

### **Why an open space committee?**

Beginning with the community profile in 1999 and continuing on with the master plan written in 2000, the people of Mont Vernon have consistently expressed a desire to maintain the rural character of their town.

At the March 2003 town meeting, the town voted to form an Open Space committee “to study the appropriation of funding and designation of open spaces to protect the natural resources of the town of Mont Vernon.”

### **Summary\* of subjects addressed by the Open Space committee:**

- 1. Defined Open Space:** Land not developed or substantially altered by human activity and has important natural, historic, ecological, cultural or recreational resources. Open Space can include forests, farmland, fields, bodies of water, and wetlands and may also encompass scenic vistas, town forests, and recreational areas.
- 2. Identified the Benefits of Open Space as:**
  - ✓ Enhancing the quality of life by providing clean water and air. Providing areas for recreation. Protecting scenic vistas and wildlife sanctuaries.
  - ✓ Supporting both agricultural and forest production and fish and game management.
  - ✓ Reducing the financial burden on taxpayers.
  - ✓ Protecting Mont Vernon’s natural resources as listed in the Master Plan.
- 3. Concluded:** The Cost of Community Services studies conducted in Mont Vernon and other New Hampshire towns have unequivocally confirmed that tax increases are directly linked to residential development. Therefore, the purchase of land for open space yields not only the intangible benefits associated with a ***high quality of life***, but also insures ***fiscal responsibility*** as well as sound land management practices.

**Residential development = higher taxes**

**Open space = lower taxes and higher property values**

Recommendations for funding open space:

- ✓ **The passage of a bond enabling the town to purchase land in a timely and expeditious manner.**
- ✓ **Appropriating 100% of the Land Use Change Tax to the Conservation Commission for purchases of open space.** 🌈

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\* The entire report will be posted on the Town’s website (<http://town.mont-vernon.nh.us>) and be available at the Daland Library.