

TOWN OF PEMBROKE CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Land Protection Criteria¹

This criterion was developed through a series of meetings of the Pembroke Conservation Commission, reviewing the 2004 Natural Resources Chapter of the Pembroke Master Plan, input from other Town Boards and Committees, and the examination of protection criteria from other towns and other land protection organizations.

This set of criteria provide a rough guide which, when properly applied, will give a useful indication whether a parcel is worthy of protection for natural resource or conservation reasons. The values represented by these criteria are conservation values and not monetary values. Below are brief explanations of the criteria that will be used to evaluate conservation land in Pembroke:

1) Shorelines and River Frontage

Three rivers, the Suncook, the Soucook and the Merrimack Rivers, make up the borders of Pembroke. These three rivers are an important natural resource and the majority of survey respondents have expressed an interest in preserving these riparian habitats.

These shorelines are particularly important because they provide several habitats along side each other – the water, the low shrubby margins and the taller adjacent forests. The biodiversity along these shorelines supports a wide variety of mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians and plants.

2) Aquifers and Watersheds

Aquifers provide the primary source of drinking water for most of Pembroke's residents. There are three stratified drift aquifers in Pembroke, as identified by the US Geological Service; all three are linked to the three rivers with the largest occurring along the Soucook River.

3) Parcel Size, Accessibility, and Enhancement of Other Existing Protected Lands

Larger unfragmented parcels help to maintain the rural character and wildlife habitats of Pembroke. To preserve this we need to conserve these larger areas from fragmentation and add adjacent parcels for expansion or linkage whenever possible. Having pieces of conservation land that are accessible to the public for passive recreation and wildlife viewing ensures continued support for the acquisition of conservation land in town.

4) Wildlife

Protect habitat for rare, threatened, or endangered animal or plant species and/or contains an exemplary natural community which provides significant wildlife habitat.

5) Agricultural Land

Emphasis will be placed on farmland in production and associated cleared land because of the biodiversity they provide and the importance of maintaining an agricultural presence in our community.

¹ To be used in conjunction with the Land Protection Criteria Rating Sheet

6) Contains a Portion of a Major Trail Corridor or Other Nature Trail.

Recognizing that existing trails and Range Roads contribute to quality of life for the community. Special attention is to be given to parcels adjacent to or spanning the Range Roads. Other parcels that have existing trail systems or linkage as laid out in the Pembroke Open Space Plan.

7) Cultural, archaeological or historic significance

Historical or cultural features enrich our community through a sense of continuity with the past and ongoing traditions of the present that often define the essence of our community.

8) Scenic Vistas

Land from which there are outstanding scenic views of mountains or water bodies was considered highly valuable to preserve.

9) Land Use Restrictions

Restrictions on how the land can be used or on-going maintenance requirements placed on the property.

10) Funding Sources

Land or grant monies that provide additional funding to offset purchase price.

11) Unique Features

Important and unique natural resources, such as year-round streams and vernal pools, which are not covered by any other criteria.