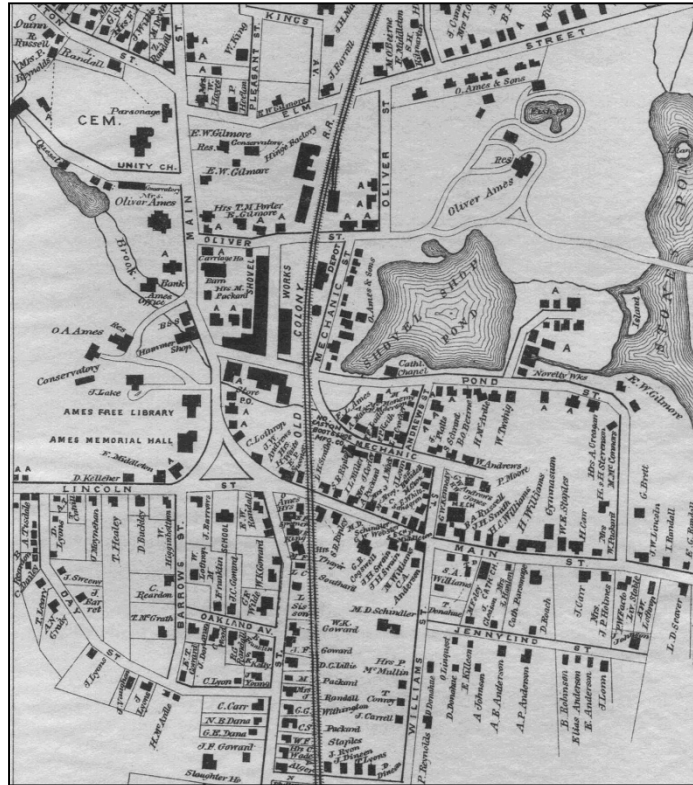


Natural Resources and Recreation

Formative Issues for Natural Resources and Recreation

Natural resources represent the physical base that supports Easton’s quality of life. From the watersheds that supply drinking water to the parks and natural places that provide for recreation, all of these resources are critical to Easton’s current and future identity. In preparation for the public forums and working group process, an extensive inventory of natural, cultural and recreational resources was prepared. The resulting maps demonstrate that Easton’s landscape is fundamentally shaped by geology, landform, soils and drainage. These factors determined the original locations of farms, forests and villages in the days when everyone drew their livelihood from the land or depended on water power to run industrial mills (see inset map right). These resources influenced growth patterns through the suburban boom of the 20th Century, and continue to shape the Town today.



This historic map of North Easton shows how the Quiset Brook served as the primary driver for early settlement and industrialization in what has become the Town’s historic center.

As the Town grew from around 5,000 people in 1940 to more than 23,000 today, town, State and non-profit groups worked successfully to preserve many Easton’s most critical natural resources. Over 4,000 acres of land is permanently protected in the town. Many large tracts are located within and provide protection to distinct watersheds. Land preservation has occurred in an aggressive and opportunistic fashion. The result is a large inventory of land that forms the foundation for larger open space systems across the community. Looking at these preserved areas, it is now possible to see gaps in these systems where either development occurred or where there simply may not have been an opportunity to acquire the land for conservation. These areas are depicted in more detail in the Land Use section of the plan. Over the coming decades (20 to 50 years depending on the real estate market), land suitable for development that is not already protected is likely to be developed. As the Town moves into this next chapter in its land use history, it should prioritize future conservation efforts by consolidating existing conservation areas and linking them together into functional systems.

Natural Systems

Easton's natural systems are anchored by large protected areas that include the Borderland State Park, Wheaton Farm and the Hockomock Swamp. These systems are linked by the north-south running lowlands with their brooks and wetlands. If these links are broken, the ecological health and biodiversity supported by the system will be permanently degraded. Gaps and habitat fragmentation in wildlife corridors can disrupt the natural movements of many species for foraging, nesting and breeding resulting in the loss of species. Encroachment into undeveloped areas and up to the edges of protected open space can increase the numbers of invasive species that crowd out native and indigenous plant and animal species, a concern raised repeatedly in public discussions. Further, encroachment into riparian or other surface water buffers can lead to long-term water quality impacts that can upset aquatic ecosystems. It is likewise important to preserve and protect aquifer recharge areas to the Town's water supply¹¹ to ensure long-term viability. As the Town has done with parcels surrounding Town wells, focusing conservation on the unprotected "gap" parcels within important ecosystems and water supply areas, the Town can ensure the functioning of those systems into the future.

Cultural Systems

Easton's cultural landscape – made up of the historic villages, farms and estates, as well as the natural areas and road corridors that connect them – is another kind of system that needs to be protected to preserve its essential functions. These functions include maintaining the story of the Town for future generations, producing a strong identity and "sense of place," providing for local food production, and generally adding to the quality of life for every resident. Like a natural ecosystem, if these cultural landscapes are fragmented beyond a certain point they will no longer serve those functions – and Easton will have lost an asset that truly sets it apart from other suburban towns that either never had such a cultural landscape or already lost it due to fragmentation.

Recreational Systems

Recreation forms another kind of system that is integral to residents' quality of life. Easton has more than 20 recreation sites across the community today. The system will become more functional by meeting the need for additional facilities and by providing the staffing and the maintenance necessary to keep the facilities operating efficiently. It also means enhancing access to these facilities by designing for an aging population, improving access for people with disabilities, and connecting facilities to residential neighborhoods with walking and biking paths. There are opportunities to develop a town-wide system of trails, bike paths and routes that can connect parks and ball fields together while also serving as a recreational resource. Easton's Bike and Pedestrian working group has already started the planning process for these types of connections in town.

In addition to the understanding of natural, cultural and recreational resources and systems that emerged from the inventory and mapping process, the public forums and working group process helped to identify a series of formative issues for natural resources and recreation:

¹¹ Protection of water supply recharge areas is primarily the responsibility of the Easton Water Department.

1. The Town must work to meet the recreational needs of all residents.

Building and Maintaining Facilities

The Easton Recreation Department organizes a broad range of activities in town including youth summer programs, golf for different age groups, track and field, and tennis. A larger network of independent leagues organizes other sports in the community and creates high demand for recreational facilities. Demand for fields, and particularly for indoor sports venues, can be intense. Scheduling is complicated by the need for coordination between the Town, the School Department, youth sports leagues, and individual participants. While the addition of Keach Park has eased demand for ball fields, there is increasing need for facilities that are a good fit for busy residents who may not have time to join a league, but who could take advantage of places for walking, biking, fishing, etc. before or after work close to their homes. For many facilities, there is a need to enhance accessibility through better signage, parking, handicapped access improvements, and provision of lighting, benches and comfort facilities.

The idea of building new recreational facilities was not the primary focus of recreation discussions during Envision Easton. However, there was considerable interest in increasing the availability of indoor facilities. As with outdoor facilities, better systems for electronic scheduling and programming can only go so far with a limited number of venues. At the same time, the cost of construction and maintenance could make substantial new facilities an unrealistic option. One solution would involve a more deliberate inventory, analysis and cooperative planning effort between private venues like the YMCA, the Town School Department, and Stonehill College. This more intensive planning exercise would be used to identify opportunities for sharing facilities with the goal of greater efficiencies and savings for all parties. For example, as maintenance and utility costs continue to rise at the college in coming years, there may be limited opportunities for the Town or local youth sports leagues to run recreational programs for local residents, fees for which could help maintain those facilities.

Supporting Staff and Coordinating Programs

Providing facilities is only one aspect of meeting residents' recreational needs. Part of the puzzle is supporting the staff needed to plan, organize and run programs so that those facilities can be used most effectively. Staff members require up-to-date tools and training to establish a central hub for coordinating the use and schedule for various facilities. Discussion is needed on how to best balance the current hands-on approach to scheduling fields with the potential for a web-based, user-driven scheduling system. Participants in Envision Easton universally supported the idea of taking advantage of the latest digital scheduling tools.

Staffing levels have had a direct effect on current levels of maintenance, which is currently provided by school staff, volunteers, and a few employees of the Buildings and Grounds Division of the DPW. More regular and planned routine maintenance would improve the condition and lifespan of Town facilities, but would require additional Town resources. The Town does not currently have a Parks department, which in many Towns is charged with maintaining public parks and recreational facilities. Participants in public forums and working group meetings raised many creative ideas for meeting the financial challenges of building and maintaining recreation facilities. An emerging theme was the possibility of enhancing partnerships. This includes not only building cooperation among the schools, recreation department and public

works, but also augmenting public-private partnerships that would link town staff, boards and committees with businesses, non-profit institutions and user groups.

Enhancing Connectivity

The geographic distribution of different facilities is an ongoing issue in planning for recreation in Easton. In looking at the Town as a whole, most of the public recreational facilities are located in the northern and eastern parts of town. Residents of the western and southern areas of Easton have greater access to open space areas, but typically not to those offered by the Recreation Department. Many of the places that people want to visit, regardless of location, can only be accessed by automobile. There are sidewalks in the more densely developed areas, and walking paths in many open space areas, but few connections exist between the two. Roadway design can also be a barrier as many roads are either state highways with a large volume of car and truck traffic, or narrow roads with little room for bikes or pedestrians.



This photograph of Chestnut Street shows the narrow, rural roadway design that helps to define the character of several different neighborhoods. The Town will need to balance the aesthetic importance of these roads with the desire to increase safety and connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists.

While residents throughout town will continue to drive as needed to get to recreation or open space sites, improving access across the entire community remains a priority. During the Envision Easton process, building new facilities in the underserved areas of Easton was less of a short-term priority when compared with improving access from neighborhoods to existing facilities elsewhere in town. Participants continually raised the need to provide better walking and biking connections throughout the Town, starting with connecting neighborhoods with nearby parks, conservation areas and other recreation sites. As the Town works to extend and connect the existing network of natural areas there is an opportunity to link off-road recreational trails into a more robust system.

Maintaining and Policing Recreational Facilities and Conservation Areas

The Town invested considerable resources over the years to acquire and develop ball fields, parks, and conservation lands. Seldom, however, do the available funding sources for these activities extend to maintenance. Recreation facilities, whether “active” or “passive”—from nature trails to parking lots and baseball backstops—have a limited life span. Plans for depreciation and replacement should be made early-on in the life cycle of these facilities so that the Town can plan more effectively for needs that will arise five or ten years down the road.

As with maintenance costs, the need for additional policing and public safety for Easton’s recreation areas should be explored as part of the ongoing planning process. Traditional open

Agriculture

Despite its residential growth over the decades, Easton has been able to maintain agriculture in town. Farms continue to be an important cultural and natural feature. Unlike areas that grew back into woods (or were developed as subdivisions), Easton's remaining farms preserve a landscape that has changed little over centuries. Just as important, they preserve a culture and lifestyle that harkens back to an earlier age when agriculture was a much more important part of the Town's economy and identity.



The Easton Natural Resources Trust (NRT) demonstrates the potential to combine community education with the preservation of agricultural lands. The Sheep Farm (above) is part of a larger educational center that connects members of the community with present day agriculture and an important link to the Town's history. (Photograph courtesy of NRT)

Fortunately, preserving farmland represents an increasing opportunity for the future. Farming is enjoying a resurgence across the region, as more communities start to focus on the value and importance of local food production. The success of the Easton Community Gardens and the farmers market are examples of how the community is invested in local agriculture and increasing access to local healthy foods. To build on these successes, these efforts by necessity start with protection of the farmland itself. These efforts must then be combined with a process to transfer that land into the hands of a new generation of farmers. This represents

a unique economic challenge in the entire Boston region, where the "highest and best use" of farmland remains residential development – at least from a real estate perspective. Unless young farmers inherit the land, they are unlikely to be able to buy it from its current owner based on what they can earn farming it. Continuing to explore and encourage the use of innovative preservation options can ensure that farmland is available for agriculture. Options such as leasing land to farmers and licensing suitable town land for agricultural use are already at work in Easton. Another tool for protecting farmlands involves partnering landowners with conservancy organizations to acquire preservation restrictions on prime farmlands.

3. Easton's watersheds are key economic and environmental resources.

Local and Regional Change Continues to Impact Watershed Quality

Easton contains a network of rivers, streams, ponds and wetlands that absorb stormwater, mitigate the effects of flooding, provide diverse habitat, and protect the Town's water supply wells. Public water supply wells and adjacent lands are owned by the Town Water Department. Water bodies and wetlands are protected under local, state, and federal law. In spite of these protections, changes in the surrounding watersheds can have profound impacts. Locally, runoff from existing developed areas and potential future development sites increases the intensity of flooding and carries pollutants into water bodies. The increase of impervious cover as a result of potential future development is one factor that will exacerbate these impacts. The other major factor is climate change, with historic rainfall records from climate stations across the region

clearly showing that storms are more frequent and intense, at the same time the region also appears to be experiencing extended periods of drought.. As climate trends continue in this direction and development creates more impervious surface, flooding events may overburden both natural wetlands and town stormwater systems.

Making Watersheds More Resilient



Poquanticut Brook represents one of Easton's many fragile water resources that require proactive management and preservation to remain healthy. (photograph courtesy of Douglas Watts)

The Town can deal with the uncertain impacts of climate change and other regional issues by working to define the likely impact of these trends on local watersheds and planning for future water demand. In addition to enforcement of existing wetland and subdivision regulations, the Town can continue to identify and preserve buffer areas around existing and potential wellheads and aquifer recharge areas. Easton can work with land-owners and developers to implement best management practices that increase on-site infiltration, minimize erosion, reduce nutrient loads to water resources, and control other non-point source pollution.

4. Easton must employ a comprehensive approach to protecting its natural resources.

Setting Priorities for Conservation

Easton has protected many of the most sensitive habitat areas and water supplies. This was confirmed through the mapping and analyses performed for Envision Easton. However, these resources are becoming increasingly isolated and fragmented by residential subdivisions and roadside development. While the pace of development slowed in recent years, the underlying functions of the local ecosystem will gradually be degraded. The Town can and should continue to seize opportunities to preserve important wildlife habitat and plant communities. To the extent possible, acquisition should be strategic—guided by an understanding of the larger functional systems that support those areas.

The mapping process performed for Envision Easton identified natural resource areas, generally following the three main north-south valleys:

- Poquanticut-Mulberry Meadow Brook Corridor
- The Black Brook-Hockomock Corridor; and
- The Queset Brook Corridor

Overlaying the map of resource areas with a map of protected land shows that while many of these areas have already been protected, there are critical gaps that threaten the long-term health of the ecosystem. Many of these gaps in protection fall in areas where the brook corridors traverse farmland, thread between subdivisions, or pass through Furnace Village, Easton Center and North Easton Village. By focusing conservation activities on filling these gaps and maintaining the continuity of corridors, the Town can ensure that the ecological value of existing conservation areas will be maintained. A more detailed discussion of these maps is provided in the Land Use section of the plan.

Improving Ecological Management of Public and Private Lands

In addition to the outright acquisition of new open space, improving management of existing open space will play an important role in preserving natural systems. This involves both management of existing landscapes and design of new ones. Removal of invasive plant species in critical areas is an important issue for existing stream corridors, as these plants can spread quickly and dominate a local ecosystem within a very short period of time. Areas that are being farmed or kept as mowed lawns can benefit from the creation of naturalized buffers where more natural and permanent vegetative cover helps to filter stormwater and prevent erosion. For new construction, wetland permitting provides an opportunity to shape the edge of the corridor. Wider buffers are generally more protective, but often soil and topographical conditions may allow for a relatively narrow corridor to function just as well. Easton has historically enforced strong buffer protection standards in the development review process and should continue to do so.

Looking Ahead: Promoting Sustainability and Resilience in an Uncertain Future

Protecting and managing land may not be enough to maintain Easton's biodiversity amid the multiple threats posed by climate change, air and water pollution, and invasive species. Each of these issues presents a distinct challenge to the health of the ecosystem and a gradual, regional and long-term threat that would seem to defy local solutions (as well as the reach of the annual budget). As the Town plans for the future, it will be important to think through the implications of these trends and do what is possible now to prepare for the future.

Climate change is creating a generally warmer, wetter environment in the northeast. Plant and wildlife species adapted to these conditions will be moving north over time, displacing those currently in residence. Some of these species will need to be managed as "invasive," while others will help create a new kind of ecosystem. *The Massachusetts Climate Change Adaptation Report* was published in September 2011 by the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs and the state's Adaptation Advisory Committee. Important findings cited directly from that document include:

- In its 2007 report, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) found that the —warming of the climate system is unequivocal, as is now evident from observations of increases in global average air and ocean temperatures, widespread melting of snow and ice, and rising global average sea levels.
- New England is expected to experience changes in the amount, frequency, and timing of precipitation. Since 1900, precipitation recorded at United States Historical Climatology Network weather stations across the Northeast has increased on average by 5 to 10 percent.
- A more recent 50-year [review of precipitation records] shows an increase in total precipitation by approximately 10 percent (2.12 mm/year). Also, the most recent 30-year normal precipitation for Massachusetts is the highest it has been since records started to be taken.

One approach adopted by the Nature Conservancy (TNC) in response to these changes is to focus less on protecting the habitat of a particular rare species and more on preserving those places that are likely to support important communities of plants and animals no matter what happens in the future. TNC generally identifies these important areas by looking at soils and topography and looking for places that have a high variety of both as an indication of potential diversity. The assumption is that areas with a diverse cross section of soil types within a varied topography tend to support a rich ecosystem in every climate. If we protect these areas, we increase the likelihood that a more diverse profile of plants and animals will take up residence, even as conditions change.

Another likely impact of changing climate is an increase in extreme weather events. Because a warmer atmosphere retains more moisture and energy, storms will become more frequent and precipitation more intense. On the ground, this will result in increased occurrence of flooding and an increase in the area that is typically flooded. Protecting and buffering floodplains will be an important way to limit the impact of extreme weather across the Town. Improved stormwater management systems will also be needed, starting with the design of individual buildings, streets and parking lots. The most significant impacts in Easton may be generated by existing roads and parking lots rather than large new developments. Policies will need to be put in place to ensure that, as these existing areas are changed or improved, stormwater systems can mitigate the amount of runoff and help to reduce pollution.

5. Economy, resource protection, and quality of life are inextricably connected.

True sustainability for Easton, in large part, will be about finding an equitable long-term balance between preservation and growth. Over time, the community will need to continually re-evaluate how it is managing local and regional growth pressures within the context of its watersheds, climate and biodiversity. To a large extent, Easton is well-equipped to provide residents with their most basic needs— food, water, shelter, and access to work. But high quality of life is what keeps residents here and what draws new residents and businesses to the Town. The appeal of Easton is connected to the availability of amenities like parks, historic sites and natural areas, as well as to practical aspects like safety and security, good schools, and a convenient commute to work. Easton’s appeal is rooted in its historic character, scenic beauty, sense of community, and relative peace and quiet.

These elements of Easton—those which create such an attractive community setting—must be recognized as fundamental to the Town’s continued economic success. While it is always important to look closely at conventional economic development strategies related to business and workforce development, “quality of life” provides a much larger economic framework that includes the full spectrum of assets across the community. Residents, business owners and visitors understand Easton in terms of the full “experience” of their time here. The degree to which they feel “at home”, invested in their work, or excited about what they might discover are a few dimensions of what planners often refer to as “a sense of place”.

History demonstrates communities with a strong sense of place tend to be more economically resilient and Easton remains well-positioned to take advantage of its broad array of assets. Today many businesses are tied not to a particular resource or region, but rather locate where they have access to a workforce that is well trained, technologically sophisticated, and creative. In turn, these young, educated workers want to live in areas with a high quality of life. This trend is supporting strong economic growth in major cities like Boston, New York and San Francisco, but is also driving up of the cost of living in those cities to unsustainable levels. Easton can take advantage of the Town’s rich quality of life and manageable commuting times by offering residents an attractive balance between costs and benefits.

This same approach can attract new businesses to town, and foster the growth of a local economy that takes advantage of the Town’s unique assets and location. Part of this is making more efficient use of areas that are already developed, rather than growing into previously undeveloped areas. Filling in older, underutilized commercial areas can reduce the cost of development – but only if town zoning allows for enough density to make it profitable. Likewise, additional economic activity needs to be coupled with a high level of design quality, with a focus on creating attractive; pedestrian-friendly places that people will choose to visit. This in turn supports higher rental rates, increased investment in amenities and maintenance, and so forth, creating a self-reinforcing cycle that will drive redevelopment forward. The Town can encourage the process by:

- Supporting visioning and planning that define a shared vision for each community asset.
- Amending zoning to provide for increased density and an appropriate mix of uses in targeted growth areas.
- Establishing design standards or guidelines that require a high-level of design quality.

- Supporting infrastructure development, streetscape improvements, parks, and trail connections that add value to the area and attract private investment.
- Redeveloping town-owned buildings in the area, or locating new town buildings in areas that will support nearby redevelopment efforts.

While economic development might seem to be at odds with protection of natural and cultural resources, a more sustainable outlook understands that these are part of a greater whole. By maintaining its centuries-old pattern of villages surrounded by open space, Easton can preserve its character and quality of life while also creating an attractive setting for business growth. In short, protecting Easton's cultural and natural resources represents a direct economic investment.

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Goals, Objectives and Actions for Natural Resources and Recreation

		Lead Agency	Time Horizon (1-2 years; 2-5 years; 5-10 years)
Goal NRR-1.	Meet the recreational needs of all Easton residents.		
Objective 1.1	Provide access to a broad range of recreational facilities and programs.		
Action 1:	Effectively coordinate field scheduling among users, the recreation department and the schools by creating a central system for facility scheduling and maintenance.	Recreation Director, School Department, Information Technology	2-5 years
Action 2:	Assess recreational interests and develop additional facilities as needed (i.e. indoor, fields, walking areas, fishing, etc.).	Recreation Department, School Department	1-2 years; then ongoing
Action 3:	Expand accessibility for people of all ages and abilities by providing adequate parking, meeting ADA requirements, and providing shade, lighting, benches and other amenities.	Commission on Disabilities	Ongoing
Action 4:	Provide adequate resources to maintain Recreation Commission, Conservation Commission and School Department owned/managed facilities.	Board of Selectmen, Town Administrator	Ongoing
Action 5:	Provide consistent funding for recreation administration, program staff, and maintenance personnel.	Board of Selectmen, Town Administrator	Ongoing
Objective 1.2	Promote walking and biking recreation connections.		
Action 1:	Connect neighborhoods with nearby town conservation lands and recreational facilities by using and developing their own sidewalk, walking trail and bike path networks.	Planning and Community Development, DPW, Bicycle and Pedestrian Working Group	5-10 years
Action 2:	Create a working group charged with developing a master plan for town-wide pedestrian and bicycle networks.	Planning and Community Development	1-2 years
Objective 1.3	Ensure facilities are safe and well-maintained.		
Action 1:	Create a 5-year plan for maintenance to be reviewed and updated annually.	Recreation Commission, DPW	2-5 years to complete first round of all facilities plans; then ongoing
Action 2:	Establish cooperative management and maintenance policies and practices between public and private recreational organizations and facilities. For example, Frothingham Park is a privately-held recreational facility used for public recreational activities.	Town Administrator, Recreation Commission, DPW	2-5 years

Action 3:	Plan for depreciation and replacement of recreational facilities.	Recreation Commission, School Department	Ongoing
Action 4:	Promote and enforce safe and legal use of conservation areas for passive recreation.	Conservation Commission	Ongoing
Objective 1.4	Establish more consistent funding for recreational development and maintenance.		
Action 1:	Empower a committee comprised of representatives from the Conservation, Agricultural, and Recreation commissions, the Community Preservation Committee and the School Department to focus on funding needs.	Community Preservation Act Committee, Board of Selectmen	1-2 years
Action 2:	Explore creative approaches to funding, such as public-private partnerships, grant opportunities and fee programs.	Planning and Community Development (facilitator), Town Administrator	Ongoing
Action 3:	Develop a long-term funding and oversight plan.	Town Administrator	5-10 years
Objective 1.5	Increase public awareness and use of facilities and programs.		
Action 1:	Conduct public outreach programs.	Conservation Commission, Recreation Commission	Ongoing
Action 2:	Develop and install consistent wayfinding signage.	Conservation Commission, Bike and Pedestrian Working Group, Department of public Works	2-5 years to develop fully coordinated wayfinding plan; 5-10 years for town-wide installation
Action 3:	Make maps, descriptive literature and interpretive materials readily available.	Recreation Commission, GIS, Conservation Commission	2-5 years
Action 4:	Research and publish the history of all conservation lands.	Conservation Commission, Historic Commission	5-10 years
Goal NRR-2.	Preserve and protect Easton's visual, historic, geologic and agricultural resources that comprise our cultural landscape.		
Objective 2.1	Identify natural, historical, agricultural and scenic areas and preserve, protect or acquire them.		
Action 1:	Coordinate between the Historical Preservation Plan and the Open Space and Recreation Plan.	Historical Commission, Recreation Commission, Conservation Commission	1-2 years for open Space Plan Update
Action 2:	Update criteria for and designate scenic roads and scenic areas in Easton.	Planning/Zoning Board, Historical Commission	1-2 years to update criteria; then ongoing
Action 3:	Encourage the use of innovative, flexible development techniques, to preserve usable, accessible open space and	Planning/Zoning Board	2-5 years to draft and adopt any new zoning standards.

	recreation areas.		
Action 4:	Identify parcels needed to create a greenbelt system.	Conservation Commission	2-5 years
Objective 2.2	Preserve the farming heritage of the Town and reinvigorate agriculture.		
Action 1:	Lease or set aside town-owned land as appropriate for agricultural use.	Conservation Commission, Agricultural Commission	Ongoing
Action 2:	Promote sustainable agricultural practices throughout the community.	Agricultural Commission, Conservation Commission	Ongoing
Action 3:	Prioritize remaining parcels with agricultural potential for preservation.	Agricultural Commission, Conservation Commission, Community Preservation Committee	1-2 years to develop a list of prioritized parcels/
Goal NRR-3:	Protect and enhance watershed resources that provide the town's drinking water and protect against flood hazards.		
Objective 3.1	Ensure long-term viability of Easton's water resources.		
Action 1:	Support and reevaluate the water conservation program.	Water Division	2-5 years to identify needs and implement strategies
Action 2:	Evaluate and identify potential future water supply sources.	Water Division, Board of Health, Green Communities	5-10 years to complete investigations
Action 3:	Evaluate the impact of climate change on water resources and establish appropriate mitigation plans and policies.	Planning and Community Development, Water Division, Board of Health	2-5 years
Action 4:	Develop and implement a pond and waterway management plan for maintaining and improving water quality to support aquatic life and appropriate recreational activities.	Conservation Commission, Planning and Community Development	2-5 years
Objective 3.2	Continue to protect water resources through enforcement of wetland and floodplain regulations and promotion of best management practices.		
Action 1:	Ensure all developers, contractors and homeowners use best management practices to control sediment migration and soil erosion.	Planning/Zoning Board, Conservation Commission	2-5 years to update regulatory standards
Action 2:	Educate all developers, contractors and homeowners on sediment and erosion control best management practices and ensure such practices are followed.	Planning and Community Development, Conservation Commission	Ongoing
Action 3:	Continue to identify and acquire land in aquifer recharge areas and zones surrounding present and potential public water	Water Division, Community Preservation Act Committee,	Ongoing

	supplies.	Conservation Commission	
Goal NRR-4.	Preserve wildlife habitat and native plant communities and establish protected corridors to connect them.		
Objective 4.1	Identify and acquire or establish protections for lands with critical wildlife habitat, important plant communities, and wildlife corridors.		
Action 1:	Define and implement appropriate measures to protect identified habitats, communities and corridors such as acquisition in fee title, conservation easements, and open space set-asides as part of subdivisions, etc.	Conservation Commission, Community Preservation Act Committee	Ongoing
Action 2:	Implement recommendations of the Land Management Plan to ensure open space preservation goals are being met.	Conservation Commission	5-10 years
Objective 4.2	Protect biodiversity of remaining undeveloped areas.		
Action 1:	Develop and implement a program to mitigate the impact of invasive species, development pressures and climate change.	Conservation Commission, Planning and Community Development	2-5 years to establish the program.
Action 2:	Establish refuge areas.	Conservation Commission, Planning and Community Development	Ongoing
Action 3:	Publish information that helps residents observe and enjoy wildlife in a natural setting.	Conservation Commission	1-2 years to develop initial publications; then ongoing