SECTION 5

##### **INVENTORY OF LANDS OF CONSERVATION AND RECREATION INTEREST**

Open space in Buckland consists of forests, farms, conservation lands, and recreation areas under both public and private ownership and management.This section of the Buckland Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP) inventories and categorizes parcels of undeveloped land and open space by ownership, use, and level of protection from development. It identifies parcels of undeveloped land that are individually, or in the aggregate, considered to be of interest because they help conserve ecosystems and ecosystem services, scenic landscapes, the area’s rural character, and current and future recreation resources for Buckland's residents. Lands of conservation interest are those parcels of land that are considered important because they are already protected from development or because they could be a priority for protection.

Communities across the country have determined that protecting land from development is a means to ensure certain aspects of their landscape are conserved. Open space and recreation plans typically identify areas of undeveloped land that contain precious natural and recreational resources and prioritize them for protection. This includes undeveloped land, which provides actively managed farm and forestland, wildlife habitat, protection and recharge of groundwater, public access to recreational lands and trail systems, important plant communities, structures and landscapes that represent the community’s heritage, flood control, and scenery.

Protected land has legal restrictions that prohibit the parcel from being developed for residential, commercial, or industrial uses. Permanently protected land enjoys the highest degree of protection from development. In Massachusetts, there are a number of ways in which land can be considered permanently protected: the land may be owned by a state conservation agency, a conservation land trust, or a municipal conservation commission; or, a conservation restriction may be attached to the deed. Town-owned land with recreational purposes stated in its deed is permanently protected under Article 97. A vote of two-thirds of the State legislature is required for any development to occur on these protected parcels.

This section provides a comprehensive inventory of the lands that provide open space, wildlife habitat, agricultural and forest products, watershed protection, scenic beauty, and recreation opportunities for the benefit of all of Buckland's residents. The inventory accompanied by the Open Space Map shows the location, types, and distribution of conservation lands in Buckland. This inventory is divided into two main sections based on type of ownership: 1) private, and 2) public and non-profit. Within each of these major categories, parcels are differentiated by use (farm or forestland), by ownership and management, and by level of protection: permanent, limited, and temporary (See Table 5-1).

Most natural processes do not follow political boundaries, but land ownership is an important consideration for Town officials who aim to protect land for conservation purposes. Land owned by DCR or MassWildlife is considered to be permanently protected from development, while privately owned land is only permanently protected if a conservation restriction is attached to its deed. Although other factors relating to ownership are important to consider for open space planning purposes, such as level of management and public access, these are often considered secondary to the level of protection from development. This is because development can have a permanent impact on natural and cultural resources.

All municipal property must be accessible to people with disabilities. The municipal parks and conservation areas in Town were evaluated for accessibility by the Buckland Recreation Commission. The results of the evaluation and recommendations for improvement are located in Appendix A of this OSRP. The Town of Buckland does not have any identified environmental justice areas. Protected open space is located throughout Buckland. Land with limited and temporary protection is available close to the village center in town.

The only truly protected land is that land which is preserved in perpetuity, such as that land protected by an Agricultural Preservation Restriction (APR) or a Conservation Restriction (CR). Total land under permanent protection through APR and CR in Town is equal to approximately 726.68 acres, or 5.7 percent of the total land area of Buckland and 11.8 percent of the total open space in Buckland. While there is significantly more land under temporary protection (a total of approximately 5,269 acres, including privately owned and town owned property), that land is subject to possible future development once the manner of temporary protection has expired.

The portion of the total land area that is protected as open space is summarized in Table 5-1. It is divided into two main sections based on type of ownership: private and public. Within each of these major categories, parcels are differentiated by use (farm or forestland), by ownership and management, and by level of protection: “protected,” limited, and temporary.

#### Table 5-1: Summary Areas of Farmland and Forest Open Space by

#### Ownership and Level of Protection from Development

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **PRIVATELY OWNED PROTECTED OPEN SPACE**  | **Area in Acres** |
|  **Farmland** |  |
|  ***Permanently Protected by Agricultural Preservation Restriction***  | 40.15 |
| ***Temporarily Protected under Ch. 61A*** | 1447.2 |
|  **Forestland** |  |
|  ***Permanently Protected by a Conservation Restriction*** | 686.53 |
|  ***Temporarily Protected***  |  |
|  Chapter 61 | 2232.28 |
|  Chapter 61B | 1330.26 |
|  Total Temporarily Protected  | 5009.74 |
|  **TOTAL PRIVATELY OWNED PROTECTED OPEN SPACE** | **5736.42** |
|  |  |
| **PUBLICLY OWNED PROTECTED OPEN SPACE** |  |
|  ***Permanently Protected by State Conservation Agencies*** |  |
|  State Department of Recreation and Conservation |  152 |
|  State Department of Fish and Game |  |
|  ***Land Permanently Protected & Owned by Town of Buckland*** | 9.2 |
|  ***Land with Limited Protection & Owned by Town of Buckland*** | 259.14 |
|  **TOTAL PUBLICLY OWNED PROTECTED OPEN SPACE** | **420.34** |
| **TOTAL OPEN SPACE** | **6,156.76** |

Source: Town of Buckland Assessors Records; June 2020.

**A.1 Permanently Protected Land**

Land permanently protected from development may be owned by a state agency or by the town. For example, Kenneth Dubuque Memorial, Catamount, and Buckland State Forests are owned by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and are under the management of the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR). Land owned by the Town of Buckland under the authority of the Conservation Commission is also considered to be permanently protected from development under Article 97 regulations, which requires a two-thirds majority vote of the State Legislature to convert open space to another use.

Farmland can be permanently protected from development when a landowner chooses to sell his/her development rights to a land trust or state agency. The Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (MDAR) purchases the development rights of farmland through their Agricultural Preservation Restriction (APR) Program. The APR Program typically pays the landowner the difference between the market value and the agricultural value of the land**.** MDAR favors towns that provide matching funds, which are typically 5 percent of that amount or up to $500 per acre. Buckland’s Community Preservation Act Funds can be used as a match for this program. In this way towns can leverage 95 percent of the cost of purchasing development rights towards protecting the farmland of willing landowners. Currently there are 3 farms in the APR program in Buckland with a total of 40.15 acres of permanently protected farmland.

**A.2 Temporarily Protected Land**

Land considered to be of limited protection includes any town-owned open space that is not under the authority of the Conservation Commission, which could be developed through a decision by the Select Board or by Town Meeting vote. Examples of town-owned open space include cemeteries, small parks, and old landfills. In Buckland, temporarily protected town-owned properties include land around town buildings such as the Town Hall, as well as properties acquired as tax takings.

The Chapter 61, 61A and 61B lands are also considered to have a temporary level of protection from development. The Chapter 61 programs offer a reduced tax assessment on privately owned working land. Landowners that choose to participate in this program therefore receive a reduction in property taxes on the portion of their land that is in active production as agriculture or forestland, or available for public recreation. There are three Chapter 61 programs: Chapter 61 for Forestry, Chapter 61A for Agriculture, and Chapter 61B for Recreation.

In order to participate in the Ch. 61 Program, landowners must manage their forestland under a ten-year management plan. The aim of this program is to temporarily keep working forests undeveloped.

In order to participate in the Chapter 61A program, a landowner must have at least 5 acres of land currently in active agriculture, and apply every year to enroll their parcels of land in the program. The aim of this program is to temporarily keep farmland in active agricultural production.

The 61B program also promotes the private ownership of open space, with the requirement that land enrolled in the program be used for public and private recreation purposes, or as open space. No management plan is required, but the tax savings are smaller. Commercial timber harvesting is not allowed on lands in the Ch. 61B program.

Lands in the Chapter 61 program are considered to be only temporarily protected because a landowner may remove land that is enrolled in the Ch. 61 Program at any time by paying a penalty tax. If the landowner receives a formal offer from another party to purchase a parcel of land that is currently in one of the Ch. 61 Programs (61, 61A, 61B), the landowner must notify the town. The town then has 120 days to exercise its right of first refusal by matching the bona-fide offer, or to transfer this right to a conservation organization.

The ability to transfer the right of first refusal to a conservation organization enables the town to create more protected open space without being burdened by the relatively short time frame for action. Private conservation land trusts often have the ability to produce creative and successful fundraising campaigns in short periods of time, while DCR and the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife (MassWildlife) may be interested in purchasing the land in the near future. While it may be difficult to bring a decision on a land purchase to a Special Town Meeting within 120 days, the negotiating process between a land trust, a state conservation agency, and a landowner can be often completed in a shorter period of time. It is therefore helpful for town officials and/or committees to maintain established relationships with conservation organizations such as DCR, MassWildlife, New England Forestry Foundation (NEFF), and local land trusts such as the Franklin Land Trust (FLT).

**B. PRIVATELY OWNED PARCELS**

Approximately 5,736.42 acres, or 45 percent of Buckland’s 12,678 total acres is privately owned protected open space. Most of this land is either forested or in use for agriculture. There are many advantages to private ownership of open space. Privately owned open space contributes to the Town’s tax base. When used for farming or forestry, land also generates revenue, jobs, food, and forest products. Some landowners allow access to their property for recreational purposes. Most take pride in their land, which favors good stewardship. Finally, owning land gives people a sense of place. This is particularly true of residents whose families have owned land in Buckland for generations. Land ownership encourages a sense of community and helps contribute to community stability over time. Privately owned land provides many public benefits, but it is important to respect private property rights and to remember that landowners ultimately determine use and disposition of this land.

The major disadvantage of private ownership of open space is that most privately owned land can easily be converted to other uses. Only about 12.7 percent of privately owned open space in Buckland has been permanently protected through APR or CR. The remaining privately owned lands are only temporarily protected, and are therefore vulnerable to development. Some landowners acquire land specifically for the purposes of development, but others are forced to sell property due to circumstances beyond their control. Aging, the death of a parent or spouse, financial needs of family and rising costs or declining profits of farming and forestry are common reasons why landowners decide to put their property on the market. The high value of land for residential development is both a powerful incentive to sell property, and a formidable obstacle to people who might otherwise want to buy it for agriculture or forestry. They are discussed in this Open Space and Recreation Plan because privately owned open space may contain important wildlife habitat, offer unique recreational opportunities, or provide a potential connection between other permanently protected parcels. In some cases, parcels may be deemed valuable enough by the community to consider purchasing, if available for sale, or helping to protect through conservation easements or other options.

The following tables show temporarily protected, privately owned agricultural and forest land in Buckland identified by assessors’ map and lot numbers. Some of this privately owned land is in pasture but most is in forest. These open space parcels are still on the tax rolls, whether the land is permanently protected or not. Many landowners have taken advantage of the Chapter 61 programs as evidenced by the fact that there are 5,009.74 acres of open space (39.5 percent of the total land area) in the 61A, 61B and 61 Programs combined.

In the following tables, Privately Owned Agricultural, Recreational, and Forest Lands are listed by level of protection from development. The ownership of the land is provided with the associated assessors map-lot number and acreage. The current use is based on the vegetation. Farmland may be pasture in Buckland, while forest is presumed to be used as such, whether it is managed for timber or not. Public access on private land may not be permitted, and if it is, is subject to change. State conservation agencies often require some level of public access before paying for, or accepting conservation restrictions. Public access is not a requirement for enrollment in any of the Ch.61 programs including the Ch.61B Recreation Program. It is assumed that given the nature of these open space parcels, access to them by people with disabilities is also not guaranteed.

Important characteristics that could motivate the Town to consider acting on their right of first refusal for a Ch.61 parcel, or negotiating with a willing landowner for a fair purchase price, may include the presence of prime farmland soils, pasture, wetlands, a portion of the land that is above an aquifer, or rare or endangered species habitat. In addition, the parcel may be deemed very important as a link in a potential greenway or trail network, or as a component of a large block of contiguous forest.

**B.1 Privately Owned Agricultural Land**

According to the Buckland Assessor’s records, 40.15 acres of agricultural land, or 0.32 percent, of total land area in town is permanently protected under APR (Table 5-2), while 1447.2 acres of land, or 11 percent, of total land area in town is temporarily protected by being enrolled in the Chapter 61A program (Table 5-3). The zoning of all of the parcels is Rural Residential**.**

|  |
| --- |
| **Table 5-2: Permanently Protected by Agricultural Preservation Restriction** |
| **Owner/Manager** | **Holder of the Conservation Easement** | **Map-Lot** | **Acres** | **Important Characteristics** |
| Gutierrez, Purple Forest, Route 112 | Franklin Land Trust | 2 0 21 | 23.00 | Prime farmland soils |
| Vallee | Franklin Land Trust | 3 0 15-1 | 11.347 | Landmark, scenic vista |
| Laursen/Dearborn | Franklin Land Trust | 7 0 58 | 5.8 | unknown |
| **TOTAL** | **40.15** |  |

Source: Town of Buckland Assessor’s Records, 2020

**Table 5-3: Privately Owned Agricultural Land with Limited Protection from Development**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Owner** | **Chapter Program** | **Map-Lot** | **Acres**  |
| ATHERTON SUSAN | 61A | 5 0 32 | 72.50 |
| BARGERON RICHARD J/ SPOONER JANE | 61A | 3 0 17-1 | 9.99 |
| CLARK MALCOM / CLARK DANA  | 61A | 7 0 51 | 44.60 |
| CLARK DANA BRIAN & AARON | 61A | 7 0 56 | 94.00 |
| COSBY CAMILLE | 61A | 2 0 11 | 28.96 |
| COSBY CAMILLE | 61A | 2 0 12 | 66.30 |
| COSBY CAMILLE | 61A | 2 0 51 | 9.80 |
| JAMES NED/ ZELLER MARILYN | 61A | 7 0 106 | 2.30 |
| JAMES NED/ ZELLER MARILYN | 61A | 7 0 108 | 11.00 |
| LABELLE FRANKLIN TRUSTEE | 61A | 7 0 103 | 14.50 |
| LABELLE FRANKLIN TRUSTEE | 61A | 7 0 15 | 2.50 |
| LABELLE FRANKLIN TRUSTEE | 61A | 7 0 22 | 41.40 |
| LABELLE FRANKLIN TRUSTEE | 61A | 7 0 97-1 | 0.57 |
| LANGFORD G LAWRENCE | 61A | 4 0 9-3 | 2.01 |
| PATENAUDE JR CHARLES R | 61A | 2 0 1 | 22.80 |
| ROTIMA SA INC | 61A | 8 0 63 | 0.82 |
| SCOTT COLIN | 61A | 5 0 56 | 6.80 |
| SCOTT COLIN | 61A | 5 0 57-1 | 18.00 |
| SCOTT COLIN | 61A | 5 0 58 | 1.40 |
| SCOTT COLIN | 61A | 5 0 59 | 6.80 |
| SCOTT COLIN | 61A | 5 0 62-1 | 48.77 |
| SMITH THERESA J | 61A | 8 0 50 | 8.00 |
| SMITH THERESA J | 61A | 8 0 51 | 106.00 |
| THIBAULT DAVID | 61A | 9 0 37 | 7.30 |
| TOWNSLEY | 61A | 7 0 70 | 50.00 |
| WILLIS PAUL L & JUDY | 61A | 2 0 19 | 5.00 |
| WILLIS PAUL L & JUDY | 61A | 7 0 82 | 51.50 |
| WILLMORE DENA /THURBER MARTHA | 61A | 8-1 0 15-1 | 9.86 |
| ATHERTON SUSAN | 61A | 5 0 5 | 69.20 |
| BARGERON RICHARD J/ SPOONER JANE | 61A | 3 0 16 | 15.57 |
| GOODMAN LEE MARIE /TOY NORMAN | 61A | 5 0 10 | 107.20 |
| LABELLE FRANKLIN TRUSTEE | 61A | 7 0 14 | 21.60 |
| LANGFORD G LAWRENCE | 61A | 4 0 9 | 15.95 |
| MOSS DALE C | 61A | 2 0 46 | 34.60 |
| NAYAK MAYA/ LANGFORD GEORGE | 61A | 4 0 8 | 14.40 |
| PATENAUDE JR CHARLES R | 61A | 2 0 3 | 6.20 |
| PURRINGTON SAMMY W & JANICE | 61A | 4 0 33 | 147.00 |
| ROBERTS SUSAN B / TRUSTEE | 61A | 6 0 20 | 48.02 |
| ROSE CHRISTOPHER C & SUSAN | 61A | 5 0 18-1 | 26.93 |
| SCHAKTMAN HARVEY Z TRUSTEE | 61A | 6 0 12-1 | 107.52 |
| TAFT-FERGUSON HORACE | 61A | 8-1 0 14 | 9.60 |
| TROW JR FRANCIS | 61A | 5 0 39-2 | 79.93 |
| **Total acres** | **1,447.20** |

Source: Town of Buckland Assessors Records; June 2020.

In some cases, farmland enrolled in Chapter 61A abuts protected land. Conversion of even a small percentage of this farmland to residential use could affect the viability of farming on the remainder. Location of new homes in proximity to active agricultural operations may result in conflict between new residents and farmers over the noise, dust, odors, and use of chemicals that are part of normal agricultural practices. Increased commuter traffic on roads in agricultural areas also makes it difficult for farmers to move their equipment between fields. Buckland’s Agricultural Commission was instrumental in helping the Town adopt a Right to Farm Bylaw to address this issue. The bylaw notifies new and existing residents that the community supports agriculture and the inherent activities associated with farming.

In some cases, farmland enrolled in Chapter 61A abuts protected land. Conversion of even a small percentage of this farmland to residential use could affect the viability of farming on the remainder. Location of new homes in proximity to active agricultural operations may result in conflict between new residents and farmers over the noise, dust, odors, and use of chemicals that are part of normal agricultural practices. Increased commuter traffic on roads in agricultural areas also makes it difficult for farmers to move their equipment between fields. Buckland’s Agricultural Commission was instrumental in helping the Town adopt a Right to Farm Bylaw to address this issue. The bylaw notifies new and existing residents that the community supports agriculture and the inherent activities associated with farming.

Much of the land enrolled in Chapter 61A also abuts rivers and streams. While agriculture can have negative impacts on water quality, these impacts can be reduced or avoided through the use of best management practices. When best management practices are observed, agriculture is compatible with watershed protection because it keeps the land open, while development results in conversion of land to impervious surfaces with negative impacts on water quality.

Agricultural lands enrolled in the Chapter 61A program continue to be used as farmland and all lie within the Town’s Rural Residential District. No state, town, or private funds are necessary to enroll the land in the program. Chapter 61A lands offer much value to the town, even if the farmlands are only “temporarily protected.” The agricultural parcels often contain prime farmland soils, contribute to the town’s tax base and generate revenue, employment, and food products. In addition, some landowners may allow access to their property for recreational purposes, such as hiking or snowmobiling. However, access should not be assumed, as the land is privately owned. Most Chapter 61A landowners take pride in their land, while practicing good stewardship. They help to define a sense of place for Buckland and contribute to community stability over time.

Remaining farms that are not in either the APR Program or the Chapter 61 Program are not listed here, as they are not considered to have any form of protection from development. It is important to note that farms may remain in a family for generations with no formal protection other than a family’s desire and ability to keep working the land. However, with development pressure and unreliable economic and weather conditions that impact farms, it is important for farm families to consider successional planning for the future continuance of their farm. This future planning may involve family discussions to consider land protection options, legal and estate issues, ownership and management of the farm operation, and sharing of assets among successors.

**B.2 Privately Owned Forested Land**

Some of the largest tracts of unbroken forest land in Buckland are privately owned. Large blocks of contiguous forest support and sustain woodland species with specialized habitats that can be irreparably lost once a forest is fragmented by roads and development.

The following two tables list privately owned forestland with different levels of protection from development. Permanently protected forestland exists when landowners have donated or sold their development rights to a state conservation organization or a land trust. The landowners retain the other rights of ownership and they continue to pay property taxes, though these taxes are lower due to the reduced value of their land. Properties with conservation restrictions may have the potential for passive recreational use or for activities such as fishing or hunting, but this is dependent upon the wishes of the landowner. It is important to note, however, that public access cannot be assumed, as properties with conservation restrictions are privately owned. Buckland currently has nineteen privately owned properties that are permanently protected from development with a conservation restriction (see Table 5-4).

**Table 5-4: Forestlands with Permanent Protection from Development**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Owner** | **Conservation Restriction** | **Map/Lot** | **Acres** |
| FRANKLIN LAND TRUST, INC. | Fee donation to FLT | 2 0 43 | 79.20 |
| MARK SURYA BROWN | CR | 3-1 0 1 | 80.12 |
| MARK SURYA BROWN | CR | 3-1 0 3 | 2.18 |
| MARK SURYA BROWN | CR | 3-1 0 4 | 2.03 |
| MARK SURYA BROWN | CR | 3-1 0 6 | 2.64 |
| MARK SURYA BROWN | CR | 3-1 0 7 | 2.10 |
| ROSE BRIAN C & RACHEL | CR | 5 0 18 | 108.66 |
| ROSE CHRISTOPHER & SHARON | CR | 5 0 18-1 | 26.93 |
| ROSE JEFFREY H & ANDREA | CR | 5 0 19 | 46.5 |
| ROSE BRIAN & RACHEL | CR | 5 0 19-1 | 2 |
| ROSE JEFFREY H & ANDREA | CR | 6 0 10 | 19.93 |
| ROSE JEFFREY H & ANDREA | CR | 6 0 10-1 | 4.53 |
| DVORAK JEFFREY P | CR | 6 0 2 | 26.83 |
| PEASE THEODORE M JR & CLAIRE V | CR | 7 0 34 | 30.75 |
| DANA M. & COLLEEN CLARK | CR | 7 0 36 | 8 |
| DANA M. & COLLEEN CLARK | CR | 7 0 37 | 8.8 |
| SEWARD CHRISTOPHER | CR | 7 0 35 | 21.00 |
| MOUNT HOLYOKE COLLEGE TRUSTEES | CR | 8 0 30 | 11.60 |
| NEW ENGLAND FORESTRY FOUNDATION, INC. | CR | 9 0 22 | 64.00 |
| NEW ENGLAND FORESTRY FOUNDATION, INC. | CR | 9 0 25 | 49.80 |
| BAUERLEIN ANTOINETTE & JIM | CR | 6 0 19 | 88.93 |
| **TOTAL** | **686.53** |

Source: Town of Buckland Assessors Records; June 2020.

Land that is considered temporarily protected from development includes those lands enrolled in the Ch.61 Programs. Shown in Table 5-5 is 3,562.54 acres of privately owned forestland, approximately 28 percent of the town, with temporary protection in Buckland. 2,232.28 acres, or 17.6 percent of the town is privately owned forest that is enrolled in the Chapter 61 (Forestry) program while approximately 1,330.26 acres or 10 percent of the town is enrolled in the Chapter 61B (Recreation) program. Many of the temporarily protected farms shown in Table 5-5 include farm woodlots.

All of the parcels in Table 5-5 are temporarily protected in the Ch. 61B Recreational Open Space and the Ch. 61 Forestland Classification and Taxation Program, and the degree of protection of these parcels is short term. The owner noted is also the manager of the parcel. There are no public grants awarded as a result of the Program; however, the owner does receive a property tax break over a ten-year period. All zoning in Buckland is either Rural Residential, Village Residential, Historic Industrial, Industrial, Commercial, Village Commercial, or Farm Building Reuse Overlay District.

**Table 5-5: Forestlands with Temporary Protection from Development Enrolled in the Ch.61 B Recreational Open Space and Ch. 61 Forestland Taxation Program**

| **Owner** | **Chapter Program** | **Map-Lot** | **Acres**  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| DUVAL ANDREE M | 61B | 1 0 12 | 57.70 |
| ISHII CATHARINE FORBES | 61B | 1 0 17 | 28.45 |
| SINCLAIR JANET / SINCLAIR JEFFREY | 61B | 1 0 19 | 24.25 |
| SEAVY TODD | 61B | 1 0 22 | 127.60 |
| COSBY CAMILLE O | 61B | 2 0 7 | 91.36 |
| MASCOLINO PAUL & APRIL | 61B | 3 0 19 | 4.40 |
| MASCOLINO PAUL & APRIL | 61B | 3 0 20 | 13.00 |
| HARLOW JUDY ANN TRUSTEE | 61B | 3 0 36 | 17.25 |
| THIERINGER DONALD E | 61B | 3 0 36-2 | 33.67 |
| RUTZ AARON F / LYDIARD SAMANTHA | 61B | 4 0 13 | 43.89 |
| REYNOLDS TRUSTEE MONICA | 61B | 4 0 13-1 | 48.43 |
| TAFT-FERGUSON MARTHA | 61B | 4 0 15 | 86.90 |
| LEE MARY K Y TRUSTEE | 61B | 4 0 20 | 12.40 |
| SCALISE JOSEPH P | 61B | 5 0 53 | 17.17 |
| SCALISE JODY | 61B | 5 0 54 | 7.70 |
| GOODMAN LEE MARIE / TOY NORMAN P | 61B | 5 0 9 | 5.60 |
| WOOD ROBERT A / WOOD HEATHER E | 61B | 5-1 0 34 | 40.70 |
| ZAGRUBSKI GREGORY | 61B | 6 0 13 | 59.60 |
| ZAGRUBSKI JOANNE R | 61B | 6 0 17 | 25.20 |
| DEAN KATHRYN N / HANSCHE ERNEST WALTER | 61B | 7 0 25 | 43.70 |
| ORGAN JOHN F | 61B | 7 0 54 | 128.80 |
| VALITON JAMES E | 61B | 7 0 69-2 | 12.83 |
| TUOMINEN AMY E | 61B | 8 0 17 | 10.56 |
| CONKLIN RICHARD L & DARLEEN | 61B | 8 0 21 | 15.42 |
| JONAS A ROBERT | 61B | 8 0 36 | 3.00 |
| NATURAL LIGHT RETREAT LLC | 61B | 8 0 38 | 66.00 |
| MENDELSOHN BETSY | 61B | 8 0 40 | 68.38 |
| KHANDROLING PROPERTIES INC | 61B | 8 0 52 | 30.00 |
| KHANDROLING PROPERTIES INC | 61B | 8 0 53 | 90.40 |
| HOPKINS DAVID P / DICKSON JOAN | 61B | 9 0 11 | 9.90 |
| 123 MAIN ST LLC | 61B | 9 0 16 | 26.00 |
| MULLEN SALLET ROBERTS/C/O CARLTON | 61B | 9 0 2 | 2.00 |
| MULLEN SALLET ROBERTS/C/O CARLTON | 61B | 9 0 3 | 17.00 |
| EARL MICHAEL P TRUSTEE | 61B | 9 0 34 | 50.00 |
| ANDREWS BETSY ROBERTS/ CO CARLTON | 61B | 9 0 43 | 11.00 |
| TROW FRANCIS | 61 | 1 0 20 | 20.00 |
| YOST HEDLEY E / DEAN GORDON J | 61 | 2 0 47 | 20.80 |
| MARCH TRUSTEE MILDRED C | 61 | 2 0 48 | 57.20 |
| SIDORSKY ROBERT G & LINDA | 61 | 3 0 16 | 32.90 |
| SESSIONS CRAIG / SESSIONS JONI | 61 | 3-1 0 8 | 49.90 |
| ALLEN JOHN F | 61 | 4 0 10 | 91.00 |
| HAYDEN JACK P & CIARA R | 61 | 4 0 12 | 283.00 |
| LORD ROBERT J & LUANN | 61 | 4 0 18 | 38.60 |
| HOLDEN JOHN R / CUNNINGHAM LAURA E | 61 | 4 0 22 | 54.00 |
| FARROW RICHARD L | 61 | 4 0 3 | 67.84 |
| DODGE RUSSELL M /DODGE CHERYL | 61 | 4 0 3-1 | 25.11 |
| CROSS MELINDA | 61 | 4 0 43 | 38.20 |
| DODGE RUSSELL M TRUSTEE / DODGE LIVING TRUST | 61 | 4 0 48-1 | 80.00 |
| STEINBAUER JOHANN / MEISHER MARIA | 61 | 4 0 5-1 | 20.00 |
| LABELLE CURTIS W & NORMA J | 61 | 4 0 54-2 | 6.32 |
| LABELLE CURTIS W & NORMA J | 61 | 4 0 58 | 14.00 |
| STEINBAUER JOHANN / MEISHER MARIA | 61 | 4 0 6 | 37.90 |
| STEINBAUER JOHANN / MEISHER MARIA | 61 | 4 0 6-1 | 78.00 |
| STEINBAUER JOHANN / MEISHER MARIA | 61 | 4 0 7 | 114.30 |
| STEINBAUER JOHANN / MEISHER MARIA | 61 | 4 0 7-1 | 1.20 |
| COTE CYNTHIA A | 61 | 5 0 12 | 47.50 |
| ROSE CHRISOTPHER C & SHARON | 61 | 5 0 18-1 | 25.93 |
| ROSE BRIAN C / ROSE RACHEL E | 61 | 5 0 19-1 | 35.00 |
| CHAPMAN WALTON F TRUSTEE | 61 | 5 0 23 | 20.02 |
| TROW FRANCIS JR | 61 | 5 0 39-1 | 45.70 |
| AMSTEIN MARK A / CUMMINGS SARAH | 61 | 5 0 68 | 30.10 |
| CHAPMAN WALTON F TRUSTEE | 61 | 6 0 12 | 20.00 |
| BUELL PETER F / JUDD HONOR B | 61 | 6 0 25 | 33.60 |
| PETERS TINA | 61 | 7 0 1 | 12.50 |
| CROSS MELINDA | 61 | 7 0 19 | 50.40 |
| PETERS TINA | 61 | 7 0 2-1 | 6.67 |
| BROWN SANDRA J TRUSTEE / SANDRA J BROWN | 61 | 7 0 23 | 12.70 |
| COLE ROBIN | 61 | 7 0 26 | 53.60 |
| RODLEY JAMES J & LAURA | 61 | 7 0 30 | 38.26 |
| CLARK DANA M / CLARK COLLEEN M | 61  | 7 0 32 | 41.80 |
| LORD ROBERT J & LUANN | 61 | 7 0 40 | 10.87 |
| LORD ROBERT J & LUANN | 61 | 7 0 41 | 20.00 |
| LORD ROBERT J & LUANN | 61 | 7 0 42 | 15.35 |
| HUMPHREY GORDEN M TRUSTEE | 61 | 7 0 95 | 48.80 |
| MILT ELLEN M TRUSTEE / ELLEN M MILT TRUST | 61 | 7 0 104 | 3.00 |
| KAUFMAN MARC R / LAVINE ELLEN R | 61 | 8 0 10 | 6.20 |
| COTE CYNTHIA A & DONALD D | 61 | 8 0 1-3 | 12.50 |
| COTE CYNTHIA A | 61 | 8 0 1-5 | 11.71 |
| KAUFMAN MARC R / LAVINE ELLEN R | 61 | 8 0 33 | 3.54 |
| KAUFMAN MARC R / LAVINE ELLEN R | 61 | 8 0 33-1 | 5.61 |
| KAUFMAN MARC R / LAVINE ELLEN R | 61 | 8 0 34 | 16.30 |
| SALLEE BRETT W | 61 | 8 0 4 | 41.60 |
| SHIPPEE MURIEL P TRUSTEE | 61 | 8 0 55 | 128.80 |
| SHIPPEE MURIEL P TRUSTEE | 61 | 8 0 57-1 | 2.00 |
| COWLS W S INC | 61 | 9 0 12 | 48.00 |
| PECK WILLIAM A & MARY P | 61 | 9 0 13 | 70.90 |
| PECK MARY P & A WILLIUM TRUST | 61 | 9 0 15-3 | 4.54 |
| SIDORSKY ROBERT G & LINDA | 61 | 9 0 17 | 75.00 |
| MINER RICHARD & LORI M | 61 | 9 0 41-1 | 26.00 |
| HARRISON ANTHONY KWAME | 61 | 9 0 6 | 25.74 |
| HARRISON ANTHONY KWAME | 61 | 9 0 7 | 29.80 |
| PECK MARY P & A WILLIUM TRUST | 61 | 8 0 9-1 | 21.97 |
| **Total acres** | **3,562.54** |

Source: Town of Buckland Assessors Records; June 2020.

 **B.3 Significant Private Land Holdings With Protection in Buckland**Privately owned forestlands offer many values to the community and are important resources for several reasons. Many forestlands are large parcels with a low degree of fragmentation, so wildlife and plant habitats are preserved. When these forestlands are protected from development, they help to protect and provide clean water, air, and healthy wildlife populations. Forest soils have a high infiltration capacity, so they absorb moisture and permit very little surface runoff. Once absorbed, water is released gradually so flooding is reduced during large rain events and streamflow is maintained during low water months. Forests recycle nutrients, so the nutrients do not pass into waterways, and water quality is preserved. Because forest soils are absorptive, soil erosion is reduced and fish habitat is preserved. Forestlands also have a thermal impact on brooks. When trees are removed from stream banks, water temperatures rise and cold water-dependent aquatic species like trout are adversely affected. Many forested lands may also provide recreational value such as hunting, fishing, hiking, and bird watching for Buckland residents, if the owner allows access.

**C. PUBLIC AND NON-PROFIT PARCELS**

State conservation agencies and the Town of Buckland own a small portion of Buckland’s land. However, the Town-owned parcels have a low level of protection unless they are under the authority of the Buckland Conservation Commission. The following inventories include those parcels that are owned by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and by the Town of Buckland.

**C.1 Publicly Owned Open Space**

There are approximately 420.34 acres of publicly owned open space in Buckland, accounting for about 6.8 percent of total open space in Buckland and 3.3 percent of the Town’s land area. Publicly owned open space includes land owned by state conservation agencies, municipal fire and water districts, school districts, the federal government and the Town of Buckland. These lands are described in Tables 5-7 and 5-8. For the purposes of this section, both public and privately owned cemeteries are included in this category. Cemeteries are listed in Table 5-9.

The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) owns a total of 316 acres. The Kenneth Dubuque Memorial State Forest (formerly the Hawley State Forest) parcel contains 60 acres in Buckland and is located in the southwest section of town. It is part of the much larger state forest which extends across the town line into Hawley. Buckland State Forest now consists of one parcel that is owned by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The parcel located in the southeastern corner of Buckland is comprised of 92 acres of land with hiking and cross-country skiing trails.

Table 5-7: Permanently Protected by Department of Conservation and Recreation

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Property Manager** | **Site name** | **Map-Lot** | **Current Use** | **Recreation Value** | **Public Access** | **Acres** |
| DCR | Kenneth Dubuque Memorial State Forest | 7 0 7 | State Park | Hiking, fishing, wilderness camping, and cross-country skiing. Marked trails.  | Good | 60.00 |
| DCR | Buckland State Forest | 9 0 23 | State Park | Hiking, cross-country skiing, nature study. No facilities.  | Fair | 92.00 |
| **TOTAL** | **152** |

Source: Town of Buckland Assessor’s Records and Maps, 2020

The Town of Buckland owns approximately 259.14 acres of open space (Table 5-8). All of these parcels are under the authority of the Select Board and are therefore considered to have limited protection from development. If residents wanted to sell town land for development, the Select Board or a Town Meeting vote could provide the authority. If the land is held by the Conservation Commission, it would take a majority vote by the Massachusetts State Legislature to convert this open space to another non-conservation use. Some of these open spaces are set aside for municipal uses like schools, parks, or historic sites.

It is not unusual for a community to set aside land for future expansion of schools, sports fields, police and fire stations, and drinking water supplies. Open space planned for these purposes might be used as open space today and placed under the authority of the Select Board. It may also be sensible to consider placing town owned land that clearly contains wetlands or wildlife habitat under the authority and protection of the Conservation Commission.

The Town does not own any significant undeveloped open space, except for the closed landfill sites on Conway Road and on Hodgen Road. Both sites are capped and the Hodgen Road site has potential to be linked to a trail system for hiking, horseback riding, and snowmobiling.

Buckland Recreation Area is owned by the town and offers a variety of facilities including tennis courts, a basketball court, a baseball diamond, trails, and a playground. Constructed in 1963, the Rec Area’s swimming pool had developed cracks in the plumbing and lining and lasted well beyond its useful life span, leading to its closure by 2016. The town spent $10,000 on a master plan of the Buckland Recreation Area in 2013 which shows a new pool complex to be built closer to Route 112, away from Clesson Brook. The brook caused hazardous stream bank erosion during Tropical Storm Irene and continues to erode areas of the property where people recreate on trails. The Town and Recreation Commission are working to secure grant funding to build a new pool with a very shallow entrance that allows the very young and senior citizens to gradually wade in.[[1]](#footnote-1) Other improvements to the Recreation Area have been made in the meantime, including reconstruction of the access road away from Clesson Brook, removal of the old pool, and an update to the picnic pavilion to be handicapped accessible. Parking is along the recreation area roadway. Parking for baseball games is available on the open field and under the forested tree line.

Table 5-8: Town-Owned Parcels of Land with Limited Protection from Development

| **Owner/ Property Manager** | **Site Name** | **Map / Lot** | **Current Use** | **Condition** | **Recreation Value** | **Public Access** | **Acres** | **Grant Received** | **Zoning** | **Degree of Protection** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Town of Buckland | Buckland Recreation Area | 2 0 18 | Swimmingbaseball basketballpicnicking playground hiking | Good | Excellent | Good | 32.50 |  | Rural Residential | Limited Protection |
| Town of Buckland | Buckland Town Hall | 6-1 0 34 | Municipal  | Excellent | Excellent | Excellent | 0.15 |  | Village Commercial | Limited Protection |
| Town of Buckland | Town Of Buckland, William Street | 6-1 0 35 | Parking lot | Good | Poor | Excellent | 0.13 |  | Village Residential | Limited Protection |
| Town of Buckland | Town Of Buckland | 6-2 0 118 | Freight Yard | Fair | Fair | Good | 0.70 |  | Historic Industrial | Limited Protection |
| Town of Buckland | Town Garage and Sheds, Conway St. | 6-2 0 122 | Buckland DPW | Poor | Poor | Poor | 0.36 |  | Rural Residential | Limited Protection |
| Town of Buckland | Wastewater Treatment Plant | 6-5 0 15 | Wastewater Treatment | Good | N/A | Good | 4.47 |  | Village Residential | Limited Protection |
| Town of Buckland | Buckland Landfill Site | 8 0 62 | Landfill capped, Transfer station | Excellent | N/A | Good | 11.00 |  | Rural Residential | Limited Protection |
| Town of Buckland | Landfill Site, Conway Street | 9 0 36 | C&D debris, stumps, Abandoned | Poor | N/A | N/A | 7.60 |  | Rural Residential | Limited Protection |
| Town of Buckland | Town Common | 5-1 0 14 | Parking lot, Open air events  | Good | Good | Good | 0.72 |  | Village Residential | Limited Protection |
| Mohawk Trail Regional School District | Mohawk Trail Regional High School | 3 0 8 | Football, track, baseball, soccer, field hockey, cc skiing | Excellent | Excellent | Excellent | 64.99 |  | Rural Residential | Limited Protection |
| Shelburne Falls Fire District | State Street | 3-3 0 40 | Fire station | Very Good | N/A | N/A | 0.845 |  | Village Residential | Limited Protection |
| Shelburne Falls Fire District | Walker Road | 6 0 20-1 | Water tank site | Excellent | N/A | N/A | 1.38 |  | Rural Residential | Limited Protection |
| Buckland Fire District | Hodgen Road | 8 0 48 | Fire station | Good | N/A | Good | 1.00 |  | Rural Residential | Limited Protection |
| Shelburne Falls Fire District | Crittenden Hill Road | 6-2 0 154 | Abandoned water tank site | Fair | N/A | N/A | 0.22 |  | Rural Residential | Limited Protection |
| Buckland Public Library | Buckland Public Library | 5-105 | Library | Good | Excellent | Good | 0.32 |  | Rural Residential | Limited Protection |
| Mary Lyon Church | Church | 5-1 0 15 | Worship | Excellent | Excellent | Excellent | 0.47 |  | Rural Residential | Limited Protection |
| Buckland Public Hall Association | Grange Hall | 5-1 16 | Community gatherings | Excellent | Excellent | Good | 0.49 |  | Rural Residential | Limited Protection |
| Buckland Historical Society | T/B Buckland Center School | 5-1 0 1 | Historical Society  | Good | Excellent | Good | 0.32 |  | Rural Residential | Limited Protection |
| US Gen New England | Malley Park | 40 331 | Picnic area, river viewing | Excellent | Excellent | Excellent | 1.00 |  | Rural Residential | Limited Protection |
| Town of Buckland | Chadwick Memorial (Cricket) Field  | 6-3 0 12 | Ball field, horseshoes | Excellent | Excellent | Excellent | 3.50 |  | Historic Industrial | Limited Protection |
| Central Rivers Power | Gardner Falls Project | 6-7 0 2 | Trails, river access  | Good | Excellent | Excellent | 30.65 |  | Historic Industrial | Limited Protection |
| Buckland Historical Society | Wilder Homestead | 5 0 4 | Recreation destination | Good | Excellent | Good | 45.20 |  | Rural Residential | Limited Protection |
| Association for Community Living | Association for Community Living | 3-1 0 15 | Foundation | N/A | N/A | N/A | 23.32 |  | Rural Residential | Limited Protection |
| Commonwealth of Massachusetts | Mass Highway Facility | 3-1 0 19 | Municipal | Good | N/A | N/A | 5.25 |  | Rural Residential | Limited Protection |
| Shelburne Falls Trolley Museum | Museum | 6-2 0 119 | Recreation destination | Good | Good | Good | 0.57 |  | Village Residential | Limited Protection |
| Shelburne Falls Trolley Museum | Museum | 6-2 0 120 | Recreation destination | Good | Good | Good | 1.68 |  | Village Residential | Limited Protection |
| Shelburne Falls Trolley Museum | Museum | 6-2 0 120-1 | Recreation destination | Good | Good | Good | 0.01 |  | Village Residential | Limited Protection |
| Southern NE Conf. 7th Day Adventist | Church | 6-2 0 13 | Worship | Good | N/A | Good | 0.37 |  | Rural Residential | Limited Protection |
| Roman Catholic Bishop | Church | 6-2 0 89 | Worship | Good | N/A | Good | 6.00 |  | Rural Residential | Limited Protection |
| Shambala International | Lodge | 6-2 0 95B | Meetings | Good | N/A | Good | 0.47 |  | Rural Residential | Limited Protection |
| Town of Buckland | Police Station | 6-3 0 25 | Municipal | Good | N/A | N/A | 0.60 |  | Village Residential | Limited Protection |
| Town of Buckland | Town Of Buckland | 5 0 69 | Vacant | N/A | N/A | N/A | 9.7 |  | Rural Residential | Limited Protection |
| Town of Buckland | Town Of Buckland | 9 0 19 | Vacant | N/A | N/A | N/A | 2 |  | Rural Residential | Limited Protection |
| Town of Buckland | Town Of Buckland | 9 0 21 | Vacant | N/A | N/A | N/A | 2 |  | Rural Residential | Limited Protection |
| **TOTAL** | **259.14** |  |  |

Source: Town of Buckland Assessor’s Records and Maps, 2020.

Table 5-9 lists the cemeteries in Buckland, which are owned by the Buckland Cemetery Association and the Town of Buckland. Cemeteries are considered to be protected from development. Most cemeteries represent well-maintained open space areas that are sometimes appropriate for walking and bird watching.

Table 5-9: Permanently Protected Land Owned by Buckland – Cemeteries

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Source: Town of Buckland Assessor’s Records and Maps, 2020; MassGIS Open Space data, 2020.

**D. Recreational Resources and Open Space Equity**

Open Space Equity means taking a look at conservation and recreation opportunities available in the town and seeing if there is an area of the town that seems to be lacking resources. There is a heavier concentration of people around the center of town, but most other residences are spread out along the rural roads in town. There are a host of activities that people do both within town and out of town. The most popular activities according to the Open Space Survey are walking and hiking, swimming, biking, boating/kayaking, running, nature/birdwatching, and camping. All of these activities can be done throughout Buckland, and there is no area of town that is deprived of recreational opportunities relative to other areas.

Much of these recreational resources are on public land, owned by the Town and the State, including Buckland State Forest, Buckland Recreation Area, Veterans/Cricket Field, and village streets and scenic byways. Privately owned lands town wide, including destinations such as Malley Park, Gardner Falls, and Walnut Hill also offer residents access to their favorite outdoor recreation activities, such as swimming in the Deerfield River, strolling along the village sidewalks, and hiking through forests. However, most respondents to the 2019 Buckland Open Space and Recreation Survey acknowledged that the reduced access to recreational programs and facilities at Buckland Recreation Area, in particular the closure of the pool, represented a major loss for the community. In addition to bringing back the pool at Buckland Recreation Area, survey respondents indicated that access to the Deerfield River for swimming has diminished, and that the Town’s roadways had become less safe for walking and road bicycling.

1. <https://www.recorder.com/Buckland-Rec-pool-to-be-demolished-6743342> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)