

**Town of Gardiner
Open Space Priority Area Rating Criteria
April 14, 2006**

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For use in initial rating and prioritization of parcels for open space conservation. These rating criteria may be modified after initial application. These rating criteria should be supplemented with analysis of on-site resources for further evaluation of local (site-specific) priorities.

Of note: at the time of development of these rating criteria, digitized soil data were not yet available. Local agricultural priorities should be further evaluated on a case-by-case basis using county soil surveys until data are available.

Tier 1: Resource Evaluation

1. Natural Systems

A. Ecological Function

Habitat: Unique and High-Quality Habitat (per habitat mapping and consultation with resource specialists)

- Dwarf Pine Ridge and 1,500' buffer (3)
- Cliff and Talus (3)
 - 1,000' buffer (2)
- Pitch pine-oak-heath rocky summit > 100 acres (3)
- Chestnut Forest > 1,000 acres (3)
- All Forest > 100 acres (2)
- Floodplain Forest (3)
- Calcareous Wet Meadow (3)
- Open Fields and Meadows > 100 acres (2)
- Forest, Successional, and Fields/Meadows < 100 acres (1)

Species and Communities: Rare, threatened and endangered species and natural communities occurrence (per DEC data) (3)

Note: data are confidential but will be evaluated in the rating process

Includes:

- Endangered or Threatened under Endangered Species Act (Federal)
- Endangered, Threatened, Rare, Special Concern under NYS Environmental Conservation law
- NYS Natural Heritage Program listings for species and natural communities

Important Bird Area (3)

- Four Winds Farm – upland meadows (locally important)
- Grasslands between Shawangunk Kill and Wallkill (Galeville Grasslands/Shawangunk National Wildlife Refuge: designated Audubon IBA)
- Shawangunk Ridge (Northern Shawangunk Ridge: designated Audubon IBA)

B. Water Resources

Major River (3)

- Wallkill and Shawangunk Kill (within 535 foot buffer)

Minor River (2)

- Coxing Kill, Kleine Kill, Mara Kill, Palmaghatt Kill, Platte Kill (within 330 foot buffer)

Tributary / Perennial Streams (1)

- Unnamed, throughout town (within 100 foot buffer)

Lakes and Ponds

- Lake (100' buffer) (3)
- Ponds or other palustrine/aquatic areas excluding wetlands (100' buffer) (2)

Wetlands (3)

- NWI, DEC and other mapped wetlands (300' buffer)
- Vernal Pools (500' buffer)

Floodplain (3)

- FEMA 100-year floodplain

Aquifer Recharge Areas

- Primary Recharge Area (3)
- Population Center Recharge Area (2)
- Seasonal Recharge Area (1)

C. Steep Slopes and Hillsides East of Break in Slope

- Slope 8-15% (1)
- Slope 15-25% (2)
- Slope >25% (3)

2. Agricultural Landscapes

- Agricultural Land Use (1)
- Agricultural District (1)
- Farm Size and Farmland Core (ownership data)
 - 100 – 200 acres (1)

- 200 – 400 acres (2)
- > 400 acres (3)
- Community ties and/or visibility (CSA, farm stand, or similar) (1)
 - All-Season Farm Stand: Wright, Tantillo, Dressel, Jenkins-Luekens
 - Wine trail (contiguity)
 - CSA: Phillies Bridge

3. Cultural Resources and Aesthetics (criteria to be refined as additional data are available).

A. Scenic Resources

Scenic Views and Roadways

- Shawangunk Ridge (3)
- Scenic Roadway:

Class I Roads (1000' buffer) (3):

- Co RT 7- from Brunswick Rd., south town border to Rt. 44-55. The “Beef Belt”
- Mckinstry Rd. from Co Rt. 7 to Burnt Meadow Rd.
- Shaft Rd.
- Albany Post Rd. (Co Rt. 9), from Gardiner Town Houses to Co Rt. 7.
- Marabac Rd.
- Sand Hill Rd.
- Phillies Bridge Rd.
- Rt. 44-55 from Walkill Bridge to western town line.
- Clove Rd.
- Guilford Rd- Vista Point to Rt. 44-55.

Class 2 Roads (500' buffer) (2):

- Rt. 208- south border north to Wrights farm stand.
- Burnt Meadow- south boundary to Stella Dr.
- Rt. 208- Mountain View Rd to north boundary.
- Rt. 299- eastern town boundary to RT 44-55
- Hasbrook Rd.
- Guilford Schoolhouse Rd.
- Rt. 32- south to north border
- North and south Mt. Road
- Co Rt. 7- Rt. 44-55 to north boundary

Class 3 Roads (250' buffer) (1):

- Forest Glen Rd.
- Crispell Lane
- Old Ford Rd

- Tuthill Town Rd.

B. Historic, Recreational Cultural Resources (3 each)

- National Register Historic District
- Historic Building
- Within/adjacent to Hamlet Boundary
- Major River Corridor (serves as Greenway/Blueway opportunity) (Wallkill and Shawangunk)
- Wine Trail
- Rail Trail
- Major Recreational Gateway- Trapps Gateway
- Cliff and Talus Area

Tier 2: Parcel-Specific Criteria *For evaluation on a project-by-project basis*

1. Additional Resource Rating Criteria

Natural Systems:

- Connectivity: Parcel provides for connectivity through wildlife corridors or “stepping stones”

Major wildlife corridors (3):

- Trapps Pass Wildlife Corridor
- Ridge to Shawangunk Kill via Palmaghatt Kill
- Ridge to Shawangunk Kill via Heddon's Lake

Minor corridors or stepping stones (2)

- Diversity: Parcel provides diverse habitat for wildlife (for example, streams and wetlands with adjacent upland habitat) (3)
- Large habitat patches:
 - Quality habitat on parcel greater than 130 acres (3)
 - Quality habitat on parcel greater than 60 acres (2)
 - Quality habitat on parcel greater than 30 acres (1)
- Parcel hosts rare, fragile or other significant vegetation (3)
- Integrity:
 - Parcel is undisturbed (no development) (3)
 - Parcel is relatively undisturbed (less than 5% impervious cover) (2)
 - Parcel is somewhat undisturbed (less than 15% impervious cover) (1)

Agricultural Landscapes:

- Soils:
 - 80 % or more prime farmland soils or soils of statewide importance (3)
 - 60 % or more prime farmland soils or soils of statewide importance (2)
 - 50% or more prime farmland soils or soils of statewide importance (1)

2. Project Viability and Community Support

Landowner Readiness (choose one):

- Landowner offers donation or bargain sale of property/easement for conservation (3)
- Landowner signs letter of intent to conserve property for open space conservation (2)
- Landowner documents high interest in open space conservation for property (1)

Project Readiness:

- Grant funding opportunity immediately available for project (3)
- Conservation value of property is in threat of being lost (development pressure) (3)
- Strong expression of community support for project (3)
- Project sponsored by partner conservation organization (e.g., land trust) (3)

Project Significance

- Parcel provides multiple resource benefits (natural systems, agricultural, scenic/cultural)(3)
 - Parcel is adjacent to or expands existing open space/conservation area (3)
 - Parcel/project identified for conservation in state or regional plan (3)
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State Open Space Plan (Draft 2005 plan) priority areas:

- Northern Shawangunk Mountains (Highest Priority: Palmaghatt Ravine-Millbrook-Baynards near Trapps Escarpment)
- Shawangunk National Wildlife Refuge (Galeville Grasslands) “Opportunities to conserve additional lands in this area should be pursued”
- Shawangunk Mountains Scenic Byway
- Turtle conservation sites -wetlands and associated uplands (Wallkill River identified for important concentration)
- Hudson River Tributaries (sites which “protect and provide access to”)
- Hudson Valley Farmland

Regional Plans/Studies:

- Shawangunk Mountains Scenic Byway
- Wallkill River Watershed Management Plan (in progress)
- Ulster County Farmland Protection Plan
- Ulster County Open Space Plan (in progress)

Community Connections and Values

- Project would allow for new/expanded trail connections (3)
- Provides for “hamlet greenway” opportunities (3)

- Provides for Greenway/Blueway opportunities on Shawangunk and or Wallkill (3)
- Potential for other active or passive recreation use of parcel (3)
- Property provides agricultural/environmental/cultural/historical education opportunities (3)
- Provides economic development opportunities (eg. agritourism, etc.) (3)