

## **Top 10 Reasons Why We Need a Constitutional Amendment to Protect Public Lands**

10. **Many Public lands were donated to US and WE deserve a voice.** Public lands -- like the new Auerfarm State Park in Bloomfield -- have been donated to the State by individuals who wished to leave a legacy of public land for all of us to enjoy. Their donation and intent should be honored.
9. **Public lands keep our air and water clean.** Public lands like People's State Forest were acquired to protect water quality as well as to showcase positive land management. These lands that provide so many values to us should not be given away without any benefit to us in return.
8. **Public lands are valuable assets.** State Parks like Hammonasset or Talcott Mountain draw tourists, increase home values, improve public health, harbor wildlife, and both attract and keep businesses in Connecticut. Our state may be in fiscal crisis now, but protection of our public lands will help our economic rebound.
7. **Public lands belong to all of us.** Public lands like Harkness Memorial State Park are a benefit to all of us statewide, not only to a local, special interest.
6. **We need to be fair and good neighbors.** Those of us who buy land near public lands like Meshomasic State Forest should be assured that our investments were not made in vain.
5. **Public land is one of the best investments we have made in Connecticut.** 134 State Parks and Forests attract 8 million visitors a year, generate over \$1 billion, and support over 9,000 jobs every year. The public lands that provide these benefits must be protected and not be given away without our input.
4. **Public lands benefit those who have less.** Many in Connecticut cannot afford to travel to the Grand Canyon, Yellowstone, or Yosemite National Parks. Connecticut's State Parks and Forests, most of which are accessible for free, are OUR local places for awe and inspiration.
3. **Once Lost, Gone Forever.** Once the error is made and public lands like Silver Sands State Park are given away or converted to other uses, it is often impossible for us get them back.
2. **We need to pass public lands on as our legacy to our children.** Today, there is a State Park or Forest within 15 minutes of every one of us in Connecticut. We hope that tomorrow our public lands will still be nearby and accessible to all.
1. **PUBLIC LANDS ARE YOUR LANDS.** Despite ongoing attempts in the General Assembly to sell, give away, or swap public lands, these "public lands" are still owned by all of us and they must not be given away without our input or an overwhelming benefit to us, the public. Think about your favorite State Park, Forest, or Wildlife Management Area and we hope you will understand that a Constitutional Amendment to protect our lands is the only way to protect them, and NOW is the time!