

SECTION 1

PLAN SUMMARY

The purpose of the Orange Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP) is to identify the town's unique agricultural, historical, recreational, natural and scenic resources and to provide a framework for the town's future decisions regarding land conservation and development.

The OSRP recognizes how dependent Orange's sense of place is on its large areas of forest, small parks and playgrounds, hillsides, farmland, rivers, lakes, ponds and wetlands, agricultural lands, scenic views, and significant historical structures and landscapes. The OSRP also illustrates the role that all undeveloped lands have in providing wildlife habitat, ensuring the integrity of drinking water supplies, and, at least in part, providing for residents' livelihoods.

The Plan highlights the town's natural and recreational resources, including:

- Large forest areas and contiguous forest blocks;
- Prime farmland soils;
- Undeveloped ridgelines and monadnocks, e.g. Tully Mountain;
- Riverfront Park and other recreational facilities/areas;
- Critical habitat lands;
- Wetlands, e.g. Black Gum Swamp;
- High-quality ground and surface waters, e.g. aquifers, Millers and Tully Rivers, Lake Mattawa, Lake Rohunta/Eagleville Pond; and
- Scenic and historic landscapes, corridors and roads.

The Five-Year Action Plan gives concrete substance to the goals and objectives that the Ad Hoc Open Space and Recreation Committee developed using the results of two surveys (1991 Master Plan Survey and 1996 UMASS Survey), public input to the 2001 Open Space and Recreation Plan, and community members' understanding of their town's significant yet vulnerable natural resource base. The 2006 Orange Open Space and Recreation Plan gives priority to actions that will:

- Ensure that the Town of Orange retains its predominantly rural character;
- Maintain or improve the quality of the Town's air and water and the diversity and integrity of native flora and fauna;
- Conserve locally and regionally important natural and cultural resources.
- Ensure that the Town of Orange improves the quality, quantity, and accessibility of its recreational resources for current and future generations.