

paul@paulwainwrightphotography.com

From: "Barbara Richter" <barbara@nhacc.org>
Date: Friday, January 11, 2019 11:30 AM
To: "Paul Wainwright" <paul@paulwainwrightphotography.com>
Subject: Re: The Value of Open Land

Hi Paul,

As far as protecting only 7% of your town land for conservation purposes, that is a really low number. While 25% is a good basic number to strive for, it can be hard to defend the numbers, without good science to back it up. Some towns are less than 10% protected, but many towns have surpassed this goal. Some more rural towns now have up to 50 to 60% protected conservation land. The percent really needs to be based on the needs of the community and what conservation goals your town has established. It might be ok to only protect 20% if you find that amount protects the critical habitat or priority natural areas in your town. For instance, if you look at the Wildlife Action Plan maps for Atkinson, <https://wildlife.state.nh.us/maps/wap/atkinson8x11scoring.pdf> and habitat

<https://wildlife.state.nh.us/maps/wap/atkinson8x11habitat.pdf>

you can find the location of areas listed as highest ranked in the State and region for critical habitat especially grasslands. You can use these maps to support conservation of more than 7% of your town. It is also important to recognize that conservation lands in more urban areas provide even more in ecosystem services like clean water and clean air. With less open space available, what is remaining is more important to protect.

Keep up the good work!

Barbara

On Fri, Jan 11, 2019 at 8:53 AM <paul@paulwainwrightphotography.com> wrote:

Hi Barbara --

Our Selectmen have unilaterally introduced a warrant article to decrease the LUCT allocated to the Conservation Fund from the current 100% to 50%. Their reasoning is that Atkinson has enough conservation land (it is 7.1% of the total land area in town), and that if open land is developed it will increase the tax base – current development trends are toward condo-style cluster developments that attract older folks who are not likely to add students to our school system, which is by far the largest segment of our property tax bills. Can you point me to any studies that would refute this assumption?

Thanks,

-- Paul.

Paul Wainwright, Chair, Atkinson Conservation Commission

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Barbara Richter, Executive Director
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paul@paulwainwrightphotography.com

From: "Barbara Richter" <barbara@nhacc.org>
Date: Monday, January 14, 2019 1:07 PM
To: "Paul Wainwright" <paul@paulwainwrightphotography.com>
Subject: Re: The Value of Open Land

Hi Paul,

Ok, I am glad you clarified the 7%. That is a good number for town forest so it is encouraging. I would count the land permanently protected with a conservation easement held by a third party. I agree that easements on development land do not always protect the most critical habitat or natural resources. If the land was protected as a requirement to build then you might not consider this conservation land. It is more of a set aside to meet local codes. However, if this land that has critical resources and the CC is charged with management and monitoring of the easement, or you know who holds the easement then you should consider it part of the % protected in Atkinson.

So my answer is really, it depends on the property. If the land is owned by a homeowners association I typically do not count this a conservation land.

Regards,
 Barbara

On Mon, Jan 14, 2019 at 12:43 PM <paul@paulwainwrightphotography.com> wrote:

Hi Barbara --

Thanks for all the info! I've added it to our ring binder of Land Conservation Resource Documents.

That 7.1% number was just our Town Forests. Should we also include other land that has conservation deed restrictions? We have quite a few cluster developments that have dedicated open space with conservation easements. Not sure who owns the easements, but the land itself is privately owned, and although it is protected from development, in most cases it is posted and not open to the public. In a few cases we have trail easements connecting up to trails on town land, but for the most part it is off limits to the public. Should we be counting that towards our total too?

Thanks,

-- Paul.

Paul Wainwright, Chair, Atkinson Conservation Commission

From: [Barbara Richter](#)
Sent: Friday, January 11, 2019 3:27 PM
To: [Paul Wainwright](#)
Subject: Re: The Value of Open Land

Hi Paul,

Here is another brochure, Investing in Nature, with great information on the benefits of natural areas. It was put together by the Land Trust Alliance and the US Forest Service.

Have a great weekend,
Barbara

On Fri, Jan 11, 2019 at 10:00 AM paul@paulwainwrightphotography.com wrote:

Hi Barbara --

Our Selectmen have unilaterally introduced a warrant article to decrease the LUCT allocated to the Conservation Fund from the current 1.22% to .22%. Their reasoning is that Atkinson has enough conservation land (it is 7.1% of the total land area in town) and that if open land is developed it will increase the tax base (current development trends are toward condo-style cluster developments that attract older folks who are not likely to add students to our school system, which is by far the largest segment of our property tax bills. Can you point me to any studies that would refute this assumption?

Thanks,

-- Paul.

Paul Wainwright, Chair, Atkinson Conservation Commission

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