

Sudbury Master Plan Community Conversation

Natural Resources, Open Space, and Recreation



Natural resources provide important environmental, social, and economic benefits, including habitat for plants and animals, flood protection, recreation, economic livelihood, and improved air and water quality. Protection and management of these areas are important for the long-term health of a community and its resilience in the face of a changing climate.



Sudbury works to preserve and protect natural resources by collaborating with agencies, supporting and participating in programs and policies such as:

- Local bylaws
- Community Preservation Act funds
- Conservation easements and restrictions
- Collaboration with Sudbury Valley Trustees, and state and federal agencies



Conservation Land

In Sudbury, there is approximately 32% of the town’s land is dedicated to conservation and recreational open space, and more than half are protected from future development. Conservation and open space areas are owned by public, private, and non-profit entities and have different levels of protection.

Landowner	% of Total Town Land
Private	13%
Federal	28%
State (incl. Sudbury Water District)	15%
Town	29%
Sudbury Valley Trustees	14%
Other (Lincoln-Sudbury Regional School District)	1%
Total	4,869



Surface Water Resources

In total, there are reportedly 190 ponds and 45 streams in Sudbury. Approximately 36% of unnamed ponds are on public lands. Major water resources include the Sudbury River and five small water bodies: Willis Pond, Carding Mill Pond, Grist Mill Pond, Cutting Pond, and Stearn's Mill Pond.

Watersheds

Sudbury is located within the Sudbury-Assabet-Concord (SuAsCo) River watershed. The watershed is divided into 9 sub-watersheds in Sudbury by the Ponds and Waterways Committee for better management. All watersheds drain into the Sudbury River except for two, which drain into the Assabet River.



Wetlands

Wetlands play a critical role in flood control and water quality maintenance as well as providing visual variety, wildlife habitats, and support for a healthy environment. Great Meadows National Wildlife Refuge has 548 acres of wetlands and is the largest public open space area in Sudbury. The area is adjacent to upland along the Sudbury River and has many recreational opportunities.

Floodplains

The largest floodplains in Sudbury are associated with the Sudbury River and its tributaries. The river's floodplain is a protected open space owned by the US Fish & Wildlife Service and the MA Department of Environmental Management. The surrounding floodplains serve as giant sponges that detain floodwaters and protect downstream areas more suitable for development from severe flooding.



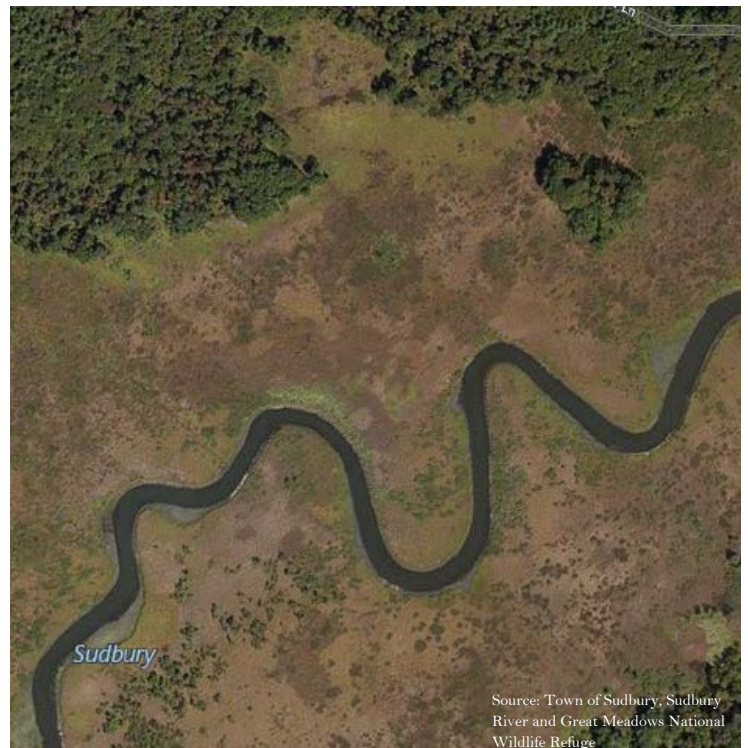
Aquifers

Sudbury Water District (an independent public body) supplies public drinking water to the Town from gravel packed ground wells in three separate aquifers:

- Raymond Road
- Hop Brook
- Great Meadow

While Sudbury generally has conditions suitable for public wells, 5 of the Town's 9 public water wells are in aquifers with a high vulnerability to contamination and pollution, specifically from the Boston Post Road/Route 20 business corridor.

The Town's Water Resources Overlay Districts Ordinance controls development and land uses within aquifers and their recharge areas to protect the available supply and quality of drinking water for the Town.



Rare, Threatened, & Endangered Species

Sudbury's wide variety of habitat types are the foundation for a rich diversity of wildlife. Land set aside for conservation provides habitat to many of Sudbury's plant and wildlife species. In particular, healthy conservation land provides habitat to endangered, threatened, and rare species.

According to the National Heritage and Endangered Species Program, Sudbury is home to 26 observed species that are rare, threatened, and/or endangered.



Recreational Resources

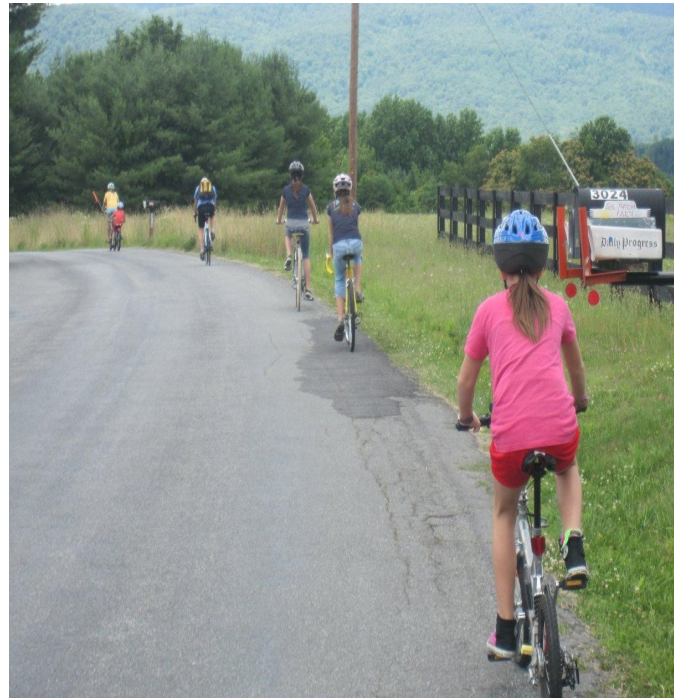
Recreation, as a municipal service, focuses on organized programming offered through the Sudbury Park and Recreation Department as well as developed facilities like playgrounds, baseball fields, basketball courts, and fields. The current recreational facilities consists of:

Fairbank Community Center	Atkinson Pool
Haskell Recreation Area	Featherland Park
Feeley Park	Davis Field
Ti-Sales Field	Cutting Field
Public school fields	

There are approximately 3,417 acres of land dedicated to open space and recreation with public access, including Town recreation facilities and those owned by different government and non-profit entities.

Open Space and Recreation Plan

The Town uses its 2009-2013 Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP) to plan for recreation and open space needs. The OSRP outlines the Town's goals and objectives and also includes resource inventories and priorities. It is currently being updated.



Trails

Sudbury has an extensive trail network that connects many of the Town's conservation areas, including:

Hop Brook Conservation Area	Tipling Rock Conservation Area
Barton Farm	Nobscot Conservation Area
Davis Farm	Lincoln Meadow
Haynes Meadow	King Philip Woods
Piper Farm	Frost Farm
Poor Farm Meadow	Cutting Farm Conservation Land

