

CONSERVING OPEN SPACE IN NEW YORK STATE

NEW YORK STATE OPEN SPACE
CONSERVATION PLAN

SUMMARY | 2016



Department of
Environmental
Conservation

Parks, Recreation
and Historic
Preservation

Department
of State

Agriculture
and Markets

Department of
Transportation

additions; various intact camp properties; Wassaic Multiple Use Area buffers including Taconic DDS/Wassaic State School; Appalachian Trail, Taconic Crest Trail, South Taconic Trail and Harlem Valley Rail Trail connectors and viewshed protection, including the Appalachian Trail viewshed as seen from the Cat Rocks overlook and the Telephone Pioneers Shelter Overnight Use Area, in the vicinity of the Dover Oak (the largest blazed tree on the Appalachian Trail) near West Dover Road in Pawling and Dover; Little Whaley Lake; Crane Pond and Depression Pond area on East Mountain; Route 22 corridor viewshed protection; prime farmland soils and designated wetlands along Route 22 and the Webatuck Creek and Ten Mile River; unique geologic segments of the Taconic Ridge such as East Mountain, Rattlesnake Mountain, Stissing Mountain/Thompson Pond, West Mountain, **Seven Wells, and Nellie Hill and Stone Church buffers; and** exceptional plant and wildlife habitat areas ranked on the State Natural Heritage Inventory such as rattlesnake and bog turtle habitat, limestone wet meadows, graminoid fens and sedge meadows.

Since this area's inclusion in the initial State Open Space Conservation Plan, thousands of acres have been protected in Putnam, Dutchess, Columbia and Rensselaer counties. Nonetheless, since key portions of the area demonstrating high biodiversity, scenic views, recreational value, working forests and farmland, and potential connections to other protected lands remain unprotected, the Taconic Ridge/Harlem Valley and associated viewsheds continue to be high priorities for protection. In

addition, extensions of the Taconic Crest Trail and the Harlem Valley Rail Trail, as well as protection of the Route 22 corridor, which includes scenic vistas, productive farmland, and habitat supporting endangered and threatened species, continue to be important considerations within the overall area.

TURTLE CONSERVATION SITES {42} – These wetlands and associated uplands provide habitats for a high diversity of turtles including some of New York's most imperiled species. The wetlands are scattered across Columbia, Dutchess, Putnam, Ulster, and Orange Counties. Some important concentrations include the Fishkill Creek, Wallkill River, Sprout Creek, Housatonic River, Great Swamp and Wappinger Creek drainage basins. This area supports the highest diversity of turtles in New York State and provides habitat for 5 species of State-listed endangered, threatened and special concern species, including the bog turtle (State endangered, Federally threatened) and Blanding's turtle (State

TACONIC RIDGE/HARLEM VALLEY {41} – – An area comprising the Taconic Mountain Ridge and its viewsheds, where it straddles the New York, Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Vermont borders in Putnam, Dutchess, Columbia and Rensselaer Counties, and the Harlem Valley and its viewsheds. At its southern end it is anchored by the Cranberry Mountain State Wildlife Management Area in Putnam County and extends to the north through Quaker Hill in Pawling and eastern Dutchess County along the Connecticut border, west to include the Harlem Valley and lands to the west including West Mountain, and north to the Taconic State Park. From here it extends northerly through Columbia and Rensselaer Counties, westerly to include the Route 22 Corridor and its viewsheds, and northward along the borders of Massachusetts and Vermont. The viewshed includes the Taconic Ridge, Harlem Valley, Route 22 corridor, farmlands of central Dutchess, and Stissing Mountain.

Protection of this area continues to be a high priority due to the region's high biodiversity, presence of threatened and endangered species, scenic views, substantial recreational value, thousands of acres of intact/unfragmented forestland, steeply sloping hillsides, unique geologic segments, historic architecture, working farm landscapes, and multiple connection opportunities to land currently protected by the State, Federal Government, Counties, Towns and private land conservation organizations.

Numerous trail systems including the Appalachian Trail, Taconic Crest Trail and South Taconic Trail extending beyond the New York border, and the Harlem Valley Rail Trail continue to be important projects for this area and will increase recreational opportunities for the public and provide permanent public use and access of the Taconic Ridge area. In addition, acquisition of properties in the Taconic Ridge/Harlem Valley and Route 22 corridor will protect important open space, scenic viewsheds, working farm landscapes, watersheds and water quality, and preserve critical wildlife habitat for several threatened and endangered species. Specific projects include the Shaker Swamp, an almost 500-acre wetland complex supporting a high biodiversity and serving as an important aquifer recharge area; surrounding active farmland, formerly owned by the Shakers and regarded as historically significant; Schein Parcel, a connector between Cranberry Mountain Wildlife Conservation Area and Ciaiola County Park; Ice Pond and its wetland system and surrounding forested areas that support a high diversity of critical habitat species and peat wetlands; Nuclear Lake–West Mountain connectors; Depot Hill and Taconic State Park

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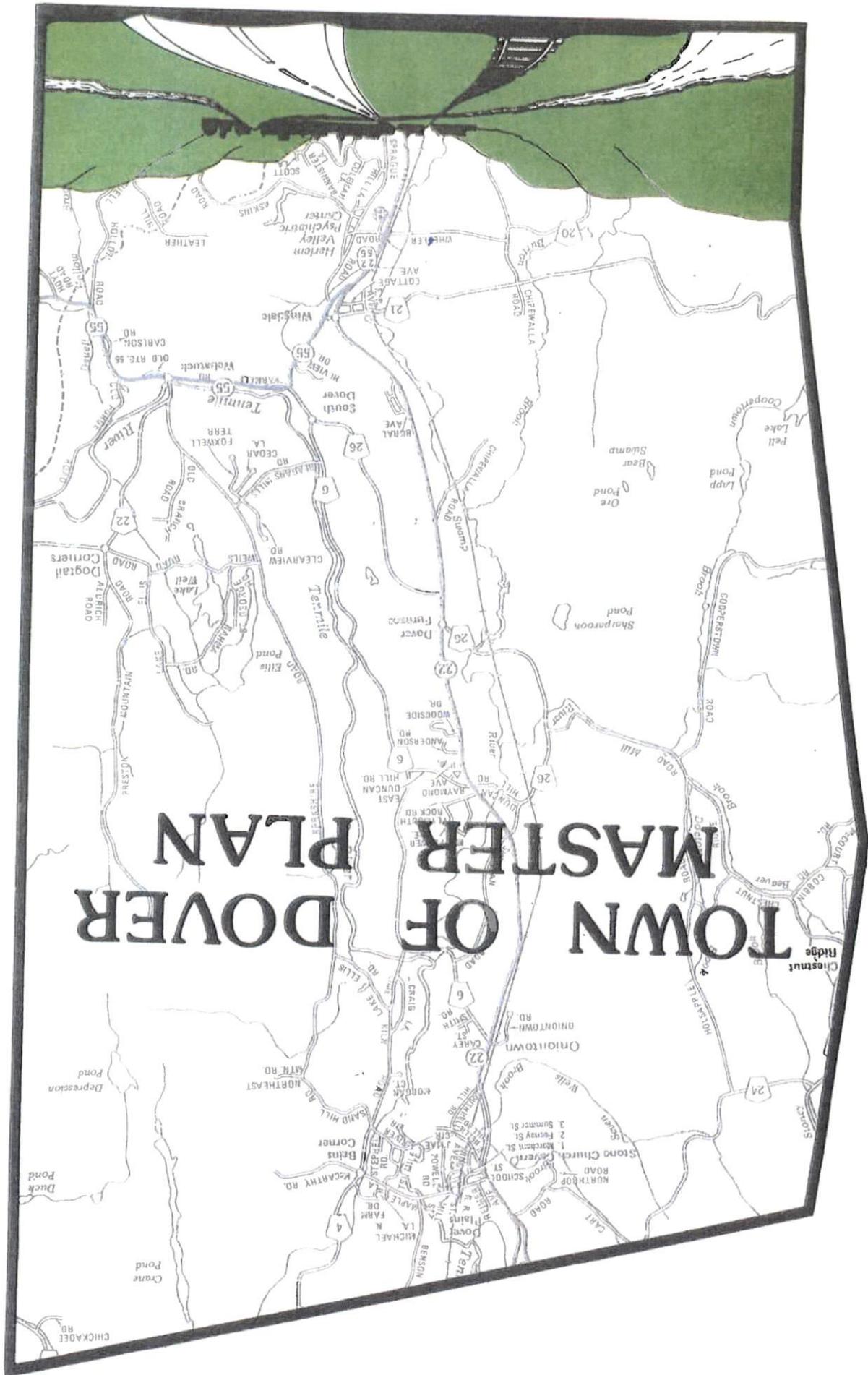
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The Great Thicket ^{Refuge} is located on the Route 22 corridor.

This plan pre-dates establishment of the refuge but addresses

the area it refers to.



TOWN OF DOVER
DUTCHESS COUNTY, NEW YORK
TOWN MASTER PLAN

TOWN PLANNING BOARD AND MASTER PLAN COMMITTEE

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Steven Vincent

Adopted by the Town of Dover Planning Board
September 21, 1993

Planning Policies and Recommendations

- 3.2 The Town should prohibit uses in the federally designated 100-year floodplains that may interfere with their flood carrying function, create safety hazards, increase the threat of property damage, or shift floodplain boundaries downstream. The flood hazard zones should be updated to conform to the latest federal floodplain maps.
- 3.3 Land use policies and regulations should provide for uses and densities which are compatible with the soils' ability to support development, while protecting prime agricultural soils and existing farmland whenever possible.
- 3.4 The Town should promote a land use pattern that protects surface and groundwater resources while working to eliminate or minimize all sources of pollution, such as road salt and leaching dump sites.
- 3.5 In prime aquifer recharge areas the Town should limit land use impacts and promote central or shared utility systems to prevent overuse or contamination of groundwater.
- 3.6 Important wildlife habitats, rare or endangered plant communities, and other significant environmental areas should be identified and protected.
- 3.7 The Town should enforce measures to control soil erosion and sedimentation during the construction process.
- 3.8 The Town should work with Department of Environmental Conservation to require the complete reclamation of mining sites and minimize the environmental and aesthetic damage caused by extractive operations.
- 3.9 A defined open space system should be part of every major site plan or subdivision proposal and, whenever possible, be linked to form continuous greenspace corridors. Natural corridors should be particularly encouraged along streambeds and wetlands to provide open space, wildlife habitat, and groundwater protection.
- 3.10 The Town should identify and protect its scenic resources, including open space views and vistas.
- 3.11 Reduced assessments, development plan trade-offs, purchase of development rights, conservation easements, and similar approaches should be encouraged to help implement desired natural resource, open space, and prime agricultural soils protection.

4. Population and Economic Base

GOAL: To encourage economic opportunities that provide a stronger employment base, meet the needs of its residents, and are consistent with the rural character of the Town.

- 4.1 The Town should actively encourage businesses to locate and remain in Dover.

- 6.3 To enhance the use of the Town Hall as a focus for local services and community events, the Town should find a centrally located permanent site on Route 22 for the transfer station as soon as possible. The Town should then provide landscaping improvements to break up and shade the expanded parking area and to screen the lot from neighboring residential properties.
- 6.4 The Town should continue to support the Town Library operations and find adequate alternative space for expanded facilities in a prominent location in one of the community centers.
- 6.5 The Town should work with churches or other not-for-profits groups in both major hamlets to provide a community center space designed for various age groups and uses.
- 6.6 The post offices should be encouraged by all possible means to stay in the core of the hamlet centers.
- 6.7 The Town should implement the long-term program outlined in the Boyce Park Master Plan to provide a wider range of recreational opportunities and parking lot improvements at the park.
- 6.8 Additional park space should be acquired in the Dover Plains area, including, most importantly, the retention of Palmer Field as a playfield and centrally located greenspace fronting Railroad Square.
- 6.9 The Town should take advantage of any reasonable opportunity to gain public access to the Ten Mile or Swamp rivers.
- 6.10 The Town should promote a town-wide trail network connected to a larger Harlem Valley Greenway system, specifically including a loop trail linking Nellie Hill with the center of Dover Plains, a continuous trail along the Ten Mile River, and a trail from Boyce Park to the Appalachian Trail.
- 6.11 The Town should work with the private, tax exempt organizations in Dover to allow community access to facilities, promote shared services, or receive payments in lieu of taxes in consideration for the ongoing use of town services.
- 6.12 In order to encourage economic development and protect the underlying aquifer, the Town should look for opportunities, coordinated with private development, to improve and expand the Dover Plains water system and provide a future sewer system in the same service area.
- 6.13 The Town should work with state officials and potential private developers to use the excess capacity in the Harlem Valley Psychiatric Center's water and sewer systems to encourage industrial, commercial and residential development in the Wingdale hamlet center area.



 Nellie Hill
 (Preserve)
 in 1993
 is now
 the
 Great
 Thicket
 Refuge

- f. Seek to maintain current agricultural uses on farmed portions of property.
- g. The Town should insist that the portion of the property that encompasses the Great Swamp be permanently protected.

6. Conservation Areas.

- a. Develop and implement appropriate low density zoning techniques to insure the proper development of the West Mountain pine barrens and the wilderness areas of East Mountain as Critical Environmental Areas. Such techniques could include mandatory clustering of units and sliding scale or other flexible zoning techniques.
- b. Consider a transfer of development rights and/or purchase of development rights program to be applied within these areas.
- c. Establish incentive zoning techniques to encourage the preservation of these areas. Such techniques should include reduced road standards and bulk requirements.
- d. Negotiate with landowners to establish open space greenway easements in these areas. Greenways could be limited so that public access is prohibited where owners do not wish such access.
- e. Consider conservation density zoning to encourage the preservation of open land.
- f. Continue to adopt steep slope, wetland protection and other environmental protection ordinances to insure that inappropriate development does not take place.

7. Specific Sites.

- a. Complete the work to nominate White's and Sharparoon Furnaces to the National Historic Register. Work with landowners to develop buffer areas around the sites and hire professional archeologists to study the sites and their surroundings. Designate the sites as local historic landmarks and implement accompanying regulations for their long-term protection.
- b. Work with landowners to obtain easements and limited public access for the Seven Wells and Stone Church sites.
- c. Develop specific regulations which would protect the Tamarack and Fen wetlands. Seek New York State DEC designation of these wetlands as regulated class I wetlands.

Clustering

Clustering allows the number of dwelling units normally allowed for a parcel to be grouped into one portion of a site, while leaving the remainder of the property open. The overall density on the property does not exceed what would be allowed under a conventional subdivision layout. New York State enabling legislation authorizes local legislative bodies to permit the Planning Board to approve cluster developments. Under a more recent legislative change, local boards can now be authorized to mandate clustering. Municipalities may cluster any type of development that is permitted in their zoning law.

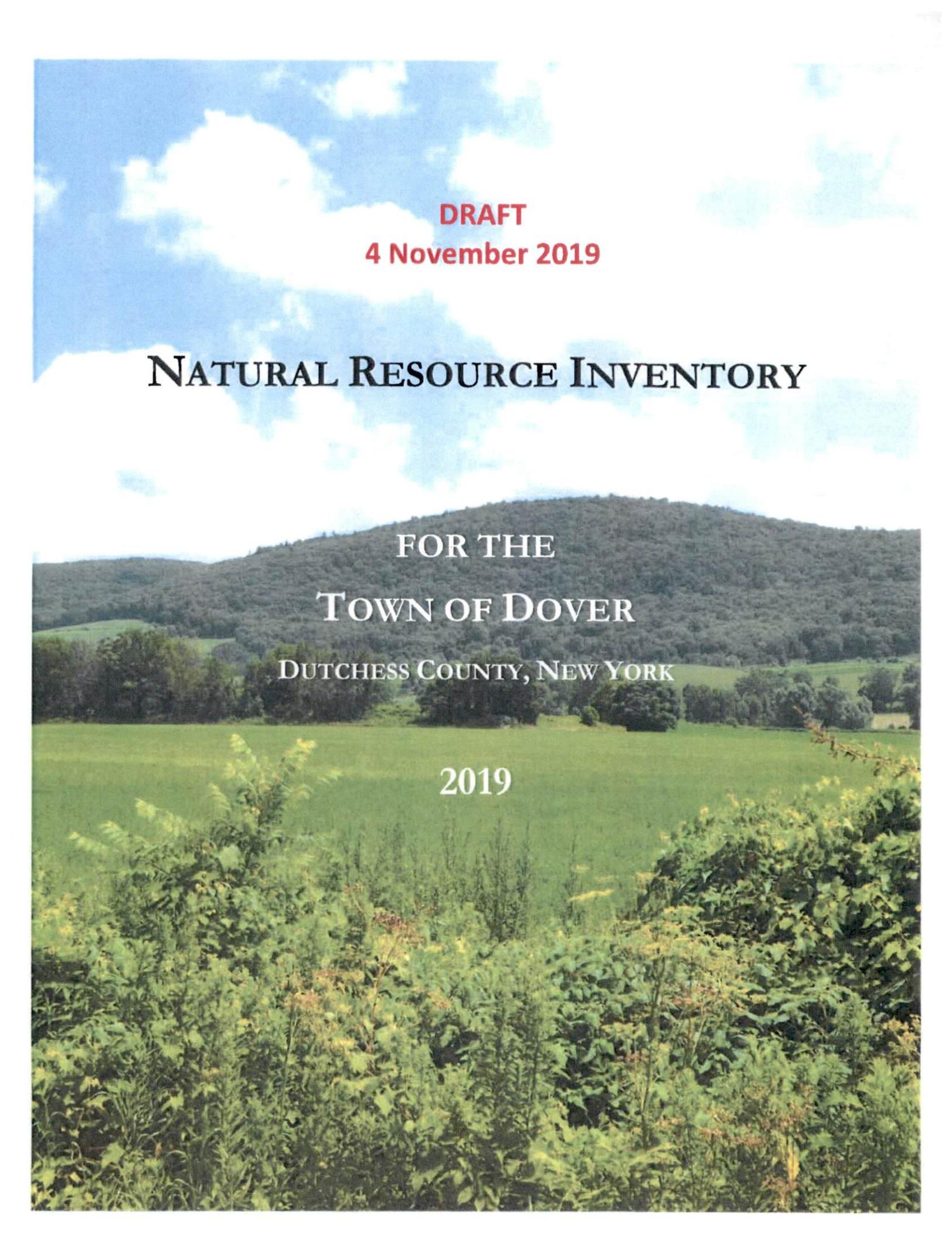
The advantages of this concept lie in the preservation of open space and the flexibility given in site design for areas with sensitive natural or historic features. In addition, affordability in housing may be realized through reductions in both the amount and cost of infrastructure, such as roadways, utilities, and other site improvements. Density bonuses, which would allow a developer to build a higher density development in conjunction with clustering, may also be used as an incentive for affordable housing or open space preservation. Cluster developments are a good way of helping to provide open space systems in the town and giving definition to community centers.

Since the essential feature of clustering is allowing the Planning Board to waive the normal setbacks and area regulations to achieve a tighter configuration, this technique can be especially useful in areas such as the community centers where central utilities exist or may be more cost-effective to provide. Cluster development can involve single-family homes on smaller than average lots or a variety of attached units. Site plan review of cluster proposals is critical to guarantee that the layout and design will be compatible with the existing neighborhoods.

Other Open Space Techniques

A variety of innovative techniques could be used to help Dover retain its crucial rural character through selective open space protection. Outright public acquisition, the purchase of development rights, or the negotiation of conservation easements on key parcels are among the most direct ways to protect important properties. Conservation easements are generally voluntary agreements filed with the deed for permanent protection that still maintain private ownership of the land. Deductions on state and federal taxes for any charitable donation or reduced property taxes are sometimes available as incentives to land-owners, depending on the particulars of the property. Such easements are often proposed in conjunction with cluster or limited development projects.

Another conservation option that could be considered is a transfer of development rights (TDR) program. New York State law was amended in 1989 to authorize this process. A TDR system allows future development potential, usually expressed in dwelling units per acre, to be relocated from a sending property with subsequent development restrictions, to a receiving property with good access to roads and utilities, as well as



DRAFT
4 November 2019

NATURAL RESOURCE INVENTORY

FOR THE
TOWN OF DOVER
DUTCHESS COUNTY, NEW YORK

2019

Achieving Conservation Goals

Actions for Water Resource Conservation

In addition to the conservation measures outlined on p. 144 which can be applied everywhere by individual landowners and the town, the actions listed below can be undertaken by town agencies and commissions.

- Educate residents who live along the Ten Mile River, Swamp River, and their tributaries about the benefits of riparian borders, broad buffer zones and best practices of stream stewardship (e.g., Lower Hudson Coalition of Conservation District's "Life at the Water's Edge: Living in Harmony with Your Backyard Stream" (https://www.lhccd.net/uploads/7/7/6/5/7765286/life_at_the_waters_edge.pdf))
- Monitor and track stream gauge data on the Swamp River and Ten Mile River to better understand seasonal and atypical fluctuations and inform residents about conservation measures as indicated.
- Use the town's Road-Stream Crossing Inventory and Vulnerability Assessment Study to prioritize repairs to culverts and bridges and identify municipal and grant-funded resources to make necessary upgrades.
- Contact businesses and homeowners in main floodplains within the town regarding restricted activities and structural requirements for the town's compliance for participation in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).
- Conduct a hydraulic and hydrologic study of J. H. Ketcham Memorial Park in Dover Plains to prevent redevelopment that results in an increase in base flood elevation.
- Develop a drought emergency ordinance with proactive measures and incremental instructions for residents to follow in the event of short- and long-term drought conditions.
- Prepare a Ten Mile River watershed management plan to protect water quality and monitor riverine changes over time.
- Expand conservation easement of parcels in the Dover Plains hamlet (e.g., Seven Wells) to protect water quality from contamination due to overdevelopment.
- Use environmentally friendly de-icing substances on town roads and educate residents about alternative products for business and home use.
- Consider implementing a government operations stormwater management program with pollution prevention measures that include reducing use of pesticides, regular catch basin maintenance, water conservation, and practices to prevent erosion, sedimentation and flooding of town facilities and properties.
- Implement recommendations of the Town's 2019 Climate Smart Communities publication, *A Review of Plans, Policies and Procedures Using the Climate Smart Resiliency Checklist*, to develop new and updated plans, policies and procedures that increase Dover's resilience to climate change, disaster preparedness and recovery, and reduce risks to people and property from natural hazards.