

DOUGLAS RECONNAISSANCE REPORT

BLACKSTONE VALLEY / QUINEBAUG-SHETUCKET LANDSCAPE INVENTORY

MASSACHUSETTS HERITAGE LANDSCAPE INVENTORY PROGRAM



Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation
John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor
Quinebaug and Shetucket Rivers Valley National Heritage Corridor

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Cover Photographs: South Douglas Cemetery
Stone Arch Bridge, Wallum Lake Road
Hunt's Pond Spillway

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INTRODUCTION

The 22 Massachusetts communities within the John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor and the Quinebaug-Shetucket Rivers Valley National Heritage Corridor are linked by a common heritage of agriculture and industry powered by the rivers and streams that dominate the landscape of south central Massachusetts. River Corridor towns extend from Mendon on the east to Brimfield on the west. While they range in size from the city of Worcester to the compact town of Hopedale, each is equally shaped by the interaction of nature and culture over time.

Heritage landscapes are special places created by human interaction with the natural environment that help define the character of a community and reflect its past. They are dynamic and evolving; they reflect the history of a community and provide a sense of place; they show the natural ecology that influenced land use patterns; and they often have scenic qualities. This wealth of landscapes is central to each community's character, yet heritage landscapes are vulnerable and ever changing. For this reason it is important to take the first step toward their preservation by identifying those landscapes that are particularly valued by the community – a favorite local farm, a distinctive neighborhood or mill village, a unique natural feature or an important river corridor.

To this end, the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) and the two National Heritage Corridors (BRV and Q-S) have collaborated to bring the Heritage Landscape Inventory program to communities in south central Massachusetts. The primary goal of the program is to help communities identify a wide range of landscape resources, particularly those that are significant and unprotected. One focus is to identify landscapes that have not been previously surveyed or documented. Another important goal of the program is to provide communities with strategies for preserving heritage landscapes. The goals of the program are to help communities identify a wide range of landscape resources, particularly those that are significant and unprotected, and to provide communities with strategies for preserving heritage landscapes.

The methodology for the Heritage Landscape Inventory program was developed in a pilot project conducted in southeast Massachusetts and refined in Essex County. It is outlined in the DCR publication *Reading the Land*, which has provided guidance for the program since its inception. In summary, each participating community appoints a Local Project Coordinator (LPC) to assist the DCR-BRV/Q-S consulting team. The LPC organizes a heritage landscape identification meeting during which residents and town officials identify the landscapes that embody the community's character and its history. This meeting is followed by a fieldwork session including the consulting team and the LPC, accompanied by interested community members. This group visits the priority landscapes identified in the meeting and gathers information about the community.

The final product for each community is this Reconnaissance Report. It outlines the community's landscape history; discusses broader land planning issues identified by the community; describes the priority heritage landscapes and issues associated with them; and concludes with preservation recommendations. Two appendices include a list of all of the heritage landscapes identified at the community meeting and a reference listing of land protection tools and procedures.



PART I

DOUGLAS'S HERITAGE LANDSCAPES



DOUGLAS'S LANDSCAPE THROUGH TIME

Douglas's uneven, hilly terrain lies at the eastern edge of the Worcester County uplands. Its western elevation of over 900' drops toward the east to below 500'. In the eastern section of town, gently sloping hills are composed of glacial till topped with sandy loam. The western section, early referred to as the *Douglas Rocky Woods*, is characterized by steep hills and stony soil. Although Douglas's town seal juxtaposes images of an agricultural plow with a timber ax, much of the town was not arable land, but it had dense forests as well as large granite outcrops that yielded building stone for local and commercial use. The Mumford River rises in Badluck Pond and flows through Manchaug and East Douglas, eventually joining the Blackstone. The town as a whole is part of the Blackstone drainage basin, with the exception of the southwest corner where Rocky Brook flows to the Thames River. There are four major ponds: Wallum, Wallis Manchaug and Badluck Ponds; as well as Whitins Reservoir, and a number of smaller mill ponds.

The area that is now Douglas lay between two precontact-era base camps which later became sites of Christian "praying" towns, Waentug in the east and Chaubunagungamaug on the west. Between these two settlements, Nipmuc bands were likely to have had seasonal hunting and fishing camps, with probable sites on the pond shores and along the Mumford River. A rock shelter has been identified in Douglas State Forest.

First called New Sherbourne by English colonists, most of Douglas came under colonial jurisdiction as a grant to Sherborn in compensation for their loss of land to Framingham in the early 18th century. By that time, much of the area had been burned over by Oxford and Mendon settlers to provide grazing for cattle. Early settlement took the form of dispersed farms on the town's more fertile land to the east and south but the pace of land clearing was slow. The town's first commercial products were indicative of the rough, wooded terrain in western Douglas: cedar shingles and hoops, barrel staves and lumber.

In the Federal Period (1775-1830), a small center grew up on the centrally-located hillside by the meetinghouse. At the same time East Douglas began to develop as an industrial village, with the establishment of an axe factory (ca. 1790) and a fulling mill (1806) on the upper Mumford River. These were followed by carding and woolen manufactories and associated worker housing. In the early 1800s, three turnpikes crossed the town. The Boston and New York Railroad came to Douglas in 1854. The town's rural environment, combined with its accessibility, encouraged summer residents and visitors, such as those who came to the Douglas Camp Meeting Ground (1880).

The town's major employer, the Douglas Axe Mfg. Co. continued to flourish into the early 1900s. The company, however, weakened by strikes, several fires and the invention of the crosscut saw, merged with another firm and moved to Pennsylvania, leaving its economic place only partially filled by two subsequent woolen mills. The 20th century also saw Douglas's agricultural base decline and many of its open fields reverting to woodland. At the same time, Douglas's rough landscape has proved an attractive environment for vacationers – witness the development of cottage colonies on Wallum Pond and Whitins Reservoir, and the establishment of Douglas State Forest for the purpose of recreation, as well as conservation.

More recently, the pace of development has stepped up again, intensified by the recently completed improvements to Route 146.

COMMUNITY-WIDE HERITAGE LANDSCAPE ISSUES

Douglas is facing a number of issues that are threatening the preservation of its rural character and historic resources. Important tools that the town has put into place to respond to these threats, as well as additional measures that can be pursued, are laid out in Part II of this report.

Concern for heritage landscapes is not new to Douglas. The town's 1998 Master Plan detailed the landscapes and structures that give Douglas its special character and reflect its agricultural and industrial roots. An earlier 1994 planning effort by the University of Massachusetts also explored the issues and strategies for preserving the defining rural qualities and historical features of the town.

Douglas's Heritage Landscape Identification meeting, attended by interested residents including many representing town boards and local non-profit organizations, was held on January 25, 2007. During the meeting, residents compiled a lengthy list of the town's heritage landscapes, which is included as Appendix A of this report. As the comprehensive list was being created, attendees were asked to articulate the value of each landscape and identify issues relating to its preservation.

Residents emphasized broad issues related to heritage landscapes and community character. These issues are town-wide concerns that are linked to a range or category of heritage landscapes, not just to a single place. In Douglas, several issues stand out. The overarching threat identified is the pace of development, intensified by the Route 146 connection to the Mass Pike, and how to respond to it.

Agricultural Land

Loss of farmland is a major concern for Douglas. As of the 1998 Open Space Plan there were a total of 411 acres of farmland under Chapter 61A, the majority of which were classified as "productive woodlands and trees." While Chapter 61A is a good incentive for owners of agricultural land, this does not provide a permanent level of protection and Douglas has seen acres of farmland lost to development. Multiple approaches to farmland preservation need to be called upon, which are laid out in Part II of this report.

Open Space Protection

The need to protect open space for visual, environmental and recreational values is clearly felt in Douglas. Efforts have been made to improve the town's capacity to acquire open space and assist private owners in placing protective restrictions on their land. The Conservation Commission has been proactive in preserving open space and rural character. It is important to think strategically about key parcels and the connection of land as open space and wildlife corridors when pursuing protection objectives.

Public Access to Riverfront

The Mumford River has played a central role in the development of Douglas, yet there is only one area of publicly owned land that abuts the river, by Soldier's (Mechanics) Field. For many years, the town has had as a stated goal development of a greenway along the river for public enjoyment of the resource. The limited time and attention of volunteer boards, however, has meant that there has not been much progress toward realizing this vision. One goal of the present inventory project is to provide support for renewal of that effort.

PRIORITY HERITAGE LANDSCAPES

Based on information gathered at the community meeting, attendees identified a group of priority landscapes for the consulting team to focus on, through field survey, documentation and planning assessment. Each of the priority landscapes is highly valued and contributes to community character. None of them has any permanent form of protection.

Douglas's priority landscapes range from the remarkable, hidden remnants of a former farm to the regionally important Southern New England Trunkline Trail. Cemeteries tell the story of Douglas's past and its distinctive neighborhoods, while sites of factories and mills echo Douglas's historic reliance on water-powered industry.

The landscapes which were given priority status by Douglas's community meeting represent a range of scales and types of resources. Each landscape is also representative of other, similar properties in the town and each demonstrates the multiple layers of significance that are common to most heritage landscapes.

Natural and cultural features, individual and civic histories, combine to present property owners and concerned citizens with a complex combination of present-day issues and opportunities. The descriptions and recommendations that follow are intended to be first steps and constructive examples for what needs to be an ongoing process: to identify what is valued and irreplaceable in the community, and develop strategies that will preserve and enhance Douglas's landscape heritage.

Hunt's Ponds Property

Description: The Hunt's Ponds property is a privately-owned site located at the corner of Main and Cottage Streets in East Douglas. The landscape is strongly defined by the expansive fields above the ponds and the large Colonial Revival-style mansion at the crest of the hill. The rolling open lawn is dotted with mature pine and deciduous trees, and a stone wall threads up the slope. Expansive views of the house and field are visible from the ponds, with filtered views from Main Street below. The land is in several parcels, one of which includes the ponds on a little less than 3 acres, and they are all under the same ownership.

Upper and Lower Hunt's Ponds are man-made ponds developed to provide water power for the edge-making tool industry that began in East Douglas in 1798. Remnants, possibly of the second axe shop built by the ponds, are evident on the land southwest of the fire station below the dam of the upper pond. There are sluiceways at the dams of each of the two ponds, created for power generation and control. The dam for the upper pond, lined by young birch trees, forms a causeway which provides access along the pond edge. The upper pond has traditionally been used for skating in the winter. The dam and sluiceway of the lower pond are visible from Main Street. The town's former fire station is adjacent to the site on town-owned land, and next to the fire station was the town's original town hall, which once also housed a school and Douglas's first library. It was demolished in 1984.

Background: The town's premier industry of the nineteenth century, the Douglas Axe Manufacturing Company, began in the Main Street blacksmith shop of brothers Joseph and Oliver Hunt. The shop was built in 1798 at the corner of Main and Cottage Streets near the dam of Lower Hunt's Pond. The brothers frequently repaired axes, and the popularity of their original axe designs led to the creation of a second shop near where the firehouse is located. The second shop, run by Oliver, was not successful and eventually was closed, while the first shop under Joseph's ownership became the Douglas Axe Manufacturing Company. The shop burned in 1823 and was rebuilt. The business declined in the late 1800s as the Pennsylvania steel industry grew, ending in 1912 when the last of the company's operations moved to Pennsylvania. The rebuilt shop was eventually torn down for renovations to Main Street.



The Colonial Revival-style mansion that dominates the slope above the ponds was built in 1939 and originally was owned by Winfield Shuster, a descendant of the original Winfield Shuster who joined the Hayward Company, the town's first woolen mill operation. A second mill known as the Shuster Mill was created at the turn of the century on Gilboa Street, and is today owned by Guilford of Maine. Descendants of the Shusters owned the mansion until its sale in 2005.

Issues

- **Ownership:** The property is privately owned, recently passing from the Shuster family. The most recent prior owner was not responsive to the town's requests to transfer a strip of land on the west side of the pond for protection and public access along the water.
- **Open Space Protection:** The importance of this site lies both in its history and in the expansive views over the pond and field to the mansion above. Protection of the site in its entirety should be a priority.
- **Lack of Knowledge of Resource:** As the site where the most important industry of Douglas had its birth, there should be better public knowledge and appreciation of this history. Text in the town's 1998 Master Plan about the former fire station does

not mention that Douglas's axe industry began nearby, where the two shops once stood adjacent to the spillways of the ponds.

Recommendations

- Confirm that the site is documented on MHC forms as part of the proposed East Douglas Historic District, and if not, complete documentation. This needs to include archaeological investigation to clarify physical evidence of the former industrial activity here.
- Share the findings of this project with the property owner. The owner needs to know that these open-space parcels are highly valued by Douglas's citizens.
- Explore options for permanent preservation with the owner, including putting a Conservation Restriction (CR) in place.
- Get the Historical Commission and Historical Society involved in promoting and interpreting the site.
- Pursue acquisition of the pond parcel or a portion of it, through ownership or easement.
- Implement the Douglas Master Plan recommendation that the fire station be preserved and an appropriate reuse found for it.

Wallis Sawmill

Description: The 3.69 acre Wallis Sawmill property forms the western gateway into Douglas on the corner of Cedar and Webster Streets, just east of Douglas State Forest. Webster Street is a moderately traveled east-west road with substantial truck traffic. The sawmill itself is a long, end-gable wood frame structure, with rough vertical board siding and a corrugated tin roof. A smaller building that serves as an office stands nearby. The mill is operated by a recently rebuilt, water-powered turbine set below an elevated sluiceway from Badluck Pond.



Wetlands border the spillway and tailrace through the property and along its eastern boundary, and the site is also an aquifer. The land is commercially zoned, and presently for sale. The owner has advertised the possibility of house construction on the property, but with the wetlands constraints, there may not be enough buildable land for a house.

This property, its hydro-engineering features and its structures are a remarkably intact survival of pre-industrial milling. Although the wall and roof fabric of the buildings has undoubtedly changed, and power converted from water wheel to turbine, the property layout and buildings are essentially unchanged and, even rarer, the mill still serves the same function that it did three centuries ago.

Background: This is a very old mill site that supposedly dates to the early 18th century. Samuel and James Wallis reportedly had two sawmills in 1790, one at Cedar Street and one at Wallis Pond. Further research would be needed to determine details and a date of construction. Badluck Cedar Swamp, one half mile upstream from the sawmill to the southwest, was the site of timber harvesting and shingle making years before Douglas was incorporated in 1746.

Issues

- **Significance:** This site is an extraordinary survival of a classic water-powered pre-industrial mill complex. Despite deterioration in some areas, it has been maintained essentially in its original form and use.
- **Uncertain Future:** With the property up for sale, there is great concern that the mill will be dismantled. The owner has indicated that if a buyer does not want to continue to use the mill, he would take it off the property.
- **Wetlands Protection:** There is some concern about activity on site that is too close to the water's edge.

Recommendations

- Document the sawmill on MHC inventory forms.
- Ensure that the wetlands are protected from negative site use impacts, and inform the Conservation Commission of the historical significance of the site as well.
- Establish a relationship with the owner and their realtor, and encourage them to market this unique property widely, and to confer with other sawmill owners to determine if there is a network that can assist in finding the right owner.

Rawson Farm Site

Description: The site of the former Rawson Farm is a 53-acre property on Yew Street. Once a farm of open fields, it is now a wooded site of primarily oak, with some maple, beech and pine. Other large parcels of open space are located in the immediate vicinity. The easement for the New England Powerline is along the site's western border and the Southwick homestead, another former farm and now a wooded site of approximately 50 acres, also lies to the west. A large portion of the property is wetlands. The adjacent Aaron Aldrich Meadow property is owned by the same individual who owns the Rawson Farm.

The Rawson Farmhouse, built in the early nineteenth century, burned in 1938, and there are no buildings left on the site. The fieldstone lined cellar hole of the house measures 24 feet by 36 feet, and remnants of the house's terrace and a large stone lintel over the entrance to the cellar also remain, as well as grape vines bordering the terrace area. There are foundations of the large barn that existed on the property, including intact stone ramps to provide access for the cattle to the upper barn floor, as well as the foundation of a carriage house/pig sty. A walled lane that served as a "herd walk" for cattle leads southwest down to a stone "slab" bridge at Laurel Brook. This follows an early road that connected Yew Street to Maple Street a mile to the north.

The property is under Chapter 61A.



Background: The Rawson Farm dates to the mid-eighteenth century, and has probably not been farmed since the early 1900s. At the time when the house burned, it had been abandoned for some years. Farming on this site was a subsistence operation, and the owners struggled with wet and ledgy land that made life on this land difficult.

At one point people attempted to mine silver on the property, but the site was wet and not enough material was found to be profitable.

Issues

- **Historic Significance:** This site contains significant historic archaeological remains of a large farmstead, including well-built and unusually intact dairy barn and house foundations and associated earthwork. Other features are likely to be identified with more thorough investigation.
- **Need for Protection:** It is important that the historical and natural resources of the site are fully understood and protected. While the present owner is protective and

respectful of the cultural features on the property, there is no permanent protection in place.

Recommendations

- The owner is open to having the property placed under a Conservation Restriction. The Conservation Commission and the Historical Commission should pursue this designation with him.
- Conduct an archaeological reconnaissance survey to identify and document both Anglo-European and Native American resources on the site.
- Develop a property management plan to address issues such as stabilization and protection of features, and potential for interpretive activities. Rawson Farm and the abutting Aldrich Meadow, for instance, might be an excellent site for guided walks sponsored by the Historical Society in conjunction with the town's Conservation Commission. An interpretive approach that combines a number of themes in Douglas's history, with an understanding of the area's underlying ecology, would serve broad educational purposes in the town.

Cemeteries

The Town of Douglas contains 15 historic cemeteries (see Appendix A for list), all of which face preservation and maintenance issues. Two were selected as representative of the group and surveyed as priority landscapes; recommendations for these cemeteries can be applied to the others.

- **South Douglas Cemetery**

Description: South Douglas Cemetery, also known as Tasseltop Cemetery (after the surrounding neighborhood) is a 1.5 acre town-owned cemetery on South Street adjacent to the site of the first Methodist church in Douglas and across the street from a trailer park. It is bounded by a mortared cut granite wall along South Street, and fieldstone walls with granite capstones along its other boundaries. A portion of the fieldstone wall is in poor condition, and some stones have been stolen. A wrought iron gate and stone pillars mark the main entrance on South Street. Side openings along the South Street edge are flanked with lower granite pillars and include a central granite post to prevent vehicular access.

There is a central unpaved road and a few deciduous trees within the cemetery. There are masses of pines and some deciduous trees on the surrounding properties. Some of the cemetery lots have ornamental yucca plantings. There are granite obelisks on at least half a dozen lots. Some lots are defined by granite curbing, and one is surrounded by granite post and iron rail fencing. Mid to late nineteenth century marble monuments predominate, including signed works of nine shops. Other monuments include works of slate and granite. The earliest death date in the cemetery is 1820 and the cemetery reportedly contains several Revolutionary War soldiers. The cemetery was inventoried on an MHC Form E in 1989.

There is land near the front entrance that appears undeveloped. Local informants were not sure whether this area contains unmarked burials, lots that have been sold but not yet used, or land reserved for future development.

Background: South Douglas Cemetery was established soon after the first Methodist church was established here in 1808. The land was part of the Amos Yates farm, one of the founders of the church. A split in the congregation led to the establishment of the



Methodist church in East Douglas and the decline of the South Douglas church. It ceased to operate in 1860 and the building burned in 1896. The cemetery suffered from lack of maintenance after that time, prompting an attempt in 1906 (recorded in a news item that year) to create an endowment for the permanent care of the grounds. It was reported that private funding was previously raised for maintenance and site improvements, and that such an effort was once again necessary.

▪ **Pine Grove Cemetery**

Description: Pine Grove Cemetery, located on Cemetery Street in a neighborhood where mill workers once lived, is surrounded on three sides by residential property. Minimal boundary vegetation and the location of neighboring barns and sheds close to the cemetery's boundaries make the cemetery appear to be an extension of the adjacent properties. The locally-famous Jussueme quartz garage sits beyond the parcel's northwest boundary. The cemetery is surrounded by a granite post and chain fence, several posts of which have recently been replaced. At one time a grove of pine trees gave the cemetery its name, but today only one large pine remains. A row of maples in poor condition lines the street side. The town assumed ownership of the cemetery in May, 2007.

There are approximately 175 monuments, predominantly marble square-topped tables typical of mid to late nineteenth century stones. The earliest death date is 1812. Signed works of six monument shops can be found in the cemetery. Other monuments include several of slate, granite and white bronze. French inscriptions from the mid-nineteenth century reflect the arrival of immigrant mill workers from Quebec. The cemetery was inventoried on an MHC Form E in 1989.

Background: Pine Grove Cemetery was officially established in 1836 when Aaron Hill deeded this portion of his father's estate to the Second Congregational Church. There are a number of prominent East Douglas residents from the first half of the nineteenth century interred here, including John Hammond, James Smith, and Ebenezer Cook. Pine Grove Cemetery is also the site of the town's "Potter's Field," a place set aside by town expense to inter those who could not afford their own burial. These are unmarked graves that include some of the early axe shop grinders who died of consumption.

In 1872, the Douglas Herald Newspaper published a criticism that the poor condition of the perimeter fence was allowing stray cattle to enter the cemetery. Five years later lot owners were solicited for funds, and the grounds were improved.



Cemetery Issues

- Vandalism: There has been some vandalism in the cemeteries; capstones have been removed from the perimeter wall at South Douglas Cemetery.
- Monument Conservation: in each of these cemeteries, there is a need for monument conservation, primarily cleaning and stabilization of the stones.
- Documentation: Although both of these cemeteries were inventoried for the MHC in the 1980s, documentation of their history and current conditions was cursory and should be updated with new forms.

Recommendations

- A preservation plan for Center Cemetery, not included as a priority landscape, appears in DCR's *Preservation Guidelines for Municipally Owned Historic Burial Grounds and Cemeteries* (2002). The town should look to this plan for specific recommendations regarding Center Cemetery, and as a model for how to plan for the preservation of Douglas's other historic burial grounds.

- Engage the services of a professional to prepare preservation plans for Douglas’s cemeteries. Such plans would:
 - document the existing conditions of each cemetery, including monuments, structures, vegetation, circulation and use;
 - make recommendations regarding stone conservation, landscape maintenance and restoration of other structures, such as tombs and walls; and
 - determine whether there is any available land for additional burial, if needed.
- Build on volunteer interest that has been expressed to help document stones in all cemeteries.
- Strengthen communication between the Douglas Historical Society, Historical Commission and the Cemetery Commission.
- Strengthen communication between the Douglas Historical Society, Historical Commission and the Cemetery Commission.
- Include the Cemetery Commission on the town’s web site to foster better understanding of the importance of cemetery preservation and care.

Mumford Riverfront

Description: The Mumford River flows through the northeastern quadrant of Douglas. With a drainage area of 56.6 miles, the river’s basin originates in Douglas and Sutton and flows in a general easterly direction before emptying into the Blackstone River in Uxbridge. The town’s 1998 Open Space Plan identified as a goal the creation of a greenway along the Mumford River, and two sections of riverfront are the focus of this priority landscape—a private parcel on both sides of the Mumford along B Street between Mechanic and Cook Streets that contains mill remnants, and a parcel owned by Guilford of Maine across Gilboa Street from the Guilford factory building. The only public access to the Mumford in Douglas is at the town-owned Mechanic (Soldier’s) Field upstream from the B Street riverfront site.

The riverfront parcel on B Street, located east of Mechanic Street, is an approximately 4-acre wooded site on both sides of the Mumford, with banks sloping down to the river. The stone arch bridge at Mechanic Street was built around 1854 to connect the 2 factories of the Douglas Axe Manufacturing Company, which stood on opposite sides of the river. The land adjacent to B Street was the site of the Upper Works of the mill. The outline of the mill is defined by a level, rectangular terrace adjacent to the river. Some foundation stonework is still visible, and there are reinforcing rods that suggest the outline of a major structural component of the complex. The spillway by Cook Street slows down the fast-moving Mumford, and makes it easier to get near the river here.

The second parcel of land along the Mumford is on Gilboa Street opposite the Guilford of Maine factory complex, and includes a sizable parking lot, currently unused. A short grassy bank with several clumps of birch trees leads down to the river. This river frontage is a very open space, with easy access to the water. The land across the river is undeveloped, with a scenic hillside covered in pines.



Background: The Mumford River historically provided the water power for the mills and industries that developed along its banks, and fueled the development of East Douglas. The Upper Works of the Douglas Axe Manufacturing Company was one of four plants of that enterprise, which in total covered a mile of river frontage. The company was a major impetus in the growth of Douglas, and produced axes, hatchets, scythes, adzes, swords and bayonets during and after the Civil War. The Upper Works was closed in 1908, after the Douglas Axe Company was incorporated into the American Axe and Tool Company of Pennsylvania. The building is no longer extant. Guilford of Maine, originally the Hayward Shuster Woolen Mill, recently ceased operations as a mill and is for sale. The mill is across the street from this priority landscape, and is not part of it.

Issues

- **Lack of Public Access to the Riverfront:** The town has had as a goal the creation of a Mumford Riverwalk for many years. It was identified in the 1998 Douglas Master Plan. A map was created showing the walk, and it was championed by the Conservation Commission, who researched abutters. Resident opposition slowed the process, which needs to be reinvigorated. These two sites show promise as the best locations in Douglas for providing recreational connection to the river.
- **Lack of Knowledge of the Resource:** The Douglas Axe Manufacturing Company is a significant historical site that many community members are unaware of. Its remains increase the richness of recreational experience along the river and provide potential interpretive opportunities. Additionally, the stone arch of the Mechanic Street bridge, a good example of 19th century civil engineering that is graceful as well as utilitarian, is invisible from the road.
- **Historic Site Protection:** Without any permanent protection in place, the cultural resources located on this site are at risk.

Recommendations

- **B Street Parcel:** Initiate conversation with owner about securing public access via purchase by the town, a long-term lease or an easement. If access can be secured, plan for passive recreational uses that include protection and interpretation of the mill foundations. In any case, document the Douglas Axe Manufacturing Company site on MHC inventory forms.
- **Gilboa Street Parcel:** The town should establish a relationship with the current owner of the mill and their broker, as well as with the new property owner, to put themselves in a position of negotiation with the new owner for a public amenity improvement such as an easement for river access.

- Revive the Riverwalk initiative, and use these two sites as the catalyst to moving forward on that goal.

Southern New England Trunkline Trail and Stone Arch Bridge

Description: The Southern New England Trunkline Trail (SNETT) is an abandoned railbed of the former Boston, Hartford and Erie Railroad. Surfaced with gravel and ballast, the SNETT covers approximately 22 miles in Massachusetts, from Franklin State Forest on the east to Douglas State Forest on the west. About 2.7 miles of the trail is within the Douglas State Forest. It passes through the towns of Douglas, Uxbridge, Millville, Blackstone, Bellingham and Franklin.

A massive stone arch bridge carries Wallum Lake Road (marking the eastern edge of the State Forest) over the SNETT. This impressive structure is assumed to be the original bridge built around 1854 when the railroad was laid through Douglas, given its similarities to the stone arch bridge spanning the Mumford River at Mechanic Street. There is a carved inscription on the top of the west wall of the bridge that reads “Z. Brown 1881.” A Brown family lived nearby at this time, and is most likely the source of the inscription. The bridge was recorded on an MHC form in 1989.

Background: The railroad was a vital asset to the town of Douglas and others for transportation of goods. The first leg of the railroad, from Franklin to Blackstone, was completed in 1849 and the leg from Blackstone to the Connecticut border was completed in 1854. Built by separate companies, both sections came under common ownership in 1854, passing to the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad Company. The SNETT continues into Connecticut along the former “Airline Route”, first a passenger rail line and then a freight line, now part of the Connecticut state park system. The bridge was constructed in 1876.



After a bridge in Blackstone collapsed due to a flood in 1969, the only operation still performed on the line was a weekly freight run to East Douglas handling mostly grain and animal feed shipments. In 1978, the section of the railbed in Douglas State Forest was taken by eminent domain from the Connecticut line to 1600 feet beyond the stone arch bridge. The trail through all 6 towns was acquired in 1984 by the former Department of Environmental Management (now DCR) and designated by the National Park Service as a National Recreation Trail in 1994.

The Bay State Trail Riders Association (BSTRA) has a great interest in the SNETT as a recreational resource. It has been conducting volunteer maintenance activities since the spring of 1989. A major effort over the years has been trash pick up and brush clearing along the trail. BSTRA has collaborated with the state and various community groups (i.e., high school students, rotary clubs) to organize work days, including many hours of work as in-kind match to grants from the state and the National Heritage Corridor. Identification and trail crossing signs have been installed, and gates controlling vehicular use have been installed.

Issues:

- Need for Ongoing Maintenance: Despite being owned by DCR and designated a National Recreation Trail, the SNETT gets relatively little public support. There is a need for regular, periodic brush clearing work, most of which gets spearheaded by private interests. The Douglas 1998 Master Plan identified the SNETT as one of two important greenway linkages in Douglas, the second being the Mumford River Greenway.
- Illegal Dumping: Illegal dumping has been a problem, which has been reduced with the installation of gates that prevent vehicular access. There are two more locations in Douglas where gates are needed.
- Trail Connections and Extensions: Bikers and riders are interested in connecting the SNETT and the Grand Trunk Rail Road. Incorporating them as a connected system would allow more interesting riding opportunities than the purely linear riding experience of the SNETT. The Grand Trunk runs mostly through private lands, but there is a portion within Douglas State Forest.

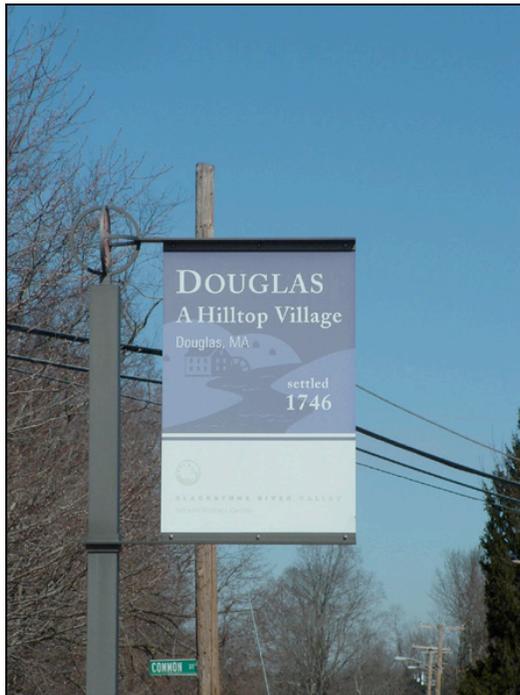
Recommendations:

- Develop a Friends group, or encourage the BSTRA to form a SNETT subcommittee, to establish a formal dialogue with DCR to help promote a regional approach to restoration and maintenance of the SNETT, incorporating cooperative private and public support through vehicles such as grants through EOEEA's Office of Public Private Partnerships.
- Encourage DCR to construct additional gates at Depot Street and Martin Road.
- Work with DCR to contact private landowners where appropriate to construct loop trails or segments between the SNETT and the Grand Trunk.
- Work with DCR to install interpretative signage at selected locations to enhance public understanding of the SNETT's history and significance.



PART II

BUILDING A HERITAGE LANDSCAPE TOOLKIT



EIGHT TOOLKIT BASICS

As our communities undergo rapid land use changes, heritage landscapes are particularly threatened because they are often taken for granted. There is a broad variety of resources that communities can call upon to protect these irreplaceable resources. Below is a checklist of the basics. Each is discussed in the sections that follow and in Appendix B.

1. Know the resources: Inventory

We cannot advocate for something until we clearly identify it – in this case, the physical characteristics and historical development of the town’s historic and archeological resources. The necessary first step is to record information about the resources at the Massachusetts Historical Commission.

2. Gain recognition for their significance: National Register Listing

The National Register of Historic Places is the nation’s official list of cultural resources worthy of preservation. Listing brings a number of benefits including recognition, consideration when federally-or state-funded projects may impact the resource, eligibility for tax credits, and qualification for certain grant programs.

3. Engage the public: Outreach, Education and Interpretation

In order to create a community of advocates, we need to raise public awareness and broaden the base of support. This includes developing opportunities to learn about and celebrate the places and history of the town, as well as to care for them.

4. Think in context: Comprehensive and Open Space Planning

It is important that Open Space Plans and Comprehensive or Master Plans address heritage landscapes as vital features of the community, contributing not only to unique sense of place but also to environmental, recreational and economic health.

5. Develop partnerships: The Power of Collaboration

Protecting community character, respecting history, and promoting smart growth are interrelated concerns that impact heritage landscapes and require collaboration across a broad spectrum of the community. This includes communication among town boards and departments, as well as public-private partnerships.

6. Utilize the experts: Technical Assistance

Regulations and creative solutions for heritage landscapes are constantly changing and emerging. Public and private agencies offer technical assistance with the many issues to be addressed, including DCR, MHC, the Heritage Corridor and the Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Council.

7. Defend the resources: Zoning, Bylaw and Ordinance Mechanisms

Effective and innovative preservation tools exist in the legal and regulatory realm. These range from a wide array of zoning, bylaw and ordinance mechanisms, to incentive programs and owner-generated restrictions on land use.

8. Pay the bill: Funding Preservation

Funding rarely comes from a single source, more often depending on collaborative underwriting by private, municipal, and regional sources. Each town also has a variety of funding sources that are locally-based and sometimes site-specific.

DOUGLAS'S TOOLKIT – Current Status and Future Additions

What follows is a review of the tools that Douglas already has in place, as well as a number of additional tools that fall within some of the categories noted above. The tools already in place for Douglas provide a good foundation for heritage landscape preservation, but their efficacy as protection for the town's natural and cultural resources can be significantly improved by strengthening existing measures and putting others in place. Appendix B includes extended descriptions of preservation measures; the specific applications of those tools to Douglas's resources is described below. In addition, the appendix contains a full description of additional avenues and creative approaches that Douglas can consider in developing a multi-pronged strategy for preservation.

A tool that has been proven to be one of the single most valuable resources in protecting heritage landscapes has been the Community Preservation Act (CPA). Towns that have approved the CPA have been able to leverage funding for such activities as historic resource surveys, acquisition of conservation restrictions and open space, adaptive reuse of historic structures, and signage programs. More information about the CPA can be found in Appendix B under 6. Defend the Resources: Laws, Bylaws and Regulations and 8. Pay the Bill: Funding Preservation.

These tools should be considered in combination with those recommendations made in Part I for Douglas's priority landscapes.

1. Know the resources: Inventory

Current: According to the Massachusetts Historical Commission, the town's inventory includes documentation for 462 buildings, structures and sites. In addition, Douglas has documented a number of precontact Indian sites and historic archaeological sites on MHC inventory forms.

Additions: The inventory work that was done for Douglas in the 1980s was a good first step in documenting the town's historic resources and advocating for their preservation. The methodology for conducting inventories, however, has advanced since then and it is vital that Douglas record information about the full range of its historical resources. The survey should prioritize heritage landscapes such as those listed in this report. It should include representative and significant structures, features and landscapes from all periods of Douglas's history and from all geographic areas. Some funding assistance is available through the MHC Survey and Planning grants. See Appendix B.

It is recommended that a similar, archaeological survey be completed for the community. Known and potential precontact Native American and historic archaeological sites should be documented in the field for evidence of their cultural association and/or integrity. Funding assistance for this effort would also be available from the MHC Survey and Planning grants, as well as CPA funding.

2. Gain recognition for their significance: State and National Register Listing

Current: Douglas has two National Register Historic Districts—Old Douglas Center and Hayward Woolen Mill—and the E.N. Jenckes Store is listed individually in the National Register. Old Douglas Center is approximately 192 acres and has 50 contributing

buildings, structures, objects and sites which collectively make up the original central residential and institutional crossroads of the town.

There are no local historic districts in Douglas. All National Register-listed resources and Local Historic Districts are automatically listed in the State Register of Historic Places.

Additions: Douglas's Master Plan identified two areas for National Register designation—Old Douglas Center Village and East Douglas. Old Douglas Center has since that time been listed. The Douglas Historical Commission should maintain a line of communication with MHC about East Douglas, since MHC may be able to provide Douglas with some assistance to complete this goal.

3. Engage the public: Outreach, Education and Interpretation

Current: The Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor has published an excellent walking tour guide to East Douglas that describes the history and significance of a number of the town's sites, as well as providing brief historical background to the town as a whole.

The Historical Commission in Douglas at this time is in need of rejuvenation.

Additions: It is recommended that they make efforts to expand their numbers if necessary and develop priorities for documenting historic sites, adding to the list of National Register designations, and promoting actions that protect and celebrate the town's heritage landscapes.

Preservation Mass, as the statewide preservation advocacy organization, is a source of support for advocacy. They have a program that annually identifies and publicizes the 10 Most Endangered historic resources in the Commonwealth, which is a good way to advocate for resources that are imminently threatened.

4. Think in context: Comprehensive and Open Space Planning

Current: Master Plan: The Town of Douglas adopted a Master Plan Update in 1998, which revised an earlier, 1994 plan prepared for the town by the University of Massachusetts. The plan identified many issues associated with natural, cultural and historic resources. The overall recommendation relative to land use was to protect the character of Douglas by strengthening the village centers, preserving open space, and encouraging economic development and flexibility in residential development. Many of the recommendations made in the plan have been implemented, including those that serve the goals of heritage landscape preservation.

Current: Open Space Plan: Douglas's Open Space Plan was adopted in 1998, and is currently being updated. That plan built on the work of the Master Plan.

Conservation Agent: Douglas has a Conservation Agent, a position that began after the Master Plan and Open Space Plans were prepared. What is unusual here, as opposed to most other towns with Conservation Agents, is that the agent in Douglas has a dual role of working with both the Planning Board and Conservation Commission. This means that the agent not only supports the work of those town bodies, but also facilitates

communication between the two. The efforts of the Conservation Agent, working in conjunction with a proactive Conservation Commission, have resulted in approximately 80 acres of land being given to the town over the last 5-6 years. The land is given to the town under the control of the Conservation Commission to remain in a natural state for passive recreation. A separate fund of the Commission helps to pay for owner efforts such as deed research and legal fees.

Additional Planning: A number of heritage landscapes that were identified by Douglas have already been, and continue to be, discussed in planning documents, such as the importance of gaining public access to the Mumford River. The town should take this opportunity to prioritize their needs and develop action plans to implement them.

It is vital that there be strong links between community economic development, open space, and recreation agendas in order to successfully address Douglas's environmental and development challenges. There should be regular joint meetings of the town boards involved with land-based and cultural resource issues. This scheduled interaction will help to maintain communication, coordinate planning priorities, and advance programs that support and promote community character and heritage landscapes.

5. Develop Partnerships: the Power of Collaboration

Current Status: Supported by the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor, Douglas is working with three other surrounding communities—Northbridge, Uxbridge and Sutton—to coordinate industrial development and thereby protect other important landscapes. This is a model planning initiative that includes the Selectmen of the four towns, the Heritage Corridor, the Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Agency, and the Blackstone Valley Chamber of Commerce.

Additional Efforts: An important goal of the Open Space Plan was to create a link between community economic development, open space, and recreation agendas in order to respond holistically to the community's environmental and development challenges. There should be regular joint meetings of the town boards involved with land-based and cultural resource issues. This scheduled interaction will help to maintain communication, coordinate planning priorities, and advance programs that support and promote community character and heritage landscapes.

6. Defend the Resources: Zoning, Bylaw and Ordinance Mechanisms

Current Mechanisms

Flexible Zoning: Several years ago Douglas added a flexible development bylaw proposed in the Master Plan to encourage creative alternatives to conventional zoning. It has allowed an opportunity for developers to create subdivision plans that achieve their development goals while protecting open space. The Conservation Agent works with landowners and developers, and the town offers bonuses if developers provide assets such as access to open space and trails development.

Zoning Designation: The Master Plan noted that the name of the East Douglas Village zone, "Central Business", created the perception that large scale, intensive uses were intended. The recommendation to change the name to "Village Business" was

implemented, reflecting the intention to preserve the historic character of the village center.

Additional Mechanisms

The following strategies have consistently proven effective as basic preservation tools in communities throughout Massachusetts.

Demolition Delay Bylaws provide a time period in which towns can explore alternatives to demolition of historic buildings. The Mendon Historical Commission should work with MHC staff to develop a bylaw that would best suit Mendon's needs. They should also work with other town groups to publicize the advantages of a demolition delay bylaw to the community. The most valuable aspect of this bylaw is that it creates space within which to have a conversation about how private and public needs can both be met in the service of preservation. Many towns have found that a delay of one year is the most effective time frame within which to negotiate alternatives to demolition. A majority of the bylaws apply to all structures built over 50 years ago, in accordance with federal standards.

Neighborhood Architectural Conservation Districts (NACD), further explained in Appendix B, are local initiatives that recognize special areas within a community where the distinctive characteristics of buildings and places are preserved and protected. The Mendon Historic Commission should work with the MHC staff to determine how an NACD can help to maintain the character of areas which have changed through time, but which retain a valued neighborhood "feel" that may be threatened by incompatible development.

Local Historic District (LHD), further explained in Appendix B, are also local initiatives and the strongest form of protection to preserve special areas with distinctive buildings and places. The 1998 Master Plan indicated that National Register listing was preferable to adoption of a local historic district because a local district would place constraints on what owners could do with their property when using private funds. Unfortunately, National Register listing provides only minimal protection for historic landscapes and structures. Local designation can be tailored to specific community needs, and often protect private investment by enhancing property values. The key to tourism and, in part, to economic development, is the preservation of the rural and village center character of Douglas.

Additional mechanisms specific to Douglas's landscapes

The following recommendations are organized by the types of resources that Douglas has, and measures that should be considered to strengthen their protection.

Mill Villages and Industrial Structures

A defining characteristic of the Blackstone Valley and Douglas in particular are the mill villages that exhibit the vestiges of the transformative power of the industrial revolution in mills, dams, mill worker housing and transportation elements such as the associated rivers, canals and railroads. Douglas exhibits that history in its many mill structures. Guilford of Maine (formerly Hayward-Shuster Woolen Mill) is the last of the town's

mills to cease operation, and is up for sale. Its location in the northeast corner of town where the four towns are collaborating on redevelopment can help to leverage attention and guide positive development.

Agricultural Lands

Preservation of agricultural landscapes means preservation of the farming activities; otherwise, it simply is the preservation of land as open space. There are instances in which changing technology sometimes requires modifications to existing farm structures, or the addition of new ones. It is important to know what the features of an agricultural setting are and which features the community treasures in order to make a case for preservation of these settings.

Appendix B has a full list of regulatory tools that should be considered to protect agricultural land; the following highlights important measures to meet the needs of agricultural protection in Douglas.

1. Create an Agricultural Commission, a standing committee of town government created through vote at Town Meeting. This Commission would represent the farming community, promote agricultural-based economic opportunities, and work to protect and sustain agricultural businesses and farmland.
2. As recommended in the Open Space Plan, prioritize parcels under Chapter 61A for future acquisition. Should the landowner choose to sell land recently withdrawn from Ch 61, the town has only 120 days to act on its right of first refusal. The need to pay fair market value, combined with lack of readily-available funding from a program such as the Community Preservation Act, makes it difficult for the town to effectively act on this right.
3. Strengthen public-private partnerships to preserve farmland through purchase of APRs or CRs..
4. Develop partnerships to raise funds with organizations to purchase development rights on farms or to assist a farmer in the restoration of historic farm buildings for which the owner would be required to donate a preservation restriction (PR).
5. Make information about the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources programs available to farmers, including the Farm Viability Enhancement Program (technical assistance, funding) and the Agricultural Environmental Enhancement Program (supports best management practices for agricultural operations to mitigate impacts on natural resources).
6. Document farms that are considered critical to the character of Douglas's community using MHC survey forms
7. Adopt a right-to-farm bylaw which allows farmers to carry on farming activities that may be considered a nuisance to neighbors. Refer to Smart Growth Toolkit at: http://www.mass.gov/envir/smart_growth_toolkit/bylaws/Right-to-Farm-Bylaw.pdf
8. Explore Community Supported Agriculture (CSA), a partnership between a farm and a community of supporters. Community members cover a farm's yearly operating budget by purchasing a share of the season's harvest. This relationship guarantees farmers a reliable market, while assuring the members high quality produce, often below retail prices.

Scenic Roads

Scenic roads are an integral part of the historic fabric of the community. They are highly valued by Douglas residents and visitors alike and were listed as a heritage landscape theme during the public meeting. Roads must also accommodate modern transportation needs and decisions regarding roadways are often made with travel and safety requirements as the only considerations. Douglas has adopted the Scenic Roads Act (MGL Chapter 40-15C) and designated roads for which there would be review and approval for the removal of trees and stone walls within the right-of-way. In addition to roadway issues, much of what we value about scenic roads – the stone walls, views across open fields and the many scenic historic buildings – is not within the public right-of-way. The preservation and protection of scenic roads therefore requires more than one approach.

1. Complete an inventory with descriptions and photo documentation of each of the roads in Douglas considered to be scenic, including the character-defining features that should be retained.
2. Post attractive road signs that identify the scenic roads in town.
3. Coordinate procedures between Highway Department and Planning Board or Historical Commission.
4. Consider a Scenic Overlay District which may provide a no-disturb buffer on private property bordering on scenic roads or adopt flexible zoning standards to protect certain views. Such bylaws would apply to the landscapes bordering state numbered roadways, which would not be protected under the scenic roads designation, as well as to landscapes bordering town roads.
5. Develop policies and implementation standards for road maintenance and reconstruction, including bridge reconstruction, which address the scenic and historic characteristics while also addressing safety. This is an important public process in which the community may have to accept responsibility for certain costs to implement standards higher than those funded by Mass Highway Department. Such standards should have a section addressing the way in which the local Highway Department maintains roads; for example, requiring a public hearing if any new pavement width is to be added to a town road during reconstruction or repair. Policies can be adopted by local boards having jurisdiction over roads, or can be adopted at Town Meeting through a bylaw. In developing policies consider factors such as road width, clearing of shoulders, walking paths and posted speeds. A delicate balance is required.

7. Utilize the Experts: Technical Assistance

A list indicating the full range of available governmental and non-profit sources of technical assistance can be found in Appendix B.

8. Pay the Bill: Funding Preservation

Douglas has been designated a [Preserve America](#) community, which makes it eligible to receive technical assistance and matching grants related to heritage tourism. More on the designation and fundable activities can be found in Appendix B.

A list indicating the full range of available governmental and non-profit sources of funding can be found in Appendix B.

CONCLUSION & IMPLEMENTATION

Douglas's residents have a strong sense of place, defined by the town's varied natural features and the historic land use patterns that grew out of them. The town has already begun to document and evaluate its most significant buildings and natural areas. It must now also look beyond these traditional resources to the landscapes, streetscapes, rural roads, neighborhoods and other natural and cultural assets that define the community's character. Like most municipalities, Douglas is facing multiple pressures for change that will have permanent impact on land-based uses and natural resources, especially its remaining farming areas. Special places within the community that were once taken for granted are now more vulnerable than ever to change.

The Douglas Reconnaissance Report is a critical tool in starting to identify the rich and diverse heritage landscapes in Douglas and in developing creative preservation strategies and partnerships. Douglas will have to determine the best ways and sequence in which to implement the recommendations discussed above. The town would do well to form a Heritage Landscape Committee, as described in DCR's publication, *Reading the Land*.

Landscapes identified in this report, especially the priority landscapes, will benefit from further documentation in accordance with MHC guidelines. The documentation in turn will provide an information base for the local publicity needed to build consensus and gather public support for landscape preservation. Implementing many of the recommendations in this report will require a concerted effort by and partnerships among municipal boards and agencies, local non-profit organizations, and regional and state agencies and commissions.

There are no quick fixes for the challenges of managing growth and funding preservation. Many of the recommended tasks and approaches will require cooperation and coordination among a number of municipal, regional and state partners to be successful. They will require time and a good dose of patience, as volunteer schedules, legislative procedures, and funding cycles try to mesh.

Circulating this Reconnaissance Report is an essential first step. The recommendations should be presented to the Board of Selectmen, who represented Douglas in its application to the Heritage Landscape Inventory program. Copies of the report should be available on the town's web site and distributed to town departments and boards, particularly Douglas's Historic Commission, Planning Board, and Conservation Commission and will also be useful for the Douglas Historical Society, neighborhood associations, local land trusts, and other preservation organizations. Finally, a reference copy belongs in the town library. All of these circulation efforts will broaden citizen awareness, and result in increased interest and support for Douglas's heritage landscapes.

Finally, the project team suggests that the following recommendations be the top three priorities for Douglas as the town works to protect the character of its community:

1. Rejuvenating the Douglas Historical Commission.
2. Preserving the Town's cemeteries, building on the work of the Cemetery Commission.
3. Creating a committee to focus efforts to implement Mumford River Walkway plans.

APPENDIX A

DOUGLAS HERITAGE LANDSCAPES

This list was generated by local participants at the Heritage Landscape Identification meeting held in Douglas on January 25, 2007 with follow-up fieldwork on March 9, 2007. **There are undoubtedly other heritage landscapes that were not identified at the HLI meeting noted above.** The chart has two columns, the name and location of the resource are in the first; notes about the resource are in the second. Landscapes are grouped by land use category. Abbreviations used are listed below.

APR = Agricultural Preservation Restriction
 LHD = Local Historic District
 PR = Preservation Restriction

CR = Conservation Restriction
 NR = National Register
Bold = Priority Landscape

Summary of Priority Landscapes:

Hunt's Ponds Property

Wallis Sawmill

Rawson Farm Site

Cemeteries: South Douglas Cemetery, Pine Grove Cemetery

Mumford Riverfront

Southern New England Trunkline Trail and Stone Arch Bridge

Agriculture	
Rawson Farm 300 Yew Street	precontact and historic archaeological significance; foundation of barn, carriage shed, farmhouse; stone bridge, lane. Owned by Pete Tetreault
11 Cedar St. Farm	horses
57 Yew St. Farm	horses
Bald Hill Farm off Yew St.	
Howard Ballou Farm Cedar St.	dairy, beef cattle
Chesborough Farm Church St.	off the Common; sheep; beautiful view
Clouart Farm Pine St.	hayfields
Douglas Apple Orchard Locust St.	
Hiram Walker Farm Yew St.	c. 1758 farmhouse, barn fields see also under Residential
Koslak Farm	hayfields
Leon and Shirley Mosczyński Farm	purchased 1936; beef cattle
Susan Moszczyński Farm Oak St.	in Ch. 61A; selling house lots from land. Distinct from Moszczyński Farm above
Petraglia Farm Wallis St	horses

Mini Brook Farm Walnut St. at Chestnut St.	horses
Crockett Farm West near Cross St.	Corn fields and vegetables
Archeology	
Stone Abutments	located by sewage treatment plant - grinding wheel on site
Cooper Town Douglas State Forest	cellarholes and other features of a barrel-making complex
asstd. features Douglas State Forest	numerous foundations along old roads; charcoal-burning circles; hearths not associated with Civilian Conservation Corps camp.
Burial Grounds and Cemeteries	
theme: cemeteries	Douglas Ctr. has dilapidated receiving tomb with stenciling – needs repair; Baker has large oak trees. - need to mark small family cemeteries so town knows where they are. Baker Cem. (1865); Buffum Cem. (1820); Coopertown Cem. (in State Forest); Douglas Center Cem. (1746); Evergreen Cem. (1818); Parker Street Cem. (1795); Pine Grove Cem. (1812); Quaker Cem. (1806); St. Dennis Cem. (1866); S. Douglas Cem. (1820); Stockwell-King Cem. (1846, private); Thayer Cem.; Walker-Aldrich Cem. (1819; on Rawson Farm, bodies apparently moved); Dyer Cem. (in State Forest); Perry St. Cem.; Monroe St. Cem.
Civic / Institutional	
Douglas Center	NRHD
Douglas Camp Meeting Ground South and SW Main Sts.	Interdenominational, with many Methodists; started 1880
Elementary School and Yard Gleason Ct.	1890s building, now mothballed. Permanent Building Committee looking into disposition/reuse
First Congregational Church Common St.	Douglas Center; 1834; closed due to structural problems
Simon Fairfield Public Library Main St.	East Douglas; 1903
Old Fire Station Cottage St.	by Hunt's Ponds; (ca. 1882-1884); station, or former town hall building that was adjacent to fire station, used as school and first public library
Second Congregational Church Main St.	East Douglas; 1834
Sokol Hall	Slovenian social club; converted from GAR in 1908
Masonic Hall	East Douglas; 1845; originally Citizen's Hall

Depot St.	
Pastimes Club Church St.	gathering place of East Douglas, started in 1909; same place as Fish and Game; in process of being turned over to the Scouts in NRHD
Commercial / Industrial	
Hunt's Ponds	including spillway: small, quaint, visible from Rte 16; at one time a popular skating area. The Douglas Axe Manufacturing Co. had its origins in a blacksmith shop operated by Joseph and Oliver Hunt adjacent to the pond
Wallis Sawmill Cedar St. and Webster St.	western gateway to town, on outflow of Badluck Pond – recently put up for sale; mill site dates to early 18 th century
Center Taverns	now homes
Goodness Store Main St.	East Douglas; named for early Douglas family
Hayward Mills North St.	now Hayward Landing Mills, now condominiums
E.N. Jenckes Store 285 Northeast Main St.	NR; built 1825, needs funding; facing structural challenges
Jussueme Garage Cook St.	built of quartz blocks
Knapp Mill	apartments
Lovett Mill Cook St.	aka Douglas Ax Works – now apartments
gristmill Wellman Pond	East Douglas; vacant; wood frame structure.
Picket Fence Restaurant Main St.	East Douglas; formerly Elmwood Club; earlier, a factory office
Granite Quarries SW Main St.; South St.	quarries behind Koslak on SW Main St. remain (ca. 1918); quarries on South St. are having houses built on them
Hayward-Shuster Mill Gilboa St.	also known as the Shuster Mill, sold in 1984 to Guilford of Maine
Axe Mills	were 4 in town, stretched for one mile along Mumford River; no longer extant
Open Space / Parks & Recreation	
Mumford Riverfront	includes bridges and river walk, Potter Road, Soldiers' Field; priority landscape focused on two riverfront parcels along B Street between Cook and Mechanic Streets, and on Gilboa Street opposite Guilford of Maine
Castle Caves Caswell Ct/Brown Rd	steep 100' cliff, south-facing Native American rock shelter used as camp site for hunting parties to stay out of rain and wind; could have been long-term site, but probably not Sutton-Douglas Line; accessible by foot near proposed 40B development
Field behind Dudley's Webster Rd.	open space/viewshed
Field	hayfield

Vine St.	
Mechanic's (Soldier's) Field	started in 1930; Mechanic St.
Walking Trail from HS	used by kids and seniors
Coffee House Crossing Crossing of High St. and Thompson Rd.	south of the crossing was the former Coffee House, a coach road tavern which stood from the 1803s to the 1820s and served travelers on Thompson Rd., part of the stage highway from Boston to Hartford
Badluck Pond	Also known as Crystal Lake and as Laurel Lake; has cedar swamp behind; leads to Wallis Sawmill (see Commercial/Industrial)
Dudley Pond	behind 1 Main St., Douglas Center
George Washington's Spring SW Main St.	local lore says that George Washington watered his horse here on his way through the area the year he was elected president
Manchaug Pond	cottage community along shore
Potter Pond	
Wallis Pond Douglas State Forest	
Wallum Lake	a Commonwealth Great Pond; also residential: has 1950s cottage community now becoming all-season homes
Whitins Reservoir	
Residential	
Hiram Walker House and Farm	also under Agriculture
Lower Village mill housing Charles, North, C Sts.	
Lovett Mill Apartments	also under Commercial/Industrial
Schuster Mansion Main St.	East Douglas; 1939; 42 acre estate that includes Hunt's Ponds (see Commercial/Industrial) – only substantial private estate in town; house overlooks the ponds
Transportation	
Southern New England Trunk Line Trail (SNETT)	built by separate companies, came under ownership of New York, New Haven and Hartford RR Company in 1854; part of proposed rail trail from south central MA into CT. Most of MA section owned by DCR.
Stone arch bridge Wallum Lake Road	stone arch bridge carries Wallum Lake Road over SNETT; 1876
Stone arch bridge Mechanic St.	across the Mumford River; built in 1854 to connect two mills of Douglas Axe Company on either side of river
"Big Fill" Douglas State Forest,	partially in forest, and partially in private ownership in Webster; stone and gravel ridge, part of Grand Trunk railway line (never completed). View is "best in town"
theme: scenic roads - Church St. - Orange St - Common St.	

- NW Main St. - Oak St.	
Worcester/Providence Turnpike	NW / SE Main St.
Village	
Center Village Historic District	including old parsonage, common; a National Register historic district
East Douglas	including Main Street, ponds, East Douglas fire station, common, library

APPENDIX B

GUIDE TO PRESERVATION AND PLANNING TOOLS FOR HERITAGE LANDSCAPES

Preservation planning is a four-step process: **identification, evaluation, education** and **protection**. Within the realm of protection, there is a vast array of tools that communities can call upon and that are most effective when used in combination with one another. Stewardship of these resources involves education and community support, planning with a clear set of goals, and regulatory mechanisms.

Three useful documents to consult when planning preservation strategies are:

- Department of Conservation and Recreation, *Reading the Land*
- Massachusetts Historical Commission, *Survey Manual*
- Massachusetts Historical Commission, *Preservation through Bylaws and Ordinances*

The following eight sections – based on the Toolkit Basics – detail the resources and strategies available for heritage landscape preservation—from documentation and evaluation, to public education, to regulating activities and finding the revenue necessary to fund the effort.

1. KNOW THE RESOURCES: INVENTORY

The vital first step in developing preservation strategies for heritage landscapes is to record information about the resources on MHC inventory forms. One cannot advocate for something unless one knows precisely what it is – the physical characteristics and the historical development.

Survey methodology has advanced since the early work of the 1980s. If a community had survey work done during that time period, it is time for an inventory update, looking at resources in a more comprehensive and connected way than may have been done at that time. Even if survey work is more recent, there may be a need to document more resources throughout the community.

Using the Massachusetts Historical Commission survey methodology:

- a. Compile a list of resources that are under-represented or not thoroughly researched, beginning with heritage landscapes.
- b. Document unprotected resources first, beginning with the most threatened resources.
- c. Make sure to document secondary features on rural and residential properties, such as outbuildings, stone walls and landscape elements.
- d. Record a wide range of historic resources including landscape features and industrial resources.
- e. Conduct a community-wide archaeological reconnaissance survey to identify patterns of prehistoric and historic occupation and to identify known and probable locations of archaeological resources associated with these patterns. Known and potential precontact and historic archaeological sites should be professionally field-checked to evaluate cultural associations and integrity. A professional archaeologist is one who meets the professional

qualifications (950 CMR 70.01) outlined in the State Archaeologist Permit Regulations (950 CMR 70.00).

NOTE: The Inventory of Archaeological Assets of the Commonwealth contains sensitive information about archaeological sites. The inventory is confidential; it is not a public record (G.L. c. 9, ss. 26A (1)). Care should be taken to keep archaeological site information in a secure location with restricted access. Refer to the MHC article "Community-Wide Archaeological Surveys" which appeared in Preservation Advocate, Fall 2005, and which can be found at the following MHC link: <http://www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc/mhcpdf/pafall05.pdf>.

2. GAIN RECOGNITION FOR THEIR SIGNIFICANCE: NATIONAL REGISTER LISTING

Survey work includes evaluation of whether resources meet the qualifications for National Register listing. This will provide new information about the eligibility of properties. Using the information generated in the survey work and the accompanying National Register evaluations, expand your town's National Register program.

- Develop a National Register listing plan, taking into consideration a property's or area's integrity and vulnerability. Properties in need of recognition in order to advance preservation strategies should be given priority.

3. ENGAGE THE PUBLIC: OUTREACH, EDUCATION AND INTERPRETATION

The best stewards and advocates for heritage landscape protection are members of the community. There are many ways to communicate the importance of these special places to the public, and to connect their preservation with the shared values and goals that community members have already expressed in various planning documents and forums.

Think creatively about how to educate the community about the values and threats to heritage landscapes, and how each town resident benefits from these special places. Use a combination of strategies to get the word out about heritage landscapes and preservation of community character, including:

- **Festivals and Tours** – Tours are a great way to draw attention to the history around us, and to engage more people in caring for it. Consider hosting a Heritage Celebration Day including tours and family-friendly activities, or plan a celebration around a particular place or area on a meaningful date. Make sure events are well publicized.
- **Signage and Banners** – Signs are a very effective way to announce special historic sites and districts. Banners can also bring attention to the significance of an area and make a celebratory statement about its contribution to the town.
- **Written Materials** – Clear, concise and engaging written material with engaging illustrations is a reliable way to relay information about community character and heritage landscapes. Make use of fact sheets and flyers to get the word out on particular issues such as a town ordinance that protects heritage landscapes, a threat that needs to be addressed, or an upcoming event.
- **School Curricula** – Start teaching at a young age. Children are very receptive to engaging stories, and there are no better stories to excite childrens' imaginations and build pride of place than stories of their town's past and present. Teachers have an opportunity to connect history

with environmental issues through classroom study, hands-on history projects, and field exploration of a town's heritage landscapes. Subsequently, students have an opportunity to teach their parents that preservation is everybody's business.

- **Lectures and Workshops** – Use these forums to raise awareness, educate at a deeper level about the community's history and its resources, and broaden the base of interest.
- **Website** – Keep Historical Commission and local historical organizations' entries on the town's website current, and include information about issues, proposals for preservation strategies, and upcoming events.
- **Press Releases** – Use all avenues including press releases to keep the public informed when a meeting or event is about to occur. Work with local reporters to develop special interest articles that highlight landscape resources.

Remember that bringing an issue or a heritage landscape to people's attention once will have only short-term effect. Outreach, education and interpretation must be ongoing concerns that involve preservation and conservation interests, teachers and community organizations in repeated projects to attract and engage the general public.

4. THINK IN CONTEXT: COMPREHENSIVE AND OPEN SPACE PLANNING

Communities use a variety of planning exercises and documents to define their goals and vision of the future, address community-wide issues, and recommend measures to respond to them. There are state mandates for towns to prepare Comprehensive or Master Plans and Open Space and Recreation Plans.

- Comprehensive or Master Plans provide an important frame of reference for land use decisions, and incorporate all of a community's issues including economic development, housing and transportation into an integrated plan. Heritage landscapes need to be seen through the lenses of community character, historic preservation, environmental health, and economic viability and growth. Their future and the values they contribute should be addressed within these multiple perspectives, not solely as historical assets of the community.
- Like Comprehensive Plans, Open Space Plans look holistically at the community—its history, demographics and growth patterns, and current conditions—to make recommendations that protect open space and natural resources for ecological health and public benefits. The Heritage Landscape Inventory Program provides a framework for looking at these important resources, and this new understanding should be incorporated into Open Space Plans.

5. DEVELOP PARTNERSHIPS: THE POWER OF COLLABORATION

Because heritage landscapes encompass such a broad range of resources and issues—from preservation of town centers, scenic roads and river corridors to promotion of smart growth and economic development – stewardship of these resources involves many interests in a community. It is essential that there be good communication between the many departments and committees that address issues related to heritage landscapes. Collaboration between public and private partners is also an essential element in a successful preservation strategy. National Heritage Corridor personnel are helpful guides to partnership opportunities for projects you may have in mind.

- Broaden the base. Preservation, particularly preservation of landscapes, is not just for the Historical Commission. It is important that the cause not be marginalized by those who view

preservation as opposed to progress, or to personal interests. A look at DCR's *Reading the Land* shows the range of organizations and viewpoints that value heritage landscapes.

- Nurture public-private partnerships. Friends groups, neighborhood associations, and local land trusts all have important roles to play to spread the word, and to expand the capacity of the public sector to care for heritage landscapes.
- Take advantage of forums created to share issues and ideas. For instance, the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources offers a "cluster" format for monthly discussion and information exchange meetings among area farmers.
- Share resources across communities. Towns that lack funding for a town planner position, for instance, have found that "sharing" a planner with another community can be quite effective.

6. DEFEND THE RESOURCES; LAWS, BYLAWS AND REGULATIONS

A wide range of laws, bylaws and regulations is available to protect heritage landscapes. Following are brief descriptions of some of the most widely used and/or most effective of these tools, arranged alphabetically.

Adaptive Reuse Overlay District

An Adaptive Reuse Overlay District is superimposed on one or more established zoning districts in order to permit incentive-based reuses of existing built properties. These districts can be created to allow for the adaptive reuse of properties of a certain kind, or within a specified area within a community. As an overlay zone, all regulations pertaining to the underlying zone apply, except to the extent that the overlay zone modifies or provides for alternatives to the underlying requirements.

Agricultural Preservation Restrictions (APR)

This program, managed by the Department of Agricultural Resources, offers to pay farmers the difference between the "fair market value" and the "agricultural value" of farmland located on prime agricultural soils, in exchange for a permanent deed restriction which precludes any use of the property that will have a negative impact on its agricultural viability. This program is different from the *Chapter 61* program, which provides tax incentives for short term restrictions.

Community Preservation Act

The Community Preservation Act is statewide enabling legislation that allows communities to assemble funds for historic preservation, open space protection and affordable housing through a local property tax surcharge (up to 3%, with some allowable exemptions) and state matching funds. These funds can support a wide variety of activities, including inventory and documentation of historic resources, restoration and acquisition.

Conservation Restrictions (CR)

A permanent deed restriction between a landowner and a holder - usually a public agency or a private land trust; whereby the grantor agrees to limit the use of his/her property for the purpose of protecting certain conservation values in exchange for tax benefits. EOEEA's Division of Conservation Services provides assistance to landowners, municipalities, and land trusts regarding conservation restrictions and has produced *The Massachusetts Conservation Restriction Handbook* as a guide to drafting conservation restrictions.

Corridor Protection Overlay District

A Corridor Protection Overlay District is intended to promote appropriate development within a given corridor, serving to protect natural (and sometimes cultural) resources. As an overlay zone, all regulations pertaining to the underlying zone apply, except to the extent that the overlay zone modifies or provides for alternatives to the underlying requirements. The Corridor Protection Overlay District can be used cooperatively by adjoining communities to help maintain continuous protection across town lines.

Demolition Delay Bylaw

With a Demolition Delay Bylaw, requests for a permit to demolish a historic building must first be reviewed and approved by the local historical commission. Demolition Delay Bylaws are either list-based (applying only to a specific list of buildings that have been previously identified), age based (applying to all buildings that are older than a certain age – typically 50 years), or categorical (applying only to resources that meet a specific criteria, such as having been documented on Massachusetts Historical Commission forms). If the historical commission does not approve of the demolition and deems a structure significant, it can impose a delay period, during which time the property owner is encouraged to explore alternatives to demolition. Delay periods of 6 months are common, although communities are increasingly adopting delay periods of up to one year.

Design Review

Design Review is a non-regulatory process that is undertaken by a town appointed Design Review Board. The board reviews the design of new construction and additions – typically those taking place in already built-up areas. Recommendations are made to the planning board to help preserve appropriate building patterns and architectural styles, with the goal of maintaining the overall character of a given area. Design Review Boards often limit their review to exterior architectural features, site design and signage.

Downtown Revitalization Zoning

Downtown Revitalization Zoning seeks to encourage businesses to locate in downtowns. Zoning of this nature is typically written to be attractive to businesses of a certain kind that would work well within the given infrastructure and transportation needs, but can also incorporate some of the same elements as Village Center Zoning (see below), such as encouraging mixed use development at a pedestrian-friendly scale, with minimal setbacks and offsite parking.

Flexible Development Zoning

Flexible Development Zoning allows for greater flexibility and creativity when subdividing land, to conform and work with the natural and cultural resources of a site and minimize alteration or damage to these resources, rather than follow standard requirements of subdivision regulations. While this does not prevent land from being subdivided, it does allow for the protection of some features, serves to preserve some undeveloped land, and promotes better overall site planning.

Local Historic Districts (LHD)

LHDs recognize special areas within a community where the distinctive characteristics of buildings and their settings are preserved. They offer the strongest form of protection available for historic resources. LHDs are administered by a Local Historic District Commission (distinct from the community's Local Historical Commission), which reviews proposed exterior changes to buildings within the district. The kinds of changes that are reviewed vary according to the terms of the local bylaw.

Neighborhood Architectural Conservation Districts (NCD)

Neighborhood Architectural Conservation Districts (sometimes known as Neighborhood Conservation Districts) are local initiatives that recognize special areas within a community where the distinctive characteristics of the neighborhood are important. They are less restrictive than Local Historic Districts in that they focus on a few key architectural elements and massing, scale, and setback in an effort to

embrace overall neighborhood character. As in Local Historic Districts, changes are reviewed by a Neighborhood Architectural Conservation District Commission.

Open Space Zoning

Open Space Zoning – also known as Cluster Development Bylaw, Open Space Communities Zoning, Open Space Development Overlay District, Open Space Preservation Subdivision, or Open Space Residential Development – allows greater density than would otherwise be permitted on a parcel, in an effort to preserve open space. Typically, construction is limited to half of the parcel, while the remaining land is permanently protected under a conservation restriction.

Rate of Development Bylaw

A town may slow the rate of its growth within reasonable time limits to allow the community to engage in planning and preparation for growth. This measure must be used for the purpose of conducting studies and planning for rational development, and not for restraining the rate of growth for a period of unlimited duration.

Right to Farm Bylaw

A Right to Farm Bylaw asserts the rights of farmers to pursue agricultural activities, provides community support for farming activities and requires dispute resolution so that abutters cannot make nuisance claims. Agricultural landscapes are widely considered to be significant heritage landscapes for which there is constant concern of potential development. This bylaw serves to help active farmers remain just that - active.

Scenic Overlay District Zoning

Scenic Overlay District Zoning protects scenic vistas by providing for a no-disturb buffer on private lands, thereby helping to maintain specific viewpoints. This type of zoning is more far-reaching than a Scenic Roads Bylaw (see below) and may be applied to numbered routes.

Scenic Roads Bylaw

The Scenic Roads Bylaw requires that a public hearing be held prior to the removal of any trees or stone walls that fall within the public right of way on a designated scenic road. Depending on how it is written, the bylaw may apply to a predetermined list of roads or encompass all roads in a community (other than numbered routes). The bylaw applies whenever there is any public or private impact to trees or stone walls within the right of way, including activities such as road widening, utility company work or creating private driveways.

Scenic Vista Protection Bylaw

Scenic Vista Protection Bylaws require additional design criteria for any proposals for new construction in areas that are determined by the town to be a scenic vista. Vistas may encompass natural, cultural and historic features.

Shade Tree Act

The Shade Tree Act is a part of MGL Chapter 87, which defines all trees within the public way as public shade trees. The municipal Tree Warden is responsible for the care, maintenance and protection of all public shade trees (except those along state highways). Trimming or removal of any public shade trees greater than 1.5” in diameter requires a public hearing. Chapter 87 applies to all communities; however, some communities have adopted their own Shade Tree Act Bylaws that provide stricter regulations than those mandated in Chapter 87.

Site Plan Review

Site Plan Review provides the planning board (and other boards and committees, depending how the bylaw is written) with an opportunity to consider a variety of community concerns – such as impacts to vehicular circulation, scenic vistas, topography and natural resources – during the permit process. Boards may comment on site plans and request changes to the design. Site Plan Review is typically limited to large scale projects and tied to the special permit process.

Smart Growth Zoning – Chapter 40R

Smart Growth Zoning (Chapter 40R) provides financial rewards to communities that adopt special overlay zoning districts allowing as-of-right high density residential development in areas near transit stations, areas of concentrated development, or areas that are suitable for residential or mixed use development. Such zoning can help direct compact growth to areas that are already developed – such as historic village centers – thereby discouraging growth in less suitable areas.

Transfer of Development Rights (TDR)

TDR is a regulatory technique that allows a landowner to separate building or development rights from the property and sell them, receiving compensation for preserving land and allowing for the development to occur in areas selected for higher density projects. In essence, development rights are "transferred" from one district (the "sending district") to another (the "receiving district"). As a result, development densities are shifted within the community to achieve both open space preservation and economic goals without changing overall development potential.

Village Center Zoning

The goal of Village Center Zoning is to meet the needs of a small-scale, mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly area by encouraging compact development. New construction is required to be built at a scale that is compatible with the neighborhood and to have a reduced (or no) setback from the street. Parking may be directed to discourage large lots in front of buildings. Village Center Zoning shares many similarities with Traditional Neighborhood Development, and the terms are sometimes used interchangeably.

Wetlands Protection Act and Bylaws

The Wetlands Protection Act (MGL Chapter 131, Section 40) protects wetlands by requiring a careful review by local conservation commissions of proposed work that may alter wetlands. The law also protects floodplains, riverfront areas, land under water bodies, waterways, salt ponds, fish runs and the ocean. Communities may also adopt their own Wetlands Protection Bylaw, providing stricter regulations than those mandated in Chapter 131.

7. UTILIZE THE EXPERTS: TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Beyond DCR and the Heritage Corridor, technical assistance is available from many governmental and non-profit sources, most often free of charge to municipalities and non-profit organizations.

- [American Farmland Trust](#): Clearinghouse of information supporting farmland protection and stewardship.
- [Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission](#): The regional planning agency charged with assisting communities with local planning efforts in this region.
- [Citizen Planner Training Collaborative](#): Provides local planning and zoning officials with training opportunities and online information; they also hold an annual conference to support land use planning.

- [Green Valley Institute](#): Provides technical assistance about land use planning to communities within the Quinebaug-Shetucket Heritage Corridor. Web site and publications contain information of use to communities throughout the region.
- [Massachusetts Historical Commission](#): Provides technical assistance as well as grants to municipalities and nonprofits for preservation planning and restoration projects.
- [New England Small Farm Institute](#): A non-profit dedicated to providing technical assistance, information and training to farmers.
- [The Trustees of Reservations](#): Offers conservation and landscape protection workshops, publications and connections through the **Putnam Conservation Institute**. The Trustees also manages a unique **Conservation Buyer Program** that links interested sellers with conservation-minded buyers and assists with establishing permanent property protection mechanisms.
- [Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources](#) is the state agency dedicated to supporting the agricultural activities in the state through special initiatives, programs and technical assistance.
- [The Trust for Public Land](#) is a national non-profit that assists municipalities with land conservation efforts.
- University of Massachusetts Extension
- DCR's [Lakes and Ponds Program](#) works with local groups and municipalities to protect, manage and restore these valuable aquatic resources. They provide technical assistance to communities and citizen groups, help to monitor water quality at various public beaches to ensure public safety, and provide educational materials to the public about a range of lake issues.
- [Massachusetts Agricultural Commissions](#) has recently launched a new website that includes helpful information both for communities with Agricultural Commissions and for those learning more about forming one.
- [UMASS extension \(NREC\)](#) – Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation) can provide assistance on issues related to land and water resource protection, smart growth/sustainability measures and forestry and farming management,

8. PAY THE BILL: FUNDING PRESERVATION

Funding for preservation projects is an important aspect of implementing strategies to protect heritage landscapes. There are local, state, regional, national and non-profit funding programs and resources that can assist communities in preservation and land conservation-related issues. The availability of such assistance varies from year to year and private property is not always eligible for funding. Examples include:

Local Funding Assistance

- Towns that have adopted the **Community Preservation Act (CPA)** find it to be an excellent funding source for many heritage landscape projects. While tricky to pass in lean economic times, the number and types of projects that are benefiting across the Commonwealth makes the CPA worthy of consideration. Such projects include MHC inventory, National Register nominations, cemetery preservation, open space acquisition and preservation and restoration of public buildings. The CPA (M.G.L. Chapter 44B) establishes a mechanism by which cities and towns can develop a fund dedicated to historic preservation, open space and affordable housing. Local funds are collected through a 0.5% to 3% surcharge on each annual real estate tax bill. At the state level, the Commonwealth has established a dedicated fund which is used to match the municipality's collections under the CPA. The amount of the surcharge is determined by ballot vote at a local election.

Adoption of the Community Preservation Act, by a majority vote on a ballot question, fosters **partnerships** among historic preservationists, conservationists and affordable housing advocates. At least 10% of the funds must be used to preserve historic resources; at least 10% must be used to protect open space; and at least 10% must be used to advance affordable housing. The remaining 70% must be used for one of these three uses as well as recreational needs and can be distributed in varying proportions depending upon the projects that the city or town believes are appropriate and beneficial to the municipality. Additional information about the CPA can be found at www.communitypreservation.org.

- Municipalities can establish **land acquisition funds**, increasing their revenue from sources such as an annual fixed line item in the municipal budget; income from forestry, farming and leasing of town-owned land; gifts and bequests; grants and foundation funding; and passage of the CPA, detailed above.

State Funding Assistance

Funding for a variety of preservation projects, primarily for municipalities and non-profit, is available through the [Massachusetts Historical Commission \(MHC\)](#), the EOEEA [Division of Conservation Services](#) (DCS), the [Department of Conservation and Recreation](#) (DCR) and other state agencies. Further information on these programs is available on the agency websites.

- **MHC Survey and Planning Grants** support survey, National Register and a wide variety of preservation planning projects.
- The **Massachusetts Preservation Projects Fund (MPPF)**, administered through the MHC, funds restoration and rehabilitation projects.
- Towns that have a local historic district bylaw may apply for **Certified Local Government (CLG)** status which is granted by the National Park Service (NPS) through the MHC. At least 10% of the MHC's yearly federal funding allocation is distributed to CLG communities through Survey and Planning matching grants. To become a CLG, the town completes an application; after being accepted as a CLG, it files a report yearly on the status of applications, meetings, and decisions; in return the town may apply for the matching grant funding that the MHC awards competitively to CLGs annually. Presently 18 cities and towns in Massachusetts are CLGs. **NOTE:** CLG status is dependent in part on a municipality having at least one Local Historical District as evidence of the community's commitment to historic preservation.

Open Space Plans, with a requirement of updating the plan every five years, make a community eligible for **Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EOEEA) grants** and technical assistance programs through the Department of Conservation Services.

- The [Massachusetts Self-Help Program](#) of DCS assists local conservation commissions in acquiring land for the purposes of natural and cultural resource protection and passive outdoor recreation.
- The [Massachusetts Urban Self-Help Program](#), another DCS initiative, is geared toward assisting towns and cities in acquiring and developing land for park and outdoor recreation purposes.

- DCS [Conservation Partnership Grants](#) assist non-profits in acquiring interests in land for conservation or recreation, and have also been used in the past to help protect active agricultural lands.
- The [Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund](#), distributed through the DCS, can support heritage landscape protection by providing up to 50% of the total project cost for the acquisition or renovation of park, recreation or conservation areas. Municipalities, special districts and state agencies are eligible to apply.

The **Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR)** administers a variety of grant programs that can help with heritage landscape preservation:

- [Urban and Community Forestry](#) grants fund projects which will result in sustained improvements in local capacity for excellent urban and community forestry management.
- The [Recreational Trails Grant](#) Program provides funding on a reimbursement basis for a variety of recreational trail protection, construction, and stewardship projects.

The **Department of Agricultural Resources** [Farm Viability Enhancement Program](#) works with farmers to develop sound business plans and funding assistance to implement them.

Regional and Non-Profit Funding Assistance

- The [John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission's Heritage Partnership Program](#) supports projects in corridor towns that further the Corridor goals of historic preservation, community revitalization, ecological restoration, land use planning, riverway development and educating people about the Valley's heritage. Communities and organizations located within the Corridor are eligible to receive funding, subject to availability.
- [Quinebaug and Shetucket Rivers National Heritage Corridor](#) provides mini-grants to member towns, supporting preservation of heritage landscapes including projects involving sustainable agriculture, river clean-ups, open space planning and natural resource conservation.
- The [Greater Worcester Community Foundation](#) provides grants to non-profit organizations for community enhancements.
- [The Trust for Public Land](#) (TPL) is a national, nonprofit, land conservation organization that conserves land for people to enjoy as parks, community gardens, historic sites, rural lands and other natural places. TPL helps communities identify and prioritize lands to be protected; secure financing for conservation; and structure, negotiate and complete land transactions. TPL's New England Office recently launched the [Worcester County Conservation Initiative](#), to accelerate the pace of land conservation in central Massachusetts by helping communities plan and finance conservation projects.
- The [National Trust for Historic Preservation](#) offers a variety of financial assistance programs. Based on the availability of funding, the National Trust awards more than \$2 million in grants and loans each year for preservation projects nationwide.

- The [Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission \(CMRPC\)](#) does not administer grants, but can work with communities to write grants or help them find funding.

Federal Funding Assistance

- The [Farmland and Ranchland Protection Program](#) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture has protected 85 farms to date in Massachusetts on 6,335 acres with matching funds. Eligible organizations are federally recognized Indian tribes, states, local government, and non-governmental organizations. They are required to provide 50-50 matching funds for purchase of conservation easements in land with prime, productive soils that are subject to a pending offer, for the purpose of limiting conversion to non-agricultural uses of the land.
- All of the communities within the Blackstone Heritage Corridor have been designated [Preserve America](#) communities, making them eligible to receive technical assistance and matching grants related to heritage tourism. Eligible grant activities include research, documentation (e.g., historic resource surveys and National Register nominations), interpretation and education (e.g., signage, exhibits and itineraries), planning, marketing and training. (Communities within the Quinebaug and Shetucket Rivers Valley National Heritage Corridor may want to pursue Preserve America designation in order to take advantage of these funding opportunities.)
- The National Park Service's [Rivers & Trails Program](#) provides technical assistance to community groups and government agencies so they can conserve rivers, preserve open space, and develop trails and greenways. The program does not offer grants, but can provide staff to help identify needs, assist partners in navigating the planning process, and help with organizational development and capacity building. The program can serve as a catalyst for successful trail development and conservation efforts.