

**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](mailto: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**

--

Barbara Richter, Executive Director  
 NH Association of Conservation Commissions  
 54 Portsmouth Street  
 Concord, NH 03301  
[603.224.7867](tel:603.224.7867)  
[Barbara@nhacc.org](mailto:Barbara@nhacc.org)  
[www.nhacc.org](http://www.nhacc.org)

