

Open Space Acquisition Criteria

- 1. Water supply protection:** Parcels in the aquifer or watershed area that supplies the main well field at the end of Pumping Station Lane.
- 2. Maintain surface water quality:** Open Space can help filter pollutants from pollution discharges. This area of a parcel is incompatible with parks and recreation.
- 3. Wetlands:** The limit of these areas is determined in the field. Maps may exist for the particular parcel in the Town house at the Conservation Commission office.
- 4. Saltmarsh:** These areas are easily field identified and usually designated on the Wetland Conservancy maps at the Conservation Commission office.
- 5. Endangered species (flora & fauna):** Roseate terns, Piping Plovers, diamond-backed terrapins and spotted salamanders, to name a few, are known to occur in Marion. This information should be based on actual sightings, as the Natural Heritage Program maps are very general.
- 6. Significant wildlife habitat:** Includes vernal pools, areas for overwintering, nesting and feeding. These can be wooded, shrub, meadows, or a combination. Habitat areas need to be a certain size, and location is important.
- 7. Adjacent to wetlands:** How much of a buffer (lateral protection) to the wetlands is provided by this purchase?
- 8. Adjacent to Saltmarsh:** How much of a buffer (lateral protection) to the wetlands is provided by this purchase?
- 9. Adjacent to river/stream/pond:** The greater the amount of river front, the greater the protection. This does not apply to every little intermittent stream. Includes: Sippican River, Hales Brook, Doggett's Brook, Benson's Brook, and Aucoot Creek. In deciding if a creek is big enough, look at the USGS map. If it is on the map (Marion or Onset quadrangle) then count it here.
- 10. Creates contiguous corridor:** Tying all the pieces together benefits wildlife and trails.
- 11. Open space gain:** If the town buys a piece of property that has a conservation restriction has it made an open space gain? How about a piece that is ready for development with all permits in place? There would be very little gain from acquiring land with wetland restrictions (most of the saltmarsh in town), private deed restrictions, or publicly held conservation restrictions.
- 12. Shore access:** This category includes shellfish area access or boat launching ramps.
- 13. Along coastline:** Does not include shore access (separate category).
- 14. Woodland for trails:** Large enough to have walking/horse/mountain bike trails.
- 15. Strategically placed for quality of life:** This includes pocket parks (such as Bicentennial Park) and other areas in the midst of built-up and crowded areas. This grouping includes purchases that are essential for the maintenance of the town character. Sites not visible from the town roads are generally not part of this category.
- 16. Sandy beaches:** Beach property.
- 17. Financial - cost vs. impact on taxes:** This is a cost/benefit in purely financial terms. What does the property cost? What are the lost taxes if purchased, and what are the avoided services? (This is performed using information from the Finance Committee on the per house cost of services, and assuming 0.5 students per household.) This would always apply to any land that could be developed commercially or for residential purposes.
- 18. Farmland:** When purchased as farmland, will future use comply with the reason it's being

bought? Will farming practices that occur on the parcel be compatible with sustainable land stewardship by using practices that prevent erosion and pollution? In almost all cases, this category will only apply to Conservation Restrictions.

19. Bordering SLT or town open space: This applies to parcels that are adjacent to Sippican Lands Trust, Recreation Committee, Water Department, or Conservation Commission land.

20. Size: Lots of acreage is the factor here.

21. Frontage on town road: The more frontage, the more attractive the land is from an aesthetic viewpoint.

22. Accessibility: Can you get to it? Accessibility to as many people as possible is important to people who want to use their open space.

23. Educational potential: A variety of habitat characteristics is important here.

24. Acreage scattered all over/not in one place: Everyone wants to be near open space. If there are not any open space parcels in the area, score points here.

25. Expansion of existing recreational area: Areas adjacent to Washburn Park, etc.

26. Possibility for recreational area: If Marion's population doubles in size in the next twenty years, a new Washburn Park, new basketball courts, and new tennis courts will be needed. We can secure these locations now and build these facilities as we need them.

27. Curb appeal: Attractive road frontage.

28. Adjacent to historical site: Check with the Historical Society for a list of historical sites.

29. Community garden location: People like to garden together. Would they go there?

Open Space Criteria Ranking

Rank	Criteria	Importance/Points
1	Water supply protection	5.0
2	Maintain surface water quality	4.4
3	Wetlands	4.2
4	Saltmarsh	4.0
4	Endangered species (flora & fauna)	4.0
6	Significant wildlife habitat	3.9
6	Adjacent to wetlands	3.9
8	Adjacent to saltmarsh	3.7
9	Adjacent to river/stream/pond	3.0
10	Creates contiguous corridor	2.9
11	Open space gain	2.8
12	Shore access	2.7
13	Along coastline	2.5
14	Strategically placed for quality of life	2.3
14	Woodland for trails	2.3
16	Financial - cost vs. impact on taxes	2.2
16	Sandy beaches	2.2
18	Farmland	2.1
18	Bordering SLT of town open space	2.1
20	Size	1.8
21	Frontage on town road	1.5
21	Accessibility	1.5
23	Educational potential	1.4
23	Acreage scattered all over/not in one place	1.4
25	Curb appeal	1.3
25	Expansion of existing recreational area	1.3
25	Possibility for recreational area	1.3
28	Adjacent to historic site	1.0
28	Community garden location	1.0