

# NATURAL RESOURCES

(2003)

## ■ INTRODUCTION

This section of the Master Plan is intended to address the “*preservation, conservation, and use of natural and [hu]man-made resources.*” as provided by RSA 674:2. The essential purpose developing this section of the Master Plan is twofold: (1) to enable the Planning Board to make better-informed decisions as to the development potential (or lack thereof) of certain land areas; and (2) to supply the Board and the town with information and knowledge about sensitive lands and important natural and/or human-made features that may need special protection. Decisions made on the basis of this information can then be implemented through a variety of techniques, which will be discussed in more detail later, but include such things as amendments to the Zoning Ordinance, or design/development standards written into the Site Plan Review Regulations to address specific concerns.

A corollary benefit of collecting and analyzing these features is that the public becomes educated about just what is significant, sensitive, and valuable to the town as a whole, and to individual residents. This level of knowledge enables people to think about the appropriateness (or inappropriateness) of using certain lands for certain uses. For example, in the not too-distant past, conventional wisdom held that wetlands were “junk” lands and should be filled in, since they couldn’t be used for anything worthwhile. Today, we know that wetlands are widely recognized as providing a variety of benefits and functions to people and the natural environment.

This section identifies and describes known information on a variety of natural resources in town (wetlands, aquifers, soils, steep slopes). Many of the features identified and described herein are also illustrated on maps that are included in this report.

## ■ SURFACE WATER

The Town of Temple is a hill town and as such is the beginning or the source of streams. The ridge of the Wapack Range, which is the town boundary for much of the western side of town, is also a watershed or drainage divide. Many streams have their origins just to the east of this high elevation ridge, and flow in a generally eastward direction to the lower elevations on the east side of town. As these streams eventually empty into the Souhegan River, most of Temple is in the Souhegan River Watershed. A small portion of Temple is part of the Contoocook River Watershed as an area in the southwest corner of town drains to the west into the Gridley River in the town of Sharon, which in turn empties into the Contoocook River. Also, a small area in the northeast part of Temple, in Miller State Park drains to the west into the Contoocook River.

Many of the streams in Temple are small, unnamed, and intermittent. Intermittent streams do not have water flow all year. They generally have water flow in the spring and wet periods of high rainfall, but dry up in late summer or early fall. There are several perennial streams in Temple. These are the major streams in town that have water flow all year.

There are 3 flood control structures in Temple. A fourth structure is just on the townline in Wilton, but about half of the water impounded behind the dam is in Temple. These structures are earthen dams built by the U.S. Department of Agriculture to store water behind the dams during major storm events to prevent flooding downstream. These 3 structures in Temple, plus several others in nearby towns are part of a flood control project in the Souhegan Watershed to prevent flooding in downstream areas.

Maintenance and authority of the flood control sites is handled by the State of New Hampshire. The largest site with the most water impounded behind the dam is on the east side of Rt. 45 in the southern part of town. This site is also a water supply for the Town of Greenville.

There are many small ponds in the Town of Temple. Some of the ponds are natural, or have been created by beavers. Many of the ponds are human-made. The reasons for constructing the ponds are varied; some are old farm ponds built for the purpose of providing water for farm animals; others are for wildlife or recreation. Some human-made ponds are fire ponds for fire protection, and some are multipurpose ponds. Most of the ponds are in low depressional areas or along streams and are part of a wetland system.

The Town of Temple is fortunate that almost all of the surface water in town originates in town. Very little water flows into Temple from adjoining towns. This means that the people of Temple have control over the quality of the water in town. If this valuable resource becomes polluted or contaminated, it is the responsibility of the people of Temple.

## ■ WETLANDS

The New Hampshire Wetlands Board defines wetland as “. . . an area that is inundated or saturated by surface or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal conditions does support a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated conditions.” “Wetlands” is the collective term for land that serves as a transition zone between surface water and upland sites. Wetlands can be bogs and peatlands, fresh marshes, salt marshes, wooded swamps and riparian areas. The Method for the Comparative Evaluation of Nontidal Wetlands in New Hampshire has been developed for the purpose of evaluating wetlands. This method lists fourteen functional values associated with wetlands; these include wildlife habitat, flood control, groundwater use, nutrient retention, educational potential, water-based recreation and historic value.

There are several methodologies a town can use to define wetlands; most towns, however, use the US Department of Agriculture, Natural Resource Conservation Service (formerly Soil Conservation Service) definition, which categorizes soils as being either very poorly drained or poorly drained. The locations of such wetlands in Temple are identified on a map entitled *Town of Temple, NH Aquifers, Wetlands, & Hydric Soils*. Hydric “A” soils are those that are very poorly drained, and Hydric “B” soils are poorly drained.

In Temple, wetlands constitute about 988 acres, out of the total land area of 14,241<sup>1</sup> acres, representing a mere 6.9% of the land area. These wetlands, identified as Hydric Soils on the accompanying map, are scattered all around town, with the exception of the western edge of the Wapack Range along the boundary with Sharon and Peterborough.

## ■ WATERSHEDS

A watershed is the land area made up of a series of connecting higher ridges that drain surface water to the lowest point, which is where a stream or river flows out of the watershed. The network formed by rivers, streams, lakes, and ponds is known as the drainage system of the watershed.

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<sup>1</sup> From the Office of State Planning as determined from USGS digitized data. This number has no legal bearing or significance, and is used for general planning purposes only.

The surface water of the rivers, streams, lakes, brooks and ponds are subject to pollution caused either by hazardous materials located in close proximity to the water or pollutants discharged directly into the water. Surface run-off is therefore considered to be a non-point pollution source because the pollutant travels over the land to the water source, for example uncovered salt piles. A point pollution source discharges directly into the water, for example a malfunctioning sewage treatment plant.

Surface water resources can function as holding areas for floodwaters and seasonal high waters. In addition, they serve as recharge areas and discharge points for groundwater sources, which are areas where surface and groundwater are hydrologically connected. Groundwater discharge replenishes surface water resources, such as water wells.

The Town of Temple falls almost entirely within the Souhegan River Watershed, which is a part of the Merrimack River Basin; there are three small areas on the western town boundary that fall within the Upper Contoocook River Watershed. The Souhegan River Watershed is comprised of approximately 282,900 acres in the towns of Temple, Lyndeborough, Wilton, Milford, Greenville, and New Ipswich.

The natural flow of water in the northern part of town is from the west to the east, with the water eventually draining to the Souhegan River. South of Route 101, the water drains from the west and south into the Reservoir, and from the Reservoir, the water drains south and north, all of which eventually drains into the Souhegan River.

## ■ **AQUIFERS**

Aquifers are concentrations of groundwater, occurring in saturated soils and geological formations. They are found where saturated layers are permeable and the storage and transmission of water can take place. Aquifers are resupplied through precipitation, surface water, wetlands, lakes and streams. The water infiltrates the ground through an aerated zone where impurities are filtered out. The water then moves to a saturated zone (aquifer) where the pore spaces between soil particles are filled by the water. It is very important that the surface of the earth be able to transmit water so that a certain percentage can be stored underground. Excessive compaction or extensive covering of the land surface reduces the volume of groundwater which, as stated earlier, affects the supply of water to wells.

The US Geological Survey has recently completed aquifer delineation maps for the entire state. The Temple Aquifer Map, found on the preceding page, was prepared from data from the USGS study. The map is essentially a surficial geology map, showing the distribution of unconsolidated (not bedrock) geologic material on the land surface. There do exist bedrock aquifers, but these were not part of this particular study. Unlike the previous aquifer study by USGS, which identified aquifers having high, medium or low potential yields, this study identifies areas of sand and gravel and measures the rate of transmissivity - that is, the speed with which water passes through the materials, in increments of 1,000 feet squared per day.

The preceding map illustrates aquifer boundaries for Temple and its surrounding area. This map is a result of a statewide aquifer-mapping project by the NH Department of Environmental Services in cooperation with the US Geological Survey, begun in 1985. The goal of the project was to update the reconnaissance level mapping that was completed in the mid-1970s. The new maps identify significant stratified-drift aquifers in terms of their location and aerial extent, as well as their hydraulic properties and internal characteristics. The methodology employed to develop these maps included drilling observation wells at selected sites around the state. These maps show only the boundaries of the aquifer areas; there is more detailed information available on ground water flow, depth of deposits, volume of sediment, etc.

The map shows four discrete areas in town with significant deposits of stratified drift aquifers, and they are all located around the major brooks in town: Whiting Brook, adjacent to Converse Road; Blood Brook, adjacent to Route 101; Temple Brook, which originates by West Road, crosses Hadley Highway and Route 45, then shifts north toward Wilton by the General Miller Highway; and the largest of the aquifer deposits along Gambol Brook is in the southern part of town west of the Reservoir over to Fish Road.

## ■ LAND

The town lies on glacier-carved ground and has a great variety of topographical features, with high ranges and broad valleys. The highest peak in Temple is Pack Monadnock, with an elevation of 2,280 feet above sea level. It is the highest point in Hillsborough County. The Wapack Range, of which Temple Mountain and Pack Monadnock are a part, continues up from the mountains of Massachusetts. On the western boundary of the town is Temple Mountain, which has several peaks that vary in height from 1,907 feet to 2,081 feet. Other hills in town include Whitcomb Peak, Howard Hill, Quinn Hill, Wilson Hill, Oak Hill, and Fisk Hill. Kendall Ledge is an outcropping of white and rare rose quartz 200 feet long and 100 feet wide that was donated to the town by Abbie Kendall Fish.

## ■ SOILS

The soils in the Town of Temple are a result of the forces of nature working on the land over a period of time. In Temple, as in the surrounding towns, this has resulted over a time span of roughly 12,000 years, or since the retreat of the ice sheet of the last glaciation. The soil material left behind by the ice, or the melt waters coming off of the retreating ice, is generally a mix of sand, silts, clays, and rock fragments such as gravel, cobbles, stones, and boulders. Over time the soil forming factors have been changing the soil to give them their present day look or their soil properties. Changes in temperature, freezing and thawing, leaching downward of minerals, additions of organic matter from decaying plants, activity of soil microbes, the presence of oxygen in well-drained sites, or the absence of oxygen in saturated soils have all contributed to make the wide variety of soil types that occur in Temple.

By far the most common kind of soil in Temple is glacial till. This is the soil material directly deposited by the ice during or at the end of the last glaciation. In the western part of Temple, at the higher elevations along the Wapack Mountain Range, the glacial till soils are generally a thin deposit of soil over the underlying bedrock. Soil types by the names of Lyman and Tunbridge are dominant in this part of town. Lyman is a well-drained, loamy textured, shallow to bedrock soil; and Tunbridge is a well-drained loamy textured, moderately deep to bedrock soil. These two soils and bedrock exposures that occur on moderately steep to steep land in the western part of Temple, present considerable limitations to many uses.

Marlow and Peru soils are two other types of glacial soils that are common in Temple. Marlow is a well-drained, loamy textured, very deep soil; and Peru is a moderately well-drained, loamy textured, very deep soil. These two soils have a dense and compacted substratum, often referred to as hardpan. The hardpan is considered as a restrictive layer with slow permeability. They occur in many areas of central and eastern Temple on the smooth side slopes and rounded hilltops. It is on these two soils types that much of the land in town was cleared of trees and stone cover for agriculture use. Agriculture has declined in town and many of the cleared areas have gone back to woodland.

Monadnock soils are well-drained, very deep soils formed in glacial till. This commonly occurring soil in Temple has a loamy textured surface and subsoil with a sandy textured substratum with moderately rapid to rapid permeability. Monadnock soils, located in the central and eastern parts of town on side slopes, hilltops, and plains, generally have an uneven (bumpy) topography.

The other kinds of soils that occur in Temple are quite numerous, but are small in area and scattered about town. There are small areas of glacial outwash soils. Outwash soils are formed in water deposited soil materials coming from the melt waters from the retreating glaciers. These sand or sand and gravel deposits are generally at lower elevations, and are usually near the major streams in Temple. The few sand or gravel pits in town are located in these soils because they are a good source of construction material. Colton and Adams are two of the soil types formed in these outwash materials. Also in town are a few small areas of alluvial soils. These are the floodplain soils that occur on flat areas adjacent to a few of the major streams. Podunk and Rumney are two soil types formed in alluvium.

Wetland soils are scattered around Temple. They are in depressions and along drainage ways. There are no large wetland areas in Temple, but the many small wetland areas in town are an important part of the landscape. These wetland areas provide important functions for water storage, water quality, wildlife habitat, and plant diversity. Wetland soils are referred to as hydric soils, and are the poorly and very poorly drained soils. Wetland soils generally have a dark surface layer underlain by gray colored subsoil, or in some areas on the wetter end of the spectrum, the soils are formed in organic deposits.

The soils in the Town of Temple have been identified, classified and mapped. The U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service has published a soils report for the western part of Hillsborough County that includes the Town of Temple. The publication is dated October 1985, and is the source for this narrative.

Other soil information is depicted on the *Development Constraints Map* (found following page 90), which maps the locations of various soil characteristics in order to understand better where certain kinds of development may not be feasible. This map includes Shallow to Bedrock (less than 40 inches) and Shallow to Water Table (less than one and a half feet) data.

There are a few areas of highly permeable soils scattered about town, but the only significant pocket is located east of the Village, straddling the General Miller Highway. Shallow to bedrock soils are scattered all over town, but are found predominantly along the western boundary.

## ■ SLOPES

The aforementioned *Development Constraints Map* also illustrates the location of slopes between 15% and 25% gradient as well as between 15% and 50% gradient. These steep slopes are predominant along the western boundary (Temple Mountain) and in the northern part of town (Pack Monadnock and North Pack Monadnock).

## ■ FORESTS

The Town of Temple is primarily a forest-covered scenic area of the Monadnock Region of New Hampshire. Major forest hardwood types include red oak, beech, maple, ash and birch. Softwood types in abundance are white pine, red pine, hemlock and spruce. Occasionally hardwood species such as

poplar, hornbeam, gum, black cherry, locust, butternut, chestnut, elm and hickory are found. A scattering of tamarack, cedar, balsam fir and yellow pine can also be found in some areas.

Temple has exceptional quality of red oak timber that is the basis of many quality hardwood products. Softwood timber can vary in quality as elevation changes and wind becomes a factor in the integrity of the trees. The northern region of Temple has varied hardwoods that give way to spruce cover at the height of the mountains, with only short, scrubby trees surviving the wild weather. In the protected valleys, some white pines up to one hundred feet high can be found. Hardwood types tend to naturally re-grow in cleared areas of town. As a rule, Temple's annual rains produce good tree growth of ¼ to ¾ inches in diameter per year.

Temple forests provide an abundant supply of acorns, beechnuts, softwood cones, and various berries that area wildlife relies upon. Several wetlands and swamps in town have great low bush and high bush blueberry species, as well as mountain ridge bushes. Many forest floors in town are thickly covered with mountain laurel, some having three to four-inch diameter trunks. Other areas are rock and ledge covered, and still others have soft pine needle covered floors.

Around the turn of the twentieth century, Temple enjoyed great views of the mountains, and much of the land was in agriculture, with grassy fields feeding the many cows and sheep. As farming profits dwindled, fields became forests again. Most of Temple's forests are quite young – only about seventy-five to one hundred years old. Some property boundary trees and others scattered around Temple have been deemed to be much older; one red oak measures 15.5 feet in circumference and is probably around two hundred years old.

Several small sugar-bush operations exist in town, adding to the New Hampshire traditional maple syrup resource. The forest-covered mountains in Temple make the town unique. Just a short ride around town would provide you with views that are very similar to the White Mountains areas in the northern part of the state of New Hampshire.

Temple has a town forest that covers 46 acres and is located on North Road. Around 1980, the Conservation Commission sponsored a logging of this forest, choosing a selective-cut type of operation. One fact of interest about the town forest is that large anthills can be found there.

Temple's forests have a good economic value for area residents to enjoy. Over the past six years timber yield taxes have been as follows:

1996	\$10,157
1997	\$9,886
1998	\$25,198
1999	\$11,291
2000	\$8,571
2001	\$25,330

Temple's forests were celebrated at its annual Harvest Festival in 2000. Many exhibits and displays provided a very informative and enjoyable show. Many residents enjoy walking Temples' Wapack Trail system that runs through the mountain region of Temple's forests. Many of Temple's forests are also open to hunting and other passive recreation. Living close to nature is a large part of the appeal of Temple to its residents.

■ **WILDLIFE**

The Town of Temple, with its varied tree and plant species supports many different mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, and fish. The topography has many different habitats attracting almost every upland species in New Hampshire.

Temple has an abundant white tailed deer population that relies on the prime bedding areas consisting of hemlocks, pines and spruces. These bedding areas provide shelter from the cold, wind and snow in the winter months. Deer and many other forest mammals rely on mast crops from red oaks, beech and apples for their winter diet. Temple supports quite a variety of wildlife with its varied tree and plant species.

Moose are on the increase in Temple, moving toward the newly timbered areas in the higher terrain. Black bears are staying steady in numbers in town, and rely on mast crops for feeding.

From the spruce mountaintops to the hardwood ridges, many brooks, streams, and fields attract the following species:

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**MAMMALS**

Beaver  
 Big Brown Bat  
 Black Bear  
 Bobcat  
 Coyote  
 Deer Mouse  
 Eastern Chipmunk  
 Eastern Cottontail  
 Eastern Striped Skunk  
 Ermine  
 Fisher  
 Gray Fox  
 Gray squirrel  
 Hairy Tailed Mole  
 Hoary Bat  
 House Mouse  
 Little Brown Bat  
 Long Tailed Shrew  
 Long Tailed Weasel  
 Lynx  
 Martin  
 Masked Shrew  
 Meadow Vole  
 Northern Flying Squirrel  
 Northern Long Eared Bat  
 Norway Rat  
 Otter  
 Porcupine  
 Pygmy Shrew  
 Raccoon

Moose  
 Red Fox  
 Mink  
 Red Squirrel  
 Smokey Shrew  
 Snowshoe Hare  
 Southern Flying Squirrel  
 Star Nosed Mole  
 Virginia Opossum  
 White Footed Mouse  
 White Tailed Deer  
 Woodchuck  
 Woodland Vole  
 Woodland Jumping Mouse

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**REPTILES**

Common Garter Snake  
 Milk Snake  
 Black Racer  
 Rough Green Snake  
 Common Water Snake  
 Ring Neck Snake  
 Timber Rattle Snake  
 Snapping Turtle  
 Blanding's Turtle  
 Painted Turtle  
 Spotted Turtle  
 Wood Turtle  
 Eastern Box Turtle  
 Red Belly Snake

**FISH**

Largemouth Bass  
 Bluegill  
 Brown Bullhead  
 Yellow Bullhead  
 Creek Chub  
 Northern Red Belly Dace  
 Swamp Darter  
 Black Nose Dace  
 Yellow Perch  
 Chain Pickerel  
 Pumpkinseed  
 Black Nose Shiner  
 Golden Shiner  
 Common Shiner  
 White Sucker  
 Black Nose Shiner  
 Golden Shiner  
 Common Shiner  
 White Sucker

Brook Trout  
 Red Breast Sunfish

**AMPHIBIANS**

Common Gray Tree Frog  
 Pickerel Frog  
 Wood Frog  
 Bull Frog  
 Green Frog  
 Northern Leopard Frog  
 Eastern Newt  
 Spring Peeper  
 Blue Spotted Salamander  
 Spotted Salamander  
 Red Black Salamander  
 Four Toed Salamander  
 Spring Salamander  
 Dusky Salamander  
 Two Lined Salamander  
 American Toad  
 Fowlers Toad

**BIRDS**

The bird population of a given area is largely determined by the topography, vegetation, surface water, climate, and elements that enhance or pose risks to habitat. Temple's varying elevations with hills, forests, meadows, and wetlands contribute to a rich diversity of bird-life. Many species nest locally, while others visit feeding grounds, frequent feeders, or migrate through with regularity. Pack Monadnock/Miller State Park is a major observatory of the spring and fall hawk migrations drawing birders from far and near. There is one small area in the center of Temple near the Town Common that has been designated a "bird sanctuary", an open meadow now containing a relocated historic schoolhouse.

Accurate records of Temple's bird population are sketchy. The Audubon Society makes results available of its surveys, but there have been years when Temple was not covered except for sporadic reports of unusual birds. Several residents have compiled informal records of their sightings and some are joining a research study sponsored by Cornell University to record species visiting residential feeders.

The Audubon Society probably published the most accurate survey of birds available in 1994 entitled *The Breeding Birds of New Hampshire*, which records several years of nesting birds observed in designated areas in the state. This publication records the following birds confirmed to nest near or in Temple, while others are \*probably nesting, or +possibly nesting.

Great Blue Heron	American Bittern *
Canada Goose	Wood Duck
American Black Duck	Mallard
Hooded Merganser	Turkey Vulture
Northern Goshawk	Red Shouldered Hawk *
Broad Winged Hawk *	Red Tailed Hawk
American Kestrel *	Ring Necked Pheasant +



Ruffed Grouse  
Virginia Rail+  
Spotted Sandpiper +  
Rock Dove  
Black Billed Cuckoo  
Great Horned Owl +  
Northern Saw-Whet Owl \*  
Chimney Swift  
Belted Kingfisher  
Downy Woodpecker  
Northern Flicker  
Olive Sided Flycatcher +  
Alder Flycatcher  
Eastern Phoebe  
Eastern Kingbird  
Northern Rough-Winged Swallow  
Cliff Swallow  
Blue Jay  
Common Raven  
Tufted Titmouse  
White-Breasted Nuthatch  
House Wren  
Golden Crowned Kinglet \*  
Veery  
Wood Thrush  
Gray Catbird  
Brown Thrasher \*  
European Starling  
Warbling Vireo \*  
Nashville Warbler  
Chestnut-Sided Warbler  
Black Throated Blue Warbler  
Black Throated Green Warbler\*  
Oven Bird \*  
Louisiana Waterthrush\*  
Canada Warbler +  
Northern Cardinal  
Indigo Bunting  
Chipping Sparrow  
Savannah Sparrow\*  
Swamp Sparrow  
Dark Eyed Junco  
Red Winged Blackbird  
Brown Headed Cowbird  
Purple Finch  
Red Crossbill \*  
American Gold Finch  
Wild Turkey  
Killdeer  
American Woodcock  
Mourning Dove  
Yellow Billed Cuckoo +  
Barred Owl  
Whip-Poor-Will  
Ruby Throated Hummingbird  
Yellow Bellied Sapsucker  
Hairy Woodpecker  
Pileated Woodpecker  
Eastern Wood-Pewee  
Least Flycatcher  
Great Crested Flycatcher  
Tree Swallow  
Bank Swallow  
Barn Swallow  
American Crow  
Black-Capped Chickadee  
Red Breasted Nuthatch  
Brown Creeper  
Winter Wren \*  
Eastern Bluebird  
Hermit Thrush  
American Robin  
Northern Mockingbird  
Cedar Waxwing  
Solitary Vireo  
Red eyed Vireo  
Yellow Warbler \*  
Magnolia Warbler \*  
Yellow Rumped Warbler  
American Redstart  
Northern Waterthrush \*  
Common Yellow Throat  
Scarlet Tanager \*  
Rose-Breasted Grosbeak  
Rufous-Sided Towhee  
Field Sparrow  
Song Sparrow  
White Throated Sparrow  
Bobolink  
Common Grackle  
Northern Oriole  
House Finch  
Pinesiskin  
House Sparrow

## ■ **NATURAL RECREATION LANDS**

Recreation facilities, for citizens of all ages are an essential element of the services provided by any well-planned community. A variety of public structured and unstructured recreational activities are available to Temple residents.

Town-owned natural recreation lands include Kendall Ledge, the Temple Town Forest, the Chris A. Weston Conservation Area, and the Brooks Quinn Memorial Bird Sanctuary.

Other recreation lands include the Wapack Trail, Miller State Park, the Joanne Bass Bross Preserve, the Heald Tract, the Cabot Memorial Forest, the Wapack National Wildlife Refuge, and the Temple Mountain Ski Area.

### ◆ **Kendall Ledge**

This unusual 16-acre area includes a beautiful outcropping of white and rare rose quartz, and offers spectacular easterly views. The area is managed by the Conservation Commission and is used for hiking, picnicking, and nature study.

### ◆ **Temple Town Forest**

The Town Forest is a 46-acre parcel located on North Road and is managed for harvest and recreation by the Conservation Commission. Upcoming plans for the property include a loop trail and a sign to identify the property.

### ◆ **Brooks Quinn Memorial Bird Sanctuary**

This property is located on the south side of the village and is cared for by the Village Green Committee and the Historical Society. It holds several birdhouses that attract blue birds, swallows, and sparrows. The Historical Society has recently relocated School House #6 from its original location on North Road to this site and is in the process of its renovation. Recently, the Village Green Committee dedicated two memorial benches for this property – in the memory of Wilfred Weston and Albert Quinn who were two of the founding members of the Village Green Committee.

### ◆ **Wapack Trail**

The Wapack Trail is a 21-mile (8 miles of which are in Temple) skyline footpath along the scenic north-south ridge of the Wapack Range. It begins at the base of Mt. Watatic in Ashburnham, MA and reaches altitudes of 2,200 feet before it ends at the foot of North Pack Monadnock Mt. in Greenfield, NH. The Wapack Trail is managed and maintained by the volunteer organization Friends of the Wapack.

### ◆ **Miller State Park**

This state park is located on the summit of Pack Monadnock and is the oldest state park in New Hampshire. 344 acres of this 544-acre park are located in Temple. The park contains three main hiking trails and a seasonal auto road to the summit. Picnic tables and an old fire tower (now used for viewing) can be found at the summit. The summit offers a panoramic view of the surrounding countryside. Mount Monadnock, 3,165 feet high can be seen twelve miles to the west. The park is named for General James Miller, long-time resident of Temple who fought in the War of 1812.

◆ **Joanne Bass Bross Preserve**

Owned by The Nature Conservancy, this new preserve consists of approximately 501 acres on Pack Monadnock in Temple and Peterborough. It connects the protected lands of Miller State Park and the Wapack National Refuge creating an important “core forest” conservation area. The Nature Conservancy’s vision is to see the long-term viability of many plant and animal species, such as forest interior dwelling birds and large mammals that require large core forest areas. The Wapack Trail passes through this property as it runs along the Pack Monadnock ridge.

◆ **Cabot Memorial Forest**

This 966-acre parcel has 308 acres located in Temple. It is owned and maintained by the New England Forestry Foundation. The Wapack Trail runs through the property.

◆ **The Heald Tract**

This recreation area is owned mostly by the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests as a gift from Philip and Ross Heald and Helen (Heald) Rader. This 410-acre property is located mostly in Wilton, but includes about 26 acres in Temple. Of particular interest on this property are the great herons with their rookery on the Tract. Heald Pond also provides a prime feeding area for other water birds, and beaver activity is common there. An extensive trail system can be found on the Heald Tract, and the area is restricted to hiking, fishing and observing wildlife. Also of note is that portions of the trails system pass over private lands by permission from the landowners.

◆ **Wapack National Wildlife Refuge**

Established in 1972 by the U.S. Department of Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service and managed as a wilderness area, this 1,672-acre refuge is located in Temple (475 acres), Lyndeborough, and Greenfield. The refuge is suitable for hiking, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, and wildlife observation. Hunting, trapping, camping, and motor vehicles are prohibited. This is a popular bird-watching area with cliff and bare ledge habitats.

◆ **Temple Mountain Ski Area**

Located on Route 101 at the Temple-Peterborough line, this has been a privately owned winter recreation area open to the public. In the past, this winter recreation area offered alpine and cross-country skiing, hiking and other activities. The ski area is currently closed and for sale.

◆ **Chris A. Weston Conservation Land**

Located on the east side of Route 45 north of the town center, the parcel is diverse with wetlands, forest, and fields. The 25.19-acre parcel is managed by the Conservation Commission and was officially dedicated in 2000. Owned by the Town of Temple.

■ **EASEMENTS**

Conservation easements are permanent deeded restrictions against future land development granted to a municipality or private conservation organization to encourage the preservation of open space, thus providing a healthful and attractive outdoor environment for work and recreation of the state’s citizens.

Easements maintain the character of the state's landscape and conserve the land, water, forest, agricultural and wildlife resources.

♦ **Stone Easement**

Located off West Road, the Stone property totals 147 acres on three contiguous parcels. This conservation easement was placed on the property through the LCIP program, and allows agricultural uses, but no further residential building. Stewarded by the Conservation Commission. Private ownership.

♦ **Banks Easement**

Located strategically within Temple's historic district, this 28-acre parcel is managed by the Monadnock Conservancy and promotes critical preservation in the historic district. Private ownership.

♦ **Sullivan Easement**

This easement protects 113 acres in Temple; however, it allows agricultural-related improvements to be made. Stewarded by the Monadnock Conservancy. Private ownership.

♦ **Banker Meadow Easement**

Located on the corner of West and Hill Road, this 5.3-acre easement conserves the rural landscape. Stewarded by the Conservation Commission. Private ownership.

♦ **Isobel Karl Easement**

Located between Foster Road, Blood Road and Perkins Lane, this easement protects 25.5 acres of meadows and woods along Temple's West Road. Private ownership.

♦ **Holt/Lockwood Conservation Easement**

This property is located at the end of Perkins Lane and consists of the Former Lackey Homestead of 92 acres, plus the 290-acre "Holt Mountain Pasture" parcel. Managed by the New England Forestry Foundation. Privately owned.

♦ **Souhegan Watershed Site 26**

This is a state of New Hampshire water flow easement on a flood control dam. This privately owned 11-acre parcel has no public access.

♦ **Souhegan Watershed Site 25B**

This property is in state fee ownership for a flood control dam on 79.5 acres, located partially in Temple. State ownership.

♦ **Souhegan Watershed 12A**

This property is in state fee ownership of 106 acres for reservoir and surrounding protective grounds (Greenville Reservoir) and is located on Route 45. The reservoir is a water supply source for the Town of Greenville. State ownership.

◆ **Doyle Easement**

Located on the easterly side of NH Route 45 (Senator Tobey Highway) and Cemetery Lane, the 7.7 acre property is important scenic open space in the center of town. The easement, held by the Monadnock Conservancy, ensures that the open fields remain unforested and available only for agricultural use.

■ **CURRENT USE**

The Current Use Taxation program reduces local real estate tax assessments for qualifying undeveloped land to a low range set by the Current Use Advisory Board, a state regulatory agency affiliated with the Department of Revenue Administration. The result of enrolling land in the program is, in most cases, a radical reduction in the municipal property tax bill. The price of this favorable treatment is a 10% penalty tax (10% of the Fair Market Value) when the property is later changed to a non-qualifying use.

This program was enacted in 1973 to promote the preservation of open land in the state by allowing qualifying land to be taxed at a reduced rate based on its current use value as opposed to a more extensive use. The minimum land area currently needed to qualify is 10 acres.

In comparing conservation easements to current use taxation, easements are permanent, while current use may be reversed by change to a non-qualifying use and payment of the Use Change Tax. Thus, current use may satisfy the goals of a landowner who cannot afford to permanently abandon future development value, but desires current property tax relief. If it becomes financially necessary to subdivide, the use change tax becomes an element of the development costs.

In Temple’s specific case, the monies collected from the Use Change Tax (10% of the Fair Market Value of a piece of land taken out of current use and sold for development) goes to the Conservation Commission for the acquisition of land and/or conservation easements. The Town of Temple has a total land area of 14,241 acres, of which 10,714 are in current use.

The current use designation, authorized by RSA 79-A, provides the town other benefits as well. This designation encourages landowners to maintain traditional land-based occupations such as farming and forestry. This promotes open space, preserving natural plant and animal communities, healthy surface and groundwater as well as providing opportunities for skiers, hikers, sightseers and hunters.

■ **AGRICULTURE**

Temple was a largely self-sufficient community rooted in agriculture from the time of its first settlement in 1755 until after World War I. In 1921, only 32 farmers still lived in Temple and the shift towards off-farm employment and the purchase of goods and services beyond Temple’s borders was well under way. By 1980, there were not more than five farms providing a living for their owners. In 2002, only one farm falls in that category.

Agricultural land area:	<u>1950</u> , 1,944 Acres.	<u>1970</u> , 1,679 Acres.	<u>1979</u> , 1,315 Acres
As % of total land:	13.7%	11.8%	9.2%
Total land (and water) area in Temple:	14,241 Acres.		

Prime agricultural soils in 1979 on undeveloped lands (not used for agriculture, but could be so used): 599 acres.

Active agricultural land according to the 1995 Souhegan study (acres taken from aerial photos): tilled 77 acres, untilled 1,359 acres, orchard 372 acres, total 1,808 acres. 2003 tax assessing records indicate that Temple has 964 acres in agricultural use.