

WILTON CONSERVATION PLAN 2016



Prepared by the:
WILTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Adopted February 8, 2016

With the assistance of:
NASHUA REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

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**ADOPTION OF THE CONSERVATION PLAN
WILTON, NEW HAMPSHIRE**

The Conservation Commission of the Town of Wilton, New Hampshire, in accordance with the provisions of RSA Chapter 36-A, does hereby adopt the Wilton Conservation Plan of 2016, including the findings, recommendations, goals and policies contained in this plan for the purpose of fulfilling the requirements of the RSA to "...conduct research into local land and water areas..." and to "...keep an index of all open space and natural, aesthetic or ecological areas, with the plan of obtaining information pertinent to the proper utilization of such areas..." The information contained in this plan will be used by the Conservation Commission to aid the Planning Board and other Town Boards in the performance of their respective duties and to make recommendations for the protection and wise use of Wilton's natural, agricultural, historic and scenic resources.

 Date 2/8/16

W. Bart, Hunter Chairman
Wilton Conservation Commission

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Increasing development pressures and land values in New Hampshire, particularly in the southern region, have demonstrated the need for protecting the natural, agricultural, scenic and historic resources of the entire State and those of each individual municipality. The farms, forests, wetlands, scenic vistas and historic resources of a community are extremely important to the overall character of the community, the region, and in many instances the State. Realizing that it would not be impossible to save everything, it is important for a community to identify those aspects essential to the character and identity of the Town.

The Town of Wilton is located in the south central region of the State, bounded by the Towns of Lyndeborough, Milford, Mason, Greenville and Temple and approximately 16 miles from Nashua, NH, and just over 20 miles southwest of Manchester, NH, the two largest cities in NH. During the 1990's southern NH experienced a significant period of overall growth, and residential development. Acres of forest, field and farmland continue to be subdivided for residential, commercial and industrial purposes. Tax map records illustrate the dramatic change in Wilton. In 1940 there were 700 individual parcels of land; currently, there are well over 2,000. Once converted, the farms, forests and other natural areas are lost forever. In addition, there is growing concern in the Town and throughout the State for the protection of wetlands, aquifers, rivers and streams as natural areas and as water resources. This concern led to a USGS aquifer delineation study for the NRPC region (Toppin, K. W. (1987). Funding for the project was a joint effort between the USGS and the localities.

Wilton is committed to protecting its significant resources as is evidenced by the numerous direct and indirect protection mechanisms already in place: the wetlands conservation district, minimum setbacks for leach-fields from wetlands and open waterbodies, the aquifer protection district and the floodplain conservation district all provide protection for the Town's resources. The Wilton Conservation Commission (WCC) worked with the Society for the Protection of NH Forests to create the 2009 Natural Resources Inventory and has continued to provide funding to update the Master Plan, and this Conservation Plan as well as remaining active in regional issues and projects with the Nashua Regional Planning Commission (NRPC).

The legislative authority for towns to create conservation commissions also outlines the responsibilities of the Commission. One of those responsibilities is to "maintain an index of the Town's natural and scenic resources." In addition, the Conservation Commission is charged with "recommending to the Selectmen a program for the protection, development and sound utilization of all the areas in the index." This Plan is developed to assist the Conservation Commission in achieving those objectives.

The Plan contains an inventory of the Town's natural, agricultural, scenic and historic resources. This inventory provides the Conservation Commission with sound information concerning existing and potentially important resources in need of future protection. In addition to the inventory, the Plan also contains information on the relevant federal, state and local regulations and programs concerned with resource protection. Finally, the Plan identifies priorities for resource management and makes

recommendations for actions to improve the level of protection afforded the Town's valuable resources and identifies potential sources of funding for conservation purchases. The Plan is intended to provide the Conservation Commission and other town officials with the information necessary to make wise decisions for short and long range preservation and management of the Town's natural, agricultural, scenic and historic resources.

CHAPTER II: GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Prior to developing the Conservation Plan, the Conservation Commission established a few overall broad goals for the plan. After completing the inventory of the Town's natural, agricultural, scenic and historic resources and the identification of the federal, state and local regulations protecting these resources, the Conservation Commission proceeded to develop measurable objectives for achieving the goals. The goals and objectives established for the Plan are the precursors to the recommended actions to implement the Plan. The following goals and objectives have been established for the Wilton Conservation Plan.

Goal: To preserve the visual character of the Town by protecting its natural, historic, scenic and agricultural resources.

- Objectives:**
1. Identify the natural, historic, scenic and agricultural resources of the Town.
 2. Maintain the Natural Resources Inventory, last updated in 2009.
 3. Purchase or acquire easements, options and rights of first refusal for the priority areas identified in 2009.

Goal: To promote the conservation, protection and sound management of the Town's natural resources.

- Objectives:**
1. Preserve prime agricultural resources.
 2. Increase protection for wetlands.
 3. Protect the shorelines of streams and ponds.
 4. Conserve prime and active farmland.
 5. Limit future development to sites with suitable soils.
 6. Protect sensitive steep slope areas, slopes greater than 15%, from development.
 7. Increase protection of public and private water supplies.
 8. Reduce non-point sources of pollution.
 9. Maintain a diversity of wildlife habitats to ensure species diversity.
 10. Connect parcels of land to create wildlife corridors as defined by NH Department of Fish and Game as well as travel corridors for people.

Goal: Provide a broad range of recreational opportunities for all ages and user groups.

- Objectives:**
1. Increase awareness of existing facilities.
 2. Increase public access to and use of the Town's natural resources.
 3. Acquire fee simple rights or easements to additional recreational land.

Goal: Protect and preserve the Town's historic resources.

- Objectives**
1. Identify the Town's significant historic resources.
 2. Support the development of a Historic District and work with the Heritage Commission.

CHAPTER III: INVENTORY, ANALYSIS AND TOOLS TO CONSERVE, PROTECT AND ENHANCE WILTON'S RESOURCES

A. Water Resources

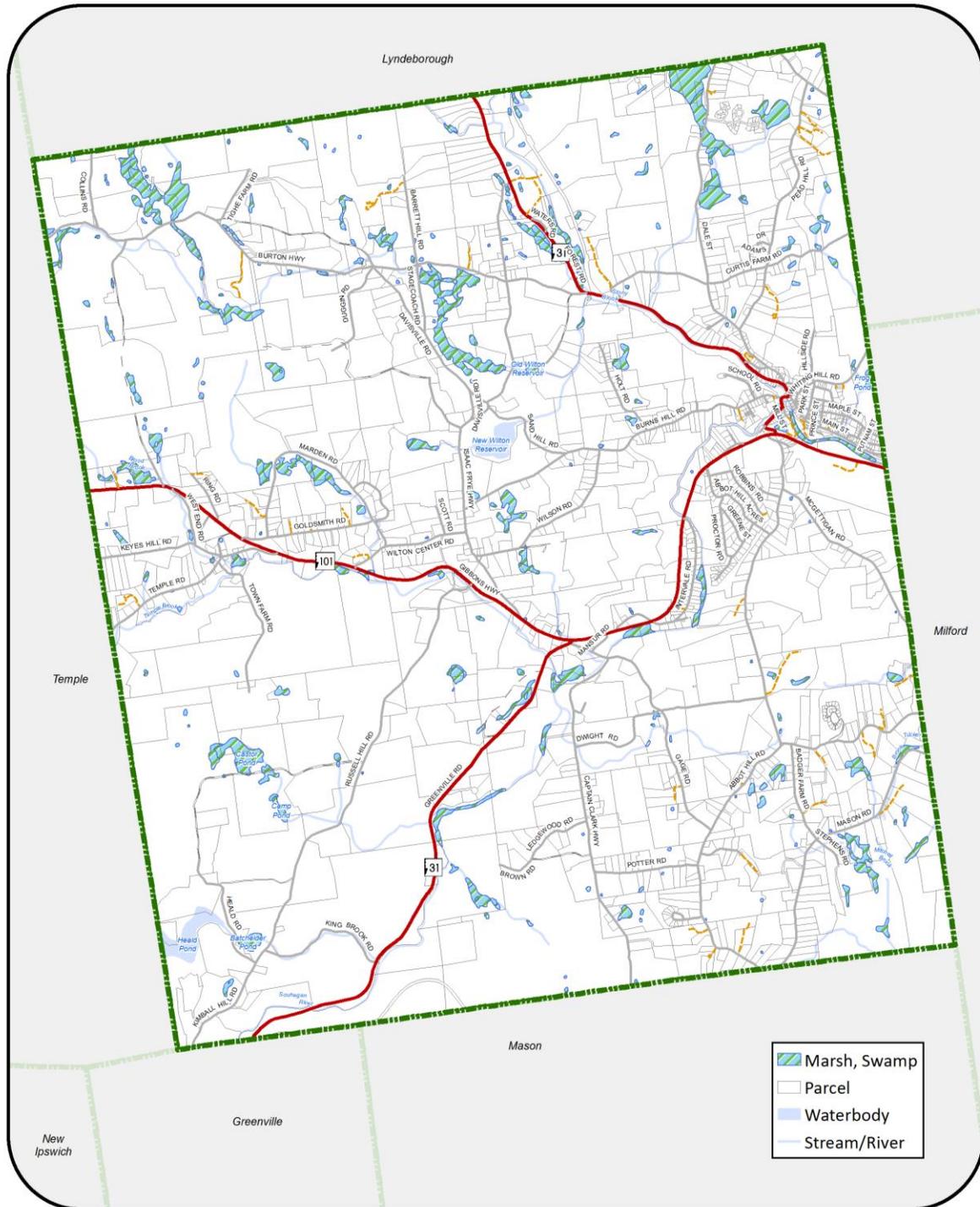
Surface water resources represent a small portion of Wilton's total area. Though small in total area, the community's lakes, ponds, rivers, streams and wetlands are an important network providing wildlife habitats, flood control, water supplies, groundwater recharge, scenic views and a host of outdoor recreational opportunities. These resources need to be protected to ensure a quality water supply, to maintain an ecological balance, to preserve scenic views, to minimize flood damage and to provide a diversity of outdoor recreational opportunities.

Rivers and Streams

The Town of Wilton is endowed with an extensive network of perennial and intermittent rivers and streams. The Souhegan River, the largest, flows through Wilton for approximately 7.4 miles as it travels along its course from New Ipswich to the Merrimack River in Merrimack. Aside from providing the usual opportunities for fishing and canoeing in the spring, the River provides many enjoyable scenic views as it winds along Route 31. The majority of the other streams in the Town drain into the Souhegan River. Stony Brook, Blood Brook, Gambrel (Gambol) Brook and Farm Brook are the four major perennial streams that flow into the Souhegan River in Wilton. According to the 2009 Natural Resources Inventory (NRI) there are nearly 40 miles of tributary waters flowing into the Souhegan River. Stockwell Brook and Mill Brook flow into the Wilton Reservoir System and are classified as Class A waters because of their historical use as public water supplies. All of the other surface waters in the Town are classified as Class B waters meaning that they meet the 1972 Clean Water Act "fishable and swimmable" criteria as amended. Other surface streams include Temple Brook, King Brook, Goldsmith Brook, Beaver Dam Brook and an unnamed brook along with many intermittent streams that carry water during spring runoff and periods of high rain. Map 3-1 shows the location of the surface water resources for the Town.

These rivers and streams traverse the Town providing numerous opportunities for fishing, swimming, boating and viewing while maintaining an adequate surface water supply and recharging the groundwater aquifers. Septic system leachate, agricultural and urban runoff are some of the major non-point sources of pollution threatening the Town's rivers and streams. The addition of nutrients from human and animal wastes and fertilizers can cause excessive growths of vegetation and algae and accelerate the natural eutrophication process of the waterbody. Chemicals and petroleum products from pesticide applications and urban runoff contaminate the water making it unfit for consumption and recreational use. Agricultural and construction activities can cause an increase in soil erosion. This in turn can increase the turbidity of the water and cause accelerated sedimentation of streams.

MAP 3-1: Rivers, Lakes, Streams and Wetlands



Data Source(s):

Wetlands – New Hampshire National Wetlands Inventory (NWI), courtesy NH Granit
Waterbodies, Rivers, and Streams – New Hampshire Hydrology Dataset (NHHD), courtesy NH Granit
Parcels, Roads – NRPC GIS Database

Other sources of pollution include point sources; discharges that can be traced directly to the source such as a discharge from foundries, sewage treatment plants, a specific industry, construction activities or underground storage tanks, and acid rain which is caused by sulfur dioxide emissions from automobiles and nitrogen oxides. Point sources of pollution can cause problems similar to non-point sources, though generally to a much greater degree.

These sources, however, must receive a National Pollution Discharge and Elimination System permit which specifies the level of waste treatment, effluent monitoring practices and the minimum effluent standards for the discharge. Acid rain lowers the pH of the water, disturbing the fragile ecological balance needed for fish reproduction.

For these reasons, Wilton's network of rivers and streams should be handled with care to protect existing and future water supplies and to provide for recreational opportunities. The Aquifer Protection Overlay District provides protection for significant Rivers and Brooks such as the Souhegan River and Stony Brook; however it does not address all of the streams in the Town. The Town of Wilton Zoning Ordinance contains no provisions for minimum setbacks of parking areas, structures, agricultural activities or other forms of development from streams or rivers outside of the Aquifer Protection Overlay District and floodplains. Septic leach fields are required to be set back a minimum of 75 feet from open water bodies. This provides limited protection for water quality from human wastes; however, the ordinance contains no provisions to protect the shoreline from erosion caused by over development of the sensitive shoreline area. The development and adoption of shoreline minimum setbacks is key to protecting the Town's rivers and streams from degradation caused by excessive development of the shoreline.

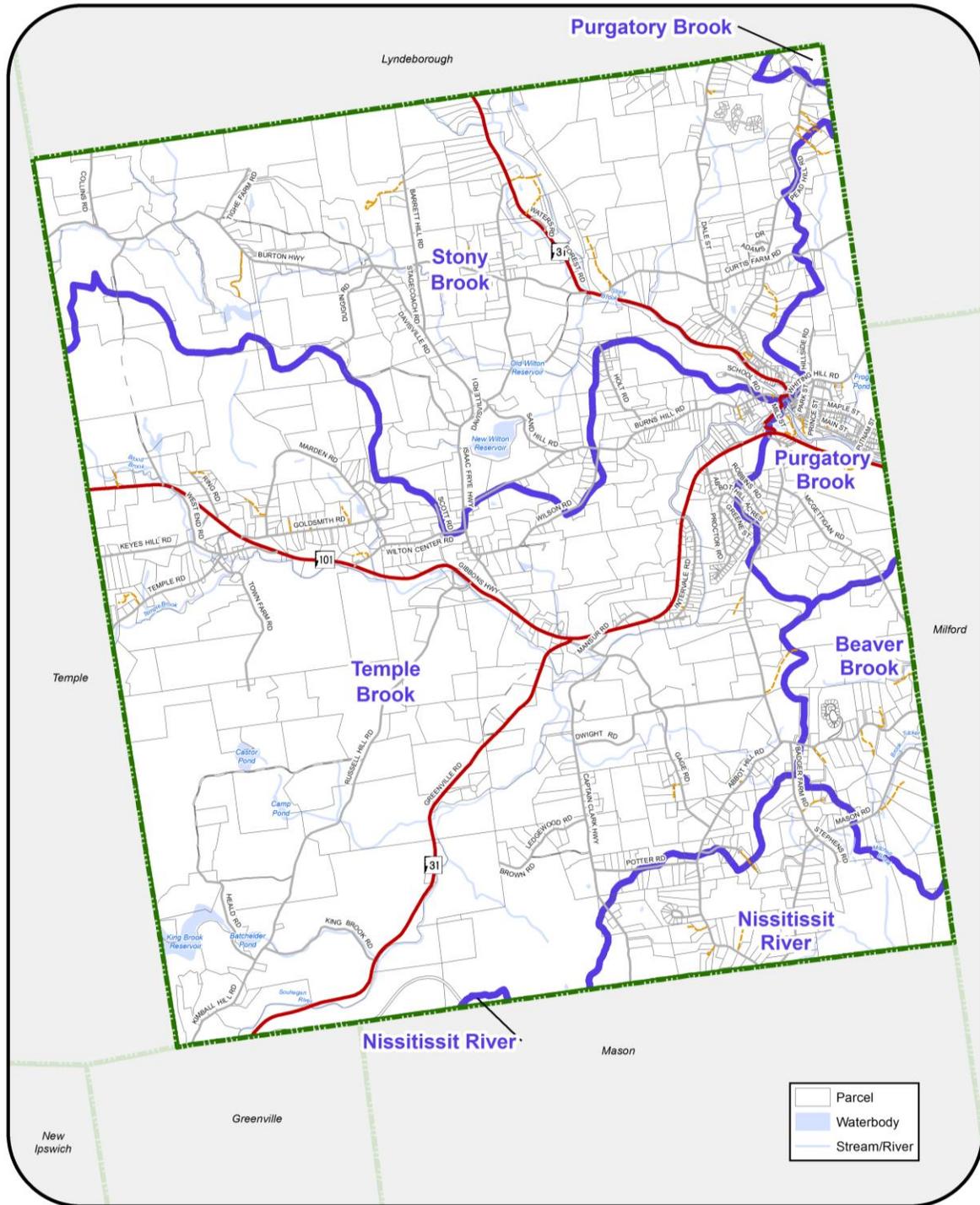
Watersheds

A discussion of rivers and streams is not complete without considering the watershed areas that drain into the watercourses and waterbodies. A watershed is defined as the land area that drains into a watercourse or waterbody. These pathways can be underground or on the surface and they typically become progressively larger as the water moves downstream. Watersheds vary in size and every stream, tributary, and river has an associated watershed (size depicted in Table 1). Small watersheds join to become larger watersheds. Wilton lies within the Souhegan River watershed, which is part of the larger Merrimack River watershed. Watersheds within the Town are depicted on Map 3-2.

Table 3-1: Watersheds in Wilton

Watershed	Acres in Wilton	Percentage of Wilton
Stony Brook	5,043	30.7%
Purgatory Brook	990	6.0%
Beaver Brook	720	4.4%
Temple Brook	8,733	53.0%
Nissitissit River	964	5.9%

MAP 3-2: Watersheds



Data Source(s):

Watersheds – HUC 12 Basins, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), courtesy NH GRANIT

The size and interjurisdictional nature of watersheds make them difficult to manage. Because watersheds are not constrained by municipal boundaries, it is important for Wilton to develop a strong working relationship with its neighboring towns. It is essential to evaluate the impact of the proposal on the waterbody into which it drains and to assess the cumulative impact of development within the watershed. Consideration should be given to increases in impervious area, alteration of natural drainage patterns, increases in quantity and velocity of runoff and potential for erosion and sedimentation.

The Town of Wilton has a Watershed District, identified in the Zoning Ordinance, which is an overlay district located in the northwest section of town and generally applies to waters that flow into the old and new reservoirs. The Watershed District is designed to preserve the quality of the water and to protect the health and welfare of residents by minimizing sources of pollution and to protect the watersheds of the Old and New Wilton Reservoirs. The Watershed District requires a minimum lot size of 6 acres, excluding wetlands and floodplains. Various setbacks are established to ensure that a residence, building, structure, outflow from building drainage, or a septic system is located at a safe distance from open water, streams, and the 100 year floodplain. In addition, the Watershed District takes precedence over all other districts located in the zone. The Town has recently converted to using groundwater for the public drinking supply; however, the reservoirs will be retained for a back-up system. Because of this, the Watershed District should be maintained to ensure the quality of the water with minor changes to allow for passive recreational use of the area.

Permitted uses

Section 14.3.5 of the Town of Wilton Zoning Ordinance states:

1. The setback area defined in section 14.3.3 shall be left in its natural state and where existing, a natural woodland buffer shall be maintained.
2. Where existing, a natural woodland buffer must be maintained. Tree cutting shall be limited to not more than fifty (50) percent of the basal area of trees, and not more than fifty (50) percent of the total number of saplings, in a twenty (20) year period. A healthy, well-distributed stand of trees, saplings, shrubs, and ground cover shall be maintained. Stumps and their root systems must remain intact in the ground. Dead, diseased, fallen or dangerous trees, saplings, limbs, shrubs, and ground cover may be removed following applicable Best Management Practices (BMPS).

One (1) driveway access may be permitted within the setback area, provided the driveway construction plan and erosion control plan are approved by the Planning Board in accordance with applicable zoning and regulations. As approved, necessary alteration of terrain, removal of rocks, stumps and roots are permitted exclusively for driveway construction and associated stormwater management and erosion control. Any activity or construction within the setback is subject to inspection as a condition of approval, solely to ensure compliance with any approval or permit.

Prohibited uses:

Section 14.4 of the Town of Wilton Zoning Ordinance states:

1. The use of any hazardous or toxic materials or liquids within the above stated setback areas.
(According to the Town of Wilton Zoning Ordinance, Section 3.1.11 Hazardous or Toxic Materials or Liquids is defined as “Materials or liquids that pose a threat to the environment, whether in use, storage or transit, including without exception hazardous waste identified and listed in accordance with Section 3001 of the Federal Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976, and any amendments thereto.”)
2. No pasturing of livestock or fowl will be permitted within one hundred (100) feet of open flowing water. It will be the responsibility of the land owner to protect the water by installing adequate and proper fencing.
3. No land shall be filled, excavated or graded and no land shall be used in such a way that would cause substantial or avoidable erosion or alter existing patterns of natural water flow in the Watershed District, except for those uses incidental to permitted residential and agricultural construction.
4. All uses other than residential or agricultural.

Lakes and Ponds

The Town of Wilton contains 10 named ponds, and 50 unnamed ponds under 2 acres. The largest ponds are the NH Water Resources Board (WRB) Flood Control Site 15, 69 acres, the NH WRB Flood Control Pond Site 25-B (Temple-Wilton), 45 acres, and the New Wilton Reservoir, 18 acres. An inventory of Wilton's ponds and reservoirs is presented in Table 3-2.

Table 3-2: Wilton Ponds and Reservoirs Inventory

Name of Waterbody	Size
Heald Pond	Area: 65 acres * Elevation: 827 feet Avg Depth: 5 feet Max Depth: 7 feet
New Wilton Reservoir	Area: 22 acres* Length: 0.9 Miles Elevation: 618 feet
Old Wilton Reservoir	Area: 0.9739* Elevation: 628 feet
NH Flood Control Site (Site 15)	Area: 69 acres Elevation: 835 feet
Batchelder Pond	Area: 6 acres Length: 0.15 miles Elevation: 819 feet
NH WRB Flood Control Pond (Temple-Wilton)	Area: 45 Acres Elevation: 740 feet
Beaver Dam Brook Flood Control Pond (Site 33)	Area: 5 Acres Elevation: 680 feet
Burton Brook Flood Control Site (Site 110-A)	Area: 1.5 acres Elevation: 860 feet
Rhododendron Swamp	Area: 30 acres Length: 0.3 miles Elevation: 575 feet
Frog Pond	Area: 4 acres* Length: 0.3 miles Elevation: 465 feet

**Calculation based on data courtesy of GRANIT
Elevations based on contour map*

The Town's numerous lakes and ponds are faced with a multitude of existing and potential threats. Inappropriate shoreline development utilizing sub-surface waste disposal systems allows nutrients and bacteria to migrate through the soil and groundwater into the surface water. This can result in health hazards, increased water vegetation and acceleration of the eutrophication process of the waterbody. Construction activities and logging operations can increase erosion and sedimentation leading to an increase in the turbidity of the water and accelerated sedimentation. Wilton's lakes and ponds are also threatened by acid rain. Acid rain raises the level of sulfuric and nitric acids in the water causing toxic metals to be released from the surrounding soils and changing the water chemistry so it is unable to support many fish species, most noticeably, game species. Because of these impacts, Wilton's lakes and ponds need to be protected to maintain their natural integrity and to ensure the continuation of their vital role in the ecosystem.

As with rivers and streams, attention needs to be focused on the impact of development within the watersheds of the ponds in the Town. A number of these ponds are used by the State to provide flood control, and therefore need to be protected from encroaching development in order to maintain this capacity. Also, most of the ponds are under private ownership and less than 10 acres in size; limiting public access, use and state authority. Thus, without local controls the potential exists for unchecked development to occur along the shores of these small ponds.

Aside from the Watershed District there is little protection available for the Town's ponds. The Zoning Ordinance does not provide for minimum setbacks of structures or agricultural practices from open waterbodies outside the Watershed Conservation District. Septic systems and leach fields are required to be set back a minimum of 75 feet from open waterbodies based on the Sanitation Code and 75-100 feet for any development within a subdivision based on the soils. In order to provide adequate protection for its lakes and ponds, the Town should adopt a minimum 75 foot setback from the shoreline for structures and associated uses such as parking areas with the requirement that a 50 foot vegetative buffer strip be maintained along the shoreline. In addition, the setback for septic tanks and leach fields should be increased to 125 feet for systems located in somewhat poorly drained soils or soils with a rapid or very rapid permeability. This setback was upheld by the NH Supreme Court in the 1979 case Gillespie v. Town of Freedom.

The New Wilton Reservoir is one of the largest waterbodies in the Town. Recently, the Town converted from using this Reservoir as its public water supply to using groundwater. The Old and New Wilton Reservoirs, however, will be maintained as a back-up water supply in case of an emergency such as contamination of the wells. While the reservoirs still need to be protected from development, the potential exists for increasing passive recreational use of the two areas. Water recreation in the Town is quite limited; therefore, the Town should contact the State authorities to discuss the use of the reservoirs for recreational purposes.

Wetlands

Wetlands are defined as areas with soils identified as poorly or very poorly drained. Based on the National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) there are approximately 525 acres of wetland soils located in Wilton. This represents about 3.19% of the total 16,447.3 acres covered by the Town. The Majority of these wetland areas are located adjacent to rivers, streams and ponds. There are however, a few isolated wetlands scattered throughout the Town. Wetlands are shown on Map 3-1.

Wetlands perform many important functions such as aquifer recharge, flood control, erosion control, water purification, nursery areas and wildlife habitat. Additionally, a number of endangered and threatened plant species are only found in wetlands. Once thought of as wastelands and areas to be filled, the important role that wetlands play in the hydrologic and ecologic health of an area is now recognized. These areas need to be protected from encroaching development and fill so that they may continue to perform their hydrologic and ecologic functions. The existing Town Wetlands Conservation District covers all areas with soils identified as poorly or very poorly drained.

Permitted Uses:

Section 11.3 of the Town of Wilton Zoning Ordinance states:

Any use that does not result in the erection of any structure or alter the surface configuration by the addition of fill or by dredging and that is otherwise permitted by the zoning ordinance.

1. Forestry - tree farming;
2. Agriculture;
3. Wildlife refuge;
4. Parks and such recreational uses as are consistent with the purpose and intentions of this section;
5. Conservation areas and nature trails;
6. Open spaces as permitted by subdivision regulations and other sections of this ordinance;
7. Natural drainage-ways, e.g. streams, creeks or other paths of normal run-off water; and
8. Water impoundments and wells for water supply.

There are special exceptions for streets and roads, utility right-of-way easements and for uses not allowed by the zoning district such as the erection of a building or structure, dredge, fill or other alteration that can be obtained from the Zoning Board of Appeals providing these activities will not conflict with the purpose and intent of the District. In addition, wetland areas are excluded from the buildable area in calculating minimum lot size. Again, septic tanks and leach fields are required to be set back a minimum of 75 feet from the edge of the wetland. The Subdivision Regulations require that leach fields be set back from wetland areas as follows: 75 feet if the leach field is located entirely in well-drained soil with no restrictive layers and slopes less than 8%; 100 feet if the leach field is located entirely or partially in somewhat poorly drained soils, moderately well-drained soils and excessively-drained soils, or soils with a restrictive layer and slope of 8% or greater. Buildings must be set back 50 feet from delineated wetland boundaries.

These regulations provide a level of wetland protection greater than even the State prime wetlands designation which only applies to very poorly drained soils. In addition, conducting the wetland identification and analysis necessary for prime wetland designation is costly and time consuming. With a little fine tuning and adjustment, the existing wetland regulations could be amended to increase the level of protection provided for the Town's valuable wetlands resource. First, the setback for septic tanks and leach fields should be increased to 125 feet for systems located in very poorly drained soils or in soils with rapid or very rapid permeabilities. Second, the Wetland Conservation District should be amended to require a minimum setback of 75 feet from the edge of the wetland for all site developments including buildings and parking areas. Within this 75 foot setback, a 50 foot vegetative buffer strip should be maintained as a filter for sediments, nutrients and other potential contaminants. The addition of these provisions will increase the level of protection afforded wetlands to a level sufficient to ensure maintenance and continuation of the resource.

Floodplains

Floodplains are areas adjacent to watercourses and waterbodies that are susceptible to flooding during periods of excessive water runoff. Flooding can cause a great deal of damage to structures and activities located in the floodplain. To prevent excessive loss from flooding the Federal Emergency Management Administration and the Federal Insurance Administration have prepared a series of maps identifying areas located in the 100 year floodplain. It is recommended that these areas remain undeveloped or that they be used for passive activities that would not receive excessive damage from flooding. Construction of residential, commercial and industrial buildings is allowed within the floodplain subject to strict regulations for flood proofing of the structures and requirements for flood insurance. Floodplains for Wilton are depicted on the Flood Insurance Rate Maps prepared by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

National Geodetic Vertical Datum

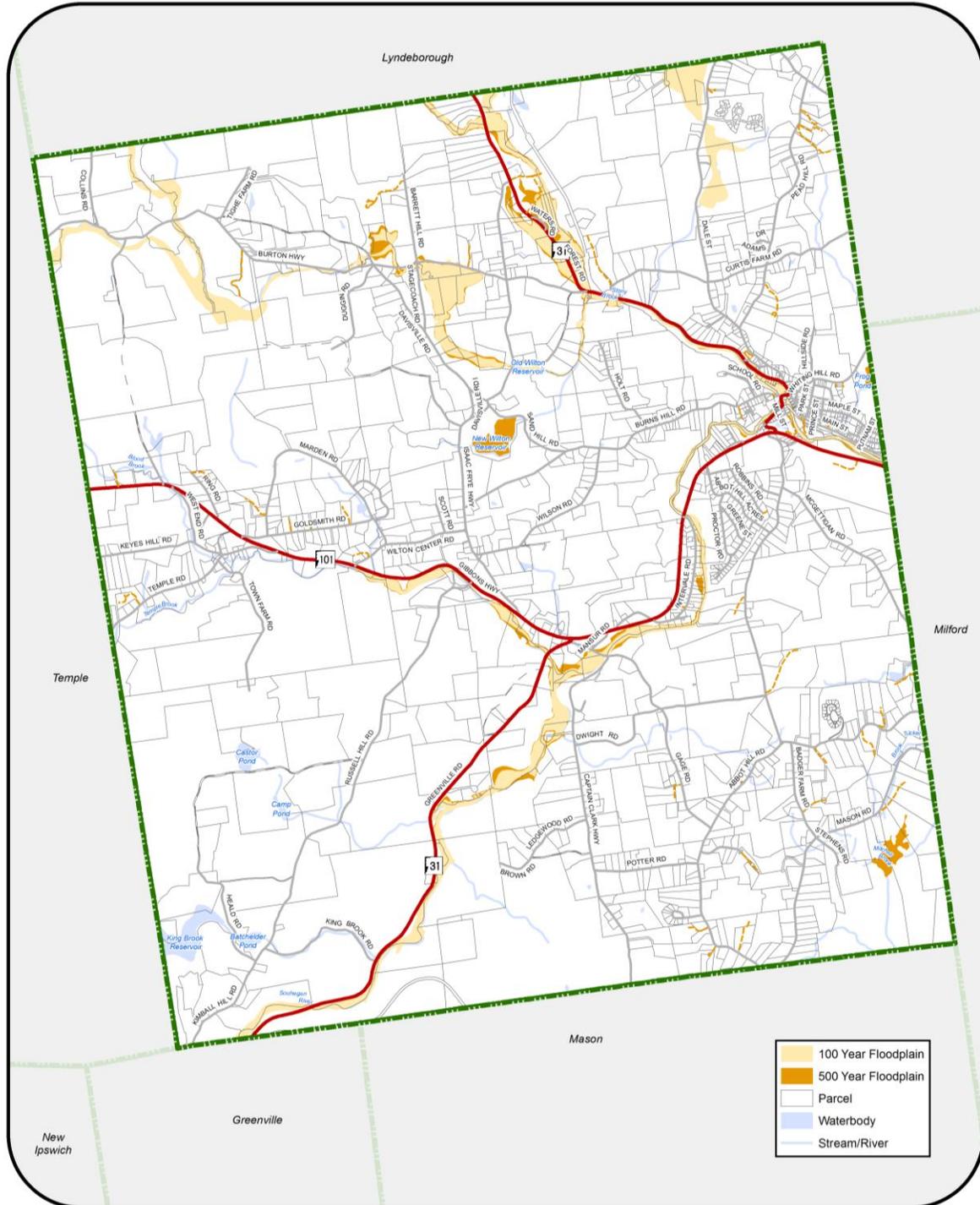
The Wilton Floodplains Conservation District requires all proposed development in any special flood hazard area to obtain a permit. The building inspector shall review all building permit applications for new construction or substantial improvements to determine whether proposed building sites will be reasonably safe from flooding. Any applicant also needs to provide the Building Inspector with:

1. The as-built elevation (in relation to National Geodetic Vertical Datum (NGVD) of the lowest floor (including the basement) and include whether or not the structure contains a basement;
2. If the structure has been flood-proofed, the as-built elevation (in relation to NGVD) to which the structure was flood-proofed; and
3. Any certification of flood-proofing.

All manufactured homes are to be placed or substantially improved within special flood hazard areas shall be elevated on a permanent foundation such that the lowest floor of the manufactured home is at or above the base flood level.

All efforts should be made to retain the floodplains in the Town in their natural state or to utilize them for recreation areas, agriculture or other passive uses.

MAP 3-3: Floodplains



Data Source(s):

Floodplains – FEMA Digital Flood Insurance Rate Map (DFIRM), courtesy NH GRANIT

Aquifers

Stratified drift aquifers are composed of sand and gravel deposited by the melting of glacial ice. These deposits may be quite extensive, layered or "stratified" and coarse in texture. This coarse texture allows for the storage of large volumes of water and the high porosity allows groundwater to flow through quite readily. Because of their potential to yield large volumes of water, stratified drift aquifers are considered prime sources of water for municipalities or other large volume users.

The United States Geological Survey (USGS) recently conducted a survey of stratified drift aquifers in the NRPC region. The location and extent of the stratified drift aquifers in Wilton is shown in detail on the maps produced as part of the USGS Aquifer Delineation Study and in general on Map 3-4. The map delineates the aquifer based on transmissivity and material composition. Transmissivity is the capacity of the aquifer to transmit water measured in feet squared per day. Aquifers are classified in four basic types based on material composition. Material composition is directly related to the storage capacity and transmissivity of the aquifer, for example coarse grained stratified drift is more porous than fine grained stratified drift and therefore it has a greater capacity to store and transmit water. The following excerpt is the USGS aquifer study description of Wilton's stratified drift aquifers:

"Permeable stratified drift covers 5.2 square miles or about 20 percent of Wilton. These stratified drift deposits are found in continuous bands along Stony Brook, Blood Brook, a Stony Brook tributary, and the Souhegan River (pls. 1 and 2)."

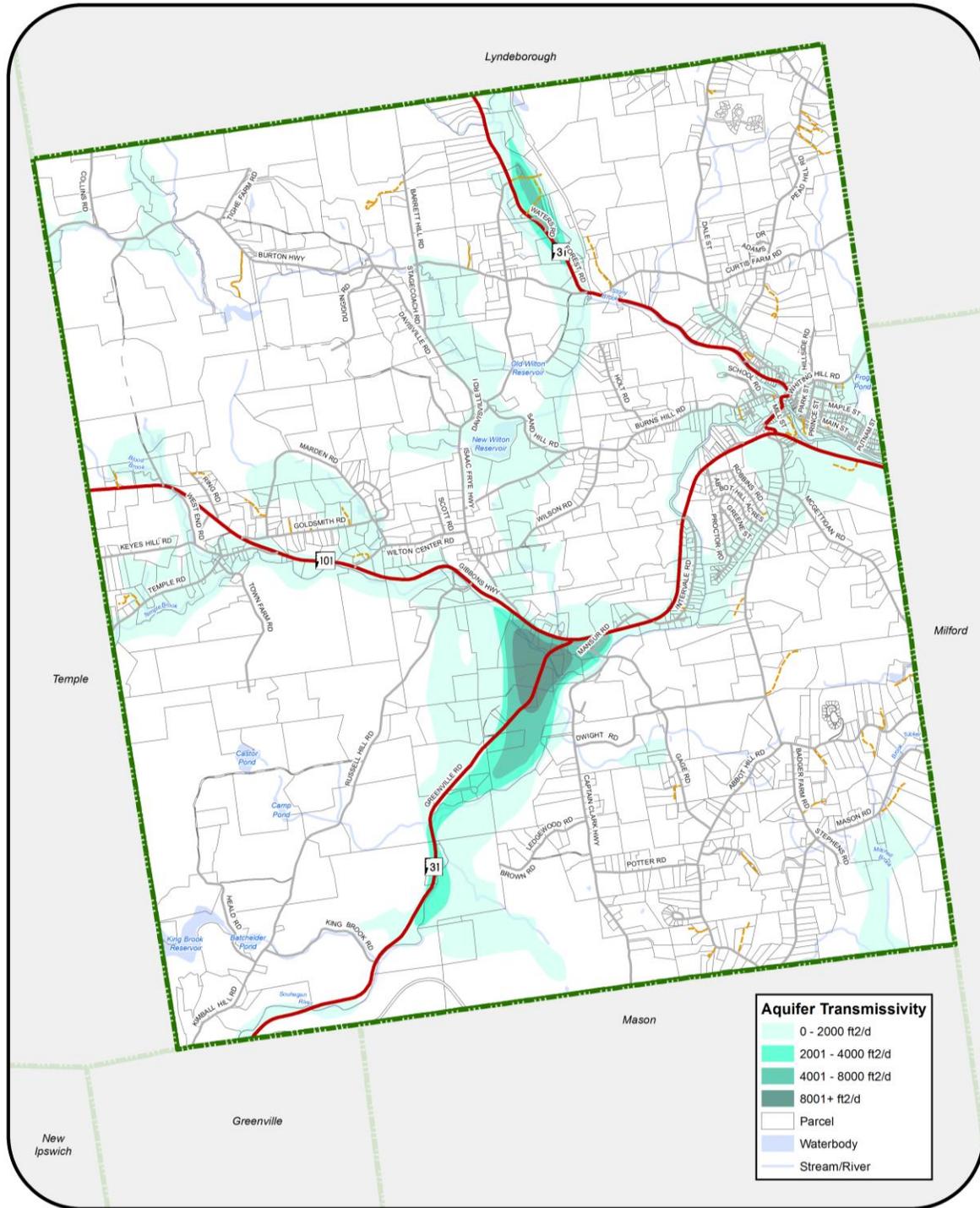
http://pubs.usgs.gov/wri/wrir_95-4100/pdf/wrir_95-4100.pdf

The most important stratified drift aquifer available for additional development is along the Souhegan River near New Hampshire State Routes 101 and 31 (pls. 1 and 2). This aquifer extends from the Massachusetts border northward toward Wilton Center and westward up the valley on Blood Brook. Seismic-refraction and test-well data indicate the presence of about 80 feet of saturated sand and gravel in this area. Well W-6 in this aquifer has a yield of 500 gallons/minute. Transmissivity in the most thickly saturated part of this aquifer is greater than 8,000 square feet per day.

The aquifer along Stony Brook south of the Wilton-Lyndeborough town line is of limited area extent but contains at least 40 feet of saturated sand and gravel. Potential exists for induced recharge from Stony Brook to supplement the yield of this aquifer. Although the transmissivity of this aquifer is less than 8,000 square feet per day, the aquifer may, upon testing, have the capacity to sustain one large-yielding well.

All other stratified drift aquifers in Wilton, including those in valleys of upper Blood Brook, Stony Brook tributary and lower Souhegan River contain stratified drift with transmissivity generally less than 2,000 square feet per day; this stratified drift is best suited for supplying water to individual households or other small users."

MAP 3-4: Aquifers



Data Source(s):

Aquifer Transmissivity – US Geological Survey (USGS), distributed by NH GRANIT

Aquifers are highly susceptible to pollution due to the ease and speed with which water-borne pollutants are transmitted through the soil. Insecticides, septic tank effluent, leaking underground storage tanks, landfill leachate or improperly stored hazardous wastes are potential sources of aquifer pollution. In addition, development which involves extensive amounts of impervious material cover (e.g. asphalt or cement) can reduce the productivity of aquifer areas. Extensive sand and gravel excavations can also have a negative impact on aquifers and removal of too much material increases the likelihood of contamination. Decreasing the amount of material overlaying the aquifer increases the potential for the contaminant to infiltrate into the aquifer at an increased rate and at an increased concentration.

The Town of Wilton Zoning Ordinance contains an Aquifer Protection District. The Aquifer Protection District sets forth the land uses and activities allowed and prohibited in the areas identified as stratified drift aquifers by the USGS Aquifer Delineation Study. A brief synopsis of the permitted and prohibited uses and activities within the Aquifer Protection District is presented below. A complete description of the Aquifer Protection District can be found in the Town of Wilton Zoning Regulations, copies of which are available in the Town Office.

Permitted uses:

(This is a summary of Section 12.3 of the Town of Wilton Zoning Ordinance)

1. Industrial or commercial uses which discharge no non-human wastes on-site;
2. Residential development, at densities permitted in the underlying district if served by Town water and sewer, otherwise at 50% of the density of the underlying district;
3. Soil, water, plant and wildlife conservation activities;
4. Outdoor recreational activities (hiking, fishing, boating, hunting, etc.); and
5. Farming, gardening, nursery, and forestry activities that utilize fertilizers, herbicides and pesticides in accordance with NRCS guidelines.

Prohibited uses:

(This is a summary of Section 12.4 of the Town of Wilton Zoning Ordinance)

1. Disposal of solid waste other than brush or stumps;
2. Subsurface storage of petroleum and petroleum products except as regulated by the State of NH;
3. Disposal of liquid or leachable wastes except from approved sub-surface disposal systems;
4. Outside storage of road salt or the dumping of snow containing de-icing chemicals brought in from outside the Aquifer Protection district;
5. Commercial animal feed-lots at excessive densities;
6. Excavation of sand and gravel except activities with an approved Earth Removal Permit; and
7. On site handling, disposal, storage, processing or refining of toxic or hazardous materials.

The Town of Wilton recently switched over from a surface public water supply to the use of groundwater. Thus, it is imperative that the Town protect its stratified drift aquifers to ensure the

continued availability of the quantity and quality of its groundwater resource. The existing Aquifer Protection District provides a fairly strong level of protection for the Town's aquifers and groundwater supplies.

Till Aquifers

Till aquifers are also composed of glacial material. Material porosity and thickness are the main differences between till and stratified drift aquifers. Till aquifers contain an unsorted mixture of clay, silt and gravel that were ground up from solid rock by the glaciers. This mixture of different sized particles limits the available pore space for water storage. Therefore, it is difficult for these deposits to store and transmit water. Wells drilled in till usually yield only small volumes of groundwater adequate for private residential use.

The only protection mechanism provided for wells in till deposits is the minimum setback requirements from property boundaries and septic leach fields. To protect these individual water supplies the Town should consider adopting more stringent setback requirements to prevent contamination.

Bedrock Aquifers

Bedrock aquifers are composed of fractured rock or ledge with groundwater stored in the fractures. These aquifers are very complex because bedrock fractures decrease with depth, "pinch out" over short distances and do not carry much water. Locating water supply wells in bedrock aquifers is often a hit or miss proposition because it is difficult and costly to determine the location of fractures. Bedrock aquifers exist in Wilton and are used for individual wells. Again, the only source of protection for bedrock aquifers is minimum requirements from property lines and septic leach fields. Recharge areas for bedrock aquifers are difficult to pinpoint which complicates any effort of protection.

B. Agriculture

Agricultural land is one of the most important forms of open space in a community. In addition to the production of crops and livestock, farms provide scenic vistas and help create rural character. Farming was a major economic activity in Wilton during the 1800's and early 1900's; however, as the population migrated to the cities and more fertile lands in the Midwest, many farms were abandoned with the fields and pastures growing into the forests we see today. Because of this migration and the agricultural limitations of the climate, New Hampshire relies heavily on other states to produce the majority of its food. In addition, food prices are generally higher here than in other regions because New England is at the end of the food transportation supply line.

According to the 2009 NRI, excellent agricultural soils are found evenly and widely distributed across the entire Town of Wilton. These soils tend to cluster on the broad ridge tops as do the most productive forest soils. There are very few large, active farms left in Wilton today. Therefore, it is important for the Town to preserve its good agricultural land.

Agricultural lands are basically defined in two ways. First, by soil type (identified areas may or may not be actively used for farming) and second, by active agricultural uses, which may or may not be located

on agricultural soils. The following sections discuss the existing agricultural resources of the Town based on soils and active agricultural use.

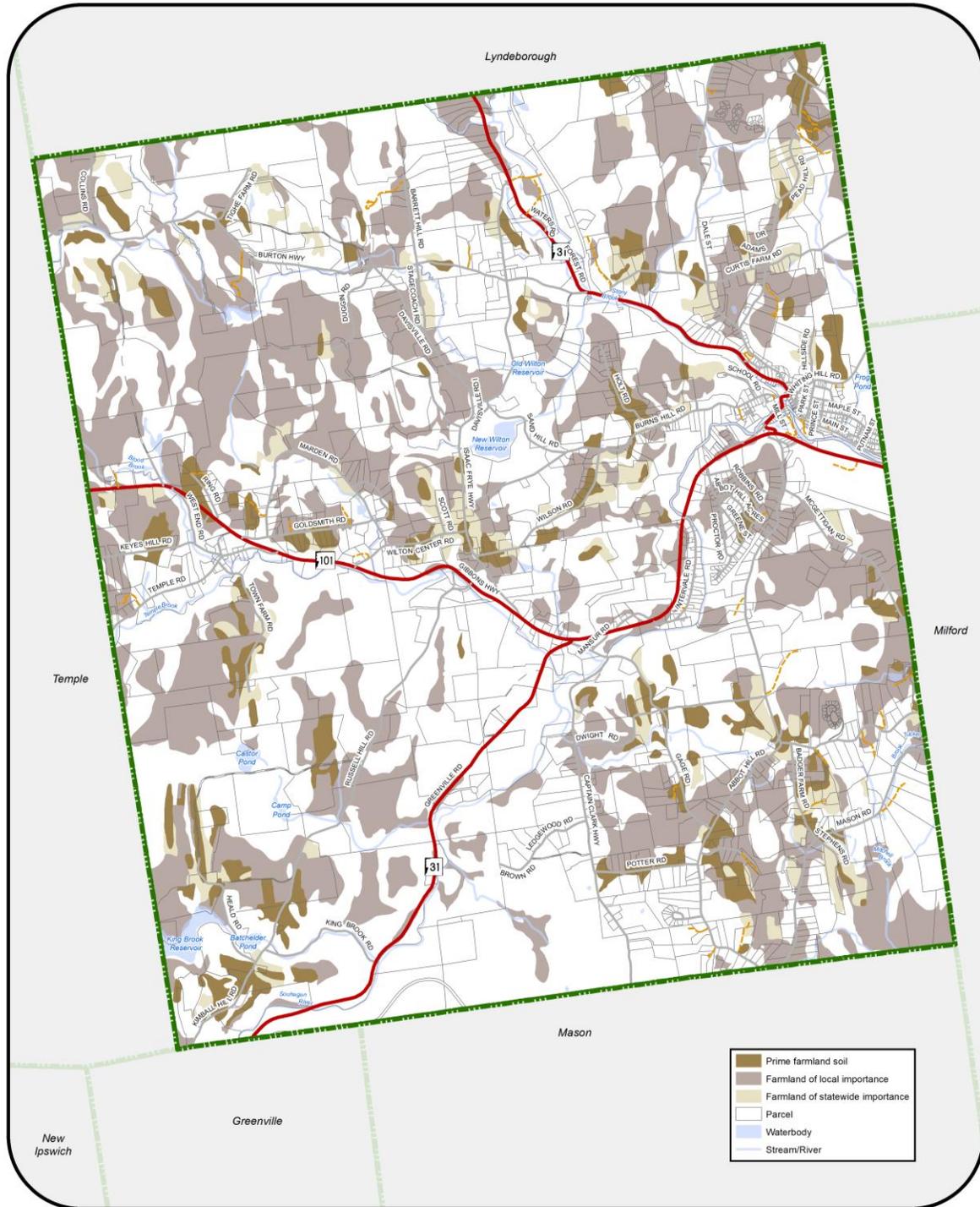
Soils

Soil type is a critical factor in determining the development potential of a parcel of land. The NRCS has conducted extensive surveys and analyses of the soils of Hillsborough County. Information for the Town of Wilton is found in the "Soil Survey for Hillsborough County New Hampshire, Western Part" [published in 1985]. The Survey delineates soil types and provides general information on the characteristics of each type. Additionally, each soil type is evaluated and rated with regard to development potential for specific land uses such as crops and pasture, forestry, recreation, wildlife habitat, building site development and sanitary facilities to name those areas directly related to conservation. The information from the Survey was used by the Hillsborough County Conservation District to develop the "Soil Potential for Development" ratings. The ratings identify farmland and wetland soils only for those uses while rating the other soil types for septic systems, dwellings, roads and for an overall development category based on the ratings of the previous three categories.

Based on soil type, the soils for Hillsborough County have been classified into three categories of farmland: prime and unique farmland, state significant farmland and locally significant farmland. Wilton has 903 acres of prime farmland, 8,506 acres of locally significant farmland and 703 acres of state significant farmland. Combined, these three categories constitute 61.3% of the total land area of the Town. Prime, locally and state important farmlands are depicted on Map 3-5.

- Prime agricultural soils: interpreting from technical soils data, prime agricultural soils have sufficient available water capacity to produce the commonly grown cultivated crops adapted to N.H. They have high nutrient availability, generally low slope and low landscape position, are not frequently flooded, and contain less than 10% rock fragments in the top six inches. Prime agricultural soils are best suited for cornfields and other row crops.
- Soils of statewide importance: land that is not prime but is considered farmland of statewide importance for the production of food, feed, fiber, forage or oilseed crops. Hay meadows not normally in row cropping could indicate soils of statewide importance.
- Soils of local importance: farmland that is not prime or of statewide importance, but has local significance for the production of food, feed, fiber and forage. In Hillsborough County, this includes all land that is in active farm use, but does not qualify as prime or of statewide importance. Pasture land and hay meadows may be common indicators of locally significant soils.

MAP 3-5: Prime Farmland



Data Source(s):

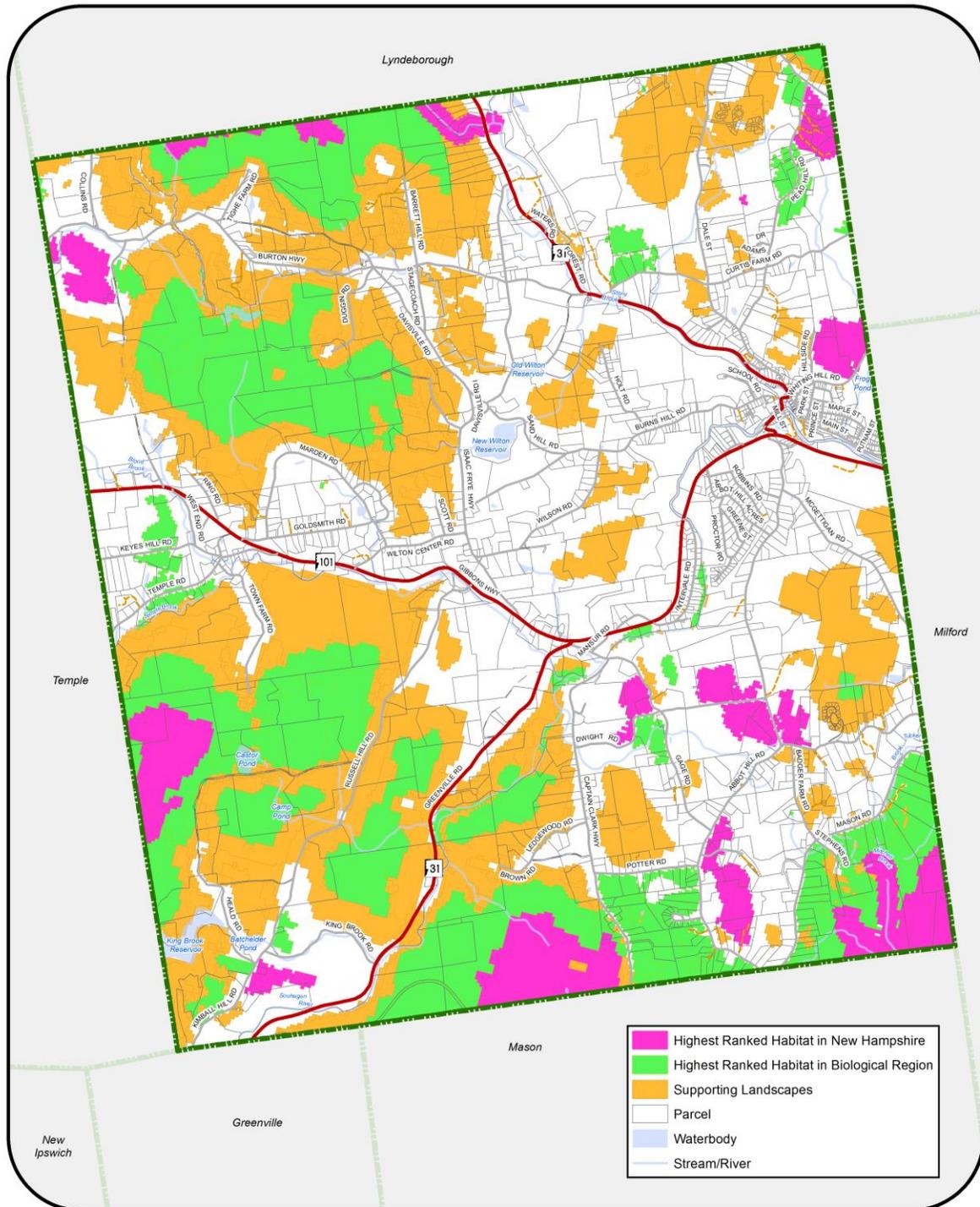
Prime Farmland – USDA/NRCS Soil Survey Geographic (SSURGO) Database, courtesy NH Granit

C. Wildlife

Maintenance of quality habitats is important to the survival of all species. Change is inevitable; however, some species are less able to adapt to changes in habitat than others. The fields, forests, streams and wetlands provide habitats for a diversity of wildlife and plant species. The Natural Resources Inventory (NRI) study evaluated habitat resources and conditions to develop a ranking to identify the highest condition habitat relative to all instances of a given habitat type in the state. The tiers of habitat quality listed below, and shown on Map 3-6 were based on an intensive statewide analysis:

- **Tier 1** rating was given to areas that contain the *highest condition habitat in the state*.
- **Tier 2** areas contain *the highest condition rank in the biological region* (defined by eco-region for terrestrial habitats, and watershed for wetland and aquatic habitats).
- **Tier 3 includes** *supporting landscapes* such as watersheds containing top-ranked stream networks and lakes, large forest blocks, or specific animal, plant and natural community occurrences of special note.

MAP 3-6: Natural Wildlife Habitat Areas



Data Source(s):

Natural Wildlife Habitat Areas – NH Fish and Game NH Wildlife Action Plan 2015, courtesy NH GRANIT

The Town also provides habitat for the usual game and non-game species of birds, amphibians, fish, reptiles, and mammals, such as deer, turkeys, raccoons, pheasant partridge, fox, ducks, Canada geese, eagles and other species native to New Hampshire. In addition, a great blue heron rookery has been located in the Town. The diversity found in types of habitat, ponds, wetlands fields, and forests, means diversity in types of animal species found in the Town. It is important to maintain a balance between fields, naturally succeeding areas, forests and wetlands to ensure the quality and quantity of wildlife habitat. Therefore, the Town should protect different types of habitats to ensure the proliferation of species diversity.

Endangered Species

The NH Fish and Game Department is the agency responsible for endangered animal species. NH Natural Heritage Bureau, a part of the Department of Resources and Economic Development (DRED) is responsible for endangered plant species. The Audubon Society records the locations of endangered bird species in the State. There are no known endangered species in Wilton. This does not mean that these particular species are not present in the Town, just that none have been documented. More information about specific endangered species and their habitats can be found at each of these agencies' websites and in the Wildlife Action Plan. There are historical records indicating that the Giant Rhododendron, a threatened plant, were located in Wilton. Over the past twenty years, there have been three sitings of the Wood Turtle and one siting of the American Eel, both of which are species of special concern. In addition, there has been one siting each of the Southern Pygmy Clubtail and the Spatterdock Darner. The Conservation Commission should consider contacting these agencies every few years to keep apprised of changes to endangered species in the Town and the State.

D. Visual Resources

Elevation and slope are two major components of the visual resources of a community. Elevations provide both the high points for viewing the scenic vistas and the subjects of the views from lowland areas or smaller hills. Slope provides the subtle and dramatic changes in the land surface that make the views interesting. Together they are the two major components of topography.

Wilton's topography is typified by sloping and gently rolling hills, cut by low-lying areas running east-west and north-south along the Souhegan River and its tributary streams. Elevations in Wilton range from a low of approximately 320 feet above Mean Sea Level (MSL) in the Town center bordering Milford to just over 1140 feet in the southwestern part of Town approaching Fisk Hill in Temple. The majority of the higher elevations, those greater than 900 feet are located in the western section of the Town. High elevations in the eastern section of Wilton range between 700-800 feet with a few areas in the 900 foot range located primarily in the Abbot Hill area. Map 3-7 shows the contour lines in Wilton.

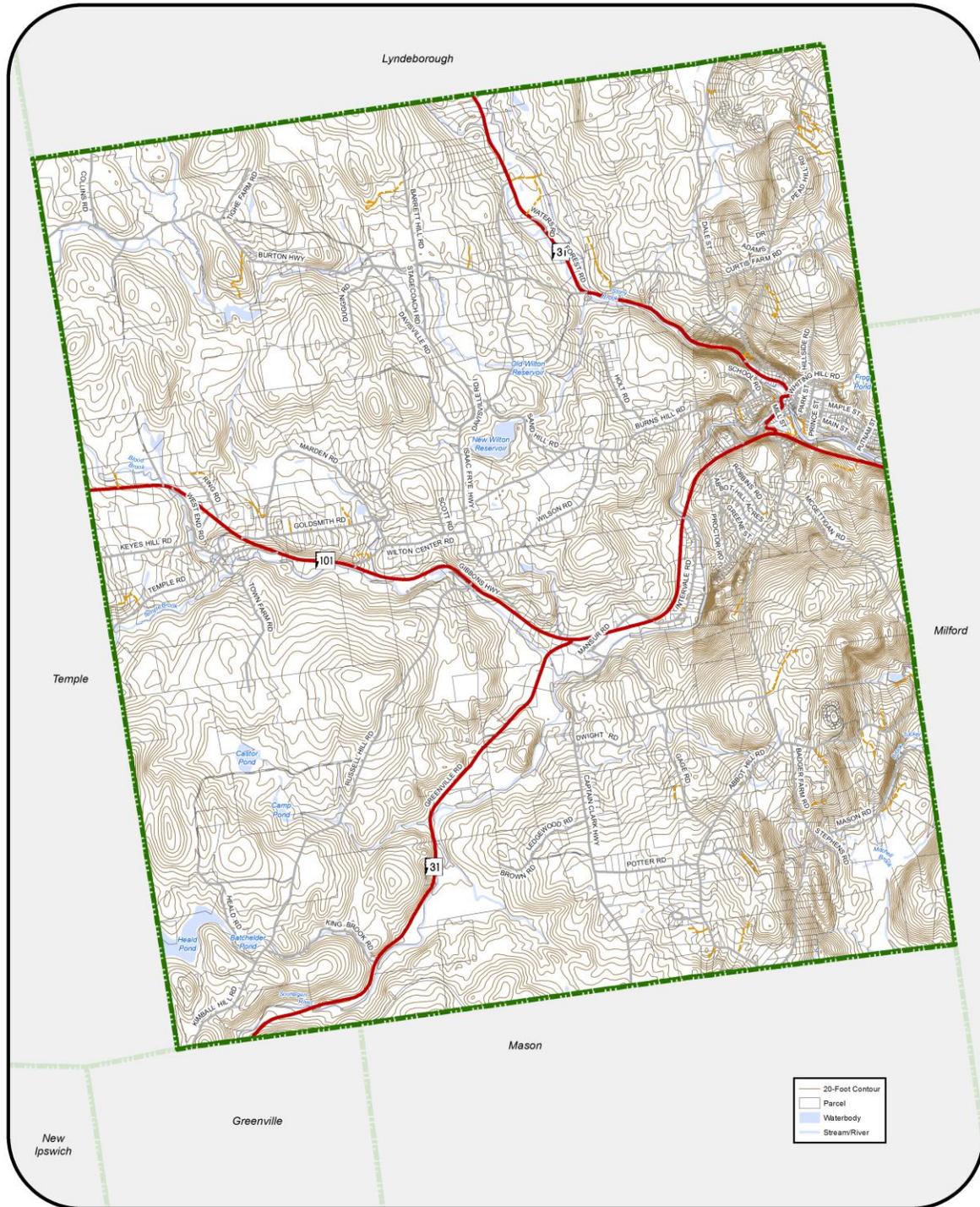
Slope is a measure of the steepness of the surface between two points. Slopes are generally classified based on their ability to support development and are broken down into 4 categories. Slopes of 0-8% are considered developable with few constraints. Slopes of 8-15% can be developed at an increased cost because of special design considerations that may be necessary due to the steepness of the area. Areas

with slopes 15-25% and greater than 25% present significant constraints for development and potential hazards for the environment. Therefore, these areas should not be developed. Aside from development considerations, the contrasts in slope provide the waterfalls and cliffs, gently rolling fields, low, winding river beds, ponds, wetlands and babbling brooks that people find visually appealing.

The high elevations in Wilton provide opportunities for viewing the scenic beauty of the Town and the surrounding countryside, and these areas should be accessible to the public for passive recreational use. Development on the Town's hilltops would significantly alter the Town's rural character; and clear-cut logging operations on hillsides can turn beautiful scenes into marred landscapes overnight. Therefore, the scenic vistas need to be maintained through the use of good forest and agricultural management practices.

The Conservation Commission conducted an inventory of the scenic vistas and views within the Town. These areas are depicted on Map 3-8.

MAP 3-7: Slope



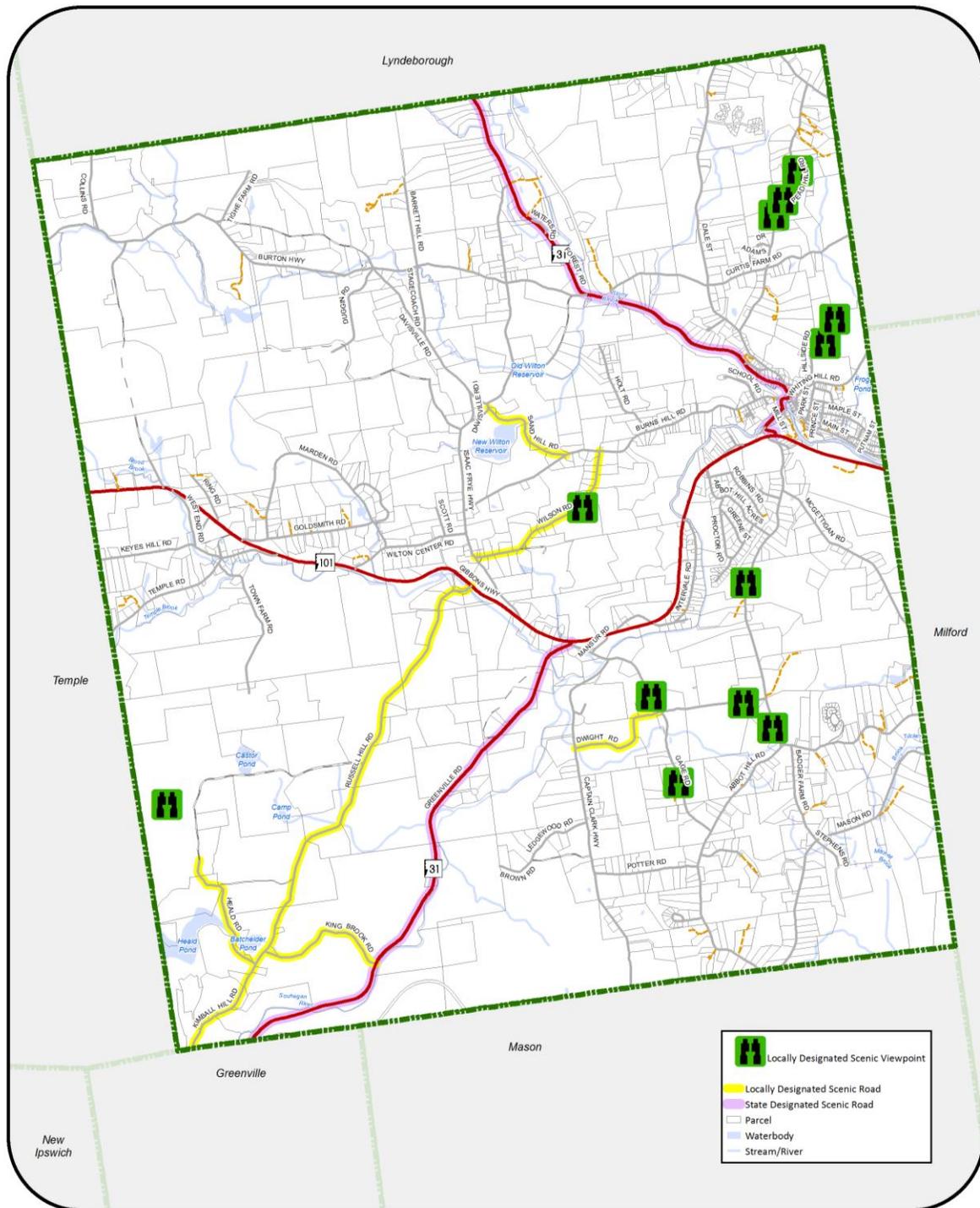
Data Source(s):
Contours - US Geological Survey (USGS), distributed by NH GRANIT

Scenic Roads

The Town of Wilton contains many miles of scenic roads bounded by rivers and streams, wetlands, agricultural areas, woods and the characteristic rock wall. These scenic roadways in many instances represent the essence of Wilton's rural character. State statute, RSA 231:157, grants towns the authority to designate local scenic roads. Once a road has been designated a scenic road, any repair, maintenance, reconstruction or paving work shall not involve or include the cutting or removal of medium and large-sized trees (with a circumference of 15 inches or more at a point four feet from the ground), or the tearing down or destruction of stone walls, except with prior written consent of the Planning Board or any other official Town body designated at Town meeting to implement the law, and after a public hearing. The law is flexible, however in that it allows the highway superintendent to cut trees, shrubs, vegetation and remove obstructions within three feet of the traveled way without consent.

Scenic road designation protects the scenic qualities of the road that may be viewed as a nuisance or an obstruction by an engineer or road agent. At present, there are 7 designated scenic roads in Wilton, Kimball Hill Road, Heald Road, King Brook Road, Wilson Road, Sand Hill Road, Russell Hill Road and Dwight Road. In total there are 7 miles of scenic roads throughout Wilton. There are many roads or stretches of road in Wilton with scenic qualities and character deserving of protection. The Conservation Commission should inventory the Town's roads and organize the residents to petition for scenic road designation at Town meeting. The existing scenic roads in Wilton are depicted on Map 3-8.

MAP 3-8: Locally Designated Scenic Roads and Vistas



Data Source(s):

Locally-Designated Scenic Roads – NRPC GIS Database

Scenic Viewpoints – Town of Wilton Natural Resources Inventory (NRI) 2009.

E. Park and Recreation Lands and Facilities

The recent Wilton Master Plan update contains a good list of the parks and recreational facilities located in the Town. A copy of that list is found in Table 3-3.

Table 3-3: Recreational Facilities in Wilton

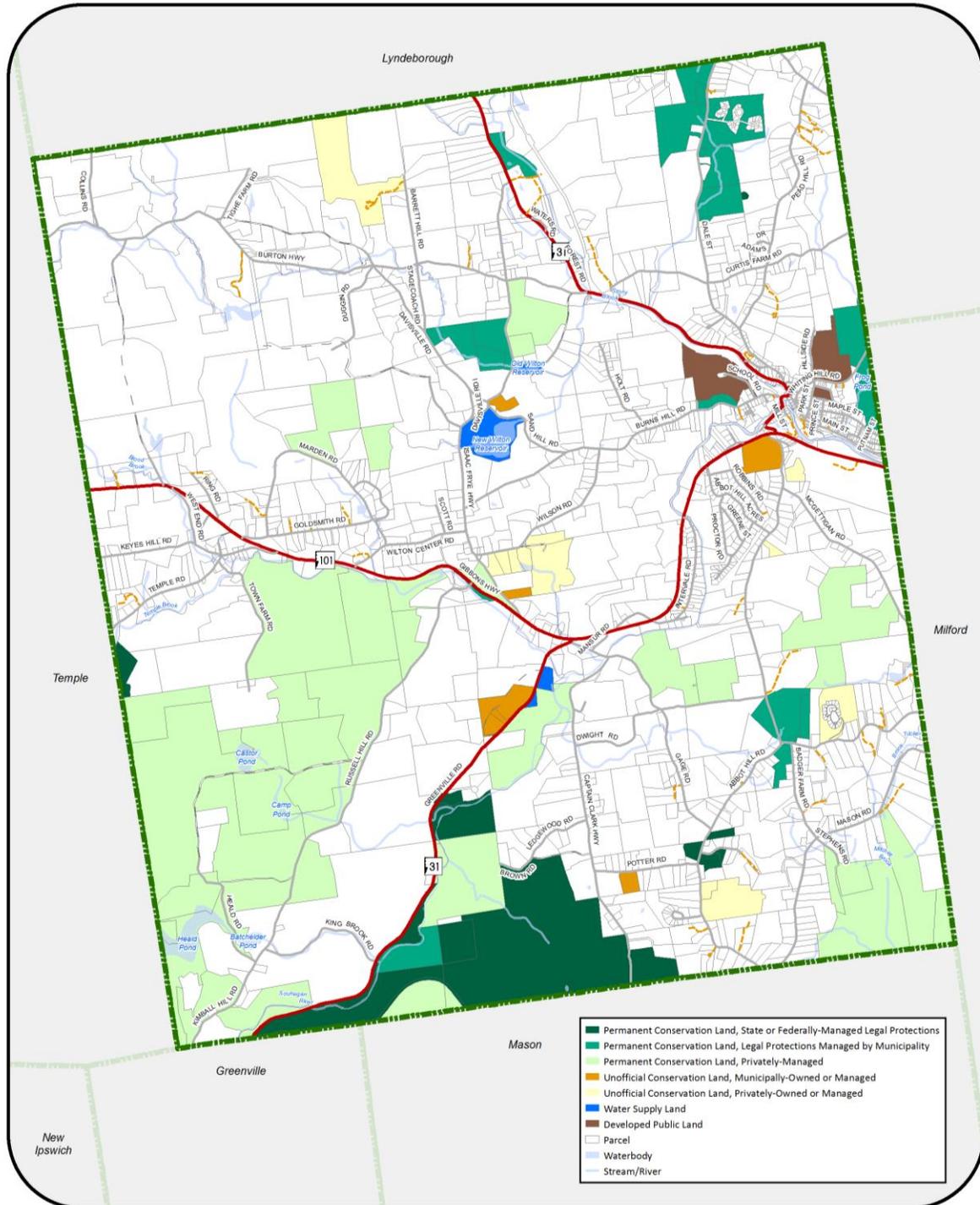
Wilton Parks and Recreation Areas	
Goss Park	An 18 acre complex located off NH Route 31 in the northern section of Town. Owned and operated jointly with the Town of Lyndeborough, the Park and Youth Center provide facilities for swimming, tennis, volleyball, boating and crafts. The Wilton -Lyndeborough Youth Center is operated through Town appropriations, in addition to individual and corporate donations.
Monument Park	Located on the Souhegan River in the downtown/business district, the monuments in the park honor local men who have fought in wars.
Carnival Hill	A 36 acre area that includes the Wilton Community Garden, and athletic fields known as the Wilton-Lyndeborough Junior Athletic Association (WLJAA). Historically this has been a location of winter recreational activities such as sledding and skiing.
Whiting Park	This small park is adjacent to the Florence Rideout Elementary School playground and is also used by the school.
Wilton-Lyndeborough High School	Various field sports (baseball, track, field hockey and soccer), and hardcourt sports (tennis and basketball), are played on the school's facilities.
Russell-Abbot State Forest	Hiking, picnicking, and hunting, among other daytime activities are allowed in the 656 acre State Forest. However, campfires and barbecues are prohibited. The State Forest is located in the southern section of Town to the east of NH Route 31. Part of the State Forest is in the Town of Mason.
Burns Hill Town Forest	A small, less than 10 acre Town-owned forest, located near the WLC School, which can be used for short hikes during the day. Fires of any kind are prohibited in the forest.
Town Forest	A small 38 acre forest located near the State forest along the Souhegan River. The area is landlocked with access by permission only.
Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests Heald Tract	A 1,500+ acre tract of land located partially within the Towns of Wilton and Temple. The tract Lands include a pond, wetland areas, forests, and other natural resources which provide fishing, and hiking opportunities for the public.
Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests Heald Tract	A small 46 acre tract of land on both sides of the Souhegan River near the Town well.
Frog Pond	Includes a .6 mile walking loop that allows for activities such as hiking, snowmobiling and cross-country skiing. Dogs on leashes are also allowed to stroll the loop.
High Mowing/Frye Conservation Land	100 acres near High Mowing School that includes a large field, views, wooden areas, agriculture, trails for passive recreation, cross country skiing and snow mobiling.
Sheldrick Forest	A 227 acre tract that includes about 4 miles of trails which allow you to observe the natural beauty of the forest. This tract also connects to Heald which offers about another 6 miles of hiking trails.

The Town could improve in the following areas: hard courts, playgrounds, picnic areas, outdoor ice arenas and recreation. This information should be utilized when considering development of conservation areas and their potential uses.

F. Existing Conservation Lands

Existing conservation lands fall into two basic categories based on level of protection and the primary protection agency. Over the past year NRPC has been working to create a seamless layer that reflects GRANIT's conservation land data and NRPC data collected over the years. GRANIT's template was used as a foundation for the project. Level of Protection and Primary Protection Agency were the chosen categories for maps based on their importance to the towns in the region. Level of Protection is broken into 5 categories: Permanent Conservation Land, Unofficial Conservation Land, Unprotected Water Supply Lands, Developed Land and Unknown. Primary Protection Agency consists of Federal, State, Municipal/County, Private, and Other Public/Quasi-Public Entity. An in depth definition of these and other attributes can be found on NH GRANIT's website. Wilton's existing natural, scenic, historical and agricultural conservation areas and town owned lands are depicted on Map 3-9.

MAP 3-9: Conserved Land By Protection Level and Agency



Data Source(s):

Conserved Lands – NRPC GIS database, based on NH GRANIT data template

G. Government Regulations

This section of the Plan discusses the federal, state and local regulations that pertain to the protection of the Town's natural, agricultural, historic and scenic resources. It is important for the Conservation Commission and the Town's citizens to be aware of these regulations to facilitate the identification and the reporting of potential violations. Enforcement of the numerous regulations is an unwieldy task, therefore, the state, federal and local agencies need all of the assistance they can get from the citizenry to stop violations and ultimately protect the resource.

Federal and State Regulations

Clean Water Act

Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (CWA) regulates the discharge of dredge and fill material into the Nation's waters, including wetlands. The CWA requires all dredge and fill activities to obtain a permit from the US Army Corps of Engineers prior to commencing the activity. Exempted activities include normal agricultural, silviculture and ranching activities, construction of farm, forest or temporary mining roads and maintenance of existing structures such as dams, dikes and bridges. Permits are also not required if an area is non-tidal and has a flow of less than 5 cubic feet per second, if it is not a tributary to a navigable water and if it is less than one acre in size.

Fill and Dredge in Wetlands

New Hampshire RSA 482-A, Fill and Dredge in Wetlands, establishes the New Hampshire Wetlands Board as the administrative agency responsible for regulating activities in the State's wetlands. The Board reviews all applications to excavate, dredge, fill or construct a structure in or on the wetlands and surface waters of the State. The jurisdiction of the Wetlands Board overlaps that of the Corps under section 404 of the CWA, however, the Wetlands Board regulates a broader range of activities with no allowable statutory exemptions.

The provisions of the statute allow conservation commission intervention into the review of the applications by the Wetlands Board. This avenue should be utilized by every conservation commission to ensure consideration of local issues and concerns by the Wetlands Board. To obtain additional time for review of the application the commission must give written notification to the Wetlands Board that it wishes to investigate the application within 10 days of the application filing date.

Water Pollution and the Disposal of Wastes

Section 404 and its State counterpart, NH RSA 149, prohibit the pollution of surface and groundwater resources through the discharge of point and non-point sources of pollutants. State waters are classified based on water quality and maximum acceptable pollutant concentrations as established by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Point sources of pollution are required to obtain a National Pollution Discharge and Elimination System (NPDES) permit that specifies wastewater treatment practices, effluent monitoring and the minimum effluent standards for the permit. The NH Department

of Environmental Services (NHDES) is the State agency charged with implementing RSA 149, permitting activities and enforcing the regulations.

Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 (Federal)

Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act regulates dredge and fill activities in navigable waters of the Nation. Under this section, the Chief of Engineers approval is required for any construction activities, such as building of docks and piers, dredging or filling, in navigable waters. Navigable waters are defined as tidal waters or larger rivers and lakes that are presently, have been in the past or may be in the future, used for water borne commerce.

Safe Drinking Water Act (Federal)

The purpose of the Safe Drinking Water Act is to ensure a safe public drinking water supply that poses no problems or health threats. The Act requires testing of public water supplies for regulated and unregulated contaminants regulates underground injections of potential contaminants and requires states to establish wellhead protection for public water supplies. In order to provide safe public water supplies, towns are required to have water treatment plants or to develop alternate groundwater sources as is the case in Wilton. The provisions of the Act are administered by the Department of Environmental Services (DES). DES is also responsible for analyzing water used for swimming and drinking, licensing of youth recreational camps and certification of water work for operators and laboratories conducting water analyses.

Dams and Hydropower Facilities

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) is an independent agency that regulates the interstate transmission of electricity, natural gas, and oil. Before licensing, dams for hydropower projects must receive the necessary permits from other State and Federal agencies and conform to the safety and construction requirements of the DES Water Division. The Water Division, as the state agency responsible for dam safety, regulates construction of new dams, inspects existing publicly and privately owned dams, and maintains state owned dams. The only way to ensure that a river will not be dammed, at this point, is to have it designated as a Federal Wild and Scenic River. Wild and scenic river designation prohibits the use of any federal funds for the construction of a project that might adversely affect the river. In effect, this eliminates dams and diversions which require federal approval.
<http://www.ferc.gov/about/ferc-does.asp>

Public Utilities Commission

The New Hampshire Public Utilities Commission (NHPUC) is vested with general jurisdiction over electric, telecommunications, natural gas, water and sewer utilities as defined in RSA 362:2 for issues such as rates, quality of service, finance, accounting, and safety. It is the NHPUC's mission to ensure that customers of regulated utilities receive safe, adequate and reliable service at just and reasonable rates.

National Flood Insurance Program (Federal)

The National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) was created by Congress in 1968 to decrease the damage and economic loss of flooding. The NFIP requirements apply to areas mapped as Special Flood Hazard Areas (SFHA) on Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) issued by FEMA. Flood hazard areas identified on the Flood Insurance Rate Map are identified as a Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA). SFHA are defined as the area that will be inundated by the flood event having a 1-percent chance of being equaled or exceeded in any given year. The 1-percent annual chance flood is also referred to as the base flood or 100-year flood. SFHAs are labeled as Zone A, Zone AO, Zone AH, Zones A1-A30, Zone AE, Zone A99, Zone AR, Zone AR/AE, Zone AR/AO, Zone AR/A1-A30, Zone AR/A, Zone V, Zone VE, and Zones V1-V30. Moderate flood hazard areas, labeled Zone B or Zone X (shaded) are also shown on the FIRM, and are the areas between the limits of the base flood and the 0.2-percent-annual-chance (or 500-year) flood. The areas of minimal flood hazard, which are the areas outside the SFHA and higher than the elevation of the 0.2-percent-annual-chance flood, are labeled Zone C or Zone X (unshaded).

<http://www.fema.gov/flood-zones>

Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (Federal)

The Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) as administered by EPA regulates the generation, transportation, treatment, storage and disposal of hazardous wastes, solid wastes and underground storage tanks. RCRA requirements are the responsibility of the DES and are handled primarily by the Waste Management Division (WMD). The underground storage of hazardous raw materials and petroleum products is regulated by DES through the oil pollution control program. NH RSA 149-M requires solid waste facilities of all sorts to obtain a permit from the WMD in order to operate.

<http://www.epa.gov/laws-regulations/summary-resource-conservation-and-recovery-act>

<http://des.nh.gov/organization/divisions/water/>

Funds for the cleanup of hazardous waste disposal sites are provided by the Comprehensive Environmental Response Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA) or "Superfund". The State of New Hampshire established a hazardous waste cleanup fund in 1981 to provide money to clean up non-qualifying CERCLA hazardous waste sites. The fund is administered by the Waste Management Division. In addition DES provides funds to conduct household hazardous waste cleanup projects on a dollar for dollar matching basis with the participating municipalities or other local or regional organizations. The Wilton Recycling Center has participated in this program.

<http://des.nh.gov/organization/divisions/waste/hwrb/>

Toxic Substances (Federal)

The EPA regulates the manufacture, distribution and use of chemical substances under the Toxic Substances Control Act of 1976. The manufacture, distribution and use of pesticides is regulated by EPA under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA, 1996). The Office of Pesticide Programs (OPP) regulates the manufacture and use of all pesticides (including insecticides, herbicides,

rodenticides, disinfectants, sanitizers and more) in the United States and establishes maximum levels for pesticide residues in food, thereby safeguarding the nation's food supply.

<http://www.epa.gov/laws-regulations/summary-federal-insecticide-fungicide-and-rodenticide-act>

Endangered Species Act (Federal)

The Federal Endangered Species Act requires protection of critical habitat for endangered or threatened species. The Federal Endangered Species List contains 245 mammals, fish, birds, insects, reptiles, crustaceans and plants. The NH Endangered Species conservation Act, RSA 212-A, prohibits the taking, possession, transportation or sale of any endangered or threatened species. The Fish and Game Department is responsible for animal species while the Department of Resources and Economic Development (DRED) is responsible for plant species.

<http://www.fws.gov/endangered/laws-policies/>

Significant Alteration of Terrain Permits

In conjunction with the Wetlands Board, DES reviews and permits dredge, excavation, fill, mining, transportation of forest products and construction activities to be located in or on the border of the State's surface waters defined as any ponds or lakes greater than 10 acres in size. In addition to this, DES in 1981 adopted additional regulations under the authority of RSA 149: 8-a, that require permits for construction or earth moving activities that would disturb an area of 100,000 contiguous square feet or more regardless of location. The purpose of the regulations is to control water pollution that may result from increased runoff and alteration of drainage patterns.

Sewage Disposal Systems

Subdivisions with lots of less than 5 acres not serviced by public water and sewer must obtain a subdivision approval by NH DES. In addition, the design, construction and operation of any septic or other subsurface wastewater disposal system must be approved by NH DES. Septic tanks and leach fields are required to have minimum setback of 75 feet from surface water, open drainage areas, private wells, reservoirs, and neighbor's foundations. The minimum setback is 200 feet from community wells and 400 feet from municipal wells. These represent only a few of the most important minimum setbacks established in the rules. In addition, these minimum setbacks are established as minimums. The individual municipalities have the authority to adopt more stringent standards governing septic system design and installation.

Cutting of Timber near Public Waters

New Hampshire RSA 227-J:9 regulates the cutting of timber near public waters and public highways. The statute restricts cutting to no more than 50% of the basal area of trees to be cut within 150 feet of any great pond (ponds or lakes larger than 10 acres), navigable river or public highway or within 50 feet of any perennial stream, brook or river without a permit from Department of Resources and Economic Development (DRED).

In addition, logging operations must comply with other statutes such as needing a Wetlands Board permit for permanent or temporary roads crossing perennial or intermittent streams. Also, the Intent to Cut form contains an agreement to conduct the operation using the appropriate best management practices to prevent surface water pollution. In one location in the State, timber cutting followed by heavy rain forced the closure of the Town's public water supply for a week because of sediments.

Motor Boat Operating Restrictions

The NH Division of Safety Services is responsible for boating safety in the fresh waters of the State. Speed, horsepower and propulsion restrictions for boats on fresh water are established by the Legislature. In addition, NH RSA 270:12 allows these same restrictions to be set by the Commissioner of Safety if petitioned by 25 or more persons, by any association with 25 or more members, or by any governmental subdivision of agency. Therefore, any restrictions on motorboat use on the Town's ponds would require legislative action.

Rivers Protection and Management Plans

The New Hampshire Rivers Management and Protection Program, NH RSA 483, allows any NH organization or resident to nominate a river or a segment of a river for protection by submitting a description of the values and characteristics of the river.

National Register of Historic Places

The National Register of Historic Places is the official federal list of properties with local, state and/or federal significance in the areas of American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering or culture. Properties may be nominated for National Register status by any organization, individual or district. Once the application form is completed, it is submitted to the NH State Historic Preservation Office for review by the State Review Board. Following approval at the State level, the application is forwarded to Washington for final approval and listing. To qualify for listing in the National Register, properties or districts must meet the evaluation criteria in the Federal Regulations summarized below:

The significance in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and culture in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess the integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and:

- a) That area associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
- b) That are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or
- c) That embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction; or
- d) That represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- e) That have yielded, or may be likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

National Register listing is beneficial in that it may spark interest and appreciation in the community's historic resources; provides for review and amelioration of impacts for federally funded or assisted

projects; ensures eligibility for tax credits for the rehabilitation of historic buildings; and qualifies for federal preservation grants when funding is available. Listing in the Register does not interfere with the owner's right to alter, manage, dispose of or even demolish his property unless federal funding is involved. Therefore, National Register listing does not ensure the continued unaltered existence of the historic resource. Hence, additional protection mechanisms are needed to preserve the remnants of the past for the generations of the future.

H. Local Regulations

This section will discuss the mechanisms available at the local level for protecting the natural, agricultural, scenic and historic resources of the community. The Town of Wilton is already using the powers provided through local regulatory authority to protect and manage its community resources. Direct measures have been taken to protect wetlands and aquifers through the adoption of a Wetlands Conservation District and an Aquifer Protection District. In addition to the direct mechanisms, many of the Town's regulations provide indirect benefits to natural resources, such as the minimum setbacks from wetlands, excluding wetlands to be included as buildable area in calculating minimum lot size, provisions for clustering to preserve open space, and requiring the maintenance of natural drainage patterns to name only a few. The Town of Wilton is doing a good job protecting its natural, agricultural, scenic and historic resources and is encouraged to continue in its efforts to protect the resources of the community and preserve the rural character and charm of the Town.

Zoning

Zoning is the major power available to localities in managing land use and development. In addition, the State has provided for local subdivision review regulations, nonresidential and multi-family site plan review and historic districts. Other mechanisms for land use management at the local level include scenic road and prime wetland designations.

After adoption of the general statement of objectives and the land use sections of the Master Plan, towns are granted the power to zone by RSA 674:16 "for the purpose of promoting the health, safety or the general welfare of the community..." This power includes the right to adopt innovative land use controls such as phased development, cluster development, performance standards, flexible and discretionary zoning and environmental characteristics zoning (NH RSA 674:21).

Zoning is used to establish the appropriate locations for types and classes of land use in the municipality and to establish specific requirements for land uses and structures. One stated purpose of zoning is to "assure the proper use of natural resources..." (NH RSA 674:17). Conservation zoning is used to protect areas sensitive to development based upon the protection of public health, safety, and general welfare. Conservation districts are generally overlay districts which apply additional conditions to the underlying zone. Examples of conservation districts include wetlands districts, floodplain districts, aquifer districts, steep slope districts and watershed districts to name a few. The Town of Wilton already has adopted wetland, floodplain, aquifer and watershed protection districts to protect the public welfare and the resource.

Subdivision Review Regulations

Towns can adopt subdivision review regulations regardless of whether or not they have adopted a zoning ordinance. Regulated areas relative to conservation include the provision of "adequate open space"; the provision of parks of adequate size and suitable location for playgrounds and other recreational purposes; requirements that the land be buildable without posing any health hazards; and minimum lot sizes in conformance with the zoning and appropriate areas for septic systems (NH RSA 674:36). Subdivision regulations can be used to promote conservation of natural, historic and cultural resources located in the community. Wilton's Subdivision Regulations provide direct and indirect protection for the Town's natural resources. For example, wetlands and floodplains are excluded from the buildable area of a lot in considering minimum lot size; a soil erosion and sedimentation control plan is required for all subdivisions except minor subdivisions; leach fields must be set back a minimum of 100 feet from open waterbodies and perennial streams; high intensity soil surveys are required for all subdivisions except minor subdivisions. These provisions represent only a few of the requirements that directly or indirectly relate to preservation of the Town's natural, historic, agricultural, and scenic resources.

Site Plan Review

Municipalities may review nonresidential or multi-family development under the authority of NH RSA 674:43 if the town already has zoning and subdivision regulations and upon adopting site plan review regulations. The site plan review regulations may contain provisions for ensuring adequate storm water drainage, pollution control measures, the quantity and quality of surface and groundwater, the protection of natural land features such as wetlands and steep slopes, adequate amounts of open space and landscaping in keeping with the surrounding character of the community. As in the case with the Wilton Subdivision Regulations, Wilton's Site Plan Review Regulations provide direct and indirect protection of the Town's resources. For example, the Site Plan Review Regulations require the preparation of a storm water drainage plan. This requirement is designed to ensure the proper handling of storm-water runoff so that it doesn't cause problems with erosion and sedimentation or drainage on the site as well as on abutting properties. Additional requirements are similar to those mentioned in the previous section which achieves the same benefits of resource protection.

Historic Districts

Localities are granted the authority to establish Historic Districts under NH RSA 674:46. Within the District, localities have the authority to regulate the construction, alteration, repair, moving, demolition or use of such structures and places. The Historic District Commission is responsible for conducting the research to serve as a legal basis for the district, adopting regulations governing change and development in the district and enforcing the ordinance. Historic district designation can provide protection for historic structures and places of historic and architectural value beyond those provided by National Register listing. It is important to emphasize that historic district commissions control noncontributing structures as well as new construction within a district. Alterations and additions within a district are individually reviewed with respect to their mass, scale and detailing in relation to

surrounding structures. The success of any local historic district depends on a variety of factors including local support and the ability and commitment of the Town to enforce the regulations.

Excavation

Municipalities are given the authority to regulate excavation activities under RS a155-E. All excavation activities require a permit from the Planning Board except for those specifically exempted in the Statute. The following excavation activities are exempted from the permitting process:

1. Activities incidental to lawful construction or alteration of buildings and parking lots;
2. Activities incidental to agricultural or silvicultural activities or normal landscaping;
3. Excavation for a granite quarry if permitted by the zoning ordinance; and

In addition, the statute prohibits permitting the following projects:

1. Excavation within 50 feet of the property line of an opposed abutter or within 10 feet of an approving abutter;
2. Excavations not permitted by zoning or other applicable ordinance;
3. Where issuance of the permit would cause undue hazards or injuries to the public welfare;
4. Where existing visual barriers near public highways would be removed;
5. Where the excavation would substantially damage a known aquifer;
6. When the excavation requires land use permits from state or federal agencies; but the regulator may approve the application when all necessary land use permits have been obtained; and
7. Where the project cannot comply with the restoration provisions of the statute.

The statute also contains provisions for restoration of the excavation site within 12 months after the expiration of the permit. The restoration must meet minimum conditions for vegetative cover to retard erosion based on soil type; debris from the excavation must be buried or removed; natural slopes must be maintained based on the soil type; and any standing bodies of water resulting from the excavation must be eliminated. These are the minimum standards based on the statute. Municipalities can choose to develop and adopt more stringent standards if they so desire.

I. Additional Local Protection Mechanisms

Scenic Roads

Towns are granted the authority to designate as scenic any road other than a Class I or II highway by RSA 231: 157. Scenic roads can be nominated by petition of 10 registered voters of the town or landowners who abut the road. Official scenic road designation is granted upon approval at the Town meeting. Scenic designation means that no road improvements involving the removal of stone walls or the cutting of trees with a circumference of 15 inches or more measured 4 feet from the ground can be made without a public hearing and written permission of the official municipal body. This does not apply to private landowners, however, so the protection offered by scenic road designation is limited.

Scenic road designation protects the scenic qualities of the road that may be viewed as a nuisance or an obstruction by an engineer or road agent. In addition, scenic road designation ensures communication between the Town and affected residents of the community. At present, there are 7 designated scenic roads in Wilton: Kimball Hill Road, Heald Road, King Brook Road, Wilson Road, Sand Hill Road, Russell Hill Road and Dwight Road. There are many roads or stretches of road in Wilton with scenic qualities an character deserving of protection. The Conservation Commission should inventory the Town's roads and organize the residents to petition for scenic road designation at town meeting.

Prime Wetlands

In order to designate any of its wetlands as prime, a town must first conduct a wetlands inventory in accordance with the rules of the Wetlands Board. Based on the evaluation conducted in the inventory, those wetlands determined to be of high value can be brought to town meeting for designation as prime wetlands. Upon approval, the wetlands maps and designations can be filed with the Wetlands Board. Permit applications for activities in designated prime wetlands will be more closely examined for potential impacts.

The Conservation Commission is responsible for notifying the Wetlands Board when a proposed activity involves or is adjacent to a prime wetland. Upon verification, a public hearing will be ordered and held by the Wetlands Board who will then make the final decision on the application. If approved, the permit will have an effective date 28 days after the decision to allow for appeal. Though prime wetlands designation does not guarantee protection, it does ensure a more detailed review of the permit application and a closer scrutiny of the potential impacts of the proposed activity.

The existing Town of Wilton zoning regulations, in particular the wetlands conservation district, provide a level of protection greater than prime wetland designation because the Town definition of wetlands includes both poorly drained and very poorly drained soils while the State definition includes only very poorly drained soils. Aside from this, it is very costly to conduct a wetlands study of the kind necessary to meet the state criteria for determining prime wetlands. In consideration of the high cost, the additional benefits received from prime wetland designation are questionable.

Voluntary Mechanisms

A number of land protection mechanisms exist that are self-imposed by the landowner. These techniques are often more effective and binding than regulation measures available to localities. The techniques currently in use range from acquisition of a parcel through purchase or donation of an easement to current use tax assessments and restrictive covenants. The available techniques will be briefly discussed below.

Current Use Assessment

The current use assessment program, authorized by NH RSA 79-A, allows for reduced property assessments on parcels of field, forest, farm, and wetland of 10 acres or greater, on "natural preserve" land or recreation land of any size and on active farmland of any size with at least a \$2500 annual gross

value of product. Applications to the program are conducted through the assessors or the selectmen and are due by April 15. Upon approval of the application and acceptance into the program the assessed valuation of the property will be lowered to the level prescribed by the program. Removal from the program or a change to a non-qualifying land use results in a 10% land use change tax based on the assessed full value at the time of the change and applied to that tax year.

Parcels less than 10 acres may qualify for a discretionary easement. The program requires the land holder to give the easement to the Town for a minimum time period of 10 years. During that time the land owner cannot develop, subdivide or otherwise intensify the use of the tract. Application is done through the Planning Board in April who makes a recommendation to the selectmen on acceptance of the easement. Once accepted the easement is registered and early removal or a change in land use would result in a penalty, however, no penalty would result if the time contract is met.

Acquisition

Fee simple ownership of a parcel is the best method available to assure its protection. Outright purchase of a parcel is the most expensive method and very often beyond the means of the Conservation Commission, and the Town. In addition, town-owned property represents a decrease in the tax base which may further hinder the process of acquisition. The efforts of private non-profit conservation organizations are also hampered by a lack of funding for land purchases, however, alternatives to fee simple purchase do exist.

Donation

Donation is the simplest and least expensive method of acquiring land for protection. The donor is assured long-term protection of the land and relieved of the property taxes. Contributions to qualified charitable organizations would also provide some federal income tax deductions.

An outright donation of full title and ownership of the property is the most direct method and it provides the maximum tax benefits. A bequest in a will is another form of donation. While this method ensures long-term protection and a reduced estate tax, it does not provide any immediate tax benefits such as property tax relief and charitable deductions. A third form of donation is donation of a remainder interest. This involves the immediate donation of the property, however, the donor reserves the right to its use for the remainder of his or some other specified family members' lifetime. The tax deduction for this type of donation is based on the remainder of the full market value minus the lifetime use of the property. Thus, the donor would receive a present benefit less than that of an outright donation but greater than a bequest.

Thus, there are several alternatives available to a landowner wishing to protect the future use of his land through donation. The benefits and costs of each type should be thoroughly discussed with the landowner prior to the donation.

Bargain Sales

A bargain sale is an alternative to a donation and an outright purchase. A bargain sale allows a conservation organization to purchase a parcel of land at less than full market value and the owner can take a charitable federal deduction for the difference between the sale price and the full market value. This technique allows organizations to acquire total ownership of the property at a lower cost while still allowing the landowner to receive some compensation.

Conservation Easements

Conservation easements are authorized by NH RSA 477:45-48. A conservation easement places permanent restrictions on the use of the property. This allows the land owner to maintain ownership while protecting the property from development. The terms of an easement are flexible and can be tailored to the desires of the landowner. The restrictions of the easement are perpetual and binding on all future landowners.

Donation of the easement to a charitable organization entitles the donor to a charitable federal income tax deduction for the reduced value. The IRS has established a set of criteria outlining the type of conservation easements that qualify as charitable deductions. Compliance with these criteria is important if the landowner is seeking a charitable income tax deduction. The organization receiving the easement is responsible for enforcing the conditions of the easement and therefore must establish a regular monitoring program and provide for potential legal enforcement.

Easements are often used to encourage good forest and agricultural management ensuring the continuation of the existing land use.

Purchase of Development Rights

Purchase of a conservation easement is called purchase of development rights. This involves acquiring the rights for certain land uses on a parcel in less than fee simple. This action allows the landowner to receive a monetary compensation greater than a tax deduction. This technique is often used to protect prime productive agricultural lands from conversion to a different use.

Options and Rights of First Refusal

An option establishes the price at which an organization can purchase the land during a specified period of time. This guarantees the purchase price while allowing the organization the time it needs to raise the money. The process works in the following manner. First the landowner and the organization establish a purchase price for the parcel. Second, a deadline is established and the owner agrees not to sell the property to any other party during that time period. The organization then uses the time to raise the money necessary for the purchase. If the money is not raised by the deadline, the owner is free to sell the property to another party. If it is raised, then the group proceeds with the purchase of the property at the agreed upon price.

A right of first refusal is less specific than an option in that it simply guarantees the conservation group the opportunity to purchase the land at a price equal to a bona fide offer. A conservation organization would obtain a right of first refusal from a landowner in the event that he wished to sell his property at some time in the future. The landowner then receives an offer from another individual for the property. The conservation organization then has the option to match the offer or to negotiate the purchase at a lower price before the property is sold. A right of first refusal is less binding than an option; however, it does afford some legal means for conservations organizations to acquire land.

Both of these options give the conservation organization the time necessary to raise the money for purchase of the property. In neither instance is the organization obligated to purchase the property.

Restrictive Covenants

A covenant is a written agreement between two or more parties in which each pledges to the other that something will or will not be done. An example would be a lake association whose members agree to leave a buffer strip along the shore of the lake. The covenant passes with the land to future owners and is enforced by the parties to the agreement. Covenants are generally difficult to enforce and may be nullified in court if deemed outdated or no longer appropriate.

Deed Restrictions

Deed restrictions provide an option to the landowner to place restrictions on the use of the land for a given period of time. The deed may state the allowed agricultural use and prohibit the subdivision or development of the property for a specified time. The longevity of the deed restriction is up to the landowner.

J. Funding Sources

Most conservation commissions do not have large budgets for purchasing conservation lands. Therefore, it is necessary for them to obtain funding from one or a combination of other sources or to work in conjunction with other conservation organizations. Competition for the limited funds available for land conservation is intense so it is important to be aware of all the alternatives. The following sections will briefly identify funding sources and programs at the federal, state and local level.

Federal Funds

The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) is a Federal fund administered by the NH Division of Parks and Recreation a division of the Department of Resources and Economic Development. The fund pays up to 50% of the appraised fair market value for the purchase of conservation and recreation lands by governmental units. The remaining 50% is to come from the locality, private sources or it may be donated by the landowner. Municipalities, school districts and the State are eligible recipients of the fund. As is the case with most federal programs, appropriations to the Land and Water Conservation Fund have been declining.

Funds are distributed through a competitive application process. Each section of the application is assigned a point value and these points are totaled at the end of the review procedure. Applications are then ranked in order of the number of points received and those with the most points receive funding.

The New Hampshire Fish and Game Department receives federal funds under the Pittman-Robertson, Dingell-Johnson and Wallop-Breaux Acts for land acquisition. These funds pay 75% of the appraised fair market value of land purchased by the Department to provide public access to ponds and rivers, wildlife habitat, fish and game management areas and critical habitat for endangered or threatened species. All Fish and Game lands are open to the public for hunting, fishing and other recreational activities not in conflict with the management goals.

State Funds

The Land and Community Heritage Investment Program (LCHIP) was enacted by the state legislature with broad bi-partisan support in 2000 for the purpose of providing competitive grants for land conservation and historic preservation projects that permanently protect iconic landscapes and historic structures in the Granite State. The purpose of making these investments is to strengthen the social and natural resource fabric of local communities and to enhance the local and regional economies in the State that depend on tourism.

The original goal was to provide \$12 million a year in state funds through LCHIP to leverage at least as much in non-state funds to make these conservation projects possible. Since 2000 LCHIP has made 240 grants to projects in 141 New Hampshire communities totaling \$27 million. These grants have protected over 260,000 acres of land and conserved 142 historic structures. The LCHIP grants have leveraged nearly \$8 of non-state funding for every dollar awarded. The largest LCHIP grant helped to permanently conserve one private ownership of 146,100 acres of working forest land in the towns of Pittsburg, Clarksville and Stewartstown, at the State's northern tip.

Between 2000 and 2008 general funding for LCHIP was very erratic, and far below the initial goal of \$12 million a year. As a consequence, the legislature established a dedicated fund for LCHIP in 2008, creating a \$25 recording fee on deeds, mortgages and plans at the State's 10 county registries of deeds. The fee was projected to raise about \$6 million a year and was specifically dedicated to the LCHIP fund. Once again, state budget pressures led to legislative diversions of this dedicated fund (from 2009 to 2012) to non-LCHIP purposes. In June 2013 the Governor and Legislature adopted a comprehensive state budget that left the LCHIP dedicated fund in place, without any raid or diversion. The fund raised \$4.1 million for the year ending June 2014, and is projected to raise \$4.3 million in the year ending June 2015.

<https://www.forestsociety.org/advocacy-issue/land-and-community-heritage-investment-program-lchip>

Local Funds

The Conservation Commission may have funds that it may use to acquire property or easements for conservation purposes. These funds may come from the municipal budget or from some other source.

The Town may also vote to appropriate funds for the purchase of lands that are deemed significant and important to the entire community. A fund-raising effort in the community could also be used to raise funds for the acquisition of an area whose conservation is important to the Town. The purchase of Carnival Hill provides a good example of the effectiveness of a fund-raising effort in Wilton. When the Hill was threatened with development, the Town's people rallied around and came up with the necessary funds for purchase. Under RSA 79-A the tax generated from removing land from current use is available to conservation commissions upon a vote at Town Meeting. RSA 79-A was enacted on July 1, 1973. The purpose of this law was to implement a tax strategy to enable landowners to keep their open space lands undeveloped. Under Current Use, the land is assessed at its present use rather than at its highest potential use. In addition, the Current Use Board (CUB) Administrative Rules further define the law under RSA 79-A.

The Yield Tax is another source of local funds for conservation purchases. Currently in Wilton the Yield Tax is turned over to the Town and goes into the general revenue fund. The Yield Tax is assessed on the value of timber harvested from a site. The land owner is responsible for reporting the yield to the Town Officials who then estimate the yield tax. The Conservation Commission and the Town should look into a method for increasing the accuracy of the estimated value of the harvest to ensure obtaining the maximum amount for conservation purchases. The yield tax is a good source of funds for purchasing conservation lands and easements. The Conservation Commission should take appropriate measures to have the yield tax revenues dedicated for conservation purchases.

Private Funds

Another alternative to public funding sources and acquisition is the acquisition of the area by a private organization. These organizations are generally private, non-profit, land-holding conservation organizations. Most of the conservation organizations have limited budgets for purchasing land and easements; however, if the parcel is significant enough an arrangement can usually be made.

Conservation organizations active in New Hampshire include: the Audubon Society, the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests and the Nature Conservancy. The Monadnock Community Land Trust and the Souhegan Valley Land Trust are two local land trusts active in the Wilton area.

CHAPTER IV: WILTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION PRIORITIES FOR NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

The previous sections of the Conservation Plan have focused on identifying the Town's natural, historic, agricultural and scenic resources and the Federal, State and local regulations designed to protect those resources. This section of the Plan focuses on evaluating the protection needs of the resources and is designed to assist the Conservation Commission in making decisions and to provide for effective and efficient use of its limited resources.

Unlike many of the communities in southern NH, Wilton is still fortunate enough to have a great deal of open space and undeveloped land area. This is due to a combination of many factors. First, the rolling hills and steep slopes have limited development to the low-lying areas. This factor, however, is quickly changing as both prime development lands become scarcer and changes in technology make it feasible to develop on marginal lands. Second, towns closer to Nashua and Boston were developed first, but now these areas are becoming saturated and people are willing to live farther away to obtain their desired living environment. Third, much of Wilton's land has been held in large parcels by families and passed on through the years. Once again, this process is changing. Increasing land values have made it difficult for large farms to be held in one parcel. In addition, the economic pressures facing agriculture have made it necessary and lucrative for farms to be sold. Often, the developer is the only one able to afford these large parcels due to the quick economic return of development. Finally, and perhaps most important, the residents of Wilton have a great deal of respect for the land and an interest in conserving the rural character of their community.

These factors: the physical limitations of the land, the distance to large urban areas, ownership patterns, and the concern of the residents, place Wilton in a unique situation for conserving its valued resources and preserving the visual character of the Town. Large parcels of forest and farmland still exist. Much of the shoreline of the Souhegan River remains undeveloped. The extensive network of streams and small ponds and the mixture of forest and field provide wildlife habitats for a great diversity of plant and animal species. From mountain top to river valley, from forest to field and from wildland to developed areas, the Town provides a multitude of scenic opportunities. Change, however, is inevitable. Therefore, it is important that the Town recognize and protect its outstanding natural, historic, agricultural and scenic resources while the opportunity still exists.

The Conservation Commission is well aware that it would be impossible to preserve all of the open spaces and resources of the Town. Realizing this, they have tried to identify the most significant assets of the community, those important to maintaining the character of the Town.

1. Conserve Prime Agricultural and Habitat Resources
2. Create Corridors for Wildlife Habitat Protection
3. Preserve Scenic and Unique Natural Resources for Outdoor Exploration
4. Preserve the Quality of Surface Waters and Groundwater for the Future

The Town of Wilton is concerned about its natural resources as is evidenced by the regulations already adopted, the Wetlands Conservation District, the Watershed District, the Aquifer Protection District, the Floodplain Conservation District and the various other direct and indirect protection mechanisms contained in the other sections of the zoning ordinance. The Town's commitment has also been demonstrated by its funding of the update to the Conservation Plan, and updating the current Master Plan. While the Town has done a good job so far, there is always room for improvement. Therefore, the following recommendations are made for the actions and activities needed to accomplish the goals and objectives established for the Wilton Conservation Plan and for the group(s) responsible for carrying out these actions.

A. Local Land Use Controls

Zoning is the major avenue available to a town for protecting its natural resources. Zoning is a low-cost, effective mechanism for protecting a dispersed resource such as a wetland or a floodplain. The Town of Wilton has adopted a number of regulations providing direct protection for many of its natural resources while other regulations provide indirect benefits. While the existing regulations provide adequate protection for many of the Town's resources, some minor adjustments to the existing regulations would increase the level of protection afforded to the Town's natural resources. The following recommendations address proposed changes in the Town's zoning ordinances.

1. Amend the general provisions of the Zoning Ordinance to provide a 125 foot minimum setback, measured horizontally, of leach fields located in somewhat poorly drained soils or soils with rapid or very rapid permeability from open waterbodies and water courses. A 125 foot minimum setback will provide adequate protection of water quality from contamination by subsurface waste disposal. This minimum setback was upheld by the NH Supreme Court in Gillespie v. Town of Freedom. In addition, the same setback should be required between leach fields and wetlands. The Town does not currently have the staffing to implement this type of measure, however this may change in the future at which time the Town should consider proceeding with this suggestion.
2. Amend the Wetland Conservation District to include a minimum 75 foot setback, measured horizontally, with a 50 foot vegetative buffer strip for all site developments from the edge of the wetland. A minimum 75 foot setback will decrease the velocity of the runoff and allow portions of the runoff to infiltrate into the ground before reaching the wetland. The 50 foot buffer strip will filter out contaminants, nutrients and sediments decreasing the negative impacts on the wetland and preserving its natural functions. Water quality will be enhanced and the lower degree of activity adjacent to the wetland will decrease the negative impacts of human activities on the wildlife.
3. Amend the Zoning Ordinance to eliminate steep slopes, greater than 25%, from consideration as part of a lot's buildable area when calculating minimum lot size. Development on steep slopes can cause serious environmental damage, loss of vegetation, increased erosion and sedimentation, and slumping of uphill lands.

4. Develop regulations to guide forest cutting practices in the Town particularly adjacent to the open waterbodies, water courses and wetland areas. The erosion potential is increased in areas being cut as soils previously protected by the tree cover are exposed to the powers of the elements. A minimum 50 foot buffer strip along the shore of the waterbody, water course or wetland effectively filters sediments and nutrients, thereby, decreasing the negative impacts to water quality.
5. Amend the Subdivision and Site Plan Regulations to include penalties for violation of the approved erosion and sediment control plan. This will encourage the developers to properly install and maintain the erosion control devices.
6. Update Cluster Developments under the General Residence and Agricultural District Section to create a more robust section.

Recommendations 2-6 outlined above all require an amendment to the existing Zoning Ordinance or the development of new regulations. To accomplish these recommendations the Conservation Commission should work with the Planning Board to develop the necessary amendments and regulations in a joint effort. In addition to the specific recommendations for changes to the Zoning Ordinance, the following general recommendations are made regarding the powers of development review and to ensure continued monitoring of the impact of growth and development on the natural resources of the community.

1. The Conservation Commission should continue to review and comment on Wetlands Board Dredge and Fill applications in the Town. The findings of these reviews should be reported to the Planning Board either in writing or by public comment at the scheduled review of the development proposal during the Planning Board meeting.
2. The Conservation Commission with the assistance of the Planning Board should continually monitor development in the Town by watershed. This will allow an analysis of the cumulative impacts of growth and development on water quality and the other natural, historic, scenic and agricultural resources of the community. Urban development increases the amount of impervious area resulting in increased runoff and an increased potential for flooding and water contamination. In addition, development can reduce the amount of agricultural land remaining in a community and profoundly impact the scenic quality and character of the Town.
3. The Planning Board should continue to use its powers of subdivision review and site plan review to assess the impact of proposed developments and to negotiate design changes with developers that would protect the Town's natural, scenic, historic and agricultural resources.
4. The Conservation Commission should evaluate the existing town roads to determine those eligible for scenic road designation. Upon identification, the Conservation Commission should organize residents to petition scenic road designations at town meeting. Scenic road designation provides a limited level of protection to preserve the scenic character of a road from road improvements and most importantly, ensure public input before, not after, a roadside has been significantly altered.

The Planning Board should negotiate, through the subdivision and site plan review process, to obtain conservation and public access easements to parcels prior to development of a site, upon the request and input of the Conservation Commission. The conservation easements can be used to protect the natural, historic and scenic resources contained on a site. The public access easement is necessary to allow public use of or passage across a site. This is a particularly important consideration along the Souhegan River for developing the greenbelt and for developing any additional trail systems.

B. Federal and State Regulations

As indicated in Chapter III, there are numerous state and federal regulations with jurisdiction over local land use activities. It is important that the Town's governing bodies, boards and citizens be aware of these regulations in order to utilize them to their fullest extent and ensure compliance.

1. As its first educational leaflet, the Conservation Commission should develop a brief description of the state and federal regulations that relate to land use activities. The list should contain the appropriate agency to contact in case of a violation. Citizens should be encouraged to report any suspected violations to the appropriate agency.
2. The Conservation Commission should take the necessary action to facilitate review of Alteration of Terrain permits at the time the applicant submits the application to DES. This review could follow a format similar to the wetlands permit review process. The alteration of terrain can have significant impacts on the natural environment. Historic sites and structures, wetlands and wildlife habitats can be destroyed and increased erosion can mar the landscape and muddy the waters.
3. The Conservation Commission should monitor the development of the Rivers Protection and Management Program to assess its use in protecting and creating a greenbelt along the protected Souhegan River. The program could provide many benefits, technical assistance and possibly even some funding for the Town's efforts. The Town should seek information from the Nashua Regional Planning Commission, the Office of Energy and Planning, NH Department of Environmental Services, the Merrimack River Watershed Council and any other agency or organization involved with river protection. Continue active membership in the NH Association of Conservation Commissions (NHACC), Souhegan River Local Advisory Committee (SoRLAC), and Regional Open Space Team of the Souhegan Valley (ROST).
4. The Conservation Commission should join forces with other commissions and conservation organizations to lobby the legislature to increase the penalties for violations of state environmental laws and strengthen enforcement. Under the existing penalty structure, penalties are often not severe enough to ensure compliance with the law.

C. Acquisition

While federal, state and local regulations can be used to provide an adequate level of protection for the majority of the Town's natural resources, there exist some resources where regulation is inadequate or inappropriate. In these instances where regulation does not provide sufficient protection or it would be viewed as an unconstitutional taking, the Town must turn to alternative measures for protecting the

resource. Acquisition is the most effective mechanism available for ensuring the long-term protection of the resource. As discussed in Chapter III, fee simple acquisition of the parcel may not be necessary. The purchase of development rights or easements may be all that is required to protect the resource. Based on this, the following recommendations are made for acquiring easements or fee simple ownership of key parcels in the Town.

1. The Town should purchase the development rights or easements to the most significant agricultural lands in the community. This acquisition is important to assure the continuation of agriculture and to maintain the character of the Town. In addition, the preservation of agricultural lands will generally provide multiple benefits by protecting other resource areas located on the parcel, such as viewsheds and habitats.
2. The Conservation Commission should actively acquire conservation and public access easements to parcels located along the Souhegan River as part of the development of the greenbelt. This action will provide multiple benefits by protecting the shoreline from development, maintaining water quality, protecting floodplain and wetland areas, preserving wildlife and fishery habitats, providing public access to the River and increasing the recreational opportunities available to the Town. In addition, key parcels should be purchased outright to allow the development of parks, formal public access points and parking areas.
3. The Conservation Commission should acquire scenic easements to the most significant scenic views and vistas identified in the inventory of the Town's resources. In addition, easements should be obtained from surrounding landowners to ensure maintenance of the view (requiring the thinning of trees, prohibiting clear cuts and view obstruction, etc.). This action will preserve the significant views of the Town and help to maintain the scenic character of the community.
4. The Conservation Commission should acquire conservation and public access easements to smaller scenic areas such as waterfalls, cliffs and viewing points at high elevations. The acquisition of these easements will serve to protect the significant scenic resources of the community while allowing public access and use of the area.
5. The Conservation Commission or Town should actively seek funding for the purchase of conservation lands or easements.
6. The Conservation Commission should continue to seek funding, from the Town in the annual budget, for conservation land and easement acquisitions. The information gathered in this plan and any additional available information should be used to support the Conservation Commission's request for funding to the Budget Committee. The Conservation Commission needs to make a strong presentation to the Budget Committee to obtain their support. In addition, the Conservation Commission needs to continually keep the citizens informed about the increase in growth and land use changes within the Town to gain their support for funding conservation purchases.

D. Education

Education is important to the success of the Conservation Plan in general and essential to many of the individual components. The Town's citizens need to be aware of the immediate and cumulative impact of their action on the natural, scenic, historic and agricultural resources of the community. In addition, the town meeting form of government makes it necessary for voters to be informed of resource related issues in order to gain their support of conservation efforts and for approval of regulations designed to protect and conserve the Town's resources. The primary responsibility for conservation education lies with the Conservation Commission. It is their job to see that the community is well informed about the conservation issues of the Town. The following recommendations are made to increase public education activities in the Town, thereby increasing public awareness of conservation issues and public support of conservation efforts.

1. The Conservation Commission should conduct public education workshops focusing on conservation issues. Suggested topics include:
 - Protection of water resources and water conservation;
 - Impacts of non-point pollution on water quality and what can be done to decrease non-point pollution on an individual basis;
 - Management of small forest areas for such purposes as tree harvesting, wildlife and multiple use;
 - Conservation mechanisms available to private landowners and the benefits of the different alternatives;
 - The care and maintenance of septic systems.

Information and speakers for these programs can come from a variety of organizations such as the County Forester, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests and the NH Audubon Society, to name only a few.

2. The Conservation Commission should utilize the power of the press to its fullest extent. This can be accomplished by encouraging the press to write articles focusing on conservation measures and practices and to report on Conservation Commission activities. In addition, the Conservation Commission can write letters to the editor expressing concern for the protection of the Town's resources or in support of state legislation, local regulations and town meeting warrant articles.
3. The Conservation Commission should prepare one or more pamphlets identifying the existing recreational and conservation lands available to the public. Trail networks, river access points, historic resources, etc., should be highlighted. The pamphlets should be available at the Town Office and the Library. This activity will get people interested in the recreational and conservation activities of the Town and provide additional support to the Conservation Commission.
4. The Conservation Commission should serve as a resource to local boards and committees such as the Planning Board, Zoning Board and Board of Selectmen.

5. The Conservation Commission should maintain relevant materials and resources on the Town website. In addition the Commission should look for opportunities to educate the public via social media and other media outlets.

E. Organizational Involvement

There is a definite need in Wilton for increased communication between the various boards involved in Town government and policy formation. Because of the limited powers of the Conservation Commission, it is imperative to the success of this plan that good, strong working relationships be established between the Conservation Commission and the other boards within the Town. Each of the Town boards and their relationship to this Plan will be discussed below along with information on other State, local and private organizations that need to be considered.

Conservation Commission

Towns are authorized to create Conservation Commissions by NH RSA 36-A. The statute also lists specific responsibilities of the Conservation Commission along with additional activities the Commission may undertake. The list of responsibilities includes:

1. Continue to maintain and update the Town's Natural Resource Inventory from 2009.
2. Coordinate the activity of unofficial bodies organized for similar purposes;
3. Maintain an index of the Town's natural and scenic resources;
4. Keep accurate records of its meetings and actions.

In addition, the Conservation Commission may do the following:

1. Recommend to the Selectmen a program for the protection, development and sound utilization of all the areas in the index;
2. May acquire in the name of the Town by gift or purchase to whatever degree necessary the right to conservation lands within the Town and be responsible for the management and control of the acquired area; funds for purchasing conservation areas may be carried over from year to year;
3. Provide public information on conservation issues.

Many of the components of this plan are designed to fulfill the responsibilities of the Conservation Commission as established by statute. First, the Commission conducted an inventory of the Town's natural, scenic, agricultural and forest resources. Second, the identified resources were indexed and ranked in order of need for protection. Third, the proposed land use monitoring system would assist in maintaining the index and provides the necessary information for supporting a conservation program. And fourth, the Plan outlines a program for the Conservation Commission to provide public information to the Town's residents.

In order for the Conservation Commission to accomplish the goals and objectives for the Plan it is recommended that:

1. The Conservation Commission take the lead role in protecting agricultural lands and in developing a greenbelt along the Souhegan River. The Conservation Commission should also encourage the other communities along the Souhegan River to develop greenbelts to promote the conservation of the shoreline and provide public access to a valuable local and regional asset.
2. The Conservation Commission develop a closer relationship with the Planning Board and the Board of Selectmen. Particularly concerning development proposals presented to the Planning Board and wetlands permits submitted to the Selectmen.
3. The Conservation Commission use the information contained in this Plan be used to develop a strong presentation to be presented to the Planning Board, the Board of Selectmen and the Budget Committee.
4. The Conservation Commission use the information provided by the WCC monitoring program concerning in land use and loss of open space to foster from the Town residents for including funding for the purchase of conservation areas in the Town budget.
5. The Conservation Commission examine alternative sources of financing as outlined in the Plan for the purchase of full or partial right to conservation lands.
6. The Conservation Commission develop as its first information sheet a series of facts concerning changes in land use and loss of open space along with information about conservation techniques for public distribution.
7. A member of the Conservation Commission regularly attend Planning Board meetings.

Planning Board & Zoning Board of Appeals

The Planning Board is responsible for drafting new zoning ordinances, amending existing ordinances and, along with the Zoning Board of Adjustment, administering the Town's land use regulations. Many of the recommendations proposed in the Plan require the Planning Board to amend existing or draft new zoning regulations. It is important that the Planning Board understand the reasons for amending the existing and developing new regulations to conserve the Town's natural resources. Therefore, it is recommended that:

1. The development of the amendments and the new ordinances be a joint effort between the Planning Board and the Conservation Commission.
2. The Planning Board work toward increasing communication with the Conservation Commission.
3. The Planning Board publicly support the recommendations of this Plan and the conservation efforts of the Conservation Commission.
4. The Planning Board use this Plan to develop the Natural Resources chapter of the Town's Master Plan.
5. The Planning Board support providing funding to the Conservation Commission for the purchase of conservation areas in the annual Town budget.

Board of Selectmen

The Board of Selectmen is the decision making body for the Town. Therefore, it is important to have the Board's support for the Conservation Plan and the efforts of the Conservation Commission. Most of the existing State and Federal conservation programs and funding sources require the signature and support of the Board as the Town's representatives. Therefore, it is important that the Conservation Commission develop a strong working relationship with the Selectmen to ensure cooperation in obtaining conservation areas and the timely conveyance of information concerning conservation efforts. In addition, it is the Board of Selectmen that will be contacted regarding any problems associated with the development of the greenbelt or other public access areas. Therefore, they need to be assured that the day to day problems of public use of the area can be adequately dealt with and that they have been considered in the continuous planning for the area.

Budget Committee

The Town budget is prepared by the Budget Committee. Therefore, it is essential that the Conservation Commission educate the Budget Committee concerning the need for conservation of the Town's natural resources in order to obtain funding for their efforts. Though the Committee does not have final approval over the budget, their support of a program is important. The Conservation Commission can use the information contained in this Plan and the information obtained in the monitoring program to illustrate the need for including funding for conservation purchases in the annual Town budget.

Historical Society and Heritage Commission

The Historical Society and Heritage Commission can provide a great deal of information about the historic resources of the Town. In addition, they are the organizations involved in promoting and protecting the historical resources and heritage sites of the Town. Therefore, the Conservation Commission needs to work jointly with the Historical Society and Heritage Commission to conserve the historic resources of the community.

Natural Resource Conservation Service

The Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) can provide the Conservation Commission with a great deal of valuable information. They can assist the Conservation Commission in evaluating impacts to wetlands; they will conduct site visits to evaluate wetlands and soils characteristics; they can provide general educational information concerning soil capabilities and agricultural practices; as well as numerous other types of assistance and information. The NRCS is also a good source of speakers and information for the Town discussions and the information pamphlets.

Private Conservation Organizations

There are several private conservation organizations active in New Hampshire. These include the Society for the Protection of NH Forests, the Audubon Society, the New England Forestry Foundation, the Piscataquag Land Conservancy, the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forest, the Nature Conservancy, the Russell Farm and Forest Conservation Foundation, the Monadnock Community Trust, the Monadnock Conservancy, the Harris Center for Conservation Education, Beaver Brook Association

and the Souhegan Valley Land Trust. All of these organizations are actively involved in obtaining conservation lands and easements. The Conservation Commission should be aware of these organizations, their policies and programs. Each of these organizations could provide invaluable information on conservation techniques, funding sources and establishing a conservation program and organization.

Cooperative Extension

The NH Cooperative Extension is another agency from which the Conservation Commission can obtain resource information. The Extension can assist the Conservation Commission by providing information and speakers for the Town discussions and the information pamphlets.

Nashua Regional Planning Commission

The Nashua Regional Planning Commission (NRPC) can assist the Conservation Commission and the Town with numerous activities. NRPC staff can provide expert advice on developing regulations for protecting the Town's resources since the NRPC has extensive experience in developing ordinances. NRPC has developed a handbook to assist Towns in conducting a community tank census to identify underground storage tanks. Another recently completed publication focuses on the issues surrounding the use of impact fees. In addition, NRPC staff can assist the Conservation Commission with applications for funding and in conducting an inventory of its historical resources.

Souhegan River Local Advisory Committee (SoRLAC)

The Souhegan River has been designated as a protected river due to its outstanding natural and cultural resources. Regular activities of the SoRLAC include reviewing development applications along the Corridor and involvement in the Souhegan River Water Quality Program each summer.

New Hampshire Office of Energy and Planning (OEP)

The OEP maintains a significant on-line resource library with a vast array of topics that could be an excellent reference for the Conservation Commission.

<https://www.nh.gov/oep/resource-library/subject-list.htm>

<https://www.nh.gov/oep/resource-library/land-use/index.htm>

Appendix A
Project Evaluation Criteria

PROJECT EVALUATION CRITERIA

Project Title: _____

Land Owner(s): _____

Address: _____

Phone: Day _____ Evening _____

Location of the Property: Tax Map _____ Lot _____

Description: _____

Current Zoning: _____

Size of the area to be protected: _____

Size of the entire parcel: _____

I. WATER RESOURCES

(0-3) A. Ponds:
Name _____ Size: _____

(0-3) B. Perennial Streams/Rivers:
Name _____ Length: _____
Name _____ Length: _____
Name _____ Length: _____

(0-3) C. Wetlands: Very poorly drained soils _____ acres
Poorly drained soils _____ acres
Total wetland soils _____ acres
Percent of Town total % _____ acres

D. Aquifers:
(1,0) Is the parcel located in the Aquifer Protection Zone? Yes No

E. Public Water Supply:
(1,0) Is the parcel located in the Watershed Protection Zone? Yes No

F. Floodplains:
(1,0) Does the parcel contain any floodplain areas? Yes No
If yes, how much? _____ acres

II. RECREATIONAL RESOURCES

(1,0) A. FRONTAGE ON POND, STREAM OR RIVER: YES NO
If yes, how much? _____ feet

(0-3) B. Ease of public access:
Existing (2)
suitable (1)
unsuitable (0)

(1,0) C. Proximity to existing recreation area: distance: _____ miles

(1,0) D. Is the parcel located close to the population center Yes No

- (1,0) E. Is the area currently used for recreation? Yes No
If yes, what type?
- (1,3) F. Potential recreational use: Type of use
(1) seasonal
(3) year round
- (1,0) G. Existing trail system: Yes No
- (1,0) H. Potential trail system: Yes No

III. AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

- (0-6) A. Soil Type:
 - (3) 1. Prime farmland soils: _____ acres
%Town total: % _____ %
 - (2) 2. State significant soils: _____ acres
%Town total: % _____ %
 - (1) 3. Total Prime and State: _____ acres
%Town total: % _____ %

- (1,0) B. Active Agricultural Use: Yes No

	Acres
Type of use:	
pasture hay crop orchard other	_____
Hay	_____
Crop	_____
Orchard	_____
Other	_____
TOTAL	_____

- C. Scenic Value to Community:
 - (1,0) 1. Visible from road: Yes No
 - (1,0) 2. Rustic buildings: Yes No
 - (1,0) 3. Fields and open spaces: Yes No

IV. FOREST RESOURCES

- (0-4) A. Total Acreage: 0 – 25 acres _____ (1)
26 -50 acres _____ (2)
51 -100 acres _____ (3)
> 100 acres _____ (4)
- B. Major Cover Type:
 - _____ Hardwood
 - _____ Hardwood/softwood
 - _____ Softwood/hardwood
 - _____ Softwood

(1,0) C. Contiguous to existing protected area: Yes No

(1,0) D. Actively managed: Yes No

V. WILDLIFE -PLANT HABITATS

(1,0) A. Endangered or threatened species: plant Yes No

(1,0) animal Yes No

If yes: species _____

habitat area _____

(1,0) B. Known breeding area: Yes No

(1,0) C. Migration route for waterfowl: Yes No

(1,0) D. Old growth plant species: Yes No

If yes: type: _____

VI. HISTORIC RESOURCES

(1,0) A. Historic site: Yes No

If yes: what? _____

(1,0) B. Historic structure: Yes No

If yes: type: _____

age: _____

(1,0) C. Is the site/structure contiguous with other historic t sites/structures? Yes No

(1,0) D. Historic district: Yes No

VII. SCENIC RESOURCES

(1,0) A. Unobstructed view or vista: Yes No

(1,0) B. Important to the Town character: Yes No

(0-2) C. Access to the view:

Existing _____ (2)

Potential _____ (1)

Inaccessible _____ (0)

NA _____

VIII. GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

(1,0) A. Does the site have scientific or educational value? Yes No

B. Surrounding Land Use:

(1,0) 1. Contiguous or proximal protected areas: Yes No

If yes, name and type of protection mechanism: _____

2. Type of land use

_____ Industrial

_____ Commercial

_____ Residential

_____ Agriculture

_____ Open Space

- (1,0) C. Is the parcel under Current Use? Yes No
- (1,3) D. Development pressure on the parcel:
 - High _____ (3)
 - Medium _____ (2)
 - Low _____ (1)
- (1,0) E. Has the owner expressed interest in conserving his land? Yes No
- (1,3) F. Importance of the parcel to the community:
 - High _____ (3)
 - Medium _____ (2)
 - Low _____ (1)
- (1,0) G. Can the parcel support multiple uses? Yes No
- (1,0) H. Does conservation of the resource provide multiple benefits? Yes No

I. Estimated cost of the project: \$ _____

J. Potential sources of funding and matching funds:

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

TOTAL POINTS _____