, scientific, educational, cultural and aesthetic purposes. A list of properties acquired through the Recreation and Natural Heritage Trust Program during calendar year 2002 is included in Appendix A.
- B. The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) closed on the largest open space acquisition in Connecticut history by acquiring interest in 18,386 acres in Fairfield, Litchfield, New Haven and Hartford Counties from the BHC Company. The land is located in 28 towns: approximately 13,569 acres in Fairfield County; 1,668 in Litchfield County; 30 in New Haven County; and 103 in Hartford County. The DEP acquired fee ownership of 5,471 acres of Class II and Class III watershed land; conservation and public access easements on approximately 9,025 acres of Class I land; a restrictive covenant on 890 acres of land retained by BHC Company for infrastructure associated with water production; and a 20 year purchase option on approximately 3,000 acres of land beneath the existing water supply reservoirs.

III. Assisting Municipalities and Nonprofit Organizations:

- A. In 2002, \$15,394,759 was awarded to 52 acquisition projects through the Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Grant Program for the acquisition of 1,758 acres of permanently protected open space land. The grant program leverages local and private funds to create a cooperative open space acquisition program. The Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Grant Program provides grant funds 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 and 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.

Property acquisitions funded through the Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Grant Program during calendar year 2002 are listed in Appendix B.

AGENDA 2003

- A. Evaluate and acquire land through the Recreation and Natural Heritage Trust Program. Currently, there are over 41 purchase and sale agreements pending with a total value of approximately \$16,000,000. In addition, over 12 properties are in advanced stages of negotiations for acquisition with an estimated value of approximately \$12,000,000.
- B. The "ninth round" of grants to municipalities, private nonprofit land organizations and water companies will be awarded in Spring 2002. A "tenth round" of grants will be announced, evaluated and awarded during the second and third quarters of 2003.
- C. The Department of Environmental Protection anticipates entering into a purchase and sale agreement and acquiring a conservation easement on over 5,000 acres of continuous private forest land located in Northwestern Connecticut.
- D. The Department of Environmental Protection will continue to work with Applied Geographics, Inc. to inventory protected open space in Connecticut.
- E. The Department of Environmental Protection will initiate an evaluation of lands of Connecticut Water Services, Birmingham Utilities and Torrington Water Company to determine the resource value and potential desirability of such lands for purchase for open space or passive public outdoor recreation or natural resource conservation or preservation. It is estimated that approximately 13,550 acres are owned by these three water companies in Connecticut.
- F. The Department of Environmental Protection will initiate development of a coastal recreational needs assessment survey and develop guidelines for a coastal and estuarine land conservation program. Although Connecticut's coastal area contains 19 percent of the State's land area, nearly 40 percent of the State's population reside in the area. According to shoreline ownership statistics compiled in 1980, approximately 80 percent of the shoreline is believed to be privately owned. There is a need for additional coastal public access and information concerning the types of access that is demanded by Connecticut's residents.

CONCLUSION

The Department of Environmental Protection, working together with municipalities, water companies and private nonprofit land conservation organizations, has continued the State's progress toward meeting Connecticut's open space goals. Since July 1998, the Department of Environmental Protection has acquired 20,930 acres and has provided grant funding for the acquisition of an additional 14,000 acres.

The Department of Environmental Protection with the support of the General Assembly, will continue to build on this success.

Submitted by:



Arthur J. Rocque, Jr., Commissioner
Department of Environmental Protection

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APPENDIX A

Recreation and Natural Heritage Trust Program January 1, 2002 through December 31, 2002

Property Name	Location	Fee Acreage	Easement Restriction or R.O.W. Acreage	Purpose of Acquisition
Skinger	Stafford	19.78		Addition to Shenipsit SF
Crumbie	South Windsor	40.39		Addition to Scantic River Greenway
HIO Trust	Enfield	8.10		Addition to Scantic River Greenway
Corapinsky	Hebron	46.28		Addition to Salmon River SF
Roberts	Vernon	90.53		Frontage on Bolton Lake
Robak	Canterbury	35.34		Addition to Mohegan SF
Mihaliak	Union	48.00		Addition to Nipmuck SF
Sturgess	Lyme & East Lyme	81.00		Addition to Nehantic SF
Rajewski	Griswold	6.10		Frontage on Pachaug Pond
Mt. Carmel Church	Hamden	4.00		Eliminate Inholdings to Naugatuck SF
Smith (Former Green)	Haddam	28.43		Addition to Cockaponset SF
Guerra DeAngelis (AKA O&G)	Groton	49.95		Addition to Haley Farm S.P.
Bowen Briggs	Groton	7.14		Addition to Haley Farm S.P.
Lumpkin	Plymouth	19.00		Addition to Mattatuck SF
Worthen et al	Granby	523.8		Addition to Enders SF
Cantoni	Oxford	26.24		Addition to Naugatuck SF
Fort Trumbull	New London	15.86		Establishment of Fort Trumbull S.P.
Mundano	Hartland	11.42		Eliminate Inholdings in Tunxis SF
Verkades	Waterford	157.15		Addition to Harkness S.P.
Thompson & Willie	Oxford	17.187		Addition to Naugatuck SF
Tenedine	North Haven	5.5286		Access to Quinnipiac River
Terwilliger	Glastonbury	78.243		Addition to Meshomasic SF
Ladyko	Oxford	15.66		Addition to Naugatuck SF
Silkey	Hartland	13.873		Addition to Tunxis SF
Miller	Milford	2.9655		Addition to Baldwin Marsh Wildlife Area
Moore	Salem	331		Protection of Eight mile River Watershed
Novak	Glastonbury	64.75		Addition to Meshomasic SF
Parker	Voluntown	5.49		Addition to Pachaug SF
NU	New Milford	98.9		Addition to Lover's Leap S.P.
Hyde	Ellington	43.15		Addition to Shenipsit SF
Fair	Stratford	6.5		Addition to Charles E. Wheller WMA
Satan's Kingdom	New Hartford	71.60		Addition to Nepaug SF
Kazan	Newtown	153.00		Addition to Paugussett SF
Barry	Killingly/Plainfield	131.4		Quinebaug River Access
CL&P/NU	Norwalk	0.0	18.07	Abuts Long Island Sound
Gerbino	Washington	66.37		Addition to Mount Bushnell S.P.
BUI	Seymour	27.1875		Acquisition of Quillinan Reservoir
Bingham	Salem	49.44		Addition to Nehantic SF
Bingham & Bingham	Salem	79.07		Addition to Nehantic SF
Lafreniere	Voluntown	16.03		Addition to Pachaug SF
Toomey	Bolton	44.26		Enhancement of Airline Trail
Wilcox	Stafford	40.56		Addition to Shenipsit SF
Gilman	Lebanon	6.06		Dam, flowage rights and frontage on Brewster Pond
Scotfield	Voluntown	21.32		Addition to Pachaug SF
Jehovah's Witnesses	Stafford	69.51		Addition to Shenipsit SF
DOT surplus	Beacon Falls	9.6		Access to Naugatuck River
DOT surplus	Stamford	0.0	14.60	Conservation Easement: DOT Transfer to Stamford (SA02-9)
Rood	Windham	143.3		Enhancement of Airline Trail
Sub-Totals		2830.4646	32.67	

Property Name	Location	Fee Acreage	Easement Restriction or R.O.W. Acreage	Purpose of Acquisition
Cavanaugh	Portland	24.34		Acquisition of Meshomasic SF inholding
Ulcinskas	South Windsor	28.02		Addition to Scantic River SP with river frontage
Iwo Jima Memorial Monument	New Britain/Newington	.975		Transfer from CT State University System
Moody	Marlborough	217.832		Addition to Meshomasic SF; protection of timber rattlesnake
CTW Builders	East Hampton	62.571		Addition to Meshomasic SF; protection of timber rattlesnake
Arbor	Glastonbury	113.48		Addition to Meshomasic SF; protection of timber rattlesnake
Brilo Estate	Glastonbury	32.246		Addition to Meshomasic SF; protection of timber rattlesnake
Macko	Griswold	41.000		Addition to Pachaug SF
Elliott	Voluntown	48.390		Addition to Great Cedar Swamp/Pachaug SF
Ladd	Voluntown	5.745		Addition to Pachaug SF
Mihaliak	Willington	7.560		Addition to Nye Holman SF; frontage on Willimantic River
Beligni	North Canaan	.370		Addition to Beckley Furnace
Kinne	North Stonington	83.300		Addition to Pachaug SF
Totals		3496.2936	32.67	

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APPENDIX B

**OPEN SPACE AND WATERSHED LAND ACQUISITION GRANT PROGRAM
JANUARY 1, 2002 THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2002**

SPRING GRANT ROUND

Title	Sponsor	Town	Acres	Total Acquisition Cost	Open Space Grant Amount	NU	Charter Oak
Swendsen Farm	Town of Bethlehem	Bethlehem	123.00	\$1,000,000.00	\$455,000.00		
DeDominicis Property	Town of Cheshire	Cheshire	185.00	\$2,452,500.00	\$546,000.00		
Good Hill Farm II	Roxbury Land Trust	Woodbury	202.00	\$1,800,000.00	\$436,369.50		\$109,630.50
Vernesoni Property	Bristol Water Department	Harwinton	18.90	\$193,000.00	\$114,159.50		
Andrew Kenneth Webster Preserve	Northern Connecticut LT	Vernon	30.70	\$94,000.00	\$42,700.00		
Meyerhuber Pond	Guilford Land Trust	Guilford	49.61	\$200,000.00	\$91,000.00		
French's Hill Greenway	City of Shelton	Shelton	107.00	\$3,370,000.00	\$546,000.00		
Shafran Property	Town of Tolland	Tolland	65.30	\$257,500.00	\$117,162.50		
Lake Laconia Project Phase I	Town of Westbrook	Westbrook	33.00	\$700,000.00	\$318,500.00		
324 Townsend Ave.	City of New Haven	New Haven	0.47	\$201,000.00	\$62,692.00	\$56,200.00	
BSA Camp Nahaco	Town of Eastford	Woodstock	120.20	\$240,000.00	\$109,200.00		
Outer France St. Open Space Land Acq.	Town of Rocky Hill	Rocky Hill	51.59	\$900,000.00	\$409,500.00		
Gillespie Property	Appalachian Trail Conference LT	Sharon	175.00	\$330,000.00	\$150,150.00		
Map #36, Lot #1 Third Avenue	City of West Haven	West Haven	2.70	\$70,000.00	\$41,405.00		
Hart Farm	Cornwall Conservation Trust	Cornwall	96.00	\$695,000.00	\$316,225.00		
Steucek Property	Town of Middlefield	Middlefield	36.60	\$203,000.00	\$92,365.00		
Hein Farm Woodland	Town of Farmington	Farmington	23.00	\$460,000.00	\$209,300.00		
Norfolk Greenway/Railbed	Norfolk Land Trust, Inc.	Norfolk	19.00	\$75,000.00	\$34,125.00		
MacKinnon parcel	Town of Suffield	Suffield	36.00	\$270,000.00	\$122,850.00		
Farfax Property South	The Nature Conservancy	Old Lyme	204.00	\$838,500.00	\$381,517.50		
West Park Place	City of Stamford	Stamford	1.06	\$2,950,000.00	\$546,000.00		
Ethel Walker School	Town of Simsbury	Simsbury	60.00	\$585,000.00	\$266,175.00		
Lord Wellington Subdivision	Town of East Haddam	East Haddam	28.49	\$178,690.00	\$81,303.95		
Pole Bridge Open Space Preserve	Town of Newtown	Newtown	20.92	\$305,000.00	\$138,775.00		
East Mather Meadows	Land Trust of Darien	Darien	3.39	\$1,100,000.00	\$500,500.00		
Fairfax Property North	The Nature Conservancy	Old Lyme	64.59	\$462,500.00	\$210,437.50		
Totals			1757.52	\$19,930,690.00	\$6,339,412.45	\$56,200.00	\$109,630.50

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FALL GRANT ROUND

Title	Sponsor	Town	Acres	Total Acquisition Cost	Open Space Grant Amount	NU	Charter Oak
Fisher Farm	Town of Avon	Avon	280.50	\$1,975,000.00	\$938,125.00		
Chizinski Property	City of Bristol	Bristol	55.572	\$915,900.00	\$565,568.00		
Terre Haute Annex	City of Danbury	Danbury	14.40	\$153,759.00	-0-		\$76,880.00
Mather McPherson Meadow	Land Trust of Darien	Darien	4.00	\$2,000,000.00	\$950,000.00		
Wimler Property	Town of Durham	Durham	281.73	\$1,040,000.00	\$494,000.00		
Scantic River Acquisition	Town of Enfield	Enfield	28.00	\$32,871.00	\$15,614.00		
Viney Hill Brook Preserve	Town of Essex	Essex	61.00	\$365,000.00	\$173,375.00		
184 Town Farm Road	Town of Farmington	Farmington	17.40	\$368,905.00	\$175,230.00		
Costello Greenway Linkage	Town of Granby	Granby	47.00	\$150,000.00	\$71,250.00		
Bluff Head	Guilford Land Conservation Trust	Guilford	60.80	\$223,200.00	\$106,020.00		
Killingworth Common Ltd.	So. Central CT Regional Water Authority	Killingworth	64.88	\$389,280.00	\$147,926.00		
Case Mtn.Lappen Property	Town of Manchester	Manchester	65.10	\$227,820.00	-0-		\$113,910.00
Lot 21 Anderson Property (Berlin)	City of Meriden (T.D)	Meriden	14.90	\$52,000.00	-0-	\$33,800.00	
Lot 23 Marks Property (Berlin)	City of Meriden (T.D)	Meriden	17.10	\$63,000.00	\$38,902.00		
Lay Property	The Nature Conservancy	Old Lyme	186.00	\$370,000.00	\$175,750.00		
Roger Tory Peterson	The Nature Conservancy	Old Lyme	68.00	\$753,000.00	\$357,675.00		
Granskog Properties	Nature Conservancy-Devil's Den	Redding	116.83	\$1,679,928.00	\$797,966.00		
Edwards Property	Nature Conservancy-Devil's Den	Redding	58.60	\$900,000.00	\$427,500.00		
McKeon Farm	Town of Ridgefield	Ridgefield	57.43	\$1,350,000.00	\$641,250.00		
Orzech Farm Acquisition	Roxbury Land Trust	Roxbury	116.00	\$1,253,000.00	\$595,175.00		
Hamlin Farm	Sharon Land Trust + Audubon	Sharon	265.00	\$1,500,000.00	\$712,500.00		
Phillips Farm	Southbury Land Trust	Southbury	97.00	\$925,000.00	\$439,375.00		
Chanda Property	Town of Stratford	Stratford	5.46	\$257,500.00	-0-		\$128,750.00
Weigold Property	Town of Tolland	Tolland	30.00	\$110,000.00	\$52,250.00		
Williams Farm Acquisition	Town of Wallingford	Wallingford	93.723	\$715,000.00	\$339,625.00		
100 Plainfield Ave/350 Forest Road	City of West Haven (D)	West Haven	22.526	\$520,000.00	\$321,100.00		
Totals (Fall) Grants			2128.951	\$18,290,163.00	\$8,536,176.00	\$33,800.00	\$319,540.00
Totals (Spring) Grants			1757.520	\$19,930,690.00	\$6,339,412.45	\$56,200.00	\$109,630.50
Grant Totals			3886.471	\$28,220,853.00	\$14,875,588.45	\$90,000.00	\$429,170.50