

Plymouth Reservoir, Plymouth, CT

# Regional Open Space Inventory Stakeholder Kickoff

December 4, 2023 | 2 p.m.



NAUGATUCK VALLEY COUNCIL of GOVERNMENTS

# “Open Space”

- Open Space has several definitions in statute and in various state planning documents.
  - CGS 12-107b for tax assessments, State Plan of Conservation & Development, DEEP’s Green Plan
- The lack of a single, clear definition leaves room for municipal interpretation.
- We want to document and map anything that municipalities, land trusts, and water companies consider to be open space.

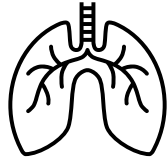


Farmington Canal Heritage Trail, Cheshire, CT

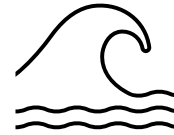
# Open Space has numerous benefits



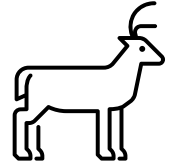
Carbon  
sequestration



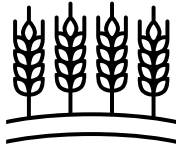
Clean air



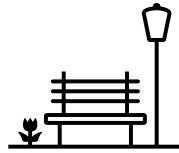
Flood attenuation



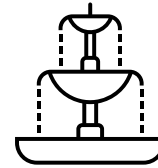
Wildlife habitat



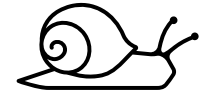
Working lands



Balanced land  
use/development



Historic  
preservation



Biodiversity



Aesthetic  
viewsheds



Exercise & healthy  
lifestyle



Recreational  
opportunities

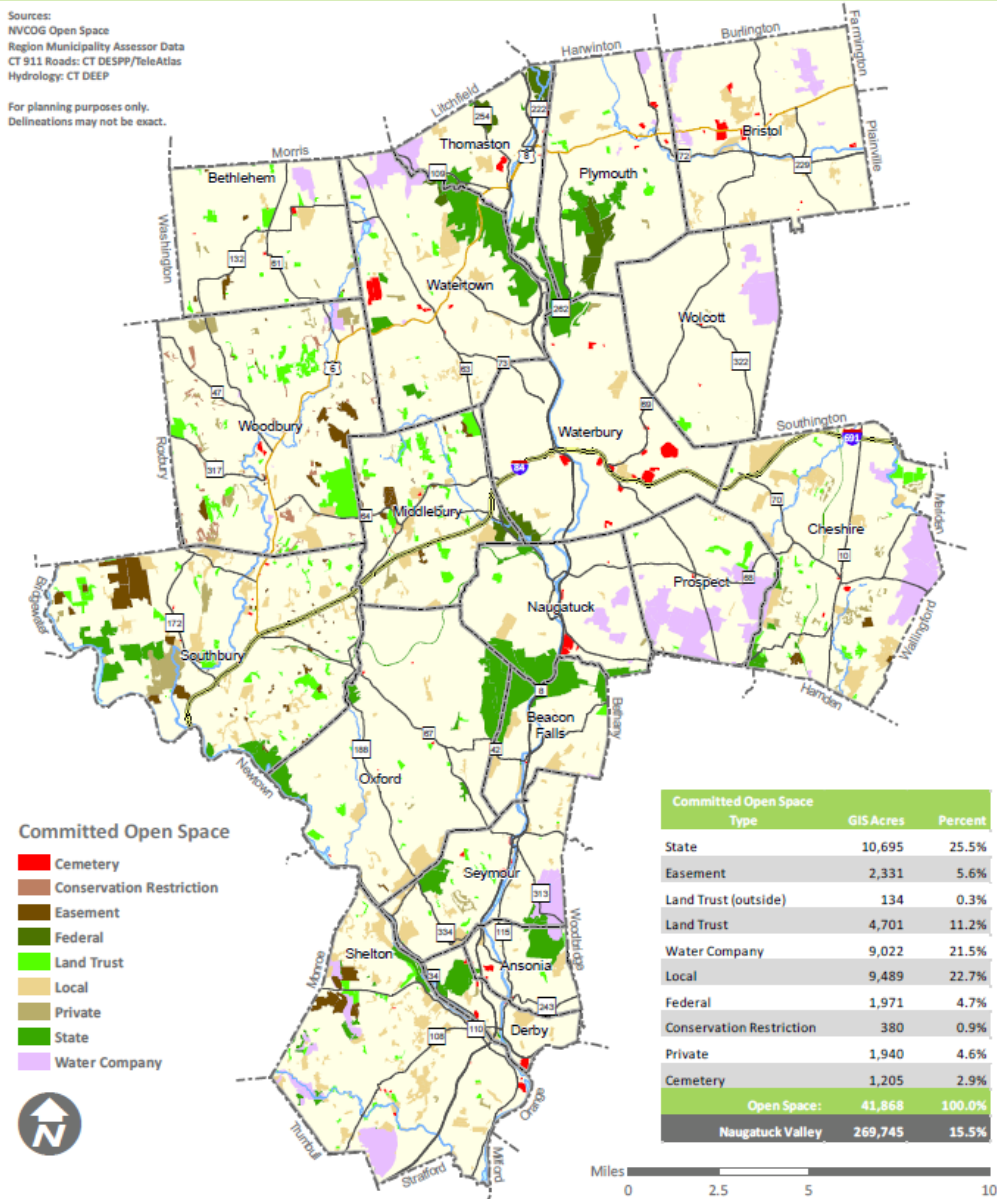


Raises  
property values

# Naugatuck Valley Committed Open Space 2017

Sources:  
 NVCOG Open Space  
 Region Municipality Assessor Data  
 CT 911 Roads: CT DESPP/TeleAtlas  
 Hydrology: CT DEEP

For planning purposes only.  
 Delineations may not be exact.

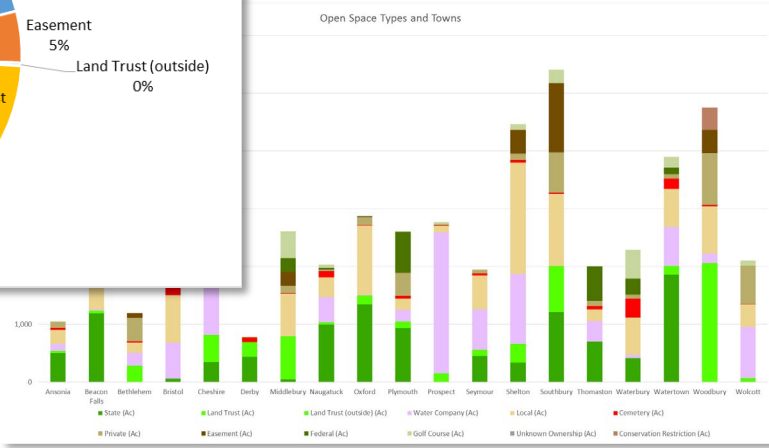
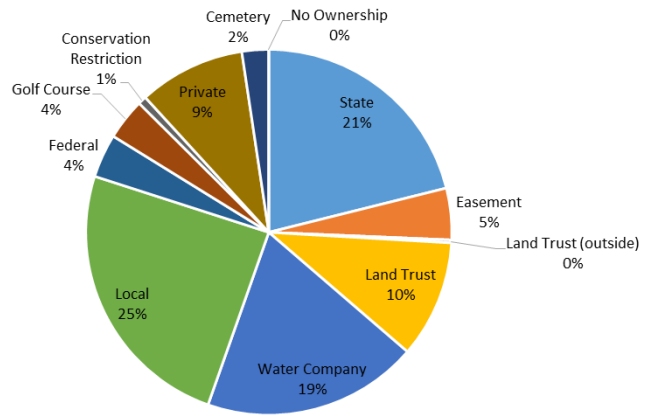


Revised: 7/26/2017 Document Path: E:\env\GIS\projects\LandUse\Open\_Space\COG\NV\_COG\_2017.mxd

# Regional OS Data

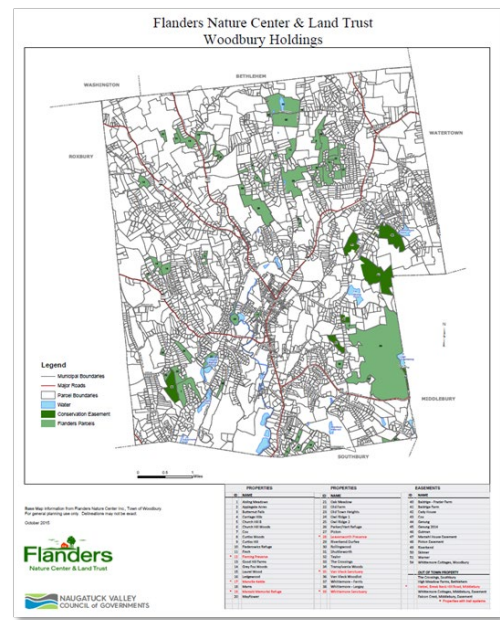
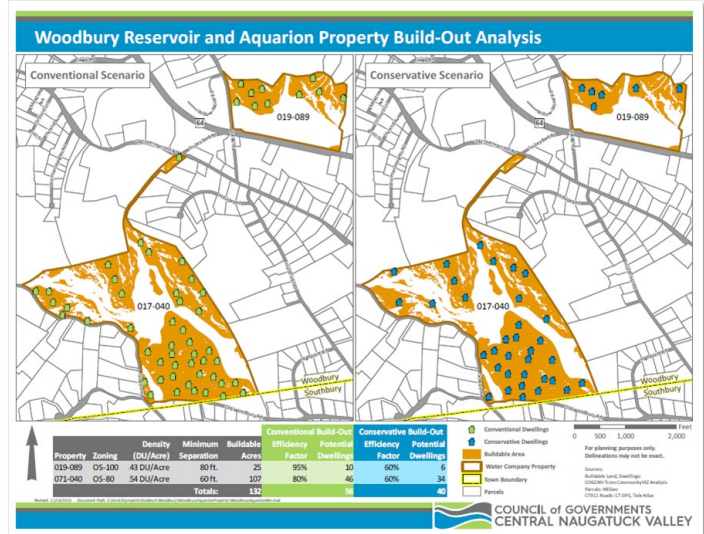
- COG GIS staff collects and manages OS data
- Rely on information from towns and partners
- Printable and Interactive Maps

## Committed Open Space for Naugatuck Valley



# Regional OS Data: Purpose and Need

- Regional Plan of Conservation and Development
- Use data to assess needs regionally
  - Deficiencies
  - Opportunities
  - Priorities
- Assist municipalities and Partners
  - Grant Applications
  - Letters of Support
  - Analysis
  - Maps

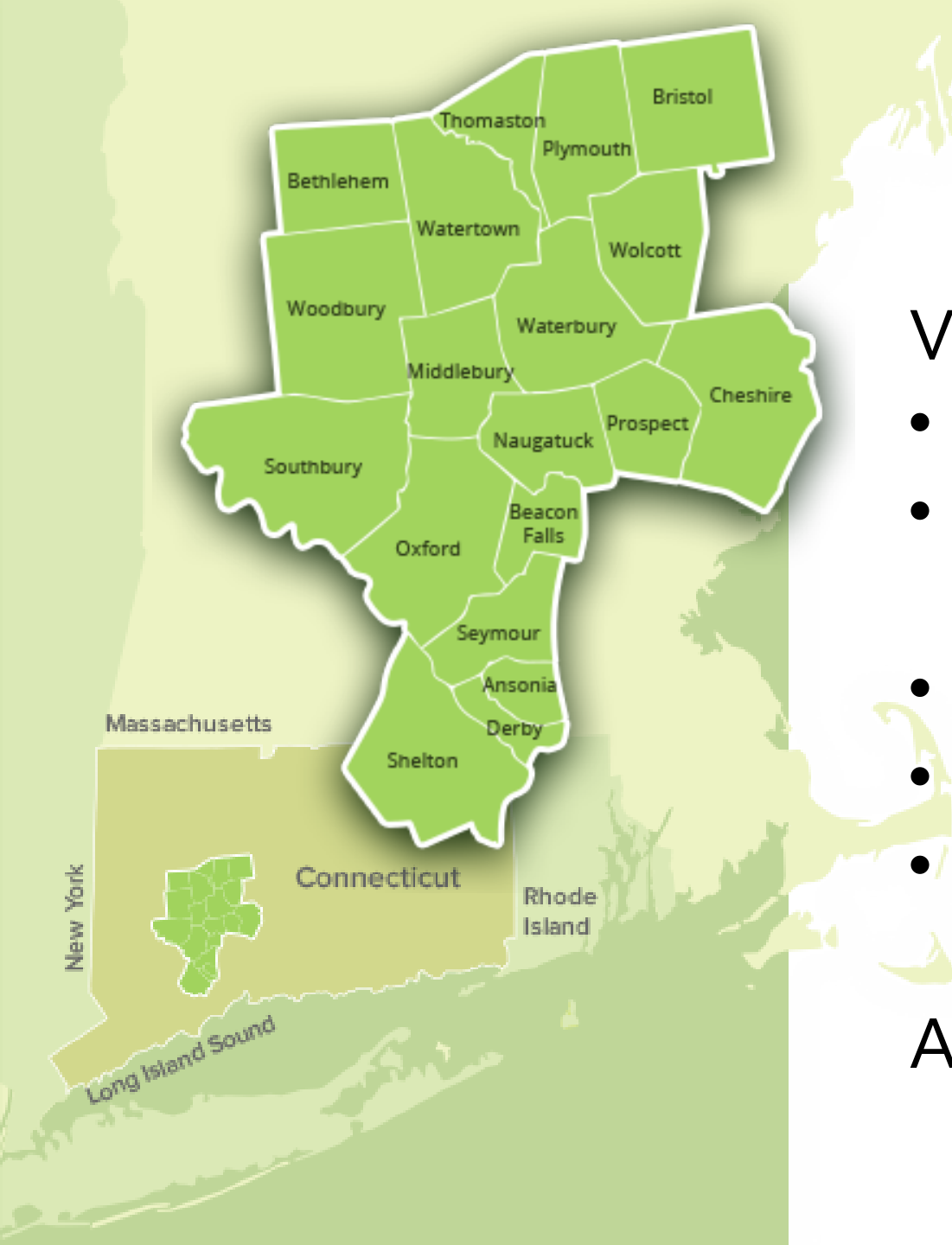


# Naugatuck Valley Region

Various Open Space land holders

- 19 Municipalities
- 22+ land trusts and other conservation nonprofits
- Water companies
- State and Federal agencies
- and more!

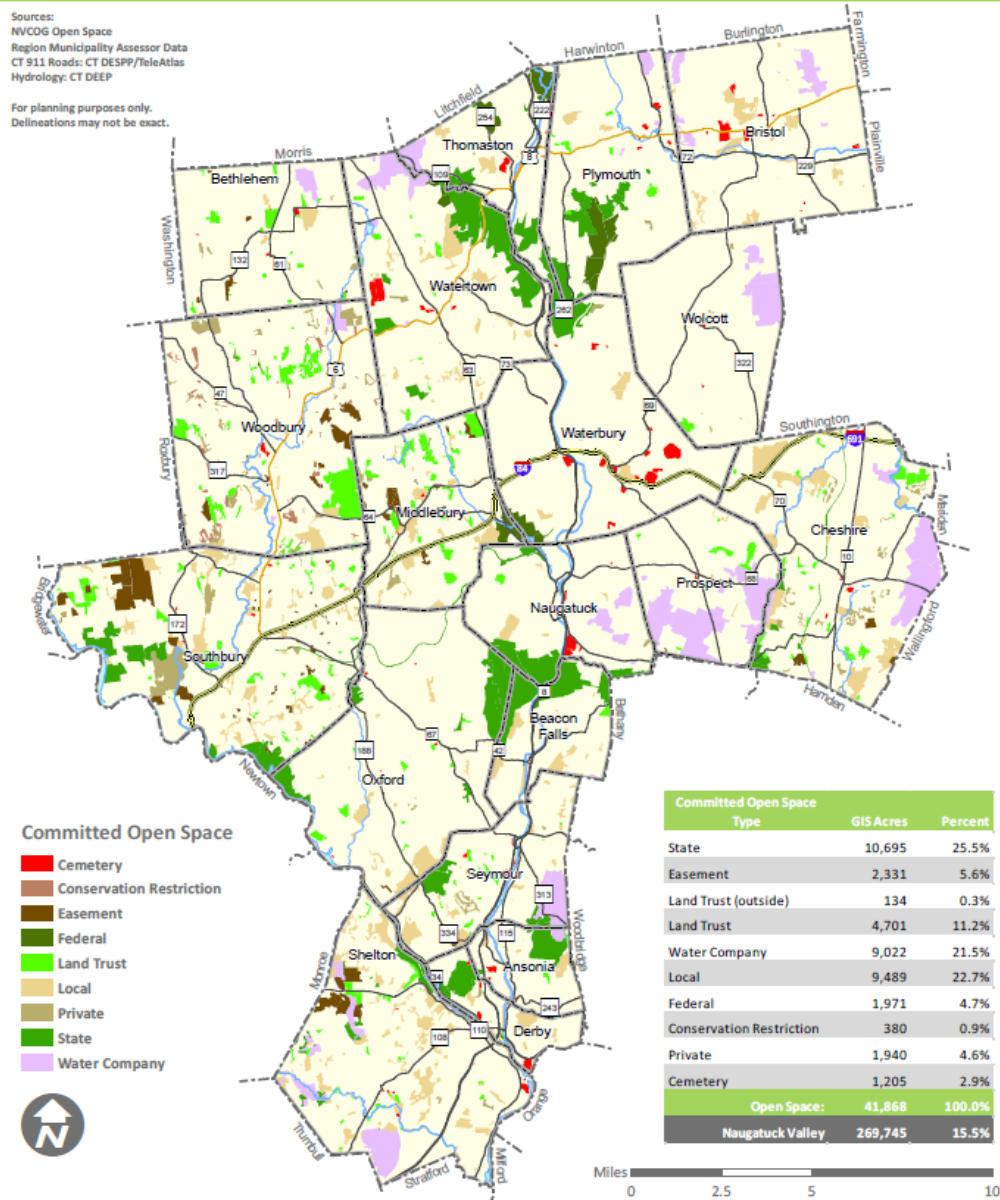
All with differing motives and goals



## Naugatuck Valley Committed Open Space 2017

Sources:  
 NVCOG Open Space  
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 CT 911 Roads: CT DESPP/TeleAtlas  
 Hydrology: CT DEEP

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# Regional OS Data - Issues

- Incomplete
- Variable by Town
  - Cooperation
  - What is Open Space?
  - What is Protected? How?
- Classification:
  - Mix of Owner/ Use/ Protection Type
  - Makes analysis difficult
  - Comparison to other regions

# Sustainable CT OS Classification System

Attribute	Town	Recorded By	Date Recorded	Map/ Block/ Lot	Unique Parcel ID	Property Name	Owner	Owner Type	Primary Function	Secondary Function
Data Type	Text	Text	Date	Text	Text	Text	Text	Text	Text	Text
Domains	169 Towns	Open		Open	Open	Open	Open	Federal	Agriculture	Same list as
				xxxx-xxxx-xxxx				State	Recreation	Primary Function
								Municipal	Cemetery	
								Municipal (Outside)	Golf Course	
								Water Company	Water Company Class I or II	
								Land Trust	Water Company Class III	
								Other Non-Profit	Green/ Community Park	
								Private	Forest	
								Other	Historic	
									Flood Control	
									Conservation	

Public Access	Legal Protection	Protection Type	Easement Holder	Citation	Parcel Acres	Protection on entire parcel?	Protected Acres	Notes
Text	Text	Text	Text	Text	Number (float)	Text	Number (float)	Text
Unrestricted	Yes	State	Open	Open	Open	Yes	Open	Open
Restricted	No	Federal		(e.g. book and page)		No		
No Public Access	Uncertain	Class I or II				Uncertain		
		Conservation Easement						
		Deed Restriction						
		Municipal (intent)						
		Other						





# Project Overview

- Although NVCOG already has an Open Space map, it is incomplete and unverified.
- We received a \$92,000 grant from the U.S. Forest Service to improve our Regional Open Space Inventory.
- The goal is to improve and maintain a useful planning tool for decision-makers in the region.

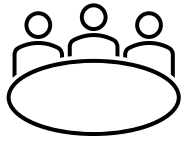
# Our Vision

The completed Inventory will be comprised of two parts: a **GIS database**, and a **report** with municipal annexes.

- GIS database will be available in the form of an interactive, regional viewer and for municipalities to download for their own use.
- The report will include town-specific maps, narratives with information, and high-level recommendations.



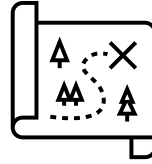
# Workflow



**Communicate** with stakeholders to share resources and gain information on Open Space parcels.



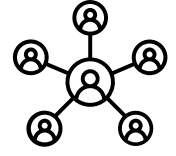
**Access** municipal land records to research details (like easements, access, legal protection).



**Update** NVCOG's GIS Open Space viewer with the newly-researched attributes.



**Draft** a report to accompany the viewer, with an annex for each municipality.



**Share** this useful planning tool with stakeholders and the community.

Repeat this process for each of the 19 NVCOG municipalities



# Our Partners

Municipal Clerks

GIS/IT Departments

Land Use Staff

Conservation & Planning Commissions

Water Companies

Land Trusts

# Here's what we need from our partners

## **Sharing parcel information**

Land Use Staff  
Conservation  
& Planning  
Commissions  
Land Trusts  
Water  
Companies

## **Accessing land records**

Municipal  
Clerks  
Land Use  
Staff

Library Park, Waterbury, CT

## **Verifying and obtaining GIS data**

GIS/ IT  
Departments  
Land Trusts  
Water  
Companies

# Information-Sharing



Thomaston Dam, Thomaston, CT



Here's what we're looking for:

- **GIS** shapefiles and current mapping
- Legal **documentation** such as deeds, easements, etc.
- **Our questions** (“Does 1 Smith Street allow public access?”)
- **Your questions** (“Can you help us understand where this easement begins and ends?”)

# Accessing Land Records

Muzzy Field Park & Rockwell Park, Bristol, CT





# Land Records Research

A photograph of a desk with a laptop, a calendar, and a folder. The laptop is on the right side of the desk. The calendar is in the center, showing a weekly layout with days of the week and dates. The folder is on the left side of the desk, partially open, showing several papers. The desk surface is made of light-colored wood.

- We will cross-reference NVCOG's open space map with current data from:
  - The most recent Plan of Conservation and Development's Open Space Map
  - The Conservation Commission's Open Space Inventory (if applicable)
  - Land Trusts
  - Water Companies
- We will use the land records to identify if there is a protection mechanism on land identified as open space.

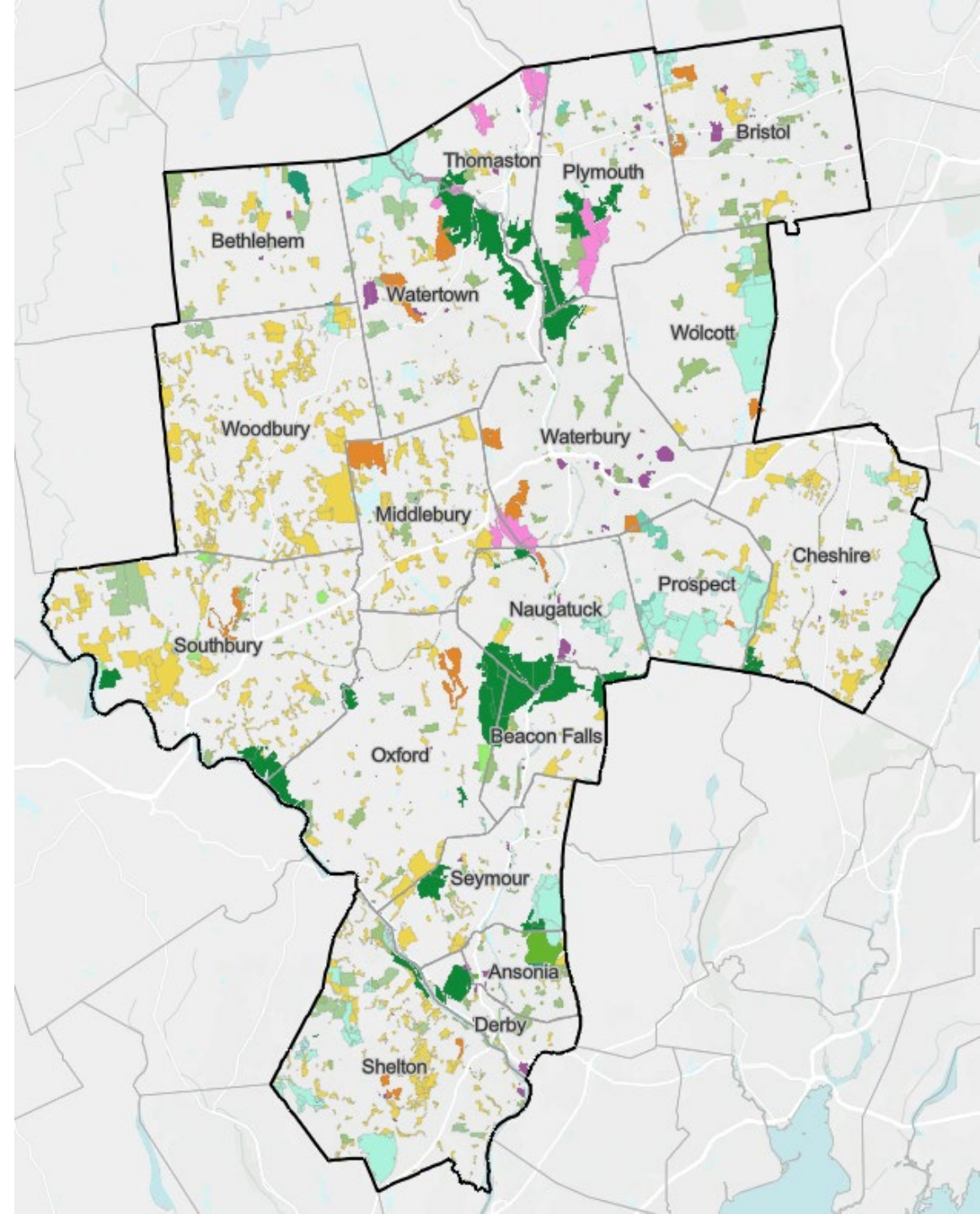
# Obtaining GIS Data

Lake Quassapaug, Middlebury, CT



# NVCOG's Current Open Space Data

- Collected over the last 20 years
- Continuous updates from multiple sources but with little verification



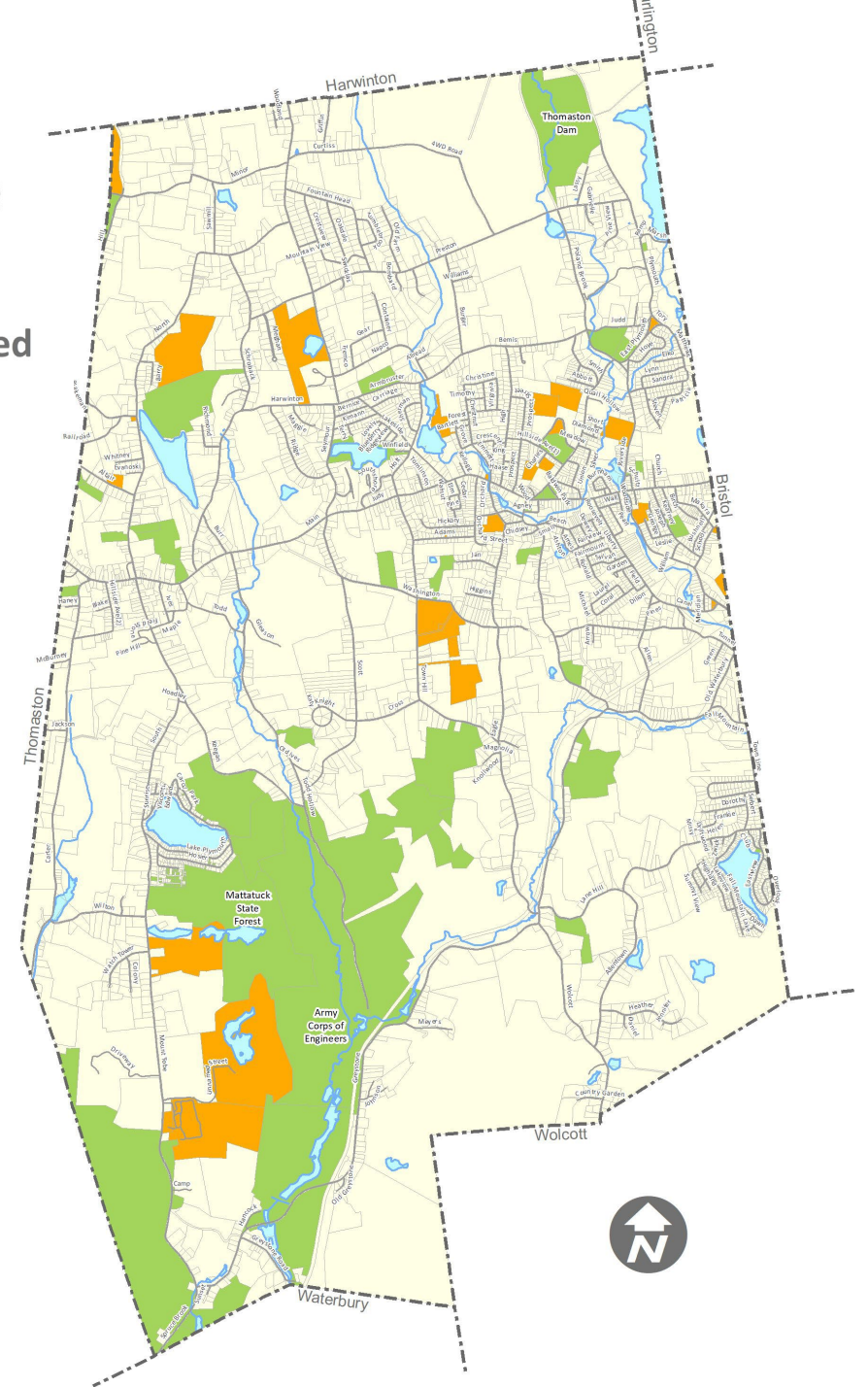
# Legal Protection Status

- No verification of protection status

Plymouth  
Open Space

Protected

Unprotected

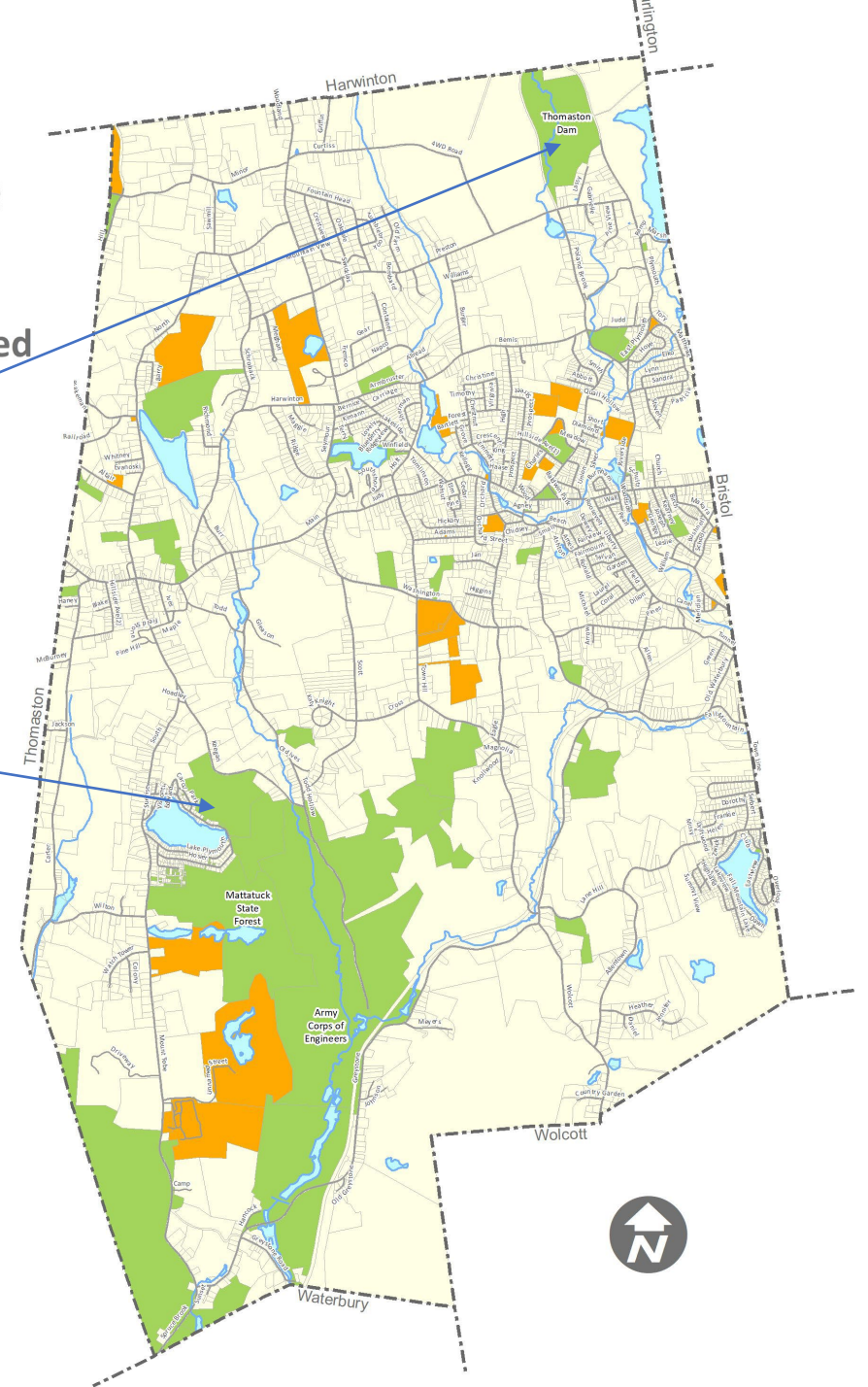


# Legal Protection Status

- No verification of protection status
- Water Company Land Class I or II
- State Forest

## Plymouth Open Space

- Protected
- Unprotected



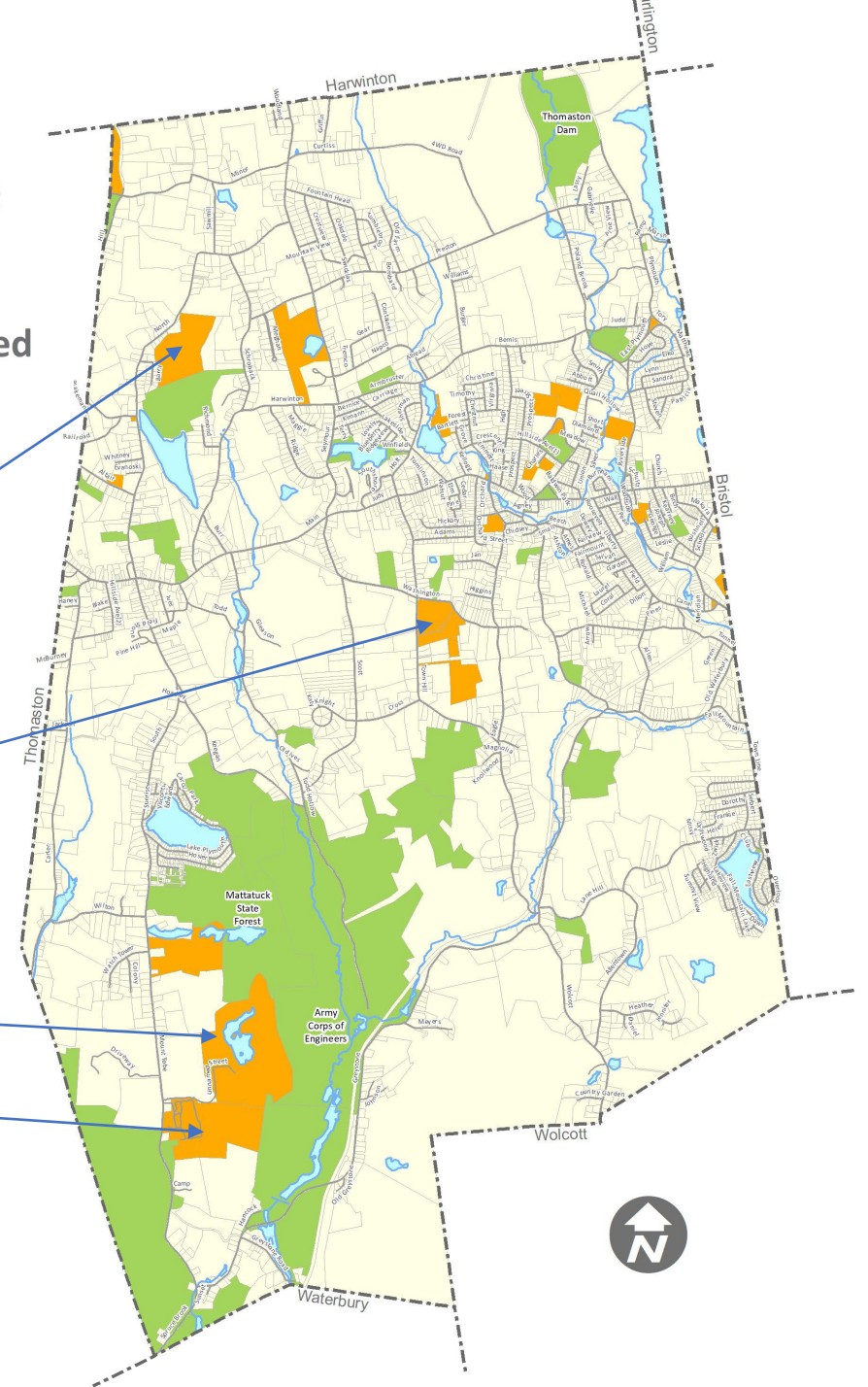
# Legal Protection Status

- No verification of protection status
  - Water Company Land Class I or II
  - State Forest
- Water Company Land Class III
- Terryville County Fair Grounds
- Private campground
- Long River Boy Scout Camp

Plymouth  
Open Space

Protected

Unprotected





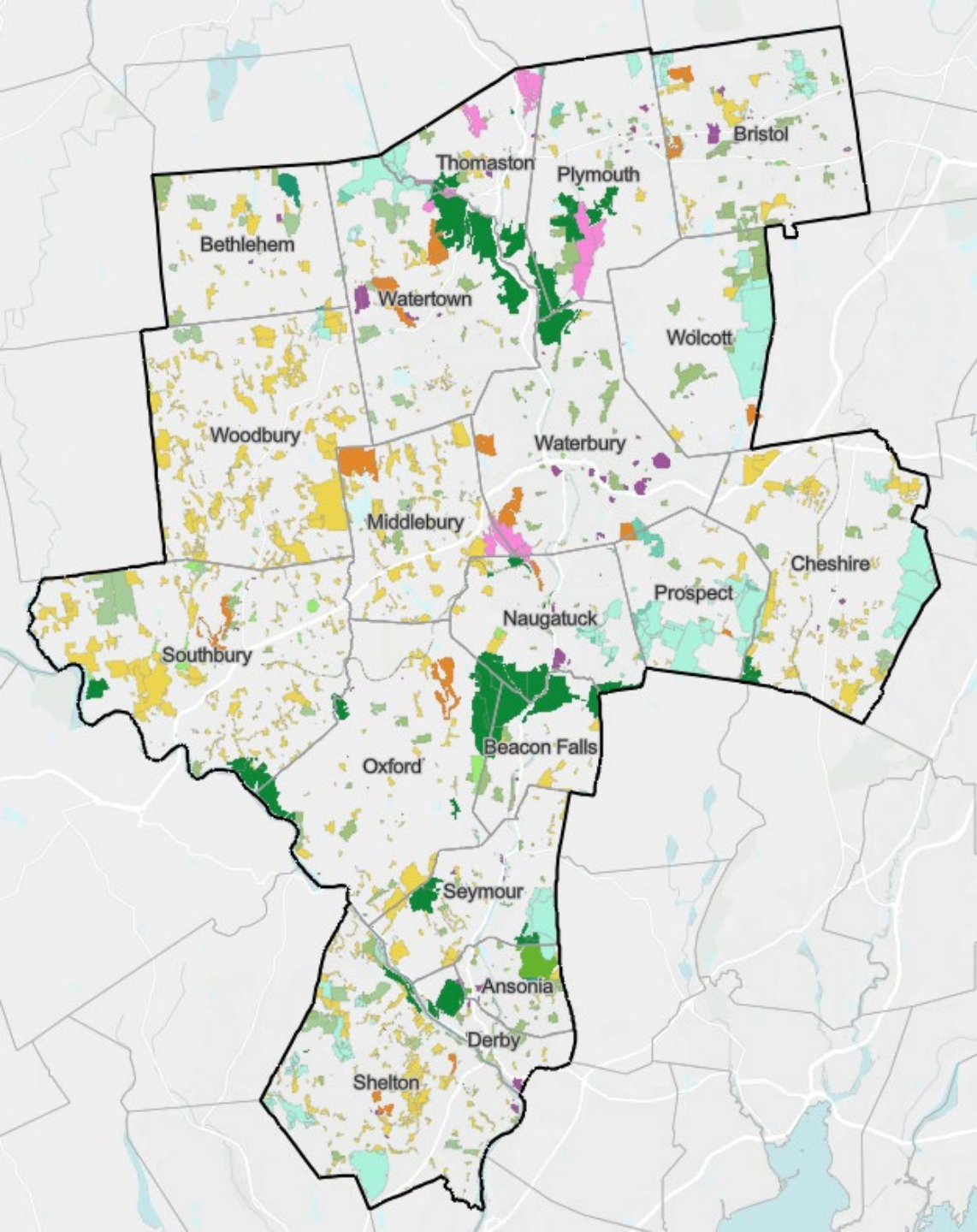
# Legal Protection Status

Owner	Owner_Type	Primary_Function	Secondary_Function	Public_Access	Legal_Protection	Protection_Type	Easement_Holder	P
State of Connecticut	State	Forest	<Null>	<Null>	Yes	<Null>	<Null>	
State of Connecticut	State	Forest	<Null>	<Null>	Yes	<Null>	<Null>	
State of Connecticut	State	Forest	<Null>	<Null>	Yes	<Null>	<Null>	
Plymouth Land Trust Inc.	Land Trust	Conservation	<Null>	<Null>	Yes	<Null>	<Null>	
Boy Scouts of America	Private	Recreation	<Null>	Restricted	No	<Null>	<Null>	
State of Connecticut	State	Forest	<Null>	<Null>	Yes	<Null>	<Null>	
Gentile Campground	Private	Recreation	<Null>	Restricted	No	<Null>	<Null>	
The Nature Conservancy	Private	Conservation	Recreation	Unrestricted	Yes	<Null>	<Null>	
Boy Scouts of America	Private	Recreation	<Null>	No Public Access	No	<Null>	<Null>	
Gentile Campground	Private	Recreation	<Null>	Restricted	No	<Null>	<Null>	
Gentile Campground	Private	Recreation	<Null>	Restricted	No	<Null>	<Null>	
State of Connecticut	State	Forest	<Null>	<Null>	Yes	<Null>	<Null>	
Plymouth Land Trust Inc.	Land Trust	Conservation	<Null>	<Null>	Yes	<Null>	<Null>	
Plymouth Land Trust Inc.	Land Trust	Conservation	<Null>	<Null>	Yes	<Null>	<Null>	
Plymouth Land Trust Inc.	Land Trust	Conservation	<Null>	<Null>	Yes	<Null>	<Null>	
Federal	Federal	Flood Control	<Null>	<Null>	Yes	<Null>	<Null>	
Plymouth Land Trust Inc.	Land Trust	Conservation	<Null>	<Null>	Yes	<Null>	<Null>	
Plymouth Land Trust Inc.	Land Trust	Conservation	<Null>	<Null>	Yes	<Null>	<Null>	
Plymouth Land Trust Inc.	Land Trust	Conservation	<Null>	<Null>	Yes	<Null>	<Null>	
Plymouth Land Trust Inc.	Land Trust	Conservation	<Null>	<Null>	Yes	<Null>	<Null>	
Plymouth Land Trust Inc.	Land Trust	Conservation	<Null>	<Null>	Yes	<Null>	<Null>	
Plymouth Land Trust Inc.	Land Trust	Conservation	<Null>	<Null>	Yes	<Null>	<Null>	





Live Demo



# NVCOG's Current Open Space Viewer



Scan the QR Code or visit  
<https://nvcogct.gov/maps-data/interactive-maps/>

# Next Steps

- NVCOG plans to work with one or two towns at a time over the course of this two-year project.
- Expect outreach from NVCOG staff as we are working on your town.
  - We may ask to meet, to come in person to look at your land records, or simply email with requests for information.
- We are already working with our first few communities, but if you're interested in going next, please email [coneill@nvcogct.gov](mailto:coneill@nvcogct.gov).



Mill Pond Way, Wolcott, CT

Thank you!

We welcome your questions.

Butterfly Garden at  
Fulton Park, Waterbury, CT





# Contacts

## **Project Manager**

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## **GIS Questions**

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GIS Coordinator

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203-489-0370

## **Land Records Questions**

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AICP, AZT

Community Planning Director

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