

## **Presumpscot River Watershed Coalition Land Conservation Vision, Values and Priorities**

### **Summary of Stakeholder Meeting**

**June 30, 2010**

**Wishcamper Center, University of Southern Maine**

**Methodology:** Following an introduction to the meeting, participants were divided into 6 breakout groups. Each small group was facilitated by a member of the Presumpscot River Watershed Coalition Steering Committee. Twenty-eight people were recorded as attending the meeting.

During the small group session participants were invited to brainstorm 6 questions: (1) What inspires you to conserve land in the Presumpscot River Watershed?; (2) What are the most important landscape elements that need to be protected in the watershed?; (3) What potential land conservation goals do you feel deserve consideration as this project advances?; (4) What current and future trends need to be considered?; (5) Given a collaborative approach as promoted by this initiative, what are the biggest opportunities that may emerge as a result of an engaged stakeholder group?; and (6) What other land conservation planning or activity is underway in the watershed that overlaps with the aims of this initiative? Facilitators recorded the brainstormed ideas on flipcharts. The facilitators then went through the brainstormed lists and had participants indicate by showing of hands their top three priorities within each brainstorm.

The brainstorming exercises were intended to produce a list of components that will lead to a shared vision statement for the Presumpscot Watershed, as well as a list of components that will lead to a set of values for the Watershed.

**Reporting:** The attached pages include summary of “like ideas” from each group’s brainstormed questions. The “like ideas” are grouped by those associated with a vision, those associated with values, and those associated with land conservation priorities.

Following summary of the like ideas are the ideas recorded on flipcharts from the breakout groups. The raw data has been listed by each group (1-6), as it was recorded. It should be noted that groups used different methods for recording priorities within the brainstorms.

## Summary of “like ideas”

### What inspires us to conserve?

#### **Vision would include:**

- Development of a land ethic that includes creating a legacy for future generations
- Raising awareness regarding the river and connecting people to the land
- Seeking a balance between the built environment and nature that emphasizes the river’s economic impact in terms of viable uses and recreation
- Recognizing the river’s impact on the bay and its environment and preserving and strengthening its native and natural communities

#### **Values would include:**

- The need for a healthy watershed and ecosystem
- The river’s role culturally both historically and for future generations
- Access to local recreational opportunities
- The river’s role in the economy and the need for sustainable development within the watershed

#### **Priorities would include:**

- Areas of wildlife and aquatic habitat
- Large undeveloped blocks of land the corridors that connect them
- Recreational areas, access to recreational areas and trails
- Areas of active farmland

### What are the most important landscape elements that need to be protected in the watershed?

#### **Vision would include:**

- Preservation of historic spaces that contribute to the sense of place embodied by the developed areas of the watershed

#### **Values would include:**

- Clean, safe water to support habitat and drinking water supplies
- The need for, and access to, open space, forests, riparian areas, agricultural resources, scenic viewsheds, recreational areas and wetlands

#### **Priorities would include:**

- Lands around water bodies including unprotected 1<sup>st</sup> order streams and tributaries
- Locations – historic and recreational – that resonate with the public
- Open space, specifically, rare and threatened species/communities, forest blocks, working farms, view sheds, recreational areas and access to recreational areas

**What potential land conservation goals deserve consideration as this project advances?**

**Vision would include:**

- Conservation of X% of the undeveloped lands within the watershed
- To maintain the undeveloped character of the watershed
- Sustainable and smart growth oriented development within the watershed
- Diverse recreational opportunities with adequate access
- To promote stewardship of the watershed
- Improved and restored fisheries

**Values would include:**

- An emphasis on ecosystem preservation
- A need for tools to assist with sustainable, smart growth oriented development

**Priorities would include:**

- Identification of large, undeveloped blocks of land

**What current and future trends need to be considered?**

**Vision would include:**

- Increase environmental literacy and support for stakeholders' efforts

**Values would include:**

- Trends in alternative energies and the role and benefits of the watershed in regard to these
- Trends in children's health and the role the watershed can play in improving health
- Trails and recreational opportunities within the watershed and their ability to connect communities and provide alternative transportation choices
- The need to identify and share knowledge about global warming and climate change trends and their effects on the watershed
- The need to understand development trends and alternatives and how they effect the watershed and communities (choice, affordability)
- Trends in demand for local food and associated land conservation opportunities

**What are the biggest opportunities that may emerge as a result of an engaged stakeholder group?**

**Vision would include:**

- Collaboration among stakeholders leading to the successful: sharing of resources, widespread agreement on conservation priorities, a collective voice, and increased ability to compete for funding
- Development of a watershed wide land conservation plan (as opposed to one adhering to political or other jurisdictional boundaries) based on agreed upon values and priorities

**Values would include:**

- The opportunity to engage and further educate the public increasing watershed awareness and support