

House Republican Press Release

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Reps Labriola, O'Neill, Sen. DeLuca: Southbury Open Space Grants will Protect Wildlife Habitats, Wooded Areas



Drumlin Hill Tree Farm, Georges Hill Road Properties to be Acquired and Preserved

Two open space grants awarded today will ensure the Drumlin Hill Tree Farm and a Georges Hill Road property in Southbury are preserved in their natural state and continue to contribute to the town's quality of life for years to come, state Representatives David K. Labriola, Arthur J. O'Neill, and state Senator Louis C. DeLuca said today.

The funding for the acquisition of the Southbury parcels was part of an omnibus open space allocation for 41 projects in 39 towns around the state totaling \$9.9 million that was announced today by Governor M. Jodi Rell and state Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Commissioner Gina McCarthy in appearances at Phillips Farm in Southbury and Freshwater Pond Park in Enfield. Phillips Farm, which was acquired and preserved with an earlier open space grant, is located across the road from the Drumlin Hill Tree Farm.

"These grants will ensure the preservation of irreplaceable open space land in Southbury," said Representative Labriola, R-131st District. "I thank the governor for her continued commitment to preserving these pristine lands in our communities."

"These awards represent wonderful additions to Southbury's open space properties," said Representative O'Neill, R-69th District. "I'm very pleased the state is continuing its commitment to preserving open space, not only in Southbury, but throughout Connecticut. This is an important program that creates a valuable legacy for future generations."

"Preserving Connecticut's beautiful, pristine land as open space is something positive we can do for future generations. I want to thank Governor Rell and Commissioner McCarthy for investing in the preservation and protection of this land in our community," said Senator DeLuca, R-32nd District.

The town was awarded a \$265,000 grant for the purchase of the 38-acre parcel at 365 Georges Hill Road. The property, which the DEP considers "vulnerable to residential development," contains a young growth forest, a wildlife habitat, a variety of water resources, and large contiguous open space upland areas, the legislators said.

The second grant, which totals \$200,000, was awarded to the Southbury Land Trust for the purchase of the 14.4-acre Drumlin Hill Tree Farm. The parcel consists of protected land on three sides and connects two land trust nature preserves. It is also a critical link in an emerging greenbelt from Southbury to Oxford, the legislators said.

The site includes a 12-acre tree farm that has been in operation since 1980, managed grassland and meadow, 120 feet of frontage on a feeder brook to Jeremy Brook, and about two acres of shrub, mixed hardwoods and semi-open wetlands. Acquisition of the property will enable the land trust to protect the drumlin ridgeline and a year-round 'boiling' spring.

In addition, the parcel is home to two Connecticut Endangered Species and several Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy Species.

The open space grants awarded today will help the state meet its goal of preserving 21 percent of its land – a total of 673,210 acres - as open space by the year 2023. It is the 13th round of grants funded by the state Department of Environmental Protection through the Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Grant Program.