

REPORT OF THE OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE

Upton's Open Space Committee, a subcommittee of the Conservation Commission, is dedicated to protecting our town's quality of life by preserving its open spaces, its natural resources, its historic treasures and its small town character. In 2011 the Committee:

1. Completed the Town's Open Space and Recreation Plan. The plan describes the town's natural resources, provides an inventory of open space and recreational facilities sets goals, and provides an action plan for the next 7 years. The plan is posted on the town's website. It is approved by the Division of Conservation Services and is valid through June of 2017.
2. Worked to preserve Sweetwilliam Farm on North Street. A special town meeting held on January 11 voted by a narrow margin to preserve the farm and the closing occurred on June 21. The total acquisition costs, including engineering, legal fees and other expenses, were approximately \$1,213,000. Funding was provided by a \$614,500 appropriation from Community Preservation Act funds, a \$500,000 grant from the state's Local Areas for Natural Diversity (LAND) program, other grants, and private donations to the Sudbury Valley Trustees (SVT) and Metacomet Land Trust. The preservation plan included purchase of 63 acres by the town and purchase of a conservation restriction to protect 33.7 acres which remain in private ownership. The town owned portion is known as the Whitney Conservation Area. The Conservation Commission and SVT jointly hold the conservation restriction on Sweetwilliam Farm. SVT holds a conservation restriction on the Whitney Conservation Area.
3. Sponsored or co-sponsored walks and events to encourage the public use, enjoyment, and appreciation of Upton's special places. These included walks at the Former Stefan's Farm, Peppercorn Hill Conservation Area and Upton State Forest, and the annual "Big Night" frog &/salamander migration watch at the Fowler Street Vernal Pool. The event programming has been in partnership with the Friends of Upton State Forest and the events have been drawing a larger and broader audience.
4. Submitted open space news articles for publication in the Upton Town Crier.
5. Maintained the Open Space Page on the Town's website.

The Open Space subcommittee welcomes new members. It meets at 7:00 p.m. on the second Monday of every month in the Gathering Room at Nipmuc High School. More information about our work is available on the Town's website.

Respectively,

Tom Dodd
Scott Heim
Rick Holmes (CPA committee representative)
Alan Miano
Mike Penko (Chair)
Marcella Stasa (Secretary)
William Taylor