

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The Inland Wetland and Watercourses Commission of the Town of Salisbury finds that the Town's wetlands and watercourses are exceptional and valuable resources that require diligent stewardship for the general health and welfare of the community and as unique resources that benefit the citizens of the entire State.

1. Salisbury is a large town (60.1 sq. mi. [2.8 sq. mi. is water]) with a rich diversity of wetland and watercourses that are un-fragmented and interconnected. Large portions of the State have lost this ecological resiliency and the importance and value of Salisbury's wetland and watercourses will increase over time as larger areas of the State become urbanized.
2. Salisbury has the highest elevations (well over 2,000 feet above sea level = a.s.l.) within the State. Two lakes and perched wetlands that lie atop the Taconic Uplift are the headwaters of cold-water streams. As the effects of climate change increase, scientific modeling has demonstrated that these wetlands and watercourses will be the last refuges for certain cold-water limited aquatic species within the State.
3. Six large lakes lie within Salisbury's boundaries. Two are at high elevations atop the Taconic Uplift (Riga Lake, 1750 feet a.s.l. and South Pond, 1715 feet a.s.l.). Four lie on the valley floor at slightly over 700 feet a.s.l. including Lakeville Lake, the deepest natural lake (106 feet at its deepest point) in Connecticut fed both by springs and surface run-off. The impounded Twin Lakes in the northeastern section of Town are the headwaters of Schenob Brook, a nationally recognized watershed of high ecological importance. These three lakes and the fourth valley floor lake, Long Pond are important recreational resources for the Town and the State and are among the most sought-after residential areas of Town under increasing threat from over-development.
4. Salisbury's rich diversity of wetlands and watercourses serve as habitat for robust populations of many endangered, threatened, and special concern wetland-dependent plant and wildlife species. Habitats such as calcareous fens, high-gradient coldwater streams, and vernal pools are among the varied habitats in Salisbury the contain many of these species and merit enhanced protection.
5. The Housatonic River, which is a Federally-designated Wild and Scenic River, is the eastern boundary of Salisbury. The Salmon Kill and Moore Brook are two major tributaries to the Housatonic River that originate in Salisbury. The Salmon Kill Valley and its broad floodplains are an iconic pastoral landscape that has remained relatively unchanged since the early years of the 20th century.
6. Altered precipitation patterns caused by climate change place new stresses upon wetland and watercourses. Increased flooding threatens both human and natural infrastructure. Expanding

the scope of the upland review areas adjacent to wetlands and watercourses is an important resiliency strategy.

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