

# Dalton Open Space and Recreation Plan

*September 2021*



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# Acknowledgements

The Town of Dalton would like to thank the Dalton Open Space and Recreation Committee members who selflessly donated their time and vision to the development and completion of this plan. The Town would like specially to thank the tireless efforts of Daniel Filiault, Chairman of the Committee, and John Roughley, Co-chair of the Committee. The Town would also like to acknowledge the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission, which provided technical assistance in the development of the plan.

The Dalton Open Space and Recreation Committee wishes to acknowledge and extend its Thank You to the EOEAs Smart Growth Technical Assistance Grant program for their financial support, without which this plan could never have been completed.

# Section 1: Plan Summary

Residents of Dalton firmly believe that their community is the best in Massachusetts in which to live and raise a family. The Town boasts itself as an exemplary New England town with interesting public and private historic architecture, and cultural and family-oriented attractions. Dalton's extensive forested areas, mountainous topography, agricultural lands, and wetlands lend the Town a distinctively vibrant aesthetic and natural beauty. This plan captures the history, context and character of the Town that makes it a pleasant, family-oriented place to live.

The Town's first 2020 Open Space and Recreation Plan presents recommendations and actions for Dalton residents to maintain the character of the community by strengthening the tax base, identifying threatened resources in need of protection, improving management of existing protected lands, and guiding appropriate future development.

# Section 2:

# Introduction

## 2A. Statement of Purpose

Dalton’s vision for the protection of open space and accessible outdoor recreation includes protecting its treasured natural resources and parks and maintaining the scenic beauty of the Town. This Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP) notes existing resources and describes key trends and issues regarding open space and outdoor recreation. It also establishes the Town’s work plan for goals, objectives, and actions to achieve its vision. This document is a critical step in helping the Town to prioritize open space preservation as it advances economic development plans. Dalton can use this document to guide growth in a manner consistent with open space preservation tenets while addressing the necessity of increasing the tax base.

## 2B. Planning Process and Public Participation

In March 2020, the Open Space and Recreation Planning Committee met for the initial planning meeting with a goal of creating and submitting to the Division of Conservation Services the Town of Dalton’s first OSRP. Soon after the meeting the public survey was created, using the online service Survey Monkey. The committee went over the questions used from a previous and unfinalized draft OSRP plan of 2006 and tailored them to be more prevalent to the current time. The survey was then posted on the Town website, shared on social media, put in various newsletters, posted on community TV, and posted in the newspaper. The survey was live for three months to collect data and gathered 182 responses of which 174 identified as a Dalton resident. The committee also put out another survey about potential use of a particular parcel of land owned by the Town. At Annual Town Meeting in May 2018, Dalton residents authorized the Dalton Select Board to take custody of 9.5 acres of land for the purpose of recreation. The Open Place Committee used the creation of this OSRP as an opportunity to seek further resident input on the type of outdoor recreation that should be pursued for this parcel.

Table 1: Open Space and Recreation Committee Members

Committee Member	Interest/affiliation
Dan Filiault, Chairman	Emergency Management
John Roughley, Co-chairman	Highway Superintendent
Rebecca Slick	Town Planner
Cheryl Rose	Green Dalton Committee and Conservation Commission
Dom Sacco	Conservation Commission
Gregory Barry	Dalton Resident
Eric Payson	Community Recreation Association

The Open Space Committee worked within the constraints of the Covid-19 Pandemic to solicit community input on this matter. To achieve this, we have been posting information on the Open Space Plan on the Town of Dalton Website, The Dalton Community Recreation Association Website, The Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC) Website and through the Dalton Community Cable Television. We have also posted information on the Dalton Emergency Management Facebook page and four other community-based Facebook pages. We also communicated with the public through email blasts to different groups in the Community, by discussing the Plan and our goals at Select Board meetings and requesting that the Select Board make announcements about the Plan and different surveys that are available for the public to provide input on. All Select Board meetings are aired on Dalton Community television.

While this planning process was being conducted, the Covid-19 pandemic was also occurring. The Pandemic did hinder the ability to go out into the public face to face but was able to take advantage of technology to receive the public's input. To include the public's input the following were done:

- In spring 2020, the public survey was announced via the Town's website, various community social media pages (such as Dalton CRA), advertised on the local tv station, and sent out in various Dalton community newsletters and Facebook accounts.
- Conducted a second public survey about the North Mountain Park area and how the 9.5-acre land should be utilized.
- Presented updates on the project at several Select Board meetings that were offered and recorded via Zoom and are always televised on public access television.
- In October 2020 a public presentation on the findings of the project was given to the Selectboard, and the public review period for the draft plan was announced at this time.
- Updates were provided to the Planning Board throughout the planning process, meetings of which were also offered via Zoom technology.

The draft OSRP was made publicly available for review and comment by the community during two time periods. The first public offering was made during October 2020, where the draft plan was posted on the Town's website for a month and paper copies were placed in the Dalton Free Public Library. The Town promoted the public review period through announcements on the Town's website and Facebook accounts and during Select Board meetings, which were hosted via Zoom technology. Comments received during the public review period were incorporated into the draft plan that was submitted to the Department of Conservation Services (DCS) in April 2021.

In July 2021 the DCS approved the draft plan, but with several conditions that needed to be met before the plan received full approval. Revisions were made to the draft OSRP to address DCS comments, and the revised draft plan was posted on the Town of Dalton website and paper copies were placed in the Dalton Free Public Library **POST DATES HERE**. One of the conditions was to make a more concerted and focused effort to reach out to and solicit comments from Environmental Justice (EJ) populations in Dalton.

When developing open space and recreation plans, it is inherent that communities identify and reach out to EJ populations. In Massachusetts, EJ households are defined by criteria that include income level, race, ethnicity and/or proficiency in English. In Dalton there are households where the annual median household income is not more than 65% of the statewide annual median household income, and these households make up the Town's EJ population. There are no

populations in Dalton that meet other state criteria, such as race, ethnicity or English-speaking capabilities. The Town's EJ population is not a homogeneous group and is not clustered in small and defined neighborhoods. As such there is no media, organization or individual church that serve Dalton's EJ population.

Seniors make up a substantial percentage of Dalton's population. Seniors also constitute a large percentage of residents in the three subsidized housing complexes in Town. Therefore, the Town of Dalton focused efforts to reach EJ populations by promoting the availability of the revised draft OSRP through the Council on Aging monthly newsletter and by posting flyers in the Senior Center, the Town Hall, Dalton Housing Authority facilities, and small stores located near public housing. These efforts were conducted in September 2021 to address comments received by DCS.

This OSRP builds upon several planning initiatives and documents that have been developed by the Town of Dalton. The draft, unfinalized OSRP of 2006 and the Master Plan of 2016 are sources of information and inspiration, as both documents involved extensive public participation processes. The plan found updated data through the American Community Survey, the United States Census, and from various Dalton departments and commissions.

# Section 3:

# Community Setting

## 3A. Regional Context

Dalton is a close-knit community of about 6,600 residents, encompassing approximately 21.8 square miles in central Berkshire County, just east of Pittsfield. Dalton is bordered by Cheshire on the north and northwest, Windsor and Hinsdale on the east, Washington on the south, and Pittsfield and Lanesborough on the west.

Dalton has an attractive, concentrated center roughly in the middle of the Town. Dalton is nearly bisected by Routes 9 and 8. Both state roads are main collectors for travelers and commuters from the north, south and east. Outside of the center of town, development in much of Dalton is constrained by steep slopes, bedrock close to the surface, and wetlands. Of the land that has not yet been developed, roughly half is either completely or partially constrained for building; with a large percent dedicated to open space. Dalton lies on the border of both the Housatonic and Hudson River Watersheds. However, most of the Town is encompassed by the Housatonic.

## 3B. History of the Community

In 1743, Massachusetts granted to Colonel Oliver Partridge and his associates, a parcel of land from a section called, the "Lower Ashuelot." This parcel, called the "Ashuelot Equivalent," formed the original settlement. The Town was later named Dalton (1784) in honor of Tristram Dalton, the speaker of the Massachusetts House of Representatives and a well-respected politician in the founding years of the nation.



*East Branch of the Housatonic River*

Characterized by a rough landscape with some good farmland in its interior, and a swift moving river, the Town of Dalton soon became a rural industrial community with many neighborhoods housing mill owners and their employees. Harnessing the power from the east branch of the Housatonic River, Dalton enjoyed the prosperity of many of the local mills. The river and the construction of a rail line between Boston and Albany provided the necessary elements to make Dalton into a prosperous mill town. By 1829, the Town was comprised of three paper mills, a gristmill, and five sawmills: all within a mile of the Town meeting house. Farmland was limited in comparison to the Towns lower on the Housatonic River, but some remain, such as Holiday Brook Farm on upper North Street/Route 9 which provides organic produce, grain raised meat, maple syrup and related products as well as mulch, hay, and other organic materials.



Dalton's largest industry, papermaking, was started by Zenas Crane in 1801, along the banks of the Housatonic River. In 1844, Crane & Co. developed its distinctive bank note paper, which was quickly accepted by banks from Great Barrington to Boston, for printing of bonds and bank note papers. The company, now known as Crane Co., remains the largest employer in town, creating paper currency for the U.S. and a few foreign governments. It has retained its status as the only supplier of paper for the U.S. Federal Reserve.

In 1846 the Fitch-Hoose house was built (now a museum and in 2010 was inducted into the State and National Registry of Historic Places). The house was bought by Charles Hoose in 1858 to provide a haven for the family, the house was in the Hoose family for three generations. The Underground Railroad had three routes that went through Berkshire County, one of which that went through Dalton. The Fitch-Hoose house is located on Gulf road which is said to be a part of the Underground Railroad as is the house itself. This area housed a small community of African Americans that had fled from slavery and felt the area was safe from pursuit, also known as "Wizard's Glen". Now the Fitch-Hoose House and Gulf Road are a part of the Upper Housatonic Valley African American Heritage Trail.



*Image Left: The Hoose House (photo from Howes Brothers Collection 1882-1902) | Image Right: Current appearance of Hoose House (2012) (provided by Dalton Historical Commission)*



**Indian Head by George Hoose (Abramovich Wizard's Glen)**

Gulf road itself is one of the oldest roads in Dalton, dating all the way back to 1794 as a road for travel from Westfield to Vermont. On Gulf Road is "Wizard's Glen" where there is a formation of various rocks making a type of gorge. This area is where the legend of Wizard's Glen takes place. The legend has various tellings but they all center around the same theme; a man was hunting and found a place for a night with the deer he got, a bad storm started and woke up the hunter at which time he saw devilish creatures dancing about and their leader sitting at an altar, the creatures fled once the man brought out a bible and proclaimed his creator. Now the

area is popular with hikers and hosts the painting of the Indian Head by George Hoose, painted in 1926. Gulf road itself is now a designated scenic roadway.

Manufacturing has long been a major economic driver in the central Berkshire County region, with paper and woolen mills prominent Dalton industries. As noted in the Berkshire Hills, a WPA project of the 1930s:

*Industrial Dalton is a community raised by hand, still accepting the system of benevolent paternalism that has persisted from the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. One fourth of the town's population of 4,000 is employed in the paper and woolen mills. Skilled workers, most of them English, Irish and Yankees, live in trim, modest houses along elm-shaded streets. The manors of officials in the paper and wool industries which control the town are flanked by formal gardens and velvety lawns in neighborly proximity to the houses of employees.<sup>1</sup>*

After the closing of the woolen mills in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, Crane & Co. became Dalton's single, major employer, being owned and operated by one family since 1801. However, General Electric (GE) owned a large, expansive manufacturing and processing facility in neighboring Pittsfield. These facilities provided jobs for workers of all levels and skills and helped furnish the economic success of the region throughout the early-to-mid 20<sup>th</sup> century, including the building of homes, neighborhoods and businesses. Two of the woolen mills have been repurposed into housing, the Sawyer/Dalton Woolen Mill and the Renfrew Mill. The Town's historic sites and National Register of Historic Districts reflect this past.

However, the decline of manufacturing began in the 1970s when GE closed some of its most active manufacturing divisions and moved others out of state. In later decades Crane & Co., like many other paper mills in the county, downsized its operations and the number of workers it employed, although it has retained an employee base of approximately 250 people. The Crane family sold the business to a private firm in 2018. The Beloit Corporation, a world-wide manufacturer of papermaking machinery, closed unexpectedly in 1999, a loss of 258 jobs. In all, manufacturing jobs in Dalton declined 46% between 2000-2013. Major sectors in Dalton that gained employment were construction, transportation/warehousing/utilities, and arts/entertainment/food services. The Town's second-largest employer is Craneville Place, a nursing home that provides jobs of varying skill levels and wages. With the shift away from manufacturing, the local economy has fewer living wage jobs or those that provide benefits such as insurance and retirement savings. Approximately 20% of Dalton's civilian labor force works in the Town (Dalton Master Plan 2016), with the Central Berkshire Regional School District and the Town of Dalton being major sources of employment. The largest employer at this time in the county is Berkshire Health Systems, located primarily in neighboring Pittsfield, but with facilities across the region.

In the early 2000s, the Town actively began to pursue diversification of its tax base and employment base to foster sustainable economic stability and growth. As stated in a 2008 CDBG grant to redevelop the Beloit Corporation property, the Town of Dalton's goal is to "encourage the redevelopment of established commercial and industrial areas while maintaining its feel as a 'city in the country' by keeping new growth consistent with the goals of its master plan."

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<sup>1</sup> As cited in *A Bicentennial History of Dalton, Massachusetts, 1784-1984*.



### 3C. Population Characteristics

Dalton is a town in the Berkshires with a relatively large year-round population – 6,569 residents, as stated by the 2018 US Census, making it the 6th most populated town in the Berkshires. However, Dalton has experienced a population decrease over the past two decades. Census data indicates that the Town population decreased from 7,099 to 6,569 residents between 1990 and 2018. Additionally, Dalton’s population is projected to decrease in the future. Population decreases can be directly connected to the decrease in manufacturing jobs in the region. The Town’s population density is 303.6 people per square mile, but the majority of people live in modest, relatively dense residential neighborhoods in the Town center. The other relatively dense neighborhood is the Greenridge section, made up largely of mid-century ranch homes.

#### Age

Dalton faces an increasingly older population. Between the 2000 census and 2018 American Community Survey, the number of Dalton residents below the age of 45 decreased, while the residents age 45 and older increased (See Table 2). The age increase, combined with an overall declining population, could create a shortage of labor in the coming decades as older workers retire and fewer young workers available to take their place (Dalton Master Plan, 2016).

The aging population could have effects on the Town’s services, as well as on its housing and recreation needs. Options for seniors to enjoy natural spaces in Dalton is limited because most public lands in Dalton are located on steeply sloped land. The Town’s parks generally offer level terrain for seniors and others who may be mobile challenged, as do the playing fields at the schools. The eastern portion of the Mill Trail is accessible, but that portion of the trail is in Hinsdale.

At the other end of the spectrum, the decline in younger residents could influence school enrollment and funding, as well as future volunteers and town employees such as police and firefighters.

Table 2: Dalton’s Age Breakdown

Age Group	2000	2010	2018
Age 19 and under	1939	1663	1171
Age 20 to 39	1491	1283	1355
Age 40 to 59	2034	2131	2012
Age 60 to 79	1099	1257	1728
Age 80+	329	422	359

*Source: US Census, American Community Survey*

#### Economic Status

As noted in the 2016 *Master Plan*, resident income in Dalton has declined due to the loss of higher paying manufacturing jobs and a subsequent increase in lower-wage jobs such as retail and services. However, there were 21 employers in the Town that employed 10-19 people, and of these at least seven employed more than 50 people in Dalton. The public school systems of Craneville Elementary, Nessesus Middle and Wahconah High Schools were three of the seven that

employed more than 50 people. At this same time 68 organizations within Dalton were members of the Berkshire County Chamber of Commerce, indicating the number of small, independent businesses and non-profits that provide services to the community.

According to the ACS, the median income for a Dalton household was \$68,538, which is 20% higher than Berkshire County overall but only 80% of median income for Massachusetts overall. Approximately 5% of persons in Dalton live below the poverty line, which is less than half that of Berkshire County overall, which is 11% (ACS, 2019 5-yr projection).

### **Environmental Justice (Refer to Map 3: Environmental Justice)**

As noted by the Commonwealth, Environmental Justice (EJ) is based on the principle that all people have a right to be protected from environmental hazards and to live in and enjoy a clean and healthful environment. EJ is the equal protection and meaningful involvement of all people with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies and the equitable distribution of environmental benefits. In Massachusetts, a neighborhood is defined as an EJ population if any of the following are true:

- the annual median household income is not more than 65 per cent of the statewide annual median household income;
- minorities comprise 40 per cent or more of the population;
- 25 per cent or more of households lack English language proficiency; or
- minorities comprise 25 per cent or more of the population and the annual median household income of the municipality in which the neighborhood is located does not exceed 150 per cent of the statewide annual median household income<sup>2</sup>

There are two large census blocks in Dalton where household median income (HMI) is less than the 65% of the Massachusetts HMI. For the purposes of this open space and recreation Plan, these blocks represent the Town's EJ populations. There are no areas in Dalton that meet any of the other EJ criteria. The neighborhood within the Main Street/Curtis Avenue/Gulf Road census block has an HMI of \$32,778, which is 46% of the state HMI. This neighborhood is characterized by modest single-family homes on small lots. This neighborhood has a wide variety of public open spaces within a half mile radius, including town parks, cemeteries, The Boulders, and the Appalachian Trail. This census block extends deeply into neighboring Pittsfield, which is a city whose population is much more diverse and economically complex than Dalton. This may explain why the HMI for this census block is so low.

The neighborhood within the Main Street/railroad tracks census block has an HMI of \$46,047 (65% of state HMI). This neighborhood is more geographically spread out and is more demographically diverse. This neighborhood has close access to the Nessacus/ Wahconah school property and to an AT trailhead, but there are no Town parks within a half mile. It is located adjacent to Day Mountain WMA, but this site has no trails nor trailheads across the property. The neighborhood is within half mile of the Old Mill Trail, but there is no trailhead or bridge to access this trail directly from this neighborhood (access is in Hinsdale where there is a new parking area and trailhead being created).

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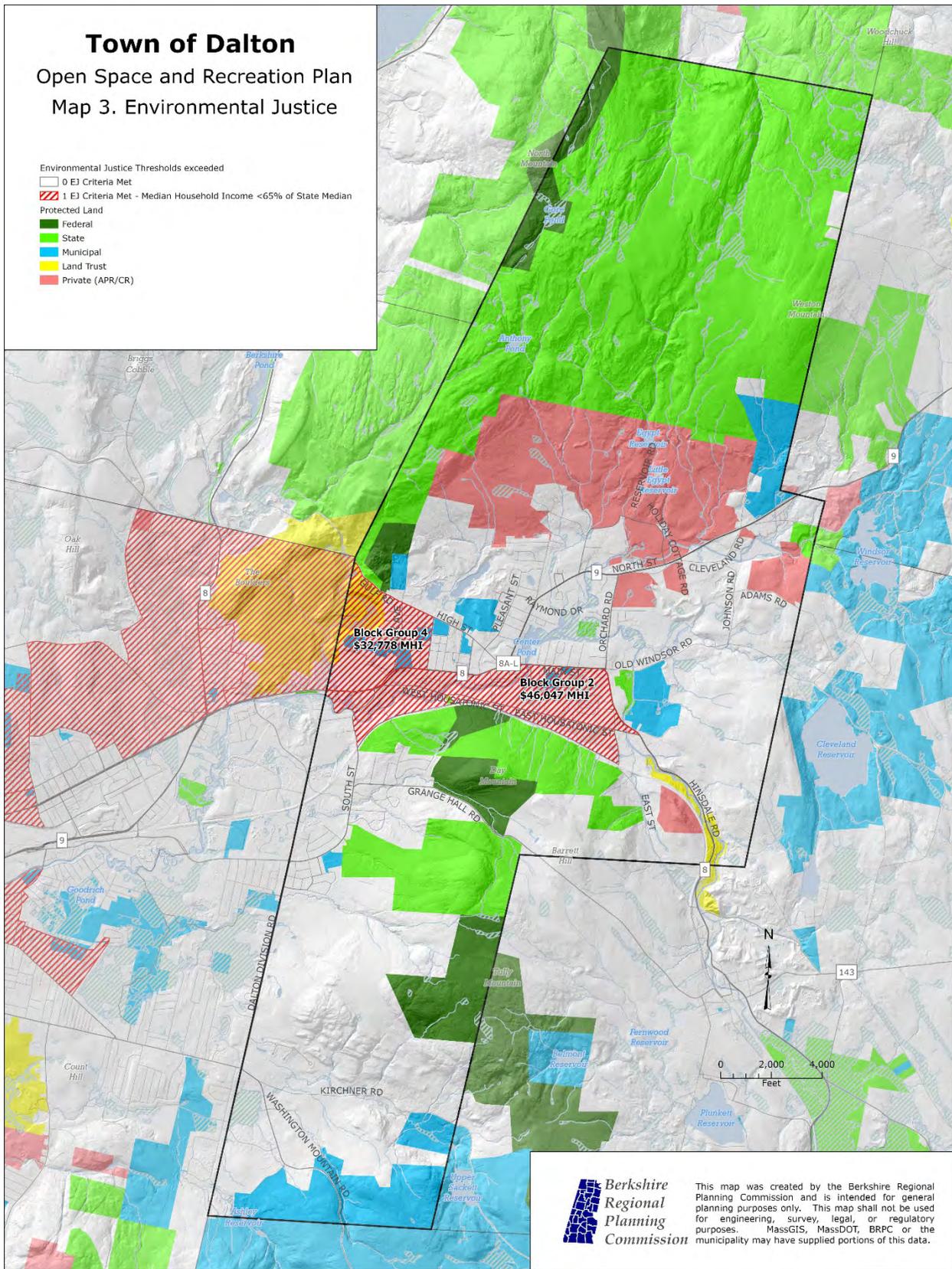
<sup>2</sup> <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/environmental-justice-populations-in-massachusetts>

# Town of Dalton

## Open Space and Recreation Plan

### Map 3. Environmental Justice

- Environmental Justice Thresholds exceeded
- 0 EJ Criteria Met
  - ▨ 1 EJ Criteria Met - Median Household Income <65% of State Median
- Protected Land
- Federal
  - State
  - Municipal
  - Land Trust
  - Private (APR/CR)



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## Race, Ethnicity, and Diversity

The Dalton population of nearly all ethnic groups has fluctuated throughout the years, with the Hispanic community growing noticeably – the number of Hispanics or Latinos increased from 70 people to 262 from 2000 to 2018. According to the US Census American Community Survey 2014-2018, the Town has a mix of ethnic groups. Of the total population in Dalton Hispanic or Latino persons make up 4.0%, Asian persons make up 1.9%, and persons who identify as two or more races make up 0.8%. See Table 3, for a breakdown of the race and ethnicity of Dalton.

Table 3: Race and Ethnicity of Dalton

Race and Ethnicity	Total	Percent
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,625</b>	
White alone	6,135	92.6%
Black or African American alone	13	0.2%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	37	0.6%
Asian alone	124	1.9%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	0	0.0%
Some other race alone	0	0.0%
Two or more races	54	0.8%
Hispanic or Latino	262	4.0%

*Source: US Census American Community Survey 2014-2018*

### 3D. Growth and Development Patterns

#### Infrastructure (Refer to Map 4: Infrastructure)

##### Transportation System

Route 9, which also serves as the Dalton’s Main Street, is the main roadway through the town. Route 9 is also a major east-west artery in the central Berkshire area, so this road carries a high volume of traffic that consists of local commuters, commercial vehicles and through traffic. Residents have expressed their difficulties with trying to cross the street or pull out of side streets and businesses located along Main Street during times of peak traffic volumes. However, because the road is a main artery, traffic is expected to continue to increase.

The other main roadway is Route 8, which also serves as a local commuter and commercial route. Other busy local roads are East Housatonic Street, which is parallel to and an alternative to Main Street, and Grange Hall Road and Kirchner Road, which serve as commuter roads for residents of Dalton, Hinsdale and Washington.

Public transportation in Dalton is available through the Berkshire Regional Transit Authority (BRTA) bus system. There is one bus route that currently runs through town as it travels from Pittsfield to Hinsdale. BRTA Paratransit and the Council on Aging provide transportation services for elderly and disabled residents in Dalton through various providers.

The sidewalks in many parts of Dalton are in poor shape. The town tries to rebuild or add sidewalks when they rebuild streets, but there is not always funding for this. Examples of where the Town oversaw new or improved sidewalk connections were the reconstruction of South Street and Housatonic Street. The addition of a sidewalk along the full length of Dalton Division Road is planned during that reconstruction project.

In 2016 the Town of Dalton received a Complete Streets Grant. "Complete streets" is transportation concept that examines the design of roadways to enable safe access for all users, regardless of age, ability, or mode of transportation (automobile, bicycle, or by foot). The complete streets concept provides a kit of parts and possible solutions that can be applied to any roadway to help improve and promote walking and travel by bicycle and makes the roadway safer for all users. The grant allowed the Town to rebuild the sidewalk on High Street from main Street to Park Avenue to improve the ability of the community to walk safely in the area. In addition to the High Street sidewalk a sidewalk was added on Field Street Extension to provide better access to the Dalton Senior Center. As part of the project the Town had route markers for the Appalachian Trail in the sidewalks. MassDOT also improved the sidewalks on Main Street and Route 9 to tie in with the project.

### **Water Supply Systems**

The Dalton Water District is responsible for providing drinking water to the community. It is part of the same entity that provides Fire services to the community. A large portion, 94%, of Dalton's potable water supply comes from the Cleveland Brook Reservoirs in the Town of Hinsdale. Windsor Reservoir has been rendered unsuitable as a drinking water supply due to sedimentation and turbidity. The Town relies solely on the water supplied by Cleveland Reservoir, which is owned and controlled by the City of Pittsfield. For extreme emergencies, the Town relies on two 1.2-million-gallon storage tanks, one off Reservoir Road, and the other off Pinecrest Drive. The public water system is shown on Map 4: Infrastructure. The remaining 6% of water for residences outside the water system is drawn from private wells.

### **Wastewater Systems**

All but the farthest outlying areas of Dalton are serviced by a sewer infrastructure that collects wastewater from Hinsdale and Dalton and directs it to the Pittsfield wastewater treatment facility where it is treated. Over 90% of the Town is served by this sewer system (see Map 4: Infrastructure).

Dalton's sewer system, which connects to Pittsfield for treatment, exhibits a significant increase in flow during periods of rain. In 2015/2016, the Town conducted the first phase of an Inflow and Infiltration study to determine where connections to stormwater may be occurring. In 2020 the investigative phase of the study began with smoke testing and scoping the sewer lines to find the exact locations of the infiltration. Correcting problems identified in the study will likely have a high cost, and the Town will have to determine how to fund the improvements.

### **Telecommunications**

Dalton recently approved the installation of two cellular phone towers, one is owned by Time Warner Cable and the other is owned by American Cable. Both are in the Chalet Wildlife

Management Area. There is also a new cell tower on the Dalton American Legion property just outside the downtown area. This tower is contained within a large flagpole so that it does not detract from the character of the neighborhood.

### **Stormwater System**

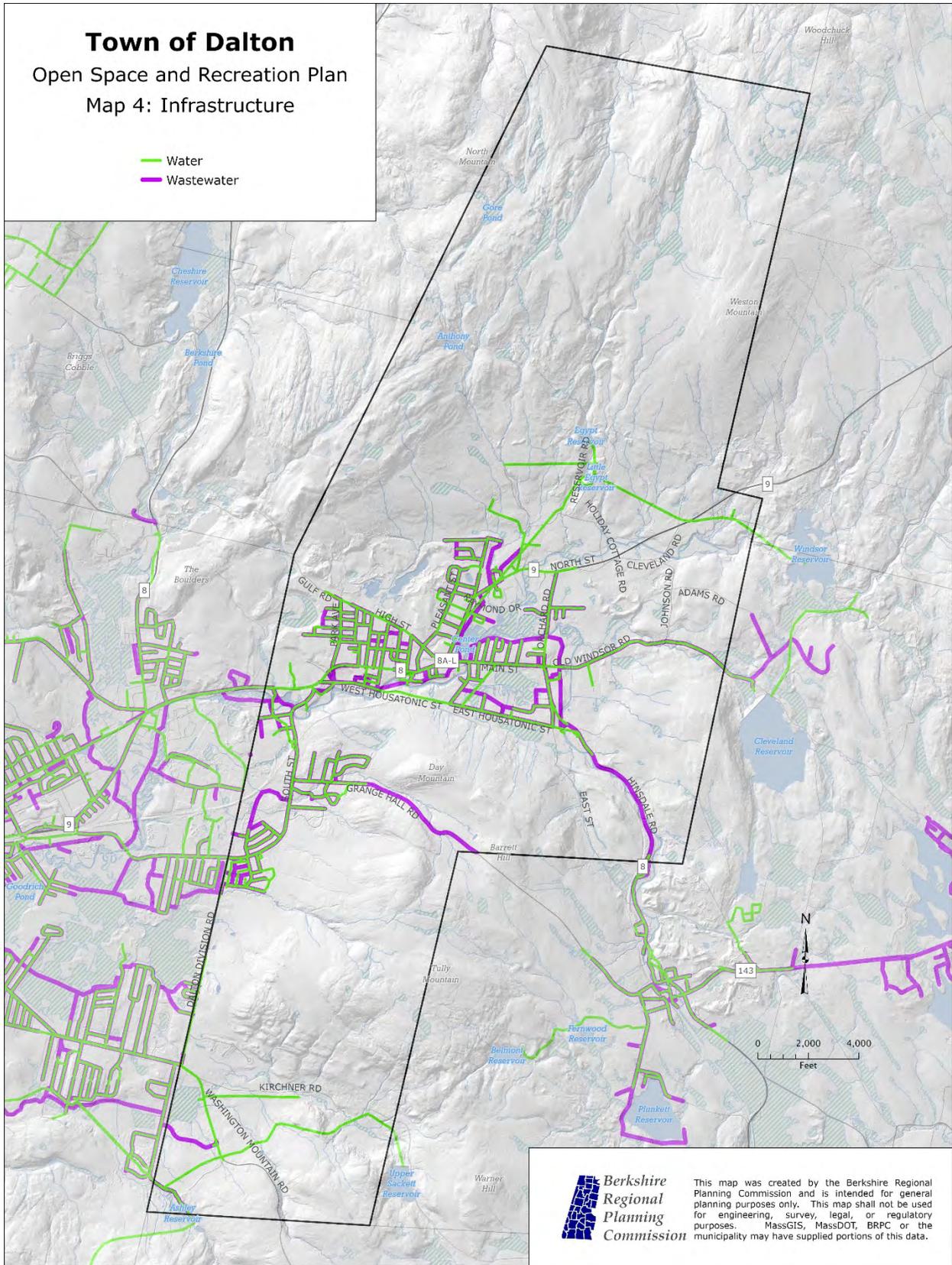
The Town of Dalton has an extensive storm water drainage system to direct precipitation off the roads and a Stormwater Management Commission that oversees the implementation of the Town's stormwater management plan. Dalton is an EPA designated National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) community, which requires the Town to meet certain guidelines on storm water discharges into streams and rivers. The commission distributes information to the public on the impacts of stormwater, develops a plan to detect illicit discharges and dumping, prohibits non-stormwater discharges into the storm system, regulates construction site runoff controls and promotes the use of appropriate Best Management Practices. Future activities are expected to include storm drain mapping, partner with the Housatonic Valley Association to conduct monitoring, education and storm drain stenciling, and conduct an Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination program.

# Town of Dalton

## Open Space and Recreation Plan

### Map 4: Infrastructure

- Water
- Wastewater



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## Land Use

### Land Use Change 1971-1999 and 2005

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts has land use data for the Town of Dalton for a 28-year period from 1971-1999. While 1999 data is old, it does allow for a picture of land use change within the Town to be developed. Between 1971 and 1999, residential acreage increased more than any other land use category, growing from 1,179 acres (8% of all land) to 1,439 acres (6% of all land). Commercial and industrial land uses also increased; however, they occupy minimal acreage (2%) within the Town.

Agricultural acreage decreased the most over the 28-year period from 1971-1999, changing from 928 acres to 640 acres, or a decrease of 31%. Forested land also decreased significantly, from 10,939 acres in 1971 to 10,541 acres in 1999, a decrease of 398 acres, which is only 4%

GIS data from 2005 shows that Dalton was mostly forested (10,655 acres or 76% of the Town), while agriculture covers 436 acres (3% of town). Of "man-made" land uses, residential land acreage is the greatest, extending across 1,297 acres or 9% of the Town, while industrial uses cover 114 acres, institutional uses cover 121 acres, and commercial uses cover 61 acres.

### Land Use 2016 (Refer to Map 5: Current Land Use)

Current GIS land use technology (2016) uses a vastly different methodology for mapping and calculating land use than previous technologies. The new GIS technology is much more detailed than the old, clearly delineating the footprints of buildings and mapping the vegetated cover surrounding those buildings. Take for example a 1-acre residential property, which includes a house surrounded by a grassed lawn and separated from its neighbor by a row of mature maple trees. The older technology would simply have mapped the entire 1-acre site as a residential use. In contrast, the newer technology would map the footprint of the house as a building, the lawn as developed open space and the tree line as deciduous forest. This technology more accurately depicts the developed, impervious acreage of the Town and the corresponding lawn coverage. However, it also increases or skews the acreage of forest cover, because mature trees within developed areas throughout the Town center and in residential neighborhoods are being considered deciduous or evergreen forest. But clearly these clumps of trees do not constitute a forest, nor do they provide the same quantity and quality of habitat that unfragmented forests provide. The 2005 data more accurately depicts the acreage of land that is forest habitat.

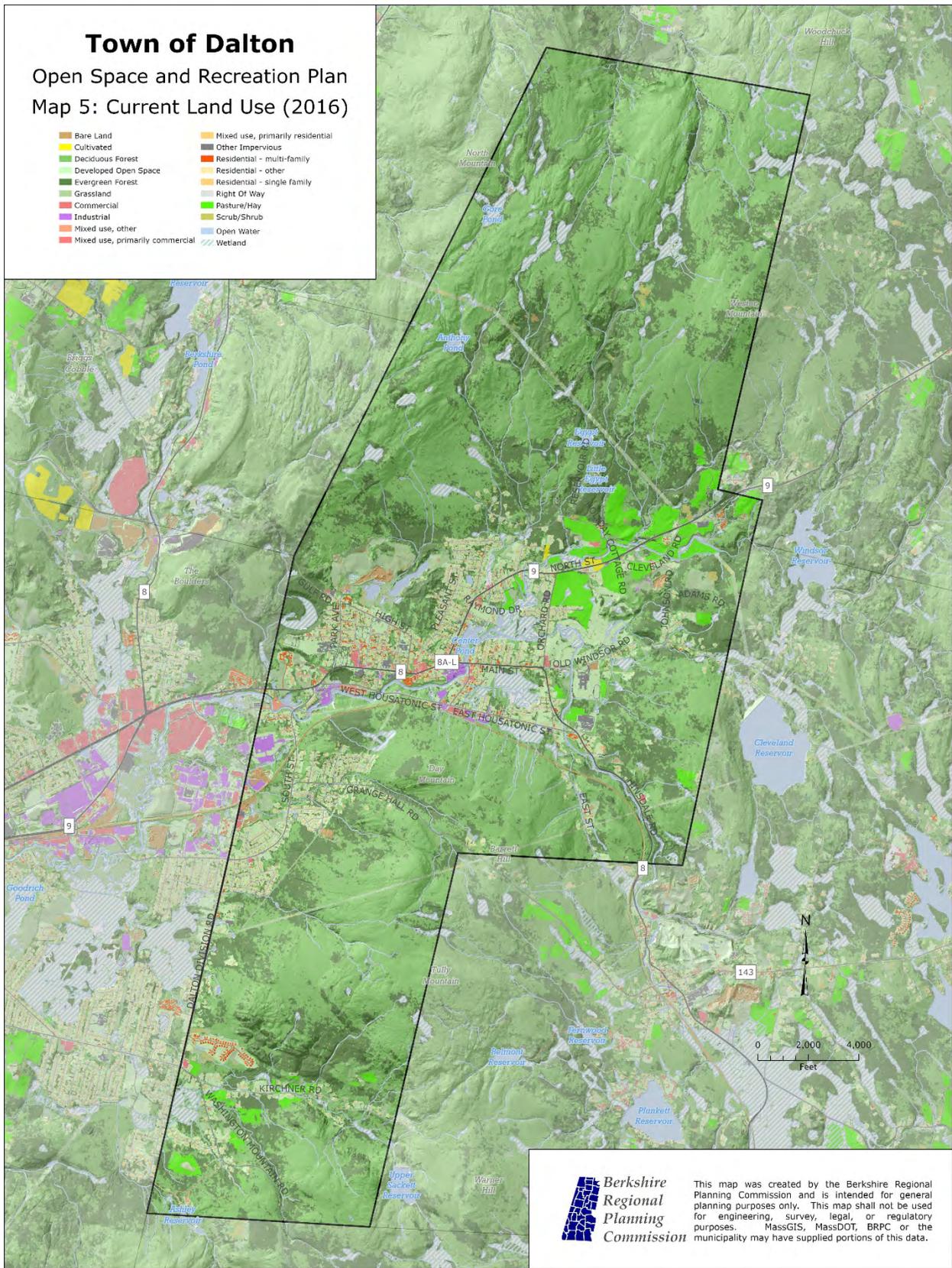
The 2005 GIS data states that there were 10,655 acres of forest (76% of total land coverage) and 1,297 acres of residential development (9% of total) in Dalton at that time. The 2016 data states that there were 11,587 acres of forest (82% of total) and 240 acres of residential development (7% of total). The 2005 data does not calculate lawn area, but the 2016 calculates that there are almost 1,333 acres of "developed open space" and "grasslands" in Dalton. Due to the differences in mapping technology, it is not possible to use the 1999/2005 data and the 2016 when tracking land use changes.

# Town of Dalton

## Open Space and Recreation Plan

### Map 5: Current Land Use (2016)

- |  |                                 |  |                                  |
|--|---------------------------------|--|----------------------------------|
|  | Bare Land                       |  | Mixed use, primarily residential |
|  | Cultivated                      |  | Other Impervious                 |
|  | Deciduous Forest                |  | Residential - multi-family       |
|  | Developed Open Space            |  | Residential - other              |
|  | Evergreen Forest                |  | Residential - single family      |
|  | Grassland                       |  | Right Of Way                     |
|  | Commercial                      |  | Pasture/Hay                      |
|  | Industrial                      |  | Scrub/Shrub                      |
|  | Mixed use, other                |  | Open Water                       |
|  | Mixed use, primarily commercial |  | Wetland                          |



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## Development Trend

Available town data showing the construction date of buildings within the Town of Dalton allow for a picture of development trends to emerge. This data shows the last available construction date for a given building, so do not capture earlier structures that may have existed on a given parcel and been replaced. This data is based on assessor's information, current as of 2012.

The earliest structures in the Town of Dalton, built prior to the year 1900, were located primarily in the downtown, between Housatonic Street and High Street, and in areas off North Street. Paper and woolen mills were located along the Housatonic River, and around these facilities sprang residential neighborhoods. The most significant building occurred between 1901 to 1950, when more than 1,200 buildings were erected. Most developing during this period was infill around Main and North Streets close to the mill complexes. After 1950, dense residential and subdivision development spread throughout Town and along outlying roadways that were sparsely developed. From 1951-1975, extensive construction of subdivisions was built off South Street, Grange Hall Road, Tower Road, Orchard Street, and East Housatonic Street. There was also development scattered throughout the rest of town.

From 1976 onward, there has been single lot residential sprawl and continued subdivision development off South Street and Grange Hall Road, as well as Raymond Drive, North Mountain Road, Yvonne Drive, and Silver Maple Farm. Scattered development continues to occur throughout the rest of town, but mostly around Johnson, Windsor, and Kirchner Roads. A large block of undeveloped land along Grange Hall Road has been subdivided and new access drives for residential homes now dot the roadway 2019-2020.

**Table 4: Dalton Buildings**

Year Built	Number of Buildings
Pre-1900	526
1901 - 1950	1,218
1951 - 1975	1,082
1975 - 2012	707
Post - 2012	15

*Source: Dalton Master Plan, Dalton Town Assessor, 2012*

## Zoning

Dalton currently has nine zoning districts, four zoning districts specifically for residential and five districts for commercial development. The zoning was originally created in 1954 and has been subsequently updated. In the past decade, the Town's zoning was recodified to modernize it.

In addition to the traditional zoning districts, there are several special districts covering a variety of interests.

### Open Space Residential District

The Open Space and Residential District (OSRD) is an overlay district that encompasses the parcels located within the R-1 district. The OSRD allows for higher a density residential

development than would be allowed in the underlying zoning but requires the developer to set aside land for conservation.

### Floodplain Overlay District

The purpose of the Dalton Floodplain Overlay District is to “to ensure that the development of land is done with the awareness and understanding of the potential flood hazards in these areas. “Construction and other development within the Floodplain Overlay District requires issuance of a special permit from the Board of Appeals. The area determining the extent of the Floodplain Overlay District is derived from Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM). The district extends through low lying areas along the East Branch of the Housatonic River, Wahconah Falls Brook, and several other small areas.

### Scenic Mountain Act

The Town of Dalton adopted the Berkshire Scenic Mountain Act (SMA), which allows it to protect scenic views and watersheds. The SMA requires any construction over 1,500 feet to not be visible above the ridge line and it controls run-off and erosion created by development. The Scenic Mountain Act is enforced by the Dalton Conservation Commission.

### Design Standard Overlay

Dalton adopted design guidelines in 2015 to help maintain the aesthetics along the major roads in town. The corridor extends the entire length of Route 9 from Pittsfield to Windsor, as well as East Main Street and Hinsdale Road (Route 8) southwards 500 feet from Fox Road. The corridor extends for 500 feet from each road. The bylaw establishes a design review board to review new construction and major modification of commercial/industrial and multi-family residential (more than 2 families).

Table 5. Zoning

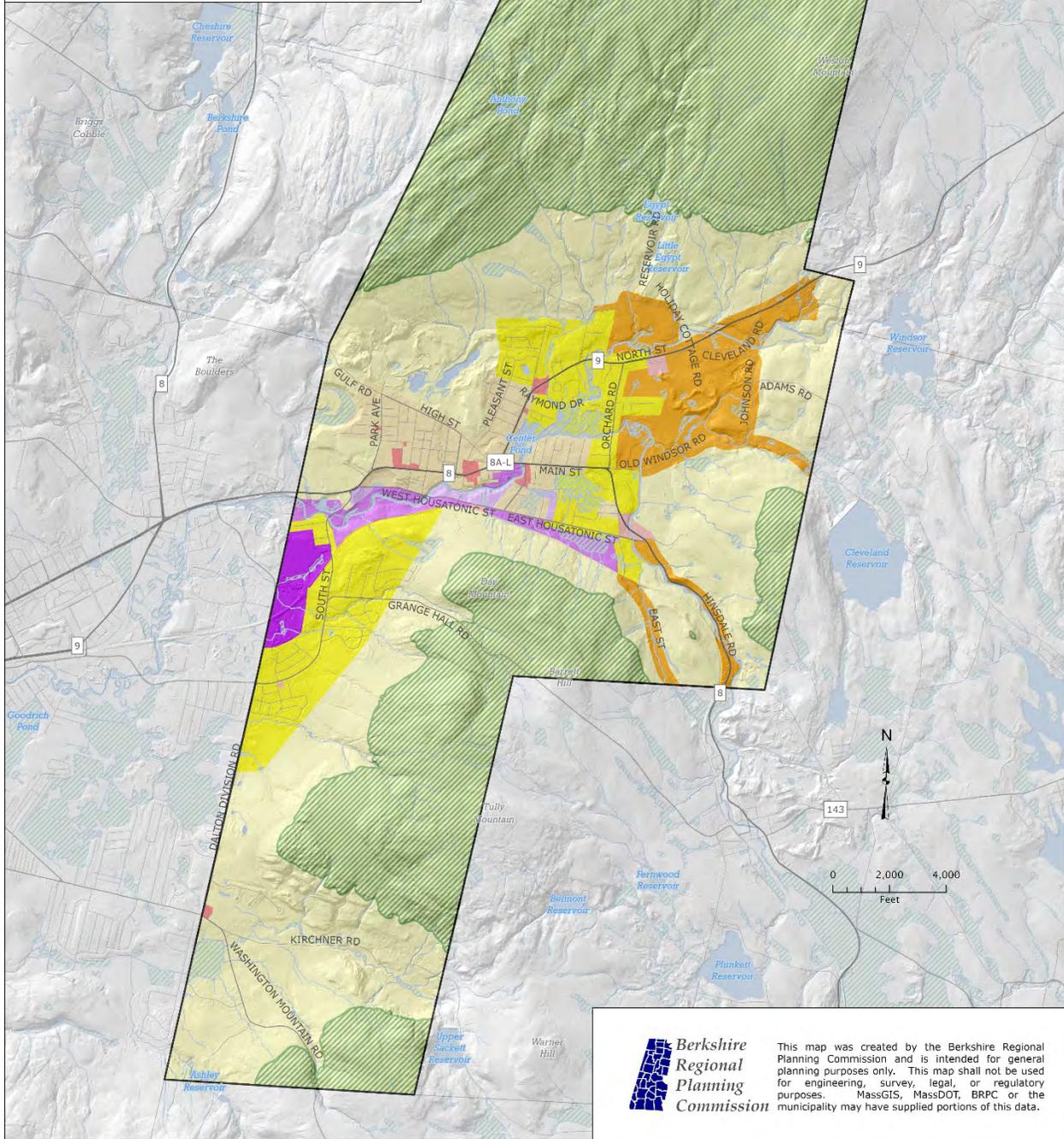
Zone	Description	Minimum Lot Size	Minimum Frontage	Max. Building Coverage	Max. Total Coverage
R-1	Residential/Agriculture	3 Acres	150	20%	30%
R-2	Residential	15,000	100	25%	30%
R-3	Residential	7,500	70	30%	35%
R-4	Residential	60,000	150	25%	30%
B-1	Dwelling	15,000	100	25%	30%
	Other permitted uses	20,000	100	60%	75%
B-2	Dwelling	7,500	70	30%	35%
	Other permitted uses	7,500	70	80%	95%
I-1	Business	20,000	100	60%	75%
	Other permitted uses	40,000	150	50%	80%
I-2	Business	7,500	70	80%	95%
	Other permitted uses	10,000	80	70%	90%
PIDD	Planned Industrial Development	20,000	70	80%	90%

# Town of Dalton

## Open Space and Recreation Plan

### Map 6. Zoning

- B-1
- B-2
- I-1
- I-2
- R-1
- R-2
- R-3
- R-4
- PIDD
- Scenic Mountain Act



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# Section 4: Environmental Inventory and Analysis

## 4A. Geology, Soils and Topography (Refer to Map 7: Soils and Geologic Features)

The central region of Dalton, where most of development has occurred, is along the East Branch Housatonic River valley. This watershed is within the Western New England Marble Valley Ecoregion, the bedrock of which was formed from ancient marine sediments and which is characterized by marble and limestone bedrock and calcium-rich soils. These alkaline foundations create the hydrologic and chemical conditions that, when combined with the relative undeveloped nature of the landscape, provide one of the state's most biologically distinctive areas. The soils offer conditions preferred by calcium-loving plants, some of which are found nowhere else in the state (NHESP, 2010).

The higher elevations of Dalton, comprising of the undeveloped expanses of land in the northern half of the Town (culminating at North Mountain) and along the eastern sections (upland to Barrett Hill, Day Mountain and Tully Mountain) are within the Berkshire Highlands Ecoregion, with a base of metamorphic rock, including shale. The steep slopes of these areas are excellent for hikers, mountain bikers, birders and wilderness campers who seek challenging and remote terrain. These areas, however, are inaccessible to those who have limited mobility.

***Exposed metamorphic bedrock located in the Chalet Wildlife Management Area (WMA).***



There are two main soil types that cover the geographical area of Dalton. Tunbridge-Lyman-Peru covers most of the hilltowns and higher elevations of Berkshire County. These soils predominate in the northern and southern sections of the Town. The second type, Copake-Hero-Hoosic, is the soil type found along the lower elevations of the Town, underneath the Housatonic River and Wahconah Falls Brook valleys. The USDA, Soil Conservation Service, defines these soil types as follows:

Tunbridge-Lyman-Peru: Moderately deep, shallow, and very deep, well drained, somewhat excessively drained, and moderately well drained, gently sloping to very steep, loamy soils formed in glacial till derived from schist, gneiss, and granite; on uplands. The bedrock and slopes here makes development more challenging.

Copake-Hero-Hoosic: Very deep, somewhat excessively drained, and moderately well drained, nearly level to moderately steep, loamy soils formed in glacial outwash; on outwash plains and terraces.

The Soils map illustrates that there are large areas where the soils in Dalton are excessively drained soils. Interestingly, these soils tend to exist on both steeply sloped areas (such as North, Day and Tully mountains), and in the lower lying areas in the Housatonic River valley in the downtown area. Poorly drained soils are found in and around wetland and floodplain areas, with large areas of these underlying soils in the broad area in the center of Dalton area where Wahconah and Cleveland Brooks join the Housatonic River. In general, excessively drained and poorly drained soils are least desirable for development where septic systems are to be used. Excessively drained soils are not desirable for recreation areas that receive heavy use or traffic, as turf will demand more maintenance in the form of watering or irrigation to stand up to heavy use. Poorly drained soils underlying recreational areas will be flooded and retain muddy conditions for prolonged periods, limiting their use for organized sports. The playing fields at Chamberlain Park and American Legion are examples of where use is limited by poorly drained conditions.

There are extensive areas in Dalton that have been categorized as having Prime Agricultural Soils. These are soils that have been determined to have combination of physical and chemical characteristics for economically producing sustained high yields of food, feed, forage, and crops, when managed according to acceptable farming methods. Development should be directed away from areas with these underlying soils so that agricultural production can be maintained or expanded. These soils are found along North Street where farms have traditionally been located, as well as under Wahconah Golf Course. Undeveloped prime agricultural soils are also found west of South Street and in the lowlands at the Washington Mountain and Kirchner Road junction.

It should be noted that the soils map is generalized for planning purposes only. Exact soil conditions are extremely localized and can differ greatly from one building lot to the next.

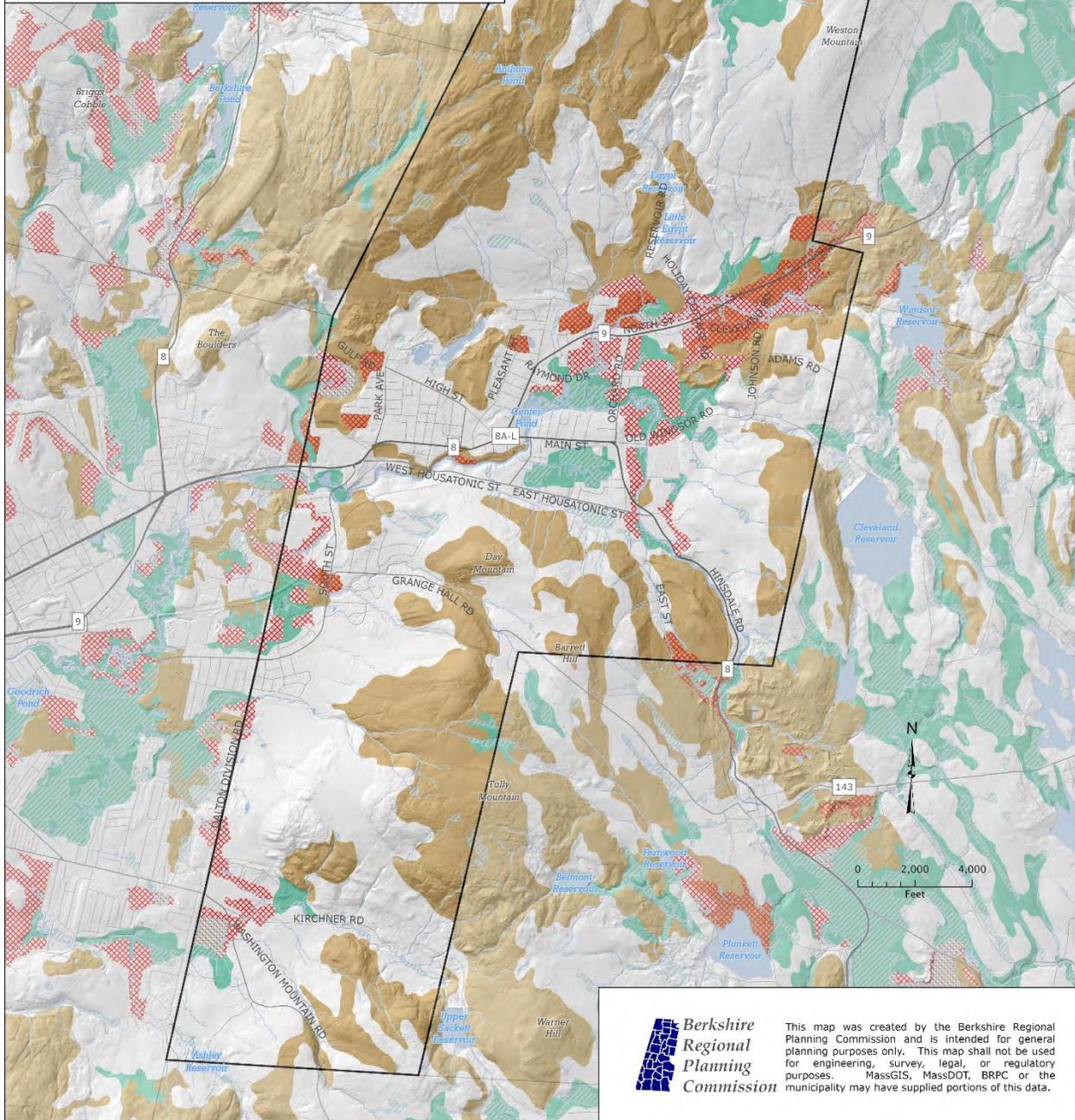
Creating or expanding recreational trails on steep slopes needs to be done carefully to avoid soil erosion and down-slope sediment deposition into water resources. Clearing of tree canopy and natural ground vegetation should be limited, especially on steeply sloped areas to avoid creating hazardous conditions and habitat destruction.

# Town of Dalton

## Open Space and Recreation Plan

### Map 7: Soils and Geologic Features Map

-  Prime Agricultural Soils
-  Poorly Drained Soils
-  Excessively Drained Soils



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#### 4B. Landscape Character (Refer to Map 5: Current Land Use 2016)

Dalton has a rough mountain wilderness exterior with a gentle rolling plain along the Housatonic River that allows for a strong town nucleus. The main central valley where the Housatonic River flows is, at its lowest point, approximately 1,030 feet in elevation. On each side of the valley are mountainous regions that rise to heights of about 2,065 feet around Tully Mountain in the south and even higher in the north to about 2,270 ft at Weston Mountain. Approximately 70% of the lands in and around the areas of North Mountain in the northern section of Town and Day Mountain in the south have slopes that are often 15% or greater.

According to 2005 MassGIS land use data the Town is primarily forested, with slightly less than 11,000 acres of forestland. This is about 76% of the Town's total of 14,000 acres. The next largest land use is residential with 1,300 acres (9%). Traditionally dense development is confined to the gentler lower slopes of the river valley, with major transportation being routes 8 and 9. These form the Main Street running parallel to the Housatonic River as it runs east to west crossing the central part of town. Rural residential development also follows local roads that connect to neighboring towns, such as Dalton Division, Old Dalton, Grange Hall, Kirchner, and Washington Mountain Roads. Agricultural uses make up just over 400 acres, with Holiday Farm being the largest and most prominent farm. Commercial and industrial properties combined, located along the Housatonic River, and associated lowlands, occupy 200 acres.



#### **4C. Water Resources (Refer to Map 9: Water Resources)**

##### **Watersheds and Surface Waters**

Dalton lies almost entirely within the Housatonic River Watershed. High mountains lie at almost at each of the four corners channeling flows into the central plain of the East Branch Housatonic River or westward into Pittsfield where waters eventually drain into the river.

The very northern reach of the Town is located within the Hudson River Watershed, where tributaries flow northward to join the South Branch Hoosic River. Land within this watershed lies entirely within the Chalet Wildlife Management Area.

The most prominent water feature in Dalton is the East Branch Housatonic River. It is actively used for purposes of industry, agriculture, and recreation. Beginning in 1801 Zenas Crane, founder of Crane Paper Company, built a series of paper mills in downtown Dalton along the river. The company provides paper for US currency and other governments around the world.

Numerous first and second order streams drain the Dalton landscape, almost all of it into the Housatonic River. Water flows downstream from the headwaters and tributaries of the East Branch Housatonic River and enters a broad floodplain area as it enters Dalton, all joining just upstream of Center Pond in downtown Dalton. The steepness of grade for a good portion of the region restricts much of this water from slowing or creating ponds. However, many of the mountainous areas have flat/ bowl shaped tops with shallow soils on them. Often water will collect in these shallow bowls creating marshes and high elevated freshwater ponds. Gore Pond in the North Mountain area is a good example of this, having an elevation reaching near 2,000 feet.

The Anthony Pond and Egypt Reservoir sub-watersheds have been designated as Outstanding Resources Watersheds by the Commonwealth. Fortunately, these highland watersheds are protected from the development, being located within the Chalet WMA, and protected under conservation deed restrictions. Center Pond, an impounded portion of the East Branch Housatonic River, is in the heart of Dalton. Although it is now shallow due to sediment build-up behind the dam, it was once a popular swimming and boating site.

##### **Aquifer Recharge Areas**

Dalton's physical features constrain the aquifer recharge area. Rainwater, as it runs down the slopes, does not have lengthy times to infiltrate and permeate the ground. There are three Medium-Yield aquifer areas within Dalton, located north and southeast of the Town center. These aquifers are estimated to be able to produce water between 100-300 gallons a minute. The largest aquifer underlies the gravel pits north of High Street, within which Crane Company has a well from which it draws water for papermaking. There are no public drinking water sources that draw from these aquifers.

##### **Flood Hazard Areas**

The floodplain areas in Dalton follow the Housatonic River and its tributaries. Flooding occurs when the volume of water within a given stream or river exceeds the channel's capacity to contain it. The floodplain is the land area adjacent to the waterbody that is subject to recurring

inundation, such as 10-year, 100-year and 500-year recurrence intervals. There are 464 acres of 100-year floodplain in Dalton, which is 3% of total land.

The largest floodplain area is upstream of Center Pond, including the rear of the American Legion Park, which often floods. Just upstream of this is another significant floodplain area, at the confluence of Wahconah Falls Brook and stream that flows out of the Egypt Reservoir. A third significant area of floodplain is at the confluence of the East Branch Housatonic River and Cleveland Brook, just upstream of where the floodplain of the Wahconah Falls and Housatonic River floodplain area is. Wahconah Regional High School is in this area, where playing fields commonly flood. Fortunately, most of these floodplain areas are open parks, farm fields or golf course, which allows the floodwaters to pool without inflicting high property damage. It should be noted, however, that residential neighborhoods back up to these areas, infringing on flood storage capacity.

Flowing into the East Branch of the Housatonic River, Walker Brook also creates flooding issues. Walker Brook goes underground at High Street and flows underground until just before the confluence with the Housatonic River. Where the brook goes underground, the High Street area, an undersized pipe periodically causes flooding. The flooding crosses High Street and will sometimes flood Field Street.

Inundation maps clearly show that significant flooding in Dalton would occur if either the Lake Ashmere, Cleveland Reservoirs or Windsor dams were to fail. The densely developed town center, which includes the Town's key commercial and industrial properties and entire residential neighborhoods, would be dangerously flooded if the Windsor Reservoir or Cleveland Reservoir dam were to fail. Wahconah Regional High School, which is listed as the major storm shelter in the region, is within this inundation area and it because of this the High School could not be used as a shelter during such an event.

## **Wetlands**

Wetlands perform important functions for wildlife and people. Wetlands are the most productive ecosystems on earth when measured by the amount of biomass or living biological tissue they support and produce. Valuable ecosystem services provided by wetlands include plant and animal habitat, flood storage and control, water purification and shoreline stabilization.

Dalton has relatively few large wetland areas. According to 2012 Mass GIS DEP Wetlands data, there are 400 acres of wetlands in the Town (3% of total land). These are shown in blue hatching on Map 9, Water Resources. The dominant wetland types are Wooded Swamp Deciduous wetlands (122 acres), Shrub Swamp (112 acres), and Wooded Swamp Coniferous (111 acres). Many of the wetlands in Dalton are associated with or part of floodplain areas. Although most wetlands are found in large undeveloped areas of Dalton, there are two large wetland complexes within the center of Town. One is a large, 40+ acre area between Main Street, Hinsdale Road, East Housatonic Street, and Depot Street, located behind residential housing that line these streets. This wetland often supports open water during spring and times of wet weather. The other large wetland area is west of Orchard Street, at the confluence of the Housatonic River and Cleveland and Wahconah Falls Brook. This wetland area is behind the American Legion athletic fields.

Because the GIS data only recognizes large wetland areas, the actual acreage of wetlands is undoubtedly higher, so the data should be used only as a rough guide. As always, wetlands can only truly be identified and quantified on the ground by a person knowledgeable in the field.



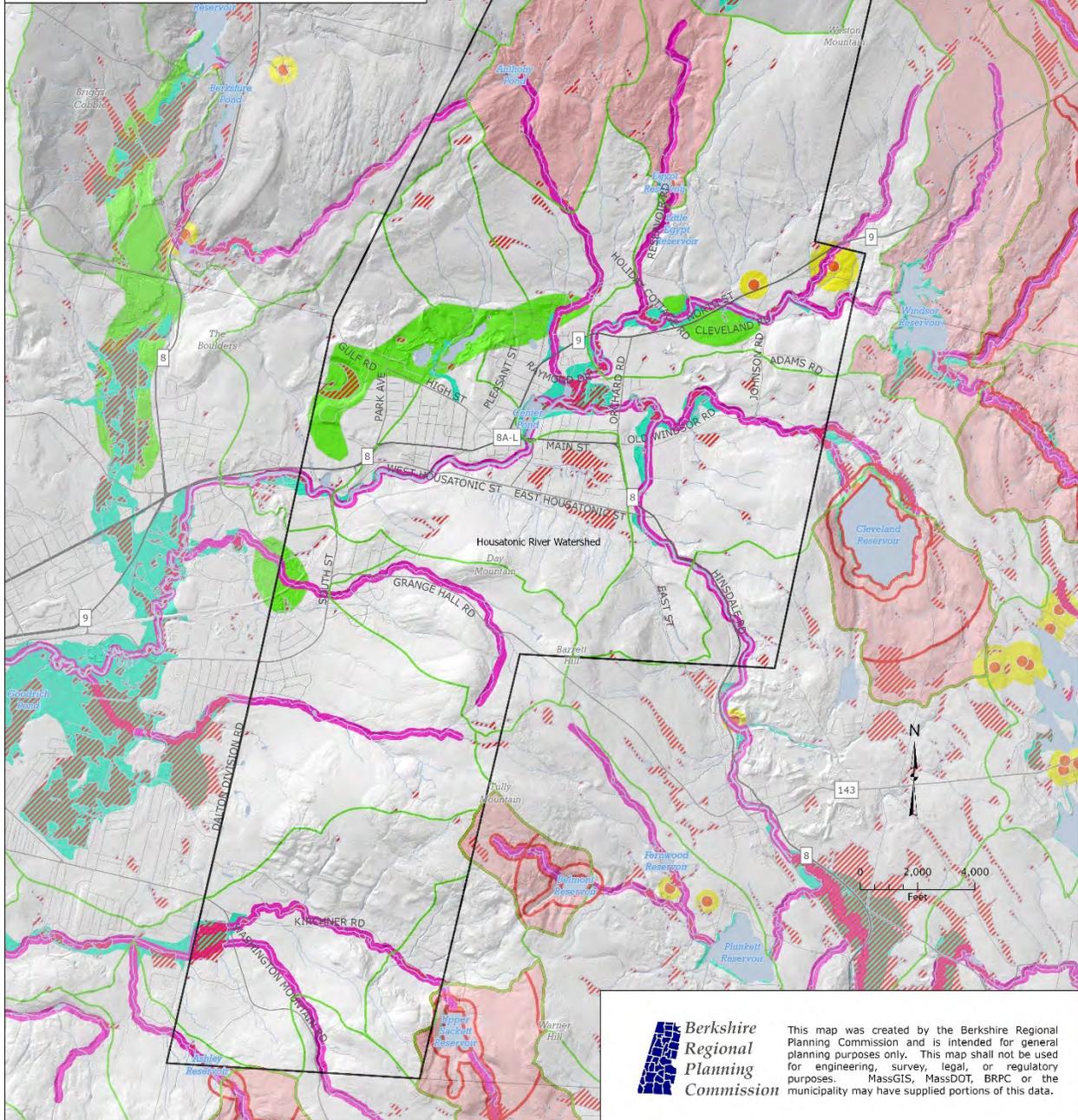
**Ponds and wetlands are found in the Chalet WMA.**

# Town of Dalton

## Open Space and Recreation Plan

### Map 9: Water Resources

- Subwatersheds
- Surface Water Protection Zone
- Cold Water Fisheries
- Public Water Supply
- Interim Wellhead Protection Area
- FEMA 100yr Floodplain
- Medium-Yield Aquifers
- Outstanding Resource Watershed
- Stream
- Open Water
- ▨ Wetland
- Housatonic River Watershed
- Hoosic River Watershed



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#### 4D. Vegetation (Refer to Map 5: Current Land Use 2016, Map 10: Vegetation and Fisheries and Wildlife)

Due to changes in topography, geology, soils and microclimates within the watershed, the landscape of Dalton provides an ideal setting for many types of natural habitats. Plant communities in Dalton contain many unusual species as well as hundreds of common plants in uncommon combinations. The largest, most abundant plant communities in Dalton are in its forests, with hundreds of acres of unfragmented habitat that reach outward and beyond town boundaries.

##### Forest Land

Dalton's forest has undergone many changes since colonial settlement. Trees were felled to make way for agriculture and industry. According to a study conducted by the Berkshire Conservation District, in 1840 only 25 percent of the land in Dalton remained in forest cover (Berk. Conservation District, 1974). In contrast, Dalton today is approximately 76% forested.

According to 2005 MassGIS Land Use data, there are approximately 10,700 acres of forest within the Town, supporting diverse plant communities. Tree diversity ranges from predominate mixed northern hardwoods to fewer softwoods. Typical canopies of a northern hardwood forest include American beech, ash, birch, and sugar maple. Scattered throughout in the hardwood forest are white pine. On some of the south facing slopes are red oak stands. Hemlock forest covers are found in and along deeply incised stream valleys while red spruce and black spruces make up some of the higher plateaus. Below the main forest canopy are mountain laurels, azaleas, witch hazel and maple-leaf viburnums, along with striped maples, red elders, and witch hazel in the lower elevations. Common ground cover in the forest includes Indian cucumber roots, blueberries, wood ferns, pink ladyslippers, and wild oats.



**The forest has reclaimed an area within Chalet WMA that was once cleared; here the Smith Cemetery lies under the forest canopy.**

The Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife (DFW) have identified several areas in Dalton that support plant communities designated as Priority and Exemplary Natural Communities. These are assemblages of plant and animal species that share a common environment, which have limited distribution statewide, or which are deemed to be exemplary examples of more common community types. For example, Rich, Mesic Forest, and Spruce-Fir Boreal Swamp are found in the Chalet WMA, and Rich, Mesic Forest is found on and around Day Mountain in the center of town. Rich, Mesic Forests are a variant of northern hardwood forests, dominated by sugar maple with a diverse herbaceous layer that includes many spring wildflowers, in a moist,

nutrient-rich environment. Spruce-Fir Boreal Swamps are forested wetlands found at stream headwaters or in poorly drained basins in the higher elevations of the state (NHESP, 2011). These forested swamps are already surviving at the southern edge of their range and are at high risk of disappearing from the state due to a warming climate and invasive insect species.

## Public Shade Trees

Mature trees along the Town's roadways contribute to the Town's rural character, adding complexity and depth to private and commercial properties. Additionally, they provide cooling shade for walking residents and school children. Dalton residents remember when large mature elm trees lined and provided a stately canopy along Main Street. Those trees were lost to Dutch Elm Disease and Main Street is now lined with maples, lindens and other species, as seen in the photograph here.

Dalton's long-serving Tree Warden (1999-2012) actively pursued tree management and plantings. A street tree inventory of the Town was conducted in 1999, involving more than 2,000 trees and planting sites across Dalton. At that time, only 20% of trees inventoried were large (greater than 24" in diameter). Fifty species were represented within the inventory, with 66% of trees being maple species. Recommendations included tree removals, pruning and planting of new trees each year. In 2002 the Town of Dalton was designated as a Tree City U.S.A. by the National Arbor Day Foundation, a designation that it has retained. As stated in the official designation letter, "Trees help clean our air and water, moderate heat and cold, and bring warmth and grace to our homes." Since its designation, the Town of Dalton has applied for and received grant funds each year to plant trees in areas where mature trees have been lost or where they are needed to provide public shade. The most recent planting of new trees has been in front of the Dalton Free Public Library in 2021.

Public shade trees are defined as trees located along the roadways within the public right of way and are regulated by Massachusetts General Law Chapter 87. This law outlines the authorities of the



***Main Street Dalton, looking east towards Town Hall and Library***



***Two new plantings in front of the Library in 2021***

Town’s Tree Warden, establishes procedures for cutting or removing public shade trees, and sets penalties for violations. The cutting and maintenance of trees along town-owned roads can only occur by first holding a public hearing, or gaining approval from the Town’s Select Board, or in the case of designated Scenic Roads, the Town’s Planning Board. Gulf Road has been designated by the Town as a local scenic road, partly due to the natural forest canopy through which the gravel road travels. Although not designated as local scenic roads, the drives down Grange Hall and Kirchner Roads descending from the hills into the lower elevations of the Town are made more beautiful because of the natural tree canopy.

Trees located along state highways are the jurisdiction of MassDOT, and do not require a public hearing to be cut, unless the cutting is part of a large improvement project. Removal of shade trees and a replanting program was conducted as part of MassDOT’s full road reconstruction for South Street and Housatonic Street.

### Rare, Threatened, and Endangered Species

The following list of rare and endangered species comes from the Massachusetts Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP), as listed in a letter from DFW dated May 4, 2020 (see Appendix A). The State Rank indicates Special Concern (SC) species are natives that have suffered a decline which could threaten the species, or have a small number, limited distribution, or specialized habitat; Threatened (T) species are likely to become endangered in the future; Endangered (E) species are in danger of extinction. To protect some rare plants and animals that reside within these areas and could fall prey to collectors, NHESP does not reveal the exact site of some individual plant and animal populations.

**Table 6: Rare Plants in Dalton**

Taxonomic Group	Scientific name	Common Name	State Rank
Vascular Plant	<i>Equisetum Scirpoides</i>	Dwarf Scouring-rush	SC
Vascular Plant	<i>Linnaea Borealis</i>	American Twinflower	SC
Plant	<i>Name not released</i>	NA	SC

The large amount of forest lands provides a wealth of opportunities for outdoor recreation such as walking, hiking, mountain biking, cross-country skiing, and snowmobiling. These lands also provide abundant wildlife habitat, which enables additional outdoor recreational opportunities such as fishing, hunting, and bird watching. The Appalachian Trail brings hiking enthusiasts from all over the world as they hike the 2,174-mile trail. The picturesque scenery along with the fall season foliage are enjoyed by residents and visitors alike.

### 4E. Fisheries and Wildlife (Refer to Map 10: Vegetation and Fisheries and Wildlife)

Berkshire County is one of the most ecologically diverse and intact natural landscapes in the state. The region provides important expansive forest habitat that connects the northern forests of New England and New York northward to Canada and southward to the forests of the Appalachian Mountain chain, providing habitat and safe passage for roaming animals like black bear, fisher and bobcat and treetop habitat for migratory birds. The Nature Conservancy has recognized the importance of the Berkshire Highlands forest that blanket the county’s eastern border, which includes the Town of Dalton (BRPC, 2014). Providing travel ways will be increasingly important as some animal and plant species may need to migrate northward or higher in elevation to continue

to survive in a warming climate. Large blocks of habitat are particularly important for animal populations that need large territories to sustainably live, breed and disperse, such as black bears and moose.

Wildlife corridors between protected areas are important to the survival of threatened, rare and endangered species. The forest that covers the northern portion of Dalton provides cover and a migratory corridor for many species of wildlife, connecting protected lands in neighboring Lanesborough and Cheshire, to lands in Windsor and Peru. NHESP has noted that the northern forest is probably an important corridor for the rare Mustard White butterfly, a rare species. In addition, the forests of southern and eastern Dalton provide travel corridors between southeastern Pittsfield and northern Lenox, to Hinsdale and Washington

Wildlife is abundant throughout Dalton, including several popular game species such as deer, bear, and turkey, and fish such as trout and bass. Hunting is allowed in the Chalet and Day Mountain WMAs, in the Boulders, and on many private lands with permission from the owners. Fishing is popular on several stretches of the East Branch Housatonic River. Several duck, heron, hawk, and owl species can be found, as well as rare and common songbirds. Bald eagles and peregrine falcons are once again commonly seen for those who look for them. The open marsh area within The Pines offers the opportunity to see a variety of birds year-round.

The waterways, forests and vernal pools provide habitat for common and rare reptiles and amphibians, and for common and rare insects, which provide the basis of the food chain for the wildlife we enjoy. Wildlife can also be found in the densely developed town center for those animals who are less shy of humans, such as several songbirds, fox, coyote, bear, and deer. Small populations of moose are known to inhabit nearby hilltown communities and will occasionally wander through Dalton.

### **Coldwater Fisheries**

There are 10 Coldwater Fisheries that flow through Dalton, including the East Branch Housatonic River and many of its tributaries. These streams support brook trout and other thermal-sensitive aquatic species, many of which are rare. Cold water fisheries, like the spruce-fir forest swamps, are increasingly stressed due to warmer air and soil temperatures due to climate change. The East Branch Housatonic is noted by DFW as an important Aquatic Core for Species of Conservation Concern, hosting rare species of concern, including fish, birds, and insects.

### **Vernal Pools**

Vernal pools are indispensable to biodiversity, both locally and globally. In many upland areas, where the nearest wetland or other waterbody is thousands of feet away, vernal pools are the only aquatic breeding grounds in the area. Some of the state's rarest amphibians, including the mole salamanders (Jefferson, spotted, marbled salamanders) and some species of freshwater snails and clams, are inexorably linked to the vernal pool in which they were hatched. Most live out their lives within ¼ miles of their natal pool, returning to breed. For a species with a narrow or small distribution, a specific vernal pool may be the only place in the region that the creature is found. If that pool is destroyed, that specific population of creatures could become locally extinct.

Vernal pools are most often found in the Berkshires in woodland areas, where evaporation from sunlight is limited due to the forest canopy. In Dalton there are 11 certified pools and 17 documented potential vernal pools, although that number could be higher.



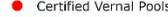
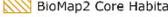
*Above: A vernal pool in Peru MA*

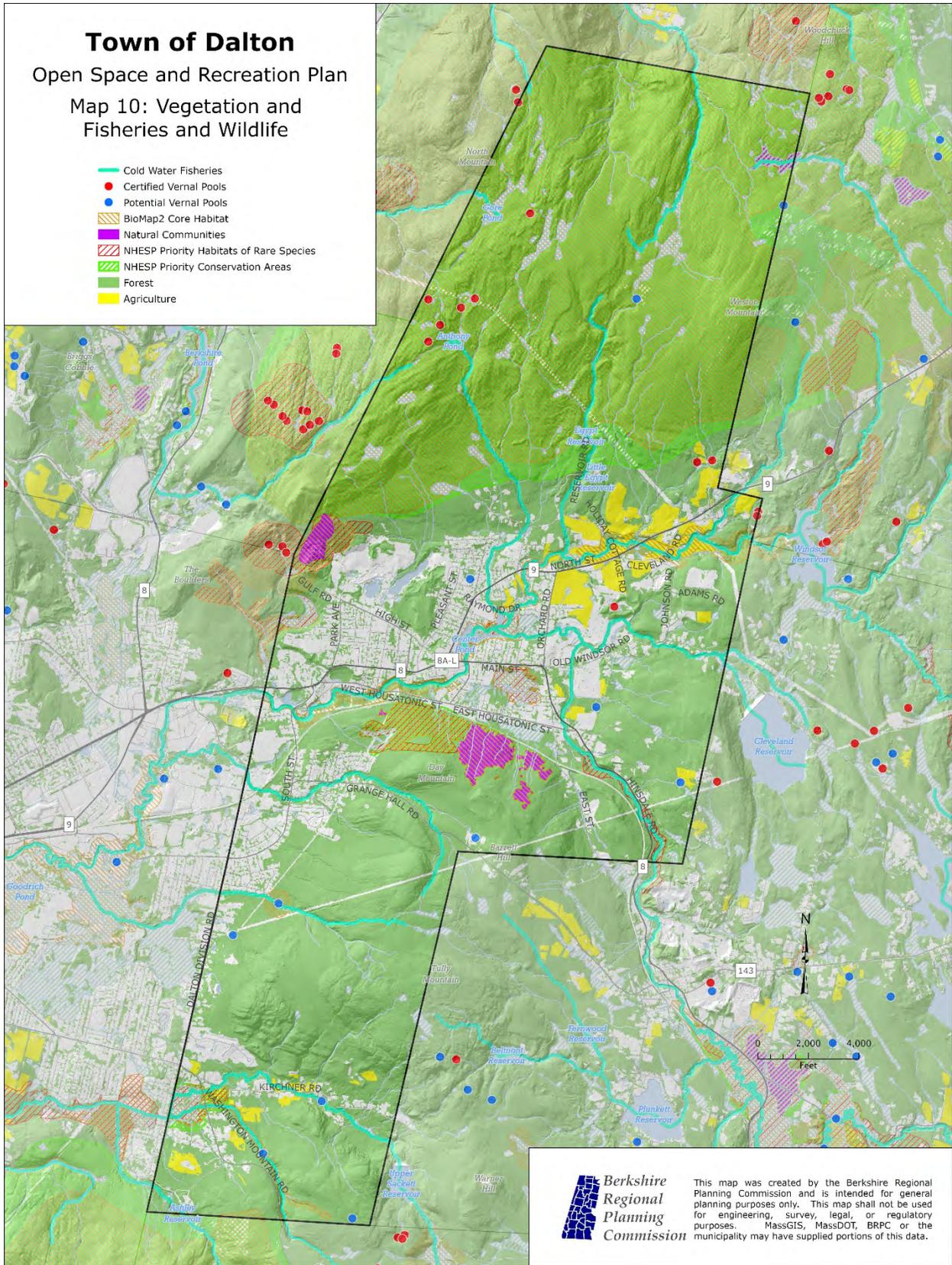
*Right: Wood frog egg masses in that same pool*



*Photos Courtesy L. Gaherty*

**Town of Dalton**  
 Open Space and Recreation Plan  
 Map 10: Vegetation and Fisheries and Wildlife

-  Cold Water Fisheries
-  Certified Vernal Pools
-  Potential Vernal Pools
-  BioMap2 Core Habitat
-  Natural Communities
-  NHESP Priority Habitats of Rare Species
-  NHESP Priority Conservation Areas
-  Forest
-  Agriculture



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## Rare, Threatened and Endangered Species (see Priority Habitat Areas Maps 8 and 10)

Areas within Dalton where rare plants and animals have been documented to exist in the northern forests in Chalet WMA, in a wetland off of Old Windsor Road, the area north and east of Day Mountain, along the lower slopes of Brattle Brook and along Hathaway Brook.

The American Bittern, a shy water bird, nests and hides in areas thick with cattails and marsh grasses. The wood turtle over-winters in stream banks but spend most of their time in the riparian forest that lines the stream. The higher-gradient streams of the northern and southern portions of town provide habitat for the rare Spring Salamander.

The forests of northern Dalton, bordering with Lanesborough and northeastern Pittsfield, includes a large tract of undeveloped and unfragmented Northern Hardwood forest, with sunny openings that is inhabited by the rare Eastern Veined White butterfly. This forest probably allows for the dispersal of individuals between sites known to harbor the butterflies in Windsor and Pittsfield. While much of this area is protected, efforts should be made to expand the protection to ensure unfragmented forest for this rare species. Map 10 indicates the approximate distribution of these species and more detailed discussion of individual species can be found in DFW reports drafted in 2011 and 2012 (see Appendix A).

The following list of rare and endangered species comes from the Massachusetts Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program, as listed in a letter from DFW dated May 4, 2020. The State Rank indicates Special Concern (SC) species are natives that have suffered a decline which could threaten the species, or have a small number, limited distribution, or specialized habitat; Threatened (T) species are likely to become endangered in the future; Endangered (E) species are in danger of extinction. To protect some rare plants and animals that reside within these areas and could fall prey to collectors, NHESP does not reveal the exact site of some individual plant and animal populations.

Table 7: Rare Animals in Dalton

Taxonomic Group	Scientific Name	Common Name	State Rank
Reptile	<i>Clemmys Insculpta</i>	Wood Turtle	SC
Amphibian	<i>Ambystoma Jeffersonianum</i>	Jefferson Salamander (complex)	SC
Bird	<i>Botaurus Lentiginosus</i>	American Bittern	E
Dragonfly/Damselfly	<i>Boyeria Grafiana</i>	Ocellated Darner	SC
Butterfly/Moth	<i>Euphyes Dion</i>	Dion Skipper	T
Butterfly/Moth	<i>Pieris Oleracea</i>	Mustard White	T

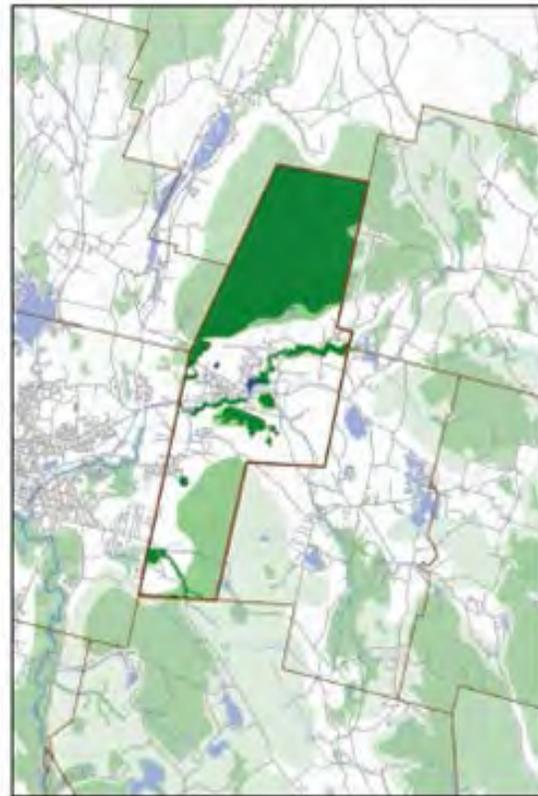
## Pulling it all Together: Priority Conservation Areas (Refer to BioMap2 Guiding Land Conservation for Biodiversity in MA, 2011)

BioMap2 is a statewide mapping project that combines 30 years of rare species and natural community data from the NHESP with wildlife species and habitat assessments. Additionally, BioMap2 data integrates the Nature Conservancy's assessment of large, connected, and intact ecosystems across the state to determine areas most suited for the long-term protection of

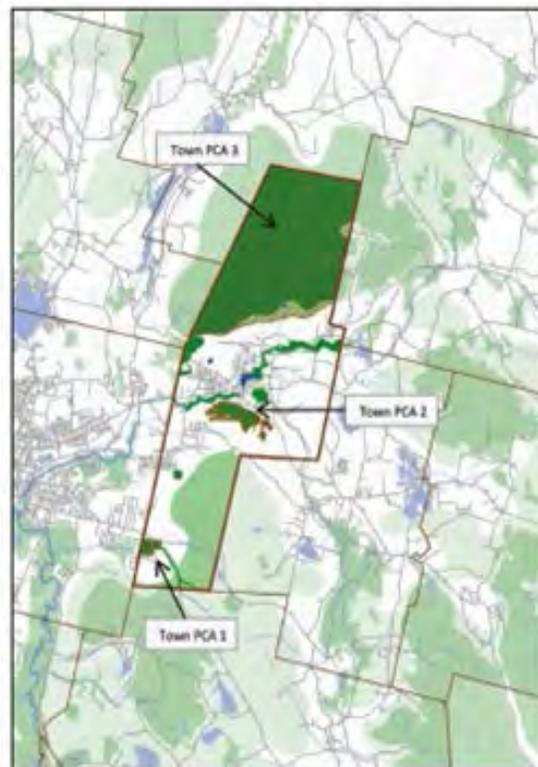
biodiversity in the state (NHESP, 2011). BioMap2 identifies two complementary spatial layers, Core Habitat and Critical Natural Landscapes. Core Habitat identifies key areas that are critical for the long-term persistence of rare species as well as a wide diversity of natural communities and intact ecosystems. Critical Natural Landscapes identifies large landscape blocks that are minimally impacted by development or fragmentation. If protected, these areas will provide habitat for wide-ranging native species, support intact ecological processes, maintain connectivity among habitats and enhance ecological resilience to disturbances in a changing world.

Taking these analyses one step further, NHESP prioritized areas in each town in the Housatonic River Watershed to help communities and local conservation organizations focus their land protection and stewardship efforts. These areas are termed Priority Conservation Areas (PCAs), of which three have been delineated in Dalton. The results of this effort are found in the NHESP's *Guiding Land Conservation for Biodiversity in Massachusetts* (2011).

- Town PCA 1: This is an approximately 70-acre area in southwestern Dalton, with many wetlands that support an Endangered marsh bird and two Threatened butterfly species. This area is on private, unprotected lands and vulnerable to development. (See Map 13 Action Map for location of this area)
- Town PCA 2: This is a 235-acre area in central Dalton, north and downslope of Day Mountain, supporting large patches of Rich, Mesic Forest, and a plant of Special Concern. Fortunately, this area is already under permanent conservation protection.
- Town PCA 3: This is an almost 5,000-acre area encompassing a large portion of northern Dalton. This large, forested area supports a Spruce-Fir Forested Swamp, three sensitive salamander species, rare marsh birds and raptors. Fortunately, this area is already under permanent conservation protection.



Core Habitat + Critical Natural Landscape



Town Priority Conservation Areas

#### 4F. Scenic Resources and Unique Environments (Refer to Map 8: Unique Features)

##### Scenic Landscapes and Unique Environmental Features

The Appalachian Trail is by far the most accessible route into northern and southern parts of Dalton's least populated regions. The state and federal governments manage and provide upkeep for the lands that the trail goes through. It is well documented that hiking the trail provides unique opportunities to see large vistas and the unique landscapes of largely unpopulated land.



**Spectacular views of Mt. Greylock can be found from within the rugged terrain of Chalet WMA.**

Wahconah Falls Brook flows over several smaller falls before ending in the 40-foot Wahconah Falls. The cascades are attractive year-round, but peak flows during spring melt and after high rainfall events are especially majestic. The Falls has been given a rating of 4 out of 5 by the authors of the *New England Waterfalls*, a guidebook to more than 500 cascades/waterfalls in New England. The Falls are located within Wahconah State Park, where visitors can sit and enjoy the falls from large boulders lining the streambank or picnic at tables provided near the parking area. The Park also offers a half-mile loop trail.

The Boulders property hosts large bedrock boulder outcrops. The weathered chunks of gray rock, some stacked like steps, are a handy rest stop after a moderate climb. The bedrock of this property is primarily pelitic rock, a metamorphosed fine-grained sedimentary rock. The large outcrops on the boulders ridge show part of a concentric arcing called a “lunate fracture.” These form as an interaction between ice, pressure, and a very hard rock like the quartzite found here (BNRC, 2020). Scenic views reward those who reach the summit (noted with a red star near the word The Boulders on Map 8, the Unique Features).

The Gulf is a rugged wooded area in the west central part of Dalton. Natural resources and history intersect in this area, known to be an African American enclave in this predominantly white community. The Gulf was inhabited by free black citizens and sheltered run-aways fleeing slavery. The Fitch-Hoose House is a house museum depicting the type of homes African Americans lived in during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. This area is also where one can access The Boulders and the Appalachian Trail (see red star on Gulf Road, Map 8, Unique Features).

North Main Street (Route 9) offers a scenic drive by car or bicycle. Where the downtown of Dalton provides a glimpse of a historic industrial town center, Route 9 provides a glimpse of Dalton’s agricultural heritage. The lighter green and yellow farm fields at the foothills of North Mountain provide a pleasant contrast to the darker green of the forested uplands (see red star on North Street, Map 8, Unique Features). The Town has many trees that run along the roads and keep the roads shaded and a feeling that you are not in a busy town. The forest is a green fringe the gives the Town a strong natural pleasingly esthetic appearance. Traveling from neighboring Hinsdale, down Grange Hall Road, offers long-range views of the mountains to the west, with settled Pittsfield in the foreground. The road is a corridor cut out of the forest, and the roadside trees frame the view ahead. Gulf Road is a local Scenic Road.

### **Cultural, Archeological and Historic Areas**

Dalton is a rural town with a Main Street that reflects its historic paper mill heritage. Many of the stately brick homes were built by members of the Crane family, such as Sugar Hill, which was built for Senator Winthrop Crane and is now restored for use as an extended care facility, and Model Farm, which is now owned by an investment firm. The Crane Museum is an invaluable source of knowledge on the beginning of how paper was made in the early and particularly by the Crane family. Dalton has several sites of significance that are on the National Register of Historic Places. These include the Craneville Historic District, Dalton Grange Hall site, the Crane Museum (Old Stone Mill Rag Room), the Fitch-Hoose House, the East Street Cemetery, the Main Street Cemetery, and the Fairview Cemetery.

The Fitch-Hoose House is an interpretive museum that honors the families that came to the area for safety and freedom. Fitch-Hoose House and Gulf Road (where the house is located) are a part of the Upper Housatonic Valley African American Heritage Trail and are believed to be part of the Underground Railroad.

The Appalachian National Scenic Trail (AT) travels through Dalton. The trail crosses Tully Mountain in Hinsdale, across Day Mountain and descends into downtown Dalton, before ascending northward over North Mountain. There are several access points in the Dalton area where one can park the car and hike a portion of the AT, including Pittsfield Road in Hinsdale, and Grange Hall

Road, Housatonic Street, and Gulf Road in Dalton. Hikers traveling the AT are a familiar site, as they often frequent the local motel, restaurants, and shops to rest and/or restock their supplies.

#### **4G. Environmental Challenges**

The Dalton Open Space and Recreation Committee, using the guidance provided by the *Open Space and Recreation Planner's Workbook* (EOEEA, 2008), has identified the pressing environmental challenges that face the Town.

##### **Landfills, Brownfields and Hazardous Waste Sites**

Currently, the Town has two closed and capped landfills, both located off High Street and Park Avenue: the Dalton Landfill and, to its east, the Warren Farms Landfill. The Dalton Transfer Station and Compost Site is located on Bridle Path Road at the end of Park Avenue. The Town of Dalton has in recent years aggressively cleaned up threatening brownfield sites, including those at the North Mountain Park, former Dalton High School, properties on Housatonic Street, and the former gas station/auto repair shop on North Street.

The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) keeps track of hazardous waste sites, which range in scope from simple spills that happen during a fuel oil delivery to complex Superfund sites. The most commonly triggered notification criterion is the sudden spill of more than 10 gallons of a petroleum product. According to the DEP, there are no federal hazardous waste sites in Dalton. However, since 1987 there have been 77 Reportable Releases of hazardous chemicals, most of which consist of oil spills. Eight sites involved hazardous materials, and remedial work has been completed or is within the administrative oversight process on all but one of these sites. The only hazardous materials site for which the responsible party has failed to provide the required cleanup plan submittal to the DEP is the Warren Property near the closed landfill. This site is not located within the midst of any residential neighborhoods, but it is located within ½ mile of the central downtown residential areas, including the EJ Block Group 4 neighborhood (see Map 2, EJ). There are also four other sites, three of which are oil spills, at which the responsible party failed to provide the required cleanup plan submittal to the DEP. These sites are displayed as purple dots on Map G, Environmental Challenges. The complete list of these sites can be found at <https://eeonline.eea.state.ma.us/portal#!/search/wastesite>.

##### **Erosion and Excessive Sedimentation**

There are no areas within Dalton where excessive erosion of riverbank or erosion from severe storms impact property, roads or other infrastructure. Drainage channels along steeply-sloped roadways occurs during severe storm events, and these severe storms seem to be increasing in number and severity in recent years. Some erosion of streambank along Wahconah Falls Brook has occurred during severe storm events, with damage done during a dam breach at Windsor Pond dam. The dam has been repaired, and most erosion is believed to be from natural causes due to steep slopes within the watershed.

Sediment-laden waters flow out of Windsor Reservoir during storm events, degrading the water quality of Wahconah Falls Brook and eventually entering Center Pond, in downtown Dalton. Residents have documented a distinct change in the water quality and habitat of Wahconah Falls Brook since a devastating storm in 2003. The water clarity has decreased, sediment has settled in

areas of the stream that once were gravel/stone, and the banks of the stream are scoured and severely eroded. Each storm event delivers new loads of sediment throughout the stream's length.

Sediment naturally settles in Center Pond, behind the Byron-Weston dam, and the sedimentation has for years been diminishing the capacity of the pond to accommodate flood waters or to provide suitable aquatic habitat. The increased sediment load of Wahconah Falls Brook is accelerating the rate of sedimentation of Center Pond. The shallower water levels facilitate plant growth and increases in water temperature and limits the pond's use for recreation. Once the sources of sediment are controlled upstream, then efforts to improve Center Pond itself should commence. Center Pond has repeatedly been cited by residents as a natural and recreational resource worth protecting and improving, and the Town should continue to partner with federal, state, and private entities to fund current and future improvement projects.

## **Flooding**

Dalton updated its existing Hazard Mitigation Plan in 2018. This plan identifies various types of disasters and their impacts on the community. As with many communities in the county, the major environmental hazard facing Dalton is flooding. There are several locations in town that have periodic flooding, usually associated with major storm events such as a tropical storm or hurricane. These include Wahconah Falls Road where it crosses Weston Brook, and Kirchner Road where it crosses Sacket Brook. A major area of concern is Walker Brook which crosses under High Street and travels underground until it reaches the Housatonic River. During heavy rain events the water overwhelms the existing drainage system and threatens the Dalton Senior Center and adjacent housing.

The Town of Dalton has received a Federal Assistance Grant to do an engineering study of the Walker Brook drainage system. The information will be used to develop a plan to alleviate the flooding in the area. The other area of concern is the watershed surrounding and feeding Center Pond. Over the years, sediment from upstream has filled the pond. The capacity to hold water is greatly diminished. The results of flooding have threatened Pomeroy Manor Senior Housing as well as many homes and businesses. In 2019, the Town completed the Municipal Vulnerability Plan which helps the Town identify the numerous areas of concern. A list of action plans and goals were developed to address the flooding issues.

## **Forestry Issues**

The forest lands of Dalton are susceptible to damage from a variety of conditions, including severe weather events, drought and infestations of invasive species and pests. According to the 2020 Massachusetts State Forest Action Plan, the three primary agents of canopy damage in Massachusetts during the years 2012-2017 were gypsy moth (1,481,115 acres), winter moth (300,571 acres), and weather events such as snow, ice, wind, tornado, frost, or hail (75,244 acres). These forest threats are with us still today, with ice damages expected to increase as warming and greater fluctuations occur during the winter season due to climate change

A relatively new but devastating threat is that of the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB), a pest that is expected to ravage ash trees in the same manner that Dutch Elm Disease killed our stately elm trees. The EAB was first discovered in Massachusetts here in Dalton, in 2012. Since that time it has aggressively spread to 168 additional communities in Massachusetts, including every community in Berkshire County. Infestations of the borer result in a very high mortality rate. Early stages of infestation in a tree will be seen in the canopy and upper trunk, but as the population density grows, EAB will infest the lower trunk. Tree damage and eventual mortality is caused by the larval feeding on the trees' cambium, eventually girdling and killing the tree. EAB-dying ash trees are easily identified because of the presence of D-shaped exit holes and bark that is bleached and flaking off. Weakened and dead trees will become safety hazards, especially along streets, utility lines and near structures. An example is a string of ash trees that are dead and dying along Grange Hall / Robinson Road on the Dalton/Hinsdale town boarder (see photo).



**D-shaped holes from EAB**

According to Dicken Crane, a farmer and timber producer in Dalton, there is significant damage to the ash trees in Dalton, specifically in the stands of trees on the sides of the mountains in the area. He believes that in ten years there will be few if any live ash trees in the area, and it will be generations before the ash tree will fully return, if ever.

### Development Impact

Dalton has had limited residential development since the Great Recession beginning 2008, but what has been and is currently being developed is along steeply sloped lands. Currently there is the subdivision and sale of building lots along Grange Hall Road, where trees are being cleared and houses are being built on many large lots along the steeply sloped landscape. Large parcels of land are for sale off Dalton Division Road where residential development would occur on a steeply sloped forested area. Building in these areas can disrupt current wildlife corridors and their habitat by fragmenting forest coverage. Steep-sloped development can increase surface runoff and sedimentation into steeply sloped streams andacerbate flooding in lower elevations downstream.



**EAB-infested ash trees along Robinson Road, Hinsdale (2021). Note the dead crowns and lightened bark of effected trees; closeup of damaged bark of one of the trees shown to the right.**



Because vernal pools are only prominently noticeable part of the year when they hold water, these vital habitats are extremely vulnerable to being destroyed by development. Much of the development in the Berkshires, including Dalton, is occurring by clearing forest lands. The most effective way to protect vernal pools is to identify and certify them. The certification affords the pools and their surrounding area some protection from development. Vernal pools that are associated with Wetland Resources, such as riverfront or forested wetlands, are afforded some protection by the Mass. Wetland Protection Act. However, small, isolated pools not associated with a Wetland Resource are not protected by the Act.

The rare species area most notably unprotected in Dalton are located on privately owned lands on Brattle Brook, at the end of Pleasantview Drive in the Greenridge area of town and in the southwestern portion of town, in the area of Washington Mountain and Kirchner Roads.

Aquatic habitats and their surrounding riparian and floodplain areas are some of our most biologically productive areas, hosting a disproportionately higher number of rare species than corresponding uplands. They provide breeding habitat for reptiles and amphibians who need both water and land to fulfill their life cycles and provide resiliency against the impacts of climate change. Yet only 13% of the Housatonic River's riparian area in Berkshire County is permanently protected from development (BRPC, 2014). A large percentage of riparian habitat has already been developed over past centuries for agricultural, industrial, and residential uses. The Wetlands Protection Act provides some protection from development within 200 feet of streams and rivers, but development is not prohibited entirely from this area. Development within the floodplain is discouraged but can be allowed if compensatory flood storage is created in the vicinity.

## **Surface Water Pollution**

The Housatonic Valley Association has conducted water quality testing in several sites within the East Branch Housatonic River watershed. Water quality testing collected in 2002-03 indicated that lower reaches of Wahconah Falls Brook occasionally suffered from high *E. coli* contamination. Following this revelation, stormwater runoff improvement projects were conducted at local farms in the vicinity. New *E. coli* data collected in 2017-18 indicated that the improvement projects were successful, as the brook in this area largely met the state requirements for primary contact recreational use. However, *E. coli* levels were still high downstream in the brook around the Deming Street area. Due a lack of access in this area, potential sources of contamination have not been identified.

## **Road Runoff**

Dalton's roads often parallel rivers, streams and brooks, and roadways are now recognized as one of the most serious sources of non-point source pollution. Roads are typically crowned to allow water to drain away quickly from the center and onto surrounding lands. If the road has a storm drain system, as many do, the water is collected and piped directly into the nearest waterway. Sand, salt, debris, and auto-derived pollutants enter the waterway untreated. If the road does not have a storm drain system, the water flows off the road and onto the surrounding land.

## Stormwater Runoff Management

Stormwater runoff is the greatest single source of nonpoint pollution in Massachusetts. The Town of Dalton is required to implement programs and practices to control polluted storm water runoff, because portions of the densely developed downtown have been designated as an urban area. It is known that stormwater runoff from urbanized areas contain higher concentrations of pollutants, so the U.S. EPA now requires urban areas to develop, implement and enforce a stormwater management program designed to reduce the discharge of pollutants from its storm drain system.

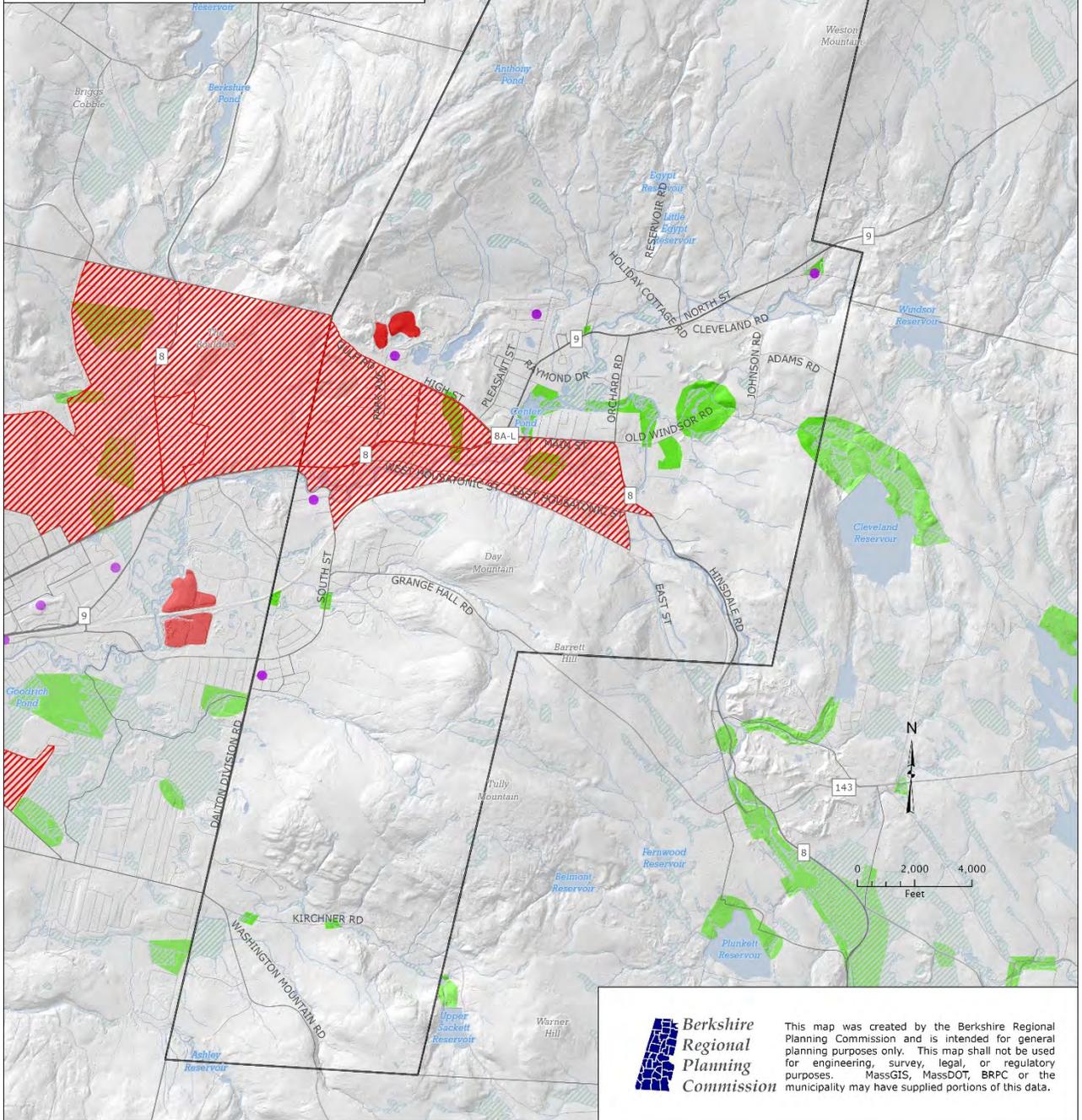
To manage its program, the Town of Dalton has established a Stormwater Management Committee. This committee oversees the implementation of a Stormwater Management Plan, drafted as a requirement under the EPA regulations. The Stormwater Management Committee is made up of key municipal officials, staff, and members of the public. The Stormwater Committee has conducted several activities to control stormwater runoff, including the development of informational brochures, the establishment of a stormwater hotline, and the development of a Sediment and Erosion Control bylaw. The Dalton Stormwater Management Commission continues to search for ways to reduce and control stormwater runoff. Future activities are expected to include storm drain mapping, partner with the Housatonic Valley Association to conduct monitoring, education and storm drain stenciling, and conduct an Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination program.

# Town of Dalton

## Open Space and Recreation Plan

### Map 11: Environmental Challenges

- Closed Landfill
- Flooding Concerns
- Chapter 21e sites
- Environmental Justice Thresholds exceeded
- 0 EJ Criteria Met
- 1 EJ Criteria Met - Median Household Income <65% of State Median



This map was created by the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission and is intended for general planning purposes only. This map shall not be used for engineering, survey, legal, or regulatory purposes. MassGIS, MassDOT, BRPC or the municipality may have supplied portions of this data.

# Section 5: Inventory of Lands of Conservation and Recreation Interest

As noted in *America's Great Outdoors, A Promise to Future Generations*, outdoor recreation provides American's physical and emotional rejuvenation and promotes respect for our natural heritage. Research indicates that regular exposure to nature lowers stress, cultivates creativity, and builds self-confidence among young people. Heritage landscapes, which provide us with a sense of our cultural and agricultural past. Revenue from farms and forests support local families, some of whom have worked the land for generations. Local farms, such as Holiday Farm, also provide fresh produce and meat, while forests provide wood products, heating fuel and maple syrup.

Undeveloped natural lands serve many natural and social functions, including wildlife habitat and corridors, water quality protection, flood control and, with the growing impacts of climate change, carbon sequestration. Conserved undeveloped lands offer residents to enter a fresh and quiet environment and to reconnect with nature. Outdoor recreation is increasingly seen as a way to increase peoples' activity level and combat health issues such as high blood pressure, obesity and diabetes.

Fortunately, the Town of Dalton has a mixture of open space, resources, and recreational areas that add to the quality of life and enjoyed by its residents. The gorges of the river valley are complimented nicely by the hiking trails and scenic vistas over the mountain forests. Approximately 8,800 acres of the land in Dalton (58% of total) is permanently protected from development, with an additional 603 acres of land under the Chapters 61 Program. These areas are under both public and private ownership, and they hold various levels of protection and various amounts of exposure to the possibility of future development, which may limit the level of public enjoyment they offer in the future. The size of the properties open to public recreation vary greatly in size, from the more than 3,600 acres of forested wildlife land within the Chalet Wildlife Management Area (WMA) to the smaller Town-owned neighborhood parks, such as the 7-acre Pinegrove Park.

In general, the larger properties tend to be in areas of higher elevation and often involve steep slopes. The Appalachian Trail travels through Dalton and can be accessed at several sites in Town, offering residents the opportunity to say they have walked a portion of this famous national Trail. Dalton is a designated hiker-friendly Appalachian Trail Community that offers amenities such as overnight stays, showers and food for long-distance hikers traveling through the area.



*Appalachian Trail marker*

This section contains an inventory of the forests, open spaces, cemeteries, and other areas in Town that provide Dalton residents with opportunities for conservation and outdoor recreation. Listed in this section are important parcels with a description of their ownership and management, the level of accessibility to the public, and the level of protection from development they hold.

The lands with the highest level of protection are those owned and managed by the federal and state governments, and those on which conservation deed restrictions have been placed. Other large tracts of undeveloped land with a good deal of protection are the municipal lands such as the drinking water supply lands owned by the City of Pittsfield and the Dalton Fire District. The Town of Dalton owns several open space parcels with varying degrees of protection.

**Table 8: Summary of Open Space Lands with Some Level of Protection (Refer to Map 12: Inventory of Land of Conservation and Recreation Interest)**

Ownership	Size in Acres	Level of Protection
Federal (Appalachian Trail lands)	746	High
State (DCR, DFW)	4,878	High
Private Lands with Conservation Restrictions (APR, CR)	1,646	High
Town of Dalton (includes Craneville Elem. School)	338	Medium
Other municipal lands (City of Pittsfield, Central Berk. Reg. School District)	466	Medium
Land Trust	122	High
Chapter 61 with no permanent protection	603	Low
<b>Total Acres</b>	<b>8,799</b>	
<i>Source: BRPC Open Space Data, Town Assessors Data 2020</i>		

## 5A. Private Parcels

### Private Deed Restricted Conservation Lands

Dalton is fortunate that two of its farming families, the Cranes and Musantes, have enrolled large parcels of their land into permanent conservation programs. Although the property owners retain ownership of the land, they have sold the development rights and, as such, the land must remain undeveloped and/or in agricultural use in perpetuity. Maintaining the working farms in Dalton helps to maintain the Town’s historic and rural character and provides local farm products to residents in the area.

The Town owns 157.7 acres of land off North Street. All but 9.5 acres of this land is protected for agricultural use under the Agricultural Preservation Restriction program. In 2018, voters at Dalton Town Meeting voted to transfer the care, custody, and control of the 9.5 unrestricted acreage “for the purpose of recreation, including sport and physical education.” The Town hopes to create recreational amenities, possibly athletic playing fields and a picnic area, on these 9.5 acres.

The Berkshire Natural Resources Council (BNRC) has accepted ownership of two former Crane and Co. properties, maintaining these lands for non-motorized recreational purposes, including hiking, hunting, and snowshoeing. The Boulders is a 645-acre property, of which 80 acres and a trailhead is located within Dalton. More than six miles of trails are found here, along with scenic views to the Taconic Mountains in the west. An easy 1.4-mile easy trail loop can be accessed off the Gulf Road trailhead. The Old Mill Trail is set along the bank of the Housatonic River, with easy access at its trailhead in Hinsdale. The first half of this 1.5-mile trail is universally accessible and provides access to the river for fishing. Ninety acres of this 127-acre site is in Dalton.

**Table 9: Deed Restricted Conservation Land**

Site Name	Ownership	Acres	Public Access?	CR/APR	Level of Protection
Holiday Brook Farm	Crane	1,194	Y (with permission)	CR: 973 ac. APR: 221 ac.	High
North Mountain Park	Town of Dalton	170	Y	APR	High
Musante Farm	Amy Musante	133	N	APR	High
Bardin Farm	James Bardin	149	N	APR	High
The Boulders	BNRC	80	Y	CR	High
Old Mill Trail	BNRC	42	Y	CR	High
Housatonic River Access	Crane and Co.	48	Y	CR	High
<b>Total Acres</b>		<b>1,646</b>			

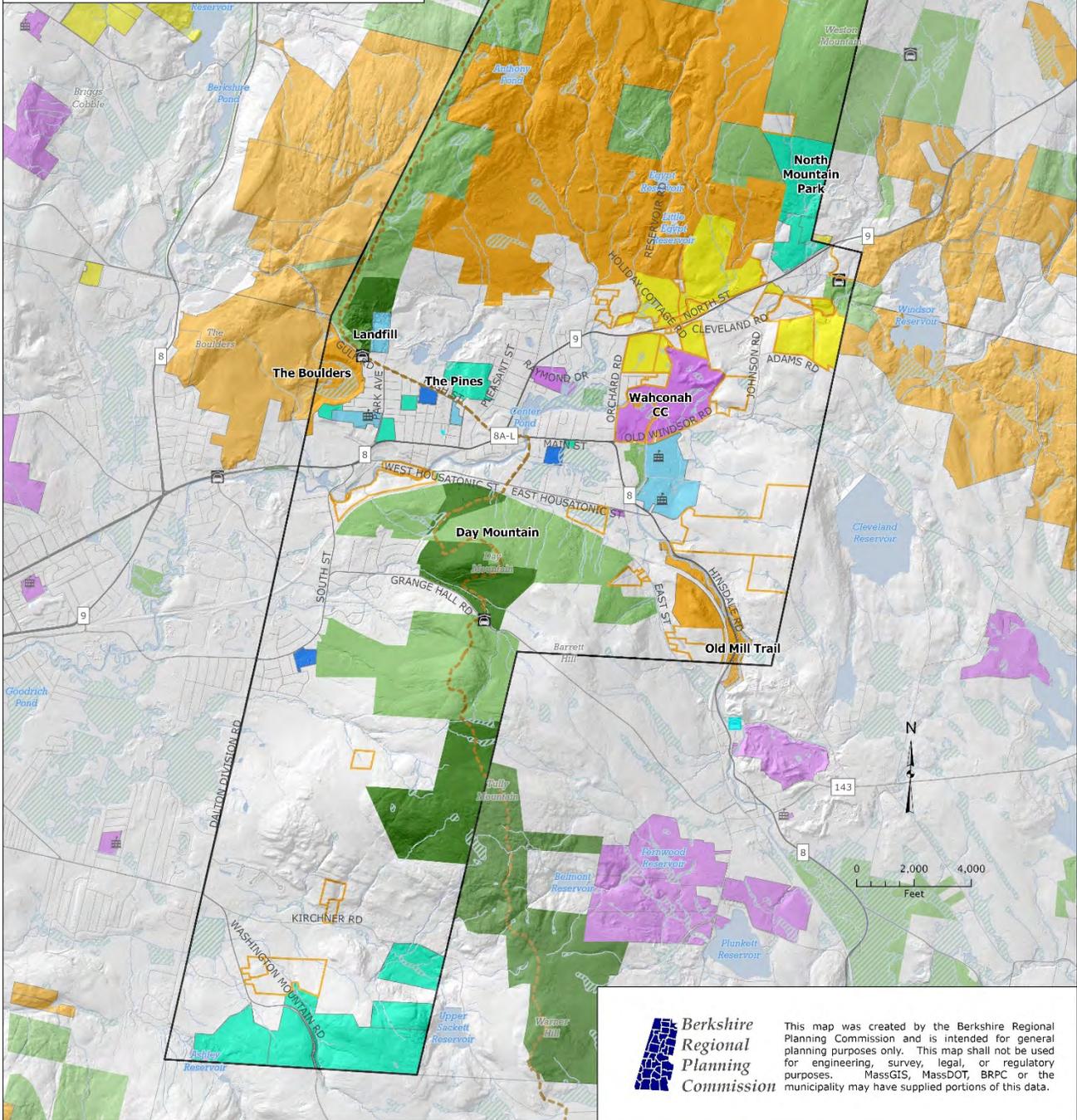
*Source: BRPC Open Space Data, Town Assessors Data 2020; Dalton Town Assessor communications June 2020*

# Town of Dalton

## Open Space and Recreation Plan

### Map 12: Inventory of Land of Conservation and Recreation Interest

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <span style="color: green;">■</span> Federal                 | <span style="color: lightblue;">■</span> Municipal - Other                                |
| <span style="color: limegreen;">■</span> State               | <span style="color: purple;">■</span> Recreational Land (Not Protected)                   |
| <span style="color: yellow;">■</span> APR                    | <span style="border: 1px solid orange;">□</span> Chapter 61, 61A, 61B                     |
| <span style="color: orange;">■</span> CR                     | <span style="color: brown;">—</span> Appalachian Trail                                    |
| <span style="color: cyan;">■</span> Municipal - Conservation |  School  |
| <span style="color: blue;">■</span> Municipal - Recreation   |  Parking |



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## Chapter 61 Tax Program Lands

There are 17 property owners that have placed all or a portion of their lands into one of the Chapter 61 Tax Abatement Programs. The total acreage of land enrolled in the Chapter 61 tax programs in Dalton is 2,386 acres. The largest land area is Wahconah Country Club, a semi-private 161-acre 18-hole golf course established in 1930. There is a fee to play golf, but the owners allow free use of the course for sliding, snowshoeing and cross-country skiing in the winter.

Chapter 61 is a tax abatement program that offers a 95% tax savings to forest landowners. The intent of the program is to protect and enhance the state's timber-producing capacity. To qualify for Chapter 61, landowners must have a minimum of 10 acres that are suitable for timber production. Like Chapter 61, Chapter 61A is a voluntary enrollment program for preferential tax assessment based on current agricultural use of the land. Chapter 61A requires a 5-acre minimum of agricultural land which must produce a minimum number of agricultural products. Chapter 61B is a recreational land classification program designed to encourage the preservation of open space and promote recreational uses. To qualify for Chapter 61B the landowner's property must consist of at least 5 acres that are suitable for recreational purposes. Wahconah Country Club golf course is enrolled in the program. The program offers a 75% tax savings.

The Chapter 61 tax programs are of interest to municipalities for two main reasons. First, lands that are managed for forest, agricultural or recreational uses remain open and scenic, helping communities maintain their historically rural roots. Second, if a property that is enrolled in any of the Chapter 61 programs is placed on the real estate market for a change of use, the Town has a 120-day right of first refusal to purchase the property at fair market value. For example, if a farm purchased for the development of a subdivision or a commercial use, which is different from its current agricultural use, then the Town has the right to purchase that property before anyone else. This gives the community some control over the destiny of its rural character. If the Town does not acquire the land and it does change use, the tax savings that had accumulated during the land's enrollment in the Chapter 61 program must be paid back in full prior to the land use taking place.

There are 1,823 acres of land in Dalton that are enrolled in the Chapter 61s tax programs. Of these, 1,220 acres have permanent conservation or agricultural deed restrictions, making them permanently protected from development. This leaves a total of 603 acres of land temporarily protected by only the Chapter 61 tax programs. Table 10 lists the lands that are enrolled in Chapter 61 tax programs and are not permanently protected from development.

Table 10: Chapter 61, 61A, 61B Properties

Site Name or Area	Ownership	Acres	Public Access?	Level of Protection
Wahconah Country Club	Wahconah Country Estates Inc.	162	Y, golf fees	Low
Holiday Brook Farm	Holiday Farm, Inc.	113	Y (with permission)	Low
Musante Farm	Amy Musante Nominee Trust	35	No	Low
Washington Mt. Rd.	Stacey Carver Revocable Trust	61	No	Low
Watson Rd.	Robt and Karen Ebbeling	41	No	Low
West Housatonic St.	Crane and Co.	37	No	Low
East St.	Kevin LaCasse	23	No	Low
East St.	Richard Ladd	23	No	Low
Kirchner Rd.	Peri and Cindy Campoli	19	No	Low
East Housatonic St.	Timothy LeClair	18	No	Low
Off Chalet Rd.	Peter Bardin	18	No	Low
Rear Anthony Rd.	Robt. and Dolores Farrell	12	No	Low
East St.	Edward and Valerie Gero	12	No	Low
Washington Mt. Rd.	Washington Mt. Irrevocable Trust	10	No	Low
Rear Dalton Div. Rd.	John MacKenzie	10	No	Low
Pease Ave.	Ralph Suriner	8	No	Low
Wahconah Country Club	Wahconah Country Club, Inc.	1	Yes	Low
<b>Total Acres</b>		<b>603</b>		

*Source: BRPC Open Space Data, Town Assessors Data 2020*

### Privately Owned Recreational Areas Without Protections

Dalton has lands owned by various private entities that are open to the public for recreational use. Some properties can be accessed free of charge, while others can be used for a fee. Either way, these lands are valuable assets providing the public with an array of recreational opportunities. The lands and their use are varied, such as the Community Recreation Association (CRA) (non-profit community center), Center Pond (created by Crane Company dam) and the Jeff Reardon Field (playing fields, owned by the nonprofit American Legion).

The American Legion has several athletic fields and a picnic area located on North Street on a 23-acre parcel. The Dalton Legion and the CRA have an agreement that allows the use of fields for recreational use. They also rent out the area for events, carnival, circus etc. They allow general

usage for recreation only. They have a pavilion at the rear of the property that is rented out for parties, family picnics etc.

The area known as Center Pond is in the process of being transferred to the Mass. Dept of Wildlife by Crane Co.



**Center Pond**

**Table 11: Privately-Owned Unprotected Recreational Areas**

Site Name	Ownership	Acres	Public Access?	Level of Protection
Jeff Reardon Field	American Legion Post 155	23	Y	Low
Center Pond	Crane Company	16	Y	Medium
CRA	Trustees of WM Crane	6	Grounds open; fee for programs	Medium
VFW Picnic Area	Veterans of Foreign Wars	3.5	Yes, with permission	Low
St. Patrick's Cemetery	St. Patrick's, Hinsdale	3.5	Y	High
<b>Total Acres</b>		<b>52</b>		

*Source: BRPC Open Space Data, Town Assessors Data 2020*

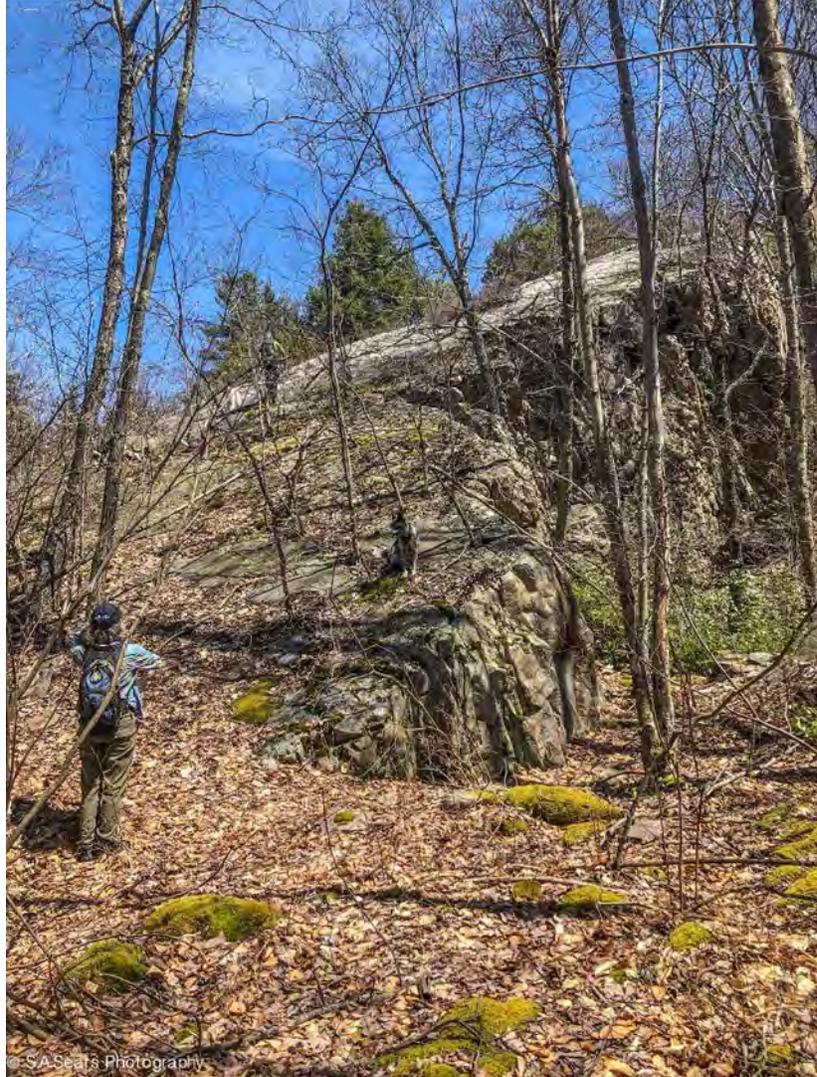
## 5B. Public and Non-Profit Parcels

### State and Federal Lands

A large percentage of open space in the Town of Dalton is publicly owned. These lands are owned by the National Park Service, Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife (DFW), and the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR). The DFW owns Chalet WMA, a 7,000-acre site of which a large portion is within northern Dalton, and Day Mountain which is in the central part of the Town. These properties are primarily managed for wildlife habitat, hunting, and hiking; no motorized vehicles are allowed on the properties, but illegal motorized use of Chalet is well documented. There is no easy access into Chalet WMA except for the AT, which runs through the heart of the property. DFW also owns two parcels of land along the Housatonic River; one 17-acre site has limited parking at the DFW office on Old Windsor Road, while the other 10-acre parcel, located off of Orchard Road, has no access. The National Park Service owns much of the land along the Appalachian Scenic National Trail (AT), which travels 10 miles north-south through the center of Town.

The DCR owns Wahconah Falls State Park, located in the eastern part of Town. The park has picnicking facilities as well as hiking trails to the falls and fishing. Wahconah Falls Brook flows over several smaller tiered falls then cascades about 40 feet into a deep pool.

**Rugged terrain within Chalet WMA**



**Table 12: State- and Federally Owned Land in Dalton**

Site Name	Ownership	Acres in Dalton	Public Access?	Level of Protection
Appalachian Trail	US Park Service	746	Y	High
Appalachian Trail	DCR	810	Y	High
Chalet WMA	DFW	3,647	Y	High
Day Mountain WMA	DFW	372	Y	High
Housatonic River Access	DFW	27	Y	High
Wahconah Falls State Park	DCR	22	Y	High
<b>Total Acres</b>		<b>5,624</b>		

*Source: Source: BRPC Open Space Data, Town Assessors Data 2020*

## Municipal Lands

In general, most water supply protection and municipal conservation and recreational lands are protected under Massachusetts Article 97 if they were acquired with conservation and/or recreation in mind. Article 97 expressly states that Massachusetts citizens have a Right to a Clean Environment. This authorizes local and the state governments to utilize their traditional Police Powers (public health, safety, welfare and morals) to protect and promote the environment in general. Article 97 requires a two-thirds roll call vote of each house of the state legislature in order to dispose of or change the use of certain local, county or state lands taken or acquired for natural resources purposes, which is broadly defined.



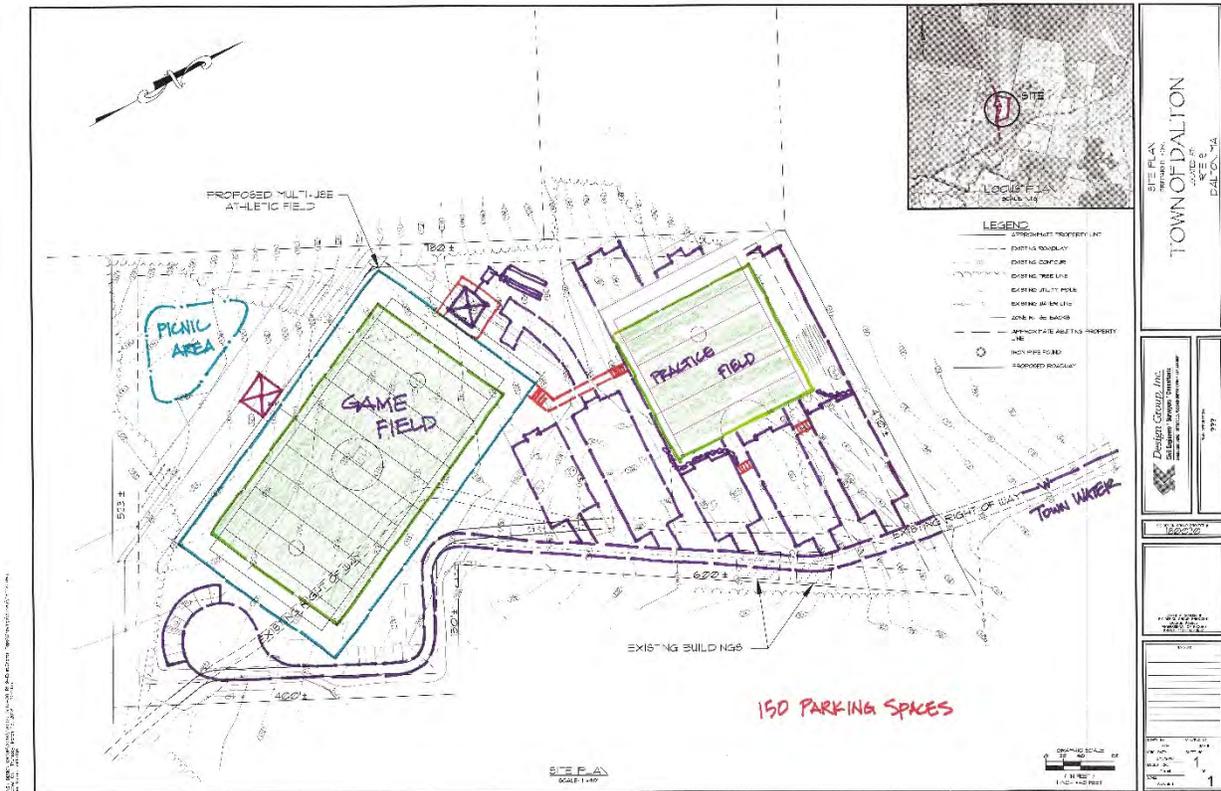
*The Pines*

Lands owned or managed by the Town of Dalton total 338 acres and are scattered throughout the Town. The Town owns three parks, each with a playground and each with a set of athletic fields: Pine Grove Park in the heart of the downtown, Greenridge Park in the southern Greenridge neighborhood, and Chamberlain Park in the north-central part of Town. A report on the status and conditions of the parks is found in Appendix C.

The Pines, off High and Pleasant Streets, is an untapped resource, a 42-acre forested parcel of land with an informal trail system within easy walking distance of the densely developed town center. There is interest within the community in improving and expanding the trail system of this park to increase its recreational value and use. Improved parking and establishing an interpretive program could not only improve access and recreational opportunities but also provide awareness of the park's natural resources.

The Town owns 157.7 acres of land, known as the Bardin properties, off North Street. All but 9.5 acres of this land is protected for agricultural use under the Agricultural Preservation Restriction program. In 2018 voters at Dalton Town Meeting voted to transfer the care, custody, and control of the 9.5 unrestricted acreage "for the purpose of recreation, including sport and physical education." The Town hopes to create recreational amenities, possibly athletic playing fields and a picnic area, on these 9.5 acres. The area designated the North Mountain Park is in the preliminary stages of planning with a private organization of citizens spearheading the project. There is hope that future funding for development would be provided by grants.

There is also 80 acres of forested land owned by the Town off Kirchner Road, Washington Mountain Road, East Street and View Street. The Town also owns several small parks, located throughout Dalton, which provide outdoor recreational opportunities. These parks provide playgrounds, playing fields and picnic areas.



*Draft Design for Proposed Use of North Mountain Park*

Town-owned cemeteries are valued historic resources to the Town. They are also valued for quiet recreation: as walking trails, a place for quiet contemplation, and a place for birdwatching. Most cemeteries in Dalton are easily accessed and are gently graded for walkers of most abilities. Although cemeteries have no formal protection, it is very unlikely that they would be developed. The Smith Burial Ground was established in 1832. Although located within the Chalet Wildlife Management area, there are no clear access trails to the site.

The City of Pittsfield owns drinking water protection lands in the southern portion of Dalton. Technically the Town of Dalton does not own Central Berkshire School District lands, but because these lands are located within the Town and the residents of Dalton figure heavily in their management, we are including these lands in the municipal category.

The 92-acre parcel of land between Old Windsor Road and Fox Road contains Nessacus Regional Middle School and Wahconah Regional High School. This property contains numerous playing fields, used for football, track and field, soccer, baseball, tennis and lacrosse, and a forested trail connects the two school sites. While these lands are currently considered somewhat protected from development, none have formal deed restrictions prohibiting their sale or their development.

Table 13: Municipally Owned Land

Site Name	Acres	Ownership	Management	Condition	Current Uses	Rec. Potential	Public Access?	Level of Protection	Zoning
The Pines	42	Town of Dalton	Town of Dalton	Good	Hiking	Hiking, biking	Y	High	R1
North Mountain Park (Town Meeting Vote in 2018)	157.7 (APR on all but 9.5 acres)	Town of Dalton	Town of Dalton	Un-developed	Recreational	Hiking, picnic, athletic fields	Y	High	R4
Sackett Reservoir watershed land	44	Town of Dalton	City of Pittsfield	Good	Drinking water protection	N	N	High	R3
Landfill	20	Town of Dalton	Town of Dalton	Good	No formal recreation	Walking track, picnic	Limited	Medium	R1
Craneville Elementary School*	18	Town of Dalton	CBRSD	Good	Playground, soccer, baseball	Link to Boulders	Y	Medium	R3
Greenridge Park*	10	Town of Dalton	Dalton Parks Dept.	Good	Playground, baseball, basketball, soccer	Hiking	Y	Medium	R2
Chamberlin Park*	9	Town of Dalton	Dalton Parks Dept.	Good	Playground, baseball, soccer, basketball	Hiking	Y	Medium	R4
Pine Grove Park*	7	Town of Dalton	Dalton Parks Dept.	Good	Playground, basketball, football, softball, baseball	Picnic	Y	Medium	R4

Site Name	Acres	Ownership	Management	Condition	Current Uses	Rec. Potential	Public Access?	Level of Protection	Zoning
Pittsfield Watershed land	374	City of Pittsfield	City of Pittsfield	Good	Drinking water protection	N	N	High	R3
Wahconah Regional High School and Nessacus Middle School*	92	Berkshire Central Regional School System	CBRSD	Good	Playing fields	Hiking, walking, track, picnic	Y	Medium	R3
Main Street Cemetery	10	Town of Dalton	Dalton Highway / Cemetery Dept.	Good	Quiet solitude	N	Y	High	R4
Ashuelot Street Cemetery	6	Town of Dalton	Dalton Highway / Cemetery Dept.	Good	Quiet solitude	N	Y	High	R1
Fairview Cemetery	6	Town of Dalton	Dalton Highway / Cemetery Dept.	Good	Quiet solitude	N	Y	High	R4
Upper Main Street Cemetery	2	Town of Dalton	Dalton Highway / Cemetery Dept.	Good	Quiet solitude	N	Y	High	R4
Senior Center*	5	Town of Dalton	Town of Dalton	Good	Walking, exercise	Picnic	Y	Medium	R4
<b>Total Acres</b>	<b>804</b>								
<i>Source: BRPC Open Space Data, Town Assessors Data 2020</i>									

*Note: Many of the parks (\*) have level grassed areas that can also provide outdoor exercise and meditative recreation such as yoga and/or Tai Chi*

## Historic Properties and Resources

Historic landscapes, property and buildings contribute to the Town’s charming historic character. Dalton has more than 760 buildings, monuments and other historic areas and resources listed in the Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System database. There are several individual properties or historic districts of note. The Craneville National Historic District includes



*Crane Museum of Papermaking*

264 buildings, 204 of which are contributing properties, spread out over 154 acres. This District reflects the Town’s historic industrial character, including the Crane and Co. mills and buildings, historic Crane family homes and their extensive lawns, and residential neighborhoods that include many early and historic houses. The Fitch-Hoose House is listed on the National Register, located in an area known as The Gulf, an African American enclave that sheltered free blacks or those who had fled slavery. This restored home is now a house museum that depicts how free

African American residents lived during the 19th century. The house is located on the African American Trail within the Upper Housatonic Valley National Heritage Area. The site is near the Appalachian Trail and The Boulders. The Crane Museum, which explains paper making over the centuries, is located within the former Old Stone Mill Rag Room.

Properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places are eligible for potential historic preservation grants, and when grant funds are used historic reviews are undertaken before their owners make alterations that may affect the historic qualities of the facades of these buildings.

**Table 14: Historic Resources**

Name	Location	Preservation Restriction	Historic Designation
Dalton Grange Hall #23 site Demolished in 1987/1988 (Building demolished)	Jnct. South Street and Grange Hall Road	None	National Register –Individual Property
Fitch-Hoose House	Gulf Road	Yes	National Register - Individual Property
Crane Museum - Old Stone Mill Rag Room	Just off Main Street	None	National Register – Individual Property
East Main Street Cemetery	East Main St.	None	National Register – Individual Property
Fairview Cemetery	Curtis Ave.	None	National Register – Individual Property
Main Street Cemetery	321 Main Street	None	State Register
Craneville National Historic District	Follows South Main St. and Park Ave.	None	National Register – Historic District

# Section 6: Community Vision

## 6A. Description of Process

In March of 2020, the Dalton Open Space and Recreation Committee was formed to steer the efforts to develop the Town's second Open Space and Recreation Plan. The open space goals developed for the Dalton Master Plan, completed in 2016, and the first draft, unfinalized Dalton Open Space and Recreation Plan (2006) were used as a foundation upon which the Committee expanded to form the Town's Goals for its second Open Space and Recreation Plan. The Committee armed with data collected by BRPC and with information derived from the public survey formed the updated Goals and Objectives found in this plan. Community input gathered during the public outreach program was incorporated into the findings of this Plan.

## 6B. Statement of Open Space and Recreation Goals

As described in the 2016 Dalton Master Plan:

*The vision for open space and outdoor recreation includes protecting Dalton's treasured open spaces and parks and maintaining the natural and scenic beauty of the Town.*

This statement is still valid today. However, specific goals must be set, and actions must be undertaken to attain this vision as it pertains to open space protection and recreational opportunities. This plan identifies the specific goals and actions that should be undertaken to maintain that vision.

# Section 7: Analysis of Needs

## 7A. Summary of Resource Protection Needs

Dalton is fortunate in that much of its undeveloped lands are protected from future development. Most of these lands are located on rugged forested lands in the north and central, and to some extent southern portions of the Town. These areas provide habitat for resident wildlife and travel corridors that allow wildlife to disperse and travel to other protected areas in neighboring communities. Dispersing and traveling wildlife includes the rare species discussed in previous sections of this plan.

However, as can be seen on the Biological Resources map, the areas where rare species are known to inhabit are the lowlands, of which very little is protected from development. Although the Mass. Wetlands Protection Act affords some level of protection, the areas outside the Act's jurisdiction is not protected from development. Intrusion into these areas could adversely impact species that are easily disturbed by human activities or that rely on both aquatic and terrestrial habitats to complete their lifecycles. Windsor Falls Brook and Cleveland Brook are partially protected by the Wetlands Protection Act but efforts to protect habitat along the brooks should be considered.

Maintaining a clean and healthy watershed is critical to the development and growth of Dalton's rivers as positive resources for its residents. Supporting the Housatonic Valley Association's on-going program for monitoring the chemical and biological health of the watershed should be continued and where possible expanded. This will allow the Town and environmental organizations to track future improvements or degradation.

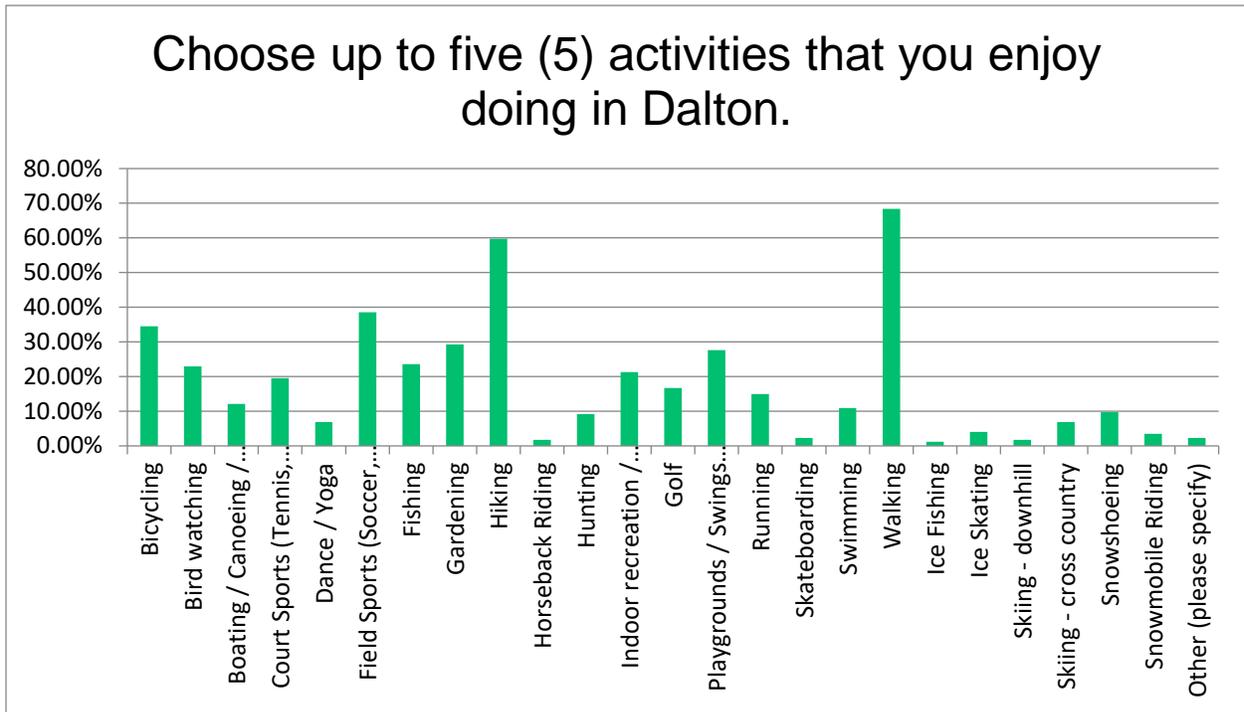
Wahconah Falls Brook continues to suffer from excessive sedimentation. In 2008, the Windsor Reservoir Dam was rebuilt to help address this issue. This sedimentation not only affects the ecology of the stream, but it affects the water quality and storage capacity of Center Pond. This pond is a beloved and historic water resource for town residents and improving its ability to support wildlife and recreational use has consistently been cited as a need by residents and public officials.

The Priority Conservation Area #1 identified by the Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program is an area targeted by that agency for long-term protection of biodiversity. This area is situated between municipally protected lands and conserving this area would create an east-west link and expand natural resources protection lands for protection and movement of wildlife, some of which are rare species.

## 7B. Summary of Community's Needs

In March 2020, the Dalton Open Space and Recreation Plan Committee conducted an Open Space and Recreation Survey as part of the process of updating its Open Space and Recreation plan (The survey results can be found in Appendix B). The electronic survey solicited input via the

Town’s official website, the Dalton Community Recreation Association website and Facebook, and sent out in various community groups email groups. The survey garnered 182 responses, with 8 of them being from non-Dalton residents. Once controlled for only Dalton residents, we had 174 responses. Of the 174 respondents 97% are full-time Dalton residents. The survey asked for respondents to answer thinking about their household, and while the top age groups to answer the survey was 40-49, the top age group they additionally answered for were 10-19.



The graph above gives shows what activities the residents of Dalton enjoy doing. The top five recreation activities are walking, hiking, field sports, bicycling, and gardening. The most visited (13+ times a year) locations for recreation activities were rural and town roadways, Wahconah High School and Nessacus Middle School, Craneville Elementary School, Appalachian Trail, and The Boulders. These locations make sense as they are where residents would engage in the activities listed in the top five.

Respondents then said that the open space and recreation funds should go to walking paths (including along town and rural roadways), bike paths (both on and off-road), hiking trails, playgrounds and park amenities (benches, grills, etc.), and sport playing fields (Baseball, Football, etc.). This correlates with the top five activities the residents like to do. Dalton has made strides in improving the walkability of the Town through Complete Street programs, but the residents would like to see further improvements. The table below shows what the residents are willing to do to support or preserve the recreation and open spaces.

**Q8 Which of the following are you willing to do to support or preserve open space and recreation resources in Dalton? (check all that apply)**



To get a better idea of what the priorities are of different age groups, we filtered the question “If your answers represent other members of your family, please indicate their number in the following age brackets (including yourself) that your answers represent” into three age groups of 0-29, 30-59, and 60+ year old. This was done so the children that were too young to fill out the survey are accounted for. Ages 0-29 and 30-59 had the same top five activities (walking, hiking, field sports, bicycling, and playgrounds) possibly because they are from the same households. The top five did change when it came to the ages 60 and up with gardening and bird watching taking the place of field sports and playgrounds. Across the age groups we see hiking, walking, and bicycling in the top five. With Dalton having completed multiple Complete Street programs it makes sense that walking and bicycling are in the top activities. Hiking is also popular across age groups and with the Appalachian trail going through the Town, The Boulders, and Wahconah Falls state park all in the area it makes sense the residents would make use of the trails.

The survey asked residents what other activities they would like to see added to Dalton. The word cloud below shows the responses. A few of note are dog park, bike trail, swimming, and skateboarding park. Looking into ways to create these opportunities is explored in section 8 of this OSRP.

**Q6 What, if any, specific additional recreational opportunities would you like to add in Dalton?**



When it came to what the residents would like to see improved within Dalton, many responses referenced improvements needed with road and streets, garbage/trash removal, and hiking trails.

Residents would like to see improved/more sidewalks, better parking at recreational sites (like hiking trails), more trash bins in open space and recreational areas, better trail markings, connecting trails to the center of town, more information on trails and maps, and creating more trails especially accessible ones. The desire for improved access to walking and hiking trail systems and upgrades for parks and playgrounds corresponds with that of other Berkshire County communities and, according to the 2017 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, with that of other communities across Massachusetts. The City of Pittsfield's OSRP cited a goal of reaching out to neighboring communities through a network of trails, including the extension of the Ashuwillticook Rail Trail southward into the city. Improving access to the Rail Trail from Dalton, possibly along Gulf Road, would provide residents with a link to more than 13 miles of a paved biking and walking route.

As part of this planning process, a spatial analysis of Dalton was conducted to identify areas or neighborhoods that might be lacking access to public conservation and recreation lands. All but a few sparsely developed, outlying areas in Dalton are within one mile of public open space lands. Those homes are not within a mile of publicly-accessible lands are located along rural roads that abut large, undeveloped blocks of forest land, which serve as informal access to open space and nature. Many homeowners who abut these lands have created their own trail systems or access points in which to recreate and interact with nature.

The most densely developed Town center has access to several types of outdoor resources within a mile, including parks, athletic fields, woodlands and cemeteries. Even the subdivision areas of Greenridge and off Grange Hall Road have access to parks and woodlands within in mile of their homes, and new sidewalks along South and East Housatonic Street provide safe links from these areas to the parks and playing fields of downtown Dalton and the three schools. Most residents along Kirchner and Washington Mountain Roads are within a mile of Kirvin Park in neighboring Pittsfield.

The outer North Street corridor has access to Wahconah State Park, but this site is small and heavily used by tourist visitors. Development of a park/picnic area at North Mountain Park could offer a local alternative.

The EJ populations within Dalton are fortunate in that they are within ½ mile of either a public park or conservation land, and many areas have access to both. The Appalachian Trail travels through the midst of this area.

### **7C. Management Needs, Potential Change of Use**

As noted in Section 5, Dalton is fortunate in that a large percentage of the Town's undeveloped lands are under some type of permanent protection program, and most of these lands are open to public use. However, as was also noted in this section, these lands are concentrated in areas where the terrain is rugged and steeply sloped. In addition, the trail system through these areas is relatively sparse. Although this is conducive to a wilderness experience, these areas are unsuitable to families with small children and people with mobility disabilities. The Town should search for recreational lands with a relatively gentle terrain to meet the needs of residents who are unable to enjoy the more rugged and wild areas. The extension of the Old Mill Trail into the downtown area may provide such an opportunity. Promoting and expanding the trail system between Nessacus Middle School and Wahconah Regional High School is another opportunity.

The Town has been aggressive in improving the walkability and connectivity of its road system. Sidewalks were expanded along the full length of South Street and Housatonic Street during reconstruction of those roads, and a sidewalk is being planned for the length of Dalton Division Road. The Town has rehabilitated the sidewalk along High Street, with funds from the Complete Streets program. Benches were placed along Main Street and a few other key areas in the Town center for those walkers who need to rest occasionally along their route. Continuing these efforts, although costly, can reap quality of life rewards for all ages and abilities.

The Town acquired 157.7 acres of land, known as the Bardin properties, off North Street. All but 9.5 acres of this land is designated for agricultural use under the APR program. In 2018 voters at Dalton Town Meeting voted to transfer the care, custody, and control of the 9.5 unrestricted acreage to the Select Board "for the purpose of recreation, including sport and physical education." A North Mountain Park Committee has been appointed to investigate the best recreational use of the site, possibly athletic playing fields and a picnic area. The Town oversaw brownfields cleanup of the site and has obtained preliminary engineering designs for playing fields on the site. There is hope that future funding for development would be provided by grants.

Nessacus Middle School holds a full-size baseball field and a large open space playing field that are currently not being utilized due to their poor condition. Both fields are out of level and poor landscaping has resulted in water drainage issues which make the property impossible to play on. Attempts to utilize the property for youth sports programs resulted in games being cancelled because the fields were unsafe. There was an understanding to upgrade the baseball field at the property to address the need for a space during construction of the Wahconah High School, but that plan has yet to be completed.<sup>3</sup> Improvements to these fields would allow safe use of the fields and provide outdoor recreational space for residents when the fields are not in use by organized sports. The Town will need to work closely with the Central Berkshire Regional School District, which manages the property.

As shown on the Protected Open Space map, there is a large amount of land enlisted in the various Chapter 61 tax abatement programs. These areas have been cited as one of the most scenic areas in the Town. The Town has a 120-day option of first refusal on these properties if they were to be placed on the real estate market for development purposes. However, at this time the Town has no mechanisms in place nor funds set aside to take advantage of the 120-day option to acquire the properties or any type of protective deed restrictions.

The Select Board serves as the Town's Park Commission. They have full authority over the use of Town parks. The Community Recreation Authority (CRA), a nonprofit community organization, is provided annual funding by the Town to operate recreational programs for the community using Town park facilities. The Field Uses Committee is a committee appointed by the Select Board who was asked to determine the best use of the Town's playing fields and maintenance/repairs needed. A recent status report on the condition of the fields is found in Appendix C. The CRA prepares the playing fields for use while the Town Highway/Cemetery/Sewer Department maintains the property, taking care of major repairs, mowing field and lawns, etc. These field responsibilities of the Department are in addition to the high demands of maintaining the road and sewer system infrastructure throughout the Town.

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<sup>3</sup> Correspondence from Glenn Lagerwall, Chairman, N. Mountain Park Committee, to Dalton BOS, dated 2-3-21.

In addition to the above-mentioned groups, the North Mountain Park Commission was established to oversee the process of developing the former Bardin property for public recreation. This Commission has procured draft engineering designed for the creation of new playing fields. Two additional Committees have been suggested: 1) a Pines Committee, to investigate and recommend improvements to the Pines, a wooded park that the Town wants to expand for recreational purposes by all citizens, and 2) an OSRP Committee, which would serve as the steward of this OSRP and to encourage and track progress on action items.

Town funding for parks and recreation are limited. The Town should investigate a mechanism by which the Town could secure funds dedicated to conservation and recreation. The Town should reconsider adopting the Community Preservation Act (CPA), which sets aside funding for conservation, historic preservation, and housing. While an effort to adopt the CPA failed at Town Meeting several years ago, neighboring communities in the county have shown how successful the program can be.

Another mechanism by which to secure funds for conservation is to consider selling Town owned lands to the Massachusetts Fish & Wildlife. An example might be the northern portion of North Mountain Park that is under a Conservation Restriction and is adjacent to existing F&W lands. This transaction would add to the acreage of Chalet WMA while provide funding to the Town for conservation and/or outdoor recreation. Part of the funds might be used to develop the remaining 9.5 acres of land for playing fields or other public outdoor uses.

Dalton must continue to manage, reduce, and control stormwater as required by the U.S. EPA. The efforts of the Stormwater Committee and the Stormwater Management Commission must continue to be supported through all levels of government.

This OSRP should be considered a living document, a blueprint for future strategies and actions. Establishing a formal and permanent Open Space and Recreation Committee to oversee the implementation of the plan should be considered by the Town.

# Section 8: Goals and Objectives

In developing goals and objectives for this Open Space Plan, the Dalton Open Space and Recreation Committee revisited the goals and objectives adopted in the unfinalized draft OSRP of 2006 and the Master Plan of 2016. Many of the goals, objectives and actions from these previous plans remain relevant today and have been adapted to meet current needs and desires.

During the review of OSRP and the Master Plan, the Open Space and Recreation Committee was pleased to learn that some of the actions listed in 2006 and 2016 have been achieved and others have been started. These include:

- The Town of Dalton has become a designated Appalachian Trail Community. Markers to help AT hikers navigate through the Town center have been laid on sidewalks and kiosks have been installed at trailheads.
- The Town sold the Town Forest to Fish and Game for permanent protection of wildlife habitat and outdoor recreation.
- Sidewalks have been reconstructed along High Street and Field Street Extension.
- Installed benches along Main St to encourage recreational walking for all abilities.
- Improved sidewalks in downtown to further encourage recreational walking and create connected walking loops for all abilities, using MassDOT Complete Streets funding.
- Supported ownership transfer and permanent protection of The Boulders lands.
- The Town has acquired 158 acres of land off upper North Street and by vote at Town Meeting have authorized the Select Board to pursue development of 9.5 - acre portion of that land for public recreational use.
- The Dalton Water District has made improvements at the Windsor Reservoir to reduce downstream sediment along Wahconah Falls Brook.
- The Town has received funding to conduct a hydraulic/hydrologic study of Walker Brook as a first step in reducing flooding in the High Street/Field Street Extension area of Dalton.
- Housatonic Valley Association's water quality monitoring indicates that bacteria levels in the upper reaches of Wahconah Falls Brook have improved, but that high levels are persistent in the Deming Street area.

The Town has also completed other notable actions that were not previously stated in past plans. These included:

- The Town accepted the gift of The Pines, which is open space land from Crane & Co., a private landowner.

- The Town took ownership of the former Bardin Property. The southern 9.5 acres is now being called North Mountain Park. The Town conducted brownfields cleanup and secured draft engineering plans for outdoor recreational use on this portion of the land.
- The Town made some major parks improvements, such as new playground equipment at Pine Grove Park and low-impact exercise equipment at the Senior Center.

While this work is impressive, there is still work to do, as listed herein and as shown on the Action Map (see Map 13).

## Goal 1: Expand Outdoor Recreational Opportunities

### Objective 1.1: Create and Expand Recreational Trail Opportunities

**Action:** Establish bicycle trails and routes in town and connecting to other towns; include a possible link to the Ashuwillticook Rail Trail along Gulf Road through The Boulders.

**Action:** Determine a best route for a walking loop and prioritize sections for safety improvements.

**Action:** Work with HVA/BNRC to extend the Old Mill Trail into downtown Dalton, possibly linking to the Appalachian Trail.

**Action:** Connect the Boulders through Craneville School to Park Avenue.

**Action:** Promote the existing trail system that connects the middle and high schools.

**Action:** Support the designation of the series of trails and paths that exist in the community; rank them by level of difficulty so that those with limited mobility can be guided to easier or accessible trails.

**Action:** Work with snowmobile and motorized recreational groups to identify and promote areas that can be used by these groups.

### Objective 1.2: Expand the Recreational Opportunities in Playgrounds and Playing Fields

**Action:** Investigate expansion of athletic fields at Greenridge Park.

**Action:** Pursue funding options for development of North Mountain Park; explore uses for the remaining part of the property not being developed (e.g. hiking, biking, agriculture, etc.)

**Action:** Work with Central Berkshire School District to improve athletic fields at Nessacus Middle School to allow safe use for organized sports.

**Action:** Explore obtaining "the Pits" that holds the pond and the surrounding environs for future use as a town swimming area.

**Action:** Develop a dog friendly area, such as a dog park or walking area.

### Objective 1.3: Maintain and Improve Access to The Pines

**Action:** Establish the Pines Committee to help the Town develop and maintain The Pines; this might include establishing routines for volunteer trail days.

**Action:** Develop a plan and program for improving The Pines; consider improved parking, marking and rerouting trails as needed to better navigate the property; map the trail system and post maps at the entrances.

## Goal 2: Maintain and Improve the Quality of Water Resources and Riparian Habitat

### Objective 2.1: Strengthen and Support the Activities of the Conservation Commission

Action: Consider hiring a shared conservation agent and/or administrator with neighboring towns.

### Objective 2.2: Protect and Improve Center Pond as a Key Natural Asset of the Town

Action: Determine the best approach to address siltation of Center Pond from Windsor Reservoir and other upstream sources.

Action: Explore the process needed to improve the habitat, increase storage capacity and lessen risk of sedimentation downstream during storm events; identify the partners needed for this process (MA DEP, ACOE, MEMA, FEMA, etc.).

Action: Improve access to the pond, possibly at sites such as East Deming Street Extension and Riverview Drive.

### Objective 2.3: Protect Water Quality Within the East Branch Housatonic River Watershed

Action: Partner with the Housatonic Valley Association to monitor water quality and conduct water improvement projects in the East Branch Housatonic River Watershed.

Action: Support the Dalton Water Fire District in efforts to reduce sedimentation in the Wahconah Falls Brook watershed.

## Goal 3: Maintain and Protect the Rich, Natural, and Cultural Resources of Dalton

### Objective 3.1: Protect Sensitive Natural Areas and Resources Such as Mountain Ridges, Steep Slopes, Rare-Species Habitat, Forested Areas, and Prime Agricultural Soils

Action: Implement zoning overlays and restrict land uses in sensitive areas; refer to the areas of Dalton cited as Priority Conservation Areas in the BioMap2 Guiding Land Conservation for Biodiversity in Massachusetts report of 2011.

### Objective: 3.2: Support Local Farmers and Become a Right-to-Farm Community

Action: Adopt the Right-to-Farm bylaw and establish an Agricultural Commission.

Action: Promote local farms and their products in local publications and direct visitors to these sites.

Action: Support local farms in applications for grant and loan programs.

### Objective 3.3: Promote Preservation and Conservation in the Community

Action: Encourage local educational programs which foster a spirit of historic preservation, highlighting gems such as the Fitch-Hoose House, Crane papermaking and the cemeteries; involve schools, senior center, library, public television, and other venues.

Action: Support the Wahconah Environmental Class program that includes field visits in Dalton and the local area.

**Objective 3.4: Pursue Funding to Support Land Conservation and Protection Initiatives**

**Action:** Investigate the Community Preservation Act to create a dedicated funding source for natural resource conservation, outdoor recreation, and historic resource preservation.

**Action:** Establish and strengthen relationships between the Town and existing land conservancy organizations and state agencies.

**Objective 3.5: Establish a Formal, Permanent Open Space & Recreation Committee to Oversee Implementation and Update This OSRP as Needed**

**Action:** Solicit community members for inclusion on the OSRP Committee.

**Action:** OSRP Committee will review goals, objectives and actions on a regular basis and advise the Select Board on steps needed to implement the Plan.

**Goal 4: Promote Dalton's Rich Natural and Cultural Heritage**

**Objective 4.1: Develop Guides to the Town's Assets**

**Action:** Create a guide to draw residents and visitors to Dalton's attractions, including sites such as public lands, the AT, historic sites, local farms, and the Crane Paper Museum.

**Action:** Create a guide to educate people about the natural resources and trail systems of Dalton and where they might view these resources. Develop Partnership with groups to promote the Community available resources: BRPC, AT, HVA, Crane Company, Historical Commission, CRA

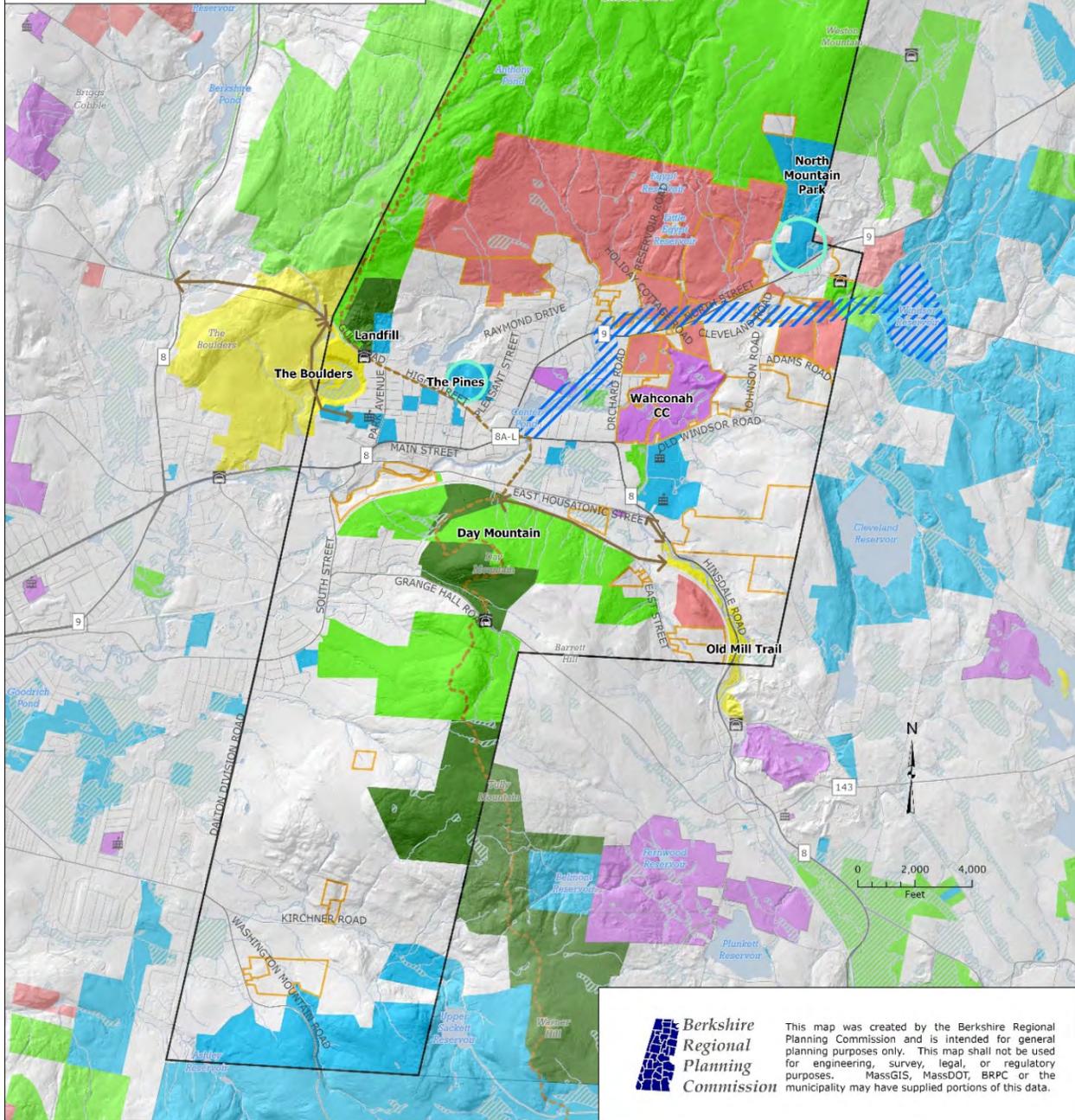
**Action:** Create interpretive signs for a few key places to describe the flora and fauna found there; ideas might be the trail between Nessacus and Wahconah, The Pines and The Boulders. Partner with Community Members to get funding for program using available grants to purchase signs and other identifying features for each trail.

# Town of Dalton

## Open Space and Recreation Plan

### Map 13: Action Map

- |  |                                   |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| Protect Water Quality and Flood Capacity | Private (APR/CR)                  |
| Improve / Develop Parks                  | Recreational Land (Not Protected) |
| Trail Linkages                           | Chapter 61, 61A, 61B              |
| Federal                                  | Appalachian Trail                 |
| State                                    | School                            |
| Municipal                                | Parking                           |
| Land Trust                               |                                   |



This map was created by the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission and is intended for general planning purposes only. This map shall not be used for engineering, survey, legal, or regulatory purposes. MassGIS, MassDOT, BRPC or the municipality may have supplied portions of this data.

# Section 9: Seven Year Action Plan

This Seven-Year Action Plan below established goals with associated objectives and actions with help from community input and integrated with other community planning efforts and their associated public processes. Continued Town commitment and citizen support are essential to accomplish these goals. Many of the listed actions reflect priorities and recommendations that have been in development for many years, and some will undoubtedly continue beyond seven years. The Town’s ability to implement any of the given objectives is also dependent on the current budget and available funding for a given year.

## Goal 1: Expand Outdoor Recreational Opportunities

Objective 1.1: Create and Expand Recreational Trail Opportunities			
Action	Responsibility	Priority / Schedule (Years 2022-2028)	Funding
Establish bicycle trails and routes in town and connecting to other towns, including a possible link to the Ashuwillticook Rail Trail along Gulf Road through The Boulders.	PARK, CRA, BRPC	Medium / 2025-28	Grant, DCR Trails Grant, Private Donations
Determine best route for a walking loop and prioritize sections for safety improvements.	CRA, COA, SB	High / 2022-23	Town, Complete Streets
Work with HVA/BNRC to extend the Old Mill Trail into downtown Dalton, possibly linking to the Appalachian Trail.	HVA, CRA, OSRC	Low / 2024-28	Town, DCR Trails Grant, Private Donations
Connect the Boulders through Craneville School to Park Avenue.	SB, CRA, CBRSD	Low / 2024-28	Town, Student Conservation Corp.
Promote the existing trail system that connects the middle and high schools.	CBRSD, CRA	Medium / 2022-25	None Needed
Support the designation of the series of trails and paths that exist in the community; rank them by level of difficulty so that those with limited mobility can be guided to easier or accessible trails.	CRA, OSRC, ATC, COA	High / 2022-2025	ATC, Volunteers

Work with snowmobile and motorized recreational groups to identify and promote areas that can be used by these groups.	CRA, ATC OSRC	Medium / 2022-24	None Needed
<b>Objective 1.2: Expand the Recreational Opportunities in Playgrounds and Playing Fields</b>			
<b>Action</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Priority / Schedule (Years 2022-2028)</b>	<b>Funding</b>
Investigate expansion of athletic fields at Greenridge Park.	PARK, CRA	Low / 2022-25	PARC Grant, Town
Pursue funding options for development of North Mountain Park; explore uses for the remaining part of the property not being developed (e.g. hiking, biking, agriculture, etc.)	PARK, N. Mt. Park Committee	High / 2022-28	PARC Grant, Town, Volunteers
Work with Central Berkshire Regional School District to improve athletic fields at Nessacus Middle School to allow safe use for organized sports.	PARK, CBRSD	High / 2023-2028	PARC Grant, School sports grants
Explore obtaining “the Pits” that holds the pond and the surrounding environs for future use as a town swimming area.	PARK, CRA	Low / 2025-28	None needed
Develop a dog friendly area, such as a dog park or walking area.	PARK	Low / 2023-25	Town
<b>Objective 1.3: Maintain and Improve Access to The Pines</b>			
<b>Action</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Priority / Schedule (Years 2022-2028)</b>	<b>Funding</b>
Establish the Pines Committee to help the Town develop and maintain The Pines; this might include establishing routines for volunteer trail days.	SB	Medium / 2022	None needed
Develop a plan and program for improving the pines; consider improved parking and marking and rerouting trails as needed to better navigate the property; map the trail system and post maps at the entrances.	CRA, OSC, ATC	Medium / 2022-25	Town, WESC, scouts

**Goal 2: Maintain and Improve the Quality of Water Resources and Riparian Habitat**

<b>Objective 2.1: Strengthen and Support the Activities of the Conservation Commission</b>			
<b>Action</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Priority / Schedule (Years 2022-2028)</b>	<b>Funding</b>

Consider hiring a shared conservation agent and/or administrator with neighboring towns.	SB, CC	Medium / 2022-25	town
<b>Objective 2.2: Protect and Improve Center Pond as a Key Natural Asset of the Town</b>			
<b>Action</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Priority / Schedule (Years 2022-2028)</b>	<b>Funding</b>
Determine best approach to address siltation of Center Pond from Windsor Reservoir and other upstream sources.	SB, CC, EMD, DWD	Medium / 2025-28	Environmental Grants
Explore the process needed to improve habitat, increase storage capacity, and lessen risk of sedimentation downstream during storm events; identify the partners needed for this process (MA DEP, ACOE, MEMA, FEMA, etc.).	DWD, CC, EMD, SB	Medium / 2025-28	Town, Grants
Improve access to the pond, possibly at sites such as East Deming Street Extension and Riverview Drive.	SB, CC	Low / 2025-28	Town, Grants
<b>Objective 2.3: Protect Water Quality Within the East Branch Housatonic River Watershed</b>			
<b>Action</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Priority / Schedule (Years 2022-2028)</b>	<b>Funding</b>
Partner with the Housatonic Valley Association to monitor water quality and conduct water improvement projects in the East Branch Housatonic River Watershed.	CC, HVA	High / Ongoing	Grants, Volunteers
Support the Dalton Water Fire District in efforts to reduce sedimentation in the Wahconah Falls Brook watershed.	CC, HVA, DWD	Medium / Ongoing	DWD, Town, Grants

**Goal 3: Maintain and Protect the Rich Natural and Cultural Resources of Dalton**

<b>Objective 3.1: Protect Sensitive Natural Areas and Resources Such as Mountain Ridges, Steep Slopes, Rare Species Habitat, Forested Areas, and Prime Agricultural Soils</b>			
<b>Action</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Priority / Schedule (Years 2022-2028)</b>	<b>Funding</b>

Implement zoning overlays and restrict land uses in sensitive areas; refer to the areas of Dalton cited as Priority Conservation Areas in the BioMap2 Guiding Land Conservation for Biodiversity in Massachusetts report of 2011.	ZBA, PB	Medium / 2025-27	Town
<b>Objective: 3.2: Support Local Farmers and Become a Right-to-Farm Community</b>			
<b>Action</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Priority / Schedule (Years 2022-2028)</b>	<b>Funding</b>
Adopt the Right-to-Farm bylaw and establish an Agricultural Commission.	SB	High / 2022-24	None Needed
Promote local farms and their products in local publications and direct visitors to these sites.	SB, EDC	High / 2022-24	Town, Cultural Council, Grants
Support local farms in applications for grant and loan programs.	SB, PLN, EDC	High / 2022-24	Town
<b>Objective 3.3: Promote Preservation and Conservation in the Community</b>			
<b>Action</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Priority / Schedule (Years 2022-2028)</b>	<b>Funding</b>
Encourage local educational programs which foster a spirit of historic preservation, highlighting gems such as the Fitch-Hoose House, Crane papermaking and the cemeteries; involve schools, senior center, library, public television, and other venues.	HC, CBRSD, COA	Medium / 2022-23	Town, Grants
Support the Wahconah Environmental Class program that includes field visits in Dalton and the local area.	WECS, OSRC, CBRSD	High / Ongoing	Environmental grants, Cultural Council, CBRSD,
<b>Objective 3.4: Pursue Funding to Support Land Conservation and Protection Initiatives</b>			
<b>Action</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Priority / Schedule (Years 2022-2028)</b>	<b>Funding</b>
Investigate the Community Preservation Act to create a dedicated funding source for natural resource conservation, outdoor recreation, and historic resource preservation.	PLN, PB	Medium / 2025-28	None Needed

Establish and strengthen relationships between the Town and existing land conservancy organizations and state agencies.	PB, PLN	Medium / 2022-25	None Needed
<b>Objective 3.5: Establish a Formal, Permanent Open Space &amp; Recreation Committee (OSRC) to Oversee Implementation and Update This OSRP as Needed</b>			
<b>Action</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Priority / Schedule (Years 2022-2028)</b>	<b>Funding</b>
Solicit community members for inclusion on the OSR Committee.	SB	High / 2022	None needed
OSR Committee will review goals, objectives and actions on a regular basis and advise the Select Board on steps needed to implement the Plan.	OSRC	High / Ongoing	None needed

**Goal 4: Promote Dalton’s Rich Natural and Cultural Heritage**

<b>Objective 4.1: Develop Guides to the Town’s Assets</b>			
<b>Action</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Priority / Schedule (Years 2022-2028)</b>	<b>Funding</b>
Create a guide to draw residents and visitors to Dalton’s attractions, including sites such public lands, the AT, historic sites, local farms, and the Crane Paper Museum.	OSRC, SB, EDC	High / 2022-23	Local, Cultural Council, Private donations
Create a guide to educate people about the natural resources and trail systems of Dalton and where they might view these resources. Develop Partnership with groups to promote the Community available resources: BRPC, AT, HVA, Crane Company, His. Comm., CRA.	OSRC, SB, DHC, BRPC, WESC	Medium / 2022-23	Local, 1Berkshires, Private donations
Create interpretive signs for a few key places to describe the flora and fauna found there; ideas might be the trail between Nessacus and Wahconah, The Pines and The Boulders. Partner with community partners an for implementation.	OSRC, HVA, ATC, BNRC, BRPC	Low / 2022-23	Local, local vocational schools, scouts, volunteers

Table Legend:

ATC	Appalachian Trail Council	DWD	Dalton Water District	PB	Planning Board
BNRC	Berkshire Natural Resources Council	EDC	Economic Development Council	PLN	Town Planner
BRPC	Berkshire Regional Planning Comm.	EMD	Emergency Management Dept.	SB	Select Board
CBRSD	Central Berkshire Reg. School District	HC	Dalton Historical Committee	WESC	Wahconah Environmental Science Class
CC	Conservation Commission	HVA	Housatonic Valley Association	ZBA	Zoning Board of Appeals
COA	Council on Aging	OSC	Open Space Committee		
CRA	Community Recreation Association	PARK	Parks Commission		

# Section 10: References

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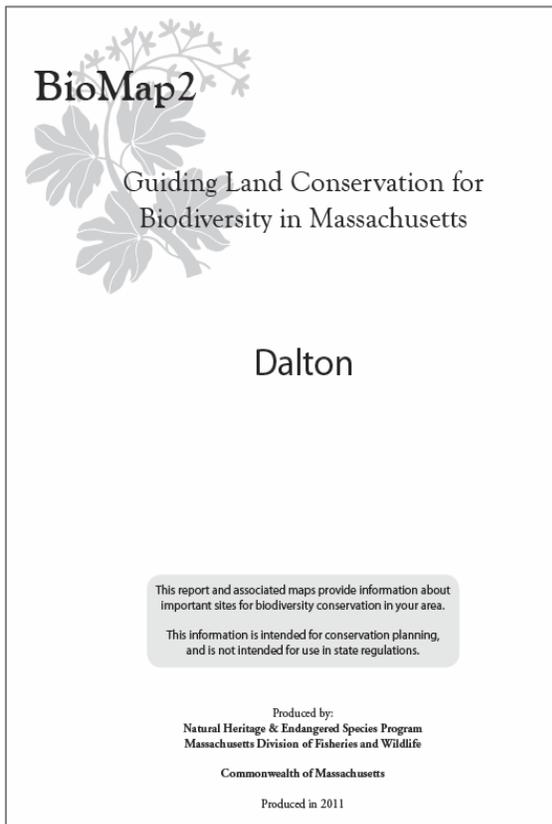
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United States Census Bureau, *2014-2018 American Community Survey*

# Appendices

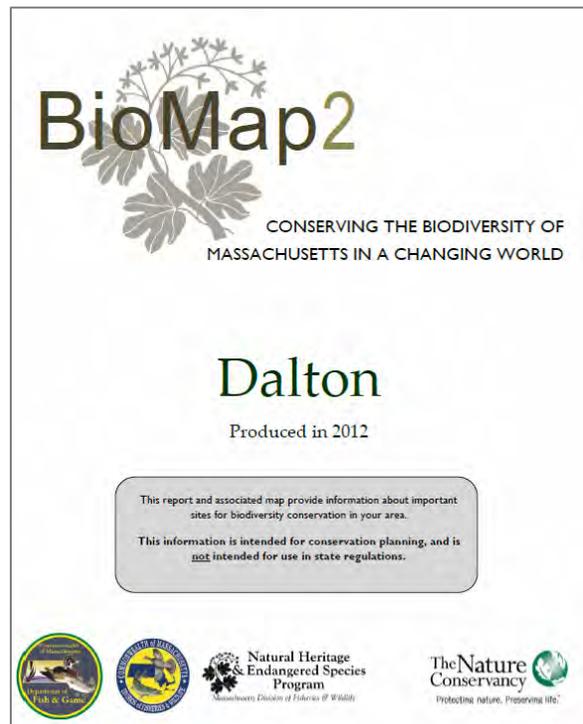
Appendix A  
References from the Massachusetts Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program.

BioMap2 Reports for the Town of Dalton, prepared by NHESP and found at the websites below.



[mass.gov/files/documents/2016/08/om/dalton.pdf](https://mass.gov/files/documents/2016/08/om/dalton.pdf)

[maps.massgis.state.ma.us/dfg/biomap/pdf/town\\_core/Dalton.pdf](https://maps.massgis.state.ma.us/dfg/biomap/pdf/town_core/Dalton.pdf)



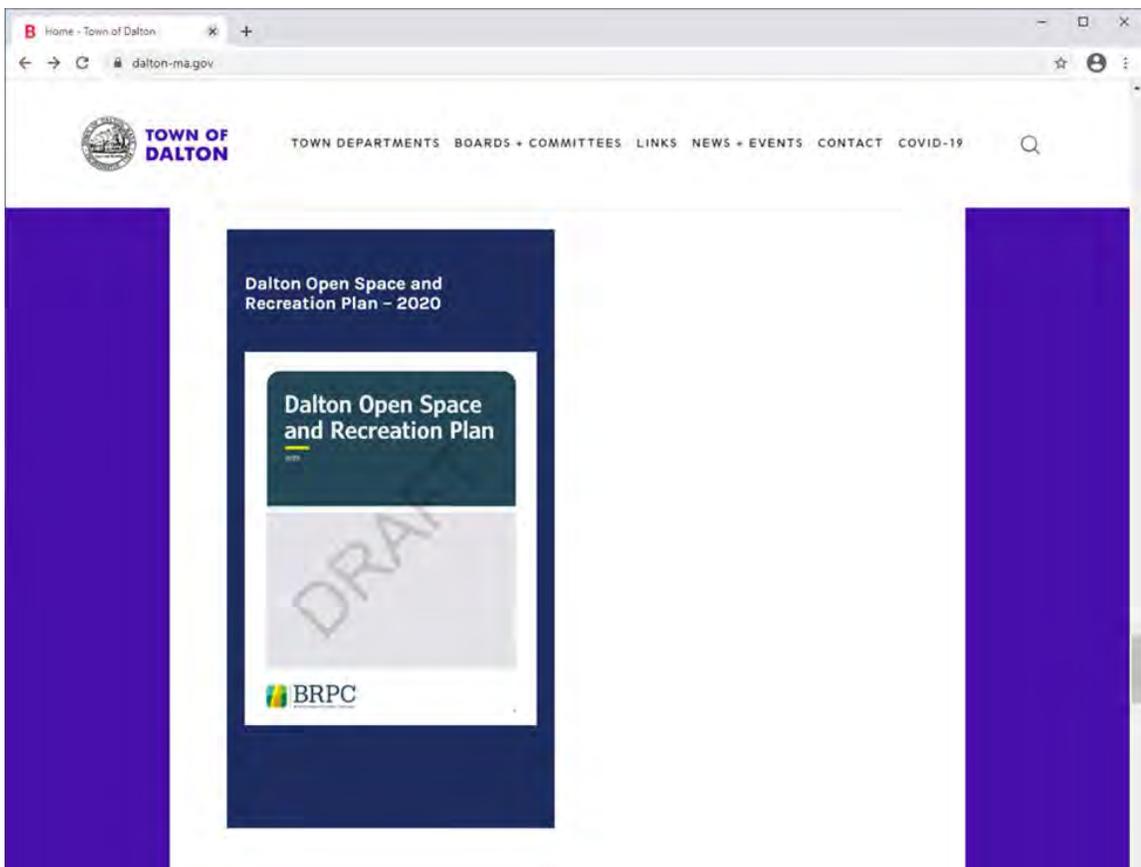
Appendix B  
Public Participation Documentation

## Public Survey Results



The OSRP Planning Committee updated the Dalton Selectboard and Planning Board on the progress and findings of the open space and recreation planning process.

The Draft OSRP was made publicly available for review and comment the month of October 2020. The draft plan was posted on the Town of Dalton website and paper copies were placed in the Dalton Free Public Library. Announcements about the plan’s availability were made via Dalton Selectboard meetings that are televised on local access television and via Zoom technology. It was also announced prominently on the home page of the Town of Dalton website and via Facebook of several town departments. Public comments received were incorporated into the draft plan that was submitted to DCS. A second public review period for a revised draft version of the OSRP was offered in September 2021, including an enhanced outreach effort to reach EJ populations.



**INSERT WEBSITE SCREEN HERE FOR SEPT. 2021**

A presentation was given to the Dalton Selectboard, at which the Town was given an overview of the planning process and a detailed discussion covering the draft Goals, Objectives and Actions.

Appendix C  
Recent Report on the Conditions of Town Playing Fields and North Mountain Park

