

Table 9-1 – Recommended Action Steps to Implement the 2012 Northfield Open Space and Recreation Plan

OBJECTIVE	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE GROUP(S)	START DATE	FUNDING SOURCE
Open Space Goal: Ensure that Northfield protects farmland, forest land, scenic views, and other open space vital to sustaining the town’s historic rural character and maintaining the quality of air, water, and wildlife habitats.				
OS1. STEWARDSHIP Develop effective means for Northfield citizens to become engaged in the stewardship of the natural and recreational resources of the town.	1. Recognize outstanding citizen stewards.	Open Space Committee (OSC) Greater Northfield Watershed Association (GNWA)	ongoing	volunteer time
	2. Conduct a stewardship workday for people of all ages to participate in the care of public conservation land and recreational areas.		ongoing	
	3. Plan outreach activities for the Town Forest, King Philips Hill, Brush Mountain, and other conservation areas.		ongoing	
	4. Launch an anti-litter campaign for Northfield.		2013	
	5. Encourage town residents to participate in the Keystone forest management program sponsored by UMass, and other conservation management programs.		ongoing	
OS2. COORDINATION Work with town committees and other organizations to achieve this open space goal.	1. Discuss conservation goals with area land trusts.	OSC	ongoing	volunteer time
	2. Bring land trust representatives to Northfield with programs on the value of land conservation, wildlife protection, etc.			
	3. Consult as needed with the Board of Health, Zoning Board of Appeals, Planning Board, water districts, and the Building Commissioner to discuss drinking water vulnerabilities.			
	4. Work with the Planning Board to explore new zoning bylaws that protect open space and surface waters in town.			
	5. Discuss policies associated with connecting protected Wildlife Management areas with the supervisors of the Northfield State Forest, Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), and Department of Fish and Wildlife.			
	6. Support the development of a Pioneer Valley Regional School Land Management Plan that encourages open-air educational options and recreation on the school's 90-acre parcel.			
	7. Help coordinate the local response regarding the 2018 relicensing of the First Light Power (FLP) pumped storage hydroelectric facility, for maximum attention to river and wildlife restoration.			
	8. Develop an “open space tour” for the new residents of the Northfield campus and for the Master Plan consulting firm.			

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OS3. FUNDING Set aside municipal funding each year to be used as a town match to help enable landowners to protect their land through the APR and other appropriate programs.	1.Promote full funding of the Community Preservation Act (CPA).	OSC Community Preservation Committee (CPC)	ongoing	volunteer time
	2.Educate residents about the CPA committee process.			
	3.Explore and prepare project proposals that meet CPA criteria.			
	4. Apply for relevant state LAND and other grants for funding activities associated with preserving open space; matching to come from CPA funds.			
OS4. CONSERVATION Continue working to preserve areas of Northfield that are most important to protect from development.	1. Identify scenic views, roads and byways, and special places.	OSC Conservation Commission (CC)	ongoing	volunteer time
	2. Promote the conservation priorities identified in the Trust for Public Land Greenprinting of Northfield.		ongoing	
	3. Ensure that the consulting firm hired to do Master Plan has a list of these areas.		2013	
	4. Work with landowners, including Northfield Mount Hermon, to improve and preserve for public enjoyment natural environments such as scenic views and other landscape features.		ongoing	
	5. Discuss ways to provide land protection and estate planning information to landowners in the region (Northfield, Gill, Erving, Bernardston).		ongoing	
	6. Inform landowners about the Chapter 61 provisions for temporary land preservation and encourage the use of Chapter 61 in appropriate instances.		ongoing	
	7. Support the Historical Commission and the Historical Society in efforts to preserve the historical character of the town.		ongoing	
OS5. MANAGEMENT Assist the Conservation Commission in managing town-owned and town-managed conservation areas and conservation restrictions held by the town.	1. Discuss with the Conservation Commission ways the Open Space Committee can assist with the stewardship of the Northfield Town Forest, King Philips Hill, Brush Mountain, and potential protected land.	OSC CC	ongoing	volunteer time
	2. Arrange for briefings on the management of wetlands and protected land, and promote attendance at stewardship monitoring workshops.		ongoing	
	3. Draft management plans for potential conservation areas, such as the Mill Brook areas west of Birnam Road.		2013	

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OS6. WATER Monitor the quality of surface water in Northfield and monitor the town's sources of drinking water (surface water, groundwater, and medium to high yield aquifers).	1. Support existing GNWA Stream Teams and recruit new members; consider establishing new stream teams in town. Help distribute the Stream Team Reports.	OSC GNWA	ongoing	volunteer time
	2. Work with the State Department of Public Health and the Northfield Board of Health on (a) monitoring water contamination of the Connecticut River and its tributaries (b) annual cleanup efforts, (c) monitoring junk & car yards, and (d) building general public awareness of pollution threats.		ongoing	volunteer time
	3. Provide educational opportunities to landowners whose land abuts tributaries to the Connecticut River watershed to help residents learn how to minimize the amount of runoff produced by their land.		ongoing	volunteer time
	4. Monitor efforts of the Connecticut River Streambank Erosion Committee.		ongoing	volunteer time
	5. Monitor the FLP Pumped Storage Facility relicensing process.		2014	volunteer time
	6. Develop detailed water supply recharge area maps for use by the Zoning Board of Appeals, in considering special permits, and by other town committees.		2013	OSC budget

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Recreation Goal: Ensure that Northfield maintains and improves the variety, quality, and accessibility of recreational facilities important in the twenty-first century for health and well being of all residents, and promote the use of these facilities and any organized programming thereof.				
R1. COORDINATION Work collaboratively with town boards, committees, and community organizations to achieve the Recreation Goal.	1. Members of the OSC will include representatives of related Town boards and commissions, including from the Conservation Commission, Planning Board, and Historical Commission. 2. OSC plans joint meetings with town boards and community groups as needed. 3. Maintain regular contact with each group. 4. Keep an OSC mailing list. 5. Coordinate with the Recreation Committee to incorporate recreation goals in the relicensing negotiations with FLP.	OSC Recreation Commission (RC)	ongoing	volunteer time
R2. COMMUNITY PARK Create a Northfield recreation area that includes playing fields, tennis courts, swimming, playgrounds, ice skating, and other activities for all ages.	1. Coordinate with the Recreation Commission on current and future recreational needs.	OSC RC	ongoing	volunteer time
	2. Sponsor public forums to obtain appropriate input for a community park.		2013	
	3. Form an ad hoc Northfield Community Park Committee to further investigate the possibilities.		2014	
	4. Construct a rough draft of a possible community park and a timetable for providing the various facilities.		2016	
	5. Research potential locations for a community park and hold public forums to discuss these possibilities.		2017	
	6. Identify sources of funding for planning, construction and maintenance of a community park.		2018	

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R3. TRAILS Promote the use of new and existing trails in Northfield, and develop and/or improve trail systems throughout the town.	1. Write a series of columns for the Northfield Newsletter, describing a different trail in each column, complete with directions and maps.	OSC Northfield Trails Association (NTA)	2013	volunteer time
	2. Develop and disseminate a brochure or printed Northfield Trail Guide.		2014	CPA funds
	3. Provide Northfield trail maps online and link to the New England Trail and Northfield Mountain sites.		2015	volunteer time, CPA funds
	4. Assist in evaluating and acquiring signage and trailhead kiosks.		ongoing	DCR grants, CPA funds
	5. Coordinate hikes to historic sites and lesser-known trails.		ongoing	volunteer time
	6. Survey existing trail systems and conduct a needs assessment for their improvement or expansion.		2015	volunteer time
	7. Create new trails on public lands or private lands with permission, including plans for their maintenance and management.		ongoing	DCR grants, CPA funds
	8. Work with the Northfield Highway Department to design and create parking for trailheads.		2014	Town funds, CPA funds
R4. RECREATION ACCESS TO THE CONNECTICUT RIVER Increase the number of public access points on the Connecticut River, including boat and paddling launching areas.	1. Facilitate the building of a canoe/kayak launch ramp at Bennett Brook Wildlife Management Area.	OSC RC	2016	DCR grant, FLP
	2. Solicit suggestions for additional paddle access to the river.		2015	volunteer time
	3. Propose accessible river-front walkways and river-viewing stations.		2018	volunteer time

