

Connecticut Greenways Program Update - 2003
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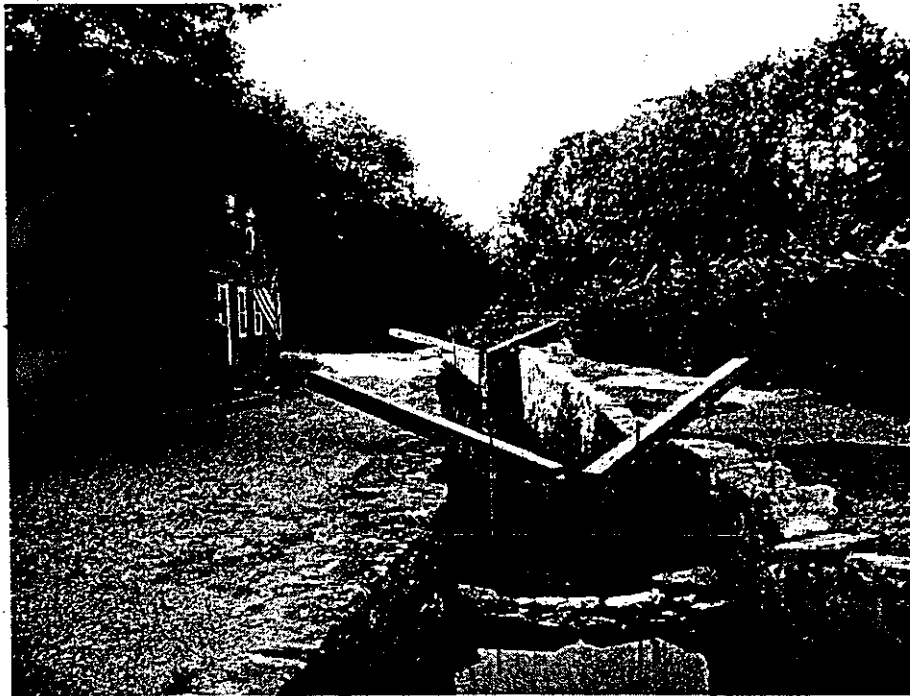
This past year has seen small steps in the completion of some of our major greenway systems, including the Air Line State Park Trail and the Farmington Canal Heritage Greenway. The current budget climate has resulted in the elimination of funds for open space acquisition, which many towns had used to expand their greenways. On the positive side, many municipalities are setting up special funding for the purchase of open space and it is hoped that some funding will be restored at the state level this year.



Air Line State Park Trail, Colchester, CT

New greenway initiatives include the proposed "Ives Trail" in Danbury, Bethel and Ridgefield and the Shoreline Greenway Trail running from East Haven to Madison. Both of these are in preliminary stages but have significant local support. Two important bi-state efforts involving CT and MA are underway as well. The first involves a study for the Metacomet, Mattabessett and Monadnock Trail for inclusion in the National Scenic Trail system. Public outreach meetings have been conducted in both states to determine levels of support for such a designation. The second is the Farmington Canal Greenway. This trail runs from New Haven to the MA border in CT along the route of the historic Farmington Canal, and links with a number of trail projects in Mass. A meeting with trail

advocates and officials from both states was held in November and generated greater interest in closing gaps and completing the route.



Historic Lock 12, Farmington Canal Greenway, Cheshire, CT



View from the Metacomet Trail, Meriden, CT

The DEP is working on a State Trail Plan as part of the requirements for the National Recreational Trails program grants. A trail and greenway mapping meeting was recently held in Northeastern CT which generated significant interest from the towns. Additional meetings in Eastern CT are planned for the next year. Results will help determine the priorities for trail grants and land acquisition in the future.