

SECTION 6

Recommendations and Conclusions

“Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better. It’s not.”

– Dr. Seuss, author of children’s books



In this section:

6.1 - Recommendations

6.2 - Conclusions

Page

6-3

6-5



6.1 – Recommendations

The Land Conservation Plan provides a science-based, consensus driven approach for protecting open space and natural resources. The Conservation Commission envisions using this Plan in the following ways, and offers the following recommendations to advance important conservation measures for the benefit of the town and its citizens. Each recommendation lends itself to development of an implementation plan and general guidance on how that will be realized.

Open Space Plan Use

RP1. Present the plan to the land use boards, selectboard, other committees and town staff.

RP2. Engage the Planning Board and Master Plan update committee on the plan contents and uses.

RP3. Audit Zoning Ordinance and Land Use Regulations to strengthen requirements designed to protect natural resources.

RP3. Coordinate with the town administrator on EPA MS4 Stormwater Permit requirements. See resources here <https://www.epa.gov/npdes-permits/new-hampshire-small-ms4-general-permit>

RP4. Meet with the Planning Board and Board of Selectmen annually to review and update the Plan.

Land and Resource Conservation

RL1. Advocate for the town to continue to fund the town’s Conservation Fund from the Land Use Change Tax revenues at 100%.

RL2. Work with volunteers, landowners, and adjacent towns to monitor and maintain conserved land and open space.

RL3. Partner with surrounding towns and land conservation organizations to protect priority areas that extend beyond Atkinson’s borders.

RL4. Monitor grant funding opportunities for land conservation using data and maps in the Plan to support funding requests.

Community Outreach

RCO1. Present the plan at public meetings and other community venues. These efforts can highlight the importance of natural resources found throughout the community, how they improve our quality of life, and how undeveloped land provides resilience to a changing climate.

RCO2. Work with owners of properties that possess important conservation and/or recreational value to inform them about measures they can take to protect and manage these sites and the Town’s priorities for conservation.

RCO3. Make the plan accessible on the town’s website and social media outlets.

RCO4. Prepare an annual calendar of public outreach events focused on relevant local issues.

RCO5. Prepare a public and community outreach implementation plan.

RCO6. Prepare a communications kit for community and other outreach including digital copies of informational materials, printed maps, and a fact sheet with contact information.

Climate Change and Emerging Issues

RCC1. Assist the Water Resource Committee to provide information to the town and landowners about water management during drought conditions and how to facilitate groundwater recharge and water harvesting.

RCC2. Work with the Atkinson Water Resource Committee to establish a Water Conservation Outreach Plan to create a framework for water conservation strategies and measures relating to drinking water resources and water quality.

RCC3. Coordinate with surrounding towns on local and regional water resource issues.

RCC4. Work with landowners to control the spread of invasive species and their introduction.

RCC5. Consider conservation-based protections for flora and wildlife and their habitats using the best available data and science.

6.2 – Conclusions

Atkinson benefits from a wide variety of natural lands and resources which will continue to thrive under proactive conservation measures and proper stewardship. The Land Conservation Plan is a blueprint for land and resource conservation, providing both the big picture view of the community and site-specific information about current resources.

The Land Conservation Plan is a blueprint for land conservation, providing both the big picture view of the community and site-specific information about resources.

The Conservation Commission, and we hope many others, will use this Plan to guide conservation actions in the coming years. The Plan provides an inventory of land conservation priorities along with an map based inventory of natural resources throughout Atkinson.

The Plan contents, data and maps provide a solid foundation for current and future decision making, community outreach and engagement with property owners, and management decisions for conservation lands. The data and maps also provide valuable information for other municipal actions including annual budgets, appropriation of funds, and other municipal functions such as compliance with the EPA MS4 Stormwater Permit, and informing the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Adjustment on application reviews.

Opportunities

There are many opportunities to use the Plan to inform future actions and expand upon current activities that will serve to protect conservation lands and natural resources. Future land conservation and resource conservation focus areas and action items may include:

- Facilitate broad based multi-media engagement in the community about the LCP uses and benefits, and land and resource conservation opportunities and methods.
- Support applications for state, regional and federal funding to implement recommendations.
- Utilize the LCP to protect the high value of community character present today.
- Improve management of open space lands and their resources through sound best management practices.
- Foster stewardship to encourage land conservation among property owners.
- Expand the focus of land conservation initiatives to include agricultural lands, scenic vistas, buffers to sensitive resources, and protection of surface water and groundwater/drinking water resources.
- Respond to emerging issues such as climate change impacts including drought.
- Identify nonpoint sources of pollution and groundwater contamination.
- Improve coordination between the Conservation Commission and land use boards and state permitting agencies on development applications.

