

Draft

Atkinson Conservation Commission Trail Master Plan

Mission Statement

The purpose of trail design and planning in Atkinson is to provide public access to appropriate public lands for recreation, study, and enjoyment.

Introduction

Atkinson is fortunate to have large areas of public land that are suitable for trails and recreation. Lack of a coherent plan and resources for maintenance has resulted in several problems:

- Trails have become overgrown and unsafe in many spots.
- Pests, invasive species, and disease breeding grounds have appeared in some areas.
- Emergency fire and rescue access has become difficult or impossible.
- Unsightly “trash vegetation” and refuse have reduced the beauty of some locations and encouraged vandalism.

None of the current problems are insurmountable, and none have reached a stage where they are visible to the general public. The lands can be restored and enhanced with appropriate planning and maintenance. This is a civic project: that is, the Conservation Commission is simply a focal point for planning, development, and maintenance of public outdoor assets of Atkinson. Citizen participation, including planning and direction, is both encouraged and necessary to develop public spaces that citizens can be proud of and enjoy.

Having viable public spaces benefits Atkinson in a number of ways:

- Town water supplies flow through many of the conservation lands, and proper management keeps these supplies available and pure.
- Maintaining trails and lands enhances the beauty, and therefore the market value, of homes and businesses in Atkinson.
- Properly maintained open spaces are biodiversity reservoirs, potentially reseeding/restoring neighboring areas and providing a wildlife habitat for native birds and animals.
- Adequate access reduces the danger and effects of storm, fire, and flood damage, and lowers the cost of maintaining emergency services.
- Public participation in management and maintenance of these areas increases a public sense of ownership and responsibility for the town and its properties.
- Maintained trails are education and awareness centers for citizens and schools.

Draft

Trail Planning and Maintenance. There are three phases to trail planning in Atkinson: startup, development, and maintenance. There is very little overlap in the tasks of each phase.

- **Startup:** infrastructure must be put in place since there has not been a formal trail plan for many years (if ever) in Atkinson. This includes (1) initial working plan (this plan), formation of initial working group(s), determine short and long-term tasks, and determine resources¹ to support all phases.
- **Development:** the initial assumption is that all trails need work and are therefore “new” trails. Following guidelines established by startup activities, all lands are reviewed and a detailed trail plan drawn up for each land. Given limited resources, priorities are assigned to each land and trail. Timelines and resources are assigned, possibly with separate maintenance plans. (Forest Management Plans exist for many lands and form the base for this project. See appendix References for list of sources.)
- **Maintenance.** Determine tasks and resources needed to keep the trails in good condition. Possible solutions are “trail stewards” in each developed land, continual monitoring, development of a pool of funding, equipment, and personnel resources, etc.

Current Atkinson Conservation Assets

List the major prime wetland and lands from the map, including new ones. Include the chart that Tim made of these lands. List references such as the Forestry Plans and Master Plan.

Sawyer Land

Location, Tax Map Reference

Acreage

Parcel history (past use, how acquired, easements and deed restrictions)

General description of parcel: soils, terrain, vegetation, habitat, special features, access

Total Trail length, number of trails

Condition of trails

Possible development and use

Carolyn Orr Land

Location, Tax Map Reference

Acreage

Parcel history (past use, how acquired, easements and deed restrictions)

General description of parcel: soils, terrain, vegetation, habitat, special features, access

Total Trail length, number of trails

Condition of trails

Possible development and use

¹ Resources are time, materials, equipment, manpower, professional services, storage, and financing.

Draft

Marshall Land

- Location, Tax Map Reference
- Acreage
- Parcel history (past use, how acquired, easements and deed restrictions)
- General description of parcel: soils, terrain, vegetation, habitat, special features, access
- Total Trail length, number of trails
- Condition of trails
- Possible development and use

Pope Road

- Location, Tax Map Reference
- Acreage
- Parcel history (past use, how acquired, easements and deed restrictions)
- General description of parcel: soils, terrain, vegetation, habitat, special features, access
- Total Trail length, number of trails
- Condition of trails
- Possible development and use

Sawmill Swamp

- Location, Tax Map Reference
- Acreage
- Parcel history (past use, how acquired, easements and deed restrictions)
- General description of parcel: soils, terrain, vegetation, habitat, special features, access
- Total Trail length, number of trails
- Condition of trails
- Possible development and use

Crown Hill

- Location, Tax Map Reference
- Acreage
- Parcel history (past use, how acquired, easements and deed restrictions)
- General description of parcel: soils, terrain, vegetation, habitat, special features, access
- Total Trail length, number of trails
- Condition of trails
- Possible development and use

Planned Trail Development and Maintenance

Trail Development, general: Many of the trails require preparation using labor and materials that are beyond the capability of volunteers: stream crossings, overgrown old trails, and poorly drained soils require special care and equipment to minimize changes to the local ecosystem and to provide access for all classes of users. Planned forestry cuts can reduce costs for this preparation by judiciously planning timbering access so that the skidder roads can form the base for trail development. This plan worked for the initial trail development on the Sawyer land and is planned for other projects, such as the Carolyn Orr forestry project.

Draft

Available Resources

Finance

Town Budget Item

Line item in Conservation Commission annual budget for maintenance. Separate line items and accountability for:

- Mowing
- Invasive organism control (currently plant only, but others may be considered)
- Planned trail development
- Existing trail maintenance
- Professional services related to trail planning

Grants

Actively search out grants that may cover certain aspects of trail development and maintenance. A trail master plan (this document) and a track record are key to grant awards. Grants may be found (but are not limited to):

- Rockingham Planning Commission (RPC)
- LCHIP
- Three Rivers
- State Conservation “Moose Plate”
- SE Land Trust
- Land & Water Conservation Fund Grant
- DOT Transportation Enhancement Funding

Check <http://clca.forestociety.org/pdf/funding-sources.pdf> for other sources

Donations

Private citizens, businesses, or organizations may wish to help fund trail projects. Need to set up funding. Paul Wainwright set up “Friends of Atkinson Conservation” some years ago and got tax-exempt status. Make sure that funds can be received and channeled properly before promulgating a donation initiative.

Personnel

Steering Committee

Town Department Reps: Conservation, Planning Board, Town Forester

Volunteers: visioning personnel?

Town Master Plan member?

Third party: Audubon? SPNHF, RPC?

Professional

Foresters

Soil Engineers

Draft

Town Forester
Rockingham Planning Commission (RPC)
DRED?

Skilled Volunteers

Trailwrights
Student Conservation Association (SCA)
Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests (SPNHF)
Retired/Inactive Professionals
New Hampshire Audubon

Volunteers

Garden Club
Scouts
Private Citizens, Visioning group
Public Land Abutters

Equipment and Materials

Permanent (owned)

Chainsaw
Grass trimmer
Tree grubber
Brush/grass grubber
Root wrench
Truck (town)
Catwagon (town)

Rental

Brontosaurus
Mower
Tractor
Backhoe
Shredder
Portable saw

Repair and Maintenance Supplies

Trail mulch (town)
Crushed gravel, various grades
Tree marking paint
Signage
Nails, bolts, fasteners
Herbicide, fertilizer

Draft

Budget

TBD: variables are: conservation land to be maintained, scope of trail system, and budget constraints.

Schedule

MAJOR MILESTONES:

1. Plan presentation to Selectmen's meeting
2. Trail Steering Committee composed of voters and town department members. Composition TBD.
3. Preliminary Plan and Schedule

For each trail project identified:

Draw on **Current Assets** section for base information

Research:

- identify specific conservation areas for trail development
- estimate trail length and terrain, including bridge or raised trail construction points
- specify trail use: walking, hiking, equestrian, ski, snowshoe, dog walk, running, etc.
- identify special considerations, such as summer use only, fragile/rare habitat, historical significance, etc.

Planning: From above information generate an individual plan for each area with estimates of resources (equipment, materials, manpower) and time schedule.

Review: from research and planning, present plan with trail goal(s), resources, and timeline to public review (hearing? Online?)

Draft

Map / Lot	Location	Acquisition	Deed Date	Size	Designated Use	New Use?	Book/ Page	Plan #
02/053	Brushwood Drive	Gift - Susan P. Wattie	1995/10/19	10.200	Conservation		4157/395	D-24087
03/019	No. Broadway-Forest Rd.	Federal Funds (HCRS-Bonin)	1980/09/11	57.870	Conservation/Town Forest		2371-1434	D-9716
03/031	Juniper Lane	Unbuildable Lot	1997/01/02	1.110	Town - Miscellaneous		3193/2410	
03/047	Sleepy Hollow Road	Unbuildable Lot	1997/01/02	1.210	Town - Miscellaneous		3193/2410	
03/108	Sawyer Avenue	West St. Realty Trust (Alfred J. Cirome)	1983/06/01	13.980	Conservation/Town Forest		2454/1104	D-1 1 188
03/114	Corner - North Broadway & Sawyer Avenue		1894/06/13	0.138	Town - Miscellaneous		540/107	
04/011	Sawyer Avenue	Purchase - Sawyers	1977/10/27	20.000	Conservation/Town Forest		4889/2182	D-7375
04/011-1	Sawyer Avenue	Federal Funds(BOR) Forest Soc.	1978/04/11	48.380	Conservation/Town Forest		2308/0940	D-7375
04/046	Main Street	Gift - Ruth D. McPherson	1983/07/28	4.200	Conservation	Conservation/Town Forest	2456/1453	C-11682
04/050	Main Street	Gift - Ruth D. McPherson	1992/06/29	24.355	Conservation	Conservation/Town Forest	2933/866	D-21571
05/048	Robie Lane	Purchase - SPNHF	1990/08/03	59.190	Conservation/Town Forest		2847/058	D-20086
05/067	Main Street	Purchase - SPNHF	1990/03/10	4.625	Town - Atkinson Comm. Ctr.		2829/2100	D-20086
07/123	Walker Road	Gift - Lewis Builders	2003/12/30	0.540	Town - Miscellaneous		4214/2984	
07/198	Providence Hill Road	Purchase - Roy F. Gurbaugh	1965/06/16	0.379	Firepond		1784/103	
07/199	Merrill & Hawthorne Drive	7 1/2% Donation - Lewis Builders, Inc.	1977/08/23	5.870	Recreation		2292/1892 , 2328/1771	D-5903, D-8348
07/204	Off Providence Hill Road	Tax Sale	1985/03/13	0.160	Town - Miscellaneous		2539/1369	D-5078
08/108	Meditation Lane	Gift - Lewis Builders	2003/12/30	1.000	Town - Miscellaneous		4214/2981	D-7630
09/027-6	Main Street-Washington Rd.	7 1/2% Donation - David Summers	1981/03/09	3.475	Town - Miscellaneous	Conservation	2386/787	D-9930

Draft

Map / Lot	Location	Acquisition	Deed Date	Size	Designated Use	New Use?	Book/ Page	Plan #
09/034-10	Maple & Washington Road	7 1/2% Donation - David Summers	1981/03/09	5.800	Town - Miscellaneous	Conservation	2386/785	D-9930
09/090	Kelly Lane	Gift - Maple Est. Realty Trust	1990/05/01	3.020	Firepond		2844/332	C-16846
10/006	East Road-Plaistow Line	7 1/2% Donation - Campbell	1975/03/06	1.370	Firepond		2234/1037	D-5025 Parcel 4
10/008	Pettengill Parcel	Purchase	2011/07/11	2.000	Conservation/Town Forest		5226/0957	D-27100
11/004	(Northend of Lot) Pope & Old Coach Road	7 1/2% Donation - Lewis Builders, Inc.	1978/11/28	7.502	Recreation		2327/0485	D-8172
11/004	(South end of lot) Pope Road	Purchase - Radulski	1969/01/07		Recreation		1948/473	
12/001-1	Hovey Meadow	Land Swap - Lewis Builders, Inc.	1992/12/28	7.000	Conservation	Conservation	2961-2963	C7727
12/002	Pope Road	Gift - Lillian Lewis	1969/01/07	1.000	Recreation/Town Forest	Conservation/Town Forest	2236/0782	
12/002(a)	Merrill Drive	7 1/2% Donation - Lewis Builders, Inc.	1980/08/05	0.173	Town - Conservation		2369/0579	C-951 0
12/002(c)	Pope Road	FederalFunds (BOR) Chadwick	1978/04/10	28.400	Conservation/Town Forest		2308/0938	C-7727
12/002-3	Off Merrill Drive / Hovey Meadow	7 1/2% Donation - Lewis Builders, Inc.	1978/11/28	1.805	Town - Miscellaneous	Conservation/Town Forest	2355/1747	B7453
12/005	Pope Road	Purchase - Killey/Stewart	1978/05/01	10.000	Dump Station/Rec./Woodlock Park		2311/1323	D-6812
12/007-1	(Portion of 7-1) Off Pope Road	Land Swap - Lewis Builders	1992/12/28	8.250	Town - Conservation	Conservation/Town Forest	2961-2963	
12/008-1	Main Street-Pope Road	Federal Funds - (HCRS)-Slade	1979/11/09	11.670	Conservation/Town Forest	Conservation/Town Forest	2353-0761	D-8322
12/012		Land Swap - Lewis Builders	1992/12/28	2.440	Town - Conservation	Conservation/Town Forest	2961-2963	
12/017	Off Pope Road	Tax Sale	1990/04/16	2.600	Town - Conservation	Conservation/Town Forest	2844/329	

Draft

Map / Lot	Location	Acquisition	Deed Date	Size	Designated Use	New Use?	Book/ Page	Plan #
13/030	One Academy Avenue	Purchase - Berger	1995/04/10	9.307	Town - New Fire Station		3096/1951	D29612
13/031	Academy Avenue	Purchase - Joseph Kimball	1907/04/13	9.367	Library/Firehouse/Kimball House/Cemetary		622/415	
13/043	Academy & Woodlawn Ave.	Tax Sale - Pentucket Builders	1967/03/09	0.820	Town - Miscellaneous		1900/122	
13/070	(North end of lot) Academy Avenue	Timberlane Regional School District	1988/05/19	1.000	Town Hall		2753/631	
13/070	(Southeast corner of lot)	Atkinson Grange	1969/08/18	0.500	Town Hall		1981/299	
13/070	Academy Avenue	Purchase - Viola E. Wilson	1970/04/01	4.000	Town Hall		2011/092	
13/077	(East side of lot) Academy Avenue	Purchase - Charles & Samuel Knight	1880/01/24	0.125	Family Mediation		476/233	
13/077	(West side of lot) Academy Avenue	Purchase - Harriet F. Fernald	1880/01/20	0.125	Family Mediation		476/232	
13/088	(North end of lot) Main Street	Purchase - George E. Wright	1975/09/22	1.500	Town - Cemetary		2246/1081	
13/088	(South end of lot) Main Street	Purchase - David How	1823/06/05	2.000	Town - Cemetary		239/068	
13/091	Main Street	Gift - William Todd	1891/01/03	0.466	Town Common		519/365	
13/110-1	Off Birch Lane	???		0.780	???			
14/033	27 Academy Ave	Land swap, Timberlane school district	1993/10/29	0.500	Police Station		3015/0029	
15/027	17 East Road	Purchase/deed restriction	2006/06/02	10.030	Recreation/Conser vation		4663-0950	
16/012-1	Off - Industrial Way	Purchase - Marshall Family Trust	2000/01/03	31.200	Conservation	Conservation/Town Forest	3447/2489	D-8554
16/019	Conley Road/Hall Farm Road	First Essex Bank	1998/09/21	1.700	Conservation		3327/233	
17/011	Main Street	Tax Sale - Tirrell	1967/03/09	1.300	Town - Miscellaneous		1900/121	

Draft

Map / Lot	Location	Acquisition	Deed Date	Size	Designated Use	New Use?	Book/ Page	Plan #
17/026-3	Westside Drive	7 1/2% Donation - Faxon	1976/12/23	0.547	Town - Miscellaneous		2273/0083	
17/094	Oak Ridge Drive	???	1991/08/12	4.100	Town - Conservation		2889/2960	
18/035	Knightland Road	Tax Sale - Guzzardi	1997/04/05	1.599	Town - Miscellaneous		3213/1521	
18/041	Sawmill Swamp	Tax Sale	1979/03/26	7.000	Town - Conservation	Conservation	2345/1179	D-2103
18/058	Sawmill Swamp	Donation - Beatrice Hutchinson	1984/05/08	0.350	Conservation	Conservation/Town Forest	2489/1754	
18/065	Sawmill Swamp	Land Swap - Lewis Builders	1992/12/28	7.000	Conservation	Conservation	2961-2963	
18/070	Maple Avenue	7 1/2% Donation - Senter	1976/05/19	4.200		Conservation	2274/1162	D-5974-2
18/077	Off Knightland Road	Federal Funds - Feuer	1985/04/25	17.430	Conservation	Conservation/Town Forest	2542/1320	C-1 0652
18/078	Knightland Road	Martin Feuer	1985/04/25	45.740	Conservation/Town Forest	Tax card says 66ac ?	2542/1320	D-12209
18/082	Sawmill Swamp	Purchase - Heirs of Lillian Lewis	1999/05/28	4.040	Conservation	Conservation/Town Forest	3418/798	
18/083	Sawmill Swamp	Gift Hutcheson	1977/06/07	3.850	Conservation	Conservation/Town Forest	2285/0147	
18/084	Sawmill Swamp	Purchase - Heirs of Lillian Lewis	1999/05/28	2.780	Conservation	Conservation/Town Forest	3418/798	
18/085	Sawmill Swamp	Purchase - Marilyn Matte	2007/02/07	2.260	Conservation	Conservation/Town Forest	3418/798	
18/086	Sawmill Swamp	Land Swap - Lewis Builders	1992/12/28	4.000	Conservation	Conservation	2961-2963	
18/088	Sawmill Swamp	???		0.010	Town - Miscellaneous			
18/109	Between Maple and Amberwood	Donation - Morse/Lemery	1999/04/15	7.700	Conservation		3446/2824	D-24190
19/017	Crown Hill Road	Tax Sale	1980/04/02	0.210		Conservation	2361/1447	

Draft

Map / Lot	Location	Acquisition	Deed Date	Size	Designated Use	New Use?	Book/ Page	Plan #
19/018	East Road (6.35a in Plaistow)	Federal Funds - (BOR)/Fila-Chambers	1978/04/03	17.050	Conservation/Town Forest		2308/0935	C-7728
19/061(a)	(North end of lot) Crown Hill Road	Gift- Hutcheson	1976/12/24	1.460	Conservation/Town Forest		2273-1956	B-6691
19/061(b)	(South end of lot) Crown Hill Road	Federal Funds (BOR) Noyes	1976/04/02	5.900	Conservation/Town Forest		2258/0461	C-6060
19/062	Off Crown Hill	Purchase - Hanson	1998/10/30	12.000	Town Forest (Article 99-27)	Conservation/Town Forest	3339/1214	
19/076	Plaistow/Hampstead Line	Tax Sale	1941/04/14 1980/03/15	2.000		Conservation/Town Forest	984/246, 2408/1703	
19/080	East Road	Gift - Balazik	1989/05/30	4.070	Conservation		2794/2303	D-19182
20/013-1	Lakeside Drive	Tax Sale - Stickney	1972/04/01	3.910		Conservation/Town Forest	2168/408	
20/015	Route 111 & Hall Farm Road	Purchase - State of NH	1982/04/28	1.000		Conservation	2412/0901	
20/015-1	Route 111	Purchase - State of NH	1983/03/25	3.400	Conservation/Town Forest		2439/1524	
20/023	Water's Edge Road	Donation - Stickney	2003/09/24	0.300	Conservation		4157/0389	
20/031	Water's Edge Road	Donation - Stickney	2003/09/24	1.500	Conservation		4157/0389	
20/035	Route 111 - Conley Grove Rd	Federal Funds - Ruth Stickney	1982/08/04	25.200	Town Forest	Conservation/Town Forest	2419/1310	D-10381
20/036	Houles Grove Road	Federal Funds (HCRS) Ruth L. Marshall	1979/12/19	35.170	Conservation	Conservation/Town Forest	2356-0667	D-8321
23/040	Stickney Road	Gift - Ruth A. Stickney	1982/08/04	0.270	Conservation	Conservation	2419/1309	D-10381
23/089	End of Boulder Cove Road	???		0.510	Town - Miscellaneous			
23/090	End of Boulder Cove Road	Tax Sale - Marshall		0.120	Town - Miscellaneous		3827-0277	
23/091	Lakeside Drive	Gift - Heirs of Ruth A. Stickney	1991/04/17	0.290	Conservation	Conservation/Town Forest	2872/1634	

Draft

Map / Lot	Location	Acquisition	Deed Date	Size	Designated Use	New Use?	Book/ Page	Plan #
Town owned municipal and conservation land:				651.39				
				8				
Other Protected Land								
02/00 1	Fieldstone Village Open Space			28.138	"Set Aside" Open Space			
06/07 6	Butler Estates Open Space			14.820	"Set Aside" Open Space			
06/07 7	Butler Estates Open Space			2.150	"Set Aside" Open Space			
07/13 9	Birchwood Condos Open Space			12.840	"Set Aside" Open Space			
09/03 3-0	Little River Road Open Space			7.900	"Set Aside" Open Space		4481- 2524	
09/06 2-22	Carriage Chase Estates Open Space			17.210	"Set Aside" Open Space			
10/00 7-0	Bryant Woods Clubhouse Open Space			170.23 0	"Set Aside" Open Space			
11/01 1	Mill Stream Crossing Open Space			2.768	"Set Aside" Open Space		3290- 0058	
11/03 9	Mill Stream Crossing Open Space			3.259	"Set Aside" Open Space		3290- 0058	
11/05 3	Mill Stream Crossing Open Space			2.222	"Set Aside" Open Space		3290- 0058	
11/05 4	Mill Stream Crossing Open Space			5.884	"Set Aside" Open Space		3290- 0058	
11/06 1	Mill Stream Crossing Open Space			2.372	"Set Aside" Open Space		3290- 0058	
13/00 1-2	Cogswell Farm Open Space			10.650	"Set Aside" Open Space			
13/02 2-0	Jesse Page Estates Open Space			26.550	"Set Aside" Open Space			
13/02 9-0	Winslow Drive Open Space			36.760	"Set Aside" Open Space		4329- 1486	

Draft

Map / Lot	Location	Acquisition	Deed Date	Size	Designated Use	New Use?	Book/ Page	Plan #
13/09 4-0	Wright Farm Open Space			43.090	"Set Aside" Open Space			
13/09 6-0	Centerview Hollow Open Space			116.83 0	"Set Aside" Open Space			
17/02 9-7	Ashford Lane Open Space			11.300	"Set Aside" Open Space			
17/08 6-0	The Commons Open Space			67.840	"Set Aside" Open Space			
18/74	Dearborn Ridge Road			15.596	"Set Aside" Open Space			D-24190
20/04 9-0	Atkinson Woods Open Space			41.250	"Set Aside" Open Space			
21/00 1-0	Waterwheel Estates Open Space			40.880	"Set Aside" Open Space			
22/00 1	Hemlock Heights Road	Williams #4		9.900	Conservation Easement		2409-434	
				Other Protected Total:	690.43 9			
				Note:	(1)			
					(3)			
					(5)			

Draft

References

- Forest Maintenance Plan*, Moreno Associates, 1989
- Natural Resources Inventory*, Rockingham Planning Commission, 2011
- Sawyer Forest Maintenance Plan*, Moreno Associates, 2012
- Carolyn Orr Maintenance Plan*, Moreno Associates, 2013
- Town of Atkinson Trail Maps*, Moose Plate Grant, 2004
- Wetlands Study*, Natural Resource Consulting Services, 2003-2004
- Prime Wetlands Study*, Natural Resources Consulting Services, 2008
- Good Forestry in the Granite State*, 2010