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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: (Bristol CT) April 22, 2022

THE CITY OF BRISTOL AND ENVIRONMENTAL LEARNING CENTERS OF CONNECTICUT ANNOUNCE THE PURCHASE OF LAND TO PRESERVE OPEN SPACE

BRISTOL, CT) – The City of Bristol and the Environmental Learning Centers of Connecticut (ELLCT) recently completed the purchase of 63.9 acres of land known as the Pigeon Hill Property. The land was purchased with an Open Space Grant that was awarded to the City of Bristol and ELLCT by the State of Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP). The grant program is intended to protect wildlife habitats, offer recreational opportunities, and serve as a buffer and adaptation to climate change. The land being purchased must be protected by a conservation and public recreation easement that will ensure the property is forever protected for public use and enjoyment.

The property is made up of a 45-acre mature, mixed hardwood forest, 9 acres of fields, a 0.6-acre pond, and a glacial esker that runs along the western edge of the property. A 304-acre Aquifer Protection Area, owned by the City of New Britain, is located less than 600 feet past the property's southern boundary. The Harry C. Barnes Nature Center and Seymour Park are directly west of the property. The 35.6 acres in Bristol is located behind the Barnes Nature Center and Seymour Park.

"The acquisition of this property will allow this land to be used for passive recreation, opportunities to educate the public on the importance of wetlands and native plants and native wildlife for generations to come," stated City of Bristol Mayor Jeffrey Caggiano.

In the short term, Pigeon Hill will remain closed to the public while measures are taken to provide for safe visitation. This includes the demolition of old structures, the removal of stockpiled construction materials, and the creation of visitors' services such as trails and parking areas.

The Environmental Learning Centers of Connecticut has put together a Pigeon Hill Management Planning Committee consisting of ELLCT Staff, naturalists, Shrub Road neighbors, and City of Bristol personnel. In addition to developing a trail layout that exemplifies the unique natural character of the property and connects seamlessly to the trails at the Harry C. Barnes Nature Center, this committee is designing the habitat management of the entire property for the benefit of wildlife and people.

City of Bristol

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“We are thrilled that this property will be protected into perpetuity”, said Scott Heth, Executive Director of Environmental Learning Centers of Connecticut. “Through the Collaboration between the City of Bristol, Environmental Learning Centers of Connecticut, and the State of Connecticut, and through the generosity of countless individuals, foundations and businesses throughout Bristol and Burlington, we have increased the amount of open space in the Shrub Road area of Bristol from 80 acres to 144 acres for the benefit of wildlife and our communities”.

A grand opening of Pigeon Hill will be announced in the near future.

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