

GOALS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Natural Resources

Bowdoinham's rural setting is home to many natural resources, from wildlife habitats to unique natural areas, and beautiful scenic vistas, and good soils for farmland of both local and regional significance.

Approximately XX% of our land is in conservation.

Goals

1. Identify, manage, protect, and enhance our natural resources, including but not limited to water resources, farmland, terrestrial and aquatic habitats, forests, shorelands, scenic vistas, open space, and unique natural areas.
2. Improve the ability of the community's natural resources to adapt to the impacts of climate change including but not limited to extreme heat, drought, invasive species, flooding, and other extreme weather events.
3. Conserve more natural areas to increase carbon sequestration, protect and connect habitats, and build resilience, through increased land conservation.
4. Promote stewardship of our natural resources through education and outreach to our citizenry.
5. Promote good stewardship of Merrymeeting Bay and its' tributaries and watershed.

Key Issues

Understand where our natural resources are and recognize their value at the local and regional level. Stay current on the direct or indirect threats to these resources and plan for their restoration, conservation, and protection. The scope, scale, and uncertainty of climate change will require a high level of expertise, support, and collaboration to protect our vulnerable resources both within and across municipal boundaries. We need to incorporate our values for protecting these resources from development and further degradation which requires more outreach, education, and planning to adequately address these concerns.

Recommendations

1. Create a Conservation Commission to serve the Town and our resources and develop and oversee an Open Space Plan and a Climate Action Plan which includes a vulnerability assessment.
2. Develop and promote educational opportunities and resources on natural resource protection.
3. Make available information to those living in or near critical or important natural resources about current use tax programs and applicable local, state, or federal regulations.
4. Initiate and/or participate in interlocal and/or regional planning, management, and/or regulatory efforts around shared critical and important natural resources.
5. Ensure that the Town's Land Use Ordinance is consistent with applicable State laws and rules and recommendations of the Conservation Commission regarding critical natural resources.
6. Protect critical and important natural resources through public/private partnerships and encourage land conservation through voluntary, focused purchases of land, working forest, and/or farm conservation easements.
7. Encourage enrollment in the Open Space Current Use Tax Program, and other conservation programs including but not limited to incentive-based carbon offset programs.