

18% of Peterborough's 24,000 acres is conserved open space.

- Private lands under conservation easement 2,500 acres
- Federal & State lands 970 acres
- Town-owned lands 840 acres

The Master Plan recommends "an immediate goal of 25% protected open space" to secure long-term water resources, a functioning natural landscape, and the "look and feel" of Peterborough.

## **Methods of land protection**

### **Conservation Easement**

Future land protection will continue to be primarily through the voluntary actions of Peterborough landowners. The OSC is available to work with landowners to design easements that meet their unique needs, and to gain the maximum estate and tax benefits of easement donation.

### **Neighborhood initiative**

Two favorite conservation lands of townspeople – the Fremont Field on Old Jaffrey Road and the Cheney Avenue/Old Street Road field – were conserved through the efforts of neighbors to secure grant money and private donations. The OSC is available to work with neighbors on similar projects.

### **Town Funding**

Town Meeting votes approved funds to expand Fremont Field and to purchase "the Hall property" along Route 101W. When land of the highest conservation value can only be secured through town funding, the OSC will advocate for that funding.

## **Tools of land conservation**

**Land Acquisition Capital Reserve Fund** through which town funds are available to help landowners with the expenses of donating Conservation Easements (survey and legal work).

**"Conserving Your Land: Options for New Hampshire Landowners"** – a clear, concise booklet available to landowners from the OSC.

### **Local land trusts** – the Monadnock

Conservancy in Keene and the Harris Center in Hancock – assist landowners considering conservation options and are knowledgeable about the tax benefits of donating land and easements.

## **Contact us**

The Peterborough OSC is eager to work with landowners and townspeople in the strong belief that land decisions can fully meet a property owner's needs *and* the long-term best interests of the town in its goal of wise and balanced development.

Alan Bannister (924-9397)  
Debbie Kaiser (924-7075)  
Ed Henault (chair) (924-6986)  
Leandra MacDonald (924-3572)  
Tom Neff (924-5236)  
Liz Thomas (selectman) (924-3187)  
Francie Von Mertens (924-6550)  
Steve Walker (231-2914)

# Land Conservation in Peterborough

Open Space Committee  
Town House, Peterborough 03458

## **Vision for Peterborough**

A town where homes, businesses and town services are set within a natural landscape of healthy waterways, working forests and farms, abundant wildlife, trails and the scenic views that give pleasure to all.

## **Cutting Principle**

When land of the highest natural resource value changes hands in Peterborough, the needs of both the landowner and conservation can be met.

*"Managing land so that our open spaces can be met."*

## **Background**

### **Townsppeople's #1 priority**

The selectmen's town-wide survey in 2000 identified the following three top priorities:

- #1 "preserve open/green space"
- #2 "support existing businesses"
- #3 "maintain natural appearance"

(Town Report 2000, page 140)

Over the years – in surveys and at the polls – townspeople have voiced strong support for maintaining the rural character of their town.

### **Balancing preservation with the pressures of growth**

Southern New Hampshire is the most rapidly developing region in the Northeast. In response, the town's new Master Plan endorses a model of concentrated "village" development surrounded by permanently protected open space.



**PES 4<sup>th</sup> graders have adopted  
Fremont Field for yearlong study**

*View of Mt. Monadnock across  
Old Street Road conservation land*



### **Peterborough's Open Space Committee**

As recommended by the Master Plan, the Board of Selectmen appointed the Open Space Committee (OSC) in 2004 to promote preservation of open space in Peterborough.

The committee is charged with identifying and protecting important natural resource areas especially as they relate to

- ✓ water quality
- ✓ agriculture (farm & forest) to meet present and future needs
- ✓ wildlife habitat & diversity
- ✓ hiking/fishing/hunting access
- ✓ maintaining the scenic views important to the townspeople of Peterborough

Townspeople committed to open space preservation balanced with advocating for wise development patterns are encouraged to join in the committee's work.

### **The Committee's Work**

#### **Education**

The benefits of land conservation are many:

- **ECOLOGICAL** (maintaining healthy water, soil and air essential to all life forms)
- **FISCAL** (conservation land requires few of the town services that drive up taxes)
- **ECONOMIC** (25% of NH's economy is linked to open space through revenue and jobs from tourism, recreation, farm and forest, and quality of life)

**OSC work includes education to increase appreciation and support for open space – as well as citizen use and enjoyment of existing town conservation lands.**

#### **Landowner outreach**

Peterborough has a strong history of

- **Land donation** (including Casalis Marsh, Shieling Forest, the Raymond Trail, Miller State Park, Cunningham Pond town beach, and Adams Playground)
- **"Conservation Easement"** donation

whereby land remains privately owned but further development is restricted by legal deed

**OSC work includes landowner outreach, especially involving land with exceptional conservation value to present and future generations in Peterborough**