

**SECTION
9****FIVE – YEAR ACTION PLAN**

The Five-Year Action Plan outlines the 2007 Open Space and Recreation Plan Update’s objectives. The objectives address both the open space and recreation goals because the quantity and quality of accessible open space relates directly to the availability of recreational opportunities. The objectives are listed in the far left column of Table 9-1 in the same order as they appear in Section 8, and are followed by recommended actions, responsible board or group, start date, and potential funding source. By implementing the recommended actions, each objective will begin to be realized.

Sometimes the objective and the action(s) listed are preliminary measures. Many of the objectives will take much time and effort to implement. Enacting these objectives by developing new programs and pursuing the conservation of the Town’s resources are new initiatives even though individual boards have been addressing some of these issues separately for years. The difference comes from having a group of volunteers dedicated specifically to enacting the recommendations of the Open Space and Recreation Plan.

Many towns in Franklin County have established official Open Space Committees to implement their OSRPs. An Open Space Committee is typically an official town committee but with an advisory role. However, as is shown in the third column in Table 9-1, the Select Board, Planning Board, Conservation Commission, Historical Commission, Historical Society, Airport Commission, Capital Planning Committee, Orange Revitalization Partnership, Riverfront Park Committee, and the Agricultural Commission are all necessary participants in the implementation of the Open Space and Recreation Plan.

Table 9-1: Recommended Actions of the Open Space and Recreation Plan by Objective

Goal A: Ensure that the Town of Orange retains its predominantly rural character and maintains or improves the quality of its air and water and the diversity and integrity of native flora and fauna, through the conservation of locally and regionally important natural and cultural resources.				
OBJECTIVE	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE BOARD/GROUP	START DATE	POTENTIAL SOURCE OF FUNDING IF APPLICABLE
1. Coordinate with all town boards to ensure that the findings and recommendations of the Orange Open Space and Recreation Plan are reflected in decisions dealing with, or affecting, Orange’s natural, recreational, and open space resources.	Appoint a seven member Open Space Committee.	Town Meeting to authorize, Board of Selectmen to appoint	2007	Town Meeting
	Get on the agenda of periodic all-board meetings.	Open Space Committee, Planning Board and Board of Selectmen	2007	Not Applicable
2. Prioritize land protection for farmland and large contiguous blocks of forestland.	Identify parcels that are most important to protect if provided the opportunity. Consider using the NQRLP criteria list.	Open Space Committee	2008	Not Applicable
3. Take advantage of the Town’s right-of-first refusal with Chapter 61 parcels and of its right to assign the right to an appropriate third party.	Adopt a protocol for exercising this right and for designating an assignee like a land trust.	Board of Selectmen	2008	The NQRLP has a model protocol which can be used
4. Support farmland protection through the Agricultural Preservation Restriction Program.	Write letters to farmland owners introducing land protection options and provide contact information for next steps.	Agricultural Commission and FC Farm Bureau	2008	Postage expenses to be covered by Agricultural Commission
5. Ensure the conservation and stewardship of large blocks of interior forest and connecting wildlife corridors through the purchase of conservation restrictions with funds from the Forest Legacy Program and other sources and through donations where possible. Consider where appropriate the incorporation of “Firewise” best management practices when planning for forest conservation near development.	Continue to work in collaboration with the North Quabbin Regional Landscape Partnership by attending quarterly meetings and trainings and keeping abreast of sources of funding for land conservation and management.	Open Space Committee	Ongoing	Not Applicable.

OBJECTIVE	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE BOARD/GROUP	START DATE	POTENTIAL SOURCE OF FUNDING IF APPLICABLE
6. For Town-owned parcels of land determine: 1) potential uses and designated manager; 2) a stewardship work plan, if any; and, 3) a means for coordinating open space related issues among Town boards and committees.	Each year, have one town-owned parcel receive a management plan that includes priority volunteer stewardship projects.	All land-managing Boards and the Capital Planning Committee	Ongoing	Town funds for property management plans with grants from the Massachusetts Forest Stewardship Incentive Program
7. Facilitate a program of water quality monitoring for the rivers, brooks, streams, lakes, and ponds in Orange.	Contact and work with the Millers River Watershed Council (MRWC) to facilitate a program of water quality monitoring for the rivers, brooks, streams, lakes, and ponds in Orange.	Open Space Committee	2008	Volunteer Training in monitoring can come from MRWC With resources from the Massachusetts Waterwatch Partnership: http://www.umass.edu/t/ei/mwwwp/
8. Promote and help protect historically significant landscapes, the National Historic District (NHD) in downtown Orange and the proposed NHD in North Orange, and Tully village centers and farm landscapes..	Complete historical survey forms for all significant properties and other historical resources and create a pamphlet to highlight the most spectacular sites on a map.	Historical Commission, Historical Society, the Orange Revitalization Partnership, and the Franklin Regional Council of Governments	2009	Massachusetts Historical Commission Survey and Planning Grants http://www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc/mhchpp/grdhp1.htm

OBJECTIVE	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE BOARD/GROUP	START DATE	POTENTIAL SOURCE OF FUNDING IF APPLICABLE
Goal B: Ensure that the Town of Orange improves the quality, quantity, and accessibility of its recreational resources for current and future generations.				
1. Increase the number of parks, play areas, and sports fields in and around Orange Center.	Determine maintenance needs of existing parks in and around Orange Center and identify potential lands for future parks.	Open Space Committee	2009	Not Applicable
	Explore whether it would work to have new residential subdivisions include parks and play areas for local residents of the development. If so, revise the Orange Subdivision Rules and Regulations to promote more parks to be maintained by the homeowner's association of the subdivision.	Planning Board	2010	EOEEA Smart Growth Technical Assistance Grants
2. Improve recreational programs for citizens of all ages and abilities, and support all the organizations that provide them.	Increase offerings for teens and elders by requesting access to the facilities at Mahar Regional High School and taking advantage of new construction and planned investments like the Dexter Park Recreation Area and School renovations.	Orange Recreation Association and Orange Elementary School Board Mahar Regional High School School Committee	2010	Not Applicable if services can be tied into the facilities' renovation.
3. Support the development of community arts festivals and events, such as the Garlic & Arts Festival, Celebrate the Harvest, Town Hall events, and Starry, Starry Night.	Coordinate with the North Quabbin Woods working group to make the website more effectively promote town events throughout Massachusetts and Southwestern New Hampshire.	North Quabbin Woods, Orange Revitalization Partnership, North Quabbin Community Coalition, and the North Quabbin Chamber of Commerce	2008	Mass Cultural Council

OBJECTIVE	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE BOARD/GROUP	START DATE	POTENTIAL SOURCE OF FUNDING IF APPLICABLE
4. Develop multi-user trail systems that can be accessed from publicly owned land or private lands with trail easements, particularly where they can be tied into existing systems.	Maintain Visitor Trail Center Kiosks at multiple locations throughout town which could show recreational and cultural offerings throughout the town and surrounding areas with trail maps.	North Quabbin Woods Working Group	2009	Foundation Grants
5. Support the continued development of the Riverfront Park, which adds needed public access to the Millers River and provides a handicap accessible open space in the downtown area.	Complete the construction of buildings, docks and gazebo.	Riverfront Park Committee	Ongoing	Urban Self Help Grant
6. Continue to support initiatives that enhance the recreational access along the Millers River Greenway between Orange and Athol Town Centers.	Work closely with the Town of Athol to explore sources of funding for the development of the Millers River Greenway bike path and canoe trail.	Open Space Committee	2009	Regional Transportation Program (TIP) funding And DCR Regional Trail Grants

Note: NQRLP = North Quabbin Regional Landscape Partnership