

CONNECTICUT
Land Conservation Council

Conservation Agenda 2012

A. Legislative and/or Administrative Initiatives

1. Open Space Funding:

- Campaign for annual state funding for the Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Program, as well as predictable, consistent grant rounds .
- Protect the Community Investment Act (CIA): Enhance public awareness of the importance of the fund and ensure that the integrity and level of funding are protected. Enacted with tremendous bipartisan support in 2005, the CIA provides increased funding for state programs for open space, farmland/dairy production, historic preservation and affordable housing.
- Expand State Open Space Funding and Opportunities: Pursue dialogue with DEEP administration on a long term strategy for open space funding, based upon other state models for funding and land trust capacity building.

2. Permanent Protection of State-Owned Conservation Lands: Work with our conservation partners on the research and outreach to administrators and lawmakers around possible administrative and/or legislative responses to the issues raised by the Haddam land swap.

3. Community Conservation Act: Continue dialogue, research and outreach on legislation which would enable, but not require, towns to enact a conveyance fee on buyers of real estate, with the revenue from the program placed in a local dedicated fund for conservation purposes.

4. Protected Lands Registry: Work to create an accessible online registry and associated database and maps to inventory/track land protected by land trusts and municipalities.

5. Federal Policy: Support Land and Water Conservation Fund, Forest Legacy Program, Land Protection Programs under the Farm Bill*, Extended Conservation Easement Tax Incentive, Recreational Trails Program and other priorities and continue to engage Connecticut land conservation community in outreach efforts.

* including, but not limited to: Wetlands Reserve Program, Farm and Ranchland Protection Program, Grassland Reserve Program, Healthy Forest Reserve Program, Conservation Reserve Program and Community Forest and Open Space Conservation Program.

B. Conservation Community Outreach

1. Work with land trusts to host conservation site visits for local and federal legislators
2. Attend land trust board meetings and other events to discuss legislative priorities
3. Develop plans for a Conservation Lobby Day during a future legislative session