

# New Marlborough Open Space and Recreation Plan



March, 2004



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## Table of Contents

<b>Section One:</b> Plan Summary	5
<b>Section Two:</b> Statement of Purpose	7
Planning Process and Public Participation	7
<b>Section Three:</b> Community Setting	9
<b>Section Four:</b> Environmental Inventory and Analysis	15
<i>A. Geology, Soils, and Topography</i>	15
<i>B. Landscape Character</i>	18
<i>C. Water Resources</i>	18
<i>D. Vegetation</i>	21
<i>E. Fisheries and Wildlife</i>	26
<i>F. Scenic Resources and Unique Environments</i>	27
<i>G. Environmental Challenges</i>	29
<b>Section Five:</b> Inventory of Lands of Conservation and Recreation Interest	31
<i>A. Private Parcels With Permanent Protection</i>	32
<i>B. Private Parcels With Temporary Protection</i>	35
<i>C. Public and Nonprofit Protected Parcels</i>	35
<b>Section Six:</b> Community Goals	39
<i>A. Description of Process</i>	39
<i>B. Statement of Open Space and Recreation Goals</i>	39
<b>Section Seven:</b> Analysis of Needs	41
<i>A. Summary of Resource Protection Needs</i>	41
<i>B. Summary of Community's Needs</i>	43
<i>C. Management Needs</i>	44
<b>Section Eight:</b> Goals and Objectives	47
<b>Section Nine:</b> Five-Year Action Plan	49
<b>Section Ten:</b> Public Comments	59
<b>Section Eleven:</b> References	61
Appendix	64

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## Section One: Plan Summary

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Preserving rural character and protecting natural resources are the primary goals for the 2004 New Marlborough Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP). Situated in the most southern part of Berkshire County, New Marlborough is off the beaten path, roughly twenty miles from the nearest exit of the Massachusetts Turnpike. The residents take pride in their sense of place and wish to maintain it. Recent decades of broad economic and demographic changes in New England are affecting the small, rural community of New Marlborough. The resulting boom in real estate sales and the building trades has given local landowners and tradesmen a welcome opportunity to prosper, and to raise their standard of living. Concerned citizens of the town, however, do not wish to proceed on a course of economic growth and development without a well planned vision for the future. As a result the town is taking some necessary measures to protect itself from haphazard sprawl, and the updated Open Space and Recreation Plan is a part of that process.

New Marlborough's concerns fall into four main categories: protecting open space, preserving the rural character of the villages, protecting water quality, and increasing community connections and recreational opportunities. The 2004 Open Space and Recreation Plan addresses these concerns by proposing the preservation of areas of unprotected open space with important natural or cultural resources (such as unprotected core wildlife habitat, prime agricultural soils, or remaining open fields); retaining the rural character with diversified zoning that also encourages economic growth; identifying additional recreational opportunities and facilities that could benefit the community; and increasing communication channels between the state, town, and citizens.

*This report includes:*

- ❖ analyses and maps of New Marlborough's landforms, water resources, critical wildlife habitats, historic and scenic sites, protected lands, potential pollution threats, and zoning;
- ❖ specific goals and objectives regarding open space protection, natural resource protection, regional open space connections, recreational needs, and communication;
- ❖ conclusions based on analysis of open space and recreation needs as related to the town's goals and objectives; and
- ❖ a draft five-year action plan, which lays out specific steps for New Marlborough to achieve its goals and objectives.

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For New Marlborough to preserve its rural character while promoting economic growth and development, this plan recommends connecting the already protected parcels of land with corridors for human and wildlife use, protecting areas of land along riparian corridors to encourage recreational use, instituting zoning that encourages development patterns which preserve rural character and open space, preserving land through land trusts and private stewardship, and enforcing existing protective measures to ensure high quality natural resources.



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## Section Two: Statement of Purpose

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A rural town, New Marlborough's character has been shifting over the past decade to that of a residential and second-home community for New York and Boston residents. Since 1990, the population has increased by nearly fifty percent. Although the town's 1990 Open Space and Recreation Plan identified the need to protect open space, historic character, and agricultural heritage, development continues to erode the value of these resources.

This 2004 New Marlborough Open Space and Recreation Plan updates the 1990 OSRP. It assesses the community's intentions and inventories existing natural resources, historic assets, open space, and recreational opportunities. It comprehensively examines the natural resources in the town, the past and current status of these resources, and the future actions necessary to protect and enhance these open space lands and recreational opportunities. It attempts to address the future needs of New Marlborough from an open space perspective so that the development of New Marlborough can proceed in a manner that will best serve the community.

## Planning Process and Public Participation

The Board of Selectmen for the Town of New Marlborough contracted with the Conway School of Landscape Design (CSLD) to write an updated draft Open Space and Recreation Plan which would be edited and submitted by the town to the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs. The CSLD team of graduate students, in collaboration with members of the Board of Selectmen, Planning Board, and interested citizens, made an assessment of the open space and natural resources in the town and developed a draft to accommodate the open space needs of the community.

Public input was solicited between January and March of 2004; this included the distribution of a survey similar to that of the 1990 plan to allow for comparison of the results. (A sample of this survey appears in Appendix I.) This survey was mailed to all 1,150 households in New Marlborough. Surveys were also distributed to board members, Town employees, and citizens who attended the public forums. A total of 293 people, or 15%, responded to the survey.

The first forum, held February 7, 2004, was convened to discuss the results of the survey and serve as an information-gathering session

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to help formulate preliminary goals and objectives for the Open Space Plan. Thirty residents attended this forum. The student team facilitated a second forum on February 28, 2004, attended by twenty-five residents, where inventory, analyses, and conceptual ideas were the focus. The discussion centered on how the analyses related to the preliminary formation of the five-year action plan. Both of the forums were publicly advertised and all citizens were encouraged to attend.



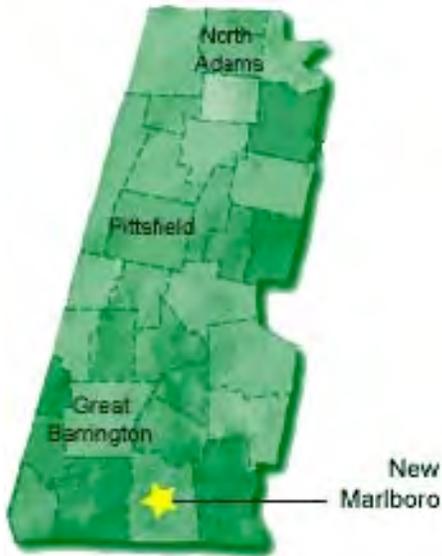
## Section Three: Community Setting

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### *Regional Context*

*Geographical Location:* The town of New Marlborough encompasses forty-eight square miles along the southern border of Berkshire County in western Massachusetts. The town is bordered by Sheffield to the west, Sandisfield to the east, and Monterey to the north. The Connecticut towns of North Canaan and Norfolk form the southern border. New Marlborough is approximately 140 miles west of Boston & 125 miles north of New York City.



The topography is a combination of rolling hills covered with dense, mature forests; meandering valleys with productive agricultural soil; and fast flowing, clean rivers. The two main rivers in New Marlborough, the Konkapot and the Umpachene, with their short, steep hillsides bisect the town from the north to the south. Wetlands and marshes between hills cover significant areas of the southeastern section of town. All of the headwater streams of the Umpachene River are located within the borders of the town; also within the town's borders are many of the headwater streams of the Konkapot River, which drains much of the town of Monterey to the north. The Whiting River drains Thousand Acre Swamp and Wolf Swamp and joins with Ginger Creek (from Connecticut) at Campbell Falls and moves west out of the plateau into Connecticut and to the broader valleys of the Blackberry and Housatonic Rivers. Except for York Lake (located in the easternmost section of town) that drains into the Farmington River, all of the water in New Marlborough drains into sub-basins and the Housatonic River.

The absence of any major transportation arteries through the town has steered development away from the area. The town is connected to the northwest by Route 57, which links to Routes 23 and 7 and to the Great Barrington area. Many of the residents in town travel this route to work and shop in Great Barrington. Traffic heading east and south continues along Route 57 to Sandisfield or into Connecticut along Route 183. There is no public transportation in town, but travel to and from Great Barrington is easy along well-maintained town and state roads. The absence of public and water sewer systems, specifically in the Village centers, has been a limiting influence on the building patterns and the economic development of retail, light commercial, and industrial initiatives. However, due to its quiet, rural setting, the town is rapidly developing as a second and third home market for New York residents.

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The children of New Marlborough have the choice of attending several schools in the Southern Berkshire Regional School District (District number 765). Under Mountain Elementary School is a Pre-Kindergarten through sixth grade school located in nearby Sheffield. South Egremont offers children a Kindergarten through first grade education. The Town of Monterey has one Kindergarten school, and New Marlborough Central offers a Pre-Kindergarten through fourth grade education. Although Monument and Lenox high schools are in the region, most of the children from New Marlborough attend the nearby Mt. Everett High School.

There is considerable regional interest in the protection of surface water quality for the greater Housatonic River watershed. In addition, there are regional benefits to protecting and improving the town's open space and recreational assets and linking them, with trails or wildlife corridors, to other regional resources. Several large tracts of land in the neighboring towns of Sandisfield, Monterey, and Sheffield are protected by State Forests. Regional land trust organizations, such as The Trustees of the Reservation and Berkshire County Land Trust, are very active in pursuing the protection of open space through Conservation Restrictions and outright purchases. In order to address development pressure in nearby towns and ensure that land use, zoning, and conservation measures are complementary, New Marlborough must work in close cooperation with its neighboring towns.

### *History of the Community*

New Marlborough was first settled in 1739 and incorporated in 1759. The Town has five distinct villages: Southfield, Mill River, Hartsville, New Marlborough Village, and Clayton. Each village contributes a separate history and set of unique characteristics to this New England town.

Begun as part of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, the township was established along with Tyringham, Sandisfield, and Beckett on June 24, 1737, with a grant whose purpose was to introduce settlers to the lands along the road established between Westfield and Sheffield, which was then the frontier. As more settlers arrived, it was determined that the village of New Marlborough should become the location for a meeting house. The site was located and a deed secured for three acres of land on what is commonly known today as the Village Green. The meeting house, the Old Inn near it, and several older homes surrounding the green are part of the National Historic District of New Marlborough Village.

Although a blacksmith shop and brass foundry were located in this village, agriculture was the main occupation throughout the

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eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. During the late 1800's, a finishing school known as the Southern Berkshire Institute was located in New Marlborough Village. Led by Hildreth Kennedy Bloodgood of New York City, wealthier families began to purchase homes and land in order to vacation here. To this day, much of the preservation work of older homes continues to be accomplished by "seasonal" residents, who contribute to the tax base but usually do not vote in town elections.

In contrast to New Marlborough Village, the village of Mill River followed a more commercial path. Several paper mills were located along the Konkapot River during the mid-1800's and contributed to the economic growth and population boom of the time. The Town Hall, which is the seat of local government, is located in this village.

Clayton, south of Mill River, has its own industrial history. The Sheffield China Clay Works was founded in 1866. Throughout the late 1800's many of the clay products were exported around the world. Employing as many as seventy-five people, the clay works business declined in the early 1900's for the same reason the mills in Mill River closed-- costly railroad transportation.

The village of Hartsville, once a center of agrarian and industrial pursuits where a sawmill still operates today, is located at the base of Lake Buel. Many summer cottages are located around the lake. Under the Clean Lakes Act, efforts are being made by the towns of New Marlborough and Monterey to reduce the level of eutrophication in the lake and enhance its natural recreational attributes. Since 1917, a fish hatchery has been located in Hartsville, concentrating on trout and Atlantic salmon as part of an environmental project.

Southfield, housing the town's volunteer fire department (established in 1930), was the site of New England's oldest continually operating tanning works, Turner and Cook, Inc. Located on the Umpachene River, the tannery building is now home to a crafts and retail center named the Buggy Whip Factory.

At one time, each village maintained its own post office and at least one schoolhouse. At present, post offices are located in Mill River and Southfield. One school, in Mill River, is part of the Southern Berkshire Regional School District. All five villages are rural in nature and the town continues its tradition as a popular location for second home owners  
(Callahan, 1975.)

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## *Population Characteristics*

The raw population data for New Marlborough show the trend observed throughout much of Berkshire County: generally higher numbers of people moving into rural areas. The population, which has steadily increased since World War II, has in some part been augmented by summer residents who have become year-round resident land owners. The population density is presently about thirty-one people per square mile.

### **Historical Populations of New Marlborough**

1800 -1,848  
1875 -2,037  
1900 -1,282  
1950 -989  
1960 -1,083  
1986 -1,330  
2004 -1,494

Non-resident land owners with vacation homes and seasonal visitors who may rent cottages or attend summer camp further add to the numbers of individuals in the town, particularly during summer months. Records from the Tax Assessor's Office indicate that more than 60 percent of the land in New Marlborough is owned by nonresidents. Current Town records list 998 registered voters out of a total of 1,494 residents.

### *Growth and Development Patterns*

Early European residents of New Marlborough found its streams and forests to be excellent sources of water power and fuel for charcoal-making. The level, alluvial soils on the lower reaches of the Konkapot River proved to be productive farmland and there were large supplies of marble to quarry and some mineral deposits, including nickel and iron, to mine. Since that time, the history of the town has followed a familiar pattern: first self-sufficient farming, then small-scale milling, industrial growth, and industrial decline.

The deeper, richer farm soils to the west in the Hudson Valley drew many farmers away from the town after much of the thin topsoils of New Marlborough had been depleted or eroded. A tannery industry, which required hemlock bark, soon caused its own demise by depleting its supply of hemlock trees. Charcoal makers, who kept the ore smelters supplied at the Mill River forge, contributed to soil erosion by clear-cutting hundreds of forest acres. The three paper mills of Mill River, which together recorded an income of \$28,160 in 1845,

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similarly encouraged lumbermen to clear-cut, with devastating effects on the soil and water quality (Peattie, 1948).

In the decades after the Civil War, competition from larger industries closer to the urban centers, along with the continued westward expansion of the railroads, curtailed economic growth in the hill towns. In New Marlborough, a vulnerable local economy with depleted natural resources experienced a substantial population decline, from 2,045 in 1876, to 989 in 1950.

There have been, and still are, large tracts of undeveloped land in New Marlborough, but only seven working farms remain. Large land holdings around Lake Buel have been transformed into both summer and year-round residences. A large, exclusive development has been created around the man-made Windemere Lake, which is located in the vicinity of the critical wetland areas in the southeast section of town. In 2003, New Marlborough issued its largest number of building permits. A total of 113 new permits were issued, and 22 of those were for new home construction.

Commercial development patterns may be expected to continue around the existing five villages and along Route 57. There may also be some development near Clayton in the level, open ground which has easy access to Route 7. A proposed 740-acre golf course in nearby Canaan would also likely stimulate development in Clayton.

Like many other Berkshire County towns, New Marlborough is experiencing residential development of its forests, farmland, waterfront lands, and lands with panoramic views. The increase in home construction reflects the increase in available income of those new landowners who have moved here from urban or suburban areas. As residents shift from urban environments to the more affordable and desirable lifestyle of smaller towns, New Marlborough will be faced with increasing demands upon municipal services, challenging the character the town has known for decades.

Build-out (see Potential Buildout map) analysis begins with an examination of available land in each zoning district. New Marlborough currently has only one type of zoning: Town/Residential (see Zoning Map). Minimum subdivision requirements are 150 feet of road frontage and one acre of land. The projections listed below only account for "as-of-right" development and do not include development by special or comprehensive permit that may increase the amount of development. These build out projections were combined with 2000 Census and other data according to the town's current zoning (see Build-out Map).

This Executive Office of Environmental Affairs build-out data, done in conjunction with Berkshire Regional Planning Commission, is designed to show how much development could occur under present zoning. **The goal is to illustrate future development potential, not predict actual growth.**

<i>Demographic projections:</i>							
Population:		Students:		Households:		Water Use (gallons/day):	
1990	1,240	1990	180	1990	458	Current	21,863
Current	1,494	Current	186	Current	963	Buildout	2,610,077
Buildout	36,004	Buildout	5,096	Buildout	14,991		

**Potential Buildout Impacts:**

Additional Residents	34,510
Additional School Children	4,910
Additional Residential Units	14,028
Additional Developable Land Area (sq. )	872,539,413
Additional Developable Land Area (acres)	20,031
Additional Commercial/ Industrial Buildable Floor Area (sq. )	0
Additional Water Demand at Buildout (gallons/ day)	2,588,214
Residential	2,588,214
Commercial and Industrial	0
Additional Solid Waste (tons/yr)	9,318
Additional Non-recyclable Waste	5,176
Additional Recyclable Waste	4,142
Additional Roadway at Buildout, miles	168.00

As with Berkshire County in general, the trend to develop large, expensive country homes exists in New Marlborough and is encouraged by the zoning regulations. If build-out were to occur along existing roads, in one-acre lots, New Marlborough would look very different and the demand for more roads would increase. New roads and development along existing roads would effectively fragment the large open spaces in the town. This would dramatically alter the rural nature of the community.

It is apparent from this analysis that the current zoning laws encourage the fragmentation of large parcels of land into many smaller parcels, a process which will eventually result in the loss of the remaining open space and places that residents hold in high regard. Current zoning encourages the expenditure of more public funds on the developing town, (on the upkeep of new and existing roads, for example), and adds significant stress to natural resources, in particular to the water supply through contamination.

If sensitive areas, including wetlands in the southeast part of town, are protected, limiting development to areas of less sensitivity, then affordable development, preservation of New Marlborough's natural heritage, and a balance of nature and development may result.



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## Section Four: Environmental Inventory & Analysis

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### A. Geology, Soils, and Topography

**Topography:** Due to the location of the town on the western edge of the Berkshire Plateau, the land generally has an uneven, rolling profile, dominated in the north and mid-section by large hills: Dry Hill (1850 feet), Woodruff Mountain (1727 feet), and Leffingwell Hill (1470 feet). The Konkapot River carves north-south through the western third of the town and has created winding valleys with short, steep hillsides, particularly near the confluence of the Umpachene River and near Benton Hill (1410 feet) to the south. The north-west/south-east alignment of the many hills reflects the scouring action of glacial advance 23,000 years ago. The sand and gravel deposits near Hartsville in the north and along the Umpachene and Konkapot in the south are remnants of the glacier's retreat 13,000 years ago. Wetlands and marshes between hills cover significant areas of the southeastern section of town.

**Bedrock Geology:** The town of New Marlborough is underlain by ancient metamorphic rocks, formed from eroded continental shelf deposits that folded and deformed in at least two separate mountain-building episodes. The bedrock, more resistant to erosion, remains at high elevations. The rock more easily eroded by glaciers and weathering is found primarily in the valleys.

**Gneissic Rocks:** These Pre-Cambrian rocks account for almost all the town's bedrock. They are mostly granite biotite gneiss with some micaceous schist and quartzite uplifted from subterranean levels to form the Berkshire Plateau.

**Schistose Rocks:** Metamorphic rocks of dark quartzose schist are found south of Hartville. Geologic mapping connects them with the Walloomsac Formation of the Egremont area and in that way connects New Marlborough with the massive Taconic Orogeny, the folding of the Earth's crust 500 million years ago.

**Carbonate Rocks:** Limestone and dolomite (limestone infiltrated with magnesium) and metamorphosed limestone (marble), found on the northern side of Brush Hill, north of Mill River, as well as around Lake Buel, are products of the marine deposits of the Cambro-Ordovician seas. These rocks, part of the Stockbridge Formation, have been uplifted and their protective mantle of probable schist worn away by glaciers (Ratcliffe, 1973; Clark and Carlozzi, 1971).

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Surface Geology: Much of New Marlborough is covered by unconsolidated deposits left by continental glaciation which scoured bedrock and eroded material. Glacial till covers the land up to fifty feet thick in places, and is notable for its yellow-brown sandy clay, pebbles, and boulders. Especially along the Konkapot and Umpachene Rivers, there are more recent deposits of alluvium (brownish gravel and fairly well sorted silt) and organic materials form the surface soils.

Of particular interest are the kames located along the Konkapot to the east of Mill River. These are sand and gravel mounds, some as much as fifty feet high, left behind by the streams that flowed from the glacial ice. Also along the Konkapot, Umpachene, and Whiting Rivers are closely-associated stream terraces.

Aquifers located in association with the kames flow freely beneath the sand and gravel deposits. These deposits allow for rapid downward movement of water as well as superb upward movement of water for drinking supplies. These areas of excellent drainage are important to protect from development due to the high potential for groundwater contamination (Holmes and Newman, 1971).

*Soils (see Soil Map):*

Berkshire Marlow Association: These soils, formed in glacial till that had been derived from schistose rock, contain many fragments of mica schist. These are deep, well-drained, and very stony soils. In New Marlborough, these soils are found on steep slopes (15 to 45 percent), typically on Dry Hill, Leffingwell Hill, and along the Monterey border to the north.

Lyman-Tunbridge Association: Generally shallow to bedrock (usually less than twenty inches), this association also developed in glacial till derived from schistose rocks. Outcroppings of bedrock occur between the flat areas of Tunbridge soils and the extremely stony, shallow areas of Lyman soils. Large portions of New Marlborough contain these soils, particularly Woodruff Mountain, the Benton Hill area, and much of the eastern half of town where steep (15 to 45 percent) slopes occur.

Peru-Marlow Association: These, too, are soils developed in glacial till derived from schistose rocks. The Peru soils have a seasonally high water table, within eighteen to thirty inches of the surface for four months of the year. This is due to excess water seepage from other areas which then lies near the surface and is trapped by the hardpan, characteristic of Peru soils. These soils are found throughout the town, particularly on Brush Hill, across most of the Thousand Acre Swamp region, and along the rolling (3 to 15 percent) slopes of the Sandisfield line.

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Pillsbury-Whitman Association: Both deep and very poorly drained due to underlying hardpan, Pillsbury-Whitman soils contain many boulders and stones and are typically found at the base of slopes. This association is located mainly in the southeast corner of town.

Amenia Series: Moderately well-drained soils developed in calcareous glacial till (resembling calcite or containing calcium), these soils contain limestone, schist and phyllite fragments. They are underlain by a silt loam hardpan and thus have slow permeability and high water table for four months of the year. In New Marlborough, these soils are found along the Konkapot and along the Umpachene, and east of Lumbert Cross Road. Much of the southern slope of Brush Hill is covered with the Amenias series.

Prime Agricultural Soil: Few soils in New Marlborough are classified as "prime agricultural soil." Classification is based on characteristics of soil composition, depth, fertility and drainage qualities. In New Marlborough, these soils include Amenias silt loam, Copake fine sandy loam, Hero loam, Merrimac loam, Pittsfield loam, and Winsooski silt loam. All but the very last were developed in glacial till derived from limestone, schistose and some phyllitic origins. All are found on gentle slopes of 1 to 8 percent, making them less susceptible to erosion. Their importance as a local and regional resource cannot be overstressed. They are exceptional soils that can be farmed continuously without degradation to the environment. These soils can produce the most food for the least effort and respond well to agricultural practices without leaching.

Typically, development occurs on prime soils because they are level, well-drained, and relatively free of stones. In New Marlborough these prime agricultural soils occupy a narrow strip of land all along the Konkapot River and along the Umpachene just north of Southfield. Scattered fields along the Whiting River also contain prime agricultural soils as do several open fields around Hartsville.

Because New Marlborough is primarily a hill town, the types of soils and slopes potentially limit the activities which require septic systems. Over 80 percent of the town has a theoretical limitation because of the characteristic shallow depth to bedrock of the Peru, Lyman, and Pillsbury soils. For example, limitations for septic systems exist around Lake Buel because of the potential for eutrophication of the lake due to excessive nutrient seepage. Slopes over 15 percent also limit development in much of the town. Since much of New Marlborough's soil is sensitive to disturbance, activities that damage the vegetation and its capacity to stabilize soils need to be carefully sited to avoid damage (USDA NRCS, 1983).

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## B. Landscape Character

The New Marlborough landscape is dominated by the forested peaks of Dry Hill, Leffingwell Hill, Benton Hill, Brush Hill, and Woodruff Mountain. The peaks of these hills and mountains offer breathtaking views to the Berkshire foothills to the east, MT. Everett to the west, and meandering valleys in between. Their hillsides are most clearly visible from the many scenic roads that wind through the valleys.

The remainder of town is characterized by rolling hills, rocky slopes, and smaller valleys, with babbling brooks, marshes, wetlands, and quiet ponds. Much of the landscape was previously cleared for fuel resources and farmland, but most of the farms have been abandoned and secondary growth and mixed hardwood and softwood forests have reclaimed these areas. Isolated fields are still hayed periodically and the vistas they afford add enormously to the character of the town. Abandoned mill sites and extensive stone walls line the rivers and country lanes that weave through the landscape. The former fields and now dense forests offer attractive and valuable wildlife habitat as well as aesthetic appeal.

## C. Water Resources

There are only a few lakes and ponds that offer recreational opportunities for residents and visitors to New Marlborough. Lake Buel, which the town shares with Monterey to the north, is open to boating, fishing, and swimming, and is one of the most frequented sites in New Marlborough. York Lake, in the eastern part of town, is also a favorite recreation area for local residents. Privately owned Windemere Lake, a developed area in the southeast part of town, is not open to public recreation. Two main rivers that flow south through town, the Konkapot and Umpachene Rivers, provide excellent habitat for unique vegetation and wildlife. As productive as these clean rivers are for fishing, they offer limited access to the public as they abut private parcels throughout the majority of town. Surrounding wetlands and floodplains are crucial buffer zones for flood prevention and serve to provide valuable, diverse habitat for wildlife and recreational opportunities for people. (See Water Resources map.)

### *Surface Waters:*

Lake Buel is a cold-water lake, shared with the town of Monterey. It is an area of great recreational opportunity for residents and visitors. Its well-populated southern shore front and southeastern bay form the

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northern border of New Marlborough. The lake covers approximately 195 acres and ranges from eighteen to forty-six feet in depth. The large number of private homes with septic systems along its shores incurs lasting negative effects on the aquatic life in the lake and the water downstream in the Konkapot River.

Classified as a pond, Thousand Acre Swamp in the southeastern part of town is another water body of high recreational value to local residents. This pond, located specifically in Cookson State Forest, is four to nine feet deep and 155 acres in size. It has a twenty-eight-foot-high dam that controls the water level. The watershed drainage area of the pond is approximately 3314 acres and includes land up to Route 57, the approximate boundary of the Farmington River watershed to the east. This pond is in the immediate Blackberry River watershed which drains into the Housatonic River.

Three other ponds lie within the Blackberry River watershed. East Indies Pond, located in Cookson State Forest, is managed by the Division of Natural Resources. This pond is not as heavily used for swimming or boating but does provide for year-round fishing.

Cookson Pond is another artificial pond, with waters flowing into the Whiting River in the southern part of town just west of Cookson State Forest. The Whiting River flows into the Blackberry River and eventually to the Housatonic River. It is a privately owned pond with a twenty-two-foot-high dam controlling the level of water.

Windemere Lake, a privately owned man-made lake, has recently been developed as an exclusive private residential neighborhood. It covers one hundred acres of land and drains directly into the popular Thousand Acre Swamp. The added septic systems, if not regularly inspected, have the potential to negatively impact the water quality in the Lake as well as possibly effecting the downstream waters of the Thousand Acre Swamp and the Whiting River.

York Lake, part of the Farmington River Watershed, is thirty-six acres in size and approximately six to sixteen feet deep. It is located in the Sandisfield State Forest and offers recreational opportunities such as fishing and swimming in the summer, and ice fishing and cross-country skiing in the winter. This lake is easily accessible from Route 183.

Harmon Pond, located just east of Cleveland Mountain in the south-central part of town, is twenty-three acres in size and fifteen to thirty-three feet deep. It is owned and used by the YMCA for summer camp activities. Its waters drain into the Umpachene River to the north. This pond is not available to the public.

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Harnet Pond is a privately owned, thirty-three acre pond located just north of York Lake and its waters flow north and west to join first with Harmon Pond and later with Rawson Brook on its way to the Konkapot River.

There are two main rivers in New Marlborough, the Konkapot and the Umpachene. The Konkapot River bisects New Marlborough along its north-south axis. The Konkapot drains Lake Garfield and Stedman pond, both located in the north-bordering town of Monterey, and Lake Buel and Harnet Pond also contribute to its fast flowing, narrow waters. In the central part of town, just south of the village of Mill River, the Konkapot is joined by the Umpachene River. Just before the confluence of these two rivers is a popular, easily accessible recreation area known as Umpachene Falls. These dramatic waterfalls tumble over stone steps through a beautifully vegetated gorge for a mile and a half. This six-acre, town-owned park is highly valued by residents for its scenic beauty as well as its recreational opportunities such as swimming, fishing, picnicking, and hiking.

Other significant rivers and streams such as the Whiting River and Rawson Brook offer fewer opportunities for recreation, due to limited access. They will be discussed further under "Fisheries and Wildlife" below.

#### *Groundwater:*

Because of its varied geological conditions, New Marlborough's groundwater is found in widely differing conditions, depths, and quantities. The valleys of the Konkapot and Umpachene Rivers provide excellent examples of stratified, unconsolidated material from glacial times. Found in these pockets of coarse gravels within outwash deposits are sources of large quantities of water. The deposits underlay all of Mill River Village and follow roughly the thousand foot contour at the western foot of Leffingwell Hill, and could yield as much as 40 gallons per minute (GPM). Similar yields may be available in the extensive outwash deposits which extend from Clayton to Konkapot. The area just southeast of Hartsville, however, may produce the most significant groundwater yields, well over 40 GPM. The gneissic bedrock beneath most of the town yields differing and significantly smaller amounts of water. Along fault lines and fractures, some successful wells have been developed. Higher yields have generally been reached in the limestone bedrock of the town's western section, where porous fractures have been opened up by solution. These are areas of recharge where the aquifer receives replenishing surface waters in the gravel slopes along the Konkapot and Umpachene Rivers, in the wetlands in the southeast part of town, and probably in the area around Lake Buel (Holmes and Newman, 1971).

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Each resident of New Marlborough obtains drinking water from private wells. There are non-residential public water supplies in town (see Water Resources Map) which are protected by a 750-foot buffer known as the Interim Wellhead Protection Area (IWPA). There has been no hydro-geologic modeling study on the groundwater in New Marlborough. The sand and gravel deposits around the Konkapot and Umpachene Rivers, mentioned above, may contain aquifers but this has not been confirmed by a geologist or hydrologist.

As in other hill towns, New Marlborough's groundwater may be limited in quantity and therefore must be protected from surface water contamination. As the 1991 Town of Savoy's Open Space and Recreation Plan points out, "While the bedrock or primary aquifer might appear to be beyond the reach of contaminants in the soil, streams, or wetlands, there is the possibility of downward movement into unmapped fractures within the bedrock, particularly in the hard gneissic formations of New Marlborough. Without test wells, the complex patterns of inter-connecting fractures are impossible to define, this fact alone demands the need for continued, intensified stewardship and study" (Town of Savoy, 1991).

## D. Vegetation

Most of the open space in New Marlborough is a mixture of northern hardwood and softwood forest with large agricultural openings. The large amount of forest cover in combination with extensive wetland and water systems create diverse areas of plant life, including thirty-two state-listed species, a variety of wildlife habitats, and recreational opportunities for residents and visitors. These important functions provided by New Marlborough's forests should be considered as the town encourages development.

The varied soil types across New Marlborough in conjunction with differences in elevation and historical land use have contributed to a diversity of flora. The steep hillsides and gorges along the Konkapot, Umpachene, and Whiting Rivers and the low-lying areas between hilltops provide extremes in habitat which allow for a wide range of plant life. The vegetation of New Marlborough can be divided into three primary cover types: hardwood and softwood forests; wetlands; and agricultural and post-agricultural fields.

### *Forests:*

The evergreen overstory consists primarily of white pine, hemlock, balsam fir, and above 1,200 foot elevation, red spruce. The deciduous components are mainly sugar maple, yellow and black birch, red oak, black cherry, hickory, beech, and white ash. Aspens and paper birches

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are also common, primarily along roads and field edges. Relatively pure stands of evergreens (Canadian hemlock) dominate the north-facing slopes and higher elevations. Mixed evergreen/deciduous forest increase as one moves into lower elevations. The understory is generally sparse and consists primarily of striped maple, witchhazel, ironwood, and mountain laurel. The herbaceous layer, too, is rather sparse, especially when hemlock, spruce, and pine are abundant; plants include intermediate fern, blue-bead lily, painted trillium, and wood sorrel.

Core habitat is land determined by a biologist to be suitable to support viable populations of wildlife. Natural supporting habitat is the undeveloped land surrounding the core habitat, providing connectivity between core habitat and large undeveloped patches of vegetation. Despite the decades of clear-cutting, much of the forest has recuperated and is now considered core habitat and natural supporting habitat for rare and endangered species by the Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (see Rare and Endangered Species Map). Most of the core habitat in New Marlborough is under temporary protection under Massachusetts General Law Chapter 61, and most of the supporting habitat is protected because it is within Cookson State Forest; however, there are still areas of both core and natural supporting habitat that need protection in order to ensure connectivity between these large tracts of open space within and surrounding New Marlborough (see Rare and Endangered Species Map).

Sandisfield State Forest and Cookson State Forest offer some hiking and off-road vehicle trails within their boundaries, but access is limited and their amenities are not widely known among residents or visitors.

### *Wetland Vegetation:*

Within New Marlborough there are three types of wetland, distinguished by their associated vegetation—marshes, shrub swamps, and tree swamps. Marshes have a year-round water depth of six inches to three feet; they contain hydrophilic grasses, sedges, horsetails, pond lilies, pickerel weed, and cattails. Shrub swamps, composed of silky dogwood, button bush, alders, and willows, are often dry in the summer and covered with up to one foot of water during flooding. Tree swamps succeed shrub swamps as silt and organic matter accumulate. They typically contain red maple, sourgum, and cottonwood, with an understory of swamp azalea, willows, spicebush, and winterberry. These wetlands experience seasonal flooding and their vegetation and soils function as sponges to absorb and slowly

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release excess floodwaters. They also function as pollution filters and groundwater protectors, and provide habitats for fish and wildlife.

The wetlands of New Marlborough are located extensively in the southeast part of town, as a part of the Whiting River watershed, and between the Konkapot River and Clayton in the lower Konkapot River watershed. Wolf Swamp, Thousand Acre Swamp, East Indies Pond, and Hay Meadow Pond are all part of the Whiting River watershed. The gorges of the Whiting, particularly Campbell's Falls, provide habitat to diverse flora normally found in more northern climates. Wolf Swamp is listed as Core habitat and is of particular importance for its valuable peatlands.

Bordering vegetated wetlands occupy extensive acreage along many of the streams in New Marlborough. An indication of the extent of wetlands can be obtained from a cursory study of the hydric soils. These soils, identified as the Pillsbury-Whitman Association, follow streambeds and low-lying areas between hills. While all areas of this soil do not function as wetlands, these soils will support wetland vegetation because of their high water table through many months of the year.

Wetlands bordering a perennial stream or at the headwaters of an intermittent stream are currently protected by the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act. The Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program conducted a survey showing sixty-four potential vernal pools within New Marlborough, but none are certified, which means these potential vernal pools are not protected by the Massachusetts Wetland Protection Act (Biological Resources Map). Vernal pools are temporary bodies of fresh water that provide critical habitat for many vertebrate and invertebrate wildlife.

#### *Agricultural Fields:*

Agricultural fields and pastures represent a small and shrinking percentage of the town's acreage, since dairy farming has decreased dramatically. The lower portions of the Konkapot and Whiting Rivers still meander through valleys of hay and corn; other remaining agricultural fields are generally in cultivation for silage for local livestock rather than grain. Some orchards persist and several small pastures for cattle and horses are currently maintained. There are post-agricultural fields in New Marlborough as well currently undergoing the process of secondary succession. This land has not been tilled for many years or may have been mowed occasionally, but the woody, perennial species like birches, aspens, dogwood, elderberry, and multiflora rose and larger herbaceous vegetation

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such as thistle, goldenrod and ragweed have taken over. Although residents would like to see full retention of the remaining farms in town, farms and agricultural fields that enhance the rural character and provide scenic views are only temporarily protected under Massachusetts General Law Chapter 61A, or remain completely unprotected.

The National Heritage Inventory identifies twenty-four vascular plant species in New Marlborough that are threatened, endangered, or of special concern (see Table 4-1, opposite).

Table 4-1. Natural Heritage and Endangered Species list of plants that are threatened, endangered or of special concern in New Marlborough.

<b>Scientific Name</b>	<b>Common Name</b>	<b>State Rank</b>
<i>Acer nigrum</i>	Black Maple	Special Concern
<i>Adlumnia fungosa</i>	Climbing Fumitory	Threatened
<i>Arabis laevigata</i>	Smooth Rock Cress	Threatened
<i>Arceuthobium pusillum</i>	Dwarf Mistletoe	Special Concern
<i>Betula pumila</i>	Swamp Birch	Endangered
<i>Calystegia spithamea</i>	Low Bindweed	Endangered
<i>Carex baileyi</i>	Bailey's Sedge	Endangered
<i>Carex davisii</i>	Davis's Sedge	Endangered
<i>Carex pauciflora</i>	Few-Flowered Sedge	Endangered
<i>Carex tuckermanii</i>	Tuckerman's Sedge	Endangered
<i>Chamaelirium luteum</i>	Devil's-Bit	Endangered
<i>Clematis occidentalis</i>	Purple Clematis	Special Concern
<i>Conioselinum chinense</i>	Hemlock Parsley	Special Concern
<i>Eleocharis intermedia</i>	Intermediate Spike-Sedge	Threatened
<i>Equisetum scirpoides</i>	Dwarf Scouring Sedge	Special Concern
<i>Eragrostis frankii</i>	Frank's Love-grass	Special Concern
<i>Minuartia michauxii</i>	Michaux's Sandwort	Threatened
<i>Morus rubra</i>	Red Mulberry	Endangered
<i>Panicum philadelphicum</i>	Philadelphia Panic-grass	Special Concern
<i>Penstemon hirsutus</i>	Hairy Beardtongue	Endangered
<i>Potamogeton friesii</i>	Fries' Pondweed	Endangered
<i>Ranunculus pensylvanicus</i>	Bristly Buttercup	Threatened
<i>Sphenopholis nitida</i>	Shining Wedge-grass	Threatened
<i>Trichomanes intricatum</i>	A Filmy Fern	Endangered

The diverse vegetated habitats of New Marlborough have high informal recreational value, primarily for hunters, hikers, cross-country skiers, off-road vehicle users, and snowmobilers. The recreational value is tempered by the fragility of certain habitats. Since much of New Marlborough's soil is sensitive to disturbance, activities that damage the vegetation and its capacity to stabilize soils need to be carefully sited to avoid damage. Intensive off-road vehicle use and large-scale athletic fields are examples of such vegetation-disturbing activity.

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## E. Fisheries and Wildlife

New Marlborough is home to a great variety of upland, aquatic, and wetland wildlife species, ranging from small invertebrates to large mammalian predators. These animals add to the rural character of the town, provide hunting and fishing opportunities for the residents, and act as indicators of the overall health of the ecosystems in New Marlborough. (See Rare & Endangered Species map.)

The terrestrial upland species include white-tail deer, red squirrel, flying squirrel, owl, wild turkey, Cooper's hawk, ruffed grouse, fox, and snowshoe hare. Rodents range from voles to porcupines to weasels. Bobcats, coyotes, and black bears have all been sighted during the last several years as well. Songbirds include tanagers, siskins, grosbeaks, nuthatches, titmice, and vireos.

The open upland meadows and pastures, particularly along hedgerows or where forest becomes field, are home to deer, red and grey fox, coyotes, woodchucks, cottontail rabbits, mice, voles, owls, hawks, garter and black racer snakes, and long-tailed shrew. These areas are home to numerous songbirds as well, including sparrows, warblers, finches, bobolinks, and meadowlarks.

The ponds and streams of New Marlborough are inhabited by beavers, otters, Canada geese, herons, muskrats, minks, turtles, and amphibian species.

The diversity of wildlife species is greatly aided by the presence of a number of undeveloped areas where the animals and their habitats are relatively undisturbed. Between the protected areas are gaps that, if developed, will fragment habitats and interrupt or prevent the movement of species. Eight species found within New Marlborough have been listed by the Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program as threatened, endangered, or of special concern (see Table 4-2, opposite).

Table 4-2. Natural Heritage and Endangered Species list of animals that are threatened, endangered or of special concern.

<b>Taxonomic Group</b>	<b>Scientific Name</b>	<b>Common Name</b>	<b>State Rank</b>
Fish	Catostomus catostomus	Longnose Sucker	Special Concern
Fish	Notropis bifrenatus	Bridle Shiner	Special Concern
Reptile	Clemmys guttata	Spotted Turtle	Special Concern
Reptile	Terrapene carolina	Eastern Box Turtle	Special Concern
Bird	Botaurus lentiginosus	American Bittern	Endangered
Mammal	Sorex dispar	Long-Tailed Shrew	Special Concern
Crustacean	Stygobromus borealis	Taconic Cave Amphipod	Endangered
Crustacean	Stygobromus tenuis tenuis	Piedmont Groundwater Amphipod	Special Concern

## F. Scenic Resources and Unique Environments

New Marlborough’s unique character is formed by a large number of scenic, geologic, cultural, and environmental resources.

### *Scenic Landscapes*

There are many opportunities within New Marlborough to enjoy the beauty of nature, be it in state forest land, on Lake Buel or York Lake, at the falls at Umpachene or Campbell’s, from panoramic hilltop viewpoints like those on Brush Hill, or along scenic roads such as East Hill Road or New Marlborough Hill Road. It is a mostly forested, hilly landscape with many areas of open fields left from New Marlborough’s agricultural past. From high points are views to the east of the Berkshire foothills and to the west are dramatic views of Mt. Everett. Residents who participated in public forums or responded to the survey identified these as valued sites. (See Unique Features map.)

Many rivers and brooks flow through New Marlborough feeding the ponds, intermittent streams, and wetlands that add to the diversity of plant and wildlife in the area. The fast-flowing rivers, with their falls and pools, offer opportunities for swimming, fishing, or viewing. The lakes and ponds are ideal for canoeing, fishing, and swimming as well. Forested areas, abandoned fields, and wetland areas are

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home to unique wildlife species and attract hunters and nature lovers depending on the season. All of these areas add to the joy of being in New Marlborough; visitors and residents alike can experience the sights, sounds, and year-round recreational opportunities to be found here.

### *Major Characteristics*

New Marlborough's geologic past has left a unique setting. Steep hills running north to south plunge into valleys created by the rivers that run through them. As in many Berkshire towns where the rivers were once an important means of transport and production, roads and mill sites follow their winding ways through the hills. All five villages are connected by these unique and scenic paths.

Small and large waterfalls and chutes cascade through narrow passages worn through vertical and slanting bedrock; at Umpachene Falls a waterfall plunges into a clear pool. Hidden gorges, full of native vegetation, offer a breathtaking experience to visitors.

### *Historic Areas*

Many buildings and structures throughout New Marlborough add to its unique character and the residents' sense of place. Historic sites, like the New Marlborough Village Green Meeting House, the Immaculate Conception Church (Our Lady of the Valley Rectory), the Native American burial ground, heritage landscape sites of the many mill foundations, old stagecoach lines, numerous stone walls, and several old cemeteries help to connect residents to the town's past. The general store and recently restored Town Hall, both located in Mill River Village, are community institutions that also help to establish the character of New Marlborough. Individual residents and organizations, like the New Marlborough Historical Commission, have worked to preserve and restore these unique features that link residents and visitors to the past (see Historic Sites and Scenic Map).

### *Unique Environments*

New Marlborough is recognized as having a diverse range of flora and fauna due to its varied and at times extreme landscape. The Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program has designated several important core habitats that support this diversity, including Dry Hill and the land further east, most of Woodruff Mountain, Benton Hill, and parts of the Clayton valley. Although some of this core habitat is held in temporary protection under Massachusetts General Law Chapter 61, most remains in unprotected, private holdings.

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Portions of the remaining space in New Marlborough have been identified by the Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program as natural supporting habitat. These areas are mainly located in the southeast corner of town and are currently protected by the two state forests, Cookson and Sandisfield.

As with many small, once-agricultural communities, the fields are becoming overgrown and succeeding into woodlands. The land once valued for its agricultural capacity is now identified as prime real estate property. Unless some actions are put into place to maintain these pastures and fields, the rural character of New Marlborough could change significantly (see Unique Features Map).

## G. Environmental Challenges

There are a number of conditions in New Marlborough, such as steep slopes, hydric soils, and vulnerable water resources, that present the town with environmental challenges. Although population density is low and industrial activity is minimal, some potential sources of pollution do exist within the town, including leachate from agricultural lands, road runoff, and contamination from septic systems. There is also the risk of waterbody sedimentation from eroded streambanks.

Although no contamination from the agricultural lands has been found in New Marlborough, agricultural runoff is a potential contaminant, particularly where manure from cattle are close to streams and water bodies. Other related causes of potential contamination are chemical pesticides and fertilizers applied to feed crops.

Road runoff carries salt into streams, along with automobile fluids and particles from parts eroded by friction and wear. Anti-freeze, specifically, is difficult to extract from the water column, and although there is no evidence of surface water pollution, roads do cross streams, rivers, and wetlands at many locations in town. These locations are potential sources of surface water pollution.

The soils in New Marlborough are not generally suitable for septic systems especially on slopes of fifteen percent or greater. Poor filter soils, or hydric wetland soils, are extensive throughout the region. Septic systems located within these areas may be functioning properly, but the potential for leachate and groundwater contamination exists.

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Another potential problem that may affect the quality of water in New Marlborough is the sedimentation that occurs when the banks of streams and rivers are eroded. In particular, along the lower reaches of the Konkapot and Umpachene Rivers are high, steep banks where erosion and sedimentation are possible, especially during the spring thaws.

Development on unsuitable land and in existing open space threatens not only the character of the town but also ground and surface water supplies that the town relies on so heavily. Open space planning allows for the opportunity to confront and manage growth and development in a way that preserves, protects, and enhances natural resources. With this as a pretext, a long-range strategy should include the viability of having waste water treatment system as well as potable water delivery within the Village districts. This would have positive effects on encouraging both residential and light commercial development to the already built up Villages thereby taking development pressures off of the peripheries, edges, and contiguous open spaces that add distinction and value to the Town.

Furthermore, New Marlborough contains some properties within which could be considered brownfields. Current uses involving industrial and commercial activities along with the Town's Highway Department depot within the Village zones, pose future environmental challenges for remediation and redevelopment. An inventory of all known and potential brownfield sites would be prudent.



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## Section Five: Inventory of Lands

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## Section Five: Inventory of Lands of Conservation and Recreation Interest

The term “open space” may be defined a number of ways. This OSRP follows the broad definition suggested by the Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs (EOEA), which includes as open space “conservation land, forested land, recreation land, agricultural land, corridor parks and amenities such as small parks, green buffers along roadways or any open area that is owned by an agency or organization dedicated to conservation” (Executive Office of Environmental Affairs, 2003, p8). Recreation open space may be used for what are termed “passive” activities, such as walking, hiking, or nature study, or the more organized “active” recreational uses, such as scheduled team sports.

Open space lands may be privately or publicly held. They may be unprotected or protected, either permanently or temporarily. Private lands can be protected in perpetuity through deed restrictions or through conservation easements (though it should be noted that some easements only run for a period of thirty years). Such private lands are permanently protected if their deed is restricted by a Conservation Restriction, Agricultural Preservation Restriction, Historic Restriction or Wetlands Restriction. Those restrictions running in perpetuity are protected under Article 97 of the Articles of Amendment to the State Constitution. (see Open Space map.)

Lands acquired for watershed and aquifer protection are often permanently protected open space. Lands under special taxation programs, Chapter 61, 61A, or 61B, are actively managed by their owners for forestry, agricultural, horticultural, or recreational use. The town has the right of first refusal should the landowner decide to sell and change the use of the land.

Public recreation and conservation lands may be permanently protected open space (“Article 97 land”), provided that they have been dedicated to such uses as conservation or recreational use by deed. Municipal properties may be protected via the Town Meeting Vote to acquire them (Executive Office of Environmental Affairs, 2003).

This section will identify open space that is already protected as well as unprotected properties that are essential for natural resource conservation or recreational purposes in New Marlborough. Protection of open space will play an important role in maintaining and enhancing the natural, economic, recreational and aesthetic qualities that this town values greatly, and will enable the town to

realize its plan for growth and development while preserving its rural character.

## A. Private Parcels

Out of the 34,655 acres of land in New Marlborough approximately 25,000 acres (76%) are privately owned. Of this, 6,256 acres are held in temporary protection and provide the owners with a reduced tax rate. There are 2,458 acres of permanently protected, privately owned land utilizing land trust and similar programs (see Table 5-1, below).

Table 5-1: Privately Owned Parcels with Permanent Protection

<u>Owner</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Acres</u>
West MA Girl Scout Council, Inc.	Pine St.	0.2
WM J. Gould Associates	Hatchery Rd.	49.0
Berkshire Natural Resources	Hartsville Mill River Rd.	5.9
Berkshire Natural Resources	Hartsville Mill River Rd.	11.9
Berkshire Natural Resources	Hartsville Mill River Rd	17.1
Berkshire Natural Resources	Adsit Crosby Rd.	3.2
The Trustees of Reservations	Route 57	26.0
Weinstein, Sydney	New Marlboro Monterey Rd.	16.0
The Trustees of Reservations	Harts-New Marlborough Rd.	161.0
Berkshire County Land Trust	New Marlboro Monterey Rd.	361.0
Berkshire County Land Trust	New Marlboro Monterey Rd.	155.0
Berkshire County Land Trust	New Marlboro Monterey Rd.	246.0
Berkshire County Land Trust	Route 57	24.0
New Marlboro Village Assn., Inc.	Harts-New Marlborough Rd.	0.9
American Legion Post 350	New Marlboro Southfield Rd.	1.1
N.M. Land Preservation Trust	New Marlboro Southfield Rd.	25.0
The Trustees of Reservations	New Marlboro Branch Rd.	23.0
The Trustees of Reservations	New Marlboro Branch Rd.	1.5
The Trustees of Reservations	New Marlboro Branch Rd.	1.5
The Trustees of Reservations	New Marlborough Hill Rd.	298.0
The Trustees of Reservations	Route 57	22.0
The Trustees of Reservations	Hillingdon Rd.	71.0
N.M. Land Preservation Trust	Norfolk Rd.	8.4
N.M. Land Preservation Trust	Hotchkiss Rd.	135.0
N.M. Land Preservation Trust	Hotchkiss Rd.	166.0
Ravine Falls Trust *	New Marlboro- Monterey Rd.	309.0

*\*The Ravine Falls Trust holds permanent conservation restrictions on this 309-acre parcel, but within the deed it is stated that logging practices may occur under the regulations of Chapter 61.*

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*Privately Owned Land Identified as Unique, Scenic,  
or Recreational*

Dry Hill has been in preservation with The Trustees of Reservation since June, 2001. Dry Hill boasts sweeping views of the South Berkshire foothills, supports woodland wildlife, and offers various recreational activities, including bird watching, hiking, picnicking, cross-country skiing, and snowshoeing. Coupled with other Trustees properties in the region, such as Questing, Dry Hill offers residents and visitors a chance for outdoor exploration. Dry Hill consists of 206 acres and features a 1.5-mile woodland trail that leads through stands of pitch pine, low-bush blueberry and mountain laurel. From the parking area at the base of the hill, a dirt road connects to a footpath that ascends the steep ridge to an unusual white marble and quartzite promontory that offers sweeping views to the south and southwest across the Berkshire Hills to Connecticut and New York. The secluded property provides habitat for bobcat, fishers, and coyotes, as well as numerous bird species including tanagers, warblers, woodpeckers, and flycatchers. Dry Hill is part of a larger landscape of contiguous forest, critical habitat for large mammals and for many species of woodland birds, such as the black-throated blue warbler. A loop trail encircles a shallow stream drainage area that contains vernal pools, a red maple swamp, and a diverse mixture of ferns and herbs, including trout lily, dwarf ginseng, miterwort, foamflower, and wood horsetail. Dry Hill is open year-round, from sunrise to sunset, and there is no entrance fee. Parking is at the entrance and will accommodate eight vehicles.

Questing includes 438 acres and is located on the flanks of Leffingwell Hill. Questing features extensive tracts of transitional hardwood forest, pockets of wetland, small streams, and vernal pools. A seventeen-acre upland field of native meadow wildflowers attracts a variety of dragonflies and butterflies, including giant green darners and monarchs. From the parking area, an old woods road leads steeply to the upland field. From there, mowed paths encircle the field and connect to a trail that links to a forest loop trail. Cellar holes and stone walls, many fascinating in their construction, tell the story of the 200-year-old settlement known as Leffingwell, where the first non-Native American children were born in Berkshire County. This settlement was abandoned in the late nineteenth century as farmers migrated to the Midwest. The upland field is encircled by a trail from which a two-mile woodland loop trail can be accessed by moderate hiking. Seasonal hunting is permitted at this property subject to all state and town laws.

Lake Buel is a cold water lake, shared with the town of Monterey to the north. This lake is 195 acres, and ranges from eighteen to forty-six feet in depth. Trout are stocked in these waters which also have

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have a viable northern pike population. This is a very popular recreation area for residents and visitors, with good access. There is a paved boat ramp in Monterey that is owned and managed by the Public Access Board and the Division of Parks and Forests. Along its shores in New Marlborough and Monterey small, seasonal cottages were developed. There are currently being converted into year-round residential homes. The potential for surface and groundwater pollution exists in the lake itself and the Konkapot River that drains it.

Windemere Lake, approximately one hundred acres in size, is located between Cookson State Forest to the south and Sandisfield State Forest to the north. This former swamp was artificially created as a lake. It now has thirty-three buildable lots surrounding the entire shore front. The installation of septic systems here risks contaminating surface and ground water and the Thousand Acre Swamp, into which the lake drains if not regularly inspected and maintained. Surrounded by extensive wetland areas, Windemere Lake is located within a critical supporting natural landscape. If the area is developed further to the east, the wildlife corridors between the two state forests will be permanently eliminated.

Harnet Pond is a thirty-three-acre, privately owned pond lying just to the north of York Lake. Unlike York Lake, which is in the Farmington River watershed, Harnet Pond drains to the north to Rawson Brook and eventually to the Konkapot River. The location of Harnet Pond is significant because it is wedged between protected areas of Dry Hill to the north and Sandisfield State Forest to the south. This area serves as an important wildlife corridor and supports rare, endangered, and threatened species of plants. Harnet Pond is located within a core habitat area. The quality of water in Harnet Pond is of critical importance due to the link to the Konkapot, the main river that flows through town.

The YMCA Camp Segowea, located off Foley Hill Road near Cleveland Mountain, owns a 628-acre tax-exempt parcel. Harmon Pond, located within the camp's property, is twenty-three acres in size and fifteen to thirty-three feet deep, and is classified as "Living Waters Core Habitat." It offers tremendous recreational opportunities for the visiting summer campers. Its waters, along with several wetlands in the vicinity, drain into the Umpachene River to the north. Recent YMCA camps in the region, such as Camp High Rock in Copake Falls, New York, have been sold to The Nature Conservancy and thus are permanently protected. Other camps, however, have been sold for private development, particularly in eastern Massachusetts. This parcel of land is completely surrounded by privately owned parcels with no level of protection. The YMCA camp's property has been valued at approximately \$1 million and has over one thousand feet of existing road frontage.

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### *Chapter 61, 61A, 61B*

Residents can benefit from reduced taxes while protecting land, albeit temporarily, by implementing approved management plans such as Chapter 61 of the Massachusetts General Law for managed forest land or wood production, Chapter 61A for agricultural or horticultural use, or Chapter 61B for recreational use. Several residents have taken advantage of these programs, placing a total of 6,256 acres in the program—2,214 acres under Chapter 61; 3,043 under Chapter 61A; and 999 acres under Chapter 61B. This reflects a solid effort on the part of New Marlborough residents to preserve their natural resources and protect their valuable open space (See Open Space Inventory Map).

If a landowner removes their property from Chapter status and offers it for sale, the town has right of first refusal and may purchase it for fair market price. This could be an opportunity for the town to buy land it wishes to protect or utilize as recreational land. As the town has only 120 days to complete the transaction, it is necessary to have available funding on-hand if a scenario like this develops. Another alternative would be for the town to assign its options to a private land trust that may be able to complete the transaction quickly.

### **B. Public and Nonprofit Parcels**

New Marlborough currently has 3,181 acres under public ownership. Most of the acres are located in Sandisfield State Forest and Cookson State Forest. The Berkshire National Fish Hatchery, located just north of Hartsville, occupies seven acres and the surrounding seventy-five acres is owned by the Federal Government. Campbell's Falls State Park owns three acres along the Connecticut border and the Town of New Marlborough currently owns forty-three acres.

#### *Federal Land:*

The seventy-five-acre Berkshire National Fish Hatchery (dating to 1914) was entrusted to the federal government by the family of trout fisherman John Sullivan Scully. It served to cultivate trout, smallmouth bass, and later Atlantic salmon until budget cuts led to the hatchery's closing ten years ago. The restoration of the facility as a center of aquaculture—the cultivation of fish for food and for educational and recreational purposes—is due to the efforts of a former Hampshire College professor, the state and federal governments, and a coalition of willing volunteers. Nourished by an aquifer that sends two

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hundred gallons per minute of chilled water coursing through its fish pools, the hatchery serves today as an education and research facility for UMASS Amherst and Hampshire College. The Hatchery site offers 7.5 miles of nature trails through wildlife and wetlands habitats and is accessible for snow-shoeing and cross-country skiing.

*State Land:*

Located in the southeast corner of the town, Cookson State Forest (1,878 acres) is the largest public and permanently protected land in New Marlborough. It is administered by the Department of Environmental Management (DEM) and the Division of Forests and Parks, whose management plan includes selective harvesting of woodland parcels within the forest. Logging roads offer access to recreational opportunities once inside the park, but access into the park is extremely limited, with only one road, located off Norfolk Road, entering the park.

Thousand Acre Swamp is a 155-acre shallow pond within the boundaries of Cookson State Forest, located approximately three miles from the village of Southfield. The pond offers recreational opportunities such as canoeing and fishing, with a maximum water depth of eight feet and an average of four feet. The pond is part of the Blackberry River watershed which eventually drains to the Housatonic. The drainage area for the pond is 3,314 acres and includes land up to Route 57, the approximate boundary for the Farmington River watershed to the east. Aquatic vegetation covers more than half of the surface area but is isolated in patches and clumps. The bottom of the pond contains abundant structure in the form of drowned tree stumps. There are two inlet streams and a single outlet. Public access is provided by a concrete ramp suitable for shallow-draft boats and canoes. The parking area allows for eight vehicles. This quiet mountain pond is considered one of the finest warm-water fishing ponds in the Western District. It may be accessible from Hotchkiss Road off Norfolk Road, or from East Hill Road off Route 57.

Sandisfield State Park, also administered by DEM, is shared by the neighboring town of Sandisfield to the east. Its boundaries within New Marlborough encompass a total of 1,163 acres. Public access to the park is adequate along both Route 57 and Route 183. Many recreational opportunities such as hiking, picnicking, biking, and horseback riding are accommodated by the paved and gravel roads that travel through the forest.

York Lake, a popular recreation area located within Sandisfield State Park, offers swimming, fishing, and non-motorized boating. It

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is an artificial pond, dammed in the 1930s by the CCC as part of a national program for flood control and soil conservation. Located in the Farmington River watershed, it is a thirty-six-acre pond, six to sixteen feet in depth, and cold enough to provide good trout habitat. Restrooms are present at the lake.

Campbell's Falls State Park is only three acres in size but the dramatic views of the steep gorges and forty-foot waterfalls of the Whiting River are breathtaking. BioMap Core Habitat and Supporting Natural Landscape encompass this entire park. It is located along the Connecticut border east of Cookson State Forest. Passive viewers and hiking enthusiasts may find this a good destination; however, with only one access point (from Campbell's Falls Road), limited parking, no amenities, and prohibited swimming, this area does not receive significant use.

*Municipal/ Town Owned Properties:*

New Marlborough Town Hall, located on two and half acres of land in the village of Mill River is the town's the seat of government. There is ample space for parking as this is an important use area for the community. The existing structure, built on an historic foundation in 1908, is currently undergoing renovations. However, the Town Offices continue to function and town meetings, voting, and other activities all take place at the Hall.

The Fire House, located in the village of New Marlborough, was constructed in 1957 as a Fire Department Training Community Center. The meeting room and garage for emergency vehicles is on this one-acre parcel and much of the fund raising activities in town are held here.

New Marlborough's Highway Department uses a one-and-a-half-acre parcel on the south end of Mill River Village. The site is approximately one half mile east of the Konkapot River and one half mile west of the Umpachene River.

The New Marlborough Free Public Library, in Mill River Village, was built on a one-acre parcel in 1920 with a grant from the Carnegie Foundation. The library houses both permanent collections of books as well as loans from the Western Regional Library System. This public library is of significant importance to the residents of the town.

The Mill River School, part of the Southern Berkshire Regional School District, was built in 1933 and is located on the northern edge

of Mill River Village. It is situated on a two- acre parcel with ample parking, a playground, baseball field, and basketball court.

The Village Green, in New Marlborough, is the site of the first meeting house in town. The structure, built in 1741 and since renovated, still stands today. The two-acre grounds are home to the New Marlborough Village Association fairs and other seasonal recreational uses. The meeting house, the Old Inn near it, and several older homes surrounding the green are part of the National Historic District of New Marlborough Village.

Umpachene Falls on the Konkapot River is a town-owned treasure. The park is located along the Clayton-Mill River Road just north of the confluence of the Konkapot and Umpachene Rivers. This six-acre public park with trails, picnic tables, swimming and fishing holes offer residents and visitors a wide variety of recreational opportunities. Well maintained parking areas, a clean environment equipped with trash disposal services, and refreshing breezes invite summer-time crowds.

There are numerous historic cemeteries throughout town. One cemetery, in New Marlborough Village, is of particular interest. This historical site, with early settlement markers, is recognized as an Indian Burial Ground. It is a total of four acres and remains active as a cemetery. The following is a list of historical cemeteries that could be considered for protection as historical sites (see Table 5-2, below).

Table 5-2: Town Cemeteries

<u>Name or Location</u>	<u>Use</u>	<u>Size (acres)</u>
Hartsville God's Aire, Hartsville, Rt. 57	inactive	0.25
Carrol Cemetery, Mill River Rd.	unknown	2.0
Mill River Cemetery, Mill River Rd.	active	2.0
Lee Memorial, Southfield	active	1.5
Cemetery- Hartsville	active	0.5
Huxley Cemetery, Norfolk Rd.	active	1.
Palmer Cemetery	active	1.0



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## Section Six: Community Vision

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## Section Six: Community Goals

### A. Description of Process

The Town of New Marlborough contracted with the Conway School of Landscape Design (CSLD) to update the Town's 1990 Open Space and Recreation Plan.

Before meeting with the representatives of the Town of New Marlborough, the CSLD student team reviewed the previous OSRP. The two students met with town representatives to review which goals had been accomplished and which goals were still relevant. A survey, based on the one used to prepare the 1990 OSRP, was distributed to every household in New Marlborough; 293 completed surveys were returned. Blank surveys were also made available at public forums.

The CSLD student team conducted interviews and meetings with members of the Board of Selectmen, the Planning Board, Tax Assessors, the Town Secretary, Land Trust representatives, senior citizens, and several concerned residents. Two public forums were held at the Town Hall in Mill River Village; these were attended by residents and non-resident landowners with diverse views and opinions. Both forums included preliminary findings of open space inventory and analyses to solicit feedback from the participating public.

Information from these various sources was compiled, compared, and reviewed to develop the current OSRP.

### B. Statement of Open Space and Recreation Goals

Through the process described above, five goals for open space and recreation have been identified. These address the widespread desire to maintain New Marlborough's rural character and to establish a sustainable, healthy balance between the human population and the local ecosystem.

#### *Goals:*

- ❖ The open spaces and rural character of the villages remain intact.
  
- ❖ Diverse, accessible, and safe recreational opportunities exist that are provided for residents of all ages without conflicting with the needs for protection of natural resources.

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❖ New Marlborough's healthy natural resources support both human and wildlife communities.

❖ New Marlborough's historic integrity and scenic beauty are preserved.

❖ State and Town officials work with citizens to determine and implement the management of open space and recreational facilities.



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## Section Seven: Analysis of Needs

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## Section Seven: Analysis of Needs

### A. Summary of Resource Protection Needs

New Marlborough's privately owned, unprotected land covers approximately 60% of the total land area. Under current zoning and traditional growth patterns, these lands are very susceptible to development. Resource protection needs to include the further protection of critical water resources, the preservation of critical habitat, and the creation of protected wildlife corridors to link with existing regional corridors.

Protecting and prioritizing the important natural resources of the Town of New Marlborough is essential for preserving the rural character the residents enjoy. At present, approximately 23% of the land is permanently protected. In survey responses citizens have stated that views, water resources, and woodland habitat are their top priority for natural resource protection.

#### *Views and Ridgelines*

New Marlborough is located among a series of ridges running from north to south. This high elevation provides spectacular views to the east, looking toward the protected lands in the Town of Sandisfield, and to the west, to the dramatic views of Mt. Everett in the Town of Mt. Washington, most of which is privately owned without protection from development. In addition, some agricultural fields and non-forested lands provide spectacular views of New Marlborough's forests. These unique areas have been identified and actions put into place for their preservation.

#### *Drinking and Surface Water Resources*

All drinking water in New Marlborough is groundwater. Currently, the town does not have a surficial geologic survey identifying aquifers and recharge areas. Because the town does not have such a map they must take extra precautions to protect the groundwater. Main threats to the ground and surface water are failing septic systems, old residential and farm dumps, and runoff from road salts. Management and monitoring strategies for these issues would alleviate common conditions and highlight major problems which can be properly addressed when funds are available. Informing the community and engaging residents in these clean-water issues is important to the long-term health of New Marlborough.

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There are extensive wetland areas in New Marlborough, particularly in the southeast part of town, which are vulnerable to potential groundwater pollution. The Statewide Comprehensive Open Space and Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) recommends that all remaining wetland areas be preserved through public acquisition or control. This policy recognizes the cumulative effect of past instances of wetland destruction that have permanently altered the environment by lowering the water table, increasing the frequency of local flooding, and degrading the quality of water. According to SCORP the policy has resulted in a much lower rate of wetland loss in Massachusetts than in other states.

The steep slopes and erosive soils in New Marlborough, particularly around Dry Hill and Leffingwell Hill, are very susceptible to hillside erosion and stream and pond sedimentation. The water quality in specific rivers, streams, and ponds which are used for recreation needs to be monitored to ensure healthy conditions for both wildlife and human use.

### *Critical Wildlife Habitat and Prime Agricultural Soil*

The tracts of protected land in New Marlborough that extend into Sandisfield have few protected connections. Wildlife corridors between protected lands would benefit a diversity of species and connect the different protected lands throughout New Marlborough. Properly designed and maintained trails through these corridors would minimize the human disturbance and presence. These trails would also allow visitors and residents to explore the unique and special places without having to exit protected land. Agricultural lands are additional important wildlife areas because they provide habitat for species requiring open fields or edge habitat. Wetlands, farm meadows, and pasturelands are some of the critical spaces in New Marlborough offering these essential qualities.

There is very little prime agricultural soil in New Marlborough. Such soil occupies a narrow strip all along the Konkapot River and along the Umpachene River just north of Southfield Village. Scattered fields along the Whiting River also contain prime agricultural soils as do several open fields around the Village of Hartsville. Development around Lake Buel, in Hartsville, threatens to further reduce the availability of these soils. Also, growth and development expansion in Canaan and Norfolk, Connecticut, particularly with the construction of a new golf course in Canaan, may steer development toward the fertile valleys of Clayton and wetland areas west of Cookson State Forest. Without stringent regulation and careful monitoring of these areas, development will remove this valuable soil from potential food production and possibly cause problems with erosion along the Whiting and Konkapot Rivers.

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## **B. Summary of Community's Needs**

New Marlborough has become the “new frontier” for unchecked building activity in the second home market. Results from the current survey indicate that 94% of the respondents wish to protect the historic character of the five villages as well as the surrounding landscape. An important aspect of the rural character in New Marlborough is the miles of scenic roads that wind through town. Recreation opportunities and public gathering places were also listed as high priorities in the survey.

Each of the five village centers in New Marlborough has a distinct, rich cultural history. The villages were founded at crossroads and served as the center of the community's commercial, residential, and public life. A mixture of general stores, churches, schools, town halls, libraries, restaurants, and shops were all within walking distance of residents' homes. The resulting village was physically compact and clearly delineated from the surrounding farms and forests. Residents of town would like to see these historic traditions promoted and enhanced.

Many miles of scenic roads travel along the rolling hills, meandering valleys, and charging rivers in the town of New Marlborough. These slow, meandering, and often steep roads offer breathtaking views. Although some of these roads are unimproved, with potholes, frost heaves, broken pavement, and few signs, New Marlborough residents cherish them and would like to see them protected. A list of scenic areas identified by residents in the survey may be found in the Appendix.

New Marlborough residents generally are outdoor enthusiasts. Their pursuits include hiking, fishing, hunting, leisure and dog walking, passive viewing, and boating. The scenic roads that link existing villages and recreational areas are not suitable for travel other than by car. Planned greenway corridors with walking and biking paths could be incorporated along these scenic roads to encourage more pedestrian-friendly recreation opportunities. Some of these connecting roads, such as Clayton-Mill River Road and New Marlborough-Southfield Road, run parallel to the town's major rivers. The Massachusetts River Protection Act requires a 200-foot protective zone along these flowing waters and may offer an avenue to establish greenway corridors. Expanding these protective zones and incorporating paths within them may allow residents to enjoy recreational opportunities without requiring a vehicle. These links may also afford the opportunity to create town parks as access points or trailheads to the greenway paths. These parks may meet the needs of the community to gather and socialize in public areas.

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Water-oriented activities are also popular with residents and visitors. The Konkapot, Umpachene, and Whiting Rivers provide excellent habitat for fish and some suitable areas for swimming; however, access is severely limited. Accessibility may be improved by the acquisition of specific parcels with appropriate access points that do not compromise the steps needed to protect water quality, such as the reduction of sedimentation from soil erosion. Done in conjunction with potential greenway corridors, these rivers may be more easily accessed by anglers and passive viewers. A well designed access point and trailhead may include limited vehicle parking, bicycle racks, open areas for fishing and possibly swimming, and level grade areas with railings for seniors and disabled members of the community. The existing Town Park at Umpachene Falls shows how recreational needs of the community can be met; this is a model that should be followed elsewhere in the town.

Accessibility is a limiting factor for the recreation areas located within Cookson State Forest. The park offers recreational opportunities such as hiking, fishing, canoeing, and wildlife viewing. It has been mentioned at public forums and in the survey that access to the park should be improved; however, some residents have expressed a desire that its more intimate and private feel be maintained. The large tract of unprotected, private land that currently separates Cookson State Forest from Sandisfield State Forest to the north offers an untapped opportunity for recreation and provides an important migration corridor for wildlife. The residents of the newly developed Windemere Lake and other residents of New Marlborough could help to create a unique, publicly owned recreation area for hiking, biking, cross-country skiing, wildlife viewing, and snowshoeing. Connecting the two areas of protected forests would also help to secure the migration patterns of wildlife in the area. Access from Route 57 would preclude the need to build new roads and the burden of financing could be shared with the neighboring town of Sandisfield, which has critical wetland areas in the vicinity.

### C. Management Needs

New Marlborough does not currently have sufficient tax money to protect open space through land acquisition or to create additional recreational facilities. Additional funds for open space and cultural resource protection could be obtained if the town were to pass the Community Preservation Act. The preservation of existing unprotected open space in New Marlborough depends on citizens organizing or using the services of existing land trusts and additional volunteer organizations for information and opportunities.

Effective lines of communication among the State, Town, and citizens are needed if any of the open space and recreation goals are to

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be achieved. The town's success in planning for future development and economic growth depends on the involvement of dedicated, enthusiastic citizens who wish to play a role in the future of New Marlborough.

Within New Marlborough there are conflicting opinions on the most important issues of economic growth. One view holds that additional regulations or additional protection of open space will hurt the financial situation of the town. Another view is interested in exploring the economic benefits of open space and the cost of residential and/or commercial growth as it relates to environmental damage and strained infrastructure. Long-term planning will be difficult if cooperation and collaboration does not take place. Coordination between town agencies is needed to prevent additional development and the installation of septic systems within sensitive areas such as steep slopes and wetland areas.

### *Resource Management*

Like other rural towns, New Marlborough has a few civic-minded people who serve on multiple boards. These dedicated people have little additional time to attend workshops offered for their benefit. Strategies for increasing participation of residents in town government are needed. More volunteers on committees will bring more resources, experiences, and energies to the process of making important decisions.

Agencies and boards have overlapping roles in ownership, management, and maintenance of town land. Given the small amount of land owned by the town, responsibility for these functions is well defined among assorted bodies. However, some of the properties and zones are of particular importance and proper management of these areas is critical. Management will also be very important if a town-wide system of greenway corridors and paths is to be created. Handling trail maintenance, dealing with use and/or abuse, and negotiating with landowners for access across private land are just a few of the many situations needing management. Utilizing the managerial skills of regional Land Trust organizations would greatly assist with the task of land management. Private landowners interested in protecting open space must be willing to assist the town financially in order to obtain the services of the Land Trusts.

With inspired management, many of the important resources of New Marlborough can be protected. Targeted efforts addressing water quality, historic resources, and recreational opportunities and needs will go a long way toward achieving the goals and objectives of the residents of New Marlborough.





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## Section Eight: Goals & Objectives

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## Section Eight: Goals and Objectives

The following list of goals and objectives for the Town of New Marlborough was developed through information gathered via a town survey, two public forums, and many conversations with individuals and committees. Some of the goals and objectives are a continuation of those outlined in the 1990 OSRP.

It is the town's responsibility to finalize the goals and objectives. More details of these goals and objectives will be given in the Five-Year Action Plan (Section Nine).

*Goal: Open spaces and the rural character of the villages remain intact.*

Objective A: Coordinated long-term growth management planning and zoning achieves a healthy rural community.

Objective B: Flexible building envelopes containing small business, light commerce, and residences exist in village centers.

Objective C: Connect villages together with large tracts of open space.

Objective D: Well-planned growth in village centers is cohesive, attractive, and welcoming.

*Goal: Diverse, accessible, and safe recreational opportunities are provided for residents of all ages without conflicting with the needs for protection of natural resources.*

Objective A: Accessible gathering areas exist for all town residents.

Objective B: Outdoor recreation coexists with the preservation of natural resources.

Objective C: Recreational facilities are adequate and well maintained.

Objective D: Children, teens, families, seniors and people with disabilities have access to recreational sites and activities.

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*Goal III: New Marlborough's healthy natural resources, support both human and wildlife communities.*

Objective A: New Marlborough's ground and surface water is of excellent quality.

Objective B: Diverse flora and fauna exist throughout town.

Objective C: Wetlands and floodplains remain as diverse habitats.

*Goal IV: New Marlborough's historic integrity and scenic beauty are integral to daily life.*

Objective A: Historic resources are maintained as cultural landmarks.

Objective B: Scenic views and unique natural resources are cherished by residents and visitors.

Objective C: Local agriculture thrives amidst sustainable land use.

*Goal V: State and Town officials, together with citizens, work to determine and implement the management of open space and recreational facilities.*

Objective A: Residents are involved in the promotion and maintenance of areas within town and state-owned properties.

Objective B: Ongoing dialogue occurs between state, town, and residents.



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## Section Nine: Five Year Action Plan

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## Section Nine: Five-Year Action Plan

New Marlborough's active and inactive agricultural land, historic and scenic road corridors, flowing and open waters, wetlands, and undeveloped land accommodating wildlife and recreation are the highest priorities for protection.

The action plan provides suggestions for connecting town villages with the tracts of protected open space. These connections serve to protect critical natural resources and create opportunities for recreation.

Areas within the village centers have been identified for flexible development to allow for economic growth and development as well as maximum protection of open space. In preparation for increased development, roads and scenic views important to residents have been identified on the Action Plan Map.

Protecting the agricultural lands, scenic corridors, and large undeveloped areas will help to preserve the rural character and natural resources that are so important to New Marlborough's residents. These lands are owned primarily by private individuals. Protecting them from development will require the voluntary participation of landowners in land conservation programs, such as sale of development rights or participation in state programs which couple conservation with tax abatement. Alternatively, privately owned lands could be protected to some degree by restricting their development potential through changes in zoning. Also, development of end-use strategies for the existing and expired open pit gravel mines is suggested. These sites are located within the Villages districts providing opportunities for future residential as well as mixed-use development on lands already degraded while at the same time meeting smart growth objectives.

The following section recommends actions and provides a schedule for their implementation. These recommendations have been carefully prepared, with consideration of the public participation and resources of the Planning Board and Board of Selectmen. These recommendations are thought to be within reach over the next five years.

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**Goal I: Open spaces and the rural character of the villages remain intact.**

**Objective A:** *Coordinated long-term growth management planning and zoning achieves a healthy rural community.*

<u>Actions</u>	<u>Who Responsible</u>	<u>Potential Funding Source(s)</u>
Work with Highlands Community Initiative (HCI) to explore ways to better incorporate community needs into implementation of state programs.	2004 - 2009 Planning Board	HCI
Explore feasibility study to define economic development strategies for New Marlborough.	2005 - 2007 Planning Board	Public Works Economic Development Fund
Create a map of conservation and development areas including zoning areas or overlay of open space development design.	2004 – 2008 Planning Board & Conservation Commission	Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC)
Review zoning bylaws every five years in view of new developments to see if desired results of the zoning are occurring and revise accordingly.	2004 – 2008 Planning Board; Board of Selectmen & Conservation Commission	Smart Growth Technical Assistance Grant (SGTAG)

**Objective B:** *Flexible building envelopes containing small business, light commerce, and residences exist in village centers.*

<u>Actions</u>	<u>Who Responsible</u>	<u>Potential Funding Source(s)</u>
Use the build-out map report from the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission to assess the current zoning laws. Research a flexible zoning bylaw which allows smaller lot size and reduced road frontage near the village centers.	2004 - 2007 Planning Board	SGTAG
Hold public meetings to explain different types of commercial zoning and obtain feedback from residents.	2005 - 2007 Planning Board & Board of Selectmen	None Required
Require new businesses and new land developments to provide access to open space trails where applicable.	2005 - 2007 Planning Board & Board of Selectmen	None Required

**Objective C:** *Villages are connected with large tracts of open space.*

<u>Actions</u>	<u>Who Responsible</u>	<u>Potential Funding Source(s)</u>
Require new subdivisions in or near town center to have open space regulations requiring a proportionate percentage of “no development zones,” especially near sensitive areas.	2005 Planning Board	Smart Growth Technical Assistance Grant (SGTAG)
Connect subdivision open spaces with other open space, the existing schools, and municipal and state trails.	2005 - 2007 Planning Board	None required
Discourage subdivisions with cul-de-sacs that do not connect to existing developed areas.	2004 – 2009 Planning Board & Board of Selectmen	None required

**Objective D:** *Well-planned growth in village centers is cohesive, attractive, and welcoming.*

<u>Actions</u>	<u>Who Responsible</u>	<u>Potential Funding Source(s)</u>
Encourage the development of “street walls,” buildings and residences close to existing roads that limit encroachment into open spaces.	2004 – 2009 Planning Board & Board of Selectmen	SGTAG
Research creative methods for disguising parking in village centers.	2004 - 2011 Planning Board & Board of Selectmen	2006-2011 Off-street Parking Program
Create “walkability” to allow safe pedestrian movement and less reliance on automobiles within each village.	2004 - 2011 Planning Board & Board of Selectmen	2006-2011 Transportation Enhancement Program
Require new developments provides sidewalks or equivalent walking connections.	2004 - 2011 Planning Board & Board of Selectmen	2006-2011 Offstreet Parking Program

**Goal II: Diverse, accessible, and safe recreational opportunities are provided for residents of all ages without conflicting with the needs for protection of natural resources.**

**Objective A:** *Accessible gathering areas exist for all town residents.*

<u>Actions</u>	<u>Who Responsible</u>	<u>Potential Funding Source(s)</u>
Provide educational and recreational programs (nature walks and historical tours).	2004 - 2011 Board of Selectmen	None Required

<u>Actions</u>	<u>Who Responsible</u>	<u>Potential Funding Source(s)</u>
Research available state funds to assist in the development of town parks to encourage local fairs, festivals, cookouts, and concerts. These can be trailhead locations at greenway corridors.	2004 - 2011 Board of Selectmen	Greenways & Trails Demonstration Grant Prog. (GTDG) Recreational Trail Program (RTP)
Create and improve public access to swimming and fishing holes. Integrate these access locations into greenway corridors to encourage "no-vehicle" access.	2005 - 2011 Board of Selectmen	Enactment of Community Preservation Act (CPA)
Create walking paths in town (some for dog walking) and a playground for children. These can be integrated into the greenway corridors that connect existing villages.	2005 - 2011 Board of Selectmen	Adoption of CPA
Continue to work with Department of Fisheries and Wildlife on programs to stock native species of fish and on game management programs that meet the needs of local residents and visitors.	2004 - 2011 Board of Selectmen	None Required
Inform the public of existing recreational opportunities existing in New Marlborough.	2005 - 2011 Board of Selectmen	Adoption of CPA

**Objective B:** *Outdoor recreation coexists with the preservation of natural resources.*

<u>Actions</u>	<u>Who Responsible</u>	<u>Potential Funding Source(s)</u>
Obtain assistance and guidance from regional Land Trust organizations.	2004 - 2011 Board of Selectmen	None Required
Work with private landowners to obtain trail easements to form connections between the large tracts of protected open spaces.	2004 - 2011 Conservation Commission	None Required
Design and implement signs informing visitors of the importance of the town's unique areas and the penalty for abusing the resources.	2005 - 2011 Planning Board, Board of Selectmen, & Conservation Commission	Historic Landscape Preservation Initiative

**Objective C:** *Recreational facilities are adequate and well maintained.*

<u>Actions</u>	<u>Who Responsible</u>	<u>Potential Funding Source(s)</u>
Improve access to Cookson State Forest.	2009 - 2011 Planning Board; Conservation Comm.; Board of Selectmen	GTDG; RTP
Incorporate public recreational facilities on the	2007 Planning Board; Board of Selectmen	None required

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<u>Actions</u>	<u>Who Responsible</u>	<u>Potential Funding Source(s)</u>
grounds around Town Hall.		

**Objective D:** *Children, teens, families, seniors, and people with disabilities have access to recreational sites and activities.*

<u>Actions</u>	<u>Who Responsible</u>	<u>Potential Funding Source(s)</u>
Research available state funds to aid in the creation of accessible town parks.	2004 – 2009 Board of Selectmen	Urban Self Help; Federal Land & Water Conservation Fund
Hold public meetings with teens, seniors, and disabled citizens to better understand what types of programs and facilities should be available.	2004 - 2006 Planning Board & Board of Selectmen	None Required
Create greenway corridors that allow for walking and biking. Refer to ADA standards for specific requirements for the disabled.	2004 - 2006 Planning Board & Board of Selectmen	GTDG; RTP
Provide educational and recreational programs such as nature walks, canoe trips, and historical tours.	2004 - 2011 Planning Board & School Committee	None Required

**Goal III: New Marlborough’s healthy natural resources support both human and wildlife communities.**

**Objective A:** *New Marlborough’s ground and surface water is of excellent quality.*

<u>Actions</u>	<u>Who Responsible</u>	<u>Potential Funding Source(s)</u>
Coordinate with the Town of Monterey to determine and eliminate sources of water pollution that could affect New Marlborough’s water supply.	2004 – 2008 Board of Selectmen	Drinking Water Supply Protection Grant (DWPG); (WIG) Watershed Improvement Grant
Tap the expertise of area universities to catalog and determine the health of habitats and species as indicators of water quality.	2009 - 2011 Board of Selectmen	None Required
Partner children with adults in an “Adopt-A-Stream” program.	2004 - 2009 Conservation Commission	None Required
Seek joint funding with surrounding towns to complete a detailed hydrologic study to identify aquifers and recharge areas in the immediate region.	2004 - 2009 Board of Selectmen and Conservation Commission	WIG; DWPG; MA Environmental Trust Grant

<u>Actions</u>	<u>Who Responsible</u>	<u>Potential Funding Source(s)</u>
Implement land-use strategies and water quality monitoring to protect aquifers and recharge zones identified in hydrologic study.	2007 - 2009 Board of Selectmen, Conservation Comm.	WIG; DWPG; MA Environmental Trust Grant
Rigorously enforce Title V requirements for all new and existing septic systems.	2004 - 2011 Board of Health	None Required
Sponsor informative sessions and encourage landowners to stabilize erosive steep slopes and stream banks with native vegetation to prevent sedimentation in streams and water bodies.	2007- 2009 Conservation Commission	LID By-law Adoption

**Objective B:** *Diverse flora and fauna habitats exist throughout town.*

<u>Actions</u>	<u>Who Responsible</u>	<u>Potential Funding Source(s)</u>
Verify that existing trails in town park and on state lands have been created in a way that is sensitive to environmental factors; correct trouble spots.	2004 - 2007 Conservation Commission	None Required
Establish a speaker series to inform residents about open space preservation opportunities.	2004 - 2006 Conservation Commission	HCI
Inform community about Community Preservation Act and how the funds acquired could be used for acquisition of unprotected critical habitat open space.	2004 - 2007 Board of Selectmen & Conservation Commission	HCI
Sponsor information sessions and encourage landowners to employ various land protection strategies such as Conservation Restrictions, Chapter 61 programs, and the Agricultural Preservation Act.	2004 - 2007 Board of Selectmen & Conservation Commission	HCI

**Objective C:** *Wetlands and flood plains remain as diverse habitats.*

<u>Actions</u>	<u>Who Responsible</u>	<u>Potential Funding Source(s)</u>
Consider establishing a new overlay district that would restrict septic system construction on all poorly drained and rapidly drained soils.	2005 - 2011 Planning Board, Conservation Commission; & Board of Selectmen	Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC)
Limit or restrict the use of salt on roads that traverse wetland areas.	2004 – 2011 Planning Board; Conservation Commission	None Required
Work with private landowners through	2004 - 2011	None Required

<u>Actions</u>	<u>Who Responsible</u>	<u>Potential Funding Source(s)</u>
conservation restrictions or land acquisition by a land trust to protect all remaining wetlands.	Conservation Commission	
Develop a Wetland Protection Bylaw that requires the Conservation Commission's review as an integral part of permitting process of all proposed construction, renovations, and all proposed subdivisions of properties so that lots do not require access across wetlands and streams.	2004 - 2006 Board of Selectmen & Conservation Commission	SGTAG; WIG
Sponsor informational meetings on the importance of wetland regulations.	2004 - 2009 Conservation Commission	None Required

## **Goal IV: New Marlborough's historic integrity and scenic beauty are preserved.**

**Objective A:** *Historic resources are maintained as cultural landmarks.*

<u>Actions</u>	<u>Who Responsible</u>	<u>Potential Funding Source(s)</u>
Inventory abandoned historic sites for preservation or possible restoration, including heritage landscapes such as mill foundations.	2004 - 2006 Historical Commission	Historic Landscape Preservation Initiative (HLPI)
Form a volunteer organization to maintain and promote the significance of historical cemeteries.	2004 - 2006 Historical Commission	None Required
Implement Community Preservation Act to provide funds for land acquisition or maintenance of historical sites.	2004 - 2007 Historical Commission and Board of Selectmen	None Required
Establish historical districts in other villages.	2006 - 2008 Historical Commission	None Required

**Objective B:** *Scenic views and unique natural resources are cherished by residents and visitors.*

<u>Actions</u>	<u>Who Responsible</u>	<u>Potential Funding Source(s)</u>
Identify important scenic views, monitor their stability, and apply for scenic byway status to protect roadside access. A measure affording some protection for scenic roads involves official designation under the Scenic Road Act, which allows towns to pass local bylaws designating particular roads as scenic. Once designated, the Planning Board must give	2004 - 2011 Planning Board & Board of Selectmen	None Required

<u>Actions</u>	<u>Who Responsible</u>	<u>Potential Funding Source(s)</u>
approval for activities within a certain distance from the road.		
Keep as many unpaved roads as possible and use minimal salt.	2004 – 2011 Highway Department	None Required
Protect mountain views from unwanted development but allow for recreational use.	2004 – 2006 Planning Board & Board of Selectmen	Scenic Mountain Act Adoption
Create an action plan for protecting priority sites. Create a conservation fund through fund-raising and solicitation to purchase important natural resource land and other priority sites.	2008 – 2010 Board of Selectmen; & Conservation Commission	None Required

**Objective C:** *Local agriculture thrives amidst sustainable land use.*

<u>Actions</u>	<u>Who Responsible</u>	<u>Potential Funding Source(s)</u>
Create an outreach program to work with local landowners, such as farmers and loggers, on Best Management Practices.	2004 – 2007 Board of Selectmen & Conservation Commission	None Required
Encourage private land stewardship through tax benefits.	2004 – 2011 Board of Selectmen & Conservation Commission	None Required
Conduct a workshop on preserving farmland in New Marlborough. Encourage local farmers to participate in the Agricultural Preservation Program to protect their land in perpetuity.	2005 – 2007 Conservation Commission	Right To Farm By-Law 2005

**Goal V: State and Town officials work with citizens to determine and implement the management of open space and recreational facilities.**

**Objective A:** *Residents are involved in the promotion and maintenance of areas within town and state-owned properties.*

<u>Actions</u>	<u>Who Responsible</u>	<u>Potential Funding Source(s)</u>
Implement volunteer Adopt-A-Stream/Road/ Historic Site Program.	2005 – 2007 State Forest Officials & Conservation Commission	None Required

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<u>Actions</u>	<u>Who Responsible</u>	<u>Potential Funding Source(s)</u>
Work with state officials to develop management plans of both State Forests.	2005 – 2007 State Forest Officials; Planning Board; & Conservation Commission	None Required
Create a committee designed to work with the State Forests in organizing trail building, maintenance, and cleanup projects.	2005 – 2007 Board of Selectmen & State Forest Officials	None Required

**Objective B:** *On-going dialogue occurs between state, town, and residents.*

<u>Actions</u>	<u>Who Responsible</u>	<u>Potential Funding Source(s)</u>
Inform public about the importance of protecting open space and the financial and recreational return to the community.	2004 – 2007 State Forest Officials & Conservation Commission	None Required
Hold regular public meetings between state and citizens for clarification on issues and updates on state activities in the protected land.	2005 – 2007 State Forest Officials & Board of Selectmen	None Required
Implement access to high-speed internet service and design an informational website for the Town. This service is critical for small and home-based businesses and is an effective tool for non-resident landowners to actively participate in local decision-making policies.	2004 – 2011 Board of Selectmen	None Required
Post state and community activities on town's website.	Board of Selectmen	None Required





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## Section Ten: Public Comments

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## **Section Ten: Public Comments**

Section Ten is reserved for public comments and letters of review from the Planning Board, Select Board, Conservation Commission, and Berkshire Regional Planning Commission. This section must be finalized by the Town of New Marlborough and must include letters of review from the prior mentioned groups. Mandated approval from the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs, Division of Conservation Services is required before requests can be made for certain grant assistance programs.

## Respondents' Comments from Survey

- Dirt roads must remain dirt roads. People should be able to build on their land but for themselves not as developments.
- The town needs to become more active in designating open space, more aggressive in conservation and creating areas for the community to gather in (other than tag sales.) I appreciate the beauty of this area as it is now – came here because of its beauty and am comfortable with the mix of old-time families and second-homers but feel there needs to be a greater acceptance of each other on both ends. Second homers don't vote (can't) and they own most of the land – it would be good to somehow include them in on the town plan for the future.
- I would categorize all [natural resources] as high. As a priority I choose [mountain tops and ridges] but to reiterate, they are all high.
- What we do to our lands, we do to ourselves. Healthy community needs healthy air, water and soil – and natural beauty and systems are a part of that.
- New Marlborough has been lucky because its located off the beaten path. Nearby towns, like So. Egremont and Lenox, have been badly hit in the past 20 years, their intimate sense of community replaced by pseudo-quaint shops and over-development and part-time inhabitants who come to the Berkshires only to spend money and to be entertained. They don't participate in the whole thing—a new kind of “second homer” unlike previous second homers, who participate. Most people, I suspect, in New Marlborough aren't aware of what's at stake and won't be aware until it's too late. People are busy raising families, etc. But developers are looking 24/7 for the next nice place to transform into \$. Open space, conservation, recreation, preservation of natural assets are essential ingredients to true good health and their promotion should supercede an individual's right to trash private property.
- When it's gone it can't be saved. It will never be cheaper than today to save land. Make sure saved land can be used, not locked up, forever wild! Open spaces should continue to be sustain ably used for agriculture, forestry, recreation, etc.
- People have to live somewhere so you cant stop development. However, you can develop in a way that protects significant (40 percent of town's land owned) open space to ensure the town always retains the “rural look.” And thus has a very high quality of life aspect for its citizens. Our acreage in NM is all protected by CR's and will never be developed. You are on the right track, keep going. – Bill Hull, General Partner, Hull Forestland, L.P.
- What do you mean by protection and preservation of our forest lands? Good forest management is good. A forest is a renewable resource.
- Some of the questions are hard to answer as I don't know exactly where you are coming from.
- Quads/dirt bikes should be prohibited. Not only is it dangerous to wildlife, but they tear up our woods, dirt roads and are noisy pollutants. Also dangerous for traffic.

- Growth is good. It increases tax base, drives or stabilizes property values, utilizes our excellent town school. However there must be a balance between encouraging and revitalizing, and maintaining what we have. I think both can be accomplished if done thoughtfully and carefully. As far as the town providing areas of affordable housing that needs to be explained in more detail. I'm not in favor of subsidizing. I wouldn't mind paying for the other town use, for protecting environment, parks, tennis courts, etc.
- Less extravagant houses, less "no trespassing" signs and more friendly big land owners may help move New Marlborough forward to what it used to be. (This is not to suggest that hunting should not be controlled.)
- Give it a break!
- I should like to see taxes lowered because of all the new homes being built which will provide more income from taxes.
- Conservation and open space should not be at the cost of making homes so expensive and precious only the rich can afford to live here. Look at Lincoln, Mass., Rontez, Middlesex County for how that can happen.
- Such growth as intelligent planning must provide for should involve cluster housing – including affordable housing for local Berkshire young families – around the existing villages. The sprawl of individual houses on the now-existing minimum lot size, along country roads is a disastrous eyesore and destructive of the natural rural beauty that has characterized New Marlborough for years past.
- I am a Great Barrington native with a cottage at Lake Buel since the 50's. I live on Berkshire County economy and understand that our greatest assets are our natural beauty and rural nature. While we need second-homers and their financial contributions to our economy locally, it is at the same time our greatest threat. I feel we need a master plan for zoning, planning and development, but am not sure what it will look like. We need good housing for our young families and for lower income families but is it fair to cut up our good resources for new homes – for any class of folks? To accommodate those of great abundance to the detriment of others? I'm not sure how to achieve Berkshire-appropriate, socially-conscious situations.
- It is important for these measures to be taken productively. Things should not be left to be addressed when threats occur or are occurring.
- With the two rivers in New Marlborough, it would be a dream to have continuous access along these river banks. Also, being able to have a continuous greenway connecting the five villages to bike, walk, or x-country ski would also be a dream. Furthermore, construction of a town activity location. One that would have an open air pavilion, bandstand, ball fields, and the like. Currently there is nothing in New Marlborough like this. Many other communities' do and they are frequently used and cherished.
- Not a well-designed survey form. Too Bad.
- I think we should have growth built into an on-going plan for the community.

- I think the town needs a center. What we lack is a downtown – it doesn't have to be large – but a place for all of our towns, Clayton, Mill River, Southfield, etc., to gather – to talk – to shop – to see neighbors. We have a beautiful town but it misses as it has no “heart” for all to share... a central place to eat, shop, see a movie, a place for kids to gather – a town is not only about outdoor activities – they are great, but so is a bookstore, a place to share coffee and lunch, a place to buy a shirt, see a show, pick up a prescription, and while doing so, see people, talk, share the latest news.
- Would like to see more places to ride quads (racing dirt bikes.) Quad riding is a family outing (family fun.)
- It is imperatively that we do all that is humanly possible to preserve and protect every inch of land that is vacant.
- Set aside some area for future affordable housing or New Marlborough will end up like Alford or Egremont.
- We do not want to see our town be over-developed such as the town of Great Barrington. There are so few rural areas now and New Marlborough is one. We want it to remain that way.
- The town should think carefully about the kind of controls enacted. Some growth is important to sustain the tax base – without growth some people will not be able to live in the town as the taxes will become exorbitant. Between protected lands, wetlands, and state lands, New Marlborough is not likely to become overpopulated. Some of the above questions seem totally inappropriate for this town.
- There is plenty and will be more as time goes on which is privately owned. I know because I will be doing so. I think there is ample room for growth and I am not worried about overdevelopment.
- I agree that we need to protect our environment, however in the past we have seen (XXXXXX) action taken by local authorization (not in New Marlborough). I have lived in New Jersey and have seen rampant growth. Attempts have been made to stop or limit growth however courts consider most attempts to limit growth as discrimination. Managed growth is the best approach to take. Growth is inevitable but we must manage it for the benefit of our community. Please reference the Mt. Laurel Decision in New Jersey for limits towns can place on growth.
- A zoning code would serve to direct growth and protect open space.
- Family heritage goes back 90 years in New Marlborough—want to preserve a special place in our lives. –Oates Family
- A balance between property rights and community rights. Very nice job – the survey, I mean! – Dan Sullivan
- Having built a home in New Marlborough I could not support stopping all development in future and that would be hypocritical. But New Marlborough's charm is to preserve some of

its open space and natural areas in conjunction with some growth, including affordable housing for those who need it.

- Forest land supposed to be in trust, adjoining our property, was sold to a developer without any notification to us or our neighbors, who might have bought it to preserve it as woodlands. Revise laws so if woodland properties are to be sold to developer, adjoining property owners be given first right to purchase, to maintain the woodlands.
- We need to save it now before pressures are too great. Put the cell tower reception hidden in the steeple of the New Marlborough meeting house.
- Do we have zoning requirements? There is a cer dump in the Southfield Road. It is not only an eyesore but perhaps leeching chemicals into the streams that flow (XXXX) by. Also several houses that are hazards – there have been many trees cut down and sold on camp property – perhaps that is not within your jurisdiction. Your idea for protecting our beautiful town is great.
- Need cell phone service throughout New Marlborough
- At this point New Marlborough is still full of open space and a wonderful place. Still, I begin to see decisions and plans that, if left untended, could get out of control. A tight reign on growth is necessary and careful choosing of members of boards who are all dedicated to keeping New Marlborough pristine. Beware the Metro North. The closer the train, the more people, more growth. Beware!
- New Marlborough is one of the most beautiful places in the world because of its natural beauty. I would support any effort to preserve this most precious resource. I would support and would like to see enacted a program by which local taxes and a community fund-raising effort could be made to not only preserve but purchase available land so that land would be unavailable to development.
- Important to keep aquifers concerned by new development on Rt 57 because of presence of aquifers there. NEED a new master plan, mindful of both younger families able to afford living here and strict conservation of what makes the country side beautiful.
- Just about all of the open spaces should be protected.
- ...if it must be built – [we] need for affordable housing for the working person. If it doesn't happen, these half-million dollar and up houses will burn down during a fire as there will be no locals to volunteer, just rich second-home owners that show up on weekends!
- New Marlborough needs to address affordable housing, particularly for young families. Growth is necessary but must be controlled with a long-range plan so as not to eradicate those things of quality which make it a good place to live. Skylines and open land must be protected, with housing growth to be either within village residential areas or developments which will not deter vitality nor ecologically from existing conditions. Rather than to impost a new tax to attain this, I suggest the town aggressively pursue collection from those who are tax delinquent.

- Without further information, this survey is ambiguous. There is no way to judge specifics until further information is available—by-law changes, MA Land Bank, should there be more, etc. Also I would be very angry if I have private land and you were asking if someone else would like it preserved.
- I think the amount of growth is less important than the way in which the growth is controlled (IE: zoned). Maintaining in rural, natural character of the town is foremost – so that growth should be clustered and aesthetically regulated. All proposals for growth should be considered in the context of the overall character of the town.
- Controlled growth would allow for both the protection of the towns rural characteristics and still allow for the development of some business, affordable housing and general home construction. However, by-laws and zoning codes must be carefully formulated.
- Do not want New Marlborough turned into a suburban development. Want to maintain its natural beauty, particular character, warmth, farms and source of open rural space.
- A bike trail would be wonderful. We frequently drive to the bike trail in Millerton, NY to spend the day, and usually spend some money at the local businesses. A bike trail in our town would attract low-impact tourists. If a dedicated trail isn't possible, a bike route on local roads is an option.
- An overall plan for the town would provide a vision for preserving open space while providing for housing and community activity. What new Marlborough does not need is 'McMansions' on large tracks of lawn. Business and industry should be part of the plan to provide jobs and to support the tax base.
- Don't kill the goose that laid the golden egg. Quietude, vistas, uniqueness is a precious asset.
- Saving our natural resources is of paramount importance – these are treasures and non-returnable. If this means higher taxes, so be it.
- We want New Marlborough to remain a nice rural community that can support a local population and a second home population. We do not want to see [it] turned into a “suburban-type” community – filled with tourists – IE: like West Stockbridge. We like the quiet atmosphere and nice mix, of full-time resident and second home families.
- Motor boats should not be allowed to any lake. Snowmobiles should be banned. Property taxes in New Marlborough are too low. They should be increased and the funds should go toward conservation. I applaud this effort to do more as the tearing down of forests to build big fancy houses is destroying the nature of our town.
- Several years ago there was a proposal to revise zoning – move dense in town, less out of town, and move acreage for building in rural areas. We need to limit the concept to 150 feet of road frontage and allow future development to take place away from the road frontage. We need to keep the beautiful vistas rural quality. The development several years back on the road to Canaan, just past the old Clayton stories the worst outcome of our zoning reg's. I am a weekender – I have no voice in any decisions. Part time residents pay more than half the taxes – meetings take place during the week and keep us out of the process. We need

representation for our (XXXXX). This is a beautiful town – it's a respite from development. Let's move forward with care and sensitivity. We need affordable housing. Let's allow in town. We need to provide a place for natives to live and work.

- Growth won't stop and should continue—it just needs to be better planned and controlled so we don't wake us in 2012 to Westchester County instead of the Berkshires.
- Growth can be good for a town as it supplies jobs and can enrich cultural and community life. In New Marlborough I know of many times when the residents and the people with second homes come together for the good of all. This happens in economic ways, cultural ways, and responsible stewardship of the land and in person-to-person ways. I wish your survey had dealt with this issue of cooperation.
- The brakes must be put on immediately, concerning the building of new homes. New zoning laws must be put into affect. All development must be zoned very close to the towns and leave the outskirts undeveloped. Houses should be allowed to be only built very far back from any public roads as to not be seen. If something is not done very soon, New Marlborough will go the way of suburban sprawl. All sold land should be allowed a minimum of development. IE: one house per three acre lot. Please do not hesitate to take action. Generations to come will be eternally grateful for your courageous decisions. Thank you.
- This is a very stupid survey. It doesn't make any sense.
- I would like to see more recreational activities in New Marlborough and more town activities. Please announce when you need people to join a task force. I think first there should be an improvement on what is already there – such as Umpachene Falls – the swings are in poor condition and the fire place full of broken bottles and could have better places to sit and play.
- We own open land in New Marlborough – no house – we live in So. Egremont, therefore unable to comment in some areas. Presently we are in the process of working with the state's Agriculture Protection Restriction program to place an APR on our property. It would be of great assistance if the New Marlborough Land Trust or Conservation Commission could assist financially; as it appears that the APR will not cover the determined values for the restriction. This activity is happening presently, and it only points up the need for New Marlborough to become active or shall we say more active in the issues and concerns pointed out in this questionnaire.
- We would like to see a system of hiking trails that connect up preserved lands with each other and with the five villages. IE: Mill River to Questing Preserve to New Marlborough village. As residents of the Village of Mill River we think that zoning changes that direct development to the villages must be paired with measures designed to protect the village's historic value and character.
- We need planning, protection to create village zones (higher density, apt's for affordable leasing). Protection of vistas and open spaces. Architectural style recommendations – see

Hillsdale, NY, zoning, planning. Protect what we have or die: The New Yorkers are coming!  
The New Yorkers are coming!

- At the present rate of growth, the town of New Marlborough will look more like a town in Hampton County than in Berkshire County. Its rural nature is fast disappearing. Additionally, it is a good town for young families, as long as those families do not expect the amenities and services of a more suburban town – you can't have it both ways – and cannot make demands on the taxpayers to change the town's character to meet their needs.
- Such steps are long overdue in the town. Growth is inevitable and demands planning to protect quality of life. (XXXX) respect New Marlborough is way behind the times and must wake up to its responsibilities for the future... the very near future.
- Our land preservation should be increased with the town buying and protecting open space as they become available. Use of space should be developed to include hiking trails, bike trails and horse trails, non-motorized boating, separate from each other, so as not to be in conflict. Shelters like the one on the Appalachian Trail could be developed in remote places to encourage appreciation of nature and sport. Please please keep the ridgeline free of buildings. I was saddened to see it broken with the house as I drove to Mill River from Clayton.
- Keep away from land trust programs.
- I would like to share with you several serious issues I have regarding the "New Marlborough Survey." The survey was accompanied by an unsigned cover letter, the source of which is, at best, ambiguous, (Is it from the Board of Selectman or the Conway School?) and that it is so poorly written that its intent is virtually impossible to determine. I believe that this survey was crafted in a biased, unprofessional, amateurish, and unintelligible manner and represents a waste of both State and Local funds and a waste of the time a resident must take to complete it. I think that the questions posed reflect pre-existing assumptions and conclusions and could not accurately or fairly elicit reliable data. In addition, the subjective nature of the questions cause me to wonder how it would be possible to quantify the data being elicited in a logical or objective manner. Between the cover letter, the introductory paragraph of the survey and the survey itself, it is difficult to imagine that a hidden agenda isn't being promulgated. A case in point, the introductory paragraph on the survey sheet says that the survey "aims to solicit the views of the citizens of New Marlborough" yet the final sentence of this paragraph ends with the statement "...and will enable local government to acquire and protect our land." This would suggest that whatever the opinions of the residents of New Marlborough, a course of action has already been determined. In addition, neither the cover letter accompanying it, or the survey itself give a date when the survey should be returned. However, the "results" of this survey, according to an article in today's Berkshire Eagle (Saturday Feb. 7, 2004), are being presented THIS morning at an open space forum. According to this article, the conclusions of this survey, while non-binding, will be used as a planning tool. It is worrisome to me that information garnered in such a haphazard and slipshod manner will be used to guide the community's development and future. I am passionately interested in and concerned for the future of our community and the preservation of its beauty, character, and economic health. I hope the Board of Selectman, the Planning Board and the Students from Conway will give consideration to the process being used to determine how New Marlborough will face its future. I believe it deserves careful and

thoughtful consideration. Thank you for your consideration. Joyce S. Bernstein, 479  
Hartsville New Marlborough Road, New Marlborough, MA 01230, 413 229 3166

- Village centers should be developed as more densely zoned areas, taking the pressure off our green areas and providing housing for local people at more reasonable costs.
- Control growth – limit to minimum of ten acres per house.
- We need a plan – comprehensive with zoning laws that meets the need of the various town constituencies, IE: different zoning for the villages than the more open spaces. Common space for more affordable housing should be a component.
- YMCA Camp in Southfield belongs to Smith Park of NY. 29 South Randolph Avenue, Poughkeepsie, NY 12601. Authur B. McComb, president. Camp has a lovely lake and about 450 + acres. Should be put in a land trust.
- We built a new house in New Marlborough so are not yet very familiar with the town. We look forward to becoming members of the community.
- We moved from New York to New Marlborough about eight years ago. We were approaching retiring years and longed for open space, clean air, less traffic, less noise, a quieter life in a community where people had a moment or two to say hello – a chance to “smell the flowers,” as they say. We were happy to find welcoming neighbors and therefore well understand that others too will be looking to country life in search of these same things. Growth and change are inevitable and will perhaps be more rapid here now than has been the case in years passed because of the threat and anxiety terrorism has placed on the world. Technology too makes it possible for people to fully function and conduct business outside of the big cities. We would only hope New Marlborough proceeds into the future, that it is done with careful planning so that what is remarkable and distinct about these five villages, what we have all come in search of, will be preserved and protected and remain for a long a time as possible.
- Please don't ruin New Marlborough. Stop this insane development. I'm a native of New Marlborough for sixty years and each day it turns more city-oriented: stripes on roads everywhere. Houses everywhere, farmlands swallowed up by greedy developers who will never live here. Stop Stop Stop.
- Since many homes obtain potable water from shallow wells and all homes are on individual septic systems, I think that the minimum acreage for build able lots should be two acres. Also setback requirements for new built homes should be increased and setbacks for existing structures should be yielded more flexibility for setback reductions through the variance process.
- We have wetland preservation. Harass outsiders like the poor farm. But I would like to know who tried to take away the land from the woman who was so upset at the February, 7<sup>th</sup>, 2004, New Marlborough Forum. Was it in New Marlborough or was it taken in another area?
- The original form of recreation, hunting, is being discouraged, it appears. Many of us hunters feel that soon the restrictions will be so stringent that we will not want to put in the effort.

The selectmen should preserve the rights of hunters and not fall pressure to the newcomers who are against it. Remember who was here first! If any land is acquired for recreation, there should be a provision for hunting.

- Growth there is going to be; but there needs to be planning for it and a thoughtful approach to zoning if a rather beautiful area is not to be lost to haphazard development.
- This survey is a trick to bring on government appropriation of private property. The only land I'd like to see protected (IE: stolen) is the land of people who profit from thinking they can steal their neighbor's land. This is an affront to our intelligence. This is the beginning to out-of-control government – which is tyranny. No good will come of this. Please understand that this survey is an attempt to destroy private property. You have no right to steal your neighbor's land under the pretext of “open recreational space.” How dare you. No more ownership of land by government, enough already. Are you nuts, is has loads of open space. Dear Bourne and Griggs – government is just promising to give you landscaping contract for this stolen land, whether or not they do is open to debate – at any rate, you've compromised your soul. If you accept the promise of a job. Would you like them to steal your land? Then don't do it to others. A good place to avoid on crouching government. No private property lease to no liberty and communism, which is enslavement. I demand the acknowledgement and reinstatement of my constitutional rights. I demand an apology for this scam. I know the scam government ownership of land leads to tyranny. Dear Bourne and Griggs – Any land taken from people is thievery and if you are given a contract to development is God will judge you as a thief for complicity. Examine yourself before you start profiting from stolen property. Comment, please pay the people who are complying and tabulating this survey, not the groups that have written this nonsense! These students are your slaves. Let's start being concerned for your student-workers and keep out of people's land rights and right to private property. What hypocrisy. PS. You can tell I'm furious.
- \*Thank you for recognizing the issue of sprawl and attempting to address it. We can't take the pie away just because we have our piece now. But we can share it responsibly.
- Natural growth without interference from a committee. This is a waste of the taxpayer's dollars. I hope it stops here.
- Walking and bike riding on any of our roads is at best hazardous. We would like dearly loved to have safe areas to walk and bike ride and in our case, walk our dogs.
- The committee of New Marlborough needs to reach a consensus – a shared vision of what they love in this town. A consensus and an objective with regards to planning will [en]able New Marlborough to become what it wants as a community – New Marlborough is an oasis, a rural town with beauty. Keep it, safe it. There is too much paralysis and division along lines of the old residents and the new; the right and poor. This needs to be addressed.
- I love to drive by open spaces and appreciate that developments are often hidden from view.
- The community is doing fine.
- Open meadows need saving, and riverways.

- Would like to see a plan similar to the one proposed in 1995, which established density zones around townships.
- Way too much housing going up – builders are buying up chunks of land and developing at a rapid pace – overdevelopment is the biggest issue for the current infrastructure.
- We have watched New Marlborough grow for more than 50 years! Without open (undeveloped) spaces it would be just one more suburb.
- You cannot control growth without limiting access to the highest bidder. Therefore open space must be preserved as a working landscape to keep open and jobs (provide) increase road frontage as leverage for developer to create mixed income cluster projects in balance with surrounding landscapes.
- If we control growth, New Marlborough is in a unique position to preserve the beautiful rural character it has, so that all may continue to enjoy, for now and in the future.
- The villages are fine as is, now! More (XXXX) growth will kick the nature of New Marlborough. The growth is out of hand and will over-tax the roads, water and environment. This unfettered growth must be slowed NOW. Later is too late.
- The more you make it cozy, the more rich people move in and take over. Who do you see walking, jogging, and bicycling, the locals or the part-timers? Locals can't afford these because a majority of them work two-three jobs just to make ends meet. "How about catering to ourselves first?"
- Places in particular neighborhoods especially lacking in open spaces –Mill River Center; Recreational activities –Clayton, Hartsville, basically all areas. The only areas I can think of for recreation are York Lake and Umpachene.
- Some of my fondest memories are of our trips to the cabin in New Marlborough. The scenic ride, the walks in the woods and the abundant wildlife made out time spent there very special. This place that started out as a hunting cabin in the woods became a wonderful get-away for family and friends of all ages. Although progress is inevitable it would hope it comes at a snail's pace.
- If there is to be the creation of additional park facilities, it should be in keeping with the current rural/semi-rural atmosphere that exists today. We don't want to see cluster housing or more developments; this would adversely affect the character of the villages.
- I have lived in New Marlborough for thirty-four years. I want to bring up my daughter in this town. I do not particularly care for the increase of traffic on my road, but I am more concerned about the restrictions that people could put upon building if allowed to do so. Great Barrington and the surrounding towns offer more than enough recreational choices.
- Lake Buel – no jet skis or two-cylinder engines. Community Summer Barb-b-q event to meet and greet.

- If New Marlborough was truly interested in conservation, why has the town prevented the Lake Buel Association from its draw down program that would help save Lake Buel from becoming a meadow, due to weed growth. Considering over 100 homes pay taxes to new Marlborough and get no services, I feel we are treated shabbily. We are a large revenue resource and get little or no consideration. The selectmen and planning board cavalierly allowed homes to be built and rebuilt with illegal specifications, regardless of the impact on the environment.
- The above ground septic fields will be the ruination of the Berkshires. IE: Lake Buel district.
- People know that this town has to offer before they move here. Most of us like what we see. Something[s] may have room for improvement but we like what we saw. I'm on a fixed income and could not afford higher taxes to offer more recreational to a few people who want to add things they may have had in their previous town or seen in a magazine or somewhere else. I like my town.
- I'm getting up in age and health is my highest priority now.
- What about a dog parks? Cluster new development in the villages. Preserve rural feel and open space. What about unpaved roads?
- I would like to have New Marlborough stay as I knew it in my youth.
- There should be strong bylaws to prevent indiscriminate development in order to preserve the character of the community.
- New Marlborough is being destroyed by developers, loggers, and "McMansion" builders. Personally won't (XXXX) my land, nor would I "develop" it. You don't destroy what you can't create. What's the expression... "You don't own the earth – you hold it in trust for your children." I am personally disgusted as Yeats said "Money's rant is on." My land is left untouched out of respect for the land and my neighbor's quality of life.
- It would be prudent for the town to review how other neighboring townships are approaching the same issues. Some successful strategies could be identified from this review and put into action to better New Marlborough. Thank you for the opportunity to express our views.
- It would be helpful in doing a survey if you had put in the amount of land already in open space (IE: 40,000 acres of Sandisfield and Cookson State Forest.) as well as the amount of land already in land trusts. This is already 35-40 percent [sic] of our town. You also tell the taxpayers how much in \$ figures have come off the tax rolls as a result of all the land put into land trusts. Also we as taxpayers assume that additional burden..... (See survey answer.)

#### **On The Town:**

- (*How do you see New Marlborough...*) a place that's in immediate danger of sprawl/development. We're surrounded by the creeping sprawl of Springfield, Hartford, Westchester, Litchfield country mansions, Lenox (MA) condos...

- Rural town, too fast growing, already beyond its agricultural beginnings, and fragmenting its forests with development.
- An historic N.E. center which reflects positively on the country living, working class and farmers, mixed with gentry.
- All emphasis on distinguishing between the villages and the rest of New Marlborough.
- Locals being priced out.
- A town that is, unfortunately, zoned for suburban sprawl.
- Young families won't be able to afford to live here.
- A good place for all residents.
- (*In what directions...*) a place with well thought-out, balanced zoning/planning.
- ...could use more tax \$\$.
- Slow down building.
- Depends on what kind of growth – quality is more important than quantity.
- ...just like it is. A town where you can afford to live.
- Control growth.
- All open spaces should be preserved and development permitted only in clusters – planned around the five villages. This survey is a most welcome step in the right direction, namely protecting the rural character and natural beauty of our area.
- ...Protecting the integrity of the existing built pattern in the villages.
- Develop, but preserve rural nature. We need to get busy and get all of this done.
- Well-planned, affordable housing, creative zoning. There will be growth. We must plan for it.
- Leffington property should not be sold. The shield “houses” are terrible.
- We would like to see New Marlborough come together more as a community, have community days, parades, rituals, and more places.

**Does the town need an expanded recreation program?**

- Yes, so the kids don't have to be transported out of New Marlborough for activity.

- I think activities for all ages together are needed. At the moment we have a lot of great places for ballgames, walking, hikes fishing, boating... But tennis courts would be nice.
- Teenagers need a positive place to have socials. Explore ways Town Hall could be used for after-school programs, weekend programs, etc.
- We need a place for kids to “hang out.” The town needs more than just sports.
- Riverwalks and village connected greenways are needed.
- We are small. Throw our resources into Regional.
- Everybody needs support.
- Teenagers need more to do – should be engaged in natural preservation.





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## Section Eleven: References

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Assessors Maps of New Marlborough. 2003.

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Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife, Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program BioMap.

Topozone, a production of Maps a la carte, Inc., a USGS Digital Cartographic Business Partner and member of the International Map Trade Association.

### *Agencies and People*

Bryan, Martha; volunteer.

Buxbaum, Linda; Assessor's Office, Town of New Marlborough.

Crawford, Neil; Building Inspector.

Maloy, Mark; Berkshire Regional Planning Office.

Mathews, Rita; Conservation Commission.

Miller, John; Planning Board.

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Moskowitz, John; Planning Board.

Mullen, James; Planning Board.

Newman, Doug; Planning Board.

Walker, Terry; Secretary, Accountant, and Grant Writer for Town of New Marlborough.

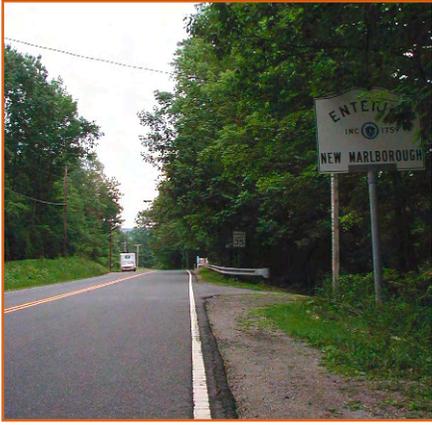
*Internet Resources*

Census Bureau: [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov).

Community Preservation Homepage: [www.commpres.env.state.ma.us](http://www.commpres.env.state.ma.us)

Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs: <http://commpres.env.state.ma.us>.

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## Appendix



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