



Photo by Steve Piazza

Nashua River on Main Street

Section 1. Plan Summary

This update of the Lancaster 2000 Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP) is required in order for the Town to be eligible for State self-help grants. Importantly, the process of updating this Plan has provided the Town with an in-depth document that states our community open space and recreation goals and identifies specific ways in which to meet these goals. The OSRP Committee has incorporated considerable public feedback into this. Committee members disseminated an Open Space and Recreation Survey in October 2008 and followed-up with a Public Forum in March 2009. Public meetings of the Open Space and Recreation Committee were held every two weeks from July 2008 until October 2009 and continue on a monthly basis. Committee members routinely attend other Town board and committee meetings. This 2009 Open Space and Recreation Plan update is a clear and in-depth blueprint that strives to centralize information from many sources into one reference document. It is intended to be used by Town decision makers and for our fund-raising and volunteer recruitment efforts. The networking of people and resources will allow the Town of Lancaster to make significant progress on the following OSRP goals:

- Protect the Town's water supply; ensure the health of its ponds, streams, wetlands, and waterways.
- Conserve and protect our agricultural lands and farming viability.
- Protect our contiguous blocks of forestland.
- Enrich our recreational resources.
- Improve the connectivity of people and places in order to foster a sense of community.
- Improve Town-wide communications.
- Protect and enrich our open space and animal and plant habitat.
- Develop sustainable human and financial resources to support the goals of the Open Space and Recreation Plan.
- Integrate growth and development to preserve Lancaster's rural feel, scenic vista, historic character, and natural landscape.

The sections of this OSRP are as follows:

- Section 1. Plan Summary, Overview of community OSRP aspirations in general terms.
- Section 2. Introduction, Why the plan was written; description of planning process and public participation.
- Section 3. Community Setting, Gives a broad picture of our community and challenges it faces.
- Section 4. Environmental Inventory and Analysis. An in-depth inventory of Lancaster's natural and cultural resources, augmented by Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program guidance letter to meet biodiversity goals.
- Section 5. Inventory of Lands of Conservation and Recreation Interest. Contains a listing by map and parcel of publicly owned land in Lancaster.
- Section 6. Community Vision. Overall vision of Open Space and Recreation Goals.
- Section 7. Analysis of Needs. Summary of resource protection needs, community needs, and management needs.

- Section 8. Goals and strategies to meet goals listed.
- Section 9. Five-Year Action Plan. This section provides a year-by-year timetable for specific actions to accomplish our goals and identifies who is responsible.
- Sections 10, 11, Appendix. Includes public comment letters, references, an extended version of Section 4, Commission on Disability American with Disabilities compliance report for Lancaster, Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program guidance letter, Open Space and Recreation Survey Tally, Public Forum summary, and maps.