

Policies on Resilient Forests for Connecticut's Future (PRFCT Future)

15 organizations (see back of page) were convened to develop consensus Policies on Resilient Forests for Connecticut's Future (PRFCT Future) in Fall, 2021. The PRFCT Future Working Group held 9 facilitated meetings, 2 public input sessions, and recommended the following actions:

RECOMMENDED POLICIES FOR THE CT GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN 2022:

- Amend Global Warming Solutions Act to require monitoring and reporting on carbon sinks (a.k.a. "negative emissions") provided by working and natural lands.
- Authorize new forest cover (+1%) and urban tree canopy (+5%) goals for Connecticut.
- Enable compensatory reforestation to mitigate state agency and utility actions.
- Update invasive plant species list with known threats to forests.

RECOMMENDED INCENTIVES FOR THE CT GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN 2022:

- Encourage municipalities to support additional development density while reducing pressure on forests, farms, and other natural resource areas.
- Extend corporate tax incentives to other taxpayers to increase the pace of forest conservation.
- Facilitate coordinated, strategic undergrounding of electric utilities infrastructure.

RECOMMENDED FY 2023 STATE BUDGET INVESTMENTS:

- Boost funding level for the Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition program to \$30 million/year.
- Continue RGGI investments to maintain and increase urban forest canopies.
- Invest in Regional Tree Care Pilot, municipal roadside forest management, and statewide mapping data to support urban tree canopy and forest cover goals.

RECOMMENDED EXECUTIVE AGENCY ACTIONS:

- Evaluate ways to improve P.A. 490 and other State incentives for forest stewardship.
- Increase DEEP Forestry Division by 6 full-time staff -- 3 Private Lands Service Foresters, 2 State Lands Foresters, and 1 Urban Forester).
- Increase DEEP's Land Acquisition and Management Office by 5 full-time staff -- 2 property agents, 1 surveyor, 1 GIS specialist, and 1 administrative assistant.
- Add 1 UConn Extension Forester to disseminate and translate forestry science to landowners and land managers.

*Full report and background on the PRFCT Future Working Group are available on the PRFCT Future Resource page: <https://www.ctwoodlands.org/public-policy/prfct-future-resource-page>

PRFCT Future Working Group Participants

Organizations

American Planning Association - CT Chapter
Connecticut Conference of Municipalities
Connecticut Farm Bureau Association
Connecticut Forest & Park Association
Connecticut Land Conservation Council
CT Council of Small Towns
CT DEEP
CT Metro Council of Governments
CT Urban Forest Council
Desegregate CT
Garden Club of America, Rep to Conservation Cmte.
Home Builders and Remodelers Association of CT
Sustainable CT
Tree Wardens' Association of CT
Yankee Div. – N.E. Society of American Foresters

Representatives

Rebecca Augur
Brian O'Connor
Joan Nichols
Eric Hammerling, Chair
Amy Paterson
Betsy Gara
Christopher Martin
Hannah Reichle
Heather Dionne
Nick Guertin
Juliet Cain
Jim Perras
Lynn Stoddard
Kevin Kelly
Mike Ferrucci