

## **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 of both local and regional significance. Approximately XX% of our land is in conservation.

### Goals

1. Manage, protect, and enhance our natural resources, including but not limited to water resources, nutrient rich 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, achieving 30% land conservation.
4. Promote stewardship of our natural resources through education and outreach to our citizenry.

### Key Issues

We need to know where our natural resources are and recognize their value at the local and regional level. We need to stay current on their health status and anticipate the direct or indirect threats to these resources. We must plan for their restoration, conservation, and protection. The scope, scale, and uncertainty of climate change impacts will require a high level of expertise, support, and collaboration to protect these 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 an Open Space Plan and a Climate Action Plan which includes a vulnerability assessment.
2. Maintain enrollment in the Community Resilience Partnership program.
3. Develop and promote educational opportunities and resources on natural resource protection.
4. Distribute or 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.
5. Initiate and/or participate in interlocal and/or regional planning, management, and/or regulatory efforts around shared critical and important natural resources.
6. Continue to ensure that the Town's Land Use Ordinance is consistent with applicable State laws and rules regarding critical natural resources.
7. Pursue public/private partnerships to protect critical and important natural resources such as through purchase of land or easements from willing sellers.
8. Encourage enrollment in the Open Space Current Use Tax Program, and other conservation programs including but not limited to incentive-based carbon offset programs.

9. Support and encourage land conservation through voluntary, focused purchases of land and working forest or farm conservation easements.