

Town Hall  
1 Union Square  
Milford, NH 03055-4240  
(603) 249-0628  
Fax (603) 673-2273  
[www.milford.nh.gov](http://www.milford.nh.gov)  
[conservation@milford.nh.gov](mailto:conservation@milford.nh.gov)

**Town of Milford**  
CONSERVATION COMMISSION



October 31, 2019

To: Milford Planning Board

**Re: Town-wide Natural Resource Inventory Project**

To the Board,

The Conservation Commission is considering having a Natural Resources Inventory (NRI) completed for Milford. We would like to discuss with the Planning Board how an NRI might help in planning and community development. Please see the attached description of an NRI as developed by UNH Extension Service.

Following is a section from the Wildlife Action Plan that also helps explain the importance of an NRI:

**A natural resource inventory (NRI) identifies and describes natural resources in a given locale.** Natural resources can be defined as critical resources supplied by nature that are irreplaceable or very expensive to replace if used up or destroyed. Examples of natural resources are soils, wetlands, other habitats, water, plants, and wildlife. It is important to identify these resources for the health and well-being of New Hampshire residents. You may have already experienced the effects of lost natural resources by noticing loss of open space and recreational areas, contamination of ground and surface waters, less diversity of wildlife, and increased erosion and flooding.

**To protect these natural resources, it is essential to first identify, map, and describe where on the landscape they currently exist.** Many communities have recognized the need for conservation planning, and conducting a natural resource inventory or "NRI" is the first step in doing so. An excellent guide on conducting a natural resource inventory is [Natural Resources Inventories: A Guide for New Hampshire Communities and Conservation Groups](#) revised and updated by Amanda Stone (2001). It can be downloaded from the University of New Hampshire's Cooperative Extension Program (large PDF download alert - this file is 29 MB and will take some time, even with a high-speed connection.)

Here is a link if you would like to investigate any NRI's on your own: <https://extension.unh.edu/FWT/tafw/NaturalResourceInventories.htm>

Very Respectfully,

Audrey Fraizer  
Milford Conservation Commission

# NATURAL RESOURCES INVENTORIES

A GUIDE FOR NEW HAMPSHIRE COMMUNITIES AND CONSERVATION GROUPS



## Tools for Conservation in Your Community



Extension

### What is a Natural Resources Inventory (NRI)?

A Natural Resources Inventory (NRI) compiles information on important, naturally occurring resources within a given locality (e.g., municipality, watershed, or region), such as forests, farmlands, streams, lakes, wetlands, and rocky ridges. Cultural resources, such as historic, scenic, and recreational assets are often included in an inventory. NRIs are comprised of maps, data, and a report that describes the resources, project goals and recommendations for next steps. As well as being a stand-alone product, the NRI can also be integrated into a master plan, conservation plan or watershed plan.

By visualizing an area's resources—where they occur and how they relate to each other, their surroundings, and existing development—a NRI provides a strong foundation for informed land-use planning and decision-making. NRIs also serve as the basis for identifying conservation priorities and other strategies, such as local regulations to protect natural resources, and identify the need for more detailed studies such as wildlife habitat assessment or wetland evaluation.

### Determining the goals and scope of a NRI

Defining short- and long-term goals at the outset of a NRI will help to determine the appropriate approach and scope of the project. Community priorities, staff or volunteer time, technical capacity, and available budget are also important factors. Key questions to consider include:

- Why do you want to develop or update a NRI?
- Are there specific priorities you want to address?
- What are the community's needs and concerns?
- How will the NRI be used?

### What to include in a NRI

A Basic NRI includes readily available data that can be used to describe and assess the current status of known natural resources – and no field work is required for a Basic NRI. Once completed, the need for additional data or more detailed studies can be determined. *The Natural Resources Inventory Guide* suggests components to include in a Basic NRI and provides information about publicly available data sources. The guidebook also presents options for conducting Detailed



Inventory Studies to supplement existing data and enhance the NRI. This may include collecting field data. Additional data sets often exist at the local level. Be sure to check with your municipal offices, regional planning commissions and local and regional land trusts to find out about available data at the start of the NRI project.

## Putting the NRI to work

The results of the NRI should be available for use by all municipal boards, interested community, watershed and conservation groups, and local residents. Some applications of an NRI include:

- Public education
- Identification of conservation priorities
- Land conservation planning
- Environmental review of development proposals
- Master Plan updates
- Zoning and subdivision regulation updates
- Watershed assessment and planning

## Local Examples of NRI Approaches

New Hampshire communities and conservation groups have approached the NRI process in a variety of different ways. For example, in the towns Bath, Campton and Jefferson volunteers on the conservation commission worked on creating their NRIs. Several other communities, such as Pembroke, Washington, Jaffrey, Somersworth and Epping hired natural resources consultants or regional planning commissions to complete their NRIs. Inventories that span multiple municipalities are often completed for regional plans, for example, Bear-Paw Regional Greenways (a regional land trust in southeastern NH) incorporated the NRI as part of their conservation plan. The Newfound Lands Region Watershed Master Plan includes a comprehensive inventory of natural resources in the municipalities in the Newfound Lake watershed.

## WHERE TO GET HELP:

UNH Cooperative Extension's Natural Resources program provides assistance and guidance to communities and conservation groups getting started on a Natural Resources Inventory. For more information, contact:

### Amanda Stone

Natural Resources and Land Conservation Specialist  
UNH Cooperative Extension, Durham, NH  
[amanda.stone@unh.edu](mailto:amanda.stone@unh.edu)

## SUGGESTED NRI COMPONENTS

### Water Resources

- Rivers, streams, lakes and ponds
- Groundwater and aquifers
- Floodplains
- Wetlands
- Shorelands

### Wildlife and Habitats

- Includes species of greatest conservation need and associated habitats (see NH Wildlife Action Plan), rare plant and animal species and significant natural communities

### Farmlands

### Forest Resources

### Unique Geologic Resources

### Unfragmented Habitat Blocks

### Cultural Resources

- Historic resources
- Scenic resources
- Recreation resources

### Conservation Lands and Land Use

- Conservation and public lands
- Zoning and tax maps

### Climate Conditions and Projections

*This list is not exhaustive and there may be other components relevant to your community or region that you would like to add.*

