

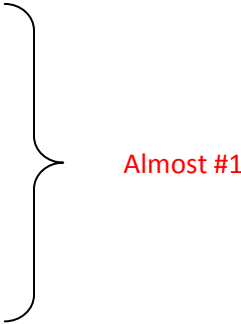
Presumpscot Land Conservation Vision, Values and Priorities

Small Breakout Group Flip Chart notes. (Name of steering committee member in parentheses). Room 102 Wishcamper Center, USM – Portland. 6/30/2010.

Group #1 (Matt)

What inspires us to conserve?

We defined conservation at the onset of the discussion. Agreed on a broad definition of conservation. Ranges from active to passive; ranges from legal to good management to voluntary actions.

- Forward thinking → future generations
 - Collaboration – partnerships
 - Idea of the commons: Pinchot/Roosevelt’s land ethic
 - New England tradition/culture
 - Aesthetic – the natural environment
 - Water quality
 - Recreation
 - Wildlife and habitat
 - Open space
 - Connection to the land (a la Aldo Leopold & Muir) - #1
 - Environmental education & ethics
 - Basic needs – for clean water, food, shelter which is provided by natural resources and the landscape - #1 also
- 
- Almost #1

Landscape elements

- #2 {
- Forests
 - Scenic vistas
 - Farms/working landscape
 - Wildlife
 - Fisheries
 - Rivers and streams
 - **Water quality #1**
 - Wetlands
 - Open space
 - Historic (sense of place)
 - Hills & valleys
 - Public access
 - Solitude
 - Swimming
 - Natural communities
 - Rare & threatened species/communities
 - Urban green space & rivers

Land conservation goals

- #1a ▸ Protecting water quality
 ○ To do that, protect the land base
- #1b ▸ Restore fisheries
- #3 {
- Impervious surface threshold
 - Manage invasive species
 - Guidance for subdivision and site plan developments
 - BMPS. Viewshed management
 - Policies for ponds
 - Setbacks/buffer zones
 - On-going collaborative processes
 - Better data collection and usage
- #2
- Goals vs. result of inconclusive collaborative process on private and public lands
 - Smart growth
 - Actively improve water quality of Mill Brook, Highland Lake
- #1c
- Get fish passage
 - Public access
 - Recreation

Current/Future Trends

- #1a • Sprawl management/smart growth
- #1b • *Energy needs/concerns
 - Biomass consumption
 - Dam power generation
 - Demand management
 - Efficiency
 - Food production/availability
 - Transportation impacts
- “Working landscapes”
- Health → getting kids outdoors
- Health of rivers, of fish
- Restoration of anadromous fish
- River → Coast → Estuary
- #2 • Trail networks – land & water
- #2 • Climate change
- Conservation easements/processes
- Food management

Opportunities

- #2 {
 - Buy-in on methods
 - An actual shot at true regional planning
 - Conservation around naturally significant boundaries rather than political boundaries
 - Better chance at funding
 - Synergies of all kinds
 - Brings in previously marginalized folks
 - Chance to co-opt the opposition
 - Building communities
 - Better chance at success #1

How to deepen the engagement process with stakeholders?

- Identify products/outcomes of project
- Identify key constituencies
 - Find out what’s important to them
 - Get specific, tangible
 - Show measureable outcomes
 - Partnerships with public, private, NGO
- 3 key things for project credibility:
 - Stakeholders – the right people are involved

dots/checks
(If applicable)

- Process
- Products – example plans, policies, partnerships
- The 5 p's: people, process, products, plans, policies, partnerships

Report out – Top 7

1. Connection to the land
2. Water quality
3. Water & fish
4. Growth management, sprawl, energy
5. Better chance at success
6. 5 P's – people (stakeholders), process, products (tangible outcomes – policies, plans, etc.)

Group #2 (Jess)

Inspires

- Not a lot of conserved, not enough fisheries habitat, quality of habitat, water quality, soil quality
- Protect relatively undeveloped urban watershed *
- Land status relates to fish accessibility (diadramous)
- Maintain resiliency of river to climate change impacts
- Health of the Bay
- Need to raise awareness/educate people/sell awareness of need for water quality and habitat
- Connect people to health of river/Bay
- Looking back 20 years – what do we want in the way of change in next 20 years
- Smart growth/responsible development
- Connectivity, wildlife corridors, preserve large forested blocks
- Food production, support agriculture, local food production, community gardens
- Support local economy through recreation

Landscape elements

- Riparian buffers – vegetated 1
- Working farms/farmland 2
- Forested blocks (undeveloped) – wildlife corridors 2
- Shoreland around lakes
- Shoreland around marshes/estuary 2
- Traditionally used recreational areas/access 2
 - Fishing areas
 - Trails
 - Waterfront access
 - Swimming holes

Goals

- We will preserve land to:
 - Improve and protect water quality
 - Improve and increase fish habitat
 - Protect wildlife habitat
 - Develop recreational corridors (ideally interconnected)
 - Support and maintain sustainable use of watershed
 - Maintain undeveloped character of watershed
 - Educate/develop a sense of value of the watershed by expanding recreational opportunities*
 - Includes building a sense of community and awareness of connection to land and watershed

Trends to consider

(-) trends

- Development ** top concern
- Global warming/sea level rise
- Flooding, runoff from bigger storms
- Riverbank erosion/sloughing banks
- Children not as interested in outdoor activities (impacts sense of value goal)
- Poor environmental literacy (impacts sense of value goal)

(+) trends

- Popularity of local foods (helps agriculture goal)
- Interest in biking, buses, use of trails (helps connectivity and water quality)
- Collaboration in seeking funding/planning (helps networking)
- Recognition of need for education component in projects
- Industry support, internships

Opportunities

- Education opportunities
- Set group priorities
- Louder voice **
- Funding opportunities
- Cross-town boundary land protection based on ecosystem
- Reduce barriers to cross-boundary protection
- Efficiency, pooled resources/coordination e.g. GIS **

Other initiatives

- Beginning with Habitat program
- PNLTC
- NOAA restoration grants
- 319 projects (3 projects)
- Sebago to the Sea
- Maine Forest Service grant
- American Forest foundation – conservation innovation grants (Crooked River watershed)
- Maine Coastal Program
- Local land trusts **
- CBEP
- YCCs
- PRWC

dots/checks
(If applicable)

- FOPR
- PRW
- USFWS

How can steering committee deepen engagement process with stakeholders...?

- One on one meetings with stakeholders.
- Spell out benefits of collaboration.
- Develop communication strategy to share information between meetings... e.g. website page

Report out – top 7

1. Protect relatively undeveloped urban watershed
2. Riparian buffers – vegetation and farmland (working farms)
3. Educate/develop – sense of value for watershed by expanding recreation opportunities including building sense of community and awareness of connection to land and watershed
4. Development and collaboration in seeking funding/planning
5. Louder Voice – efficiency, pooled resources, coordination, e.g. GIS
6. Local land protection efforts

Group #3 (Brooks)

Inspires

-
- Awareness of loss – making choices, either planned or by default
- Urban proximity to nature – refreshing
- Hidden resource, but damaged
- Open space/wildlife/water quality as a system
- Spiritual connection
- Need for environmental justice
 - Clean water for the disadvantaged
- Renewed awareness of the river
- Balance between built and nature

Landscape elements

General

- River banks (eroding)
- Clear water, streams
- Woods
- Wetlands – riparian
- Lakes and ponds
- Open fields – variety of views and habitat
- *the ecosystem*

Specific

- Old dams
- Pleasant River
- Upper Presumpscot near Sebago – fishing
- Presumpscot Falls
- Gunpower mills
- Canal

Land Conservation Goals

- Water quality – protect and improve ✓
- River corridor preservation
- Wildlife habitat corridor preservation ✓
- Access to water and lands
- Preserve a sense of place and connection to history through water quality and natural habitat
- Open space/farmland protection

- “Legacy of land use”
- Maintaining diverse recreational uses
 - The right use in the right place
 - Overcoming (avoiding) user conflicts

Trends

- Unchecked **growth** by default – sprawl
 - Increased costs of public services, environmental mitigation
 - Loss of scenic quality – diminished tourism? (\$)
- Increased public awareness of regulations and plans
 - Public scrutiny, controversy, obstruction
 - Litigiousness
 - ~ *More time to get things done*
- Land costs are rising! Shoreland
- Elders getting “taxed out” – more “elite” ownership
- New interest in rivers
 - River walks, trails, paddling
- Shoreland preservation /zoning
- Highway congestion

Opportunities

- * Networking!
- Potential for municipal/land trust collaboration
- “Hands on” soil and water conservation projects
- Maintaining/improving open spaces/public places
- *Larger group could leverage funding
- Increase watershed awareness
- Motivate the community
- Increased awareness → increases concern → increases action
- Collaboration with private sector
- Increase owners’ awareness of public lands natural values

Overlaps

- Sebago to the Sea trail
- * Multiple land trust/bank organizations
- PACTS? GPCOG
- *What are the big private landowners doing or planning?
- Portland wetland mapping
- Portland land bank

dots/checks
(If applicable)

- Interlocal stormwater working group
- Maine healthy beaches initiative
- Fragmented forest efforts

(maybe too specific Q for available time)

Report out – top 7

1. Our urban proximity to nature inspires us and makes us aware of natural loss
2. All aspects of the river ecosystem have value – land, water, woods, and fields
3. Preserve a sense of place and connection to history, water quality and natural habitat
4. Unchecked growth increases public costs, environmental damage, loss of scenery – ultimately lessening value
5. Larger group enhances networking, promotes public awareness and can leverage funding
6. We don't know what major landowners are doing/thinking

Group #4 (Will)

Inspires

- Recreational opportunities
- Love nature – advocate for “voiceless resources” 2
- Past degradation leads to opportunities for restoration in most populous region of Maine
- Want future generations to know what it means to live in Maine – wilderness, forests, rivers, recreation. Clock is ticking ... now or never 2
- Protection of drinking water
- Support return of native fish

Landscape elements

- River and riparian areas 4
- Wildlife habitat
- Unfragmented forests (wildlife, solitude). Landscapes 4
- Historic elements – buildings, farms
- Scenic vistas (e.g., East Windham). “Rural character”

Land Conservation Goals

- ___ % of Presumpscot watershed protected forever 4
 - Including ___% of critical natural areas
 - High value wildlife habitat
 - Wetlands
 - Riparian
 - Aquifer/recharge areas
- Farmland protection
- Corridors/connectivity 2
- Unique flora & fauna protection
- Public access/recreational opportunities
- Some areas “forever wild”
- Maintain sustainable forestry
- Existing undeveloped riparian areas stay undeveloped 5
- Educate current and future generations – to value this kind of resource 1

Future Trends

- Development pressure 4
- Local food 1
- Less outdoor activity (kids)
- Energy transformation 2
 - + value of wood

dots/checks
(If applicable)

- New dams/hydro
- Tidal
- Wind
- Solar
- Climate change 1
- Water crisis (nationally)
- Carbon sequestration

Opportunities

- Fund raising
- Public engagement / political support 3
- Influence policy
- Create a model for other watersheds
- Regional cooperation
- Town and land trusts focused on goals, working efficiently and effectively to accomplish them 1
- Leverage Sebago to the Sea to mobilize land conservation

Overlapping Initiatives

- Sebago to the Sea
- Forest service initiative (grant)?
- Casco Bay Estuary Partnership?

Engagement

- \$\$
- Communication
- Define “what’s in it for me” (common ground)

Report out – top 7

1. Future generations know they still live in Maine – appreciate the natural world
2. Unfragmented forests and river/riparian areas
3. Existing riparian areas remain undeveloped
4. Development pressure
5. Public engagement and political support
6. Sebago to the Sea (?)
7. Define/find common ground - communicate

Group #5 (Rebeccah)

Inspires

- Declining water quality both in river and Casco Bay 2
- River's impact on the bay 1
- River's impact on property values
- Ecosystem integrity 3
- Preserving the river for future generations 5
- Maintaining a healthy watershed supports more viable uses around it 1
- Clean water is an economic issue
- Recreation and access, both recreation on the river and along the river 5
- Cost avoidance – keeping it clean is less expensive than having to clean it up 1
- River's history
- Loss of high value agricultural land (to development) within the watershed 2

Land Conservation Goals

- Expand visual and physical access to the river 3
- Conserve 70% of the watershed as undeveloped 6
- Have entire river achieve swimmable water quality 5
- Be able to canoe entire river 1
- Improve water quality by 50% 3
- Consider dam removal/evaluation
- Develop tools/mechanism that allows for residential development in rural areas
- Address camp roads and related issues

Landscape Elements

- ~~Accessibility~~
- Forest cover 5
- All of them
- Buffering and proper forest management 6
- Unprotected first order streams 2
- Wildlife corridors 3
- Historic land marks
- Gambo Falls 1
- Covered bridges
- Undeveloped river frontage
- ~~Working farms~~
- Viewsheds
- Trails & accessibility 3
- Fly fishing spots 1

dots/checks
(If applicable)

- Fish ways
- Downtown integration
- Farms within watershed 1

Trends

- Sprawl – needs to be mitigated 5
- Need to enhance land management
- Seek to reduce fertilizers and pesticides and herbicides 3
- Would like more public transit 2
- Conversion of seasonal camps to year round homes 4
- Loss of local farms to development 4
- Rising home prices.... “drive until you qualify”
- Positive trend of more alternative energy
- Move towards rail 1
- Increase in the number of people seeking recreation opportunities 1

Opportunities

- Diversity in response 3
- Brings credibility 4
- More cost effective
- Regional land use 4
- Results 3
- Increases ability to compete for funding

Other Initiatives

- New State building code
- Sebago to the Sea trail
- Sustainable communities planning grant
- Gorham E/W corridor study
- Mountain Division Rail

Report out – Top 7

1. Preserving the river for future generations.
2. Buffering and proper forest management
3. Conserve 70% of the watershed as undeveloped
4. Sprawl – needs to be mitigated
5. Regional land use
6. Sebago to the Sea
7. More bulleted information about the watershed to group

Group #6 (Molly)

Inspires

- Beautiful places close to home 3
- Community open space in a dense, urban environment 2
- Preserve natural communities, forest preservation 1
- Trail network (high quality) near/in Portland 1
- Educational opportunities 1
- Recreational
 - Fish
 - Boat
 - hike 1
 - swim
- Legacy – take advantage of natural resources for generations 1

Landscape Elements

- Waterfalls 1
- Forests 2
- 250' buffer of water/riparian zone 2
- Ecologically important areas (MNAP identified) 3
- Working farms
- Presumpscot river preserve 1
- Public access to water 3
- Public access to trails 1
- Contiguous/large/undeveloped parcels 5
- Wildlife corridors 3
- Viewsheds from public roads
- Tributaries/upstream 2
- Convergence – Presumpscot & Piscataqua
- Archaeology sites/historical/cultural
- Cumberland Oxford canal 2
- Gambo Powder mill 1
- Community forests

Trends

- Sprawl expansion/acceleration 5
 - Roads/fragmentation
- Landscape scale planning
- Global warming 4
 - Population pressure/ecological shifts

dots/checks
(If applicable)

- Targeted funding
- Increased demand for local food
- 3rd party land certification 1
- Mixed use (single land serving many interests) 2
- Increase in posted land 2
- Carbon sequestration
- Coalitions addressing these issues
- Fish passage improvements 1
- Industrial discharge improving
- Smaller land ownership patterns 4

Land Conservation Goals

- Protect critical wildlife habitat 2
- Expand public access 3
- Given next generation opportunity to experience “wild” settings close to home
- Identify critical wildlife corridors 1
- Identify large, undeveloped blocks of land
- Protect/sustainably manage the forest 3
- Advocate for Low Impact Development 2
- Promote ecosystem conservation (systems, not individual pieces) 2
- Identify and repair/replace inadequate stream crossings (detrimental)(
- Maximize efforts of coalition partners
- Farms/forests stay as farms/forests (economically viable/sustainable) 4
- Balance economic development with conservation 3

Opportunities

- Coalition building
- Increase grant competitiveness 3
- Increase education and outreach 1
- Increase opportunities for large blocks of land networking 3
- Improved cooperation lowers overhead
- Increase public awareness 4
- Focus on priority items as a group (synergy) 3
- Shared resources 1

Report out – top 7

1. Inspiration – beautiful places close to home
2. Landscape elements – contiguous undeveloped parcels
3. Goals – Economically viable working farms; forests with BMPs

dots/checks
(If applicable)

4. Trends – Sprawl and fragmentations/parcelization; climate change impacts
5. Opportunity – increased public awareness; coalition synergy
6. Other Initiatives – DOT; Manomet
7. Include more business/economic interests in the coalition