



Preserving Open Space

What is “Open Space”?

Open space is undeveloped land left in a natural state or used for low-impact recreation or limited agriculture. It can be privately or publicly owned, and can be open or closed to public access.

Why is open space so valuable?

Open space provides several benefits to neighborhoods, communities and regions. These include:

- o **ecological health benefits** through protecting land in its natural state which then provides habitats for wildlife and protects resources such as soil and water.
- o **human health and quality of life benefits** through providing recreation, preserving the natural landscape and developing local tourism and agriculture.

What are the best ways to preserve open space?

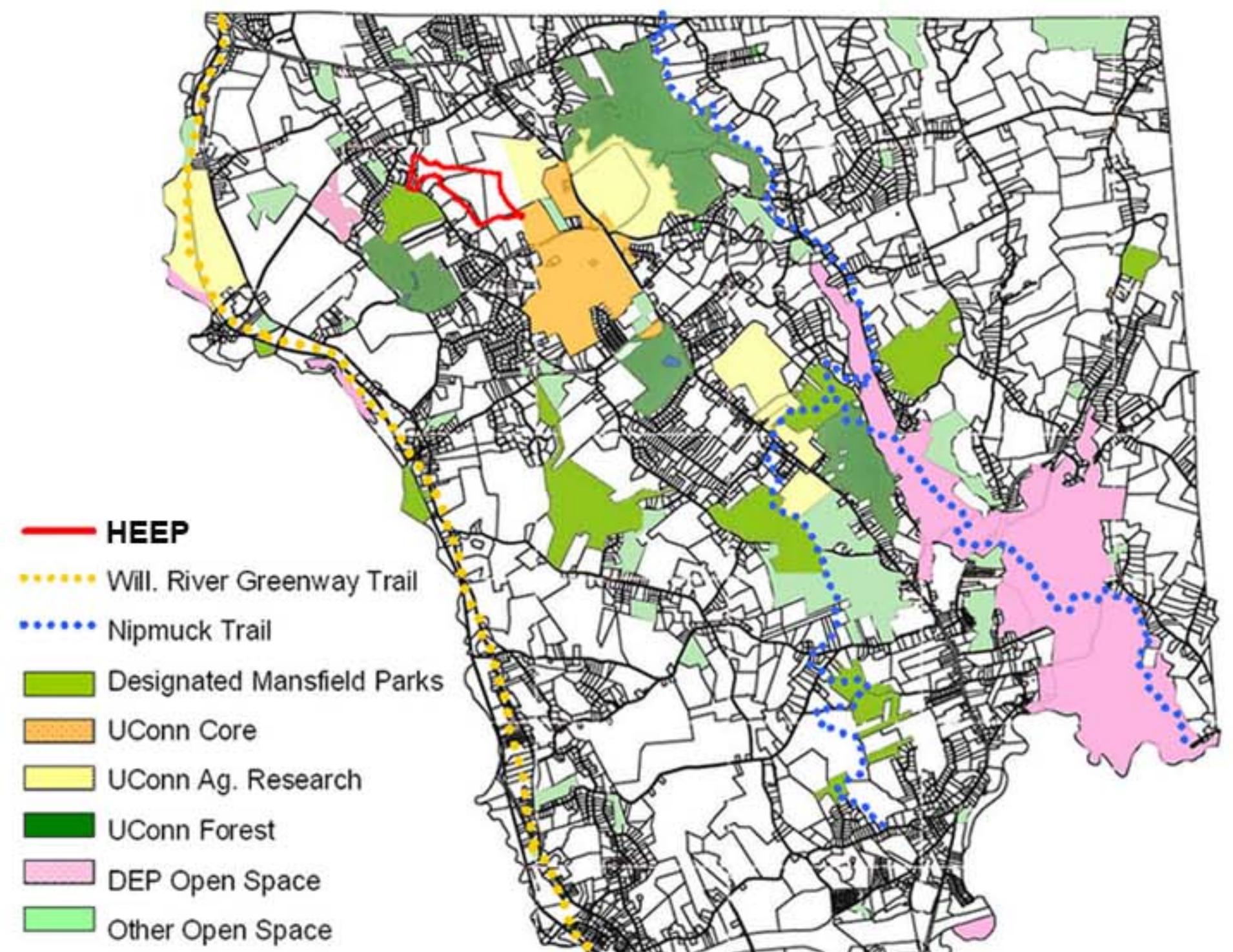
- o **Connected Space:** Open space is most valuable when linked together. This creates a network of open space throughout a community, which increases the human and ecological benefits.
- o **Public/Private Partnerships:** Parcels & networks of open space represent cooperation between private citizens’ interests and the public good.
- o **Sound Management:** We can enhance open space benefits through a sound management plan. This plan should establish appropriate uses and long-term care and maintenance such as monitoring and invasive species control.

What is the significance of this open space?

The Hillside Environmental Education Park (HEEP) is open space owned by UConn and preserved through an easement with the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection.

The landfill closure, wetlands restoration, invasive species control, public access, and educational opportunities are important components of the University’s open space plan.

This map indicates the location of HEEP in relation to other open space parcels in Mansfield.



Mansfield Open Space Network

