

**Section 9: Five-year Action Plan**

The Five-year Action Plan proposes a set of actions and a timeline for each of the open space and recreation goals and objectives. Of course, all of the goals, objectives, and actions are subject to funding and appropriation.

**Key** (group responsible for action): AC= Agriculture Committee, AO= Assessors’ Office, Arts= Arts Council, BOH= Board of Health, BOS= Board of Selectmen, CC= Conservation Commission and Conservation Associates, DAC=Disability Advisory Committee, FOYFC= Friends of Youth and Family Services, GCC= Golf Course Committee, HD= Highway Department, Hist= Historical Commission, HTC=Holliston Trails Committee, HS=Historical Society, HYSA= Holliston Youth Soccer Association, HYC= Holliston Youth Council, OSC= Open Space Committee, PARK= Park and Recreation Department/Park Commission, PB= Planning Board, SCH= Schools, Senior= Senior Center, TFC= Town Forest Committee, UCC= Upper Charles Conservation, Inc., VOL= Volunteers (Civic Organizations, Newcomers Club, Garden Club, Scouts), WD= Water Department/Commission.

**Goal 1. Protect and enhance the quality of Holliston’s surface and groundwater.**

<b>Sub-goals and Actions</b>	<b>Schedule</b>
<b><i>Goal 1A. Protect the quality of the drinking water supply.</i></b>	
Continue to evaluate bylaws and amend as necessary to increase protection of ground and surface water supplies (e.g. fertilizers and other chemicals). BOH, PB, CC	Ongoing
Continue to identify future water needs and seek acquisition and protection of future well sites. WD, CC	Ongoing
Develop a Wellhead Protection Plan. WD	2006
Inspect the areas surrounding the town wells yearly, and seek mitigation of potential threats to water supply. CC, WD	Ongoing
Continue to review BOH regulations to ensure adequate design of subsurface sewage disposal systems to ensure protection of groundwater quality. BOH	Periodically
Research and devise methods for the Town to purchase additional land surrounding current and future town wells (>400’), in particular up gradient of well. BOS, WD, CC	Ongoing
<b><i>Goal 1B. Protect the quantity of the drinking water supply.</i></b>	
Continue to work with Golf Course Committee to minimize the use of chemicals. WD, GCC, CC	2006
Work on implementing sewage treatment alternatives that would recharge groundwater within the watershed. BOH	Ongoing

<b>Sub-goals and Actions</b>	<b>Schedule</b>
Educate the residents and businesses about water conservation issues such as benefits of low water-use plantings and low flow plumbing fixtures with water bill mailings. Consider developing pamphlets for inclusion in water bills. CC, WD	Ongoing
Encourage water conservation efforts - especially for landscape use. CC, WD	Ongoing
Continue to research and amend bylaws to require water conservation in new development (e.g. sprinkler system, landscape design for commercial and multi-family developments, depth of topsoil). BOH, PB	Ongoing
Continue to research and incorporate Environmental/Resource-based Zoning into Bylaws. (e.g.. Charles River Watershed Assoc. recommendations). CC, PB, WD	Ongoing
<b><i>Goal 1C. Protect the quality of the town's surface water resources.</i></b>	
Develop a program to monitor the quality of the town's streams and lakes. CC	2006
Develop and implement an Aquatic Resource Management Plan with particular emphasis on Lake Winthrop. CC	2006

**Goal 2. Provide and maintain conservation land that protects Holliston's natural resources.**

<b>Sub-goals and Actions</b>	<b>Schedule</b>
<b><i>Goal 2A. Create greenbelts/wildlife corridors through Holliston.</i></b>	
Actively seek acquisition of potential links of conservation land and wetland areas to create wildlife corridors through and across town and joining to adjacent towns, using such vehicles as conservation restrictions, land acquisition, cluster subdivision permits, Ch. 61 status, etc. (See table of Land Adjacent to Existing Open Space in Section 5.) OSC, CC, PB	Ongoing
Continue to identify areas of significant rare and/or endangered species habitats and seek their protection or acquisition. (See tables of land in BioMap Areas and land in Priority Wildlife Habitat Areas in Section 5.) OSC, CC, VOL	Ongoing
Seek acquisition of area surrounding Jasper's Rock and connection to Poitras Memorial Conservation Land. CC, Hist, OSC	2006
<b><i>Goal 2B. Increase the amount of permanently protected open space to achieve a minimum of 25% protected land.</i></b>	
Maintain catalog of high priority parcels for acquisition and prioritize list. (See table of land with Multiple Open Space Values in Section 5). CC, OSC	Ongoing

<b>Sub-goals and Actions</b>	<b>Schedule</b>
Petition Town Meeting to vote that all lands under Conservation Commission jurisdiction are for conservation purposes only. CC, OSC	2007
Work cooperatively to acquire additional land around the West Holliston Town Forest and Upper Charles River Headwaters Area. OSC, CC, TFC, UCC	Ongoing
Maintain communication with Assessors Office to identify tax-title parcels with potential for open space/recreation purposes. OSC, CC, AO	Ongoing
Establish policy of assessing land and buildings at its use value if used for agriculture or if a Conservation Restriction is placed on land, without requiring owner to seek abatement. CC, AO, AC	2007
Track sale of Chapter 61 lands for Town acquisition. AC, OSC	Ongoing
Work with Board of Selectmen and other town groups to identify town-owned lands that should be protected open space. BOS, CC	Ongoing
<b><i>Goal 2C. Seek funding for purchase of open space lands.</i></b>	
Continue to document the costs and benefits of purchasing Open Space lands and continue to review tax advantages for landowners. OSC	Ongoing
Continue to seek a variety of mechanisms for funding open space acquisition. OSC	Ongoing
Continue to work with Community Preservation Committee to fund the acquisition of open space. OSC	Ongoing
When necessary seek Town Meeting approval for the acquisition of open space. CC, OSC	Periodically
<b><i>Goal 2D. Promote bylaw revisions to increase utility of open space provided under cluster subdivision and protect natural resources from effects of construction activities.</i></b>	
Revise zoning bylaw and Planning Board Rules and Regulations on cluster subdivisions to include a minimum percentage of upland or useable land for future open space. Consider bonuses for promoting or creating linkages or trails connecting to existing open space. PB, CC, OSC A good model is MassAudubon's Green Neighborhood Program ( <a href="http://www.greenneighborhoods.org/site/Index.htm">http://www.greenneighborhoods.org/site/Index.htm</a> ).	2006
Ensure open space in cluster developments include access. PB, CC	Ongoing
Revise cluster bylaw to better protect environmentally sensitive areas and to provide additional benefit to the town. PB, CC, OSC	2006
Evaluate and amend bylaw to limit tree clearing for subdivisions and projects subject to site plan review. PB	2006
Seek a bylaw amendment for Subdivisions and Site Plan Review to incorporate Best Management Practices to meet DEP storm-water management standards. PB, BOH, CC	2006

<b>Sub-goals and Actions</b>	<b>Schedule</b>
<b><i>Goal 2E. Maintain conservation lands.</i></b>	
Develop management plans for key open spaces, beginning with Fairbanks Land. CC	2006 to 2010
Encourage and expand stewardship program for conservation land. CC, VOL	Ongoing
Encourage involvement in stewardship program of schools, scouts, private companies and civic or special interest organizations (e.g. Newcomers Club, Garden Club, New England Mountain Biking Association). CC, SCH, VOL	Ongoing
<b><i>Goal 2F. Identify and preserve natural and scenic areas.</i></b>	
Continue identification, certification and protection of vernal pools. CC	Ongoing
Work with Agricultural Commission on restoration of cranberry bogs. AC, CC	2006 and ongoing
Work with Historical Commission and Historical Society on the restoration of millponds. Hist, HS, CC	2007 and ongoing
Incorporate town-wide tree planting program. CC, HD, SCH, VOL	2006
Video document and map important trees and scenic features on designated Scenic Roads. PB, SCH, VOL	2007
Seek acquisition of lands prioritized for scenic value. CC, BOS, OSC	Ongoing

**Goal 3: Increase and improve active and passive recreational opportunities to meet the diverse needs of all citizens.**

<b>Sub-goals and Actions</b>	<b>Schedule</b>
<b><i>Goal 3A. Provide recreational opportunities for all Holliston citizens.</i></b>	
Continue to seek funding for Upper Charles Trail as an accessible trail for persons with disabilities. HTC, CC, UCC, DAC	Ongoing
Continue fund-raising efforts and organize activities for teens. FOYFC	Ongoing
Develop safe parking areas at all publicly accessible open spaces and recreation areas. CC, Parks, HD	Ongoing
Increase recreational opportunities for disabled people, such as accessible trail systems and play equipment. CC, PARK, DAC	Ongoing
Seek bylaw that would require “neighborhood” recreation areas in new residential areas/subdivisions. CC, PARK, PB	2007
Seek reuse of the Andrews School, or other potential buildings, as an activity and counseling center for teens. HYC, FOYFC	
Continue to develop an environmental education/recreation outdoor program for Holliston’s youth. HYC, CC, PARK	
Develop recreation programs for seniors. PARK	2007

<b>Sub-goals and Actions</b>	<b>Schedule</b>
<b><i>Goal 3B. Maintain existing and develop additional Town recreational facilities and programs.</i></b>	
Seek acquisition of/or redevelopment of land for recreational purposes. PARK	Ongoing
When possible expand existing recreation areas to accommodate additional facilities. Such as developing additional outdoor tennis and basketball courts at the HS. PARK	Ongoing
Make parking and building repairs and improvements at Patoma and Stoddard Parks. PARK	2006
Develop walking trails, passive recreation and athletic practice fields on the Marshall Street old landfill cap. PARK	2007
Identify areas suitable for recreation/open space in high population density areas, and seek acquisition. CC, PARK	2007
Prepare a maintenance plan and funding source for ongoing maintenance of recreation facilities, including playing fields and play equipment. PARK	2007
Continue to work with Community Preservation Committee to fund the maintenance and development of additional recreational facilities and programs. PARK	Ongoing
Encourage use of private property for sports practice. PARK, VOL	Ongoing
Perform yearly mowing of hill at Weston Pond to maintain grassland habitat. HD	Ongoing

**Goal 4: Increase environmental awareness and promote appreciation of natural features and resources among all sectors of the Holliston community.**

<b>Sub-goals and Actions</b>	<b>Schedule</b>
<b><i>Goal 4A. Utilize conservation lands for educational purposes.</i></b>	
Increase use of conservation lands by school groups, youth groups, and civic groups. CC, SCH, VOL	Ongoing
Encourage teachers to utilize conservation lands for field trips/scientific studies. CC, SCH	Ongoing
Repair interpretive signage at vernal pool behind Miller School. CC, SCH, VOL	2006
Utilize school system to educate students on environmental and conservation issues. SCH	Ongoing
Sponsor public walks at conservation lands. CC	Ongoing
Advertise seminars/lectures offered by outside groups. CC	Ongoing
Promote appreciation of open space lands through art and/or education. SCH, Arts, CC	Ongoing

<b>Sub-goals and Actions</b>	<b>Schedule</b>
<b><i>Goal 4B. Educate citizens on the importance and fiscal advantages of land conservation.</i></b>	
Encourage Holliston Net News to publicize open spaces and recreation opportunities. Parks, CC	Ongoing
Provide seminar, articles regarding the amount of protected open space in Town, how much of the Town could be developed. CC, PB	Periodically
Provide seminar and public information on fiscal advantages of Open Space. CC, OSC	Periodically
Utilize Holliston Web page to increase environmental and conservation awareness. CC	Ongoing
Provide seminar on forest protection and wildlife enhancement to owners of large areas of land. TFC, CC	Periodically
Educate landowners on the advantages to placing conservation restrictions on land. OSC, CC	Ongoing
Hold a minimum of 3 lectures each year on environmental issues such as rare and endangered species, conservation restrictions, etc. and provide informational pamphlets at town functions.	Annually
<b><i>Goal 4C. Promote public awareness of conservation lands.</i></b>	
Improve and maintain database and map of conservation lands. CC, AO	2006 and Ongoing
Continue local programs on conservation lands such as sponsored walks. CC	Ongoing
Improve signage of trails within conservation lands. CC, VOL	Ongoing
Provide trail maps at entrances to conservation lands. CC	Ongoing
Accommodate parking in all trailhead areas CC	Ongoing
Publicize trails with trail maps at town function, on Holliston's web page, local cable channel, and library. Distribute information about availability of trail maps with tax bill or water bill. CC	Ongoing
Define and manage access, posting signage of rules for use of conservation lands. CC	Ongoing
<b><i>Goal 4D. Participate in regional environmental planning issues.</i></b>	
Maintain inter-town communication to protect sources of public water supplies. WD, BOS, CC	Ongoing
Work with area towns to minimize sources of air and water pollution. BOS, CC, WD, BOH	

**Goal 5: Protect the historic aspect of Holliston’s character by promoting the restoration and adaptive reuse of historic structures and by maintaining the historic appearance of downtown.**

<b>Sub-goals and Actions</b>	<b>Schedule</b>
<b><i>Goal 5A. Maintain the historic character of downtown Holliston.</i></b>	
Create design guidelines for appropriate historic areas such that new buildings and renovated buildings contribute to maintaining the historic appearance of Holliston. HS, Hist, PB	2008
Seek designation of additional areas in Town under National Register designation. Hist, HS	
Create bylaw and regulations on the protection of historical resources in Town. Hist	2007
Support small businesses in their reuse of historic buildings in downtown. BOS, Hist	Ongoing
Continue to locate and centralize historic records. Hist, HS	Ongoing
Continue to develop program to provide owners of historic buildings with signs designating date of construction. Hist	
Research colonial and Native American history and create educational pamphlet. Hist, HS	2007
<b><i>Goal 5B. Preserve and protect historic, natural and man-made features (e.g. outdoor artwork, arch bridges, and Winthrop canal).</i></b>	
Provide interpretive signage at the Linden Pond Conservation Land, highlighting the former historic mill. CC, Hist	2007
Identify historic resources on present conservation lands and seek funding for interpretive signage to identify and describe significant features. Hist, HS, CC	Ongoing
Coordinate with the Bullard Family Trust to seek protection of the historic Bullard Farm and its significant resources. OSC, CC	2006 & 2007
Preserve Arch Bridges and maintain views of structure from roadways and conservation lands. HD, CC	2008
Seek acquisition of land adjacent to arch trestle for a potential park at the 8- Arch Bridge. CC, BOS, OSC	2008
Clean up and maintain Winthrop Canal and seek establishment of 5’-10’ zone around canal for open space/maintenance. HD, CC, VOL	2007
Seek funding for potential park/Town Common in downtown area. CC, BOS	2007
Protect outdoor art and stone structures (including stone walls). Hist	Ongoing
<b><i>Goal 5C. Encourage the preservation and reuse of historic buildings.</i></b>	
Educate residential owners on advantages of historic preservation. Hist	Ongoing
Clarify roles of and increase public access to Historical Society/Historic Commission. Hist, HS	2006

<b>Sub-goals and Actions</b>	<b>Schedule</b>
Provide information and records for use by owners with historical homes or properties. Hist	Ongoing
Increase effort to get grants for Enhancement Grants Program. Hist	Ongoing

**Goal 6. Provide a system of trails that addresses the demand and opportunity for walking, biking, and skiing.**

<b>Sub-goals and Actions</b>	<b>Schedule</b>
<b><i>Goal 6A. Develop a comprehensive Trail Plan.</i></b>	
Expand role of Holliston Trail Committee to develop a town-wide Trails Plan. CC, HTC	2006
Define potential trail linkages. CC, HTC	2006
Evaluate potential trail linkages. CC, HTC	2007
Choose routes and begin work on implementation. CC, HTC, OSC, VOL	2007
<b><i>Goal 6B. Promote coordination with private organizations, neighboring Towns, and regional agencies to provide recreation links.</i></b>	
Seek funding for the acquisition of land to be incorporated into regional and local trail systems. CC, HTC	Ongoing
Seek designation of portions of local trails into the Bay Circuit Path System. CC, HTC	Ongoing
Seek construction of trail link to connect Cole Court and the Miller/Flag/ Adam's school complex. CC, HTC	2006

**Goal 7: Protect and enhance the quality of Holliston's air space.**

<b>Sub-goals and Actions</b>	<b>Schedule</b>
<b><i>Goal 7A. Protect residents from noise and light pollution.</i></b>	
Review bylaw and amend as necessary to ensure proper control of noise pollution, radio waves, air pollution and glare. PB	2006
Provide performance standards for outdoor lighting. PB	2006
Create design guidelines for lighting. PB	2006

**Open Space Protection Priorities**

Section 5 contained tables and maps showing key land for protecting the town's agricultural and forest areas. Other tables showed land important for habitat protection, water supply protection, and lands adjacent to existing open space. Another table listed lands with multiple open space values—lands with more than one of these open space resources. This table is also a list of priorities for open space protection.

Of course, circumstances such as owner's wishes and family situation will affect efforts to protect some of these lands, as will the town's ability to raise necessary funds. It is hoped

that many of these parcels will be protected, but it is likely that some will be developed. The open space plan will help the owner and the town to recognize and take efforts to protect some of these values even as the site is developed. For example, if a portion of the land helps complete a potential trail linkage, the town may negotiate an easement through the site if it is developed. If the land is important for protection of the water supply, the town can place restrictions on the uses allowed.

### **Conservation Commission and Planning Board Relationship**

The relationship between the Planning Board and the Conservation Commission will be increasing critical in guiding the future of the town. Each development proposal comes before the planning board and their regulations and deliberations often set the stage for how the property is developed. The Conservation Commission and the Open Space and Recreation Plan can provide important information about the natural resources of each site and how those resources relate to the character of the town, water supply, wildlife habitat, and linkages through potential corridors and trails.