Manchester

**NATURAL RESOURCES**

*State’s Goal: Protect the State’s critical natural resources, including without limitation wetlands, wildlife and fisheries habitat, Sand dunes, shorelands, scenic vistas, and unique natural areas.*

**PRINCIPLE ISSUES** (in Plan not included here}

**POLICIES**

A. To conserve critical natural resources in the community, using non-regulatory mechanisms wherever practicable.

B. To conserve high-value natural areas in the community, primarily using non-regulatory mechanisms wherever practicable.

C. To coordinate with neighboring communities and regional and state resource agencies to protect shared critical natural resources.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES**

1) Designate and protect as Critical Rural Areas in the Land Use Plan the current Resource Protection District, Aquifer Management Overlay District and critical natural areas mapped and identified by the Beginning with Habitat program. *Land Use Ordinance Review, Short term*

**2) Utilize GIS mapping to better define boundaries of areas deemed “critical natural areas” (resource protection zones) and “high value natural areas” (as defined by 2004 Open Space Plan). *Code Enforcement Officer, Conservation Commission, Short term***

**3) Inform landowners of presence of critical natural resources and potential means of protection and enhancement. *Conservation Commission, Mid term***

**4) Protect land in high value natural areas identified in 2004 Open Space Plan primarily through purchase of land or easements from willing sellers. Pursue public/private purchase options including but not limited to collaboration with Kennebec Land Trust. *Board of Selectmen, Conservation Commission, ongoing.***

**5) Promote and establish connections between High Value Natural Areas identified in 2004 Open Space Plan through greenways, trails, and wildlife travel corridors including links with village neighborhoods. *Conservation Commission, Mid term***

**6) As part of the planned Capital Investment Plan for the town, designate 100% of revenue from timber harvesting on town-owned land to be utilized for open-space preservation or enhancement, such as seed money or matching funds for the acquisition, protection or stewardship of important natural resources or High Value Natural Areas identified in 2004 Open Space Plan. *Board of Selectmen, Conservation Commission, Short term.***

7) Maintain or strengthen current Land Use Ordinance standards that protect critical natural resources including but not limited to open space subdivision provisions and buffering/screening provisions. *Land Use Ordinance Review, Short term*

8) Maintain current shoreland zone districts, setbacks, and other provisions regardless of potential future changes in state law or rules. *Planning Board, ongoing*

**9) Notify Conservation Commissions of proposed development in shoreland zones, in or near High Value Natural Areas identified in the 2004 Open Space Plan. Email agendas and relevant application details to Conservation Commission chair at least 4 days prior to meeting when project will be discussed or considered. *Provisions to be included in Land Use Ordinance Review, Year 1. Implemented by Planning Board Secretary, Short term***

**10) Allow Conservation Commission and applicable state agencies to offer review comments on development proposals and provide a copy of site plans and other supporting documents upon request. *Planning Board, CEO, Short term***

11) Incorporate into site plan review process consideration of impacts on critical natural resources by review of maps and information provided by State Beginning with Habitat program, High Value Natural and Scenic Resource Areas Maps from 2004 Open Space Plan, and 1992 Visual Resource Inventory and Evaluation. Applicants should seek alternatives as necessary. *Land Use Ordinance Review, Short term*

12) Request MDIFW written comments when a portion of a major development is within a High Value Plant and Animal Habitat Area as indicated on State Beginning with Habitat map to minimize negative impacts on these habitats. *Land Use Ordinance Review, Short term1*

**13) Research available dark-sky lighting standards for the Land Use Ordinance, to further minimize night glare from nonresidential development and land use activities. *Conservation Commission, Short term***

**14) Inventory vernal pools in Manchester and submit results to DEP for review of status, for interested landowners. *Conservation Commission, Mid term***

**15) Explore options of providing financial incentives to landowners who allow public use of their open space. *Conservation Commission, Town Assessor, Board of Selectmen. Mid term***

**16) Initiate and/or participate in interlocal and/or regional planning, management or regulatory efforts around shared critical resources including but not limited to collaboration with Kennebec Land Trust and other trusts when applicable. *Conservation Commission, Board of Selectmen, Mid term***

17) Maintain planning board capacity in shoreland zoning by having planning board members attending DEP workshops, training and other avenues. *Planning Board, ongoing.*

18) Compare Manchester’s ordinances for natural resource protection practices and standards for construction and maintenance of public roads and properties to those of the 2008 Maine Department of Transportation Best Management Practices for Erosion and Sedimentation Control and update to meet standards of best practice as necessary. *Road Committee, Town Manager, Land Use Ordinance Review, Short term*