2021 Conservation Policy and Funding Priorities

Incentivize Land Conservation, Stewardship, and Climate Resilience

- **ENABLE** communities to address conservation and climate change at the local level through an option to establish a limited buyer's conveyance fee program. The funds may be used to: purchase, preserve, and steward open space, forest, and farm lands; implement climate resilience, mitigation or adaptation strategies; match certain state environmental grant programs; fund other environmental projects including brownfields remediation, urban forestry and tree-planting; and repayment of municipal bonds obtained for any of the foregoing purposes.

- **INCORPORATE** forest, open space, agricultural land, and other nature-based climate solutions into Connecticut’s goals and implementation plans to mitigate climate change through policy and legislation, including through the establishment of a state “No Net Loss of Forest” Policy.

- **PROTECT** existing tax exemptions that benefit land trusts and land conservation and **SUPPORT** new tax incentives for individuals to encourage land conservation.

Support Funding and Staff for Land Conservation and Farmland Protection Programs

- **PROTECT** the integrity of the Community Investment Act and **ENSURE** the funds stay intact and dedicated.

- **ENSURE** consistent and increased funding for state land conservation programs including Open Space & Watershed Land Acquisition Program, Urban Green and Community Garden Program, Recreation and Natural Heritage Trust Program, Recreational Trails & Greenways Program, and the Department of Agriculture’s Farmland Preservation Program.

- **SUPPORT** CT DEEP by promptly filling vacancies and new positions to ensure the agency may efficiently and effectively meet its mission and maintain service levels.

2021 Federal Policy and Funding Priorities

- **SUPPORT** passage of and appropriations for critical federal conservation programs, including: Recovering America’s Wildlife Act (RAWA), USDA Conservation Title (Including the Farm Bill) and Forest Service (including Forest Legacy Program) Programs, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Programs (including State Wildlife Grants Program).

- **SUPPORT** efforts to expand federal land protection programs to allow third-party holders.

- **LEVERAGE** and **ALLOCATE** the full amount of federal funding obligated to Connecticut via the now permanently authorized and fully funded Land & Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) for conservation efforts.

- **SUPPORT** efforts to establish conservation corps programs through bills such as RENEW Conservation Corps Act.

- **PROTECT** tax laws and regulations that incentivize charitable giving to land trusts and other non-profits and **SUPPORT** legislation to put an end to abusive conservation easement tax shelters.

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