

# SECTION 1

## PLAN SUMMARY

The purpose of the Whately Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP) is to identify the town's unique agricultural, historical, recreational, natural and scenic resources and to provide a framework for the town's future decisions regarding land conservation and development.

The OSRP recognizes how dependent Whately's sense of place is on its contiguous forests, open upland ridge line views, streams and wetlands, agricultural fields, scenic views, and significant historical structures and landscapes. The OSRP also illustrates the role that all undeveloped lands have in providing wildlife habitat, in ensuring the integrity of drinking water supplies, and, at least in part, in providing for residents' livelihoods.

The Plan highlights the town's natural and recreational resources, including:

- Prime farmland;
- "Pick-your-own" farms;
- Massachusetts Audubon Graves Sanctuary;
- Nasami Farm;
- Connecticut and Mill Rivers;
- Great Swamp;
- Recreational facilities at the Whately Elementary School;
- Tot Lot at the Center School;
- Tri-Town Beach;
- Herlihy Park;
- Large blocks of contiguous forest;
- Abundant supplies of high-quality ground and surface waters;
- Wetlands; and
- Scenic and historic landscapes and corridors.

The Five-Year Action Plan gives concrete substance to the goals and objectives that were developed from the results of the 2006 Open Space and Recreation Plan Survey and from community members' understanding of their town's significant yet vulnerable natural resource base. The 2006 Whately Open Space and Recreation Plan gives priority to actions that will:

- Establish a standing Open Space Advisory Committee.

- Develop a protocol for prioritizing parcels for conservation and working with other organizations to achieve conservation goals.
- Develop a protocol for how the town would consider using its right-of-first-refusal regarding Chapter lands that are offered for sale and residential development.
- Set aside funding each year for land conservation.
- Encourage Whately's children and residents to participate in an annual training program on vernal pool certification.
- Provide periodic reports on the status and needs of recreational facilities and programs in town.
- Promote a sense of community and collaboration.
- Encourage stewardship of the town's resources.
- Initiate discussions regarding multiple uses of current open space.