



# **OPEN SPACE & RECREATION PLAN**

*TOWN OF WARE,  
MASSACHUSETTS*

**December 2007**

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# **SECTION ONE: PLAN SUMMARY**

## **A. Philosophy of the Town of Ware's Open Space and Recreation Planning and Protection**

- Open space should not be just leftover space that remains after development; it should be space that is actively planned to contribute to the character and quality of the town's total environment.
- Open space is critical to the town's economy. Conservation and recreation lands enhance the town's appearance, which in turn raise the value of developed land, especially adjacent lands. This creates a community that is very attractive to new residents. Preserved agricultural land creates a permanent base on which future farm businesses can depend.
- Open spaces offer an important way to preserve history, educate the public about nature, and foster a strong sense of stewardship for the land. In addition to learning about nature, opportunities to interpret local culture, industry and heritage also emerge, as urban rivers, canals, and rail lines are often steeped in history. Conservation and recreation lands help mitigate the loss of natural areas due to development and provide a counter-balance to an expanding human-dominated landscape.
- Recreation is an important aspect of open space planning in Ware. Active, outdoor-organized sports as well as other less intensive forms of recreation are an important element in the lives of residents. The lands required for these activities should be actively planned and managed wisely to satisfy the needs of both current and future users.

- Open space lands provide vital habitat for wildlife and plant species that cannot thrive in more developed areas. The needs of local wildlife and plants, especially those that are endangered, should not be ignored when planning for open space areas. The ecology of the region should be studied closely to provide the most suitable arrangement between the built environment and the natural world.
- Open space and recreation lands should not be seen as separate parcels randomly distributed throughout the town. They should form a cohesive system that connects the various parts of the town through a network of natural patches and corridors. This greenway system would connect the entire town - the recreation and conservation areas, historic and cultural points, urban regions and waterways. On another level, it would not only link the various parts of the ecosystem, but also link the families to the town and the town to the entire region.

## **B. 2008-2013 Goals of Ware Open Space Program**

The goals of the 2008-2013 Ware Open Space program are to:

- Provide a broad range of high quality recreational programs;
- Manage open space and recreation cohesively and effectively;
- Preserve town's rural character; and,
- Increase public awareness of open space and recreation resources.

## **SECTION TWO: INTRODUCTION**

## **A. Statement of Purpose**

The term 'open space' can be defined in many different ways. It can mean conservation land, recreation land, agricultural land, corridor parks, small parks, green buffers along roadways, or any open area that is owned by an agency or organization dedicated to conservation. However, it can also mean any area of undeveloped land with particular conservation or recreation interest. This latter, broader definition is the one that will be used throughout this document. Due to the random changes in a community, the lifestyle of its residents and the condition of its natural resources can be dramatically altered in a very short period of time. By writing this open space and recreation plan, the town of Ware is able to articulate its desire for the economic, recreational, and aesthetic benefits that open space provides.

The town's last open space and recreation plan was completed in 2003. Ware's Open Space Committee has recognized the benefits of creating a new, updated open space and recreation plan:

- With an open space and recreation plan that specifically cites those areas that are environmentally sensitive or have great recreation potential, the benefits of development may be obtained without losing valuable environmental assets. Related to this is the profound economic benefit that may be derived from planning for open spaces and recreation. For example, a groundwater supply area that becomes contaminated from being developed on is costly to correct. Likewise, a poorly sited athletic field may quickly become a very expensive endeavor from cut and fill, erosion, or pollution problems.

- Open space planning is a step toward larger greenway planning for the entire region. Greenways are linear systems that weave cultural and historic resources, natural resources, and recreational areas into a network of open spaces that may span towns, counties, and even states. Greenways already exist in the Blackstone Valley region and other areas of Massachusetts, and many regions are currently planning for greenways.
- An updated open space and recreation plan is a powerful instrument to effect community goals. Administrators and legislators often recognize the effort and organization behind a plan, and may look more favorably toward the creation and protection of open spaces in the community.
- Finally, a municipality that has an open space and recreation plan that meets the requirements of the Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs becomes eligible to apply for state and federal grant programs such as Self Help and Land and Water Conservation Funds.

## **B. Planning Process and Public Participation**

The Ware Board of Selectmen appointed an Open Space and Recreation Committee to work with the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission to develop this plan. The committee met five times between June and August of 2007. The meeting minutes are included in the Appendices.



The Open Space and Recreation Plan Committee members are as follows:

Dan Boivin  
Herbert Foley  
Edward Lavella  
Louwana Goodfield  
Paul Hills, Community Development Department  
Martha Klassanos, Conservation Commission and East  
Quabbin Land Trust  
David Kopacz, Conservation Commission  
Denis R. Ouimette, Finance Committee  
Scott Slattery  
Mike Topor

A public visioning session was held on July 12, 2007 at the Ware High School Library to identify goals and objectives for the plan. The visioning session agenda, minutes and list of attendees are included in the appendices.

## **SECTION THREE: COMMUNITY SETTING**

## A. Regional Context

Located in the southeast corner of Hampshire County, the town of Ware is a series of valleys and ridges running north and south, carved by the great glaciers. Easternmost is the Ware River valley. Moving west, the Muddy Brook and Flat Brook valleys are located in the geographical center of Ware. The Swift River flows from the Quabbin Reservoir through the western edge of town. Although much development has occurred in Ware in modern times, the town has remarkably retained a rural character and historic appearance.

The major commercial development in Ware has come, logically, along the two major highways that run through town. Route 9 is the major east-west traverse, and Ware's historic district is located along this road. West of the town center along Route 9, farmhouses, agricultural fields, and stone walls give the passerby a glimpse of real New England tradition. Route 9 runs east through Ware to the city of Worcester, and west to the town of Amherst and the city of Northampton, where Interstate 91 can be accessed.

Route 32 runs north and south through town and has served as the spine of more recent commercial development. Here the development is more true to the sprawling "strip mall" types that occur from coast to coast. Route 32 runs through the town of Palmer where the Massachusetts Turnpike can be accessed.

A major asset to the residents of Ware and the surrounding communities is the Quabbin Reservoir, abutting the northwestern corner of the town. The Reservoir was built between 1928 and 1939 to provide water to the residents of Boston, and is managed by the Metropolitan District Commission (MDC). The Quabbin has 38.6

square miles of water surface, and 118 miles of shoreline. The regional State Police Barracks is also located at the Quabbin Reservoir. The Quabbin's vast protected wilderness is constantly managed for optimum levels of wildlife and plant species. Control programs such as burning and fencing, as well as limited fishing and hunting, help maintain healthy relationships between plants, animals, humans, and the reservoir itself. Although competitive sport recreation is prohibited within the Quabbin, the area provides unmatched opportunities for less formal recreation. The Quabbin was designed to provide passive recreation such as hiking, sightseeing, birdwatching, and picnicking. An observatory tower was built on Quabbin Hill, and the park headquarters house an interpretive center. Traditionally, MDC officials have prohibited cross-country skiing and horse-back riding within the Quabbin's lands, and the residents of Ware must look elsewhere to enjoy these activities. A good place for such activities is the proposed Ware River Valley Greenway Trail (See Chapter 4 for a discussion of this wonderful recreational opportunity).

Regionally, the town of Ware is in an optimal location: the town is far enough away from major cities to enjoy a rural, traditional atmosphere, but major state highways, namely I-91 and I-90, are within close proximity. Large tracts of wilderness like the Quabbin Reservoir and the undevelopable ridgelines in and around Ware provide natural buffers from other developed areas and should be considered for recreation and conservation opportunities. The residents of Ware should consider themselves and their town to be in an enviable position.



*Figure 1: A beautiful cut stone bridge over the Ware River near Downtown Ware*

## B. History of the Community

Historically, the region's inhabitants have always relied heavily on the abundance of water here to survive and flourish. The site of Ware was once a favorite spot for the Native Americans who frequented the area before colonial times. The falls, located on the Ware River near the center of town, was a famous fishing spot for salmon, and many Native American relics have been found in this immediate area. In fact, the name "Ware" is derived from the Nemaneseck Indians' technique of building fishing weirs in the rivers. The weirs were rough walls of stone that formed a substructure for stakes and brush, allowing fish to be more easily caught.

The colonists found the Ware River Valley an optimum place to settle, and many small villages sprung up along the rivers and brooks. The water provided opportunities for small scale milling and the fair valley soils provided the base for an agricultural economy. The first mills were built around 1729. Snow's Pond was one of the first man-made ponds in Ware designed to harness water power for milling.

The first major manufacturing company in Ware began in 1813, supplying a local demand for textiles. This was the beginning of what was to be a long and arduous history of the relationship between the manufacturing companies and the residents of the town. In 1829 the Hampshire Manufacturing Company, followed by Otis Company, built large manufacturing mills in town. The Otis Company's mill is unique in that it was built from stone quarried from a nearby town, and is still standing today.

With the prosperity of mill manufacturing came railroads, which in turn brought more goods and people to the town. The early

nineteenth century saw an influx of foreigners to fill positions in the prospering and expanding factories. Here in town, residents lived, worked, went to school and church, found opportunities for recreation, and spent their wages in the downtown shops. During the 1900s, Ware was the most prosperous village in Hampshire County. The boom of Ware was noticed as early as 1823 by reporter Jeremiah Spofford of the *Gazetteer of Massachusetts*, who wrote:

*"An immense change has been made in the town of Ware within a short period, By which a desolate wilderness has been changed into a prosperous village."*

The town lost prosperity in the early twentieth century, with the regional decline of the milling economy. The Otis Manufacturing Company, who had been the largest single employer in the town for over one hundred years, failed to gain profit and announced its demise. What followed was just short of a riot. However, in the span of a few days, the town voted to buy the mill and raised enough money to rename the now publicly owned factory the Ware Manufacturing Company. It was during this trial that Police Chief Buckley is credited with famously dubbing Ware as "The Town That Can't Be Licked."

Relative prosperity during the 1950s gave way to the pressures of inflation and recession prevalent throughout the 1970s, and the Ware Manufacturing Company finally declared bankruptcy in 1978. To recover the losses, the town divided the complex of mills into seventeen parcels for sale. Today, many outlet shops and specialty stores, along with industrial firms and light industry, are housed in the mill complex.



*Figure 2: Employees of the Otis Manufacturing Company, ca. 1920s*

### C. Population Characteristics

Between 1980 and 2000, Ware's population increased by 14.1 percent. This increase is expected to continue through the year 2020 and result in an older population. This brings up interesting questions when considering open space and recreational needs. Affection for and commitment to the cause for natural recreation corridors and open space is growing, not only in Ware, but in the United States in general. What form should these spaces take? How can the entire town's needs be met?

A critical element to consider in recreation and open space planning is the age of the population, because the needs can range from formal athletic fields to meandering trails and parks. From 1995-2006, the student population that experienced the most growth was the high school age school age category (See Table 1). The most popular form of recreation for this age group is organized competitive sports. These sports require large, flat, highly maintained playing surfaces.

In addition, from 1990 to 2000 the population of people age 65 and older increased by 45.6 percent. This implies a growing need for recreational space that accommodates a less intense form of recreation, like hiking, walking, and birdwatching, all of which have become very popular in the last decade. Often the recreational needs of the elderly are overlooked or underestimated, and these forms of recreation should be considered just as vital to the community as formal competitive ones.

Between the elementary school population and the elderly, the recreational preferences vary. Team sports are popular with a section of this age group, but so are individual sports like biking and hiking.

The recreational need of this age group should include virtually all types of recreation, both active and passive.

Ware's public school system has approximately 1265 students (2006). Table 1 shows that the most significant increase in the last decade has been in the high school age category. This group has increased 13.2 percent since 1995; however, the elementary and middle school categories decreased during the same period.

As stated earlier, a critical element to consider in recreation and open space planning is the age of the population. Certain age groups have the potential for significant impact on recreation demand which also comes in different forms. As these age groups increase in numbers, there will be increased strain placed on the existing recreation and open land conditions. Table 2 shows the population breakdown for Ware.

**Table 1. Student Population Trends (1995-2006)**

Year	Elementary (K-5)	Middle (6,7,8)	High School (9-12)
1995-96	664	344	277
1996-97	669	316	301
1997-98	693	324	318
1998-99	686	330	383
1999-00	667	336	379
2000-01	659	331	342
2001-02	597	379	353
2002-03	599	344	330
2003-04	587	321	326
2004-05	568	294	316
2005-06	573	314	319
<b>Total Change 1995-2005 for K-12 is -63 students or -4.7%</b>			

Source: New England School Development Council

**Table 2. Ware Population Breakdown**

Age	1980	1990	% change 1980- 1990	2000	% change 1990- 2000
0-4	495	744	50.3	570	-23.3
5-9	591	764	29.2	698	-8.6
10-14	791	564	-28.6	746	32.3
15-19	689	639	-7.2	597	-6.6
20-24	650	664	2.1	352	-47.0
25-29	618	780	26.2	542	-31.0
30-34	659	942	42.9	811	-14.0
35-44	1061	1398	31.7	1,870	34.4
65+	1271	1581	24.4	2065	45.6
Total	8910	9808	10.0	10376	5.8

Source: Ware Recreation Facilities Plan

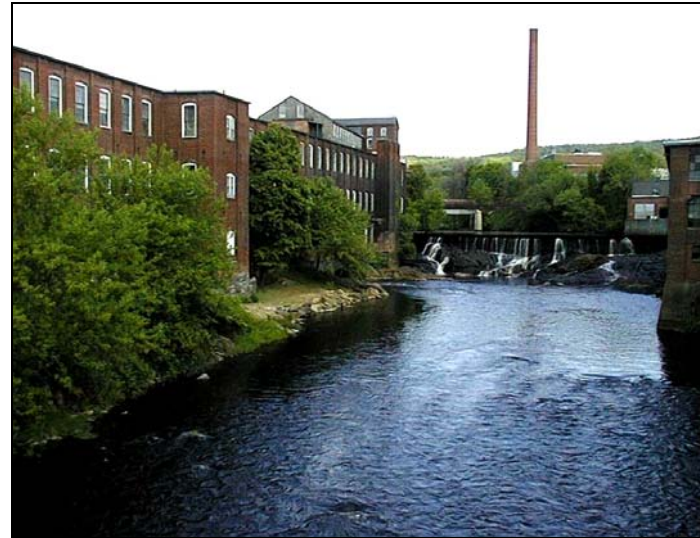


## D. Growth and Development Patterns

### *Patterns and Trends*

The Town of Ware began to develop during the middle of the 18th century, but quite differently from its neighboring communities. Due to soils and terrain unsuitable for agriculture and an isolated location that limited settlement, the development of Ware never quite fit the classic New England development pattern of the town center. As people realized the industrial advantages of water power from the Ware River the town was quickly settled, and the saw and grist mills that were established in 1729 are thought to have been the first mills in the Ware Territory. The phenomenon of the mill village in New England was most important to the American manufacturing system in the years between 1790 – 1860, and Ware’s pattern of development reflects this.

Since about 1952, Ware has seen an increase in its population and in its number of housing units. Between 1952 and 1985, there was a 170 percent increase in residential land and a 51 percent decrease in the amount of open agricultural land. The amount of farmland continued to decline in the years between 1972 and 1985 (about 52 acres) and was primarily used for light and medium density residential development. The 1990 U.S. Census showed the population of Ware as having increased by 10.0 percent and this was coupled with a 13.6 percent increase in the number of housing units. There are eight approved subdivisions with a total of 176 units approved. Only three of these projects are under construction. A ninth subdivision with 29 proposed units is currently in the preliminary plan stage. All of these projects are in West Ware.



*Mills along the Ware River*

Ware currently has 11 different zoning districts (see Map 1: Zoning), ranging from Rural Quabbin to Industrial. A number of the districts include intent and characteristic explanations, many of which are geared toward open space preservation. For example, the district described as Rural Residential 1 (Beaver Lake) requires low density residential development due to the rapid permeability of the soils and major water bodies (such as the Swift River and Beaver Lake). Of note is the Residential Business 2 district. This is the Route 9 corridor that is the major entrance to Ware from the west. This area is predominantly rural farmland and forest with areas of low density development. The intention of the town is to preserve this scenic rural quality while allowing residential and commercial development that is in keeping with adjoining uses and is not in conflict with the natural environment.

According to the 1987 Ware Growth Management Plan, Ware is entering the fifth stage of its development pattern. The first four of these patterns were:

- 1) settlement and agricultural development;
- 2) industrial development and downtown establishment;
- 3) expansion and maturing of mill town character; and;
- 4) decline of industrial base and resulting period of stagnation.

The next phase has already begun and consists of a pattern of rural-suburban residential development with a secondary commercial and industrial base. These future development patterns will directly affect the amount and form of recreation and conservation space, and thus will require careful thought and planning throughout. Past patterns of growth were given shape by a number of factors which will also shape the direction of future trends:

- Ware's location is both isolated and centrally located. Rural/suburban development is on the rise since Ware lies within 45 minutes of both Worcester and Springfield yet retains the quiet rural life it has always enjoyed.
- Ware's physical character has had a significant impact on the type of development in Ware. The basic landform character is one of narrow valleys and ridges running north-south. These ridges limited the amount of open land available for farming and concentrated the amount of developable land within the valleys and divided the town into three basic development areas: Beaver Lake, Ware Center, and the Ware River/Route 32 Corridor. These factors discouraged agriculture and large scale industrial development and encouraged dispersed residential development for suburban commuters.

- Ware's real estate market has fluctuated over the years but recently, as prices rose in surrounding regions, Ware's lower prices became an economic incentive. Ware is now desirable for its lower cost of housing and land, both of which have already impacted and will continue to impact, residential and business development. The land itself will also feel these impacts. With the increased growth it is important to plan in advance for critical ecological and recreation lands.
- Ware's urban pattern of downtown, civic organizations, social and health services, and infrastructure set it apart from other towns its size. Its history of being a milltown has given Ware a complete set of urban resources that will allow the town to both accommodate and attract additional growth and development.

Historically, Ware had been settled primarily in the downtown area or its immediate vicinity. However, in recent years, the outlying "rural" areas have become popular locations for individual homes; the area surrounding Beaver Lake has become increasingly developed. In addition, there has been a trend of development within the agricultural areas in the northern part of town, along Fisherdick and Greenwich Roads, and in the agricultural areas along West Warren Road in the southern part of town.

This development in the outer areas has caused some serious concern about the loss of town and rural character. All of the features which contribute to this town's character – farmland, historic buildings along Route 9 West and in the downtown, the beauty of the Beaver Lake area, the Quabbin, Muddy Brook – have felt the effects of development. These elements, in addition to tracts of open space and

recreation areas, are in need of protection so that future generations may enjoy Ware as it is meant to be.

### *Infrastructure*

#### Transportation System

Ware has 121.1 miles of road, 71% of which is town owned and maintained. Crossing each other in the center of downtown are Route 9, which runs east-west, and Route 32, which runs north-south. These two routes provide convenient access to neighboring towns, as well as Worcester, Springfield, and Northampton. The Mass Central Railroad, which originates in Palmer, passes through Ware and extends to Barre. Additionally, there are two major railroads passing fairly close to Ware: the Central Vermont Railroad (CVRR) and Conrail. The CVRR operates on a southerly route through Belchertown, with a shipment point in Palmer. Conrail, which is the region's largest major rail freight carrier, follows the south and east boundaries of Palmer and operates freight service on the Connecticut Valley route from Springfield to Connecticut. The major airport in proximity to Ware is Bradley International Airport, located in Windsor Locks, Connecticut, about 15 miles south of Springfield on Interstate 91. The Metropolitan Airport, a small privately owned general aviation facility in Palmer closed in early 2000 and the land has been redeveloped for housing.

#### Water Supply Systems

Ware's present water supply is a series of four wells located to the west of Barnes Street. It is estimated that 60% of the town's population is served by this central water system with the remaining served by private wells. The pumping station, to the east of the wells, forces the water up to the two existing standpipes, located at Church

Street and Anderson Road. These wells have a daily capacity of 1.8 million gallons per day (mgd), and the town's average daily demand is 1.2 mgd. The system is able to meet the average water demands of the present population, but there is usually a deficit during the summer months of .160 mgd.

#### Sewer Service

Several areas of potential development in town lack public water and sewer facilities, but have severe restrictions for septic suitability (e.g. the Beaver Lake area) which may slow the pace of development. Construction of a new sewer trunk line began in the Spring of 2007 from Robbins Road to the Walmart on Route 32. The new line will be sized to carry the estimated future sewer capacity for that neighborhood.

### *Long-term Development Patterns*

#### Land Use Controls

Floodplain/Wetlands District – Floodplains and wetlands are nature's way of dealing with unusual amounts of rainfall. When development occurs in these areas, there is nowhere for the excess water to go. In fact, development on floodplains has two undesirable effects. First, homes and other buildings are flooded, causing enormous amounts of costly damage. Second, this development actually enlarges the floodplain, so that what would have been a minor flood is much worse. This is due to pavement and other impervious surfaces that coincide with development. Asphalt does not absorb water, so the flood waters spill over and cause damage to a much larger area. Also, natural water systems like rivers and streams become polluted.

Undisturbed wetlands have the added bonus of a filtration system. Wetland plants are a natural filter, so that when runoff from parking lots, roads, and other paved surfaces reaches a wetland, pollutants like gasoline and oil are filtered out of the water before it reaches the groundwater system. When these wetlands are built upon, the pollutants are not filtered out and runoff from streets and parking lots may flow directly into groundwater or streams and rivers.

Ware has done much to protect its water bodies from pollution and increased flooding. The creation of the floodplain/wetlands district in Ware has several purposes: to protect the public health, safety, and general welfare of human life and property from the hazards of periodic flooding, to preserve the natural flood control characteristics and the flood storage capacity of the floodplain, and to preserve and maintain the groundwater table and water recharge areas within the floodplain. To achieve these goals, Ware regulates the amount and type of development which can occur in these zones, which are overlay districts. Some of these uses include agricultural, forestry and nursery uses, outdoor recreation and wildlife management areas. No structures or buildings can be built in this district without a special permit granted by the Planning Board. This regulation helps to insure that loss of property and a decrease in water quality are minimized. Many communities do not have such regulations, and realized when it is too late that such a restriction is beneficial to all. See Map 3: Wetlands/Waterbodies and Map 4: Floodplains for more information.

Water Supply Protection District – The Ware Water Supply Protection District includes lands which lie within groundwater aquifer recharge areas and watershed areas which provide the public water supply (See Map 5: Aquifers). It is important to delineate such a district because protection is needed for both aquifers and groundwater

supplies in order to protect against contamination and to insure that the aquifer is constantly being recharged. Because aquifers are underground, it is critical that rainfall be allowed to permeate into them, in order to keep the supply of water constant. Ideally, an equal amount of water is added to the aquifer that is taken out, so that there is no shortage of drinking water.

The permitted uses in the water supply protection district are similar to those permitted in the floodplain and wetlands district, but with residential development also permitted. However, when developing in the water supply protection district, the lot may not be more than 50 percent impervious surface. There are also restrictions concerning toxic and hazardous wastes and runoff. All runoff from impervious surfaces must be recharged on the site by being diverted to stormwater infiltration basins covered with natural vegetation. These restrictions protect both water quality and the amount of water available from the aquifer.

#### Build-out

The 1999 EO 418 Buildout Analysis illustrates to a community, using a series of maps, the potential for the future growth of the community in terms of residential units and potential square footage of commercial and industrial space. The Buildout Analysis enables a community to examine its likely future based on its zoning and other regulations, and determine if that is the future that is desired by the community. The analysis provides community-based estimates of the impacts of the buildout on the number of residents and school children, the water supply needs of the community, the future trash production, and the additional road miles associated with the buildout. The model also allows the community to test the

implications of alternative zoning regulations.

**Table 3 Summary Build-Out Statistics**

<b>Impact of Additional Development-Ware, MA</b>	
Developable Land Area (Acres)	13,025.37
Additional Residential Units	7,087
Additional Commercial/Industrial Floor Area (Square Feet)	904,365
Additional Residential Water Use (Gallons Per Day)	1,428,414.62
Additional Residential Solid Waste (Tons)	9,306.4
Additional Students	2,516
Additional Miles of Roadway	115.46

*Assumptions:*

1. *Additional Students figure is based on an average of 2.56 persons and 0.355 students per household.*
2. *Additional Road Miles calculated for residential development only, based on frontages of 125 and 150 feet. Overall impacts on the transportation network in Ware should reflect the number of trips generated, level of service at key intersections, and other critical methods of measurement.*
3. *Water use figures do not reflect commercial water use.*

The table above is a summary of the build-out statistics for the town of Ware. The analysis shows that as of 1999, out of 13,000 developable acres in Ware, there is the potential for over 7,000 additional housing units and 900,000 square feet of commercial space in Ware. This could result in over one million additional gallons of water per day for residential uses, 9,000 tons of residential waste, over 100 miles of roadway, and an additional 2,500 students.

Ware will continue to grow and there are indications that the rate of growth is increasing. In particular, West Ware and the Beaver Lake

area are two of the fastest growing parts of town for residential development. Definitive Subdivision Plans for a large subdivision was recently approved in this part of town consisting of a 67-home development off of Monson Turnpike Road and Coffey Hill Road. There is also the potential for several more subdivisions on privately owned land in this area.

Large-scale subdivisions such as these and the increasing pace of development increases the need for regulations that control the amount and rate of growth in order to plan for infrastructure, recreation, and open space. Achieving Ware’s vision for the future of a town with abundant parks and recreation opportunities, the safety and character of a small town with scenic roads and vistas, will require controlled growth and protection of those lands with recreation and conservation importance.

# **SECTION FOUR: ENVIRONMENTAL INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS**

## A. Geology, Soils and Topography

Ware is located in the easternmost part of Hampshire County, and encompasses 25,660 acres (40.09 square miles). The maximum elevation areas are a peak in the southeastern corner of the town (1050 ft.) and Quabbin Hill (1026 ft.). Approximately two-thirds of the area of the town falls in the 500-1000 ft. elevation range, while the area which runs due south of the Quabbin Reservoir and then east through the commercial district is in the 0-500 ft. range.

The topography of much of Western Massachusetts was radically changed by glaciation during the Pleistocene period nearly one million years ago. The retreat of the last glacier, about 1,000 years ago, removed 10 to 15 feet of bedrock from the most exposed ledges, rounded the hills, deposited debris and created new land forms. The Muddy Brook valley, which is a glacial flute (small valley), is an example of this geologic phenomenon, and a considerable percentage of the soils in the Ware area were formed from glacial till and alluvial deposits. The large stones and boulders left as glacial debris often create serious problems for agricultural use, and the slow permeability of the soils is a severe limitation for septic systems.

The U.S. Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) has organized the soils in Ware into two soil types, each with distinctive patterns of soils, drainage pattern, topographic relief, development and agricultural constraints and opportunities, and other characteristics. Most of Ware's lands are severely limited by slope for small scale commercial sites, and large rocks, shallow depth to bedrock, droughtiness or occasionally high water table conditions pose serious problems for forest or agriculture development. The general soil associations are as follows:

Southern and Central Ware: These areas of Ware contain Hinckley-Merrimac-Windsor soils. The Hinckley association contains soils that are characterized as being very deep, nearly level to steep, sandy, are excessively drained, and are formed in outwash deposits. Topography ranges from rolling broad areas to narrow terraces. Many areas are dissected by drainage ways with slopes ranging from 0 to 35 percent. According to the NRCS, soils in this association are suited to cultivated crops, hay, and pasture. However, there are management concerns: droughtiness and erosion on sloping to steep areas. The main limitation for woodland production is the soils' low available water capacity. These soils are, in general, well-suited to building site development, but have the problem of readily absorbing, but not adequately filtering, the effluent from septic tank absorption fields. This is an issue to be taken into consideration in order to avoid polluting groundwater.

Northern and Central Ware, and areas around the Quabbin Reservoir: These areas of Ware contain Canton-Gloucester-Scituate soils. This association contains soils that are very deep, well-drained, and formed in sandy glacial till. Most areas have stones and boulders on the surface that are 5 to 20 feet apart with slopes ranging from 0 to 45 percent. The NRCS describe these soils as being generally poorly suited to cultivated crops, hay, and pasture because of the stones that are found on the surface. They have a moderate potential for woodland production and upland areas are quite well-suited to building site development. However, wetness is a limitation in low areas and in depressions. Another problem is similar to that of the Hinckley soils: the Canton and Gloucester soils also readily absorb but do not adequately filter the effluent from septic tank absorption

fields. Once again the issue of polluting groundwater must be taken into consideration.

Slope is an important factor to consider in determining the development potential of an area. Areas with a slope of 15% or greater are considered to have limitations for building due to the significantly increased physical or financial requirements of such a project. The areas with a slope of 15% or greater form a series of north-south bands below the Quabbin until approximately the latitude of the commercial area. The major areas with slopes of less than 15% are located in the Fisherdick Road area in a north-south pattern east of the Quabbin which continues due south to the southern boundary, and into the western corner of town. In general, approximately 50-60 percent of the town's land area has a slope of 15% or less.

Combining soil characteristics with slope gives an indication of whether an area can support septic systems. Many of the soil types found in Ware were found to have moderate to severe (primarily the latter) restrictions for septic tank absorption fields. The only area which offers slight limitations (and therefore the least expense) for installing septic tanks is the Highland Street-Church Street-North Street areas, which is already extensively sewerred. This does not mean that septic systems are impossible in other areas, but it does mean that the specific soil conditions must be considered on an individual basis, and lot size adjustments must be made to accommodate the general soil limitations.

## **B. Landscape Character**

Upon first glance, Ware assumes the form of a typical western Massachusetts mill town, nestled among the glacial valleys and ridges

and concentrated along the major waterways. From many points in town and along major roadways, forested ridges and busy valleys with church spires and factory chimneys portray Ware as a close-knit community, founded on the New England traditions of farming and mill manufacturing.

There is a juxtaposition between the old and new in Ware. Route 9 is the spine of the original town center, and is surrounded by historic buildings. The large residences along Route 9 and other roads close to the town center (e.g. Church Street) testify to the prosperity the town once enjoyed when mill manufacturing was at its peak. Newer development has sprung up in recent years, mostly along Route 32. Here the sprawling nature of today's commercial developments provides a less appealing and more generic solution to providing residents with goods and jobs.

The outer country roads of Ware take one on a tour of the history of town, from the original farms and mills (and a covered bridge) to the newer residential lots that are being built on the outskirts of town. Ware has a beautiful history that is still evident in the town's buildings and people (residents still refer to Ware as "The Town That Can't Be Licked"). A wonderful way that Ware has retained its tradition while allowing for new development is found in the reuse of the large mills in the center of town. Now occupied by factory outlets, several small businesses such as the full service fitness center called the Fitness Factory, and some industrial uses, the mills serve a dual purpose of visual history and active commerce. Redevelopment is not at full capacity and some underutilized space is still available. It is crucial to balance the value of the new, necessary improvements needed in town with the value of a rich history that should not be forgotten or replaced.



## C. Water Resources

### *Watersheds and Surface Water*

The entire town of Ware is located within the Chicopee River basin, which encompasses a large network of tributaries that ultimately flow into the Connecticut River. The watershed has a total drainage area of approximately 723 square miles. Five other subwatersheds to the Chicopee also exist in Ware including: Muddy Brook, Quabbin Reservoir, Quaboag River, Swift River and Ware River. The Quaboag, Swift and Ware Rivers converge in the Town of Palmer south of Ware to form the main stem of the Chicopee River.

The three major surface waters in Ware are the Swift and Ware Rivers and the Quabbin Reservoir. The Swift River flows along the Ware-Belchertown boundary until it joins the Ware River at the Three Rivers junction. The Ware River originates in Hubbardston, MA and flows generally southwesterly through the town. The Quabbin Reservoir, located in Ware, Pelham, and Belchertown, is owned by the Metropolitan District Commission, and covers 24,705 acres. See Table 4 for more information on the location of surface water resources in Ware.

**Table 4. Surface Water Resources in Ware**

<u>Surface Water</u>	<u>Owner</u>	<u>Size (acres)</u>	<u>Use</u>	<u>Dam Height</u>	<u>Drainage (sq.mi)</u>
Babcock Tavern Road Pond	Private	13	Recreation	none	unknown
Swift River and Ware River	Public		Recreation		
Beaver Lake	Private	155	Recreation	13	5.6
Martowski Pond	Private	8	Recreation	none	unknown
Penny Brook Pond	Private	8	Recreation	none	unknown
Cook's Pond	MDC	10	Fishing	10	2.7
Snow's Pond	Water Dept	25	Recreation	8	18.9
Quabbin Reservoir	MDC	24,705	Water Supply, Limited Rec.	170	185.9

### *Outstanding Resource Waters (ORW)*

Outstanding Resource Waters is a classification under the Massachusetts Surface Water Quality Standards of 1995 for certain watershed areas. According to 314 CMR 4.00: "Certain waters shall be designated for protection under this provision in 314 CMR 4.06(3) including Public Water Supplies (314 CMR 4.06(1)(d)1.). These waters constitute an outstanding resource as determined by their outstanding socioeconomic, recreational, ecological and/or aesthetic values. The quality of these waters shall be protected and maintained." (March 1, 1995). The Quabbin Reservoir is a designated Outstanding Resource Waters with 3,357 acres of ORW surface waters in Ware. This is also the same amount of Living Waters Core in Ware.

There are ORW watershed land associated with the Quabbin extending into Ware totaling 6,296 acres.

*Flood Hazard Areas*

The major floodplain areas in Ware are located primarily along the Ware River and the Quabbin Reservoir. Other floodplain areas are located along the Swift River, Flat Brook, Muddy Brook, and in the Beaver Lake and Peppers Mill Pond area. Ware has restrictions on development in these areas to protect the community against resource degradation when unsuitable uses occur along these waterways, and also to prevent an increase in the extent and severity of flooding.

*Aquifer Recharge Areas*

There are a number of aquifer recharge areas in Ware, all of which are located around the major bodies of water. One is located along the Swift River toward River Road and Sczygal Road. Another is found from Ware Center along Flat Brook toward the Worcester County line. The major recharge area is along Beaver Brook until it meets the Ware River where it continues through the center of town as it

branches to also include Muddy Brook. Various development and use restrictions exist in these areas in order to protect both water quality and water availability for the town. However, residential development is still occurring in the recharge area via Approval Not Required (ANR) single-family home development along Sczygal Road.

**D. Vegetation**

*General Inventory*

Ware’s landscape of rich fertile floodplains are a patchwork of croplands reaching the gently sloping hillsides found mostly with mature woodlands.

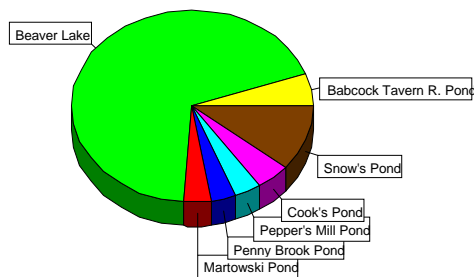
*Forest Land*

As of 1985, sixty-four percent of Ware’s land was covered with forest. Current estimates of forest cover are unavailable. The major forest types in Ware are the Appalachian-Oak (Northern Red Oak, White Oak, Chestnut Oak, American Chestnut) and the Northern Hardwood (Sugar Maple, Beech, Yellow Birch, White Birch, Paper Birch, Hemlock). Many of these species may be harvested for furniture, flooring, and fuel. These mature forests are excellent places for recreation trails, because of the lack of substantial undergrowth. A maturing forest has less recreation opportunities, but is a more popular habitat for wildlife, and provides game for hunting and wildlife viewing.

Over 2,000 contiguous acres of woodlands cover the Dougal Mountain Range in East Ware. This region of Ware extending into Hardwick is a priority conservation area for the East Quabbin Land Trust.

*Surface Water Resources*

(Acres)



### *Agricultural Land*

The many unforested fields in Ware provide some of the most scenic views in town. Open lands allow viewsheds to the surrounding community and region. Considering recreation, the typically flat and well-drained lands may easily convert to active recreation fields, like soccer and baseball. Also, converting former agricultural fields to recreation fields means that little or no forest cutting is needed. However, much of Ware's undeveloped, unforested land is still in private ownership, and liability issues make it difficult for owners to permit recreational use by the town. Currently, over 800 acres of privately owned open lands are protected for agricultural use under Chapter 61A. Between 1971 and 1999, there was a 14.1% loss of farmland in Ware.

### *Wetland Vegetation*

Ware's wetlands are highly protected, overseen by the town's Conservation Commission. The typical wetland plants (highbush blueberry, ferns, red maple, quaking aspen, birches, junipers, dogwoods) are popular foraging plants for many birds and other wildlife. Development limitations and strict legislation concerning wetland areas prevent these ecosystems from being used for anything more than conservation and recreation use. Recreation opportunities in and around include bird watching and hiking.

The NHESP produces maps for use under the Wetlands Protection Act (Estimated Habitat maps, provided to the Conservation Commission and shown in reduced form in the Natural Heritage Atlas, and the Massachusetts Endangered Species Act (also in the Natural Heritage Atlas). These data layers are included on the Natural Environments Map included at the back of this plan. These two sets of maps are created for regulatory use. Estimated Habitats

are a complete subset of Priority Habitats that focus on habitats of rare wetlands wildlife. Priority Habitats are drawn for all rare species. Early planning and review of development projects under the Wetlands Protection Act and the Massachusetts Endangered Species Act plays an important role in protecting rare species habitats. Town commissions and boards are encouraged to request the assistance of the Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program in reviewing any project proposed in the habitat areas of the regulatory areas of the maps in the Natural Heritage Atlas.

Management and monitoring of conservation lands become important as acquisition and protection are accomplished. All wetlands particularly need to maintain their natural water regime, including normal fluctuations and connections with the uplands and other wetlands. Water quantity and quality are ongoing issues for wetlands. Another aspect of managing conservation lands that is important in many areas is controlling invasive non-native species that alter the habitat and occupy space that native species would otherwise use. Monitoring conservation land for invasives and removing non-native species before they become a problem and impact native species is recommended.



*Figure 3: First high water over new East Street dam, February 15, 1939*

### *Rare Species*

A list of state listed rare and endangered species is included in Table 5. The DEP Wetlands datalayer shows four bogs in Ware, which NHESP has not visited – these are not the sites the species are from. The Watch-Listed One-flowered Shinleaf is another species of bogs – also not known from those DEP-identified bogs.

Climbing Fumitory is a viny herbaceous plant that grows on open rocky slopes; it is found in several areas of town where these habitats occur.

The other rare plants known to exist in Ware include two historic species which were more common when there were more open, non-forested land such as pastures. Habitat for Butternut, a Watch-List species, is usually found in low acidic forests with some nutrient enrichment – below rock outcrops or cliffs where nutrients accumulate and soil water is available, sometimes below rocky areas supporting Climbing Fumitory.

### *Unique Natural Resources*

The most important areas of Ware to protect to maintain biodiversity are the areas around the Quabbin, the Ware River and its tributaries—all in BioMap and Living Waters Cores shown on the Natural Environments Map. In addition, the ridge in the northeastern part of town, shown as BioMap Supporting Natural Landscape (SNL) between Muddy Brook and the Ware River supports several recent rare species observations (since the BioMap work), many vernal pools (certified and potential), and older forest, all of biodiversity interest.

Ware has a very good, large area of protected lands around the Quabbin. That area includes BioMap cores and 1830s forest areas that provide a remarkable example of relatively unfragmented habitat. Completing conservation protection of remaining unprotected land in that area, with buffers included, would enhance the viability of these special areas. Size and continuity of open space is particularly important for supporting wildlife populations. Preventing habitat fragmentation is vital in protecting the ecosystems for the rare species on the enclosed list, as well as for additional common species.

The two types of NHESP Priority Natural Communities recently identified in Ware, Circumneutral Talus Forest/Woodland and Hickory Hop-Hornbeam Forest/Woodland, are both forests of variable height and openness. Talus forests develop on boulder strewn slopes, usually below cliffs. There is often a gradient of vegetation, with exposed rocks at the base of the cliffs and taller, older trees near the bottom and sides of the slopes. “Circumneutral” refers to the chemistry of the rocks having low acidity, which allows the soils to have more nutrients available for plant growth than in the more acidic conditions that occur in much of Massachusetts (part of the reason for their relative scarcity in the state). Circumneutral Talus Forest/Woodlands have a greater diversity of plant species than Acidic Talus Forests. Some species associated with richer (more nutrients, especially calcium) conditions typically occur in Circumneutral Talus communities, including sugar maple, hickories, hop-hornbeam and some of the spring wild flowers. Hickory – Hop Hornbeam communities are mixed hardwood, open, usually short, forests/woodlands with a spars shrub layer, almost park-like in appearance. There is often a nearly continuous layer of grasses and sedges below the trees, which are dominated by hickories with a subcanopy of hop hornbeam. Hickory – Hop Hornbeam communities

often occur on east or southeast facing midslopes with shallow soils – usually relatively dry areas. Many occurrences are small patches of a few acres each within a matrix of oak dominated forests. There are several herbaceous plant species that are found predominately in Hickory – Hop Hornbeam communities.

#### *Vegetation Mapping Projects*

Ware is one of the Towns with maps showing areas forested in the 1830s, areas of possible Primary Forest, untilled woodlots and wooded pastures. Such lands have greater biodiversity than areas that have been tilled. These are not Old Growth, they have been harvested and pastured, but the ground may not have been tilled. Harvard Forest digitized maps from the 1830s that the Massachusetts legislature mandated Towns to make. Ware’s map shows areas that were forested in the 1830s. NHESP GIS staff took those data and combined them with information from MassGIS’ landcover datalayer made from 1999 aerial photos. Although a great deal will have changed in those areas during the time between the map dates, some areas showing forested land during both periods won’t ever have been tilled. Surveys of the soil structure in the individual sites are necessary to determine whether those sites are primary forest. The importance of primary forest is that they retain more native biodiversity than sites that have been tilled: soil fauna and flora, microorganisms and plants that reproduce primarily vegetatively contribute to a higher biodiversity. In addition, a variety of species of wildflowers are more common in untilled forests than previously tilled lands. The areas of 1830s forest on private land would be good targets for conservation acquisition in order to maintain the biodiversity of the Town and region, particularly the ridge between

the Ware River and Muddy Brook and lands north of the DFW Herm Covey WMA in the western part of town.

BioMap and Living Waters cores were produced by NHESP to identify the areas of highest importance for biodiversity based on known locations of rare species and uncommon natural communities, and incorporate the habitats needed by rare species to maintain the local populations. BioMap focused on species of uplands and wetlands; Living Waters focused on aquatic species. Large unfragmented conservation land provides the best opportunities to maintain populations of species and limit further species loss from the Town. Land protection by towns that ties in with open space in other municipalities, and other protected open space, public or private is one way to provide important large areas of biodiversity protection. There are 9,665 acres of Biomap core habitat and 3,357 acres of Living Waters core habitat in Ware. The Living Waters core consists solely of the Quabbin Reservoir.

It is important to differentiate the BioMap and Living Waters core areas from the Priority and Estimated Habitats described above. BioMap and Living Waters core areas identify areas particularly important for conservation planning purposes where as Priority and Estimated Habitats are regulatory. However Priority and Estimated Habitats are updated regularly, and the BioMap / Living Waters report is static (data from 2001 and 2003) which means it misses some of the most recently identified rare species areas.

## E. Fisheries and Wildlife

### *Inventory*

Numerous physical factors influence the sustainability of animal species communities, including plant species coverage, elevation, climate, development, pollution, and the availability of food and water. A small change in any of these elements and a species may decline or increase. Generally, Ware's physical characteristics provide a variety of wildlife habitats, including mixed and hardwood forestlands, agricultural and abandoned open fields, ponds and lakes, streams and rivers, wetlands, and even residential backyards. The most common species found in western Massachusetts in these categories are listed in Table 4. Many of these species may be hunted during a portion of the year with a valid hunting or fishing license.

### *Vernal Pools*

There are 20 Certified Vernal Pools and many Potential Vernal Pools (PVP) (identified from aerial photographs, needing verification on the ground) in Ware. Areas of swamps also provide habitat for vernal pool species. Certifying the PVPs would provide more protection to these wetlands and the species that use them. There are several clusters of CVPs/PVPs, which provide extra habitat value for the species that use them since each pool is somewhat different and provides alternate habitats in different years and seasons. A cluster that is also on likely primary forest (described above) is likely to be particularly important for biodiversity. An example of this combination occurs on the ridge between the Ware River and Muddy Brook. Lands that are primary forest with CVPs/PVPs would make particularly good acquisitions for protecting the biodiversity of the Town. Rare turtles that occur in Ware all use vernal pools as part of

their habitat. The Blue-spotted Salamander, known in Ware only from over a century ago, depends on vernal pools as breeding habitat, but spends the rest of its life in surrounding forest.

### *Corridors for Wildlife Migration*

Wildlife diversity is a function of the size and shape of undeveloped land, and the variety of habitat types available to animals. It is important to note that often species must occupy more than one land type during its day, year, or lifetime in order to survive. The white tail deer, for instance, can be seen seeking shelter in the thick evergreen forest, foraging berries along the edge of a field, and drinking from a small stream, all in the same day. In addition, many species require overland migration routes to hunt or forage for food and water as well as seek shelter and propagate. Major natural corridors must be recognized as potential migration routes for many animals. Recreation trails or undeveloped floodplains and riverfronts can often successfully serve as wildlife migration corridors.

### *Rare Species*

Protection priority must be given to those specific lands that currently house endangered species. The recently delisted bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucoccephalus*) used to be the only federally listed endangered species under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service in the town of Ware. Bald Eagles nest in tall trees near lakes where they hunt fish. They were reintroduced into Massachusetts in the Quabbin Reservoir area and have spread from there, but still maintain good populations in the Quabbin area.

There are four state listed endangered species (Massachusetts Endangered Species Act) in Ware including the Bald Eagle which is both a state and federal listed species: the Pied-billed Grebe (*Podilymbus podiceps*), the Brook Floater or Swollen Wedgemussel (*Alasmidonta varicose*), and the Spine-crowned Clubtail (*Gomphus abbreviatus*).

Wood Turtles, a species of Special Concern, are associated with streams, usually fairly low gradient ones. Wood turtles require both aquatic and terrestrial habitats to complete their life cycle. Rivers and streams are used extensively throughout the year for foraging, mating and overwintering. During the late spring and summer, these turtles are often terrestrial, using riparian (riverside) forests, particularly ones that have a good shrub canopy cover and open areas. Most Wood Turtles stay within 1000 feet of their home stream. The recently delisted Spotted Turtle uses wetlands, rather than the streams or rivers themselves, and adjacent uplands for habitat. Box Turtles, not reported from Ware for 80 years, are mostly found in upland oak forests, but use wetlands in the summer. All these turtles nest in open, often sandy, areas when possible.

Other species associated with streams and rivers include the freshwater mussels and the dragonflies (Clubtails and Snaketails). These records are mostly from the Ware River. These species indicate the presence of clean water and need good quality water to support healthy populations. Maintaining good water quality and quantity are

important for the biodiversity as well as public health. Pied-billed grebes are water birds that nest in thick vegetation on the edges of lakes, ponds, and large slow moving rivers.

Bridle Shiners are fish of ponds and slow moving waters. The presence of lake using species such as these reflect the quality of the lakes and ponds in the area, and their surrounding lands, as the previously mentioned dragonflies and mussels do the faster moving waters. There is good habitat for aquatic and wetland species in Ware, not only in the Quabbin area, but throughout the town.

The habitat of Southern Bog Lemmings is bogs, and Four-toed Salamanders live in sphagnum moss, most commonly found in bogs. The Four-toed Salamander builds nests in the moss over water, into which the larvae drop when they are ready to disperse on their own. The DEP Wetlands datalayer shows four bogs in Ware, which NHESP has not visited – these are not the sites the species are from. However further populations might well occur in the bogs if they are in good condition, and it would be worthwhile investigating these habitats.

The two species of rare moths, one not collected in town since 1934, are species that prefer dry oak shrublands and rocky outcrop areas. Melchheimer's Sack Bearer Moth requires scrub oak, found in Pitch Pine – Scrub Oak communities on rocky ridges and on sand plains and riversides. The habitat of the Orange Sallow Moth is dry open oak woodlands found in rocky uplands and around rocky ridges.



*Table 5 Rare Species and Natural Communities Documented in the Town of Ware (AS OF June 4, 2007)*

<u>Scientific Name</u>	<u>Common Name</u>	<u>MESA Status</u>	<u>Most recent Year</u>
<b>VERTEBRATES</b>			
Ambystoma laterale	Blue-spotted Salamander	SC	1800
Clemmys guttata	Spotted Turtle	delisted	1981
Glyptemys insculpta	Wood Turtle	SC	2007
Haliaeetus leucocephalus	Bald Eagle	E	2005
Hemidactylium scutatum	Four-toed Salamander	SC	2007
Notropis bifrenatus	Bridle Shiner	SC	2005
Podilymbus podiceps	Pied-billed Grebe	E	2000
Synaptomys cooperi	Southern Bog Lemming	SC	1992
Terrapene carolina	Eastern Box Turtle	SC	1928
<b>INVERTEBRATES</b>			
Alasmidonta undulata	Triangle Floater	SC	1997
Alasmidonta varicosa	Brook Floater (Swollen Wedgemussel)	E	1997
Cicinnus melsheimeri	Melsheimer's Sack Bearer Moth	T	1934
Gomphus abbreviatus	Spine-crowned Clubtail	E	2004
Gomphus borealis	Beaverpond Clubtail	delisted	1991
Ophiogomphus aspersus	Brook Snaketail	SC	2004
Ophiogomphus carolus	Riffle Snaketail	T	2004
Rhodocia aurantiago	Orange Sallow Moth	T	2003
Strophitus undulatus	Creeper (freshwater mussel)	SC	2006
Stylurus spiniceps	Clubtail Dragonfly	T	2004

<u>Scientific Name</u>	<u>Common Name</u>	<u>MESA Status</u>	<u>Most recent Year</u>
<b>VASCULAR PLANTS</b>			
Adlumia fungosa	Climbing Fumitory	SC	2006
Juglans cinerea	Butternut	WL	2006
Liatris scariosa var. bivae-angliae	New England Blazing Star	SC	1931
Moneses uniflora	One-flowered Shinleaf	WL	
Pedicularis lanceolata	Swamp Lousewort	E	Historic
<b>NATURAL COMMUNITIES</b>			
None in NHESP database			
<b>CERTIFIED VERNAL POOLS</b>			
CERTIFIED VERNAL POOL (20)			2006

*SOURCE: MA Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program*

This list does not include data sensitive species. Watch List dates are not all available. KEY TO STATUS - DFW RANK:  
 E = Endangered. T = Threatened. SC = Special Concern. WL = unofficial Watch List, not regulated. Delisted – not regulated.

**Table 6 Common Wildlife and Habitats of Western Massachusetts**

Habitat Type	Animal Type	Common Species
<b>Woodland</b>	Reptiles	turtle, snake
	Amphibians	salamander, tree frog, toad
	Birds	ruffed grouse, crow, hawks, turkey, woodpeckers, owls, songbirds
	Mammals	deer, rabbit, squirrel, woodchuck, chipmunk, raccoon, fox, skunk, porcupine, coyote
<b>Open Land</b>	Insects	spiders, wasps, bees, ants, flies, moths, butterflies, beetles, mosquitoes, dragonflies
	Reptiles	snakes
	Birds	pheasant, crow, hawks, swallow, songbirds
	Mammals	cottontail, skunk, woodchuck, moles, shrews, bats
<b>Open Water</b>	Insects	mosquito, dragonfly, horsefly, moths
	Fish	herring, shad, trout, salmon, pickerel, pike, carp, catfish, perch, bass
	Reptiles	turtles
	Amphibians	frogs, toads, salamanders, newts
	Birds	Canada goose, mallard, osprey, bald eagle, kingfisher, swallow
	Mammals	beaver, otter
<b>Wetland</b>	Insects	mosquito, earthworms, beetles, snails, flies, dragonfly
	Fish	pickerel, carp, shiner, shad
	Reptiles	turtles, snakes
	Amphibians	salamanders, frogs, peepers
	Birds	ducks, herons, egrets, osprey, killdeer, kingfisher, grouse, pheasant, goose, songbirds
	Mammals	deer, rabbit, opossum, raccoon, fox, mink, beaver, otter, muskrat, skunk, moose
<b>Residential</b>	Insects	flies, mosquitoes, bees, wasps, beetles
	Reptiles	snakes
	Amphibians	toads, frogs
	Birds	crows, songbirds
	Mammals	squirrel, chipmunk, raccoon, rabbit

Source: A Natural Resource Inventory Atlas for Hampshire County

## F. Scenic Resources and Unique Environments

### Scenic Landscapes

Most of the entire town of Ware could be considered scenic. From its open farmland to its historic downtown, Ware is brewing with beautiful landscapes. The town has, however, described some exceptional places where the scenery is particularly noteworthy. This is the scenery that Ware residents cherish, that attracts new residents to the town, and that visitors to Ware remember. These places should be given the highest priority when considering scenic open space protection. Moreover, a strong effort should be made to integrate these scenic areas or viewsheds with certain recreation activities, such as hiking and biking trails. Some of the places identified to be particularly scenic include:

- Several spots along the Ware River afford great views of the rushing water and surrounding countryside.
- The dams along East and South Streets are very popular scenic spots for residents. These dams could serve as trail nodes or designated picnic areas. However, the safety of visitors should be considered before any improvements are made.
- The Quabbin Reservoir is a favorite place for hiking, picnicking and birdwatching. The creation of a trail network linking the town with the Quabbin Reservoir should be examined.
- Snow’s Pond is a favorite destination for fishing, walking and picnicking, and is very close to the center of town.

- Travelers along Fisherdick Road will spot wonderful views of distant Mount Tom and the Quabbin Tower amid the forests and fields.
- A glimpse of Ware can be seen from a great vantage point along Route 9 eastbound before the descent into town, and also along Warren Road. Design guidelines should ensure that these views are never obstructed by development.

#### *Major Geologic Features*

Ware is a town comprised of a series of glacial ridges and valleys. As is typical in the region, many of the town's ridges have steep slopes and rocky soil, and so have never been developed for agriculture, unlike the rest of the town. These ridges are thickly forested and provide critical habitat for certain species of birds and mammals that could not survive elsewhere. The rivers that the town was founded on are filled by waters shed from these ridges. The steep landforms provide climatic shelter for the valley inhabitants. The ridges also add to the scenic quality of Ware.

A strong planning effort should be made to protect these ridges from the dangers of development. Clear-cut logging practices increase runoff which can lead to flooding. Structures built upon the ridges could ruin the scenic quality of the landscape. Wildlife habitat will certainly diminish with any human use. These ridges help to make the valleys of Ware such great places to live, and should be left untouched.

#### *Cultural and Historic Areas*

There is a need to remember the past so that we can assess the present. Preserving places or districts makes a bridge between then and now, over which we can cross to learn, reflect and enjoy. Preservation of irreplaceable heritage is in the public interest so that cultural, educational, aesthetic, inspirational, economic and energy benefits will be maintained and enriched for future generations of residents.

The National Register of Historic Places has a central role in recognizing buildings, sites, districts, structures, etc., and identifying them as worthy of preservation, according to the National Historic Act of 1966. Areas proposed for historic district zoning do not need to be of national or even of state importance. Historic districts should be created by cities and towns to protect areas which are significant in their own local development. A historic district may be established when "the relationship to each other of a sufficient number of buildings creates a whole which is greater than the sum of its parts." (From: Cambridge Historic District Study Committee, Final Report, Cambridge, 1962.)

According to the National Register of Historic Places, Ware has five national historic districts:

- The Church Street Historic District runs from Church Street between Park Avenue and Highland Street. Dating from 1800 to 1900 and later, this district contains 73 structures and is architecturally and historically significant as a substantially intact residential part of a 19th century New England factory village.

- The Ware Center Historic District is on Route 9, east and west of Greenwich Plains Road. Dating from 1700 to 1899, this district of twenty structures is significant for its spatial organization and architectural forms of the 18th century colonial settlement of Ware, as well as aspects of the town's 19th century development.
- The Ware-Hardwick Covered Bridge is located in Ware, Gilbertville, and Hardwick on Old Gilbertville Road and Bridge Street. It dates from approximately 1886 and is significant because it is only one of four 19th century wooden bridges still standing in its original location in Massachusetts.
- Located in the Town center along South, Church, Canal, Main, Park, Pleasant, and Otis Streets, the Millyard and Housing District contain forty-five structures. The structures were built by three manufacturing companies over a 10-year period beginning in 1821. These structures are noteworthy as exceptionally intact examples of the style used in this era of industrial development and its corresponding impact on residential development.
- The Town Hall itself is also a historic structure. Located at the corner of Routes 9 and 32, it dates from 1885-1886 and is an impressive Romanesque Revival building with strong Richardsonian overtones. The Town Hall is significant for its importance in centralizing Ware's activities in the present Town center.

### Grenville Park

In 1910 there were no large parks in Ware. Aspen Grove Cemetery and the Pumping Station Grounds were the most important open spaces owned by the Town and were used, to a large degree, for pleasure strolling and driving. The public also enjoyed the vacant lands on the outskirts of town for ball playing, picnicking, and walking over large tracts in all parts of town. While this use did not create serious objection from land owners, there was a great need for a public park to provide permanent recreation. Through the public spirit of one of the commissioners, Mr. J.H.G. Gilbert, Ware was able to secure land that was large enough to provide ample outdoor recreation facilities within a few minutes' walk of the downtown. This is Grenville Park.

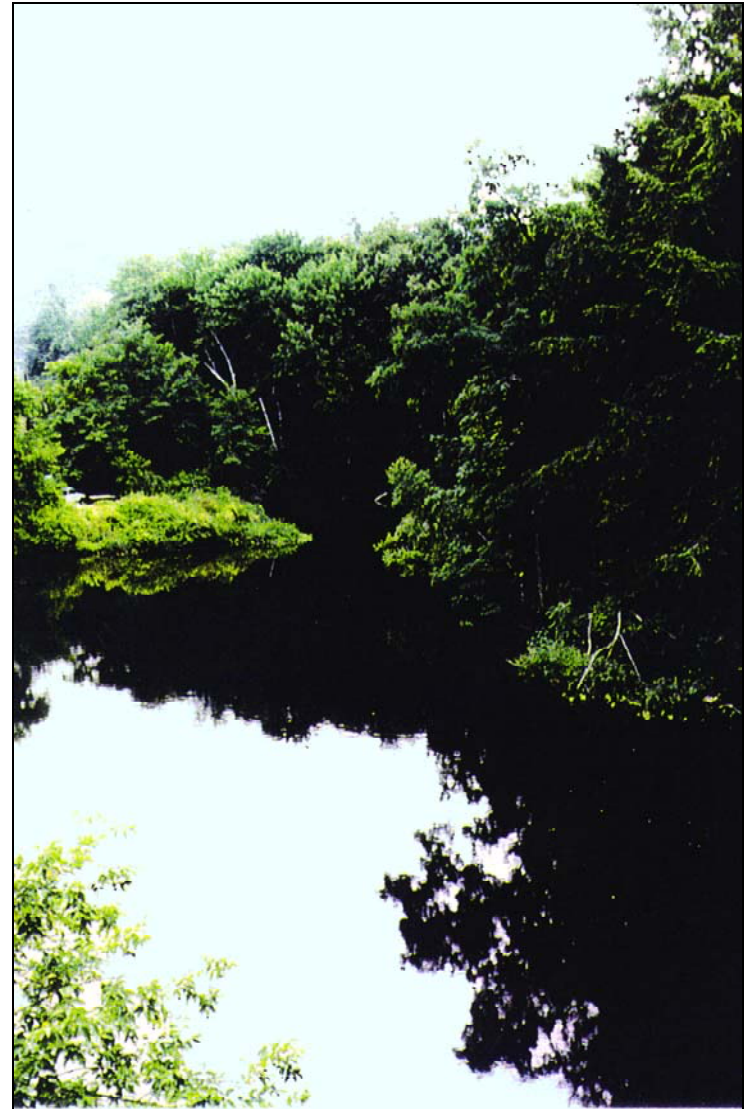
Grenville Park commemorates Grenville Gilbert, Jr., the beloved son of Mr. and Mrs. Gilbert. They felt that in no better way could they perpetuate the memory of their son than in associating his name with a permanent factor in the daily life of the community, which assured their home town a lasting and beautiful environment on the site where natural beauty lay in abundance.

The ambition of the designer, Arthur A. Shurtleff of Boston, MA, was to design a park which was reminiscent of the best natural wild landscapes of New England both with regard to the arrangement of trees and shrubbery and the choice of native vegetation. The Park includes ball fields, intimate spaces, and open spaces, giving people many opportunities for different kinds of recreation. The plan includes maintenance schedules, descriptions of the various trees and shrubs, and specific details about the reasoning behind such design decisions as leaving open spaces open and footpaths graveled instead of paved (Arthur A. Shurtleff, 1923). The Park is also an integral part

of the Ware River Valley Greenway Trails Project (see Chapter 5). Grenville Park truly is a gem in the Town of Ware.

*Unique Environments*

There are no designated Areas of Critical Environmental Concern in Ware. An Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) boundary is delineated upon designation by the Secretary of Environmental Affairs and includes any areas needed to protect and preserve significant natural resource features such as estuaries, wetlands, floodplain, and forested upland.



*Figure 4: The Ware River at Grenville Park*

## G. Environmental Challenges

### *Hazardous Waste and Brownfield Sites*

#### Former Ware Farm Equipment Company, 208 West Street, Ware

The roughly fifteen-acre site was formerly the Ware Farm Equipment Company and is contaminated with both hazardous material and petroleum substances. Approximately 5 to 7 acres of the property was also a former solid waste disposal area that was last used in the mid 1920s. Burning waste at the disposal site led to elevated concentrations of total petroleum hydrocarbons (TPH) and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) in the soil, groundwater and surface water samples. The site is currently vacant including two unused buildings. The site is listed as a Tier II Site by the MA DEP for petroleum hydrocarbons and metals in the soil and groundwater. This property is owned by the Town of Ware and cleanup activities are underway.

### *Landfills*

The Town landfill has been capped. Even so, landfill leachate can pose an environmental hazard, especially given its proximity to the Ware River. The site is undergoing long-term post-closure groundwater, surface water and gas emission monitoring under the supervision of MA DEP to identify any migrating contaminants. The landfill is located next door to the town-owned Banas Farm, an important conservation property with recreational potential. Any future recreational use of this property should be planned in consultation with the Board of Health and MA DEP's Solid Waste Division to prevent potential public health risks from landfill leachate. For environmental and public safety reasons, access to the capped landfill is restricted except for designated maintenance and monitoring.

### *Erosion and Sedimentation*

Recently, the town developed an Erosion and Sediment Control bylaw to establish minimum requirements and procedures to control the adverse impacts associated with stormwater runoff from land development. Until the development and adoption of this bylaw, stormwater management in Ware was handled on-site. Additional measures to address erosion and sedimentation were also mentioned in the town's Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plan, developed with funding from Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency in 2007.

### *Chronic Flooding*

Because Ware has so many water sources and floodplains that have long been built upon, the town has an infamous history of flooding. Ware's rivers exceeding their banks have caused much damage. The Ware River, being the largest and closest to town, has flooded many times, especially along upper Church Street near the airport, and again along Route 32. The Muddy Brook has been known to flood near Reed Pool, and the Flat Brook along Route 9. Ware has always been concerned about flooding in town.

**SECTION FIVE: INVENTORY OF LANDS OF CONSERVATION  
AND RECREATION INTEREST**

The conservation and recreation lands in Ware fall into a number of categories, namely, town-owned recreation sites, town-owned conservation sites, state-owned conservation sites, and privately owned parcels, which include Chapter 61 lands. Each of these areas contributes to the presence of open space and rural character, which are such important aspects of Ware.

As described in Chapter One, the term ‘open space’ in this document refers to any area of undeveloped land with particular conservation or recreation interest to the town of Ware. Using this definition it is easy to recognize that many types of land make up Ware’s open space. In addition to community and state-owned parcels that are designated as town forests, wildlife areas, water protection areas and neighborhood parks, other undeveloped lands such as agricultural lands, private woodlands and private recreation and conservation land contribute to the town’s ‘open space’. For these reasons, all of these land parcels are included in this chapter which seeks to develop an inventory of the lands that make up Ware’s open space and contribute to its rural character.

The degrees of protection open space parcels enjoy also varies. While some are protected from development or change of use in perpetuity by deed restrictions or government decree, others are “protected” for only a limited time period such as Chapterlands (Chapter 61, 61A and 61B). Chapterlands are not conservation lands but rather properties that are taxed at a reduced rate based on their current use as agriculture, forestry or recreation. At any time, a property owner may release its property from chapter status, pay the back taxes due on the property under its full assessed value, and sell the land for development. However, the town is given the first right-of-refusal to buy the land to protect it. Many of the lands in the four priority areas

for protection (Ware River Greenway Trails Project, Ware Center, West Ware and Dougal Range) are in Chapter status.

Still others are totally unprotected and could be easily and quickly developed. Essentially, although these areas may be undeveloped currently, there are no guarantees it will remain in this state. Therefore, it is important to consider the degree of protection (a.k.a. status) that is afforded to the lands that make up Ware’s valuable open space and determine ways in which further protection can be assured.

### **A. Private Parcels**

#### Ware River Valley Greenway Trails Project

The plans for converting the abandoned Boston and Maine Rail corridor into a recreational trail have been forming in Ware for many years. First official references are recorded in the 1987 Open Space and Recreation Plan. The 1997 Ware River Valley Greenway Trails Project report is directed toward establishing a multi-use recreational greenway corridor along the west bank of the Ware River. The project combines the development of a multi-use trail system together with an open space and wildlife management plan. The leading goal is to utilize an abandoned railway corridor of the Boston and Maine railroad as a public access trail, linking together the towns of Ware and Hardwick. The total proposed trail length is 3.3 miles, from historic Greenville Park to the old covered bridge which borders Hardwick, yet has future expansion potential north through Hardwick and south to the Amherst Norwottuck Rail Trail. The combined result would establish a regional multi-use trail linking together six towns with over 20 miles of trails (The Ware River Valley Greenway Trails Project, Site Assessment Report, June 1997).



The Ware Community Development Department prepared an application for funding under the Transportation Enhancements Program (ISTEA) for the design of the Ware to Hardwick Trail. In October of 1997, the town was notified by the Executive Office of Transportation and Construction that the project was eligible for funding under the Massachusetts Transportation Enhancement Program Guidelines. Final design of this section of the trail is complete. The town was awarded a Massachusetts DEM Greenways and Trails Demonstration Grant to undertake a planning and research project that can result in the southward extension of the trail to the Palmer town line.

While this project focuses on a strip of land that was formerly a rail bed of the Boston and Maine Railroad, the potential for public acquisition of land between the rail bed and the river will also be examined. This will preserve the river shore as an important environmental resource while providing the public access via the railbed.

The Ware River Valley Greenway Trails Project, guided by the Ware Community Development Department, is an exceptional opportunity to create a linear greenway system to serve multiple purposes. The greenway will also significantly preserve natural resources including water quality, wildlife habitat, and the scenic quality and history of the Ware River Valley. Every effort should be made to ensure that this greenway comes to pass.

#### Dougal Project – East Quabbin Land Trust

The East Quabbin Land Trust (EQLT) has undertaken a land protection program for the Dougal Range, an area consisting of over 2,000 acres of unfragmented forest in northeast Ware and Hardwick.

The mountain range stretches north-south between the Ware River and Muddy Brook up to Dougal Mountain in Hardwick. The proposed Ware River Valley Greenway Trails Project runs parallel to this area of special concern.

To protect this important stretch of open space, EQLT has been conducting outreach to property owners about long-term conservation options such as easements / conservation restrictions and the Agricultural Preservation Restriction program. They have also been seeking fee-simple purchase agreements with certain property owners. Parcels within the Dougal Range focus area are identified in the inventory tables with an asterisk (\*). These parcels correspond to Assessor maps 29, 30, 35, 40, 41 and 43.

#### Ware Center

Ware Center is a distinct area of town with working farms and large blocks of open space contributing largely to the rural sense of place one experiences here. In addition to its contribution to town character, this area provides important habitat along Flat Brook which connects to the Quabbin Reservoir. According to the Ware Conservation Commission, Flat Brook is home to several species of endangered freshwater shellfish including brook floaters and triangle floaters, both swollen wedge mussels.

The roads surrounding Ware Center are steadily turning frontage into ANR lots for residential sprawl. Parcels in Ware Center of interest for this priority focus are included in Assessor's maps 21 and 22. These parcels are identified in the inventory tables with a double asterisk (\*\*).

### West Ware

West Ware and the Beaver Lake area are two of the fastest growing parts of town for residential development. Definitive Subdivision Plans for two large subdivisions were recently approved in this part of town including a 32-home development in New Penny Brook and a 67-home development off of Monson Turnpike Road and Coffey Hill Road. There is also the potential for several more subdivisions on privately owned land in this area. This area contains important habitat along the stream corridors of Beaver Brook, Penny Brook and a series of wetlands connecting to the Quabbin Reservoir.

**Table 7 Inventory of Town Owned Parcels with Recreation and Conservation Interest**

Map and Parcel	Ownership	Location	Acres	Current Use	Condition	Public Access	Access for People with Disabilities	Recreation Potential	Zoning	Protection Status	Type of Grant Rec'd	Deed Restrictions
10-96-1	Town	Meadow Rd	1.69	Open space	Wet/ possibly undevelopable	Yes	No	Adjacent to rail trail corridor	RB1	None	n/a	None
14-0-8, 14-18-57 through 14-18-70	Old Pennybrook Estates, Town	Babcock Tavern Rd	48.65	Open space, forest	Good	Yes	No	Adjacent to Beaver Lake	RR1	None	n/a	None
19-0-41 through 19-0-47	Town	Coffey Hill Rd	9.71	Open Space, forest	Good, road frontage	Yes	No	Passive	RR1	None	n/a	None
29-69-1	Town	Greenwich Rd	0.66	Drainage w/culvert	Functioning	Yes	No	Addition to Town Forest and Snow's Pond	DTR	None	n/a	None
60-0-228	Town	Pleasant St	0.18	Open space	Good	Yes	No	Parking for Kubinski Field	DTR	None	n/a	None
60-232-1	Town	Pleasant St	1.25	Open space	Good	Yes	No	Addition to Kubinski Park - parking	DTR	None	n/a	None
57-98	Town		0.15	pocket park, near fire station	Good	Yes	No	Passive	I	None	n/a	None

**Table 8 Inventory of Chapter 61 Lands**

Map and Lot	Ownership	Location	Acres	Condition	Public Access	Access for People with Disabilities	Recreation Potential	Zoning	Protection Status
4-1	Darlene Bergeron-Burns	Kelly Rd	96.01	Good	Yes	No	Passive	RR1	Not Protected
43-16-1	Patrick Brown	Hardwick Pond Rd	62.92	Good	Yes	No	Passive	RR2	Not Protected
24-25	Vincent Ciancotti	East St	17.20	Good	Yes	No	Passive	I	Not Protected
40- 36*	Daniel Finn	Old Stagecoach Rd	25.11	Good	Yes	No	Passive	RR2	Not Protected
33- 14	William & Patricia King	Hutchinson Rd	18.81	Good	Yes	No	Passive	RR2	Not Protected
40-35*	Brian & Martha Klassanos	Old Stagecoach Rd	6.95	Good	Yes	No	Passive	RR2	Not Protected
40-38*		Hardwick Pond Rd	25.00					RR2	
40-37*		Old Stagecoach Rd	4.82					RR2	
26-6	Daryl & Anita Krantz	Monson Turnpike Rd	37.36	Good	Yes	No	Passive	RR1	Not Protected
26-7		Monson Turnpike Rd	1.56					RR1	
15- 25	Raymond & Rose Letendre	Babcock Tavern Rd	6.20	Good	Yes	No	Passive	RR1	Not Protected
21-5		Belchertown Rd	140.00					RR1	
21-31		Belchertown Rd	21.30					RR1	
8-17	Michael & Michael Jr. Moriarty	Old Belchertown Rd	97.50	Good	Yes	No	Passive	RR1	Not Protected
		Babcock Tavern Rd	86.50					RR1	
10-105	Paul & Gail Moryl	Palmer Rd	20.00	Good	Yes	No	Passive	RB1	Not Protected
35-2*	Charles & Bella Moulton	Sorel Rd	66.14	Good	Yes	No	Passive	RR2	Not Protected
29-53*		Sheehy Rd	55.84					RR2	
29-48*	Gary & Lorna Moulton	Sheehy Rd	102.60	Good	Yes	No	Passive	RR2	Not Protected
35- 2-3*	Jeffery Moulton	Sorel Rd	11.55	Good	Yes	No	Passive	RR2	Not Protected
41-15*	Carl & Deborah Oberg	Old Gilbertville Rd	11.93	Good	Yes	No	Passive	RR2	Not Protected
39- 4	Edward Reynolds	Old Poor Farm Rd	51.00	Good	Yes	No	Passive	RR2	Not Protected
39-21-1		Old Poor Farm Rd	56.00					RR2	
34- 4	Gerard & Maria Vadnais	Greenwich Plains Rd	143.08	Good	Yes	No	Passive	RR2	Not Protected
19- 22-5	Donna Young	Coffey Hill Road	11.39	Good	Yes	No	Passive	RR1	Not Protected

\* Parcels of interest for Dougal Range Project.

**Table 9 Inventory of Chapter 61A Lands**

Map and Lot	Ownership	Location	Acres	Condition	Public Access	Access for People with Disabilities	Recreation Potential	Zoning	Protection Status
21-33**	Walter Boronski	Belchertown Rd	23.08	Hay	Yes	No	Passive	RR1	Not Protected
25- 7 25-19	Edwin & Susan Bradley	River Rd	4.35 9.19	Forest	Yes	No	Passive	RR1	Not Protected
40- 23* 40- 25* 40- 26* 40- 27* 40- 41* 40-41-1*	Donald & Blanche Carlson	Hardwick Pond Rd	6.48 16.16 10.59 22.32 3.50 2.56	Dairy	No	No	None	RR2	Not Protected
22- 5-S**	Stanley & Theodora Chrabaszcz	Belchertown Rd	132.12	Hay	Yes	No	Passive	RR1	Not Protected
22-9**	David and Catherine Cook	Belchertown Rd	31.62	Beef cattle	No	No	None	RR1	Not Protected
40- 1-1* 40- 79*	Stephania Couture	Greenwich Rd Greenwich Rd	25.15 37.90	Hay	Yes	No	Passive	RR2 RR2	Not Protected
41-22-1* 41-23*	Lawrence & Katherine Crockett	Gilbertville Rd Gilbertville Rd	2.17 4.21	Hay	Yes	No	Passive	RR2 RR2	Not Protected
30-54*	Peter & Mary Dudula	Gilbertville Rd	18.13	Hay	Yes	No	Passive	RR2	Not Protected
33-15 33-16 33-17	Michael Juda	Fisherdick Rd Fisherdick Rd Fisherdick Rd	97.00 6.60 41.46	Hay and pigs	No	No	None	RR2 RR2 RR2	Not Protected
27-1 27-6	Steven Juda	Fisherdick Rd Fisherdick Rd	46.00 9.00	Hay and pigs	No	No	None	RR2 RR2	Not Protected
28-6	Claudia & James Kadra	Osborne Rd	30.57	Forest	Yes	No	Passive	RR2	Not Protected
40-38*	Brian & Martha Klassanos	Hardwick Pond Rd	12.42	Hay and nursery stock	No	No	None	RR2	Not Protected
19-24	Frank Kokoski	Coffey Hill Rd	8.76	Dairy	No	No	None	RR1	Not Protected
19-29 19-29	Mark Kokoski	Coffey Hill Rd Coffey Hill Rd	36.62 35.05	Dairy	No	No	None	RR1 RR1	Not Protected
34-10 34-33	Frank Jr. & Bernadette Lagrant	Osborne Rd Osborne Rd	12.26 5.38	Forest	Yes	No	Passive	RR2 RR2	Not Protected
15-25 21-5** 21-31**	Letendre LLC	Babcock Tavern Rd Belchertown Rd Belchertown Rd	10.00 176.12 9.70	Hay	Yes	No	Passive	RR1 RR1 RR1	Not Protected

**Table 9 (continued): Inventory of Chapter 61A Lands**

Map and Lot	Ownership	Location	Acres	Condition	Public Access	Access for People with Disabilities	Recreation Potential	Zoning	Protection Status
36-5	W. Chandler Lincoln III	Stagecoach Rd	35.00	Corn and hay	No	No	None	RR2	Not Protected
140-1	Joseph T. Martowski	Shady Path	5.00	Xmas trees	Yes	No	Passive	RR4	Not Protected
29-48	Gary & Lorna Moulton	Sheehy Rd	25.00	Hay	Yes	No	Passive	RR2	Not Protected
38-8	Michael & Melissa Pulchtopek	Old Poor Farm Rd	30.60	Forest	Yes	No	Passive	RR2	Not Protected
39-4	Edward Reynolds	Old Poor Farm Rd	8.62	Hay	Yes	No	Passive	RR2	Not Protected
39-21-1		Osborne Rd	14.00					RR2	
39-9	Michael & Clericuzio Sciortino	Osborne Rd	26.50	Forest	Yes	No	Passive	RR2	Not Protected
36-1	Kevin Shea	Old Gilbertville Rd	27.06	Dairy	No	No	None	RR2	Not Protected
36-4		Old Gilbertville Rd	6.81					RR2	
36-54		Old Gilbertville Rd	63.37					RR2	
39-27	David & Gail Siegel	Old Poor Farm Rd	13.62	Forest	Yes	No	Passive	RR2	Not Protected
39-27		Old Poor Farm Rd	36.07					RR2	
38-7	Terrance & Ivy Smith	Old Poor Farm Rd	26.40	Forest	Yes	No	Passive	RR2	Not Protected
22-12**	John Soper & Jamie Murray	Greenwich Plains	45.40	Hay and animals	No	No	None	RR2	Not Protected
22-12-1**		Howard Rd	22.00					RR2	
39-1	Byron & Nancy Stutzman	Old Poor Farm Rd	25.00	Forest	Yes	No	Passive	RR2	Not Protected – working on conservation restriction
39-2		Old Poor Farm Rd	21.65					RR2	
22-36**	Joseph Jr. & Jodi Szczepanek	Walker Rd	29.30	Hay and pets	No	No	None	RR2	Not Protected
22-38**		Doane Rd	28.62					RR2	
22-45**		Doane Rd	5.00					RR2	
22-46**		Doane Rd	23.75					RR2	
28-62		Walker Rd	3.10					RR2	
25-10	Robert & Cynthia Turek	Webster Rd	23.63	Forest	Yes	No	None	RR1	Not Protected
31-4		Webster Rd	60.44					RR1	

\*Parcels of interest for Dougal Range Project.

\*\*Parcels of interest for Ware Center protection area.

**Table 10 Inventory of Chapter 61B Lands**

Map and Lot	Ownership	Location	Acres	Condition	Public Access	Access for People with Disabilities	Recreation Potential	Zoning	Protection Status
20-6-1	Randy & Sheila Bennett	Coffey Hill Rd	17.37	Good	Yes	No	Passive	RR1	Not Protected
3-13-1	Gene & Glen Birk	Murphy Rd	37.84	Good	Yes	No	Passive	RR1	Not Protected
36-27	William & Dorothy Bish	Gilbertville Rd	14.26	Good	Yes	No	Passive	RR2	Not Protected
5-27	Gladys & Alice Boss	Bacon Rd	8.99	Good	Yes	No	Passive	RR4	Not Protected
5-27-1			4.56						
28-46	Kenneth & Ruby Breedon	Walker Rd	12.00	Good	Yes	No	Passive	RR2	Not Protected
41-1	Kathleen & Andre Cloutier	Old Gilbertville Rd	8.00	Good	Yes	No	Passive	RR2	Not Protected
34-7	Countryland Realty	Rear Osborne Rd	10.00	Good	Yes	No	Passive	RR2	Not Protected
36-2	Stephania Couture	Old Stagecoach Rd	86.00	Good	Yes	No	Passive	RR2	Not Protected
29-73-1	Matthew Devine, et al	Old Gilbertville Rd	7.88	Good	Yes	No	Passive	RR2	Not Protected
12-50	Paul & Tara Grenier	Sczygiel Rd	13.43	Good	Yes	No	Passive		Not Protected
4-15	James & Elizabeth Hancock	Babcock Tavern Rd	10.58	Good	Yes	No	Passive	RR1	Not Protected
21-4	Craig & Doreen Harder	Belchertown Rd	35.62	Good	Yes	No	Passive	RR1	Not Protected
41-26	Matthew & Lorri Horton	Old Gilbertville Rd	9.64	Good	Yes	No	Passive	RR2	Not Protected
14-3	Mark & Samantha Jolin	Monson Turnpike Rd	21.75	Good	Yes	No	Passive	RR1	Not Protected
20-5	James Kenyon	Shoreline Dr	41.43	Good	Yes	No	Passive	RR1	Not Protected
49-100-2			4.08						
24-34	Joseph & Patricia Knapp	East St	37.25	Good	Yes	No	Passive	I	Not Protected
19-24	Frank Kokoski	Coffey Hill Rd	8.60	Good	Yes	No	Passive	RR1	Not Protected
19-29			36.62						
40-36-1	Hyde Realty Trust	Old Gilbertville Rd / Old Stagecoach Rd	37.81	Good	Yes	No	Passive	RR2	Not Protected
40-80			61.78						
26-16-1	Chester & Debra Lemon	Belchertown Rd	5.00	Good	Yes	No	Passive	RR1	Not Protected
26-19			46.00						
38-12	Leo & Tamara Letendre	Old Poor Farm Rd	14.42	Good	Yes	No	Passive	RR2	Not Protected
36-52	Lincoln, Elizabeth	Stagecoach Rd	7.82	Good	Yes	No	Rail trail corridor	RR2	Not Protected
36-5	W. Chandler Lincoln III	Stagecoach Rd	91.77	Good	Yes	No	Rail trail corridor; fishing	RR2	Not Protected
36-53			63.95						
34-3	Edward Loboda	Old Poor Farm Rd	13.73	Good	Yes	No	Passive	RR2	Not Protected
41-24	Mary Mansfield	Gilbertville Rd	7.22	Good	Yes	No	Passive	RR2	Not Protected

**Table 10 (continued): Inventory of Chapter 61B Lands**

Map and Lot	Ownership	Location	Acres	Condition	Public Access	Access for People with Disabilities	Recreation Potential	Zoning	Protection Status
41-10	David & Melissa Martin	Old Gilbertville Rd	26.29	Good	Yes	No	Passive	RR2	Not Protected
10-140-1	Joseph Martowski	West Warren Rd	18.02	Good	Yes	No	Passive	RR4	Not Protected
6-16	Stanley & Joseph Martowski	West Warren Rd	14.00	Good	Yes	No	Passive	RR4	Not Protected
10-105	Paul & Gail Moryl	Palmer Rd	20.00	Good	Yes	No	Passive	RB1	Not Protected
36-39 36-48	Richard & Joan O'Riley	Gilbertville Rd / Upper Church St	0.33 24.97	Fishing on Ware River	Yes	No	Fishing	DTR	Not Protected
15-16	Christine Pilch	Dugan Rd	8.62	Good	Yes	No	Passive	RR1	Not Protected
9-44 9-45 15-17 15-19	John & Lucille Pilch	Dugan Rd	15.00 77.50 84.11 17.48	Good	Yes	No	Passive	RR1	Not Protected
1-15	Joseph & Constance Pisarski	Bondsville Rd	61.12	Good	Yes	No	Passive	RR1	Not Protected
36-2 36-2-1 36-55	Kenneth Root	Sullivan Rd / Old Gibertville Rd / Old Stagecoach Rd	4.66 1.73 1.42	Good	Yes	No	Passive	RR2 RR2 RR2	Not Protected
39-27	David & Gail Siegel	Old Poor Farm Rd	16.79	Good	Yes	No	Passive	RR2	Not Protected
37-4	James & Shelly Siegel	Millers Rd	5.11	Good	Yes	No	Passive	RR3	Not Protected
28-23	David & Norma Silloway	Cummings Rd	41.10	Good	Yes	No	Passive	RR2	Not Protected
43-6-3 43-7	Mark & Donna Sinkoski	Greenwich Rd	0.94 6.00	Good	Yes	No	Passive	RR2 RR2	Not Protected
7-15 19-9 19-10	Bolac & Joseph Skowron	River Rd	38.62 6.83 1.41	Good	Yes	No	Passive	RR1 RR1 RR1	Not Protected
44-1	John & Mary Jane Sullivan	Old Gilbertville Rd	87.77	Access to "The Bugle" on Dougal Mountain	Yes	No	Passive	RR2	Not Protected
13-4	Chester & Genevieve Swiszc	Szygiel Rd	25.92	Good	Yes	No	Passive	RR1	Not Protected
43-11 43-17	Leo Wiedersheim	Hardwick Pond Rd	0.28 31.12	Good	Yes	No	Passive	RR2 RR2	Not Protected
19-22-5	Donna & George Young	Coffey Hill Rd	11.00	Good	Yes	No	Passive	RR1	Not Protected



## **B. Public and Non-Profit Parcels**

### *Conservation Lands*

There are a number of parcels of conservation land in Ware totaling 92 acres of town-owned lands and over 8,300 acres of state-owned lands (mostly the Quabbin Reservoir). Tables 7 and 11 summarize this information, but it may be useful to briefly describe the parcels and their current uses.

The town forest totals 87 acres of municipal land that is overseen by the Conservation Commission. The Town Forest consists of three different parcels that are located near each other, but not adjacent. Unfortunately, the forest has poor accessibility by car and is difficult to locate due to inadequate signage. At present there are no designated activities in the forest, save for a few, un-maintained trails. The town was recently awarded an Urban Forestry grant through the Department of Conservation and Recreation to develop a forest management plan to determine the best use for each of the three parcels that create the town forest. These recommendations can be found in Section 8 and 9 of this plan.

Near the forest is Snow's Pond, where the Water Department administers almost 5 acres of property used for picnicking and fishing and other forms of passive recreation.

The state Department of Fish and Game administers the 268-acre Swift River Wildlife Area. The area is located on 1,408 acres of Ware and Belchertown land off Route 9, and is entirely funded from the sale of hunting licenses. The primary function is to stock the land with seasonal game for Saturday hunters, but other activities include bicycling, hiking/walking, snowmobiling, swimming, skiing, and

camping. Finally, there is the previously mentioned Quabbin Reservoir, overseen by the Metropolitan District Commission. While many activities are prohibited in the reservoir lands, the area is an incredible natural resource.

Ware also has a number of parcels of private conservation land. Currently, 715 acres of land are classified under Chapter 61, the Forestland Assessment Act. This act grants landowners a substantial tax break for those lands kept under forest use. Also, if Chapter lands ever change use or are put up for sale, the town has first right of refusal. There are 803 acres classified under Chapter 61A, The Farmland Assessment Act which gives agricultural landowners the same tax break as Chapter 61.

Town-owned recreation and conservation land can be permanently protected under Article 97 of the Articles of Amendment to the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Land acquired for conservation purposes as stipulated in a Town Meeting Vote must reference Article 97 and be reflected in the deed for the property as well in order to ascertain this legally binding protection status. It is also extremely difficult to remove a property from Article 97 status. Exceptional circumstance must exist for the Commonwealth to support an Article 97 disposition. Determination of "exceptional circumstances" includes a finding that all options to avoid the Article 97 disposition have been explored and no feasible and substantially equivalent alternative exists including the evaluation of other properties for the proposed activity.

**Table 11 Inventory of Public Conservation Land**

Map and Lot	Name and Ownership	Acres	Managing Agency	Current Use	Condition	Public Access	Access for People with Disabilities	Recreation Potential	Zoning	Protection Status	Type of Grant Rec'd	Deed Restrictions
29-15	Town Forest, Walker Road	40.00	Conservation Commission	Forest	Under Forest Stewardship Plan	Yes	No	Passive	RR2	Perpetuity	n/a	Article 97 land
29-46	Town Forest, Upper North Street	6.31	Conservation Commission	Forest	Under Forest Stewardship Plan	Yes	No	Passive	RR2	Perpetuity	n/a	Article 97 land
35-15-1	Town Forest, Greenwich Rd	66.38	Conservation Commission	Forest	Under Forest Stewardship Plan	Yes	No	Passive	RR2	Perpetuity	n/a	Article 97 land
29-72	Town Forest, Snow's Pond	13.5	Conservation Commission	Forest	Under Forest Stewardship Plan	Yes	No	Passive	DTR	Perpetuity	n/a	Article 97 land
23-8	Town Forest, Snow's Pond	11.4	Conservation Commission	Forest	Under Forest Stewardship Plan	Yes	No	Passive	DTR	Perpetuity	n/a	Article 97 land
62-44	Snow's Pond, Pleasant St.	1.4	Water Department	fishing	good	Yes	No	Passive	DTR	Perpetuity	n/a	Article 97 land
62-45	Snow's Pond, Pleasant St.	3.1	Water Department	picnicking	good	Yes	No	Passive	DTR	Perpetuity	n/a	Article 97 land
19-1, 19-4, 52-1, 3-8, 3-9, 3-10	Swift River Wildlife Area	268.3	Dept. of Fish and Wildlife	hunting, camping	good	Yes	No	Passive	RR1	Perpetuity	n/a	Article 97 land
64-1	Quabbin Reservoir (Ware, Belchertown, Pelham)	8,180.3	Metropolitan District Commission	fishing, hiking	good	Yes	No	Passive	RQ	Perpetuity	n/a	Article 97 land
6-20	Susan Dr	0.26	Conservation Commission	river access	good	Yes	No	Passive	RR4	Perpetuity	n/a	Article 97 land
52-91	Indian Cemetery	0.74	Town of Ware		good	Yes	No	Passive	RR2	Perpetuity	n/a	Article 97 land

**Table 11 (continued): Inventory of Public Conservation Land**

Map and Lot	Name and Ownership	Acres	Managing Agency	Current Use	Condition	Public Access	Access for People with Disabilities	Recreation Potential	Zoning	Protection Status	Type of Grant Rec'd	Deed Restriction
60-72	Aspen Grove Cemetery	31.20	Town of Ware	cemetery	good	Yes	No	Passive	DTR	Perpetuity	n/a	Article 97 land
6-1-1	Bacon Rd	2.49	Conservation Commission	Connects to Palmer conservation land	good	Yes	No	Passive	RR4	Perpetuity	n/a	Article 97 land
9-148	Meadow Rd	0.63	Conservation Commission	Open space in subdivision	good	Yes	No	Passive	RR4	Perpetuity	n/a	Article 97 land
62-44	Snow's Pond dam	1.39	Water Department		good	Yes	No	Passive	DTR	Perpetuity	n/a	Article 97 land
62-45	Well field, Pleasant St	3.08	Water Department		good	Yes	No	Passive	DTR	Perpetuity	n/a	Article 97 land
63-45	Lakeview Park, Aspen St	3.17	Town of Ware	Frontage to Muddy Brook	good	Yes	No	Passive	DTR	Perpetuity	n/a	Article 97 land
63-45	Lakeview Park	0.69	Town of Ware	Frontage to Muddy Brook	good	Yes	No	Passive	???	Perpetuity	n/a	Article 97 land
?	Lakeview Park	0.34	Town of Ware	Frontage to Muddy Brook	good	Yes	No	Passive	???	Perpetuity	n/a	Article 97 land
9-170-2	Rte 32	?	Town of Ware	Ware River frontage	Good	Yes	No	Passive	?	Perpetuity	n/a	Article 97

### *Recreation Lands*

Less than 1% of land in Ware (approximately 0.6%) is classified as recreation. Recreation is concentrated around the downtown areas where a large majority of the population and commercial amenities are located. The DeSantis Property, Grenville Park, Ware High School and the Water Tower Field are all located along Route 32, the major north-south road through town. A brief discussion about these facilities is followed by Table 12, which summarizes this information.

An important aspect of any Open Space Plan is the considerations it makes for handicapped accessibility. For each site under the jurisdiction of the Parks and Recreation Department or Conservation Commission an ADA Section 504 Report must be completed. On August 16, 2007, the American with Disabilities Act (A.D.A.) Section 504 Report was done with the assistance of ADA Commission member Edward Lavella. Looking at a park or playground from the perspective of a person who must maneuver a wheelchair, changes the functionality of particular elements. Consequently, open spaces were assessed for their accessibility to persons with a physical handicap. It is the desire of this plan to make the community recreation areas enjoyable for everyone. An inventory for each facility under the jurisdiction of the Parks and Recreation Department or Conservation Commission is included in the Appendix.

All uses within **Grenville Park** (See discussion in Chapter 3) blend into the natural surroundings, and any structures, from restrooms to baseball dugouts, are painted green to match the vegetated backdrop. The park contains areas for hiking/walking, bicycling, fishing, field sports, and picnicking. In addition, there is the added proposal for

the park to be a link in the proposed Ware River Valley Greenway Trails Project.

Facilities in Grenville Park are partially accessible to handicapped persons. There are twenty picnic tables, about half of which are currently easily accessible to persons with a handicap. Several are somewhat accessible, but are difficult to reach due to tree roots and/or steep inclines. We noted ten benches, five of which were fully accessible. The most inconvenient factor for a person with a handicap is the fact that the bathrooms, which are handicapped accessible, are usually locked. The four portable bathrooms (sandi-cans) are not accessible or equipped for persons with a handicap. There are three water fountains within the park, only one of which is easily accessible to the handicapped. The roadway through the park is slated to be repaved in 2007 making the road more accessible for people with disabilities.

Several suggestions have arisen to help correct these inadequacies. More sensitive siting of picnic tables, benches, and other park furniture can easily fix most of these problems. Posting the hours of the bathrooms so that people know when they can expect to be able to use them could ameliorate the bathroom situation. Also, the acquisition and proper siting of a handicapped-ready Sani-Can would make the park experience more enjoyable for handicapped people. Finally, the present water fountains should be replaced with fountains that accommodate all people.

The **William Dearden Memorial Athletic Field**, commonly known as Memorial Field, consists of 5 acres of land off South Street, adjacent to the Ware River. Facilities include one field that serves as a baseball and football field, a lighted basketball court, and a track. Memorial

Field is generally handicapped accessibility. South Street was recently rebuilt so that the transition from sidewalks to curb cuts to the street are smooth and accessible. There is also a handicapped parking area near the rear entrance, thereby avoiding the need for handicapped individuals to cross the street.

The **South Street School Recreation Area** is an area of approximately 4.5 acres located behind the former District Courthouse. Facilities include one small tee ball field that is in poor condition, a jungle gym. Of note is the fact that there is an outcropping of bedrock located throughout the field, and if recreation use at this facility were to increase, the field would need to be resurfaced and leveled.

The **Barnes Street Recreation Area** is 26.57 acres owned and administered by the Water and Sewer Department which, in addition to the recreation space, contains the three wells that provide the municipal water supply for the town. It also contains a lighted baseball field, the municipal swimming pool, and a considerable amount of land between the well field and the swimming pool. The baseball field and the surrounding wooded areas are well-maintained and frequently used by town leagues and the general public.

The **Reed Memorial Swimming Pool**, open from May to September, is municipally-owned and provides many activities and programs funded through the Recreation Board, such as swimming classes and water safety for town residents during the summer. A playscape is located on the 10 and 15 acre parcel that runs behind the pool and along the side of the wellfield. Any additional recreational development at this site would need to consider its location in the Zone II.

**Nenameseck Park** is located on Main Street and is about half an acre. Nemaneseck Park was the original town common, and was once much larger. The park has diminished in size with the expansion of the traffic intersection in the center of town. This parcel of land is a tiny park in a traffic island downtown that is accessible to anyone. Handicap accessible gates and curb cuts were recently installed.

**Veterans' Memorial Park** is also located on Main Street and also half an acre. This park was developed by the Community Development Department in 1985 and 1986 to beautify the downtown and provide a place for passive recreation. Both parks are administered by the Park Commissioners and are well maintained. Veterans' Memorial Park is fairly accessible to persons with handicaps. Additionally, the park was apparently built with a poor foundation that has dips and sags that could trip up just about anyone. This park is slated to be rebuilt in 2007.

Located off Church Street and Old Gilbertville Road, the **Water Tower Field** provides 11.47 acres of open field which would make an excellent recreation facility. Administered by the Department of Public Works, re-grading would be necessary since there is a slope of about five percent from the edge of the water tower to Church Street. Completed in 1998, the Ware Junior-Senior High School is a great addition to the recreation facilities in Ware. The new additions include a football field, 6-lane all-weather track, two soccer fields, baseball and softball fields, shotput area, discus cage and a play area. Scheduling of field time is problematic due to limited availability of other playing fields.

*Proposed Recreation Land*

There is a great need in Ware to develop additional athletic fields, particularly for youth sports. This need was prioritized during the development of this plan and is noted in the Five-Year Action Plan in Section Nine. Many characteristics must be taken into consideration for selecting land appropriate for athletic field development including the physical characteristics (drainage, size soils, etc), access/parking, surrounding land use, proximity to population centers and permitting issues.

The 2003 Open Space and Recreation Plan identified three sites appropriate for recreational development: the DeSantis property on Anderson Road adjacent to Ware High School, Gould Road/Route 9 and The Ware Gas Company. Each of these properties is located

within Ware center. The Babcock Tavern Road, Gilbertville Road, Lincoln and Shea Farm sites are located in areas of town where recreation is virtually nonexistent. Recreation facilities located at these sites would enable recreation to be dispersed throughout Ware, rather than be concentrated. Also, the Lincoln property is in close proximity to the proposed Ware Greenway, which would be an important addition to the greenway corridor.

The recently acquired 61-acre Banas property and 48-acre Old Pennybrook Estate have great potential for development of athletic facilities. Now under Town ownership, the Banas property which abuts the Ware River off Robbins Road could be included in the southern extension of the Ware River Valley Greenway Trail. Table 13 summarizes the site descriptions. Table 14 includes a list of parcels in Tax Title of conservation and recreation interest.

**Table 12 Inventory of Public Recreation Lands**

Map and Parcel	Name	Acres	Managing Agency	Current Use	Condition	Public Access	Access for People with Disabilities	Recreation Potential	Zoning	Protection Status	Type of Grant Rec'd	Deed Restrictions
57-91	Nenameseck Park, Main St.	0.5	Park Commission	Passive recreation	Good	Yes	Yes	Passive	DTR	Long-Term	n/a	Historic Preservation Restriction
61-6	Veterans Memorial Park, Main St.	0.82	Park Commission	Passive recreation	Good	Yes	Yes	Passive	DTR	Perpetuity	n/a	None
57-62	Memorial Athletic Field	5.0	Park Commission	Football, basketball, baseball, soccer	Good	Yes	Yes	Active	RR4	Long-Term	n/a	None
23-15	Greenville Park, Church St.	75.0	Park Commission	Athletic fields, basketball, playground, fishing, boating, bandstand	Good	Yes	Yes	Active	DTR	Perpetuity	n/a	None
60-70	Barnes	26.6	Water and Sewer Dept.	Baseball, softball, practice field, swimming	Good	Yes	Yes	Passive	RR2	Long-Term	n/a	None
57-37	South Street School Area	1.0	Park Commission	Practice field	Poor	Yes	Yes	Active	RR4	Long-Term	n/a	None
16-14	Ware High School	15.0	School Dept.	Field sports, general use	Good	Yes	Yes	Active	RB1	Perpetuity	n/a	None
16-14P	Ware Elementary School		School Dept.	Field sports	Good	Yes	Yes	Active	RB1		n/a	None
	Water Tower Field	11.47	Dept. of Public Works	Field sports	Not level, no bathrooms	Yes	Yes	Active	???	Perpetuity	n/a	None
	Reed Pool	5.64	Recreation Commission	Playground, multi-use field	Good	Yes	Yes	Active	DTC	Perpetuity	n/a	None
11-21	Banas Property	61.20	Town of Ware	To be determined	Good	Yes	No	Active	HC	Perpetuity	n/a	None
10-136	Old Railroad Bed	24.26	Town	Open space	Good	Yes	No	Future rail trail	HC/RR4	Perpetuity	n/a	None

*Table 13 Proposed Conservation and Recreation Land in Ware*

<b>Name and Location</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Access</b>	<b>Condition</b>	<b>Recreation Potential</b>	<b>Conservation Status</b>
Babcock Tavern Road, between Babcock Tavern Rd. and Miner Rd.	179.0	Good	Good	Passive	None
DeSantis Property, off Rt. 32, adjacent to Ware High School	60.93	Excellent	Good	Passive	None
Gilbertville Rd, near the Ware Rd. divide	31.30	Fair	Good	Passive	None
Gould Rd. / Route 9	9.81	Good	Good	Passive	None
Greenwich Road	62	Land locked	Good	Frontage on Muddy Brook	None
Lincoln Property, off of Rt. 32	129.56	Good	Good	Passive	Temporary
Old Pennybrook, Babcock Tavern Road	61	Good	Good	Athletic fields	None
Shea Farm, off Old Gilbertville Rd.	93.19	Poor	Good	Passive	Temporary – Ch 61A
Scziegal Road		Frontage	Good	Passive	None; acreage selling for ANR lots.
Ware Gas Company, off Monroe St. adjacent to Memorial Field	1.26	Excellent	Good	Parking for Memorial Field	None



**Table 14 Tax Title Properties of Interest for Conservation and Recreation**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Date of Taking</b>	<b>Parcel ID</b>	<b>Property Location</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Barnes, Charles	27-Mar-2003	12-3	Prendiville Rd. (rear)	Coy Hill
Barnes, Henry	27-Mar-2003	60-211	Eddy St. (rear)	
Blair, John	16-Oct-1979	30-37	Gilbertville Rd.	Ware River Access
Boone, Bonnie	21-May-2007	34-0-27	175 Osborne Road	
Busa & Klug	9-Jul-1999	9-152	Meadow Rd.	Abuts rail trail
Cassidy, Michael	27-Mar-2003	34-18-3	Osborne Road	Land locked parcel
Countryland Homes Realty Inc.	21-May-2007	8-0-10	Old Belchertown Rd./Moriarty	
Dirienzo, Priscilla	9-Jul-1999	36-38	108 Gilbertville Road	
Endelson, Charles	22-Nov-1985	19-11	Rear River Road	Swift River frontage
Gervais, Ovilla M.	27-Mar-2003	61-23	33 Vigeant Street	
Gibbons, Michael	2-Jun-2006	58-6	18 Ross Avenue	
Gin-Smith, Inc.	13-Nov-1987	24-22	Gilbertville Rd.	
Goguen, Gary	21-May-2007	61-0-309	25 North Street	
Hajjar, John	13-Apr-2005	6-11-23	West Warren Road	
Houle, Linda	15-Nov-1990	19-20	Sherman Hill Rd.	
Houle, Linda	15-Nov-1990	19-28	111 Webster Rd.	
Kusek, David	21-May-2007	3-0-7	109 Bondsville Road	
LaForest, David	7-Aug-2003	38-6	218 Greenwich Plains Rd.	Abuts Quabbin land
LaFreniere & LeClair	15-Nov-1990	30-33	28 Gilbertville Rd.	
Larzazs, Keith	27-Mar-2003	38-2	210 Greenwich Plains Road	
Lavalley Jr., Wesley	17-Dec-1991	22-17	Doane Road	Pond, behind town owned dam
Northeast/Great Lakes Camp	3-Apr-2003	43-12	Hardwick Pond Rd.	Dougal
Owner Unknown	16-Oct-2003	27-4	Belchertown Rd. (Rte. 9)	Abuts Quabbin land
Owner Unknown	16-Oct-2003	34-12	Osborne Rd. (rear)	Land locked abuts #28 below
Owner Unknown	16-Oct-2003	34-9-2	Osborne Rd. (rear)	Land locked abuts #27 above
Owner Unknown	13-Apr-2005	56-157	West Street	Small river front parcel at flood wall
Pekala, Karen	21-May-2007	9-0-163	344 Palmer Road	

<b>Name</b>	<b>Date of Taking</b>	<b>Parcel ID</b>	<b>Property Location</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Quail World, Inc.	21-May-2007	64-0-2	Belchertown Road	Abuts Quabbin land
Reeser, Linda	21-May-2007	58-0-10	Morse Avenue	
Reeser, Linda	21-May-2007	58-0-19	38-40 Morse Avenue	
Reeser, Linda	21-May-2007	58-0-20	Morse Avenue	
Scarpaci & Easley	3-Apr-2003	60-114	3-7 Vigeant Street	
Shea, Kevin	21-May-2007	36-0-1	124 Old Gilbertville Road	
Smith, Peter	13-Apr-2005	56-82	72 West Street	
Suchodolski, Thomas	2-Jun-2006	61-195-1	10-12 Pleasant St.	
Szczygiel, Stanley	7-Aug-2003	61-124	9 Cottage St.	
Western Mass Theatre Corp	24-Jun-2004	60-139	Main Street	Casino Theater
Woloshchuk, Thomas	2-Jun-2006	12-2	Prendiville Rd.	Coy Hill
Yee, Gail	3-Apr-2003	48-74	Monson Turnpike Rd.	

## **SECTION SIX: COMMUNITY VISION**

## **A. Description of Process**

A number of methods were used to compile the community's open space and recreation goals. A public visioning session was held on July 12, 2007 to help identify goals and objectives. At that session, the goals and objectives from the 1998-2003 OSRP were presented and discussed. Three of the four previous goals were kept and the fourth goal, "acquire new lands for recreation and open space" removed and replaced with "preserve the town's rural character". Objectives from the old plan under each of the goals were also edited and new ones added.

## **B. Statement of Open Space and Recreation Goals**

- Provide a wide range of recreation opportunities including more indoor recreation as well as outdoor passive and active recreation. All recreation programs should be well managed with adequate facilities.
- Structure all recreation scheduling, maintenance, and administration under one entity for better communication between all boards and commissions concerned with open space and recreation. This includes actively pursuing the development of town owned land for athletic facilities.
- Preserve the towns rural character by protecting lands in high priority areas of town with the collaboration of local non-profits and land trusts.
- The public wants to be informed of all the exciting recreation opportunities in town. With so much going on, better

methods of communication must be used to reach citizens for the support these programs need.

## **SECTION SEVEN: ANALYSIS OF NEEDS**

## **A. Summary of Resource Protection Needs**

### *Viewpoints*

Scenic areas are very important to protect for a number of reasons, not the least of which is the fact that scenic roads are a prime location for new development. When scenic roads are identified, zoning policy such as requiring setbacks and clustering can help to protect the views and still allow the same amount of development to occur. Many towns and localities see zoning as a solution to the problem of maintaining rural quality, but it can actually contribute to suburban sprawl and visual disharmony. In a farming region it is almost impossible to preserve the historic character of the land - let alone profitable agriculture - with four-acre lots. Often, large-lot zoning makes it impossible to concentrate development in the way it was done historically, like in Ware's downtown.

Cluster development is a technique that encourages developers to concentrate development in areas most suited for it and then to dedicate the remaining land to open space. The principles of clustering allow houses to be hidden from public view in a wooded or hilly landscape, such as Ware. Transfers-of-development-rights (TDRs) programs can make a large impact and expand the concept of cluster developments. TDRs allow owners of land in areas that the local government has designated as a conservation zone to sell their development rights to owners of property in a designated development zone. This also allows the local government and its constituents to guide development where appropriate and conserve large tracts of valuable open space.

Methods like these should be used within Ware's open space program to protect scenic viewpoints and maintain the rural character of its roads.

### *Water Protection*

Rivers and streams are the backbone of conservation and recreation systems. In addition, the numerous ponds and streams, most notably Snow's Pond, Muddy Brook, Flat Brook and the Ware and Swift Rivers, provide essential wildlife habitats. These habitats are nearly impossible to recreate anywhere else, and are very fragile. A strong effort must be made to acquire or preserve land along these water bodies so that they are protected by public ownership with river frontage.

### *Rural Character*

Ware's citizens are increasingly concerned about the irrevocable loss of farmland. Steps must be taken now to help farmers maintain their land for purposes of food and natural resource production as well as wildlife habitat and scenic beauty.

### *Wildlife Habitat*

The Massachusetts National Heritage Program (MNHP), of the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife, is concerned that a few potentially significant habitats may exist along the Ware and Swift Rivers, as well as the wetland adjacent to the Quabbin Reservoir. MNHP recommends that these areas be considered for conservation protection since they provide habitat for large numbers of wildlife. A strong effort must be made to acquire and preserve land along these water bodies for conservation purposes.

### *Conservation Lands*

The Town Forest and other areas under conservation protection are potential goldmines for trails and passive recreation areas for the entire town to enjoy. A combined effort must be made between the Conservation Commission, the Recreation Commission, the Board of Selectmen, and others to realize the valuable resources that the town has underutilized and to take advantage of them.

Unauthorized ATV use has also become problematic on town-owned lands as well as private property. ATVs have become particularly problematic, causing erosion and habitat destruction along the banks of Flat Brook and in the Town Forest. The Environmental Police will respond to calls if they are in the area, however, due to the large area that they cover, they are unable to have much effect controlling such use or issuing tickets and fines.

## **B. Summary of Community's Recreation Needs**

Athletic fields for all sports, youth and school sponsored, are fully scheduled year round. Ware's soccer fields are strained to their limits trying to accommodate practices and games for 300 children. Presently, there are three football teams competing for practice and playing time at Memorial Field. The three town baseball diamonds are presently home to twenty-three baseball teams at different levels.

Ware is a town of avid recreation enthusiasts and the need for additional recreational resources has been made clear. The following needs have been identified for parks and recreation:

### *Neighborhood Parks*

Most of Ware's parklands are centrally located in the town center. There is a need for more parkland within individual residential neighborhoods, where children and elderly do not have to travel far to enjoy open space. Currently, the only tot-lots in town are located in Grenville Park (which should be upgraded), the Reed Pool Complex, and the elementary schools.

### *Regulation Fields*

Ware has several sites where competitive sports are played, but few are considered "regulation." This means few fields meet the specific requirements for official use by a major sports organization. Drainage, orientation, field and equipment size, and maintenance are just some of the factors that make a sports field "regulation." As discussed in previous sections, Ware is in need of new regulation athletic fields.

### *Indoor Recreation*

There is a need for more indoor recreation opportunities, particularly an indoor pool. Perhaps one indoor recreation facility is needed to house an indoor pool and space for classes or workshops, such as arts and crafts and photography. With a large, multi-use facility, the indoor recreation opportunities are endless.

### *Passive Recreation*

The town has expressed a need for more trails throughout the town for hiking, walking, and biking. The Conservation Commission, which controls more than one hundred acres of conservation land, including the town forest, currently has no agenda for trail creation or maintenance. The abandoned railroad bed along the Ware River,

as well as the town forest, is a perfect place for town-wide greenway creation (See Chapter 5 for a discussion of the Ware River Valley Greenway Trails Project).

#### *Lack of Funds*

There are limited funds for maintenance of many of the town's recreation facilities. Grenville Park, for example, is supported by a private trust, but is not adequately funded to maintain what were once very high quality facilities. It is often difficult for town boards and officials to further develop land under their jurisdiction because of the lack of funding. Land acquisition, facility development and improvements, and maintenance all require additional funds beyond current budget allowances.

### **C. Summary of Management Needs and Potential Change of Use**

#### *Public Recreation Awareness*

There are certainly many recreation opportunities already available to the citizens of Ware. With plans for new recreation activities, particularly the less organized ones, the public must be kept informed of new recreation options. The success of the recreation programs depends on the amount of people that support them. Public awareness is a must. The creation of new and innovative ways to communicate recreation options to the public is key. Bulletin board kiosks, school announcements, flyers, town website and a town-wide signage system are all great ways to make the town's recreation voice heard.

#### *Recreation and Open Space Administration*

Currently, the recreation areas in town are administered by a number of different entities. In addition, many different sport organizations, such as girls' soccer and little league, must coordinate with the administrative body of a certain recreational field for scheduling. This plan recommends funding a full-time Recreation Director position responsible for the coordination of all recreation activities and facilities in town. The Recreation Director would schedule field space for all sports organizations, administer paperwork, oversee new recreation projects, schedule and oversee maintenance, and be responsible for the quality of recreation facilities in town. It is hoped that a full time Recreation Director would create an efficient town-wide recreation program that serves the needs of all residents. This position would be within the Department of Parks and Recreation.

In addition to the Recreation Director position, there is a need for an Open Space and Recreation Committee. The formation of this committee as well as its responsibilities and tasks for the next five years, are described in Section 9 Five-Year Action Plan. The committee should consist of representation from the following organizations and town boards: youth football, youth baseball, youth soccer, adult softball, the Council on Aging, Parks and Recreation Department, Conservation Commission, ADA Commission, and possibly two at-large members.

The primary tasks of this committee in its first year should be developing a feasibility study for the development of athletic fields on several town-owned parcels and a campaign for adoption of the Community Preservation Act (CPA) at Town Meeting in May 2008.



### *Local Board Communication*

As is the case in many towns, the local town boards often have their own agendas with their own meetings and their own budget. Too often opportunities are missed because of the lack of communication between these boards. In many cases, the agenda of each board is directly related to one or more others. The Department of Parks and Recreation, Conservation Commission, Public Works Department, and School Committee all have a hand in open space and recreation planning. It would be more productive and efficient to have more communication between these and other town entities. The forming of an Open Space and Recreation Committee as mentioned above would encourage better open space planning. Formed by selected members of the various boards along with other public and private individuals, a member's task would be to communicate the current open space-related efforts of his/her board or organization to the other members, and to gain information about the other boards' open space agendas.

## **SECTION EIGHT: GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

Through the planning process, including numerous meetings with various boards and commissions, the following list of goals and objectives was compiled and prioritized. First came “brainstorming” an exhaustive list of goals and objectives, or the methods to be used to achieve the goals that would reflect the needs and wants of Ware residents. The next step was the job of prioritization. This was done in an effort to describe both short- and long-term goals for the town and what needs to be done in the near future and what should be planned in the years ahead. These objectives were then put into the Five-Year Action Plan described in Section 9.

### **GOAL ONE: PROVIDE A BROAD RANGE OF HIGH QUALITY RECREATIONAL PROGRAMS**

#### **Objectives**

- 1a. Develop passive and active recreation opportunities on town-owned lands and private property.
- 1b. Develop recreation programs for all residents including social, arts and cultural programming.
- 1c. Secure space for indoor recreation activities.
- 1d. Develop lighted regulation athletic fields.

### **GOAL TWO: MANAGE OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION COHESIVELY AND EFFECTIVELY**

#### **Objectives**

- 2a. Create an Open Space Committee comprised of individuals representing town boards and other public and private organizations concerned with open space and recreation.
- 2b. Consolidate all town recreation facilities’ management and administration under one entity.

- 2c. Hire a Recreation Director.
- 2d. Refurbish existing town recreation facilities.
- 2e. Identify funding for recreation and conservation land management.

### **GOAL THREE: PRESERVE TOWN’S RURAL CHARACTER**

#### **Objectives**

- 3a. Follow the Open Space and Recreation Plan’s maps for possible land acquisition, working toward a town-wide greenway system. Pay particular attention to the already in-progress Ware River Valley Greenway Trails Project.
- 3b. Collaborate with non-profits and other organizations on land protection and recreation development.
- 3c. Inform the public about protection possibilities for their land such as land trusts, conservation restrictions, land gifts, APRs, etc.
- 3d. Utilize regulatory tools such as zoning strategies for land protection.

### **GOAL FOUR: INCREASE PUBLIC AWARENESS OF OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION RESOURCES**

#### **Objectives**

- 4a. Develop a town-wide signage program that describes and directs people to recreation facilities such as trails, water bodies, and playgrounds.
- 4b. Create innovative fund-raising to raise money and increase awareness.
- 4c. Offer town-wide special event programs.

## **SECTION NINE: FIVE-YEAR ACTION PLAN**

## ***FIVE-YEAR ACTION PLAN: 2007-2012***

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Responsible Individuals</b>	<b>Schedule</b>	<b>Possible Funding Sources</b>
<b>1a. Develop passive and active recreation opportunities on town owned and private lands.</b>				
	Create and maintain a trail network through town forests.	Conservation Commission Park Commission	2012	DCR Trails Grant DCR Urban Forestry Grant
<b>1b. Develop recreation programs for all residents including social, arts and cultural programming.</b>				
	Develop and distribute survey identify the most desired programs for citizens of all ages.	Dept. Parks and Recreation	2007	
	Create seasonal recreation programs	Dept. Parks and Recreation	2008-2012	
	Create after school programs for children overseen by teen and adult volunteers.	School Department Dept. Parks and Recreation	2008-2012	
<b>1c. Secure space for indoor recreation</b>				
	Identify spaces for indoor recreation	Open Space and Recreation Committee*	2008	
	Develop night programming for teens and adults.	Open Space and Recreation Committee*	2008-2012	
<b>1d. Develop lighted and unlighted regulation athletic fields for youth sports.</b>				
	Work with Capital Planning Committee on funding allocation	Capital Planning Committee	2007-2008	
	Contact Hardwick Music Camp about partnership in athletic field development and management.	Open Space and Recreation Committee*	2007-2008	DCS Urban Self Help Grant
	Perform feasibility study for athletic field development on Banas Farm, Old Pennybrook Estate and Hardwick Music Camp.	Open Space and Recreation Committee* Board of Health	2007-2008	DCS Urban Self Help Grant
	Solicit grants for athletic field development.	Open Space and Recreation Committee* Board of Selectmen	2008	DCS Urban Self Help Grant

Objective	Action	Responsible Individuals	Schedule	Possible Funding Sources
<b>2a. Create Open Space and Recreation Committee.</b>				
Outreach to town boards, youth and adult recreation groups and community at-large about formation of Open Space and Recreation Committee and seek support and interest		Conservation Commission Board of Selectmen	2007	
Seek appointments to Open Space Committee by Board of Selectmen		Board of Selectmen Conservation Commission	2007	
<b>2b. Consolidate town recreation facilities administration and management under one entity.</b>				
Identify appropriate town entity for administration and management and seek support from town boards and departments		Board of Selectmen Open Space and Recreation Committee*	2007-2008	
Develop plan of administration for all town recreation facilities.		Recreation Commission	2008	
Seek authorization of new department/commission at town meeting		Open Space and Recreation Committee*	2008	
<b>2c. Hire Recreation Director.</b>				
Develop schedule of Recreation Director duties justifying need for part-time position		Open Space and Recreation Committee* Board of Selectmen	2008	
Seek approval at Town Meeting for creation of position and funding		Open Space and Recreation Committee* Board of Selectmen	2008	
Advertise position, conduct interviews and hire director		Open Space and Recreation Committee* Board of Selectmen	2008-2009	

Objective	Action	Responsible Individuals	Schedule	Possible Funding Sources
<b>2d. Refurbish and maintain existing town recreation facilities.</b>				
	Relocate Kubinski Field parking lot from Zone I to town-owned land on West Main and Pleasant Street.	Open Space and Recreation Committee* Board of Selectmen	2008	DCS Urban Self Help Grant
	Manage Town forests on Upper North Street, Walker Road and Muddy Brook as described in Urban Forestry Plan	Town Forester	2007-2012	
<b>2e. Identify funding for recreation and land conservation</b>				
	Pursue Self Help, Urban Self Help and DCR Trails Grants.	Open Space and Recreation Committee* Community Development	2008-2012	
	Pursue DEP Source Water Protection Grants for acquisition of land in Zone I or II.	Water Department Community Development	2008-2012	
	Seek corporate sponsorship in a "Give Back" campaign.	Open Space and Recreation Committee* Board of Selectmen	2008-2012	
	Adopt Community Preservation Act	Open Space and Recreation Committee* Board of Selectmen Conservation Committee	2008	
<b>3a. Acquire land for town-wide greenway.</b>				
	Acquire easements along abandoned rail bed along Ware River.	Community Development	2007-2012	DCS Self Help

Objective	Action	Responsible Individuals	Schedule	Possible Funding Sources
<b>3b. Collaborate with non-profits and other organizations</b>				
	Collaborate with East Quabbin Land Trust	Open Space and Recreation Committee* Conservation Commission	2007-2012	
	Collaborate with Community Chest	Open Space and Recreation Committee* Conservation Commission	2007-2012	
<b>3c. Public outreach about land protection options</b>				
	Distribute information through Assessor's Office with tax bills	Assessor's Office	2008-2012	
	Sponsor workshop for interested landowners	Open Space and Recreation Committee* Conservation Commission	2008-2012	
<b>3d. Utilize regulatory tools such as zoning for land protection.</b>				
	Identify zoning strategies to protect priority areas including West Ware and Route 32.	Planning Board		
<b>4a. Develop town-wide signage program</b>				
	Create a plan locating optimum sites for signs and kiosks.	Community Development Conservation Commission Dept. of Public Works	2009	DCR Trails Grant
	Develop design standards for signs and kiosks	Community Development Conservation Commission Dept. of Public Works	2009	DCR Trails Grant
	Utilize town website and cable access station about facilities, signage awareness, and rules and regulations.	Community Development Conservation Commission Dept. of Public Works	2009	DCR Trails Grant



Objective	Action	Responsible Individuals	Schedule	Possible Funding Sources
<b>4b. Create innovative fund-raising</b>				
	Research fundraising techniques for specific recreation objectives.	Open Space and Recreation Committee*	2008-2009	
	Partner with non-profits and other organizations.	Open Space and Recreation Committee*	2008-2012	
<b>4c. Offer town-wide special events</b>				
	Research possibilities of large-scale recreation events such as road races or derbies to attract large crowds.	Open Space and Recreation Committee*	2010-2012	
	Organize a "Pride Day" for trash cleanup through school system with local sponsors.	Open Space and Recreation Committee*	2010-2012	

\* Formation of the Open Space and Recreation Committee is an action identified for 2007 under Objective 2a.

## **SECTION TEN: PUBLIC COMMENTS**

The agenda, attendance list and summary of the discussion from the July 12, 2007 open space and recreation public visioning session are included in the Appendices. The Draft Open Space and Recreation Plan was issued for public comment from August 27<sup>th</sup> – September 28, 2007. Comments received during this period have been incorporated

into the plan. Additionally, the plan was submitted to the Conservation Commission, Planning Board, Department of Parks and Recreation and the Board of Selectmen for adoption. Letters from each of these boards are included in the appendices.

## **SECTION ELEVEN: REFERENCES**

Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Division of Fisheries and Wildlife, Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program. *Correspondence Patricia C. Swain, Ph.D.*. June 6, 2007.

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