Over the past century the former DeDominicis property was part of a larger farm system, likely used primarily for haying, grazing, and woodlot purposes as typically found within colonial land husbandry systems. This property had been on the Town’s list of Areas of Conservation Interest since the list’s first compilation in 1985. The Town of Cheshire, in cooperation with the Regional Water Authority and the Department of Environmental Protection, purchased the property from the Aldo DeDominicis Foundation and Clorinda and Enzo DeDominicis in July 2003 for $1,724,000. This property is the second largest open space acquisition for the town.

While the DeDominicis Property’s 185 acres are worthy of preservation without adjacency to other preserved properties, successful preservation of this land has also provided several forms of open space linkage.

The Cheshire Land Trust’s Old Farms Preserve is a six-acre property actively maintained as meadow habitat located directly adjacent to the southeast portion of the DeDominicis property. The Cheshire Land Trust also owns and stewards the 33-acre Fresh Meadows Wildlife Sanctuary, located north of Cook Hill Road, approximately 1,000 feet north of the DeDominicis Property. The properties are not directly adjacent, but Fresh Meadow’s size and maintenance as a meadow habitat, in juxtaposition with the 185-acres of unfragmented forest on the subject property, provides a habitat mix and interface for wildlife, particularly bird species.
A portion of the DeDominicis Property’s eastern boundary is also adjacent to land owned by the New Departure Fish and Game Club. This is a 35.8-acre property, privately owned, which is utilized for shooting practice and fishing by club members. The club stocks its pond, which is upstream of the project property.

Protection of the DeDominicis property has water resource importance as it is entirely within the Mill River Watershed. Additionally, approximately 25.3 acres in the property’s northwest corner and 1.3 acres in its southwest corner overlay the Level A South Cheshire Aquifer. Acquisition of the property has therefore assisted with water supply protection for the South Central Connecticut Regional Water Authority.

Streams and wetlands are scattered throughout, and surrounding these is a rich assortment of plant and animal life. The significant acreage and the close proximity to existing open space parcels also make it a desirable habitat for wildlife. Hawks, deer, owls, and other animals can be regularly seen on the property, and some of the local residents claim that the streams are full of trout. In addition, there are well-marked trails, which allow hikers and horseback riders easy access to the scenic beauty of the property.

The property is varied with some moderately steep elevations alternating with shallow wetlands. There are several steep ridges surrounded by deep wetlands and streams in the alternating valleys, several of which constitute small gorges. In the northeast section of the property there is a particularly deep gorge near the border with the residences of Pine Brook Rd. In addition, there are a number of glacial boulders (erratics) strewn throughout. The varied, pleasant terrain makes the property an especially attractive spot for hikers with some scenic vistas at the higher elevations, especially during winter months.

*Map on following page.*
DeDominicis Property
Cheshire, Connecticut

Please stay on marked trails. Unmarked trails may lead into or out of public property.

To report emergencies, call 911.

Bicycles, motor vehicles, walking, and camping are currently prohibited.

Please respect temporary trail closures, as posted, which may occur for safety, maintenance, or conservation purposes.

Public acquisition of the property was a cooperative effort by the DEP, RTM, and the Town of Cheshire.

For any non-emergency problems or more information, please call 277-6871 or email info@ctdep.org.

Map prepared by the Cheshire Planning Office/M. Kastendiek on June 17, 2004.

Scale 1 inch = 800 feet
2 feet contours are shown with selected spot elevations.