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## GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE

Dear Friends,



I am pleased to present New Hampshire's 2013 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP), developed through the collaborative efforts of the New Hampshire Office of Energy and Planning and the New Hampshire Department of Resources and Economic Development. The purpose of each SCORP is to meet the state's eligibility requirements to participate in the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) grant program by identifying current needs and trends for outdoor recreation in New Hampshire.

The people of New Hampshire have entrusted their state and local parks to the perpetual care of our state's leaders so that future generations can experience the same benefits and quality of life that have made New Hampshire a world-class destination. New Hampshire's extraordinary landscapes and range of outdoor recreation activities are unparalleled. Visitors to our state are always surprised that within the borders of New Hampshire one can find such a diversity of outdoor recreation experiences. From Mount Washington State Park located on the summit of the tallest peak in the Northeast to the newly redeveloped Hampton Beach State Park on the seacoast, residents and guests are constantly discovering new parks, trails, forests, and historic sites to explore in New Hampshire.

The Land and Water Conservation Fund, established by Congress nearly a half century ago, administered by New Hampshire's Department of Resources and Economic Development, Division of Parks and Recreation in partnership with the National Park Service, is an integral and essential grant program that helps our state preserve, protect, and provide the best possible recreation experience for visitors and residents. I believe this SCORP will prove to be an excellent resource in planning for future outdoor recreation resources in New Hampshire to ensure that the outdoor recreation heritage of our state remains as vibrant for future generations as it is today.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "John H. Lynch". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized initial "J".

John H. Lynch  
Governor

## COMMISSIONER'S MESSAGE



The NH Department of Resources and Economic Development, Division of Parks and Recreation, is pleased to present this updated edition of the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) 2013-2018.

Every five years our planning teams work together to determine the current state of outdoor recreation facilities and trends in New Hampshire and revise the SCORP to reflect changing demography and recreation preferences of residents and visitors.

Key to this latest report we find that New Hampshire's citizens are aging in place and looking for more recreation opportunities that are geared to walking trails, soft nature hikes, paths to share with pets, and places to stop to enjoy a view, a watershed, or a picnic. Older respondents that participated in our focus groups and surveys want to remain active as long as possible and as long as their physical strength allows. It will be important to keep this need in mind as we move forward in establishing new outdoor recreation opportunities at both the local and state levels.

The NH Division of Parks and Recreation is also intentionally moving to create and support more year-round recreation activities at NH State Parks. Traditionally the state park system has focused its efforts on the summer visitors and vacationers but more and more there is demand from the growing snow sports clientele for attractions and amenities that include zip lines, mountain coasters, winter camping cabins, pavilions with fire places, skating rinks, cross-country ski trails, and a range of other additions to the recreation opportunities available throughout the year. It is clear that people in New Hampshire want to be active outdoors as much as possible and certainly with the lengthening shoulder seasons it is more important than ever to maximize these opportunities wherever possible.

Community recreation is vitally important to the entire recreation landscape in New Hampshire. Locally based recreation opportunity that includes parks with playgrounds and picnic tables, places where dogs can romp with other dogs and dogowners can share outdoor play time, pathways that allow for walking from home to stores or community centers and back again, bicycle paths and right-of-ways for both exercise and commuting, as well as safe walking routes to schools, are integral to future planning for both transportation and recreation improvements. A strong community-based recreation program supports a strong state park system which helps build strong healthy minds and bodies for our young people, our families, and our elders.

Many studies prove the benefits of outdoor recreation to overcoming obesity, refreshing our spirits, and improving our physical strength. The greater we can expand these opportunities to our urban communities, burgeoning immigrant populations, and rural economically disadvantaged areas, the more we encourage healthy lifestyles for everyone so that our citizens can be productive and healthy throughout their lives regardless of where they live or what they earn.

The Land and Water Conservation Fund has been extraordinarily valuable in providing funding that has helped create and expand outdoor recreation opportunity throughout New Hampshire. Over 700 projects have been approved and more than \$40,000,000 in grant funds have been matched or exceeded by state and local contributions. Outdoor recreation is integral to the exceptional quality of life enjoyed by New Hampshire's residents and visitors. It helps to attract new business, encourages young people to remain here after college to raise their families, and is critical to attracting tourists from all over the country and around the world which supports additional economic development in our state. There is no substitute for a healthy landscape that provides a wide range of healthy options to enjoy the outdoors while also offering healthy lifestyle amenities to encourage connected and locally sustainable communities.

We are very proud of the state's partnership with the National Park Service to deploy the grant funds provided through the Land and Water Conservation Fund to continue growing outdoor recreation opportunity in New Hampshire. We expect this SCORP to provide both helpful reference information as well as identifiable measurement tools to gauge the success of the goals outlined in the plan. Thank you to all those who participated in producing this plan. We hope you will find the 2013-2018 SCORP to be a valuable guide for creating expanded outdoor recreation opportunity throughout New Hampshire.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "George M. Bald". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping initial "G" and "B".

George M. Bald  
Commissioner



## NEW HAMPSHIRE'S OUTDOORS

With just over 9,000 square miles of land area and 5,900 miles of shoreline and riverfront, New Hampshire's natural and cultural landscape provides an ideal setting for residents and visitors from around the world to participate in a stunning array of four season outdoor recreation opportunities.

Recreation opportunities include the popular White Mountain National Forest (WMNF), which is almost 800,000 acres, state lands and waterways, municipal outdoor recreation providers, and over one million acres of private forest and agricultural land. These places offer scenic beauty as well as vast opportunities for wilderness experiences, hunting, fishing, wildlife viewing, hiking, camping, rock climbing, bicycling, snowmobiling, paddling, surfing, swimming, winter sports, and boating. New Hampshire's pristine view sheds, spectacular mountain tops and fragile alpine zones can be counted among the most unique natural and geologic features in the world.

**"We, who promote the outdoors as an indispensable element of our well-being, also must stress that the outdoors must be healthy as well."**

**- Jon Jarvis, National Parks Service Director, April 6, 2011**

Promoting and encouraging the enjoyment of New Hampshire's outdoors builds the tourism industry, which contributes heavily to the state's economy, and supports the health and well-being of New Hampshire residents and visitors. *Wise stewardship, protection, and management of these valuable natural and cultural resources are vital to New Hampshire's continued prosperity.*



Franconia Notch State Park

### STATEWIDE COMPREHENSIVE OUTDOOR RECREATION PLAN - A MANDATE

Under the terms of the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act (LWCF) of 1965, which established the LWCF State Assistance Program, each state is required to develop a Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) at least every five years. The SCORP is filed with the National Park Service (NPS), and enables New Hampshire to participate in the LWCF program, guiding the use of LWCF funding.

In addition, the 2013-2018 SCORP:

- Fulfills New Hampshire's statutory requirement (RSA 12-A:18) for an outdoor recreation planning program.
- Is intended to align with the 2011 America's Great Outdoors Report, which promotes connecting people to the outdoors, conserving natural and cultural resources and developing partnerships.
- Provides guidance on outdoor recreation planning that is focused on coordinating resources and efforts within the outdoor recreation community and the broader decision-making process throughout the state.

**2013-2018 SCORP Goals** - The goal and intent of the 2013-2018 SCORP is to use contemporary planning resources to secure a future where New Hampshire residents and visitors live healthier lifestyles; wildlife, water, and natural resources are conserved; and the economic vitality of communities is sustained.



Winslow State Park



## PLAN PURPOSE

The intent of this plan is to justify state and federal expenditures for outdoor recreation using the following planning criteria:

1. Identify major issues and challenges facing the state's outdoor recreation and natural resources using public, provider, and user feedback, including those that may not be active participants in outdoor recreation activities.
2. Assess the existing supply of and demand for outdoor recreation opportunities.
3. Evaluate recreation trends, deficiencies, under-served areas, and desired improvements.
4. Conduct an inventory of current outdoor recreation facilities, trails, and wetlands.
5. Establish priorities based on outreach efforts, data research, and previous plans.
6. Ensure accountability in measuring success using publicly issued annual benchmark reports.



Greenfield State Park

Clough State Park

## VISION

Public outreach efforts to determine a vision for outdoor recreation in New Hampshire and identify SCORP objectives consisted of the following initiatives:

- The Carsey Institute at the University of New Hampshire (UNH) convened “NH Listens” community conversations at seven sites throughout the state, with 171 community members participating.
- UNH Cooperative Extension facilitated planning sessions with key stakeholder groups and conducted a web-based survey with 136 recreation and conservation leaders throughout New Hampshire responding.
- Review of the 2010 New Hampshire Fish and Game Department survey on outdoor recreation participation.

Survey respondents identified several vision themes, which have been incorporated into the following Vision Statement:

**New Hampshire SCORP 2013-2018 Vision Statement** - “Outdoor recreation In New Hampshire serves diverse populations throughout the state, has a strong, positive impact on the economy, and improves the quality of life for New Hampshire residents and visitors.

Strong partnerships among community organizations, the business community and the public sector facilitate diverse outdoor recreation opportunities for a variety of users.

A well-connected and maintained system of trails, expanded funding, and quality educational resources insure that outdoor recreation continues to be a vital part of New Hampshire.”

## THE IMPORTANCE AND RELEVANCE OF OUTDOOR RECREATION

Outdoor recreation is a vital contributor to local, regional, and state economies, natural and cultural resource conservation efforts, and public health. The New Hampshire 2013-2018 SCORP identifies priorities and actions that support a healthy citizenry by creating access to the outdoors for all, wise stewardship of the natural environment, and community and statewide economic vitality for the next five years.

**SCORP and Healthy Lifestyles** - Water parks, tennis courts, swimming pools, winter sledding areas and playgrounds, and a connected network of hiking, snowshoe, and biking trails on public and private lands are an essential component of a healthy lifestyle. Federal and stateside LWCF projects are making vital contributions toward addressing our nation's growing public health concerns.

### a. The Land and Water Conservation Fund and Public Health

We are continuously reminded of the costs associated with obesity as more and more children are being diagnosed, in part because of a sedentary lifestyle. Hypertension or high blood pressure, kidney disease, heart disease, and now liver disease are on the rise for children, some as young as age 12. Obesity is defined as having a body mass index of greater than or equal to 30 percent of total body weight. The facts below tell the story about our children, their health, and the outdoors:

- The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) reports that the percentage of obese youth has tripled from 1980 to 2008. Children and adolescents who are obese have a 70-80 percent chance of becoming overweight or obese adults.
- Studies show that young people today spend a substantial amount of time using electronic media (screen time). Children ages 8-18 average approximately seven hours a day watching TV, video games, computers, and movies.
- An active lifestyle, along with other factors, can help to reverse this trend. However, if people are going to be encouraged to adjust their lifestyles, they need accessible, clean, safe places to connect with the outdoors.

### **b. Universal Access to Outdoor Play Opportunities**

A 2009 survey commissioned by KaBOOM!, a national nonprofit dedicated to bringing play back into the lives of children, included 1,677 parents with children between the ages of 2-12. The survey found that:

- Fifty-nine percent (59%) of parents report that their children don't have access to a community playground.
- Ninety-six percent (96%) of parents said playing outside was critical to keep kids physically fit.
- Ninety-two percent (92%) of parents said children today spend less time playing outside than they did as children.

Seniors, youth, low income populations, people with disabilities, and New Hampshire's growing racially and ethnically diverse citizenry need to be included when considering land acquisition, and planning and designing trails, open space, facilities, and programs.

**Low Income Children and Access to Play** - According to a KaBoom! commissioned survey, "Sixty-nine percent (69%) of U.S. children in the lowest income bracket don't have access to a community playground."

### **c. Measuring the Economic Value of a Park System**

Measuring the benefits of outdoor recreation using survey tools, metrics, and data collection is an important component of understanding the impacts on employment opportunities, land values, revenue generation, mental and physical health, environmental stewardship, and community sustainability.

According to a study published in 2009 by The Trust for Public Land and Center for City Park Excellence, seven attributes of park systems that provide economic value (property value, tourism, direct use, health, community cohesion, clean water, and clean air) can be quantified and measured by calculating:

- Direct revenues to local and state government realized from property taxes related to property value increases because of proximity to parks, and increased spending by tourists.

- Direct savings in medical costs resulting from exercising in parks; community members coming together to improve neighborhood parks, the public safety, and social benefits of a healthy park system; and the value of trees in air and water pollution reduction.

The 2013-2018 New Hampshire SCORP outlines the economic contributions of various outdoor recreation providers throughout the State, demonstrating the significant value that outdoor recreation participation, environmental conservation initiatives, and cultural resource preservation make to the State's overall economy.

**New Hampshire Recreation and Conservation Leaders Survey** - Seventy-one percent (71%) ranked partnerships with organizations to foster connections between outdoor recreation and improved health and wellness as a medium to high priority.

#### **d. Outdoor Recreation Participation**

According to the Outdoor Foundation (OF), a non-profit organization that conducts research on outdoor recreation, nearly 50 percent of Americans ages six and older participated in outdoor recreation in 2011, the highest participation level in five years. "Active" outdoor recreation includes bicycling, camping, fishing, hunting, paddling sports, snow sports, wildlife viewing, trail-running, hiking, and climbing. The Outdoor Industry Association, a trade association of outdoor retailers, manufacturers, distributors, and sales representatives, has calculated that outdoor recreation contributes \$646 billion annually to the U.S. economy in direct sales.

#### **The Outdoor Recreation Economy in New Hampshire**

- Supports 53,000 jobs
- Generates \$261 million in annual state tax revenue
- Produces nearly \$4 billion annually in retail sales and services

- *Outdoor Foundation Report, 2006*



## TRENDS IMPACTING OUTDOOR RECREATION IN NEW HAMPSHIRE

### a. Emphasis on Community Connectivity and Active Transportation

Emphasis on community connectivity through trails, greenways, and active transportation initiatives is receiving increased attention by communities committed to public health, environmental conservation, and economic development.

According to a 2002 report on housing preferences, *Boomers on the Horizon: Housing Preferences of the 55+ Market*, trails were the #1 amenity influencing homebuyers in the 55+ age bracket. Being able to get from home to natural areas, parks, recreation facilities, and important community destinations by bicycling or walking allows people to make the choice for active transportation.

**Economic Impact of Trails and Greenways** - There are numerous economic benefits from trails and greenways, such as increased property value of nearby homes, health benefits, and reduced environmental impact. Studies have shown that trail users spend money on food, beverages, camping, bike rentals, and accommodations, all of which stimulate the local economy.

### b. Overweight and Obesity Concerns

Overweight and obesity rates among children and adults continue to receive attention nationally and in New Hampshire, notably for the increased risk of developing chronic diseases, such as heart disease, diabetes, stroke, high blood pressure, and cancer. According to the 2001 U.S. Surgeon General's Report, childhood overweight and obesity rates have tripled since 1980, and adult obesity rates have doubled since 1980.

### c. Demographics

In the 2012 Carsey Institute report, *NH Demographic Trends in the 21st Century*, the following key trends were observed:

- New Hampshire's population increase is slowing.
- New Hampshire's population is aging.
- The pace of demographic change is uneven in New Hampshire.
- New Hampshire is becoming more racially diverse.

**New Hampshire's Active, Aging Population** - "...recreational and scenic amenities will attract additional older migrants, and this stream will likely swell as the large baby boom cohorts now in their late 40s to early 60s begin to retire. The combined effect of residents aging in place and senior migration is a likely doubling of the population aged 65 to 74 in the next twenty years."

- 2012 UNH Carsey Institute Demographics Report



Rollins State Park

### HOW TO USE THIS PLAN

The 2013-2018 SCORP provides specific guidance to communities, school districts, planning jurisdictions, and their partners about how statewide LWCF monies for communities will be targeted in the upcoming five-year period. In this context, the plan may serve as a:

- **Policy guide** for local, regional, and state outdoor recreation planning initiatives.
- **Data source** for demographic trends in the context of recreational trends, supply, and demand.
- **Information Resource** for recreation-related issues in the state, with recommendations for addressing them.
- **List of performance goals** that will allow the Department of Resources and Economic Development and others to assess progress on meeting the recommendations in this SCORP.



Rhododendron State Park



## PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

To create a comprehensive analysis of parks and outdoor recreation facilities for the 2013-2018 SCORP, the New Hampshire Department of Resources and Economic Development (NHDRED) and the New Hampshire Office of Energy and Planning (NHOEP) conducted outreach sessions around the State and analyzed relevant national, regional, and state plans. Outreach efforts consisted of the following initiatives:

- The Carsey Institute at UNH convened “New Hampshire Listens” community conversations at seven sites throughout the state, with 171 community members participating.
- The University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension Service facilitated planning sessions with key stakeholder groups and conducted a web-based survey with 136 recreation and conservation leaders throughout New Hampshire responding.
- Review of the 2013-2018 SCORP was conducted by the Office of Energy and Planning, Department of Resources and Economic Development, the SCORP Advisory Work Group, and the Open Project Selection Process Committee.

## Summary of Key Findings

The public engagement process for the 2013-2018 NH SCORP yielded the following key findings:

- **Health and Quality of Life**  
There is a growing appreciation for the benefits of outdoor recreation, including reduced health care and transportation costs. Access for all children, senior citizens, and people with disabilities is important.
- **Economic Development and Funding**  
Recreational opportunities contribute to economic vitality and attract business. Retailers should be enlisted to support the State’s outdoor recreation initiatives.
- **Community Recreation, Children and Youth**  
Opportunities for the underserved (including urban populations and immigrants) are important, as well as leadership opportunities for young people, and education on how and where to recreate close to home.

- **Connectivity – Places and People**

There is a high value placed on increasing connectivity among recreational sites and trails while addressing the environmental impact and safety concerns that come with multiple users..

- **Communications and Outreach**

Cultivating volunteerism and developing partnerships to combine resources and a centralized source of information were important. Addressing the risk aversion of parents letting children play outdoors, also identified as a “culture of fear” was a priority.

- **Stewardship**

It is important to implement sustainability practices in stewardship plans, including adequate funding and overall financial support for lands, facilities, and programs.



Fort Stark Historic Site

### NEW HAMPSHIRE SCORP PRIORITIES

It is vital that local, state, and federal government agencies work in partnership with private sector and non-profit organizations to address the priorities of the 2013-2018 New Hampshire SCORP, which are derived from the community engagement process, statewide data collection, current and previous plans, and regional, state, and national trends:

1. Connect People to the Outdoors.
2. Consistent Stewardship and Conservation
3. Economic Vitality
4. Education Ethics and Benefits



### NEW HAMPSHIRE SCORP MANAGING AGENCIES

The following agencies play a role in preparing and administering the SCORP.

- **National Park Service (NPS)**

New Hampshire receives LWCF funds from the Department of the Interior managed through the National Parks Service, which is the corresponding federal agency that reviews the statewide plan. Upon approval, the NPS authorizes the release of funds to the State if funds are available.

- **New Hampshire Department of Resources and Economic Development (NHDRED)**  
Following approval by the NPS, the New Hampshire Department of Resources and Economic Development is responsible for the oversight, management, and allocation of the LWCF monies through a request for proposal grant process. NHDRED is the state agency acting as liaison with the federal government for the purposes of preparing the SCORP.

- **New Hampshire Office of Energy and Planning (NHOEP)**

The New Hampshire Office of Energy and Planning partners with DRED on the development of the statewide plan and assists in its implementation.



Hampton Beach State Park



### ROLE OF SCORP IN ALLOCATING FUNDS

Funds for LWCF projects are provided through the U.S. Department of Interior's National Park Service. The allocation of LWCF funds may be conducted through a statewide application process, and requires a 50 percent federal and 50 percent local matching grant. A number of criteria guide the allocation of funds, including:

- Compliance with the SCORP
- Demonstration of a link between the proposed project and an analysis of New Hampshire's outdoor recreation supply, demand, and need
- Compatibility with the priorities expressed in the public involvement process



Miller State Park

### WHO ARE THE PARTNERS IN IMPLEMENTING THE SCORP?

Implementing the 2013-2018 SCORP will only be successful by taking a new approach to creating sustainable partnerships with the numerous public, private, and non-profit outdoor recreation providers throughout New Hampshire.

- Municipalities, state agencies, federal land managers
- Private and quasi-public outdoor recreation providers
- Non-profit and health organizations
- Residents and visitors participating in outdoor recreation



Wellington State Park

## 2013-2018 SCORP OUTLINE

The 2013-2018 SCORP provides guidance for how New Hampshire expends federal LWCF monies on a community level and provides direction for addressing statewide recreational issues. The focus of the 2013-2018 SCORP is as follows.

### Chapter 1: Trends Impacting Outdoor Recreation

An analysis of current and projected trends in New Hampshire's demographic and socio-economic profile and the resultant challenges they pose.

### Chapter 2: Supply, Usage Patterns, and Expressed Demand

A summary of available data related to the supply and demand for outdoor recreation in New Hampshire with regional issues identified.

### Chapter 3: Priorities

A discussion of the four priority themes and related recommendations:

- Promoting health and livability for all through connection to the outdoors
- Practicing wise stewardship and conservation of natural resources and the built environment
- Contributing to New Hampshire's economic vitality
- Educating multi-user groups, partners and agency leadership

### Chapter 4: Goals and Actions

A comprehensive presentation of strategic actions to guide agency leaders, policy makers, and recreation providers in developing programs, policies, and land management strategies.

### Chapter 5: Guiding Principles for Implementation

An evaluation of unmet needs in rural and urban communities, regional coordination initiatives, wetlands evaluation, and LWCF requests and awards.

**The Benefits of Active Outdoor Experiences** - Studies show that the socio-economic benefits of outdoor recreation spaces and experiences far outweigh the public's investment. An active lifestyle connected to nature is not only a right of human existence, but a requirement for sustained public and environmental health. Therefore, parks and outdoor spaces held in public trust should be considered essential services.





Pillsbury State Park



## **Chapter 1: Trends Impacting Outdoor Recreation**





Weeks State Park

## NEW HAMPSHIRE – A LOOK AT THE TRENDS

### Demographic and Population Trends

Demographics shape our communities, institutions, and social interactions on a daily basis, facilitate an understanding of recreational supply and current and projected needs, and help policy makers implement informed decisions. The 2013-2018 SCORP includes statewide maps, located throughout this document and in **Appendix C**, including GIS Maps, which highlight demographic regional differences around the state. Recognizing these differences and responding to the unique characteristics of each region is critically important to the overall success of long-term outdoor recreation planning.

### Socio-Demographic Trends

New Hampshire residents are middle-aged, well educated, and less racially diverse when compared to the nation as a whole, and are most often born someplace else and migrate into the state. A summary of demographic trends is as follows:

- Since the high growth decade from 1970-1980, the state's population growth has fallen steadily.
- In the past decade, 2000-2010, New Hampshire's growth rate declined to 6.5 percent, still the highest rate in the Northeast, but below the national rate.
- The 2010 Census indicates that 37.8 percent of the population lives in rural areas while 62.2 percent lives in urban areas.

### Demographic and Housing Trends - 2010 US Census

- In New Hampshire, 94 percent of the population is white, compared to the national average of 74 percent.
- Ten percent of New Hampshire's housing stock is for recreational or seasonal use, compared to 3 percent nationwide.
- Minorities represented 5 percent of New Hampshire's population in 2000, and 50 percent of the State's population increase from 2000-2010.

### Minority Populations

The University of New Hampshire Carsey Institute 2012 report, *New Hampshire Demographic Trends in the Twenty-First Century*, describes New Hampshire's minority populations:

“Although minority populations are growing, they remain spatially concentrated in just a few areas. Minorities represent a significant part of the population in the Concord-Manchester-Nashua urban corridor, as well as in the Hanover-Lebanon region and in a few areas of the Seacoast.

“Because the diversity of the child population is increasing much more rapidly than that of the adult population, areas where minority children represent a significant proportion of all children are more numerous. This is particularly evident in the Concord-Manchester-Nashua corridor, where populations of minority children exceeding 40 percent can be found in a number of places. Concentrations of minority children are largest in the City of Manchester, where 30 percent of children belong to a minority. In a state where diversity historically has been unusual, such large concentrations of minority children represent a challenge to school districts, health care providers, and communities that must meet the needs of these diverse groups. It also presents an opportunity for these communities to embrace and celebrate diversity, as well as to use it to foster mutual understanding and acceptance.”

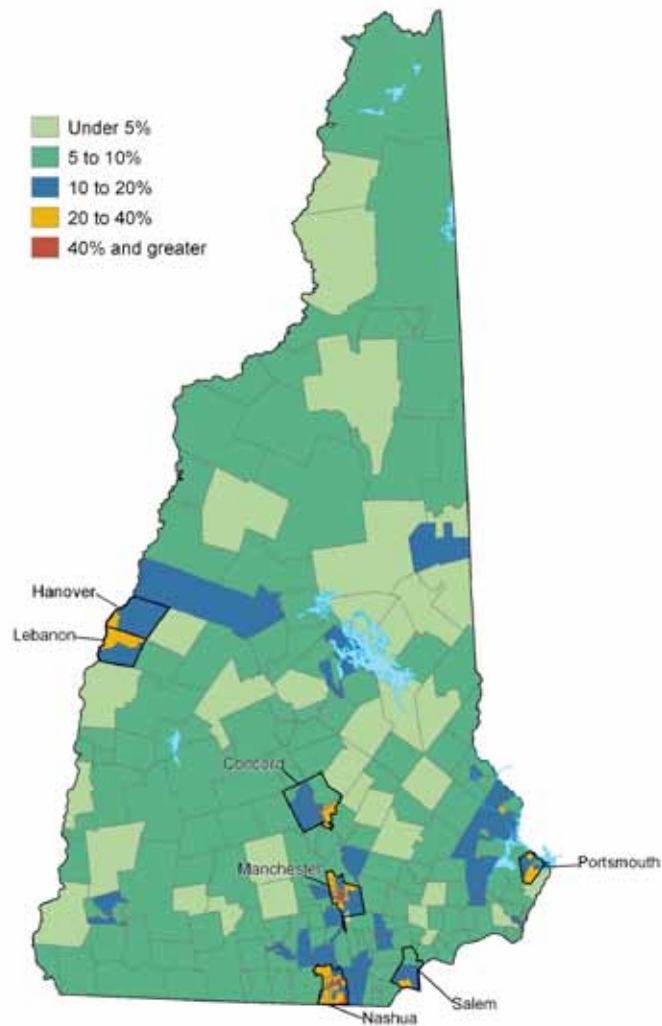


Wentworth-Coolidge Mansion Historic Site

*Figure 1* demonstrates the child minority concentrations in New Hampshire.

**FIGURE 1**

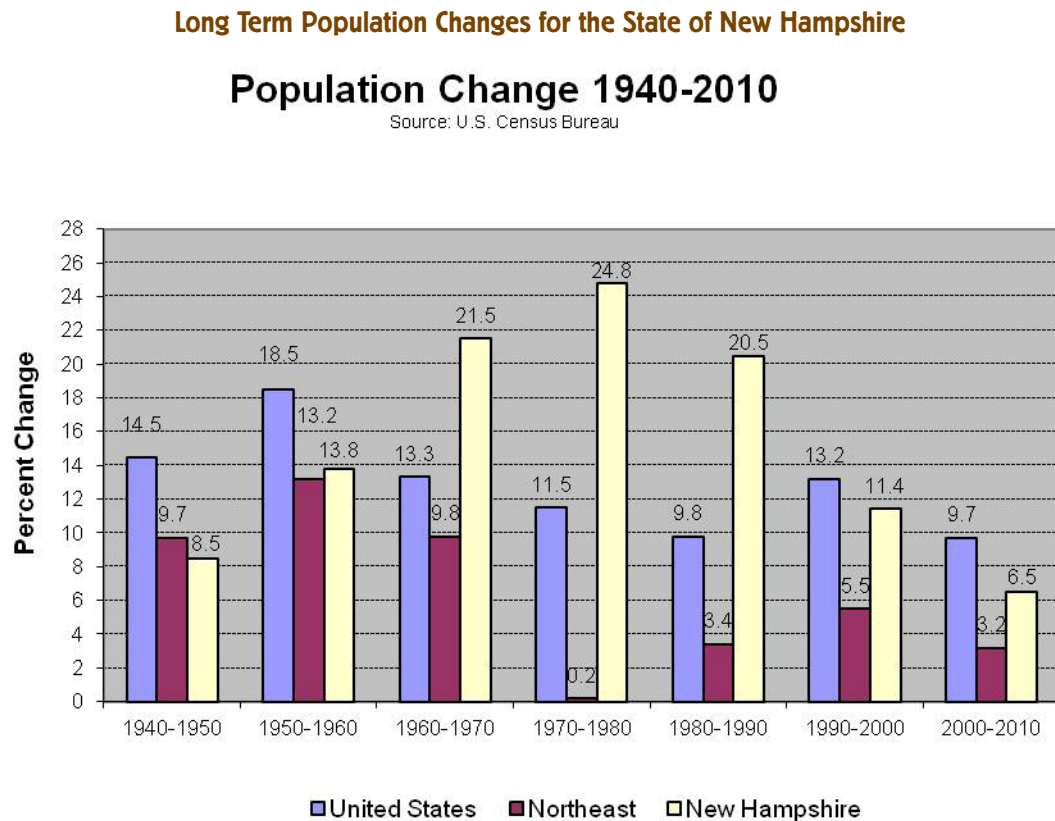
**Population of Minorities under 18 by Census Tract 2010**



### State Population Trends

New Hampshire's population growth patterns show a steady decline. *Figure 2* shows long-term population comparisons.

FIGURE 2:



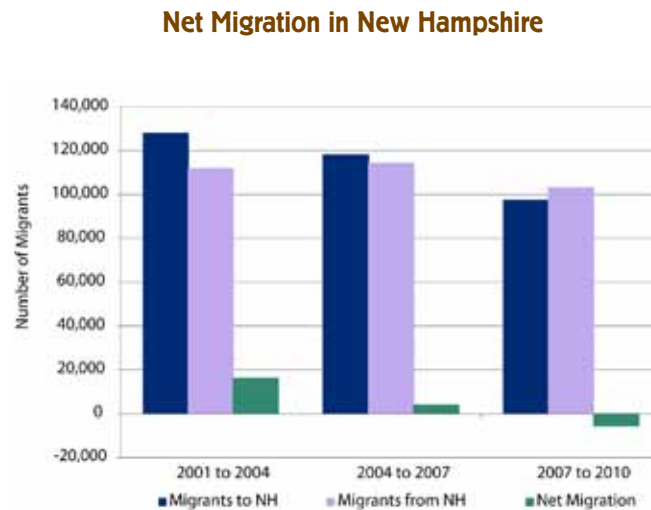
### Regional Population Trends from 2000 to 2010

Considering New Hampshire's regions, growth was concentrated in the southern part of the State. Hillsborough County gained the most residents, close to 20,000, increasing its population by 5.2 percent. Dover, with the largest share of its region's population, grew at 11.5 percent; Strafford County was the fastest growing of New Hampshire's 10 counties, increasing 9.7 percent. Grafton and Carroll counties, often referred to as the tourism/amenity counties, grew 9 percent and 9.5 percent respectively. The slowest growing county was Coos at .1 percent, representing an increase of 25 residents. Among the state's largest cities, Manchester grew 2.4 percent to 109,565 while Nashua experienced a slight loss in population by 0.1 percent.

### Migration Trends

Migration into and out of New Hampshire is a key trend to consider when planning future outdoor recreation resources. Despite the negative net migration shown in *Figure 3*, the state's superior amenities are predicted to attract significant numbers of retirees.

**FIGURE 3:**



Source: NH Demographic Trends in the 21st Century

In New England, migration patterns have shown a consistent trend of migration out of every New England state. *Table 1* shows the migration patterns for New England.

**Table 1: New England State Migration – IRS Data**  
**New England States Net Migration 2009-2012**  
 (includes State to State and Foreign)

State	In-Migration	Out-Migration	Net Migration
ME	21,049	24,720	-3,671
NH	29,833	32,162	-2,329
VT	13,422	14,071	-649
RI	19,952	23,722	-3,770
CT	56,130	64,691	-8,561
MA	95,002	104,319	-9,317
Totals	235,388	263,685	-28,297

### Aging Population and Income Trends

The statewide median age was 41.1 years in 2010, an increase from 37.1 in 2000. Many demographers have concluded that the declining number of young adults is not due to migration out of the State, but rather the result of fewer children being born 20-30 years ago. Retirees are attracted to the amenity communities, such as those in the Lakes Region and the North Country, which will result in an increasingly older population.

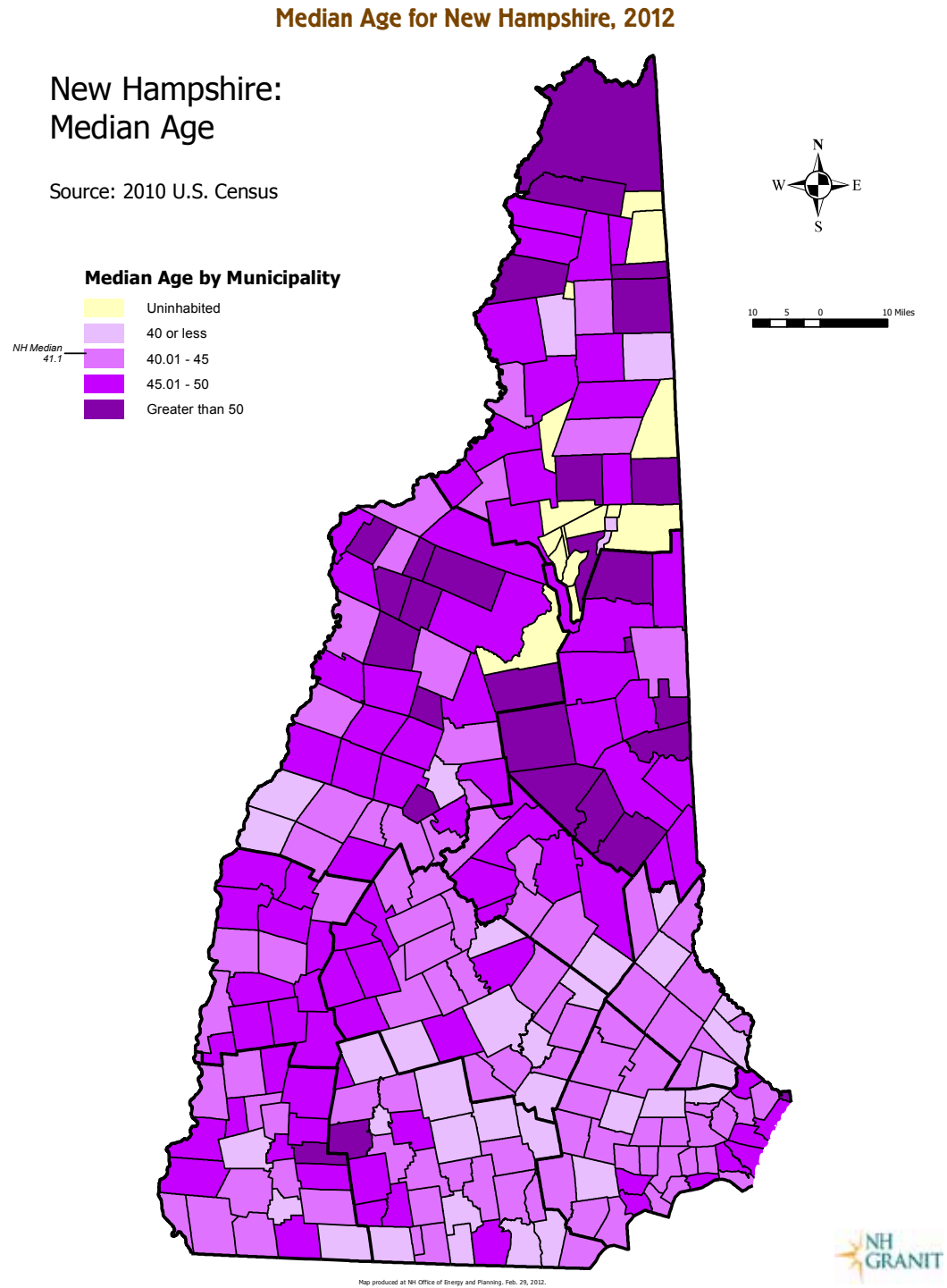
- NH's population is more dense the further south one travels. Population density ranges from fewer than 20 people per square mile in the Great North Woods to over 750 people per square mile in the Greater Nashua area.
- Not all of New Hampshire's communities and regions are aging at the same rate. *Figure 4* shows New Hampshire's median age for 2010, as well as the different age group distributions throughout the State.
- The impact of an older population on outdoor recreation includes the issue of community connectivity, particularly as middle-aged populations may choose to "age in place," and opportunities for recreation close to home become more important.

**Population Migration** - "...recreational and scenic amenities will attract additional older migrants, and this stream will likely swell as the large baby boom cohorts now in their late 40s to early 60s begin to retire. The combined effect of residents aging in place and senior migration is a likely doubling of the population aged 65 to 74 in the next twenty years."

- *New Hampshire Demographic Trends in the Twenty-First Century, 2012*  
UNH Carsey Institute

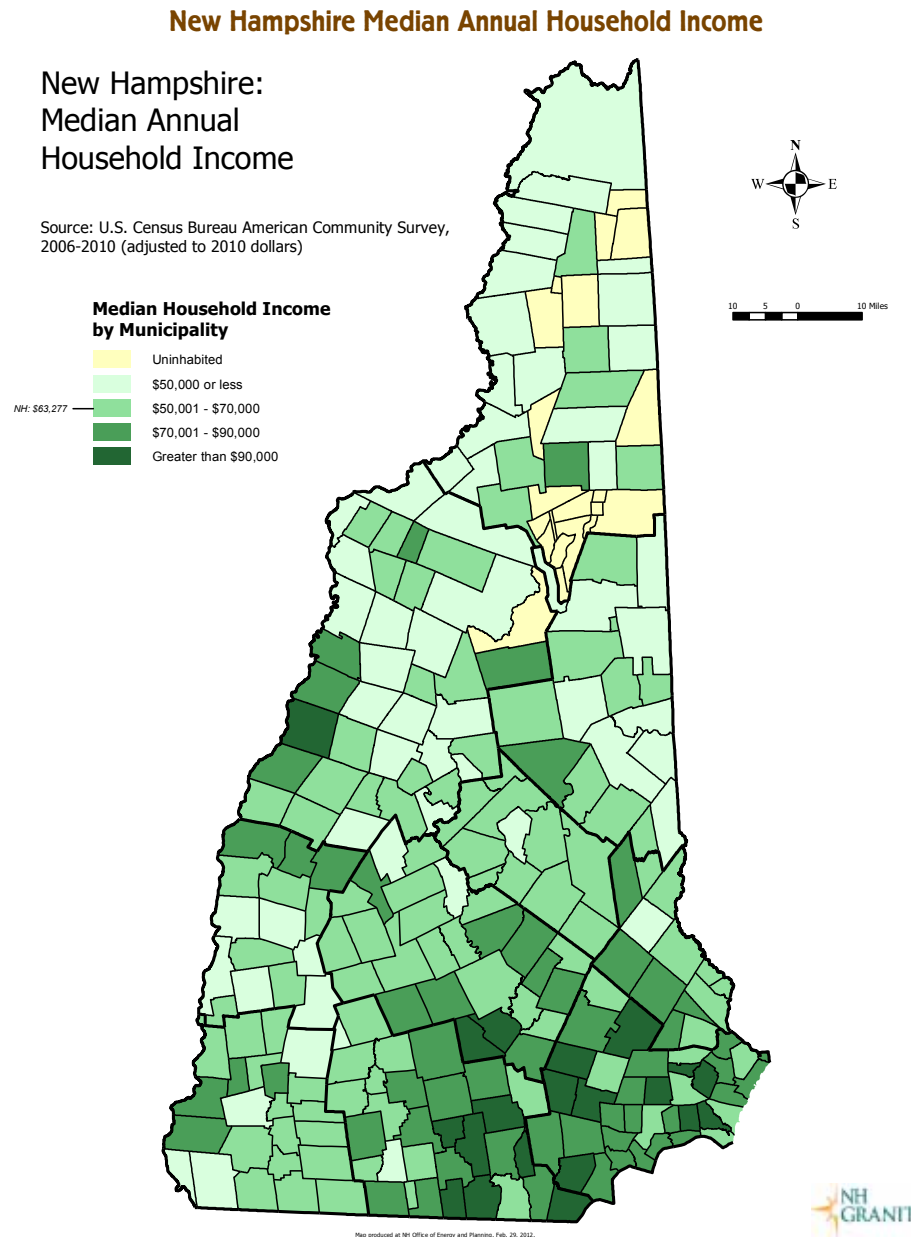


FIGURE 4:



Median income, illustrated in *Figure 5* is also an indicator of regional differences. NH residents, as a whole, are wealthy compared to national averages; however, there are areas within the state where median income is much lower than the state average.

FIGURE 5:





### HEALTH AND WELLNESS TRENDS

Overweight and obesity rates among children and adults continue to receive attention nationally and in New Hampshire. Obesity and overweight increase the risk of developing chronic diseases, such as heart disease, diabetes, stroke, high blood pressure, and cancer.

#### National Trends

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services reports that 63 percent of adults were overweight or obese as measured in the 2010 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS). Nationally, childhood overweight and obesity rates have tripled since 1980. Obesity now affects 17 percent of all children and adolescents in the United States.

#### State Trends

According to the *New Hampshire Obesity Data Book 2010*, “Contributing factors to obesity include a social environment that supports physical inactivity.” Data collected in 2010 from various sources, including the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) and the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) reported:

- Low-income children 2 to 5 years old have a 15.5 percent obesity rate.
- Third grade public school students have an obesity rate of 18 percent.
- High school students have an obesity rate of 11.7 percent.
- New Hampshire adults have an obesity rate of 24.9 percent.
- The New Hampshire obesity rate is as high as the national rate – 63 percent, and has climbed steadily since 2001.
- Inadequate physical activity is one of three Obesity Risk Factors, according to the DHHS’ *NH Obesity Data Book 2010*.

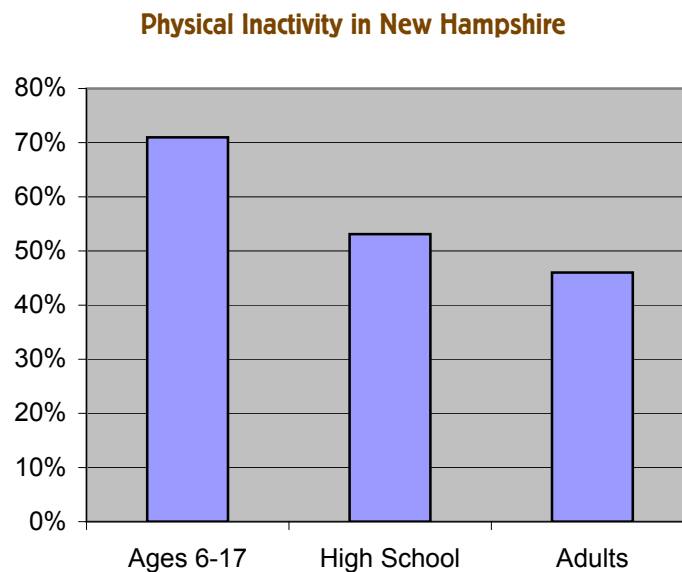
According to the New Hampshire Obesity Data Book, physical activity recommendations for adults include 30 minutes or more of moderate physical activity five or more days a week or vigorous physical activity for 20 or more minutes three or more days a week.

Among New Hampshire adults, overweight and obesity increase with age, and obesity rates are higher among adults with lower incomes and less education. Overweight is more prevalent among adults with higher incomes. Younger adults with higher incomes are more likely to meet recommended physical activity levels.

Recent guidelines developed by the US Department of Health and Human Services recommend that children and adolescents be active for at least 60 minutes a day.

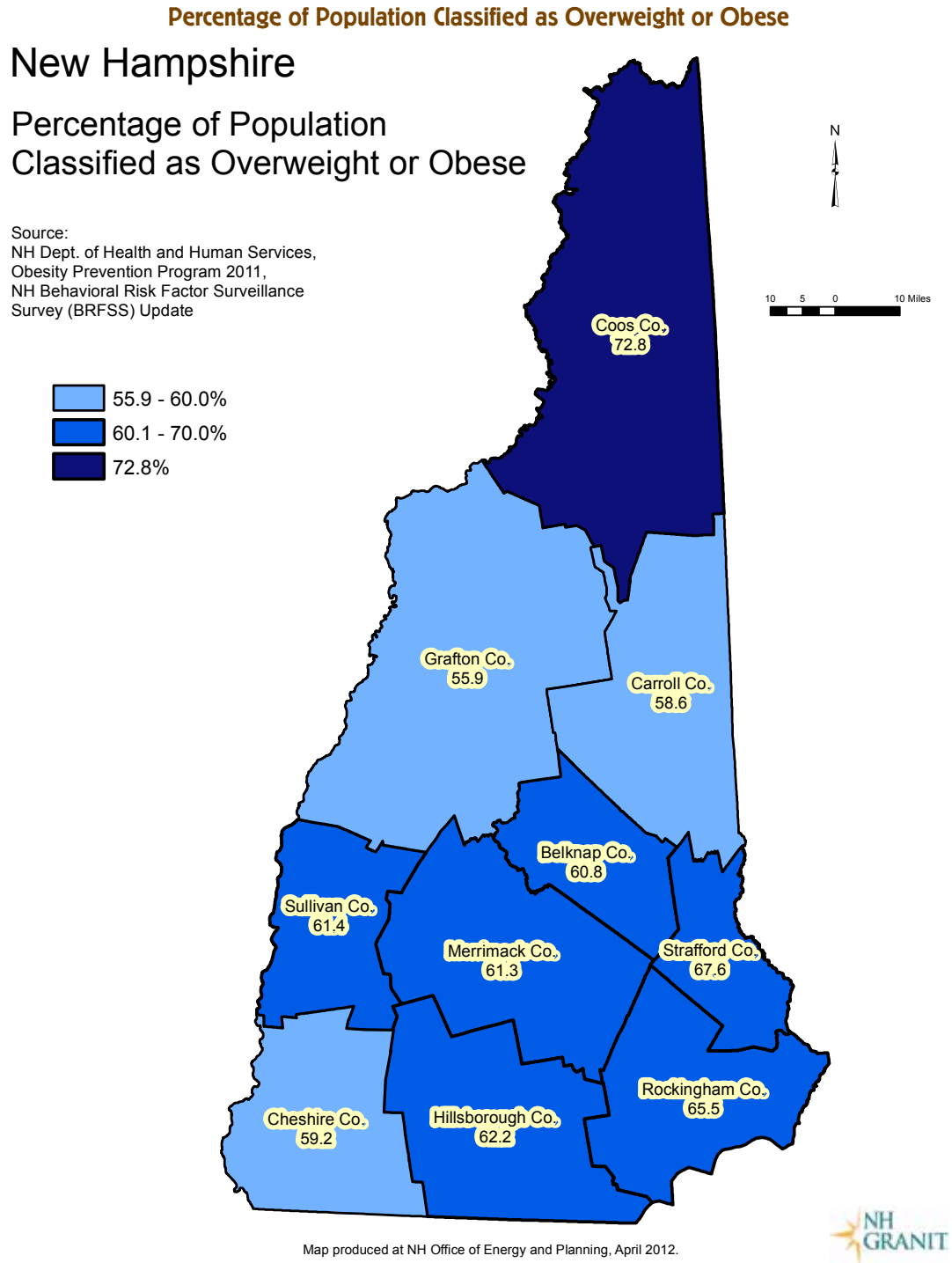
*Figure 6* shows the levels of inactivity in New Hampshire.

**FIGURE 6:**



In a 2011 BRFSS update report, Coos County had a significantly higher proportion of obese adults in comparison with the state average, while Grafton County had a significantly lower adult obesity rate in comparison with the New Hampshire average. The map in *Figure 7* demonstrates New Hampshire's obesity rates by County.

FIGURE 7:



### THE BENEFITS OF PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

In a report published by the Trust for Public Land, *“The Benefits of Parks: Why America Needs More City Parks and Open Space,”* the following observations about the health, economic, environmental, and social benefits of parks and open space emerged:

- Physical activity makes people healthier.
- Physical activity increases with access to parks.
- Contact with the natural world improves physical and psychological health.
- Residential and commercial property values increase.
- Value is added to community and economic development sustainability.
- Benefits of tourism are enhanced.
- Trees are effective in improving air quality and act as natural air conditioners.
- Trees assist with storm water control and erosion.
- Crime and juvenile delinquency are reduced.
- Recreational opportunities for all ages are provided.
- Stable neighborhoods and strong communities are created.



Bear Brook State Park

## OUTDOOR RECREATION TRENDS

### National Trends

In 2012, The Outdoor Foundation (OF) released its *Outdoor Recreation Participation Report*. The report highlights growth in nature-based outdoor activities and a continued decline in youth outdoor participation. Industry trends show the beginning of adjustments in American lifestyles brought about by a challenging economy and shifting demographics. Their research brought the following key findings:

- **Return to Nature:** Nearly 50 percent of Americans ages six and older participated in outdoor recreation in 2011, a slight increase from 2010, equating to a total of 141.1 million Americans.
- **First Time Participants:** Activities with the highest percentage of first time participants in 2011 included stand up paddling, triathlons, freshwater fishing, and adventure racing.
- **The Economy:** Forty-two percent (42%) of outdoor participants said the economy impacted how often they participated in outdoor activities in 2009.
- **Fitness and Health Benefits:** Outdoor participants rate their fitness level at 6.4 on a 10-point scale. In terms of health, outdoor participants rate their health level at 7.6 on a 10-point scale.
- **Youth:** Among youth ages 6 to 17, bicycling is the most popular outdoor activity.
- **Preservation of Land:** The majority of Americans agree that preserving undeveloped land for outdoor recreation is important. **A large percentage of outdoor participants also believe that developing local parks and hiking and walking trails is important and that there should be more outdoor education and activities during the school day.**

**NH Fish & Game Department's Wildlife Action Plan** - During the public engagement process for developing the Wildlife Action Plan, participants were asked to identify the top issues for wildlife conservation in New Hampshire. Respondents identified the following:

- |  |     |
|--|-----|
| • Prevent habitat loss                       | 86% |
| • Educate citizens about wildlife management | 52% |
| • Improve land use planning                  | 40% |
| • Encourage stewardship                      | 36% |



## THE OUTDOOR RECREATION ECONOMY

The Outdoor Industry Association reports the following economic impact of the outdoor recreation economy:

- Contributes \$646 billion annually to the U.S. economy
- Supports nearly 6.1 million jobs across the U.S.
- Generates \$80 billion in annual federal, state and local tax revenue
- The outdoor recreation economy grew approximately 5 percent annually between 2005 and 2011, during an economic recession when many sectors contracted.
- Adds \$524.8 billion in active outdoor recreation trip and travel expenditures

## New Hampshire Outdoors - National Rankings List

### Littleton:

*"American Dream Town,"* Outside Magazine, 2005

### Lebanon:

*"#10 Best Place to Raise an Outdoor Kid,"* Backpacker Magazine, 2009

### New Hampshire:

*"Most Livable State"* CQ Press, 2011

*"3rd Healthiest State,"* United Health Foundation, 2011

*"3rd Lowest Crime Rate in U.S."* Morgan Quitno, 2011

*"America's Best States to Live In"* CNBC, 2012



Mount Sunapee State Park

### ECONOMIC IMPACT OF NEW HAMPSHIRE'S OUTDOOR RECREATION ACTIVITIES

In New Hampshire, the active outdoor recreation economy contributes the following to the state's economic resilience, as reported by the Outdoor Foundation:

- Supports 53,000 jobs
- Generates \$261 million in annual state tax revenue
- Produces nearly \$4 billion annually in retail sales and services

The highlights below demonstrate the economic impacts of various state and local agencies providing outdoor recreation, areas of expressed demand identified in the public engagement process, and natural resource features.

#### Outdoor Recreation Activities Economic Contributions

New Hampshire's natural beauty and abundance of lakes and rivers, trails, and forested lands not only attract tourists who participate in a variety of active outdoor recreation pursuits, but also provide opportunities for close-to-home participation by residents. According to the Outdoor Foundation, 42 percent of New Hampshire residents participate in wildlife viewing, followed by trail use at 35 percent. Hunting, fishing, bicycling, camping, snow sports, and paddling also contribute to the New Hampshire economy with additional revenues from lodging, restaurant, retail, and equipment sales.

#### State Parks Economic Contributions

In 2009, New Hampshire State Parks conducted a survey to determine park usage and found that 92 percent of respondents had visited a state park within the last three years. Current estimates indicate state parks receive six million visitors each year, contributing more than \$500 million annually to New Hampshire's economy through spending and tax revenues in restaurants, accommodations, retail trade, services, and transportation. New Hampshire owns two ski areas, Cannon Mountain and Mt. Sunapee, which actively support the outdoor recreation economy, with Cannon contributing \$1.3 million in net revenues in Fiscal Year 2011.

**State Parks Benefit Tourism** - “In a recent survey the Division of Travel and Tourism learned that the main activities associated with New Hampshire were outdoor activities with 90% of them being recreational activities that take part in New Hampshire State Parks. Of those surveyed, 70% agreed that New Hampshire has great state and national parks, just reaffirming that these natural resources are an important aspect for promoting New Hampshire. The natural landscapes and varied experiences provide exceptional opportunities for both residents and visitors travelling from all corners of the globe to enjoy what New Hampshire has to offer whether they are seeking active outdoor recreation, relaxation, or just the natural beauty of our quintessential New England landscape.”

*-Lori Harnois, Director, NH Division of Travel and Tourism Development*

### **Fishing and Hunting Economic Contributions**

The US Fish and Wildlife Service 2006 *National Survey of Fishing, Hunting and Wildlife-Associated Recreation* by Southwick and Associates, American Sportfishing Association, and Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies identified tax revenues, employment, participation, and spending associated with outdoor recreation in New Hampshire, specifically fishing and hunting. The survey reports 4,000 jobs, 159,000 resident anglers and hunters, and in 2006, 131,000 non-resident anglers and hunters. Annual spending in New Hampshire totaled \$255 million.

### **Equestrian Community Economic Contributions**

Equestrian activities in New Hampshire generate a considerable amount of economic impact through jobs in the industry, competitions and events, retail sales, and tourism activities. There are approximately 21 equine related user groups in the state.

In a 2003 survey of 506 equine owners sponsored by the New Hampshire Horse Council, Inc. and New Hampshire Farm Bureau Federation, the sum of all the expenditures in the previous twelve months reported by the respondents was about \$61 million. Of this amount, \$32.8 million was for operating expenditures and \$28.2 million was for capital expenditures such as purchases of equine-related services, real estate, and equipment.

### Off-Highway Recreational Vehicle (OHRV) Economic Contributions

Wheeled off-highway vehicle registrations, both in-state and out-of-state, are increasing. Total registrations have more than doubled in the last ten years. Out-of-state registrations have more than tripled. Total OHRV registrations for the 2010-2011 season exceeded 80,200.

A steady increase in OHRV use can impact soil, water, wildlife habitat, and other recreational visitors. To properly manage the effects of OHRVs, NHDRED created a park dedicated to OHRVs in the North Country region of the state using vehicle registration revenues, which are significant. During the 2011 season, revenues from OHRV registrations totaled \$5.2 million, with \$3.8 million in net revenues dedicated to New Hampshire Department of Resources and Economic Development. In New Hampshire, the definition of OHRV under RSA 215-A:1 does not include snowmobiles.

**ATV/Trail Bike Spending** - As reported in a 2003 report by the Institute for New Hampshire Studies at Plymouth State University, *The Impact Of Spending By ATV/Trail Bike Travel Parties On New Hampshire's Economy During July 2002 To June 2003*, all-terrain vehicle (ATV) and trail biking travel parties had direct spending within New Hampshire of about \$124 million, and direct and indirect spending of approximately \$176 million.

### Snowmobile Activity Economic Contributions

Resident and non-resident snowmobile registrations showed a decline from 2008-2010, but this trend reversed beginning in 2011, with more than 56,550 registrations for the 2011 season, totaling \$3.1 million in net revenues.

### Travel and Tourism Economic Contributions

The Institute for New Hampshire Studies at Plymouth State University studied tourism-related dollars generated both from in-state visitors as well as out-of-state visitors and their impact on the New Hampshire economy. The total estimated direct spending by tourists and travelers of \$4.3 billion for FY 2011 is about 7.0 percent of the estimated Gross Domestic Product of \$61.7 billion for New Hampshire for this same period. This is an increase from 6.7 percent during FY 2010 and shows that tourism spending is growing slightly faster than the overall economy between these two years.



**Return on Investment (ROI) For New Hampshire Travel and Tourism** - The Institute for New Hampshire Studies at Plymouth State University calculated the ROI for every Division of Travel and Tourism Development (DTTD) dollar spent. The result: For every dollar spent, the ROI was \$9.23.

### Travel and Tourism Impacts:

- 61,820 jobs
- \$4.3 billion in direct spending

### Local Parks and Recreation Economic Contributions

While the economic impact of local parks, trails, and recreation activities has not been formally studied at the community level in New Hampshire, studies nationwide show that quality parks and recreation are cited as one of the top three factors businesses consider when making relocation decisions, and that real estate values are 10 to 30 percent higher on average for properties located near parks, trails, and recreational amenities.



Franconia Notch State Park



### OTHER TRENDS

#### Active Seniors and Youth Engagement

Outdoor recreation planners and providers will need to be responsive to a more active, older population that seeks adventure in its outdoor experiences, and focus on encouraging greater participation in the outdoors by children and youth. Key trends for advancing this public health related agenda include:

- Active transportation programs, policy, and funding are getting recognition in communities across the country.
- Exercise walking, camping, and swimming are among the top ten athletic activities ranked by total participation.
- Trails, parks, and playgrounds are among the five most important community amenities considered when selecting a home.
- The majority of Americans agree that preserving undeveloped land for outdoor recreation is important, and that there should be more outdoor education activities during the school day.
- Adventure racing, slack lines in parks, mountain bicycling, rock and ice climbing, trail running, and kayaking are growing in popularity nationwide.
- Geocaching, letterboxing, Segways for access to recreation, and tree top zip lines are recognized outdoor recreation activities.

**Local Parks and Recreation Visitors** - The New Hampshire Recreation and Park Association surveyed 23 communities in New Hampshire with the following results:

- The population served by local agencies increases by 59 percent in the summer.
- Between June and August 273,356 people visited local parks and recreation facilities and programs.
- Local agencies hired approximately 635 seasonal employees in one summer.

### Statewide Land Use

Communities toward the northern part of the state tend to be dominated by large tracts of publicly owned lands, such as the White Mountain National Forest, and large tracts of un-fragmented privately held lands.

Tourism promotion, the impacts of recreational use, and the management decisions made on these lands are all of great importance to local communities. Comparatively, there is much less publicly held conservation land in the southeastern part of the state, and the number of large un-fragmented parcels is dwindling. Communities in the southeast must increasingly deal with issues surrounding growth, including loss of open space, loss of community character, and increased development pressure.

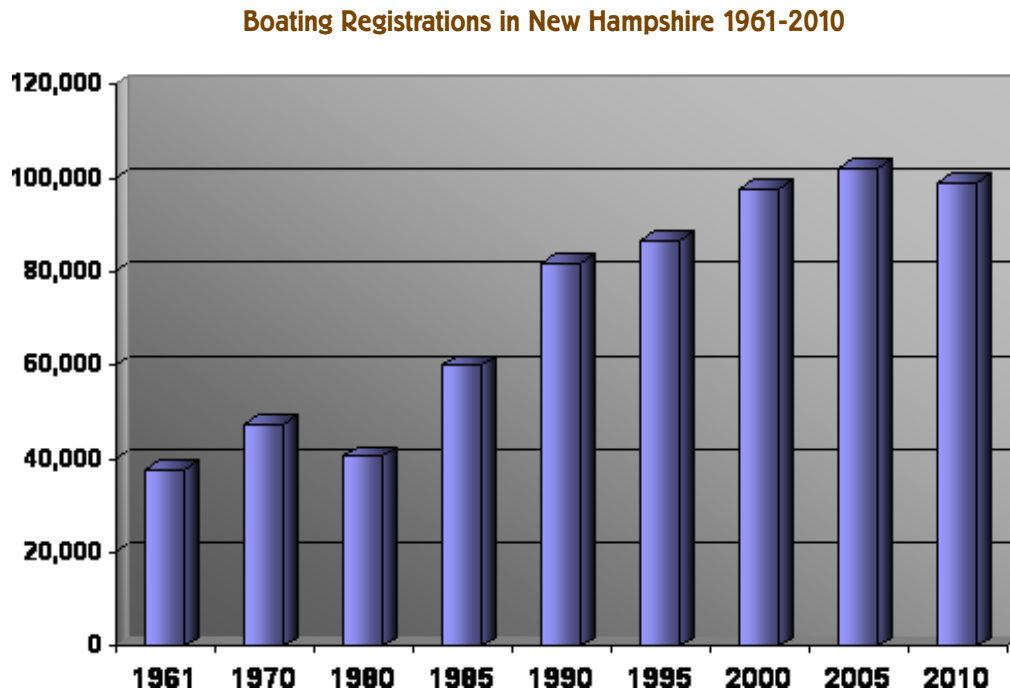
### Boating Registrations

*Figure 8* demonstrates that while boating registration numbers remained somewhat steady between 1960 and 1980, registrations increased sharply between 1985 and 2000. New Hampshire reported approximately 39,000 boat registrations in 1980, and this figure rose to almost 98,000 in 2000 and to 102,234 in 2005. Registrations doubled between 1980 and 1990 alone, and increased over 19 percent between 1990 and 2000. However, the number of registrations decreased between 2005 and 2010. These years coincide with a slowdown of the economy but the overall consistently high number of boating licenses continues to highlight the need for access-site maintenance, enforcement, and improved boater information and education.



Greenfield State Park

FIGURE 8:



### Statewide Motorized Access

In 2001, the State of New Hampshire recognized that off highway recreational vehicle use (OHRV), a recognized recreational activity, was on the rise in the State. With registrations increasing 150 percent over the prior 10 years, finding a way to address the issues brought about by the legitimate use, and potential abuse, of these machines was paramount. One initiative was to increase registration fees, with a portion of those fees dedicated to buying land to develop OHRV trails.

While a relatively small proportion of people participate in wheeled OHRV activities as compared to non-motorized activities, its increasing popularity and its relatively large impact on other users and interests demands increased attention from land managers. Compounding this increase in resident interest is the growing trend towards restricting wheeled OHRV use in Massachusetts and Vermont.

A wide variety of opinions about wheeled OHRV management exist in New Hampshire. One view holds that existing trail and wheeled OHRV area access is insufficient given the growing demand and substantial registration fees paid by OHRV users, and that more state resources and wheeled OHRV fees should be directed to expanding and improving access for wheeled motorized vehicles.

Another view relates to a growing statewide concern with the impact of OHRV use on the environment (wetlands, wildlife, air pollution) and trail conditions, as well as other trail users and abutters (trespass, litter, safety, enforcement).

DRED has begun to address this demand with the purchase of land and the development of Jericho Mountain State Park in Berlin as a destination park for ATV use. The Bureau of Trails, in collaboration with more than 20 ATV clubs across the state and the New Hampshire Off Highway Vehicle Association, have created an education program that informs ATV riders of state laws, rider ethics, and responsible trail usage.



Jericho Mountain State Park

### POTENTIAL CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACTS ON NEW HAMPSHIRE

The Department of Environmental Services (DES), in collaboration with the New Hampshire Energy and Climate Change Collaborative, acknowledges that New Hampshire's social and economic health is predicated in large part upon the health of its lakes and rivers, oceans and beaches, mountains, scenic towns, and natural areas, and that global climate change will affect the climate of New Hampshire. Impacts to New Hampshire's outdoor recreation resources may include the following:

#### Impacts on New Hampshire Forests

- Ecological collapse for several tree species, including beech, maple, and hemlock (an important species for deer during the winter).
- Widespread tree mortality, including spruce and others; decreases in vegetation density of 25 to 75 percent; extensive wildfires; large increases in pest and pathogen outbreaks; and a lag in the establishment of new forests for several decades.

#### Impacts on New Hampshire Coasts

- Sea level rise of 12 to 20 inches, causing large scale alteration of Great Bay, reduction of coastal estuaries and flooding of rivers, as well as potentially large revenue losses from coastal tourism, a \$484 million generator for New Hampshire.

#### Impacts on New Hampshire Foliage

- Dulling and browning of foliage season due to tree die-offs, species substitution, and "climate stressed" unhealthy trees. New Hampshire foliage travelers on average spend a total of \$292 million annually.

#### Impacts on New Hampshire Fishing

- Loss of cold water fishing: 50 to 100 percent eradication of rainbow, brook, and brown trout fishing, a \$150 million New Hampshire industry.

#### Impacts on New Hampshire's Ski Industry

- Loss of 10 to 20 percent of ski season days, representing a loss of \$42 million to \$84 million in direct and indirect spending in New Hampshire.

#### Impacts on New Hampshire's Recreation Trails

- Loss of use from downed trees, flooding, erosion caused by storm events, and resulting increased maintenance costs.



In August of 2011, three to ten inches of rain fell across the White Mountain National Forest (WMNF) from Tropical Storm Irene in a matter of hours and washed away roads, bridges, trails and recreation sites. According to a White Mountain National Forest news release dated September 13, 2012 “work to restore the damage from Tropical Storm Irene began last fall as the Forest, the State, partners, and volunteers worked to get the front country open for leaf season, areas stabilized for winter, and snowmobile trails ready for snow. About \$10 million dollars of damage was sustained to the Forest’s infrastructure from the storm. Trail crews have been out all summer, addressing blow downs, gullied tread ways, erosion, and damaged bridges. The Forest estimates that \$2-\$3 million of trail damage still remains to be addressed.”

The State of New Hampshire, Bureau of Trails is working through a cooperative cost-share with the WMNF to repair snowmobile trails damaged by hurricane Irene. It is estimated that the cost to repair snowmobile trails within the Forest is about \$130,000, and approximately \$400,000 in damage occurred to snowmobile trails outside of the Forest throughout New Hampshire. Severe single-event storms are causing major trail damage on New Hampshire’s trail systems.

### Local Open Space and Trails Planning

Many communities already identify, inventory, and plan for recreation needs such as ball fields, playgrounds, bicycle paths, open space, and trails through their master planning process.

**Open Space/Trails Plans** - An open space/trails plan consists of an inventory and maps of a town’s existing conservation easements, public lands, rights-of-way, and privately conserved lands, with an inventory and maps of existing formal trails and informal trails. These plans can provide recommendations for changes to a municipality’s site plan review regulations or subdivision regulations to align community interests in trails with development. The Central New Hampshire Regional Planning Commission (CNHRPC, [www.cnhrpc.org](http://www.cnhrpc.org)) has developed a manual to provide guidance in writing open space/trails plans.

### What These Trends Mean

Changing demographics, the economic impacts of outdoor recreation and participation trends are important to be aware of in planning long-term outdoor recreation improvements. A number of indicators apply to the SCORP planning process:

- **Changing Preferences** – Shifts in ethnicity and age will result in changes in outdoor recreation preferences relative to types of activities, frequency, style, and location. Understanding the barriers or constraints to recreation participation, such as perception of safety, income/age/ethnicity discrimination, and language barriers, is vital as New Hampshire’s demographics continue to shift.
- **Accommodating Active Seniors** – Outdoor recreation opportunities must also accommodate a growing active senior population, who will become more interested in individual health and wellness, easy and safe access to recreation opportunities, and an increase in social and family activity experiences. Connectivity using trails and green spaces is a low cost solution to address the need for access to active recreation opportunities. The cost of building and maintaining trails equals about \$98 annually for each new person who uses them at least three times per week. (Wang G, 2004).
- **Collaborating With Multi-Sector Providers** – The NH Department of Health and Human Services participates in HEAL (Healthy Eating, Active Living), a consortium of organizations supporting obesity prevention efforts. Seventy-one percent (71%) of respondents to the 2011 New Hampshire Recreation and Conservation Leaders Survey rank partnerships with organizations to foster connections between outdoor recreation and improved health and wellness as a medium to high priority.
- **Aligning With State and National Efforts** – The New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services Obesity Prevention Program (OPP) receives funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The program focuses on six target areas for obesity prevention, including:
  1. Creating safe communities that support physical activity
  2. Improving access to outdoor recreational facilities
  3. Enhancing infrastructure that supports bicycling and walking
  4. Enhancing personal safety and traffic safety in areas where people are or could be physically active
  5. Encouraging communities to organize for change
  6. Forming coalitions and partnerships that promote active living

### Community Leaders as Public Health Advocates

- An impressively high percentage of recreation and conservation leaders in New Hampshire, eighty-one percent (81%), ranked development of and access to outdoor recreation opportunities that connect people to where they live and work as a medium or high priority.
- Responding to a 2007 International City and County Management Association survey, eighty-nine percent (89%) of city and county Administrators believe park and recreation departments should take the lead in developing communities conducive to active living.

**The Healthy New Hampshire Foundation**, whose mission is promoting healthy lifestyles, supported a statewide assessment to determine readiness in NH for pursuing obesity prevention efforts. The February 2012 report found a need for increased opportunities for physical activity, including promoting zoning changes and land use policies on the municipal level that support living, working, learning, and playing in the same area and promoting the use of parks, as well as walking and other outdoor activity. The report also found that partnerships are key to a successful and comprehensive obesity prevention program.



Monadnock State Park



Odiorne Point State Park

**America's Great Outdoors 2010 Homegrown Listening Sessions** were held across the country, including two in New England, and were reported back to the Obama Administration's America's Great Outdoors Initiative. The following relevant recommendations were made:

**a. Connecting Americans to the Great Outdoors**

1. Provide quality jobs, career pathways, and service opportunities
2. Enhance recreational access and opportunities
3. Raise awareness of the value and benefits of America's Great Outdoors
4. Engage young people in conservation and the great outdoors

**b. Conserving and Restoring America's Great Outdoors**

5. Strengthen the Land and Water Conservation Fund
6. Establish great urban parks and community green spaces
7. Conserve rural working farms, ranches, and forests through partnerships and incentives
8. Conserve our national parks, wildlife refuges, forests, and other federal lands and waters
9. Protect and renew rivers and other waters

**c. Working Together for America's Great Outdoors**

10. Make the federal government a more effective conservation partner

### TRENDS SUMMARY

Outdoor recreation is a vital component of local, state, and national efforts to promote individual health and wellness, environmental sustainability, and economic vitality. Participation in outdoor recreation activities connects people to our parks, trails, facilities, and water resources, and contributes to healthy lifestyles and the State's economy. The research is clear – changes in the built environment that support safe, active transportation and connectivity, and policy changes requiring inclusive transportation and recreation planning can help reverse the alarming trend toward increased rates of obesity and chronic disease while contributing to economic vitality.





Hampton Beach State Park



## **Chapter 2: Supply, Usage Patterns, and Expressed Demand**

### **SUPPLY: NEW HAMPSHIRE'S OUTDOOR RECREATION SERVICE PROVIDERS**

New Hampshire is fortunate to have a variety of outdoor recreation providers – local municipalities, state and federal land management agencies, non-profit organizations, educational institutions, and private landowners and businesses. It is imperative for local, state, and federal governments to work collaboratively with private and quasi-public sector organizations to secure a future where New Hampshire residents live healthier lifestyles, the economic well-being of communities is sustained, and wildlife and natural resources are conserved. These agencies are responsible for providing for both the outdoor recreation needs of the state's 1.3 million residents as well as for the protection and preservation of land and water resources for future generations.

#### **New Hampshire Division of Parks and Recreation (NHDPR)**

A division of the New Hampshire Department of Resources and Economic Development, NHDPR oversees 92 properties, including 38 parks, 22 beaches, 2 ski areas, 1,300 campsites, and approximately 8,000 miles of snowmobile and OHRV trails, and manages over 12,000 acres designated as recreation land, not including water surface area. These figures include historic sites.

#### **New Hampshire Division of Forests and Lands (NHDFL)**

The NHDFL, a division of DRED, protects and promotes the values provided by the states forested resources. Reservations (the term for public lands under the jurisdiction of the Department of Resources and Economic Development) total 186,072 acres consisting of 220 properties in 145 towns distributed throughout the state. Reservation sizes range from 0.1 acre for Endicott Rock Historic Site at Weirs Beach in Laconia to 39,600 acres in Nash Stream Forest located in Columbia, Odell, Stark, and Stratford. The Division is also responsible for monitoring state-owned conservation easements totaling 222,572 acres.

**New Hampshire Lands** - Of New Hampshire's 9,000 square miles, 29 percent is conservation land, most of which is owned and managed by Federal, State, and local governments.

### New Hampshire Bureau of Trails (NHBOT)

The NHBOT, a bureau of NHDPR, administers multiple-use trails on state, federal, and private lands. The Bureau of Trails assists organizations, municipalities, and trail clubs with the development of trails on both public and private lands. Included in the bureau's management are 850 miles of wheeled off-highway recreational vehicle trails, over 300 miles of state-owned rail-trails, and 7,300 miles of snowmobile trails.

### NH Bureau of Historic Sites (NHBOHS)

The NHBOHS, a bureau of NHDPR, preserves, protects, and promotes the historic resources under the management of the Department of Resources and Economic Development. The bureau operates six seasonal house museums with guided tours and eleven passive use historic sites. The bureau also maintains project review oversight for all historic resources under the management of DRED. All state historic sites maintain some kind of passive recreational use ranging from salt water fishing to hiking and walking trails. Many of the state historic sites operate in cooperation with a community, volunteer advocacy group, or friends group.



Weeks State Park

### New Hampshire Department of Fish & Game (NHFG)

The NHFG carries out its mission through the work of seven divisions: Business, Facilities and Lands, Inland Fisheries, Law Enforcement, Marine Fisheries, Public Affairs, and Wildlife. Of particular importance to the SCORP are:

- **Facilities and Lands Division** – Responsible for the management and maintenance of all Fish and Game properties statewide, including approximately 160 buildings, 140 boat ramps, 130 dams, and more than 72,100 acres of Wildlife Management Areas and conservation easements. The division also provides the design and construction of boating access facilities, fabrication of information kiosks, and portable sanitary facilities. The lands side of the division negotiates land and habitat acquisitions and manages conservation easement areas.
- **Public Affairs Division** – Informs and educates, building public support for conservation and encouraging participation in hunting, angling, and other activities.
- **Wildlife Division** – Manages and maintains the state's game and nongame species at levels consistent with available habitat and public desires. Wildlife biologists conduct surveys to monitor populations; promulgate hunting regulations to balance competing interests; oversee applied research; and conduct intensive restoration efforts.

The NHFG facilitates numerous programs to educate and engage citizens and visitors in outdoor recreation and wildlife conservation. The New Hampshire Children in Nature Coalition is dedicated to fostering experiences in nature that improve physical and emotional health, increase understanding of the natural world, and promote stronger connections to community and landscape. A multi-sector collaboration, representatives from health, education, community planning, and environmental education came together at a series of events to launch a New Hampshire initiative to reconnect children with nature and encourage children and families to get outside and be active in the natural world.



**Saving America's Treasures in Littleton** - In 2005, the National Register-listed Littleton Town Building (built in 1894) was closed for life safety and code violations. The resulting rehabilitation, funded in part with a \$500,000 Save America's Treasures grant, involved many structural repairs that removed the majority of an already compromised floor plan but saved the pristine theater that once hosted Bette Davis and the world premiere of her movie *The Great Lie*.

The final plan preserved historic wainscot and the character-defining ceiling height, created new finishes and details on new walls that complemented existing historic fabric, and reused doors and woodwork salvaged from razed interior walls. The end result is a wonderful space with historic charm that serves both the visitors and residents of Littleton.

### **New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES)**

NHDES manages many public access sites in collaboration with other state agencies, municipalities, user groups and private landowners. Most facilities provide canoe/car-top access, and fishing, swimming, and snowmobiling among other uses.

### **New Hampshire Department of Cultural Resources (NHDCR)**

NHDCR includes the State Council on the Arts, the Film and Television Office, the Division of Historical Resources, the State Library and the Commission on Native American Affairs. The Division of Historical Resources Five Year Preservation Plan (2011-2015) advocates for the preservation of historical resources as a sound investment that can create new jobs, revitalize downtowns, provide affordable housing, and support heritage tourism. The Division oversees grant funding allocations for restoration and preservation of covered bridges, cellar holes, stone walls, barns, and architecturally, archaeologically, and historically significant sites and structures. The Commission on Native American Affairs and the New Hampshire State Council on the Arts Folklife program both celebrate the Native American Abenaki heritage in New Hampshire, including translations of place names originating with these early residents such as Ammonusuc ("fishing place") Kearsage ("rough mountain") and Umbagog ("to the clear water lake").



### National Park Service (NPS)

The National Park Service manages two national parks (St. Gaudens National Historic Site in Cornish and the Appalachian Trail), one National Heritage Area, 11 National Natural Landmarks, and 22 National Historic Landmarks, with over 31,000 visitors annually.

### U.S. Forest Service (USFS)

The U.S. Forest Service manages almost 800,000 acres of New Hampshire's most ecologically diverse lands, largely in the White Mountain National Forest. The Forest provides many recreation opportunities with 1,200 miles of non-motorized trails, 21 campgrounds, 40 day use areas, 6 ski touring areas and 400 miles of snowmobile trails. Some of the activities within the Forest include bicycling, camping, climbing, fishing, hiking, hunting, nature viewing, outdoor learning, picnicking, rocks and minerals (rock hounding), scenic driving, water activities and winter sports.

### U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service manages five National Wildlife Refuges (NWR) that are open for wildlife viewing, hiking, water sports, fishing, and snow sports – Great Bay, John Hay, Umbagog, Silvio O. Conte, and Wapack.

### U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers manages six recreational flood control dam sites in New Hampshire which are valuable as outdoor recreation sites – Blackwater, Edward McDowell Lake, Franklin Falls, Hopkinton Lake, Otter Brook Lake, and Surry Mountain Lake – and used for boating access, picnicking, swimming, fishing, and hiking.

### Local Government (Municipalities/Public Schools)

While many New Hampshire residents travel to enjoy the vast opportunities of the state's public lands on the weekends, local government agencies also provide daily accessible outdoor recreation opportunities in the form of parks, fields, courts, skating rinks, ski areas, river access, pools, picnic areas, playgrounds, and trails.

**New Hampshire Conservation Organizations, both non-profit and community based,** are actively involved in managing, acquiring, and protecting greenspace, water resources, and lands with unique natural resources. It is vital to coordinate efforts among New Hampshire's many conservation organizations to preserve the quality of life in New Hampshire.

**Quasi-public recreation providers** include a wide diversity of partners and services, including local and statewide user groups, hospital recreation therapy programs, charitable social organizations, such as YMCA/YWCAs, Boys and Girls Clubs, Boy and Girl Scouts, and churches.

**Private recreation providers** include dozens of for-profit entities that support a wide range of services and facilities for outdoor recreation: golf courses, ski areas, marine activities and water sports, campgrounds, hunting preserves, guide services, adventure playgrounds, and shuttle services. While the SCORP assesses and guides provision of public recreation opportunities, it is important that governmental entities consider the financial and geographic accessibility to private service providers when expressed public need overlaps with private provision opportunities.

**Non-Profits Making a Difference** - The Wildlife Heritage Foundation of New Hampshire, the Department of Fish and Game's official non-profit partner, is a charitable organization dedicated to enhancing critical conservation programs with private financial support.

The many initiatives that Foundation grants have funded include extensive improvements at Fish and Game's Owl Brook Hunter Education Center and the Great Bay Discovery Center, support for Discover Wild New Hampshire Day and National Hunting and Fishing Day Expo activities, publication of Discover Wild Times for Kids, and support for programs such as Operation Land Share, Barry Conservation Camp, the aerial stocking of remote trout ponds, and Fish and Game Law Enforcement Division's K-9 conservation corps.

### SUPPLY: OPEN SPACE, CONSERVATION, AND RECREATIONAL LANDS

County-level divisions provide a starting point for understanding regional variations that may exist beyond a reported statewide average. The needs of the state's regional populations require different access accommodations and different approaches to managing outdoor activities that will occur due to differences in geography, resources, population, and economics and potential barriers to outdoor recreation participation. *Figure 9* shows a map of New Hampshire's 10 counties.

**FIGURE 9:**

**Counties of New Hampshire**



### Conservation Lands

The New Hampshire Geographically Referenced Analysis and Information Transfer System (GRANIT) maintains a comprehensive statewide database of geographic-related information. The statewide conservation lands layer provides acreage and ownership information about both publicly and privately held conservation land holdings with either permanent, fee simple acquisitions, or limited protection through conservation easements. This database is also available on-line through the GRANIT Conservation Lands Viewer (<http://granitview.unh.edu>).

**New Hampshire's Changing Landscape** - Based on the 2010 report by the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire's Forests, *New Hampshire's Changing Landscape*, the state remains the second-most forested state in the nation, after neighboring Maine. However, our forestlands continue to decline from a high of 87% in 1960 to about 82% today, a loss of nearly 450 square miles of forest.

**Table 2** provides a summary of the public and private fee and easement holdings by acreage across the state. The large increase in "State Easements" between 2002 and 2006 is due to the conservation acquisition of the 171,500-acre Connecticut Lakes Headwaters area in northern Coos County (25,000 acres purchased by the Fish & Game Department; 100 acres purchased by the Division of Parks & Recreation; and 146,400 acres conserved by easement).

**Table 2: Conservation Lands by Owner and Protection Type**

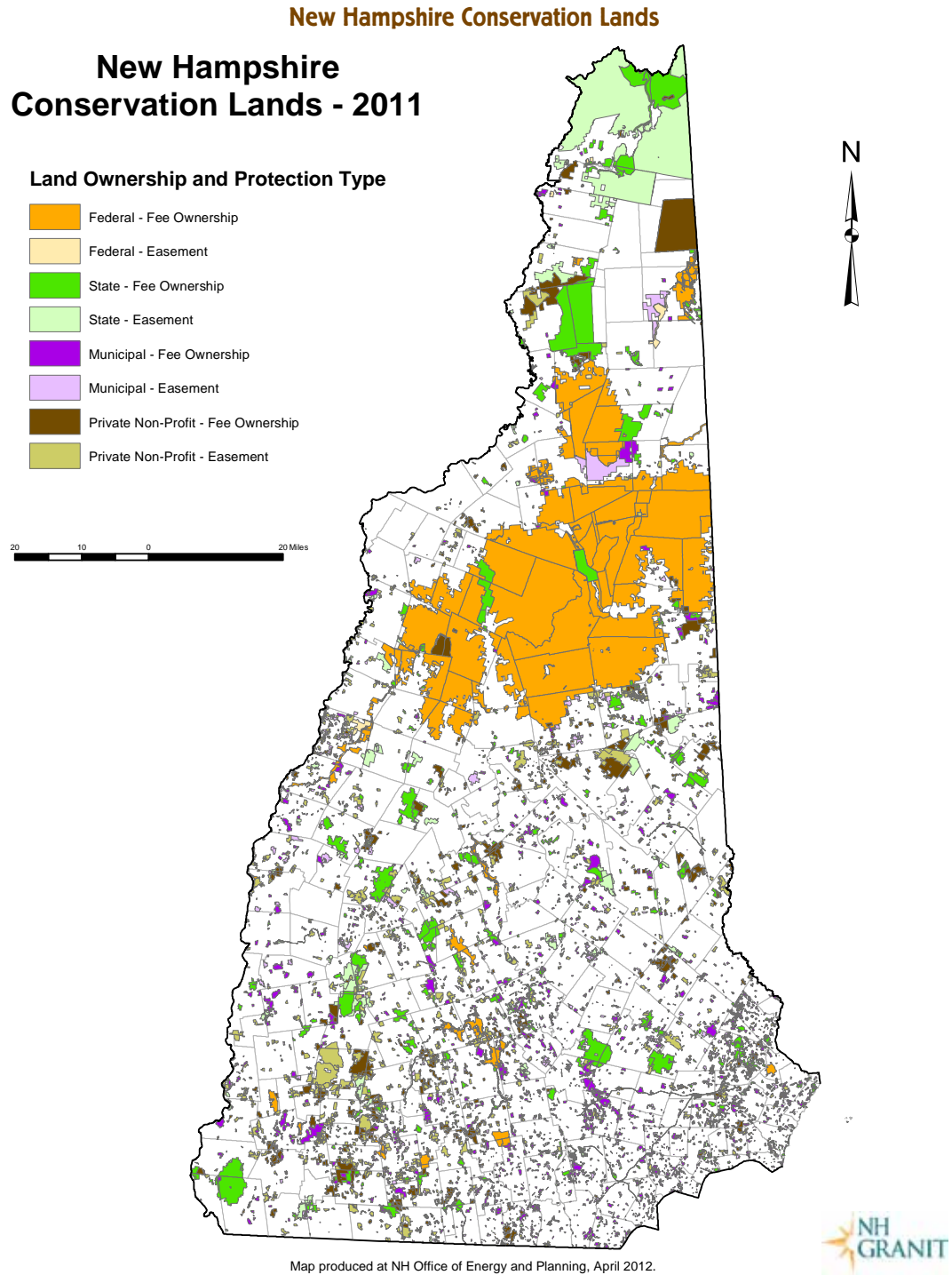
Ownership/Protection Type	Number of Acres		
	2002	2006	2011
Federal Fee	762,535	767,830	787,147
Federal Easement	3,808	5,739	9,657
State Fee	189,602	215,428	228,331
State Easement	32,854	189,611	204,075
Municipal Fee	101,413	109,304	114,450
Municipal Easement	34,361	50,627	63,791
Private Non-Profit/Other Fee	130,991	145,910	164,002
Private Non-Profit/Other Easement	94,724	115,871	174,502
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1,350,288</b>	<b>1,600,320</b>	<b>1,745,955</b>

Source: GRANIT, 2011

Open space and conservation lands provide opportunities for many different recreational activities ranging from developed, intensively used parks to remote wilderness experiences. Access varies and it is important to know and respect the landowner's wishes before entering into either public or privately held conservation lands. **Figure 10** shows the distribution of New Hampshire's conserved lands.

**Preserving Wildlife Habitat, Protecting Water Quality** - While some parcels of land are managed expressly for recreation, a majority of conserved lands in New Hampshire are managed with the broader goals of preserving wildlife habitat, maintaining productive forest and agricultural lands, and protecting water quality or rare and endangered species.

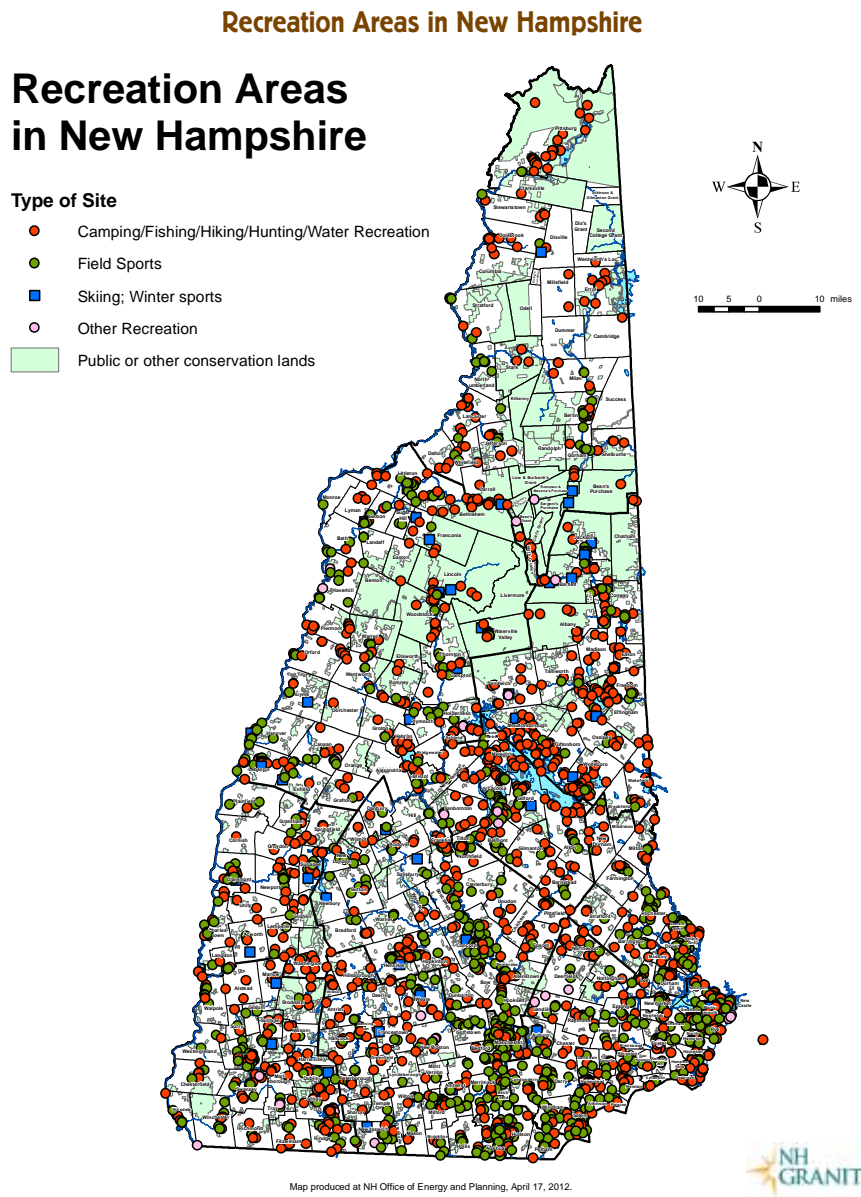
FIGURE 10:





New Hampshire's vast outdoor recreation assets such as hiking trails, camping areas, fishing, hunting and water recreation, field sports, and snow sports are identified online at the GranitView GIS mapping website. Detailed maps allow users to locate outdoor recreation sites, learn about approved uses, ownership, and accessibility. *Figure 11* shows recreation areas in New Hampshire.

FIGURE 11:



### Outdoor Recreation Lands and Facilities

The Office of Energy and Planning maintains a statewide inventory of outdoor recreation lands and facilities in New Hampshire, providing information about ownership, acreage, and types of recreational activities available at over 4,000 sites across the State.

**Table 3: NH Population, Acreage, and Outdoor Recreation Lands Supply by County**

County	2010 Population	Recreation Acreage	Number of Sites	Percentage of County Acreage (rounded)
Belknap	60,088	21,356	246	2%
Carroll	47,818	200,035	307	15%
Cheshire	77,117	65,905	324	5%
Coos	33,055	351,576	250	27%
Grafton	89,118	412,507	465	32%
Hillsborough	400,721	51,646	635	4%
Merrimack	146,445	66,529	420	5%
Rockingham	295,223	37,417	600	3%
Strafford	123,143	15,249	235	1%
Sullivan	43,742	75,562	181	6%
<b>Statewide</b>	<b>1,316,470</b>	<b>1,297,782</b>	<b>3,663</b>	

Sources: US Bureau of the Census, 2010 NH Census; OEP, 2011 NH Outdoor Recreation Inventory

The northern part of the State has a few large individual recreational areas – most notably the White Mountain National Forest. The southern, more populated part of the state contains a larger number of smaller recreation sites. The activity types presented in *Table 4* are broad classifications, and individual sites may provide opportunities beyond the classifications listed.

**Table 4: Recreation Sites by Selected Activity by County**

County	Camp-grounds	Field Sport Areas	Golf Courses	Historic Areas	Natural/Passive Recreation Areas	Parks, Picnic, Playgrounds	Water Access Sports	Winter Sports
Belknap	35	42	6	1	52	26	60	2
Carroll	72	34	10	7	96	21	57	12
Cheshire	26	65	7	4	122	34	42	3
Coos	36	34	4	1	74	33	36	6
Grafton	65	71	14	8	108	38	53	17
Hillsborough	31	202	22	15	193	102	51	8
Merrimack	23	104	12	19	142	49	53	7
Rockingham	36	185	25	19	172	59	65	5
Strafford	17	71	8	5	97	27	19	3
Sullivan	12	33	4	7	42	36	27	3
<b>Statewide</b>	<b>353</b>	<b>841</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>1,098</b>	<b>425</b>	<b>463</b>	<b>66</b>

Source: 2011 Office of Energy and Planning Recreation Inventory

Public access rights to lands conserved by easement such as the Connecticut Lakes Headwaters Easement increase access for so called “traditional uses” including hunting, fishing, snowmobiling, hiking, and walking, as well as other uses such as ATV use and mountain biking and Nordic skiing.

Hillsborough and Rockingham Counties have the largest populations and are also home to the largest number of field sport areas, park/picnic areas, and golf courses. Rockingham County has the highest number of water sports and fishing areas. It is important that a higher proportion of these sites be located near the larger population bases, given the national trend of individuals choosing to recreate closer to home.

Public lands comprise the majority of identified recreational acreage in New Hampshire (about 82 percent), followed by private non-profit organizations (about 12 percent), as shown in *Table 5*.

**Table 5: Recreational Land Acreage by Owner Type\***

County	Total Recreation Acres	Federal Acres	State Acres	Municipal Acres	School Acres	Private Non-Profit Acres	For-Profit Recreational Businesses Acres
Belknap	21,356	1,235	5,660	6,488	768	4,853	2,352
Carroll	199,884	155,459	17,113	5,083	429	8,247	13,553
Cheshire	65,703	2,605	21,754	5,184	1,049	31,535	3,576
Coos	497,935	227,190	204,497	5,730	474	30,256	29,788
Grafton	411,965	348,919	26,915	5,493	1,473	13,718	15,447
Hillsborough	51,147	2,826	10,457	13,320	2,583	14,498	7,463
Merrimack	66,498	11,483	26,159	12,459	2,921	5,857	7,619
Rockingham	37,417	1,057	12,554	13,666	1,467	2,741	5,932
Strafford	15,169	0	4,120	3,985	432	4,892	1,740
Sullivan	75,494	139	17,086	4,240	465	51,330	2,234
<b>Statewide</b>	<b>1,442,568</b>	<b>750,913</b>	<b>346,315</b>	<b>75,648</b>	<b>12,061</b>	<b>167,927</b>	<b>89,704</b>

Source: 2011 Office of Energy and Planning Recreation Inventory

**\*Note:** *Table 5* includes **identified** recreational acreage and does not include **unidentified** recreational acres provided and owned by private landowners. The lands measured in *Table 5* are identified in the recreational lands layer in NH GRANIT.

### SUPPLY: PUBLIC ACCESS TO WATER RESOURCES

The Office of Energy and Planning maintains an inventory of “public” and “other” water access sites in New Hampshire, available on-line through the Office of Energy and Planning web site, <http://www.nh.gov/oep/programs/SCORP/index.htm>. This inventory provides information about 915 water access sites on 494 different lakes, ponds, and rivers including ownership, types of facilities, accessibility, and activity types (*Figure 12*). Almost half of the sites have been evaluated for accessibility, with data available to the public through the GRANITView mapping application online at <http://granitview.unh.edu>. The New Hampshire Fish and Game Department, the lead agency for public water access, maintains an up-to-date inventory of its guaranteed public access sites.



Mount Sunapee State Park



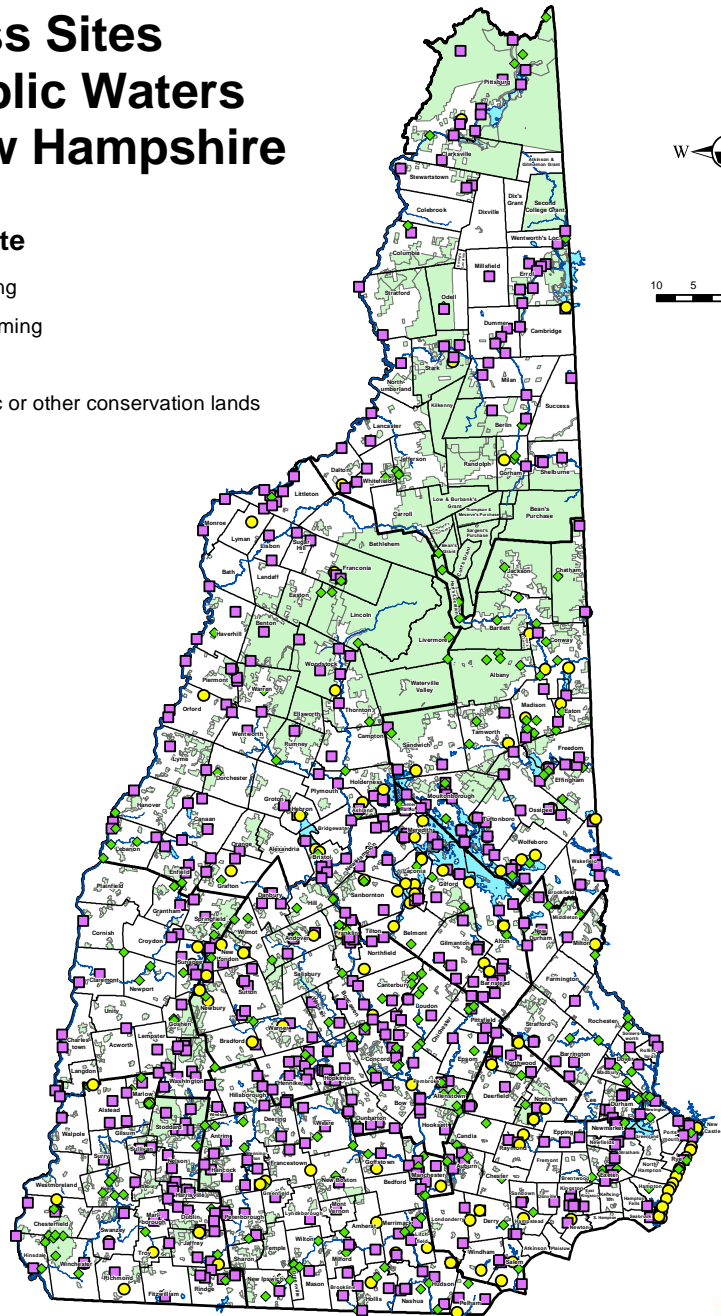
FIGURE 12:

Access Sites to Public Waters in New Hampshire

# Access Sites to Public Waters in New Hampshire

## Type of Site

- Boating
- Swimming
- ◆ Other
- Public or other conservation lands



Map produced at NH Office of Energy and Planning, April 17, 2012.



In New Hampshire, distinction is made for water access depending upon whether it is state owned or maintained.

- **“Public”** or state access sites are defined under RSA 233-A: 1,III as “... legal passage to any of the public waters of the state by way of designated contiguous land owned or controlled by a state agency, assuring that all members of the public shall have access to and use of the public waters for recreational purposes.”
- **“Other”** access is defined in the *Public Access Plan for New Hampshire’s Lakes, Ponds and Rivers* (OEP, 1991) as “...legal passage by way of designated land owned or controlled by a public entity (e.g. federal, municipal) or private entity (e.g. commercial, private nonprofit, individual landowner) for the purpose of providing active or passive recreational opportunities and/or use of the public waters of the state, and where such legal passage may or may not involve a fee.”

**Table 6: NH Public and Other Water Access Sites by County**

County	Sites Listed	Trailer Parking	Canoe/Car-top Parking	Shore-bank or Roadside Parking	Swimming or other access
Belknap	76	23	24	8	21
Carroll	100	27	19	36	18
Cheshire	94	36	23	23	12
Coos	76	33	26	13	4
Grafton	107	40	31	22	14
Hillsborough	111	34	29	23	25
Merrimack	151	51	38	48	14
Rockingham	118	32	27	18	41
Strafford	43	12	11	16	4
Sullivan	39	20	9	9	1
<b>Statewide</b>	<b>915</b>	<b>308</b>	<b>237</b>	<b>216</b>	<b>154</b>

Source: NH Public Access Sites, NHOEP (2011)

*Table 7* shows that, on average, New Hampshire has one public water access site per 6.4 miles of shoreline. Coos County, by far, has the fewest number of public access sites available per mile of shoreline/riverfront. Merrimack and Rockingham counties have the highest density of access sites.

**Table 7: Miles of Shoreline and Public Access Sites to Water by County**

County	Public and Private Sites Listed	Miles of Shoreline and Riverbank	Miles of Shoreline Per Site
Belknap	76	420.6	5.53
Carroll	100	711.4	7.11
Cheshire	94	531.2	5.65
Coos	76	817.4	10.76
Grafton	107	820	7.66
Hillsborough	111	688.5	6.20
Merrimack	151	691.1	4.58
Rockingham	118	549.3	4.66
Strafford	43	354.4	8.24
Sullivan	39	302.6	7.76
<b>Statewide</b>	<b>915</b>	<b>5,887</b>	<b>6.43</b>

Sources: Office of Energy and Planning Public Access Inventory (2011) and GRANIT

### SUPPLY: CURRENT USE LANDS

Owners of privately held lands offer various levels of traditional public access for hunting, fishing, Nordic skiing, hiking, and snowmobiling by special permit, verbal agreement, or under New Hampshire's Current Use Taxation Program.

Parcels of land (10 acre minimum) may be taxed based on their current use value as open space rather than on their potential value for development purposes.

**NH RSA 79-A, the Current Use Taxation Program, was established in 1972 to:**

"...encourage the preservation of open space, thus providing a healthful and attractive outdoor environment for work and recreation, maintaining the character of the state's landscape, and conserving the land, water, forest, agricultural and wildlife resources."

*Table 8* provides statistics about the percentage of total land acres in each county that are in Current Use. Roughly 51 percent of New Hampshire land acres were enrolled in Current Use in 2010.



Winslow State Park

Table 8: Current Use Lands by County – 2005, 2010

County	Total Land Acres		Acres in Current Use		Percentage of Land in Current Use	
	2005	2010	2005	2010	2005	2010
Belknap	257,726.30	257,726.24	136,535.67	138,422.19	53.0	53.8
Carroll	598,386.75	598,386.69	217,825.62	225,832.05	36.4	37.8
Cheshire	452,910.78	452,910.70	290,161.07	291,840.01	64.1	64.7
Coos	1,153,614.25	1,152,946.70	707,135.48	705,646.47	61.3	61.2
Grafton	1,096,323.54	1,096,323.46	497,473.39	494,038.9	45.4	45.1
Hillsborough	561,351.43	561,351.39	265,373.37	257,727.48	47.3	46.0
Merrimack	597,481.35	597,481.33	329,236.11	334,486.75	55.1	56.0
Rockingham	446,221.19	446,221.01	156,315.42	149,668.22	35.0	33.6
Strafford	235,092.87	235,092.84	115,517.79	114,198.14	49.1	48.6
Sullivan	344,219.13	334,219.09	231,863.62	236,050.65	67.4	68.6
<b>Statewide</b>	<b>5,743,327.59</b>	<b>5,742,659.45</b>	<b>2,947,437.54</b>	<b>2,948,910.86</b>	<b>51.3</b>	<b>51.4</b>

Source: Department of Revenue Administration, Current Use Report 2005, 2010

Public access to private lands increases with the “recreation adjustment,” which lowers a landowner’s tax burden by an additional 20 percent if the land is kept open to the public for traditional forms of recreation (Nordic skiing, snowshoeing, fishing, hunting, hiking, and nature observation). Access must be available year-round unless the recreational activities are detrimental to crops on agricultural lands or active forestry operations. Nearly 49 percent of Current Use Lands received the recreational adjustment in 2010.



### SUPPLY: CULTURAL AND HISTORIC RESOURCES

In New Hampshire most of our natural landscapes are also cultural landscapes. Ten thousand years of human activity has affected virtually all of our lands, from tidal estuaries to the summits of our highest peaks. Many areas were burned or cleared and harvested by the early indigenous populations. Much later, the immense effort of settlers during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries to harvest the timber resources and bring as much of our soils under cultivation resulted in New Hampshire's land being 80 percent cleared by 1830.

In our forests, along streams, lakes, and river margins, wherever plant and animal species have reclaimed sites that once supported human activity, natural and cultural resources coexist. Sometimes, the cultural resource predominates, as in our cities and villages, with their built environment. Sometimes, natural and cultural resources balance one another, as on working farms that include standing structures, sites of former structures, old wells and dams, stone walls, cultivated fields, grasslands, managed woodlots, and re-established forests. Sometimes, natural resources predominate, as in land that was once farmed but has long been abandoned for farming. Here, the forest hides most of what remains of human culture in the form of archaeological resources.

Because cultural resources add value to our sense of place and our understanding of history, these resources require identification and protection.



Wentworth-Coolidge Mansion Historic Site



Bear Brook State Park

## USAGE PATTERNS: NATIONAL AND STATE PARTICIPATION IN OUTDOOR RECREATION

### National Participation in Outdoor Recreation

Three out of every four Americans participate in active outdoor recreation each year. Americans spend money, generate jobs, and support local communities when they get outdoors.

Nationwide, outdoor participation continues to be solid, even during the challenging economic times of the last few years. According to a 2012 report by the Outdoor Foundation, *“Nearly half of Americans ages 6 and older, or 141.1 million individuals, participated in at least one outdoor activity in 2011, totaling 11.5 billion outings.”*

Outdoor Foundation research also shows significant increases in adventure sports such as recreational kayaking, bow hunting, freestyle skiing, stand up paddling and downhill telemarking as well as increases in youth participation among young boys and female teenagers, with most participants choosing to recreate close to home.

**Reasons for Participating in Outdoor Recreation** - A 2010 NH Fish & Game Department Survey conducted by Responsive Management identified the most important reasons New Hampshire residents participate in outdoor recreation:

1. Fun and enjoyment
2. Exercise and health benefits
3. To be out in nature

### Statewide Participation in Outdoor Recreation

A summary of statewide recreational usage patterns shows a New Hampshire citizenry actively participating in outdoor recreation activities:

- Of the 6 million visitors per year to New Hampshire's State Parks, 56 percent are from New Hampshire, 22 percent are from Massachusetts, and the remaining visitors are primarily from throughout New England and the Mid-Atlantic states.
- State park users are predominantly middle-aged, well educated, with annual incomes over \$50,000.
- Ninety-two percent (92%) of survey respondents to the 2009 NH State Park Survey visited a state park within the last 12 months.
- While boating registrations showed significant increases in the 80s and 90s, the number of licenses has decreased slightly between 2005 and 2010, peaking in 2005 at more than 100,000 registrations annually.
- Participation levels among nine responding New Hampshire equine clubs (there are approximately 21 clubs total) informally surveyed in 2012 recorded 630 members throughout the State, concentrated in the southern counties, with total event participation by members and spectators at approximately 2,054 individuals each year.
- New Hampshire has 32 ski areas, according to Ski New Hampshire, Inc. (SkiNH). Resort-based snow sports participation is weather dependent, but remains a strong economic driver in the state. For the 2011-2012 season, Ski New Hampshire, Inc., calculated more than 1.8 million alpine skier and snowboarder visits, over 96,000 Nordic skier visits, and approximately 91,600 snowtubing visits.
- According to the New Hampshire State Parks Ten-Year Strategic Development and Capital Improvement Plan, the most popular outdoor activities for New Hampshire residents include wildlife observation, driving for pleasure, sightseeing, and jogging/running/walking. Day hiking tends to be more popular in New Hampshire than the national average.

### 2011 Most Popular Outdoor Activities for Americans Ages 6 and Older

1. Running, jogging, and trail running
2. Freshwater, saltwater, and fly fishing
3. Road, mountain, and BMX bicycling
4. Car, backyard, and RV Camping
5. Hiking

The Outdoor Foundation tracks participation by state in major categories of outdoor recreation, including camping, fishing, bicycling, hunting, paddling, snow sports, and wildlife viewing. New Hampshire's most popular activity, enjoyed by 45 percent of the population, is wildlife viewing, followed by trail activities including hiking, rock climbing, trail running, and backpacking, as illustrated in *Figure 13*.

**Economic Impact of New Hampshire's Ski Industry** - SkiNH commissioned a report by Plymouth State University for the 2009-2010 ski season, recording more than \$910 million in direct (skiers and off season visitors) and indirect spending (taxes, capital investments, hotel, restaurant, electricity, salaries). Emerging off-season activities at New Hampshire ski areas, which also contribute additional economic value, include ziplines, canopy tours, horseback riding, and Segway tours.



Weeks State Park



FIGURE 13:

## New Hampshire Outdoor Recreation Participation Report

NEW HAMPSHIRITES PARTICIPATE  
IN ACTIVE OUTDOOR RECREATION

	ACTIVITY CATEGORY	# OF PARTICIPANTS*	% OF POPULATION*
	<b>BICYCLING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Paved-road bicycling</li> <li>Off-road bicycling</li> </ul>	241,100	24%
	<b>CAMPING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RV camping at a campsite</li> <li>Tent camping at a campsite</li> <li>Rustic lodging</li> </ul>	238,895	24%
	<b>FISHING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recreational fly</li> <li>Recreational non-fly</li> </ul>	142,149	13%
	<b>HUNTING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shotgun</li> <li>Rifle</li> <li>Bow</li> </ul>	51,116	5%
	<b>PADDLING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kayaking (recreational, sea, or whitewater)</li> <li>Rafting</li> <li>Canoeing</li> </ul>	225,662	22%
	<b>SNOW SPORTS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Downhill skiing, including telemark</li> <li>Snowboarding</li> <li>Cross-country or Nordic skiing</li> <li>Snowshoeing</li> </ul>	254,233	25%
	<b>TRAIL</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trail running on an unpaved trail</li> <li>Day hiking on an unpaved trail</li> <li>Backpacking</li> <li>Rock climbing (natural rock or ice)</li> </ul>	349,570	35%
	<b>WILDLIFE VIEWING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bird watching</li> <li>Other wildlife watching</li> </ul>	445,000	42%

\*Wildlife-based participation is based on adult population 16 years of age and older living in New Hampshire in 2005: 1,063,065 (US Census). Non wildlife-based participation is based on adult population 18 years of age and older living in New Hampshire in 2005: 1,007,415 (US Census). Detailed activity definitions and participation calculations are available in the technical report.

New Hampshire not only attracts those from out-of-state to take part in active outdoor recreation but also, with exceptional close-to-home recreation, generates economic activity from active New Hampshire residents.



New Hampshire's landscape is an ideal setting for participation in adventure sports such as rock climbing, mountain biking, kayaking, and snow sports, considered to be "active recreation," as well as "passive recreation" pursuits such as wildlife viewing, reflection, and nature study.

**Active or Passive Recreation: What's the Difference?** - Recreation resource agencies often focus on the "extractive" element of outdoor recreation (hunting vs. walking), or on the "facilities" element (ball fields vs. wildlife areas), or on the "team sport" element (bird watching vs. baseball).

**For the purposes of this plan:**

- **Active Recreation** is based on physiology and refers to activities that result in a healthy increase in aerobic rate. Mountain biking, hiking, snowshoeing, and tennis are considered to be active recreation.
- **Passive Recreation** activities provide important benefits for mental health and stress reduction. Reflection, bird watching, and nature study are considered to be passive recreation.
- **Active Transportation** is any self-propelled, human-powered mode of transportation, such as walking or bicycling, which has the effect of improving cardiovascular fitness, and reducing the risk of cancer, overweight and obesity.

### Issues That Potentially Impact Outdoor Recreation Participation

Issues related to outdoor recreation participation, as noted by the 2006 New Hampshire Fish and Game survey on outdoor recreation participation, include:

- Overcrowding/development/overuse
- Litter, proper upkeep
- Access-related
- Water quality
- Speeding by boaters/jet skiers
- Health of fish and wildlife

These issues may be considered to impact a resident or visitor's decision to participate in outdoor recreation activities, and inform land managers of resident concerns for future planning.

### Federal Funding for Outdoor Recreation

After several years with no funding, New Hampshire began receiving federal LWCF funds in 2001. In the last two years, New Hampshire has distributed over \$450,000 in grants, funding seven projects. In this two-year period, there were 15 local proposals totaling more than \$4.4 million in requests. The significant difference between \$4.4 million in proposals and the amount of grants distributed, over \$450,000, shows that available grant funds are less than the demand, representing an unmet financial need.

In the 2011 Annual Report of the Land and Water Conservation Fund, State and Local Assistance Program, New Hampshire's reported unmet need was \$103,278,363. The National Park Service "annually requests that each state partner estimate the total cost of all desired outdoor recreation facility development and parklands acquisition projects that cannot be met with available levels of funding." New Hampshire's unmet funding needs identify the importance of the LWCF program and the benefits it brings to outdoor recreation.

**Natural Disasters Impact Recreation Infrastructure** - A common theme in expressing outdoor recreation need in recent years has been the issue of existing recreational infrastructure that is aging, worn, obsolete, or not universally accessible and thus requires repair, replacement, or other upgrades. However, some states have to confront a different problem in maintaining their outdoor recreation facilities: those damaged or destroyed by natural disasters such as hurricanes and flooding. Many communities across the U.S. have been affected, particularly in 2011.

*-National Park Service, LWCF State & Local Assistance Program, 2011 Annual Report, [www.nps.gov/lwcf](http://www.nps.gov/lwcf)*

Monadnock State Park

### EXPRESSED DEMAND: WHAT DO NEW HAMPSHIRE RESIDENTS WANT?

In order to create a comprehensive system of parks and outdoor recreation facilities for the 2013-2018 SCORP, The NH Department of Resources and Economic Development (DRED) and the NH Office of Energy and Planning (OEP) wanted to hear from a wide range of citizens—young and old, native Granite Staters and newcomers, city and rural residents, and those who come from all socio-economic levels. This approach extended opportunities for input beyond those who have previously been engaged in the SCORP development process – frequent users of our parks and recreation facilities such as hikers, hunters, ATV users, fishermen, skiers, and cyclists. Complete results are summarized in *Appendix A* and *Appendix B*.

- The Carsey Institute at UNH convened “NH Listens” community conversations at seven sites throughout the state, with 171 community members participating.
- UNH Cooperative Extension facilitated planning sessions with key stakeholder groups and conducted a web-based survey with 136 recreation and conservation leaders throughout New Hampshire responding.

**Connecting Children and Youth to the Outdoors** - A common theme when participants talked about their connection to outdoor recreation was a concern for getting children and youth to use the outdoors for recreation.

### KEY FINDINGS – NH LISTENS

The public engagement process for the 2013-2018 NH SCORP yielded the following key findings:

#### Health and Quality of Life

- There is a growing appreciation for benefits of outdoor recreation
- Livable communities create reduced costs of health care and transportation
- Culture of fear as a barrier for some
- Ensure access for senior citizens, children, and people with disabilities
- Incorporate recreation into transportation corridors

**New Hampshire Listens** - For NH Listens, special emphasis was placed on hearing citizens' views about unmet needs and innovative approaches to meeting those needs.

Additional outreach was focused on those with limited use of outdoor recreation resources for reasons of access, age, income, or knowledge.

#### Economic Development & Funding

- Recreational opportunities contribute to economic vitality and attract business
- Enlist retailers to support outdoor recreation initiatives
- Set funds aside for facilities as well as lands
- Educate the public on how park entrance fees are used

#### Community Recreation, Children, and Youth

- How/where to recreate close to home
- Opportunities for the underserved (urban populations, immigrants, elderly, youth)
- Explore leadership development opportunities for young people
- Partner with school districts to develop outdoor recreation opportunities

**New Hampshire Recreation and Conservation Leaders Survey:** Seventy-one percent (71%) ranked partnerships with organizations to foster connections between outdoor recreation and improved health and wellness as a medium to high priority.

### Connectivity – Places and People

- Connectivity of recreational sites, trails
- Increase access for all users, with a close evaluation of equestrian uses
- Address the environmental impact and safety concerns with multiple users

### Communications and Outreach

- Importance of cultivating volunteerism with friends groups and service groups
- Education for children and youth, user groups, providers, private property owners
- Centralized source of information
- Develop partnerships to combine resources, talents, and knowledge
- Address the risk aversion of parents letting children play outdoors
- Implement a SCORP Advisory Council to support implementation

### Stewardship

- Create a uniform state trail signage system
- Implement sustainability practices in stewardship plans
- Create endowments for stewardship of outdoor lands and facilities



### KEY FINDINGS – UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE RECREATION AND CONSERVATION LEADERS SURVEY

To gather stakeholder input, an open-ended survey was launched via email and websites. The goal was to gather as much information as possible regarding outdoor recreation and land conservation planning needs and management priorities for communities throughout the State of New Hampshire. In concert with results from the NH Listens public outreach findings, the survey results are intended to inform and update the goals and objectives for the 2013-2018 SCORP and to frame the priorities and action items identified later in this document.

Those responding to the survey serve a varied number of constituents ranging from as few as 100 to over 100,000. The majority of respondents serve year-round users and a small number serve seasonal users, although most indicated they do not or are unable to track this data. The respondents had a mix of part-time, seasonal, and full time staff with volunteers representing a large number of “workers” to help recreation and conservation organizations accomplish their work.

Stakeholders included recreation department staff, municipal boards and commissions, non-profit organizations, and user groups.

Meeting the expressed demand for outdoor recreation now and for future generations requires close collaboration with other state agencies, local communities, businesses, non-profits, and educational institutions.

### Key Findings - Recreation and Conservation Leaders Survey

- Outdoor recreation adds to the quality of life in New Hampshire and is a contributing factor in the economic health of the state.
- Funding outdoor recreation is the top challenge for recreation and conservation leaders.
- Leaders support a vision that includes increasing access to underserved populations, providing diverse opportunities and bringing in a new generation of users.
- Trail work and making connections between trails is a priority.
- There is strong support for keeping private lands open for outdoor recreation opportunities.
- Volunteers are important to outdoor recreation and conservation work, and there is a concern about developing a volunteer base for the future.
- Education is seen as an important component to outdoor recreation use and land conservation.



Bear Brook State Park



Moose Brook State Park



## Chapter 3: Priorities

Current and future trends nationwide and in New Hampshire provide relevant information for developing strategic priorities to connect people to the outdoors, promote healthier lifestyles; elevate New Hampshire's economic well-being; and conserve open landscape, natural, cultural, and wildlife resources now and into the future. The public engagement process for the 2013-2018 NH SCORP yielded the following key findings, which inform and support the 2013-2018 New Hampshire SCORP priorities:

- **Health and Quality of Life** – There is a growing appreciation for the benefits of outdoor recreation and the cost savings resulting from a livable communities focus. Communities that support quality of life initiatives can realize positive economic impacts.
- **Economic Development & Funding** – It is acknowledged that recreational opportunities contribute to economic vitality and attract businesses that support outdoor recreation initiatives. Adequate funding is vital for both facilities and lands, combined with public education about park and facility entrance fee uses.
- **Community Recreation, Children, and Youth** – Opportunities for recreation close to home and services for urban populations, immigrants, elderly, and youth are important. Leadership development opportunities for young people and partnerships with school districts for increased outdoor recreation participation are vital.
- **Connectivity – Places and People** – Connectivity of recreational site and trails for increased access for all users and provide awareness of environmental impact and safety concerns that can occur with multiple users. Active transportation corridors connecting community destinations can increase access to outdoor recreation for children, senior citizens, and people with disabilities.
- **Communications and Outreach** – Cultivating volunteerism and developing partnerships to combine resources, talents, and knowledge. Creating a centralized source of information and education for users and private property owners, addressing the risk aversion of parents letting children play outdoors.
- **Stewardship** – Creating a uniform state trail signage system, implementing sustainability practices in stewardship plans and creating endowments for stewardship of outdoor lands and facilities.



### America's Great Outdoors 2011 Report Highlights the Northern Forest

The Northern Forest covers some 30 million acres across New Hampshire, Maine, Vermont, and New York. Its forests are diverse, ranging from the extensive broadleaf deciduous and mixed forests to montane and lowland spruce-fir and low-elevation forests of oak, pine, and hickory. Forests help define the region's character and are integral to its economy.

Federal partners have made notable investments in recent years through the Land and Water Conservation Fund and the USDA Forest Service Forest Legacy program. Public-private conservation has enabled significant conservation in this region — conserved lands have increased from 4.3 million acres in 1997 to more than 6.5 million acres today.

Many opportunities remain to ensure that this largest remaining contiguous forest east of the Mississippi River continues to provide the products, outdoor recreation, and wildlife benefits that communities will continue to rely on for generations to come. *This project supports the AGO priorities of large landscape conservation and conservation of rural working lands.*



Crawford Notch State Park



### NEW HAMPSHIRE'S SCORP PRIORITIES

Through a deliberative review of the findings from the public engagement process; analysis of existing state, regional, and national plans; and a study of trends impacting outdoor recreation, four strategic priorities have emerged for New Hampshire's SCORP to focus on over the next five years.

- Promote health and livability for all through connection to the outdoors
- Practice wise stewardship and conservation of natural resources
- Contribute to New Hampshire's economic vitality
- Educate multiple users, partners, and agency leadership

**New Hampshire Listens** - “How can our outdoor recreation areas become the best places for everyone to experience the natural wonders of New Hampshire?”

“How can state and local outdoor recreation areas help all of us, young and old, natives, and newcomers, be healthy and fit?”

*-Community Conversation Questions from the  
“New Hampshire Listens” process*



Milan Hill State Park

## PRIORITY 1. CONNECTING PEOPLE TO THE OUTDOORS

**Children and Heart Disease** - Six out of every ten overweight children already have at least one risk factor for heart disease.

### Why is this a priority for New Hampshire?

Childhood obesity is growing at an alarming rate, and children are spending less and less time playing outdoors. A 2009 survey commissioned by KaBOOM!, a national nonprofit dedicated to bringing play back into the lives of children, included responses from 1,677 parents with children between the ages of 2-12. The survey found:

- Fifty-nine percent (59%) of parents report that their children do not have access to a community playground.
- Ninety-six percent (96%) of parents said playing outside was vital to keep children physically fit.

According to its 2011 BRFSS Update, DHHS reported that in 2009, 36.5 percent of NH adults were overweight, while 26.3 percent were obese. These rates are comparable to overweight and obesity estimates in US population.

An active lifestyle can help to reverse this trend that seems to be growing out of control. “Active” outdoor recreation, which includes bicycling, camping, fishing, hunting, paddling sports, snow sports, wildlife viewing, trail-running, hiking, and climbing not only contributes \$646 billion annually to the U.S. economy, but is a vital component in addressing our nation’s growing public health concerns.

The goal of the 2011 New Hampshire Recreation and Conservation Leaders Survey was to gather as much information as possible regarding outdoor recreation and land conservation planning needs and management priorities. The survey identified the top planning priorities for outdoor recreation and conservation, as outlined in *Table 9*.

**Freedom to Roam is Diminishing** - Studies show that the freedom to explore and improvise play has been reduced dramatically. The area in which children are free to roam has shrunk by 89% in 20 years due to loss of open space, population growth, and urban sprawl. According to the US Forest Service, an estimated 6,000 acres of open space is lost each day.

**Table 9: Planning Priorities for Outdoor Recreation and Conservation in New Hampshire**

<b>Planning Priorities for Outdoor Recreation and Conservation</b>	<b>High priority</b>	<b>Medium priority</b>	<b>Total</b>
Encourage keeping private lands open to the public for outdoor recreation opportunities	66%	21%	87%
Encourage partnerships and cooperation between diverse users of recreational land	59%	28%	87%
Focus on collaboration, volunteerism and environmental education particularly for youth, in developing and maintaining outdoor recreation areas	42%	44%	86%
Encourage local development that supports connectivity of open space for recreational and cultural uses	56%	28%	84%
Cultivate a new generation of users (i.e. under-served audiences) by increasing awareness of outdoor recreation opportunities	48%	33%	81%
Focus efforts statewide toward development of and access to outdoor recreational opportunities that connect people to where they live and work	40%	41%	81%

Additional priorities were identified by survey respondents, and many were supported by citizen participation *New Hampshire Listens: Statewide Community Conversations on Outdoor Recreation in New Hampshire*, conducted by the Carsey Institute at the University of New Hampshire. Priorities were identified in the following categories:

- **Trails**

Improving and developing trails with a focus on connectivity with existing trails and newly developed trails. Equestrian concerns included a lack of support for equestrian use on trails and public lands, a lack of understanding about equestrian use and its impact.

- **Access**

Providing access to outdoor recreation opportunities for all users was a common theme in the community conversations. Participants were concerned about access to private lands from landowners, easier access for seniors and the disabled population, access related to fee structure, providing access close to home and work, parking and connections with public transportation, and ensuring permanent access to outdoor recreation lands. Equestrian users expressed concern relative to trail conditions and shrinking access due to loss of Class VI roads throughout the state. Conversely, Fish and Game Survey respondents expressed satisfaction with the level of access afforded for fishing, boating and hunting.

Connecting people to the outdoors through trails, open spaces, and recreation facilities is encouraged by providing easy to access information and close to home opportunities that are safe and convenient.

### Top Reasons Why New Hampshire Residents Visit State Parks

- Wanted to get away
- Family tradition
- Good value for the money
- Many things to do
- Convenient/nearby

*-2011 New Hampshire Division of Parks and Recreation 10-Year Strategic Development and Capital Improvement Plan*

As stated in the Center for Disease Control newsletter, *Vital Signs - More People Walk to Better Health (August 2012)* “more than 145 million adults now include walking as part of a physically active lifestyle. More than 6 to 10 people walk for transportation or for fun, relaxation, or exercise, or for activities such as walking the dog. The percentage of people who report walking at least once for 10 minutes or more in the previous week rose from 56% (2005) to 62% (2010).” Some points listed in the report are:

- Walkable communities result in more physical activity.
- People need safe, convenient places to walk.
- People need to know where places to walk in their communities exist that are safe and convenient.
- Walking routes in and near neighborhoods encourage people to walk.
- People walk to get to places they want to go when places are nearby.

Additional recommendations from The “*Guide to Community Preventive Services*” include:

- Creating more places for physical activity with information and outreach that lets people know where these are.
- Considering walkability in community design.
- Using community-wide campaigns to provide health education and social support of physical activity.

*Connect People to the Outdoors in New England*, a 2011 Report to the National Park Service, US Environmental Protection Agency and Commission on Land Conservation of the New England Governor’s Conference, outlines seven pathways on land and water envisioned to connect people throughout New England by experiencing outdoor recreation. Supporting this important vision creates the necessary alignment among national, regional, and state values for conservation, public health, recreation, and livability.



**Connect People to the Outdoors in New England** - In a bold vision for the future, these pathways and blueways (river trails) will serve to connect four out of five people in New England:

- Androscoggin River
- Blackstone River
- Champlain Valley
- Connecticut River
- East Coast Greenway
- Merrimack River
- Northern Forest Canoe Trail

Five out of seven pathways weave through New Hampshire.

#### **New ADA guidelines**

On September 14, 2010 the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) issued an amended regulation implementing the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA 2010 Standards). On March 15, 2011 the amended Act became effective and, for the first time in history, includes recreation environment design requirements. Compliance with the regulations must be effective March 15, 2012. This includes design and construction requirements and the development of a three-year transition plan. By March 15, 2015 implementation of the three-year transition plan must be complete.

The Department of Justice (DOJ) has listed on their website proposed new guidelines for people with disabilities. Specific information can be obtained at [www.ADAinformation.org](http://www.ADAinformation.org) or [www.ada.gov](http://www.ada.gov). These guidelines will ensure the following outdoor recreation amenities are compliant for accessibility:

- Campsites
- Picnic shelters
- Boating areas/ramps
- Trails
- Beaches

### The Role of the ADA

On July 26, 1990, the United States officially recognized the rights of people with disabilities by enacting the American's with Disabilities Act (ADA). The provisions of the ADA state, **"People with disabilities are allowed equal access to all services provided by local, state, and federal governments, including recreational services. The ADA allows full and equal access by persons with disabilities to any place of public accommodation, governmental or private."**

To determine the accessibility of facilities, agencies should conduct a review of facilities using the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG).

- How a community interprets and implements the guidelines of the ADA regarding parks and recreation programs and services for children, youth, and adults with disabilities ultimately depends upon the philosophy of staff and how accepting they are of people with disabilities.
- Some organizations provide a basic level of service as per the law and other communities embrace the notion of accessibility and choose to exceed what is expected.

**New Hampshire Listens** - "How can outdoor recreation facilities partner with schools, community recreation centers, and programs like Scouts, church groups, and others to enhance outdoor experiences?"

- *Community Conversation Questions from "New Hampshire Listens"*



Rhododendron State Park

## PRIORITY 2. CONSISTENT STEWARDSHIP AND CONSERVATION

### Why is this a priority for New Hampshire?

The New Hampshire Listens report notes “...*outdoor recreation is an important issue in New Hampshire. The public has strong connections to outdoor facilities and lands used for outdoor recreation, and therefore, have a stake in future plans. Outdoor recreation supporters would like to see an expansion and strengthening of outdoor recreation opportunities and resources to benefit residents, visitors, communities, economic development, and future generations.*”

### Most Important Natural Resource Issues Facing New Hampshire

- Water Quality
- Habitat Loss

-2010 NH Fish and Game Department Survey

With the possible development of a Federal level 21st Century Conservation Corps (modeled after the historic Civilian Conservation Corps [CCC]) to engage youth and returning military personnel in conservation initiatives, New Hampshire may have opportunities to maintain existing conservation, water, and cultural resources, while supporting job creation.

Given this statement of public preferences for outdoor recreation opportunities and facilities, it is vital that stewardship and conservation of wildlife and natural resources remain a top priority into the future to ensure that carrying capacity is properly managed for resource protection and sustained access for multiple uses. This approach is supported by responses from the New Hampshire Listens process and the Recreation and Conservation Leaders survey.

- **Land Conservation**

The use of volunteers was discussed by most participant groups in connection with on-going and long-term stewardship of state and local recreation, open space, and natural lands. There is concern about whether there will be volunteer stewards in the future if the next generation (youth) are not interested, acclimated, or comfortable in the outdoors.

- **Stewardship**

There is concern about resources, both human and financial, for the future stewardship and maintenance of outdoor recreation lands, facilities, and the built environment. There is a strong sense that long-term plans for stewardship must be in place.

- **Partnerships**

Participants put a high value on the importance of partnerships, collaboration, and cooperation. Partnerships can be created among user groups; local and state entities; within state departments dealing with lands and recreation; towns, schools, and local organizations; government entities; and the business community, federal government, state government, and private conservation groups. Partnerships are viewed as a way to strengthen resources and limit conflict.

- **User Satisfaction**

Some of the most popular recreational activities in the state (e.g. walking, wildlife watching, hiking, etc.) are highly dependent on open space and tracts of undeveloped land. The SCORP outreach results show that residents view the protection of natural landscapes and natural areas as highly important management objectives, and felt that setting aside natural areas from development was either a very or most important management objective of the state.

- **Water Quality**

The New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services Water Division conducted a study including a public engagement process, to determine the economic impact and importance of clean water to the state's long term economic vitality. Conclusively, clean water is an important aspect of why New Hampshire is attractive to residents and tourists, as well as vital to fish, wildlife, and environmental health.

### PRIORITY 3. ECONOMIC VITALITY

#### Why is this a priority for New Hampshire?

Promoting outdoor recreation events, programs, parks, and facilities that attract day travelers and overnight visitors is a vital component of developing a positive economic impact for New Hampshire. Creating new and strengthening existing partnerships with businesses such as chambers of commerce, recreation equipment vendors, and guide services enhances the economic benefits of outdoor recreation for all.

**Parks and Property Values** - In a 2005 study, *Real Estate Impact Review of Parks and Recreation*, Dr. John Crompton of Texas A&M University estimated that property values abutting or fronting a passive park are 20 percent higher than similar property not situated near a park. Parks have a substantial, positive impact on property values within 500 feet, and the study found that 57 percent of respondents want to live near a park.

#### New Hampshire State Parks

According to the 2011 New Hampshire Department of Resources and Economic Development Annual Report, annual earnings from state parks are between \$5.8 and \$6.5 million. This range considers the weather dependent nature of state park visitor preferences. It is estimated that state parks' contribution to New Hampshire's economy is \$545 million through spending and tax revenues.

In a 2009 report conducted for New Hampshire State parks by Applied Economic Research, *The Economic Impact of Visitors to the New Hampshire State Park System: A Preliminary Estimate*, spending by state park visitors provides direct support for more than 8,000 jobs in restaurants, accommodations, recreation, retail trade, services, transportation, and information.

**Quality of Life = Economic Health** - One of the key findings of the Recreation and Conservation Leaders survey is that outdoor recreation is seen as adding to New Hampshire's quality of life and is a contributing factor in the economic health of the state.



### Tourism and Local Economies

Outdoor recreation and tourism have played a key role in New Hampshire's economic development at the local and state level, and will continue in this trend. Many of New Hampshire's small communities are located near popular outdoor recreation, wildlife and natural resources, and cultural sites, such as the White Mountain National Forest, ski areas, water parks, and major concert venues. Income derived from the lodging, food, and hospitality industries support both rural and urban economies.

There are numerous economic benefits of trails and greenways. Studies have shown that trail users spend money on food, beverages, camping, hotels, and bike rentals, which stimulates the local economy.

### Top rated experiences reported in the 2005 US Fish and Wildlife Service Lake Umbagog National Wildlife Refuge Stakeholder Survey:

- Experiencing a serene environment
- Viewing birds on or near the water
- Being in natural, undeveloped lands

Lake Umbagog is an example of integrated multi-level collaboration among local communities, and state and federal agencies for wildlife and water resource protection and economic benefits.

### Equestrian Economics

According to a 2004 survey of more than 1,000 equine owners conducted by the New Hampshire Horse Council, the sum of all equine-related expenditures by New Hampshire equine owners in 2003 was about \$61 million. The most common activity among equine users in New Hampshire is pleasure riding and trail riding. State parks and beaches were the most popular places for equine riding, in particular Bear Brook State Park.

### Snowmobile Economics

*“The Economic Impact of Spending by Snowmobilers on New Hampshire’s Economy 2010-2011,”* a report prepared for The New Hampshire Snowmobile Association by The Institute for New Hampshire Studies at Plymouth State University, acknowledges the past and current value of snowmobiling in the state. “Snowmobiling has been an important winter sport in New Hampshire since the early 1970’s,” and, “has become one of the key components of winter tourism for Coos and Grafton counties.”

In addition, the report found the following:

- The sport of snowmobiling delivers an economic impact of \$586 million to the State of New Hampshire annually.
- Spending by snowmobilers was 0.3 percent of the gross state product and more than 5.2 percent of all travelers spending in the state.
- Snowmobile traveler spending supported 2,394 direct full and part-time jobs, while indirect spending supported an additional 680 full and part-time jobs.
- Average spending per visitor per day in New Hampshire was \$79 per resident and \$114 from non-residents. In addition to spending on trips, each snowmobiler spends \$1,307 annually and each out-of-state snowmobiler spent \$1,179 annually on equipment, clothing, club membership, insurance and state license fees.
- There were 56,645 registered snowmobiles in New Hampshire from May 2010 to April 2011. New Hampshire Fish & Game reports 22,871 New Hampshire households and 10,450 out-of-state households registered snowmobiles during the 2010-2011 season.



Pawtuckaway State Park

### The Economic Value of Clean Water

A multi-year study begun in 2001 and commissioned by the New Hampshire Lakes Association on the economic value of New Hampshire's lakes, rivers, streams, and ponds revealed the following:

- The total sales generated by recreational uses (i.e., boating, fishing, swimming) of New Hampshire's freshwaters and public drinking water supplies, range from \$1.1 billion to \$1.5 billion annually.
- Annually, there are approximately 14.7 million visitor days spent boating, fishing, and swimming in New Hampshire by both residents and non-residents. These visitor days represent roughly 65 percent of the state's summer visitor days and roughly 25 percent of the state's annual visitor days.
- Days spent boating, fishing, and swimming collectively generate approximately \$320 million to \$340 million in annual household income and 9,000 to 15,000 full-time and part-time jobs.
- One-half to two-thirds of visitors would decrease or cease their visiting days to a particular site if they perceived a decline in water clarity and purity, natural views and scenery, crowding levels, and water levels and flows.



Winslow State Park

**America's Great Outdoors Report Celebrates Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge** - The Connecticut River, New England's largest, flows 410 miles from its source at New Hampshire's northern tip to its mouth on Long Island Sound. Along the way the river drains a 7.2-million-acre watershed in four states – New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, and Connecticut.

Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge, the only multi-state watershed unit in the National Wildlife Refuge System, has protected 35,134 acres of land in targeted areas in all four states, including 7,400 acres in the Mohawk River and Pondicherry divisions of northern New Hampshire.

The USDA Forest Service Forest Legacy Program has also been a critical contributor to protecting land in the Connecticut Valley through working forest-conservation easements, most notably the 171,000-acre Connecticut Lakes project in New Hampshire that protects the river's headwaters. The Appalachian National Scenic Trail traverses the Connecticut Valley, and the National Park Service has acquired land and scenic easements along the trail corridor. The National Park Service also manages the 150-acre Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site in Cornish.



Pillsbury State Park



## PRIORITY 4. EDUCATION ETHICS AND BENEFITS

### Why is this a priority for New Hampshire?

In a 2011 report to President Barack Obama, America's Great Outdoors proposed an overall goal to "reconnect Americans, especially children, to America's rivers and waterways, landscapes of national significance, ranches, farms and forests, great parks, and coasts and beaches." This goal closely parallels recommendations in "*Connect People to the Outdoors in New England*" an initiative of the New England Governor's Conference (NEGC) established in 2010. The objectives for the New England region, many of which pertain to educational activities, are:

- **Conservation Corps and Employment Opportunities**  
Provide employment opportunities in the outdoors through the creation of a regional partnership with third-sector programs organized and promoted by New England's many youth and adult conservation and education organizations.
- **Livability**  
Explore opportunities to develop community and urban gardens, serving as both a source of food as well as creating educational opportunities.
- **Recreational Opportunities**  
Helping communities along New England's river corridors develop a wide range of recreational opportunities.
- **Environmental Education**  
Collaborate in developing programs that introduce the public to the outdoors and generate awareness in the natural sciences.
- **Healthy Outcomes**  
Provide opportunities through recreation, agriculture, and education that will contribute to healthy lifestyles for Americans.

According to *New Hampshire Listens* participants, education should focus on youth and parents, recreation users, and private property owners. It was stressed that many organizations currently focus on environmental education. Education was also closely linked with developing partnerships, especially with local schools and environmental/conservation organizations. Education was also noted as important among different user groups to help each group understand the other.



### Challenges Facing New Hampshire Recreation and Conservation Leaders

When asked to list their top challenges in the next five years, overwhelmingly, recreation and conservation leaders identified funding of current and future projects and overall financial support for recreation lands, facilities, and programs as their top challenge.

- Recreation and conservation leaders were asked to indicate the sources of operating funds for their organizations, and responses show diverse approaches to supporting operations. Some respondents also listed endowments, fundraising events, and membership dues as funding sources.
- Federal and state funds were identified by 60 percent of respondents, indicating that LWCF funding is a vital component of recreation and conservation organizations overall funding strategies. Private donations (67 percent) followed by appropriated funds (63 percent), were identified by a slightly higher percentage of respondents.

### Additional Challenges Facing New Hampshire Recreation and Conservation Leaders

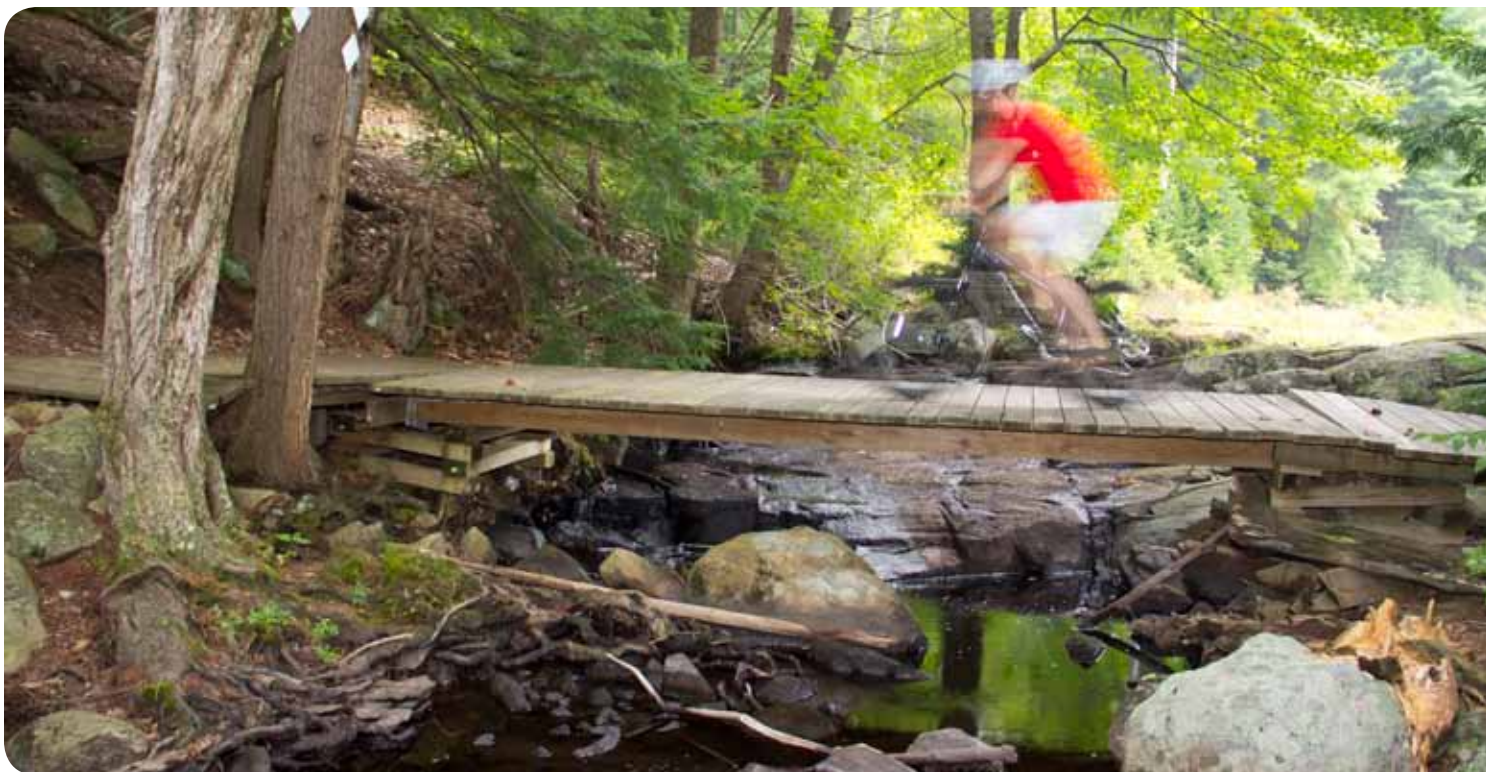
- **Projects:** Initiation and completion of trails, parks, bridges, athletic fields and land acquisition projects.
- **Education:** Educating users, potential users, and private landowners on opportunities, rights, and responsibilities with recreation lands and facilities.
- **Volunteers:** The immediate need for volunteers and concern about attracting volunteers in the future.
- **Government:** The political atmosphere, the need for legislative support and political leadership were cited. All levels of government – local, state, and federal were seen as a challenge.
- **User Conflicts:** Managing and reducing conflict with different user groups on recreation lands.

### **Making Tangible Contributions – Outdoor Recreation and Healthy Lifestyles**

While there is strong public support for outdoor recreation and well-developed strategies for effecting positive change in the health and well-being of New Hampshire citizens and visitors and protection of wildlife and natural resources, challenges still exist. Working together on targeted strategic actions, federal, state, and local agencies along with the business community and citizen advocates can achieve proactive change toward healthier citizens, visitors, communities, and the environment.



Franconia Notch State Park



Pawtuckaway State Park



## Chapter 4: Goals and Actions





Pawtuckaway State Park

The 2013-2018 New Hampshire SCORP provides the outdoor community with a proactive framework based on a strategic vision, current data, and public input and offers recommended Priorities, Goals, and Actions. This framework is offered as a guide and resource to be used frequently by diverse recreation agencies, businesses, non-profits, and communities statewide to develop collaborative projects that will provide easily accessed and safe physical connections for outdoor recreation opportunities in every corner of the state.

From within the 2013-2018 SCORP framework emerge suggested Goals and Actions to address the identified Priorities. These Goals and Actions will assist New Hampshire's outdoor recreation community adapt to the changing needs of our citizens and visitors while serving as a guide for outdoor recreation providers over the next five years. This will be accomplished by:

- Promotion of the significant connections between outdoor recreation, quality of life, public health, the environment and economic stability to encourage the development of walkable communities and active lifestyles.
- Awareness of the importance of preserving our ecosystems through knowledge and stewardship of our parks, open spaces, greenways, blueways, and pathways.

These Priorities, Goals, and Actions are intended to provide guidance for a collective path to be built within the next five years that will move New Hampshire towards a variety of active outdoor recreational opportunities and enjoyment.

Working together, outdoor recreation stakeholders in New Hampshire, including municipal, state, and federal land managers and public and private recreation providers can make New Hampshire a model for New England and the nation in outdoor recreation, service partnerships, and wildlife and natural resource protection. Goals and Actions within each of the four priority areas can be applied to Land and Water Conservation Fund criteria and tracked for performance measurement purposes.

**New Hampshire's Newest State Park** - ATV, trail bike, and snowmobile riders are discovering that some of the state's best off-road riding is at Jericho Mountain State Park, New Hampshire's newest state park located off Route 110 West in Berlin. With approximately 60 miles of scenic trails in the 7,500 acre State Park, the system provides endless loops through forest, over streams, and past Jericho Lake, with many scenic outlooks and mountaintop picnic pavilions. Park guests can also enjoy swimming, fishing, canoeing, kayaking, or picnicking at Jericho Lake.

Open to the public, but still in development, this integrated recreation complex is designed to become the off-highway recreational vehicle (OHRV) hub in the North Country. Over the next several years, more miles will be added to the trail network—towards a planned total of 136 miles—and more facilities will be added as well. Future development plans for the park include a ride-in/ride-out campground, several remote tent sites, group picnic pavilions, administrative offices with visitor welcome center and education/training facilities, and improved beach facilities.



Jericho Mountain State Park



### PRIORITY 1: CONNECTING PEOPLE TO THE OUTDOORS

**Connecting People to the Outdoors** poses several challenges and opportunities to address the distinct differences and needs identified by population, age group, health, access, and economic opportunity throughout our state and its regions.

**Goal 1.1: Understand** the potential impact on outdoor recreation needs that might occur with changes in our state's population, age, health, ethnicity, and culture.

**Action 1.1.a** Create a partnership initiative with public agencies and private organizations to perform ongoing research to track statewide and regionally identified trends in population, age, health, ethnicity, and culture; develop educated opinions on what impacts these trends may have on outdoor recreation; and provide recommendations on what and how advantages can be obtained through these trends in the context of outdoor recreation.

**Goal 1.2: Identify** what populations are underserved, how they are underserved, and where they are located.

**Action 1.2.a** Create a partnership initiative statewide and regionally that will research, define, and identify underserved populations within our state, identify their needs and opportunities for outdoor recreation, and make recommendations on how to better serve these populations.

**Goal 1.3: Create** ease of access to an electronic, one-stop information resource of comprehensive statewide recreation opportunities.

**Action 1.3.a** Fund, develop, and create a well-promoted, comprehensive, and user-friendly statewide public internet data base and mapping system that identifies multifaceted public and private outdoor recreation resources, facilities, opportunities, and access points that are statewide but also close to home. Promote and raise awareness of the associated health benefits and outcomes obtained by using the outdoor resources identified through this system.

**Goal 1.4:** Connect people to their outdoor resources through community parks, trails, greenways, and blueways.

**Action 1.4.a** Encourage public and private funding, creation and delivery of activities, programs, and services that appeal to diverse communities of age, ability, ethnicity, culture, and the underserved through easy and safe access to community programs, parks, trails, greenways, and blueways. Develop support for activities and programs by promoted awareness of the associated benefits and advantages obtained by communities and the state through a healthy population.



Clough State Park

## PRIORITY 2: CONSISTENT STEWARDSHIP AND CONSERVATION

In the public outreach sessions NH Listens, conducted by the Carsey Institute, participants strongly voiced their concern that New Hampshire residents and visitors “have a strong connection to the outdoors through their recreational activities.” They put a “high value” on having access to outdoor recreation, open space, and nature. They simply value “being outside.” New Hampshire’s bountiful natural resources are extraordinary and preserving their beauty and state of health were identified as being a Priority through consistent stewardship and conservation that will provide future generations with equal opportunity to know and experience the diversity of outdoor recreation that are present today within our communities.

**Goal 2.1: Develop** the next generations of stewardship through partnerships, environmental education, and programs particularly targeted at youth.

**Action 2.1.a** Create partnerships with existing organizations and efforts to develop or enhance programs that particularly target youth into becoming active participants of environmental stewardship through social media and programs that promote an active outdoor lifestyle and outdoor recreation.

**Goal 2.2: Manage** and preserve New Hampshire’s special places through well-constructed and collaborative statutory framework and legislation that will provide guidance and flexibility to manage the multiple-use demands of outdoor recreation.

**Action 2.2.a** Work with statewide planning agencies to develop guidelines, statutory framework, and legislative recommendations for the development of outdoor recreation infrastructure, trails, greenways, and blueways that support active outdoor recreation lifestyles.

**Goal 2.3: Conserve** New Hampshire's natural resources through joint efforts between public and private organizations with a focus on increased partnerships that promote and care for existing and future properties and landscapes.

**Action 2.3.a** Encourage Planning Boards to gather information and opinion on connectivity of trails statewide and regionally with possible development of an interactive GIS map that allows users to provide input on connectivity and access information that would be used by organizations and public and private agencies to prioritize land and water acquisitions, projects and trail improvements.

**Goal 2.4: Build** coordinated efforts with New Hampshire conservation funders and agencies to conserve and restore high quality wetland resources.

**Action 2.4.a** Assist with the conservation of wetland, wildlife, and exemplary natural communities through coordinated funding efforts with the LWCF, NH Department of Environmental Services, and NH Fish & Game Department to conserve and restore high quality wetland resources in New Hampshire.



Pillsbury State Park

### PRIORITY 3: ECONOMIC VITALITY

The health of our state and national economy has a strong influence on current and future funding for outdoor recreation grants and programs. During public outreach efforts, a broad range of participants from varied life and professional experience voiced significant concern in regard to sufficient funding for the future and how fiscal constraints will impact outdoor recreation and their outdoor experiences.

The New Hampshire Recreation and Conservation Leaders Survey, conducted by the University of New Hampshire's Cooperative Extension, revealed two key findings related to the economy: "outdoor recreation is seen as adding to the quality of life in New Hampshire and is a contributing factor in the economic health of the state; and funding outdoor recreation is the top challenge for recreation and conservation leaders." It is an important Priority to develop awareness among the New Hampshire public on the many ways outdoor recreation contributes to the economic vitality of our state.

**Goal 3.1 Cultivate** targeted and adequate funding sources for existing and future resources that are stable and reoccurring with synergies and cooperative efforts through community organizations, the business community, and government.

**Action 3.1.a** Continue to effectively manage and support relationships with federal programs related to outdoor recreation. Create a working group to identify and analyze unmet financial need for current and future outdoor recreation facilities and areas statewide, and develop recommendations on how to meet the unmet need; identify stable and reliable funding streams; and include recommendations for cooperative efforts from public, private, and business communities.



**Goal 3.2 Achieve** coordinated support for the outdoor recreation economy through public and private partnerships that promote innovative programming and outdoor recreation opportunities that are marketed to residents and visitors alike.

**Action 3.2.a** Facilitate development and support for programs and initiatives that provide electronic, one-stop information sites to residents and visitors for identification, access, and promotion of all outdoor recreation facilities and opportunities statewide, and support efforts to fully document the economic benefits of outdoor recreation regionally and statewide.

**Goal 3.3 Collaborate** with youth program organizations and communities to foster and create employment opportunities associated with stewardship and conservation of the outdoor environment.

**Action 3.3.a** Listen to and learn from the many youth program organizations and communities about the challenges and opportunities associated with connecting youth to outdoor recreation and what conversations and actions can be taken to develop and support youth employment programs.

**Goal 3.4 Engage** partnerships and dialogue with healthcare organizations and communities to explore the economic health benefits of an active outdoor lifestyle.

**Action 3.4.a** Encourage and develop partnerships with the healthcare community to promote healthy lifestyles through outdoor recreation. Using outdoor recreation as a healthcare and healing tool, these partnerships can initiate, develop, and target programs to specific populations, regions, residents, visitors, and the workforce. These efforts can influence a synergistic effect on local and state economies.

#### PRIORITY 4: EDUCATION ETHICS AND BENEFITS

The need for conversation and education on the many topics associated with recreating in the great outdoors was seen a Priority and an important component to outdoor recreation use and conservation as voiced within the statewide community and leaders conversations process. The public outreach process identified youth and parents, all recreation users, potential users, private landowners, and all levels of government as areas that should be addressed through public and private partnerships, and volunteer efforts. The opportunities associated with the education process would advance understanding of the impacts outdoor users have on the limited resources, how the different user groups can share them and the health benefits of engaging in outdoor activities. Alignment with federal agency programs such as “Let’s Move” will advance this priority.

**Goal 4.1 Strengthen** partnerships and volunteerism to combine resources, talents, and knowledge to expand education programs and services associated with the use, benefits, needs, and preservation of outdoor recreation resources and experiences.

**Action 4.1.a** Reach out to new and current audiences to convey the immediate need for the development of partnerships with existing public and private organizations, businesses, agencies, institutions, and volunteer groups to facilitate, deliver, and advance outdoor recreation and associated health benefit topics, needs, opportunities, and experiences.

**Goal 4.2 Advance** education of outdoor recreation topics and its benefits through contacts, information, and experiences directed at children and youth, user groups, providers, private property owners, and all levels of government.

**Action 4.2.a** Develop a statewide ethic through educational outdoor recreation opportunities and experiences and by constructing, providing, and supporting the content and delivery of a wide range of educational topics to outdoor recreation users, potential users, providers, private landowners, and all levels of government on the opportunities, rights, and responsibilities associated with outdoor recreation lands and facilities.

**Goal 4.3 Provide** recommendations for the use of technologies and social media to effectively communicate with and capture the interest of individuals and organizations.

**Action 4.3.a** Create a working group to identify and analyze leading-edge technologies and social media avenues that can be used and accessed regionally and statewide. The group would also provide recommended strategies on how to effectively communicate with and capture the interest of individuals and organizations affected by the benefits and challenges of providing outdoor recreation opportunities.

**Goal 4.4 Collaborate** with education professionals and institutions on the development of outdoor education programs and environmental learning opportunities for schools and communities.

**Action 4.4.a** Strengthen support and resources for organizations, plans, and programs that engage education professionals and institutions on the opportunities for use of outdoor recreation areas, facilities, parks and open landscapes, as places of learning through developed outdoor recreation and environmental literacy programs and activities within our schools.



Bear Brook State Park



Monadnock State Park



## **Chapter 5:** **Guiding Principles for Implementation**



## GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR NEW HAMPSHIRE SCORP AND LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION

### Connection to America's Great Outdoors Priorities

A 2011 National Association of Recreation Resource Planners (NARRP) report, *Reframing the Role and Relevancy of SCORP Plans for the Next 50 Years*, suggests examples of connections to America's Great Outdoors priorities (a 2011 White House Report on protecting our lands and waters and connecting all Americans to their natural and cultural heritage). These include developing urban parks and community green spaces; landscape-scale conservation; recreational blueways; children, youth, and special populations; connections of local, state and federal outdoor recreation assets; community collaboration, multi-agency cooperation; improved public access; natural and cultural resource conservation; special designations (e.g., scenic byways, heritage areas, national trails); wildlife corridors and habitat protection; linkages to healthcare, K-12 education, transportation, economic development, and tourism industries; identification of priority state and federal land acquisition needs; use of spatial analysis tools for recreation supply and gap analysis.

**America's Great Outdoors Vision Statement** - All children, regardless of where they live, have access to clean, safe outdoor places within a short walk of their homes or schools, where they can play, dream, discover, and recreate.

Americans participate in the shared responsibility to protect and care for our unique natural and cultural heritage for the use and enjoyment of future generations.

Rural lands - our working farms, ranches, and forests - are conserved and restored through incentives and local partnerships.

Our national parks, national wildlife refuges, national forests, and other public lands and waters are managed with a renewed commitment to sound stewardship and resilience.

Our natural areas and waterways, whether publicly or privately owned, are reconnected, healthy, and resilient and support both human needs and the wildlife that depend on them.

Communities work together to restore and protect healthy rivers and lakes to provide recreational opportunities and to contribute significantly to a vibrant economy.



### Funding

Support for state and federal funding for outdoor recreation land acquisition, development, rehabilitation, operations, and maintenance can be justified through accountability for implementing actions and systematic data collection demonstrating the economic, social, and environmental benefits of outdoor recreation activities, parks, and facilities.

While New Hampshire's state parks received the first system-wide capital investment in four decades of \$6 million in fiscal year 2008 from the New Hampshire State Legislature, and approximately \$16.95 million between 2008 and 2013 for improvements to Hampton Beach, North Beach Seawall, and North Hampton Beach Bathhouse, and approximately \$2.7 million for repairs to parks statewide, existing state and federal funding levels are not sufficient to address New Hampshire's long-term outdoor recreation needs. *Figure 14* shows community locations of LWCF projects in New Hampshire from 2006 to 2011 that were funded, not funded, or applications were withdrawn.



Franconia Notch State Park

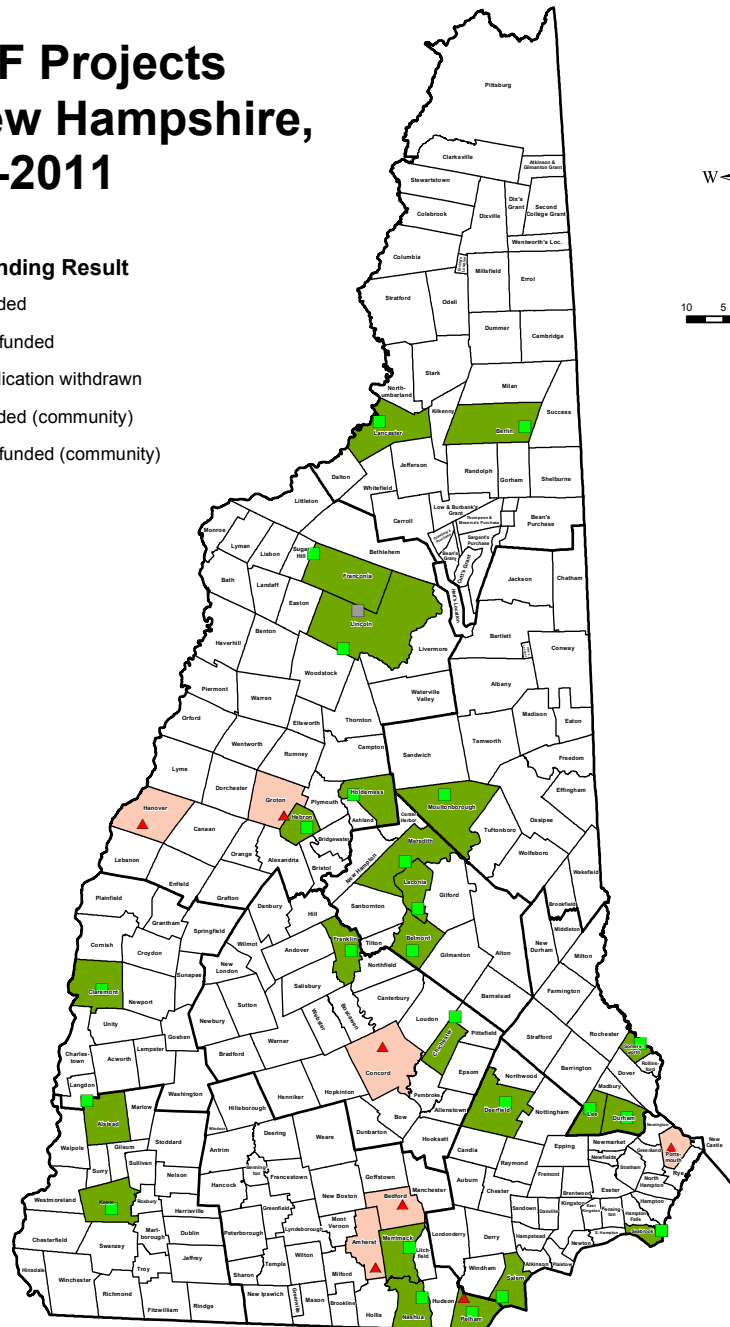
FIGURE 14:

LWCF Projects in New Hampshire, 2006-2011

# LWCF Projects in New Hampshire, 2006-2011

## Project Funding Result

- Funded
- ▲ Not funded
- Application withdrawn
- Funded (community)
- Not funded (community)



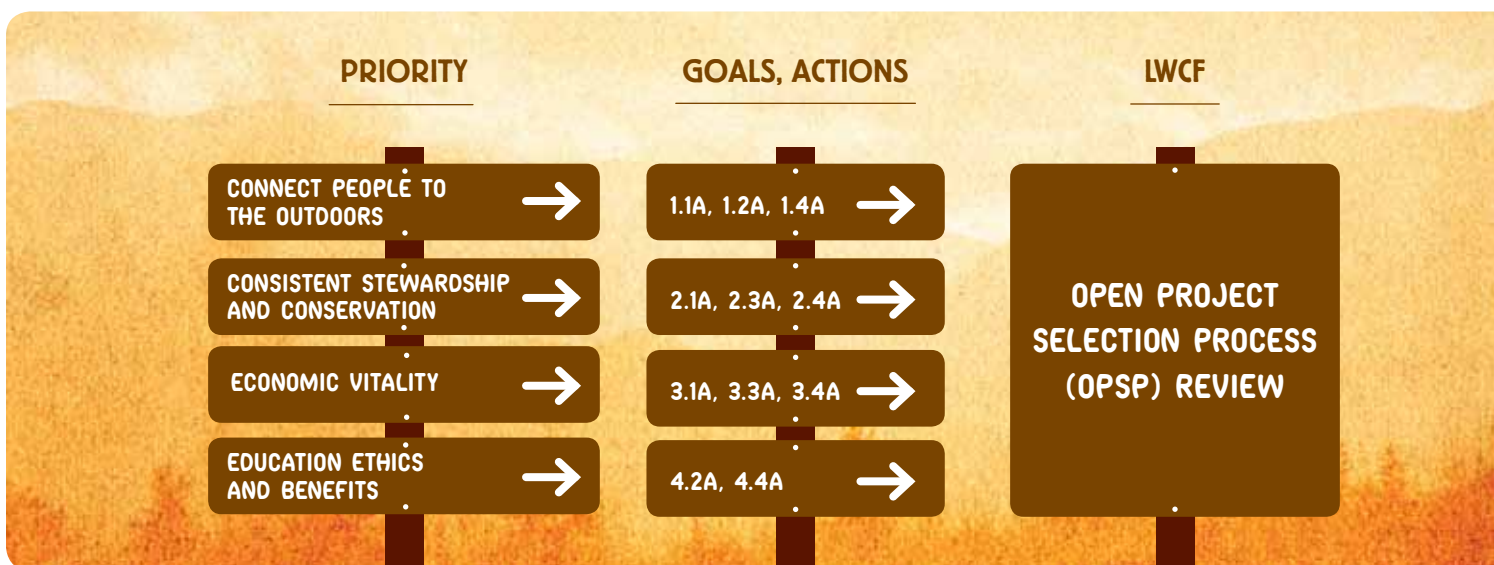
Map produced at NH Office of Energy and Planning, July 31, 2012.



### Alignment with SCORP Priorities, Goals, and Actions

The 2013-2018 SCORP must be completed for New Hampshire to be eligible for federal Land and Water Conservation Fund grant funding. The allocation of funds to communities is conducted through a statewide application process. Project applicants are required to demonstrate a link between the proposed project and the analysis of New Hampshire's outdoor recreation supply, demand, and needs contained in the SCORP and should be in alignment with the priorities (Chapter 3), goals, and actions (Chapter 4) expressed in the public involvement process.

The following priorities, goals, and actions have a direct correlation to the LWCF funding process, and will be used to develop criteria for scoring applications and ultimately making grant awards.



### Outreach to Rural Areas/Smaller Towns

The obesity epidemic and healthy aging are critical issues facing New Hampshire citizens. Smaller local projects, trail connections, fishing ponds and river access, restrooms, trailheads, and looped park trails may provide the largest community reach and provide additional opportunities for healthy and active lifestyles. State agencies can help by marketing the availability and status of the Land and Water Conservation Funds for projects, and providing technical assistance to communities in obtaining match-funding resources.



### Sustainable Communities

In 2011, a three-year \$50,000 grant made by the Healthy New Hampshire Foundation to the Nashua Regional Planning Commission (NRPC) was used to leverage a \$3.37 million Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The program encourages grantees to work together to create employment and economic opportunities by integrating housing, land-use, workforce, transportation, and infrastructure development.

### Healthy Eating Active Living

The Healthy Eating Active Living (HEAL) Campaign will provide technical assistance to the state's regional planning commissions to incorporate the recommended interventions outlined in the HEAL NH Action Plan, specifically the section addressing Communities and Municipalities. Examples of incorporating the plan's concepts of the built environment to create healthy communities include accessible sidewalks, traffic calming techniques, and safe parks. The three-year project will create a template by which the state's nine Regional Planning Commissions can identify local issues while coordinating technical expertise and public outreach. New Hampshire SCORP priorities positively align with the goals of the HUD grant initiative, creating potential for collaborative funding of parks and active transportation initiatives (trails, greenways), education programming and community outreach.



Ellacoya State Park

**Volunteers as Conservation Partners** - In 2011, Ammy Heiser of Pembroke, led the process to conserve the Hillman property, a 44-acre working farm along the Suncook River. As Chair of the Pembroke Conservation Commission, she thoroughly researched the parcel and found that its soils were of statewide agricultural importance. She then worked with the Central New Hampshire Regional Planning Commission to develop an Open Space plan, discovering in the process that the property was also of significant environmental, historical, and cultural value.

Heiser's efforts to obtain an award of a Federal Farm and Ranch Land Protection grant and raise \$300,000 in matching funds enabled the acquisition of the property and the purchase of a permanent conservation easement.

"In the end, her tenacity won out, with an overwhelming show of support at Town Meeting," said Robert S.S. Blake, Fish, and Game Commissioner for Strafford County and chair of the Commission's Awards of Excellence program. "As a result, there is permanent protection of a working farm with many other conservation values, including a significant riparian buffer on the Suncook River and public access for fishing, as well as forest, field and aquatic habitat protection."

### Technical Planning Assistance

As recommended in the National Association of Recreation Resource Planners (NARRP) report, *Reframing the Role and Relevancy of SCORP Plans for the Next 50 Years*, technical planning assistance is necessary for states and communities to fully benefit from statewide comprehensive outdoor recreation planning.

### Technical Assistance Options for SCORP Efforts

- National Park Service Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program
- USDA Cooperative Extension Service
- State and Private Forestry, U.S. Forest Service
- Professional Outsourcing



### Accountability for Implementation

A commitment to providing annual progress reports available to the public on implementing New Hampshire SCORP Priorities and Actions is essential.

### Wetlands and SCORP

Section 303 of the Federal Emergency Wetlands Act requires that the SCORP address wetlands as an important outdoor recreation resource and that protection priorities be established. The priorities established in this SCORP satisfy that requirement.

**Wetlands and Wildlife** - The correlation between wetlands preservation and wildlife conservation is important to understand. Landscape connectivity that supports critical features of wildlife migration, including foraging and colonization, help maintain ecological connectivity and wildlife diversity.

### Overview of New Hampshire's Wetlands

New Hampshire is blessed with numerous lakes, ponds, and rivers, as well as valuable groundwater. Wetlands provide a wide variety of benefits including maintaining clean water supplies, enhancing water quality, controlling floodwaters, erosion control, and providing recreation and wildlife viewing opportunities. The environmental savings related to clean water can be measured in terms of water pollution reduction, stormwater treatment cost reduction through rainfall retention. Measures to control invasive species, plant kills, and allergy blooms are important for the continued safe use and enjoyment of water based recreation and for maintaining sustainable rivers, lakes, and ponds.

With an understanding of how recreational use and the number of visitors can affect watershed resources, community planners can make responsible choices for locating recreation activities and facilities. Once a recreation site is created, long-term maintenance is essential for maintaining landscape health as well as continued user satisfaction. In some instances, volunteer maintenance may be able to pick up where public funding ends in determining resource capacity limitations. Watershed groups, whose efforts focus on education, monitoring, and rehabilitation, can also serve as a bridge between the public agencies and volunteer maintenance groups.

### Wetlands Protection

The New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services, Water Division conducts a variety of programs designed to ensure the protection of New Hampshire's waters with guidance from the New Hampshire Water Council, and the New Hampshire Wetlands Council.

Public water supplies are protected by overseeing the operation of about 125 municipal systems, 500 residential systems (condominiums, apartment buildings, and mobile home parks), and over 1,100 systems that provide water for restaurants, motels, and campgrounds. Consistent with criteria of the federal Safe Drinking Water Act, the Water Division conducts engineering reviews of all proposals to develop or expand public water supplies. Additionally, it conducts regular water quality sampling, water facility inspections, facility operator licensing and educational programs, and technical assistance. It also administers a source water protection program that includes a grant program for protecting lands surrounding water supplies.

DES protects the state's surface water through its active lakes and rivers monitoring programs and its biological and chemical analyses of rivers and water bodies. During the year, DES conducts thousands of water analyses on state waters, including those involving drinking water and industrial and municipal wastewater effluents. The Water Division also oversees lake and river volunteer monitoring programs, a public beach and swimming pool inspection program, and an acid rain monitoring program.

### New Hampshire Wetlands Inventory and Regional Data

The estimated acreage of wetlands in New Hampshire ranges between 290,000 acres, estimated from the National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and 576,386 acres, estimated from soil surveys by the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (Tiner, 2007). Accordingly, wetlands occupy between five and ten percent of New Hampshire's landscape. An analysis of aerial photography by the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services indicates that there are approximately 7,500 acres of tidal wetlands, with the vast majority of New Hampshire's wetlands being nontidal (NHDES, 2002).

*Figure 15* shows the distribution of wetlands throughout the state.

FIGURE 15:

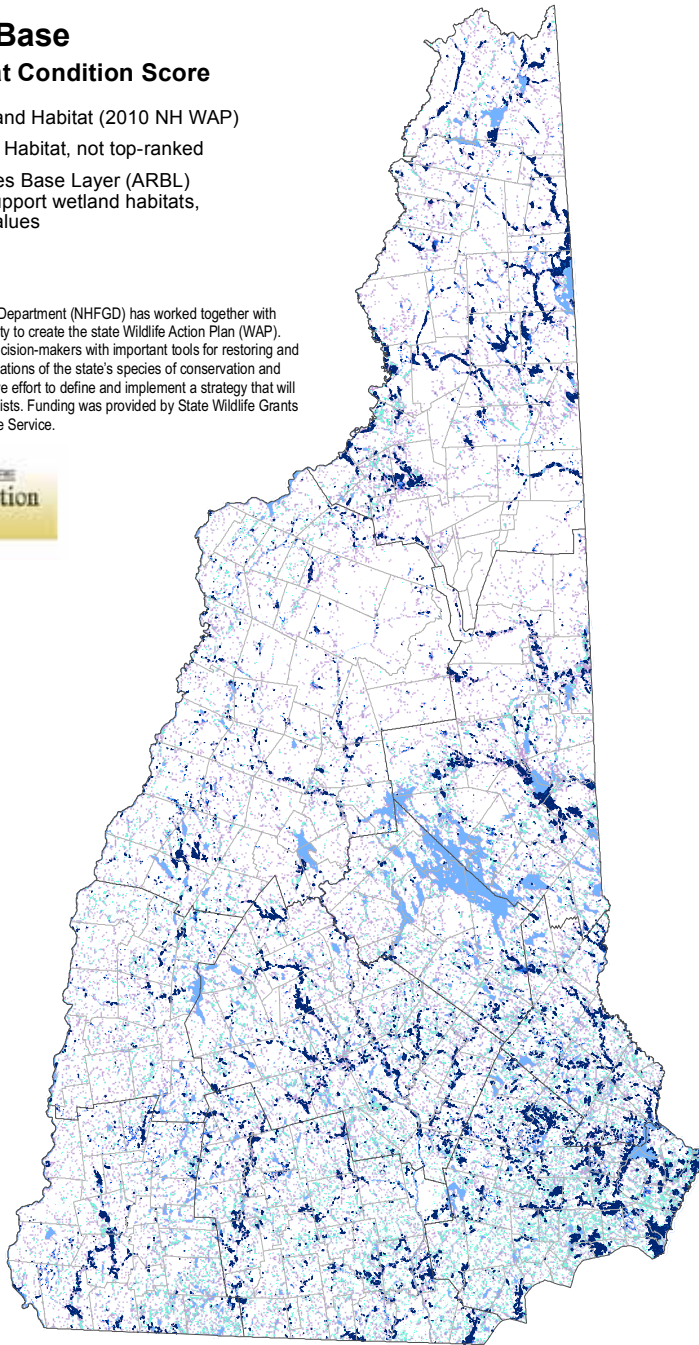
### New Hampshire's Wetlands Base

#### NH Wetlands Base

##### by Relative Habitat Condition Score

- Top-ranked Wetland Habitat (2010 NH WAP)
- Mapped Wetland Habitat, not top-ranked
- Aquatic Resources Base Layer (ARBL) areas likely to support wetland habitats, functions, and values
- Surface Water

The New Hampshire Fish and Game Department (NHFGD) has worked together with partners in the conservation community to create the state Wildlife Action Plan (WAP). The plan provides New Hampshire decision-makers with important tools for restoring and maintaining critical habitats and populations of the state's species of conservation and management concern. It is a pro-active effort to define and implement a strategy that will help keep species off of rare species lists. Funding was provided by State Wildlife Grants administered by the US Fish & Wildlife Service.



### Economics of the Loss of Wetlands

Overall, perceived degradation to water clarity and purity will result in the greatest economic loss to New Hampshire. Perceived declines in water clarity and purity would result in about \$51 million of lost sales, \$18 million in lost income, and more than 800 lost jobs statewide. Upwards of 220 acres of wetlands has been restored or enhanced, and more than 12,500 acres of upland buffers have been preserved through the Aquatic Resources Mitigation program (NH R.S.A. 482-A:28-33).

### Environmentally Based Outcomes

- Wetland complexes of high ecological function and value are afforded adequate protection.
- Blocks of unfragmented habitat are protected and/or connected to other habitats, protected land, or stream and wildlife corridors.
- Land development practices avoid and minimize cumulative and indirect impacts to wetland and aquatic resources.
- Natural stream flow regimes are maintained, and stream crossings allow aquatic resources to stay connected.

### New Hampshire's Wetland Program Plan

According to the NH Department of Environmental Services 2011-2017 Wetlands Program Plan, New Hampshire's tidal and non-tidal wetlands are of great importance for flood control, water filtration, water storage, and recharge for both groundwater and surface waters. Wetlands also support the food chain, providing food and shelter for a variety of aquatic and upland plants and animals. Although New Hampshire has lost fewer wetlands to filling and dredging than many coastal states, landscape change poses a significant challenge to the protection of New Hampshire's wetlands. Given the important functions and values of wetlands, there have been a number of attempts to place an economic value on wetlands resources. For instance, a 2006 EPA funded study estimated that the economic benefits generated by a single acre of wetland amounts to \$150,000 to \$200,000 (NACO, 2006). The same study found that wetlands increase surrounding real estate values by an estimated 28 percent while enhancing the quality of life. In 2002 a study by the Clean Water Network estimated the economic value of New Hampshire's remaining wetlands to be approximately \$1.2 billion (CWN, 2002).

Greenfield State Park

DES has identified the following “desired outcomes” related to wetland resources in the state. These outcomes are separated into environmentally based outcomes and programmatic based outcomes and are the two cornerstones that were used to guide the work to be accomplished under the Plan.

#### **Programmatic-Based Outcomes**

- Wetland permit processes will be integrated with other land resources permits.
- Wetland protection efforts will be well funded and wetland resources will be protected and maintained to provide improved ecosystem services (reduce flooding, improve water quality, provide habitat and recreation opportunities) and the economic benefits they provide.
- Development of a broad base of stewardship and public understanding of the multiple benefits of the functions and values of wetlands and aquatic resources.
- Wetland compliance and enforcement efforts are adequately funded, and actions are consistent and responsive.
- Wetland condition is assessed on a regular basis as part of NH Water Quality Monitoring Strategy and 305(b) reporting.
- Environmentally-based outcomes and measures are used for annual status and trends reporting and to influence proposed regulation, policy, and decision-making.
- Resource management decisions are based on sound science and balance competing interests.



### IMPLEMENTING THE 2013-2018 NEW HAMPSHIRE SCORP

The 2013-2018 New Hampshire SCORP provides a five year framework that will assist in addressing priority outdoor recreation issues and influences. The plan was developed and based on research of impacting trends, supply, usage patterns, and expressed demand that included the analysis of outdoor recreation issues and needs collected through the public outreach process. The plan includes priorities, goals, and supporting actions that will assist in addressing outdoor recreation issues and needs within the State of New Hampshire.

Implementation of the SCORP will require and benefit from coordinated efforts and collaboration between federal, state, and local government agencies, outdoor recreation providers, non-profit interest groups, private industry, and policy makers. The intent of this plan is to guide and prioritize recreation planning that is thoughtful in design, consistent in purpose, and coordinated in effort among the diverse outdoor recreation entities throughout the State of New Hampshire. Also important to implementation of the SCORP within the next five years will be the efforts put forth to ensure accountability in measuring success. Publicly issued annual reports will provide a benchmark of progress for the identified goals and actions within the identified priorities.



Mount Sunapee State Park

To effectively implement the priorities, goals, and actions identified in the 2013-2018 New Hampshire SCORP, improving collaboration among state agencies, cities and towns, businesses, and non-profit recreation providers throughout the state is essential. Toward this end, the following initiatives have been identified by the New Hampshire Department of Resources and Economic Development.

- Educate communities and governing bodies on the value of the SCORP and the LWCF including Select Boards, Conservation Commissions, and Planning Boards.
- Distribute the SCORP to libraries, municipalities, government officials, and legislators.
- Conduct regional outreach meetings with municipal parks and recreation agencies and local recreation leaders to discuss the LWCF program and its requirements.
- Revise grant program criteria to reflect the priorities, goals, and actions of the 2013-2018 SCORP.
- Convene a meeting with the Open Project Selection Process Committee (OPSP) to finalize project selection criteria and grant round timetable.
- Develop an implementation matrix for measurement of SCORP progress over the next five years.

As planning and progress for outdoor recreation is an ongoing effort, it will be important to continue active participation among the Office of Energy and Planning, the Department of Resources and Economic Development, the SCORP Advisory Work Group, and the Open Project Selection Process Committee to ensure its success.

The 2013-2018 New Hampshire SCORP provides guidance to accomplish goals and provides direction for local and state agencies, communities, and partners to enhance the outdoor experience for New Hampshire's residents and visitors, while supporting the state's economic vitality and natural resources.

### New Hampshire State Parks Engage Families

“We joined the Great Park Pursuit this year at the urging of a friend, but we were not prepared for what happened to us: after spending most of the last five years close to our home in Manchester we discovered what a wealth of unforgettable activities and experiences were available to us through the New Hampshire Division of Parks and Recreation! The Great Park Pursuit provided just the framework for us to take the plunge and throw ourselves into exploring the New Hampshire wilderness. Our three children (ages 5, 9, and 10) each took something memorable from the various Great Park Pursuit events and activities, and day treks are now a part of our monthly diet! Thank you, Great Park Pursuit, for inspiring us to get out and experience what a special state we live in. We can’t wait to participate again next year!”

- Team Barber Style



Odiorne Point State Park