

## **The Town of Barrington, its Conservation Commission and Natural Heritage Committee**

### **Statement of Purpose and Guiding Principles for the Acquisition of Land and Conservation Easements**

**Goals:** Through a combination of selective land purchases and the granting of conservation easements, the town of Barrington, the Barrington Conservation Commission, and its Natural Heritage Committee seek to conserve and permanently protect unique and increasingly rare parcels of undeveloped land within the town for current and future generations of Barrington residents.

**Guiding Principles:** The Selectmen, and the Conservation Commission and its Barrington Natural Heritage Committee work to identify undeveloped parcels of land whose protection and conservation are most critical to maintaining the natural heritage of the community. These critical land parcels include, for example, scenic open spaces, important wildlife areas, key water resources, and environmentally fragile areas. To that end, a wide variety of criteria are used (See Selection Criteria) to insure that each acquisition or easement will be a significant addition to public lands within the town, as well as contributing to the town's overall comprehensive commitment to land conservation and protection. A particularly important guiding principle in land acquisition using public funds is to maximize land protection achievements with the limited resources available and to leverage public monies (through grants and gifts) whenever possible

**Means for Acquiring Land Parcels and Conservation Easements:** A number of mechanisms exist for acquiring land outright or for obtaining conservation easements. They are:

- Outright donation of a parcel of land to the town by a landowner.
- Outright granting by landowner of a conservation easement.
- Purchase of a parcel at the market value using monies (a) appropriated by the town through a warrant article, (b) available through a conservation bond authorization, or (c) taken from the town's Conservation Fund.
- Purchase of a parcel of land at below market value using monies (a) appropriated by the town through a warrant article, (b) obtained through conservation bond authorization, or (c) taken from the town's Conservation Fund.
- Partial or full reimbursement for granting a conservation easement (related to the reduced land value) using monies (a) appropriated by the town through a warrant article, (b) obtained through conservation bond authorization, or (c) taken from the town's Conservation Fund