

Strategies

Each of the four main goals of the *Conservation Plan for Bremen* has specific objectives. Some objectives for one goal overlap with those of others. The overall strategies proposed by the Conservation Commission would each achieve more than one objective. For example, the first strategy, “**Identify and Protect Large Undeveloped Blocks**,” pertains to all Conservation Goals. Large blocks of undeveloped land are vital to maintaining wildlife habitat. If all the town’s land becomes fragmented, many species of wildlife, such as moose, will disappear from Bremen. Blocks of undeveloped land are also critical to protection of water resources, to provide outdoor recreation opportunities, and to maintain the town’s rural character.

1. Identify and Protect Large Undeveloped Blocks

- **Identify unfragmented blocks of land, including multiple connected parcels, of at least 125 acres, and determine which are most critical to future open space needs of the town.**
 - Add parcel size in acres to the Commission’s Bremen map.
 - Plot potential wildlife habitats and corridors, using the habitat block size chart from the Patterns of Development Task Force-Maine Environmental Priorities Project as a guide.

- **Protect critical parcels through a combination of measures such as easements, donations, and acquisitions. Work with the local land trusts to provide information for landowners of applicable properties.**
 - Commission members invite landowners having property identified as critical to wildlife habitat to an informational meeting on the importance of their properties to wildlife and how they can protect that property.
 - Conduct meeting(s) for land trust representatives, mainly Pemaquid Watershed Association (www.pemaquidwatershed.org) and Medomak Valley Land Trust (www.medomakvalley.org), to meet with landowners and explain the need to protect undeveloped land and the methods available for providing such protection.
 - Promote the federal income tax benefits available to landowners creating conservation easements. The tax benefits may be viewed on the Land Trust Alliance web site (www.lta.org) under the heading Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008.
 - Start the easement information process as soon as possible because income tax benefits resulting from land placed in a conservation easement may be reduced or eliminated after December 31, 2009.

- **Work with neighboring towns to protect even larger blocks of land.**
 - Discuss habitat issues and protection with conservation commissions, land trusts, and neighboring towns.
 - Create wildlife habitat and/or corridor with other towns on the peninsula.

2. Identify and Protect Designated High Value Wildlife Areas

- **Locate habitat areas designated as high value on the Beginning with Habitat map No. 2.**
- **Propose plans to protect the high-value areas**
 - Give maps to the Bremen Code Enforcement Officer, members of the Planning Board, and other interested Bremen officials showing designated high-value habitat areas.
 - Have the same map available for viewing by citizens in the Bremen town office.
 - Encourage the protection of high value habitat as a consideration in the building permit process.

3. Protect Water Sources

- **Maintain forested watersheds to absorb precipitation, renew ground water aquifers, and prevent nonpoint source pollution.**
 - Encourage property owners to maintain forested acreage.
 - Work with landowners and appropriate town officials to maintain the maximum amount of forested area when development occurs.
 - Enforce forest harvesting regulations requiring restocking of trees in clearcuts.
- **Reduce amount of erosion from gravel roads and driveways and other impervious surfaces in critical watershed areas.**
 - Encourage shoreland property owners to prevent erosion from gravel roads.
 - Sponsor a “Camp Road Workshop” and invite all lake front property owners to attend.
 - If erosion from gravel roads continues to pollute lakes and streams, the town should require steps to stop further runoff.
- **Encourage maintenance and installation of vegetated shoreline buffers.**
 - Work with conservation groups such as the PWA to provide education and information to shoreland owners about the importance of maintaining vegetated buffers
 - Survey shorelands from the water and make note of lots with no or inadequate vegetated buffers.
 - Provide shoreland owners, as appropriate, with a copy of the Bureau of Land & Water Quality’s Buffer Handbook and the DEP LakeSmart pamphlet.
 - Encourage lake front owners to be LakeSmart.
- **Protect lakes from invasive plants.**
 - Support PWA and other volunteer efforts to inspect all boats entering Bremen’s ponds for invasive plants.
 - Help provide information about dangers of invasive plants to the lakes.

● **Protect Water from Contamination.**

- Take immediate steps to determine what is contaminating Bremen’s shellfish beds and to correct the problems.
- Encourage all homeowners to periodically inspect septic systems to ensure they are working properly, and to have systems pumped out every 3-5 years.
- Provide information contained in the “Safe Home Program” bulletins to town residents to help maintain clean and safe well water.
- Encourage homeowners to inspect wells to ensure their water is clean and safe to drink.
- Enforce all regulations requiring separation between wells and septic systems, and require a further setback of new septic systems from bodies of water.

● **Encourage minimal residential use of fertilizers and chemicals on lawns.**

- Educate all homeowners, not just shoreland owners, about the consequences of overuse of residential fertilizers and chemicals on lawns.
- Minimize use of phosphorus to prevent algal blooms in lakes.
- Reduce use of chemical pollutants that could run off into coastal waters and affect the shellfish beds.

● **Consider Need for Future Town Water Supply.**

- Take exploratory steps to identify future town drinking water sources
- Manage and protect those sources.

4. Enhance Recreational Opportunities

● **Identify and inventory existing high-value recreational areas.**

- Provide a recreational map outlining existing recreational areas for Bremen residents
- Create a map highlighting areas of town that are appropriate for specific recreational activities for Bremen residents
- Create a map showing waterways that connect to town-owned properties and other public water access properties for Bremen residents

● **Improve fresh and saltwater access for recreational purposes**

- Provide public access to McCurdy, Webber or Pemaquid Pond through land acquisition, right-of-way or easement.
- Be aware of saltwater access opportunities for recreational purposes and work with interested landowners and land trusts to enhance access.

- **Consider ways to utilize existing town-owned properties for low impact, non-motorized recreation**
 - Establish a nature trail on town-owned property.
 - Work with conservation groups to build and maintain trails
 - Work with adjacent landowners to explore connective trail systems to town owned properties

- **Encourage landowners to keep open traditional hunting areas with an emphasis on firearms safety.**
 - Work with hunting enthusiasts, concerned residents and the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife to understand adverse impacts on wildlife populations in Bremen
 - Assist landowners in understanding the State of Maine landowner liability laws and how they can tailor their access preferences, as opposed to simply posting “No Trespassing” signs.
 - Explore conservation incentives for landowners whose properties lie within traditional hunting grounds and would otherwise restrict hunting
 - Provide a hunting map that highlights access to traditional hunting areas versus lands posted against hunting by individual property owners

- **Work directly with local land trusts, neighboring towns, conservation minded organizations and individuals.**
 - Work directly with Medomak Valley Land Trust in planning for and managing the Karl F. Berger Preserve on Bremen Long Island for Bremen residents and property owners.
 - Sponsor and encourage volunteer-based efforts in connecting river/pond and trail links.
 - Coordinate recreational opportunities with neighboring towns and land trusts.
 - Work with interested property owners in understanding the recreational value of their properties.
 - Explore ways to recognize private landowners for the important public benefit they provide by allowing others to use their land for recreational purposes.

- **Establish a Recreation Sub-committee of the Bremen Conservation Commission that would:**
 - Keep the Conservation Commission informed when it is felt that any inventoried high-value recreational areas are threatened by inadequate ordinances or modes of development.
 - Review any proposed ordinances or ordinance amendments for the same purpose. Provide input to ordinance developing process to ensure recreational opportunities are protected.
 - Encourage public awareness and participation in creating healthy lifestyles through outdoor recreation.
 - Hold public discussion groups, seminars, workshops and forums on recreational topics.
 - Be responsible for implementing recreational strategies

5. Encourage Traditional Rural Occupations

- **Provide information that will assist current and potential farmers.**
 - Educate residents on importance of maintaining farmland and agriculture in Maine, specifically in Bremen.
 - Publicize availability of information from GrowSmart Maine (www.growsmartmaine.org), Friends of Mid-Coast Maine (www.friendsmidcoast.org), the Maine Farmland Trust (www.maineFarmland.org), and the Maine Department of Agriculture (www.state.me.us/agriculture/mpd/farmland/) on ways to maintain Maine farmland.
 - Provide information on Maine Farmland Trust programs that help preserve farmland, put preserved farmland to better use, and link farmland owners with prospective farmers.

- **Provide information to assist Working Waterfront property owners.**
 - Publicize new tax law which allows working waterfront property to be valued for its worth as working waterfront land and not what its market value would be if the property could be converted to other uses.
(www.maine.gov/revenue/forms/property/pubs/workingwaterQ&A.htm).
 - Provide information on Department of Marine Resources Working Waterfront Access Pilot Program (www.wvapp.org).
 - Work with the Harbor Committee to sponsor an information session for working waterfront owners and commercial fishermen on the tax and access programs.

- **Ensure residents can continue to make agricultural use of their land, including timber harvesting, crop growing and livestock grazing; that fishermen can store boats, traps and other gear beside their homes; and farmers, artists, craftspeople and other residents can provide services or sell products from their homes or yards.**
 - Bring to attention of the Ordinance Review Committee any part of an existing town ordinance that would prevent any of the above.
 - Review any proposed new ordinances or ordinance amendments for the same purpose.

6. Manage Town Conservation Account

- **Establish criteria for use of town Conservation Account to acquire land, easements, and rights-of-way to maintain open space for Bremen's future.**
 - Invite interested residents to join with Conservation Commission to develop criteria.
 - Work with Selectmen and other town committees to determine priorities for use of Conservation Account.

- **Seek sources of additional funding for Conservation Account, such as matching grants and donations.**
 - Make potential donors aware of fund's existence.
 - Research available grants.

- Work with Planning Board to suggest situations when a payment into the fund by a subdivision developer might be more appropriate than dedication of open space acreage.
- Put percentage of fines imposed for abuse of Shoreland Zoning, Subdivision and other Land Use Ordinances and state regulations in Conservation Account.

7. Promote Education & Participation

- Provide conservation-minded educational programs to encourage conservation awareness.
- Encourage year-round and seasonal residents to participate in conservation planning.
- Share ideas to satisfy the stated strategies listed above.