

MASS GIS

Definitions of "Level of Protection"

In Perpetuity (P)- Legally protected in perpetuity and recorded as such in a deed or other official document. Land is considered protected in perpetuity if it is owned by the town's conservation commission or, sometimes, by the water department; if a town has a conservation restriction on the property in perpetuity; if it is owned by one of the state's conservation agencies (thereby covered by article 97); if it is owned by a non-profit land trust; or if the town received federal or state assistance for the purchase or improvement of the property.

Private land is considered protected if it has a deed restriction in perpetuity, if an Agriculture Preservation Restriction has been placed on it, or a Conservation Restriction has been placed on it.

Temporary (T) - Legally protected for less than perpetuity (e.g. short term conservation restriction), or temporarily protected through an existing functional use. For example, some water district lands are only temporarily protected while water resource protection is their primary use.

These lands could be developed for other uses at the end of their temporary protection or when their functional use is no longer necessary. These lands will revert to unprotected status at a given date unless protection status is extended.

Limited (L) - Protected by legal mechanisms other than those above, or protected through functional or traditional use.

These lands might be protected by a requirement of a majority municipal vote for any change in status. This designation also includes lands that are likely to remain open space for other reasons (e.g. cemeteries and municipal golf courses).

None (N) - Totally unprotected by any legal or functional means. This land is usually privately owned and could be sold without restriction at any time for another use (e.g. scout camps, private golf course, and private woodland).