

PROTECT NATURAL RESOURCES

Overview

This “briefing booklet” has been prepared as part of the process of preparing an update to the 2008 Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) for Branford. This booklet is intended to familiarize the members of the POCD Update Committee and others existing and potential future strategies related to natural resources.

What Are “Natural Resources”?

For the purposes of the POCD, the term “natural resources” is considered to include:

- Water resources (including surface water and groundwater)
- Land / soil resources
- Air resources
- Biologic resources (plants and animals)

Protecting natural resource is important since doing so helps promote overall environmental health, preserve environmental functions, enhance community character, and enhance the overall quality of life.

Water Resources



Habitats



Natural Diversity Database

The Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (CT-DEEP) maintains a Natural Diversity Database (NDDDB) in order to help public agencies protect important resources such as known locations of:

- endangered species,
- threatened species,
- species of special concern,
- significant natural communities,
- scenic areas, and/or
- unique natural assets (waterfalls, caves, etc.)..

In some cases, the exact locations are masked to protect sensitive species from collection and disturbance.

Possible Verbs

- **Preserve**
- **Protect**
- **Enhance**
- **Prioritize**
- **Manage**

Background

Inventory

The map on the facing page shows the location of some of the important natural resources in Branford:

Land-Related Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Steep slopes• Stratified drift aquifer areas
Water-Related Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Waterbodies / watercourses• Wetlands• Inland / riverine floodplains
Biologic-Related Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Plant and animal habitats• Natural Diversity Database Sites• Vernal pools
Air-Related Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Everywhere

Assessment

Branford prepared a Natural Resources Inventory in 2003 and the 2013 update noted that Branford continued to enjoy a relatively high quality of natural resources. The report noted that threats to natural resources might arise from:

- Stress from growth / development.
- Sea level rise / climate change.

At the community meeting held at the start of the planning process, participants identified the following natural resource issues as being important:

- Protection of water quality.
- Protection of the overall eco-system (habitats, air quality, bio-diversity, invasive species, etc.).
- Averting threats to natural resources as a result of development.

2008 POCD

GOAL	Minimize impact on natural resources from human activities.
STRATEGIES	Protect Water Quality Protect Biologic Resources Protect Air Quality

DRAFT

North
Branford

Branford Hill

Pine Orchard

Stony Creek

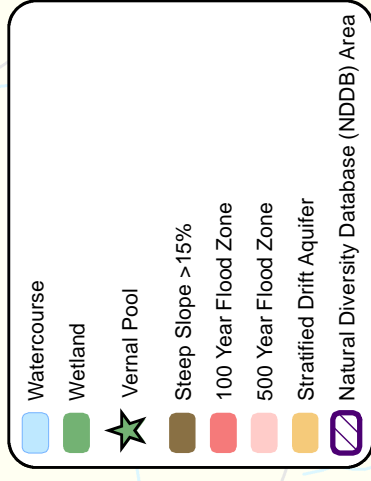
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Bradford Center

land,



4,000 Feet





Possible Strategies For 2018 POCD

2008
KEY STRATEGY

Maintain and Improve Water Quality

The 5-Year POCD Update reported that the Branford Recreation Department is a national trend-setter in the use of organic fertilizers for all playing fields and playgrounds.

A. Maintain And Improve Overall Water Quality	Comments
1. Continue <u>programs and efforts to maintain and improve water quality – including drinking water supplies, surface waters, and groundwater.</u>	
a. Promote sewage pump-out boats, land use agency coordination, the Branford River Project, storm drain marking, etc.	Seems too detailed.
b. Develop more stringent water quality standards for properties along the coast.	Not sure what this means or how it would be implemented
2. <u>Discourage the use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides.</u>	

B. Address Stormwater Quality	Comments
1. Continue <u>programs and efforts to improve stormwater quality.</u>	
a. <u>Review and update Section 6.9 of the Zoning Regulations to incorporate specific “low impact development” (LID) standards (such as those contained in Section 7.4 of the Connecticut Stormwater Quality Manual (2004), as amended).</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>  The utility infrastructure section of the POCD will likely include a map of “hydrologic soils groups”
b. <u>Prepare a plan to retrofit existing stormwater management systems utilizing modern water treatment approaches such as LID.</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. <u>Complete “marking” of storm drains so people know that material flowing into such drains affects water quality downstream.</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. <u>Continue to maintain and implement Branford’s Stormwater Management Plan.</u>	Part of the “MS4” General Permit for Branford

C. Improve Erosion And Sedimentation Control	Comments
1. <u>Eliminate (or reduce) erosion and the resulting sedimentation of catch basins, drainage pipes, culverts, wetlands and waterways.</u>	
2. <u>Continue to require implementation and maintenance of erosion and sedimentation controls.</u>	

Address Water Quantity And Inland Flooding Issues

NEW
STRATEGY

See briefing booklet on Coastal Issues for discussion of strategies related to coastal flooding.

A. Address Water Quantity And Inland Flooding Issues		Comments
1. <u>Address water quantity and flooding issues in inland areas in terms of:</u>		✱
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>managing new development, and</u> • <u>updating existing drainage systems / culverts.</u> 		
a. <u>Revisit design criteria for stormwater systems to reflect the changing frequency and intensity of storm events.</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2. <u>Continue to participate in the National Flood Insurance Program.</u>		
3. <u>Unless in strict accordance with the National Flood Insurance Program:</u>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Prohibit construction of new structures or expansion of existing structures within the inland 100-year flood zone.</u> • <u>Discourage development in flood prone areas including construction of new structures or expansion of existing structures within the inland 500-year flood zone.</u> 		
4. <u>Seek to reduce flood insurance premiums for Branford properties.</u>		
a. <u>Participate in the Community Rating System program in order to enable Branford properties to be eligible for lower flood insurance premiums.</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Relocated from Utilities
b. <u>Implement flood hazard reduction programs</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Relocated from Utilities

The 5-Year POCD Update reported that the RTM adopted updates to the Flood Ordinance.

Protect Other Important Natural Resources

The 5-Year POCD Update reported that the Parks and Open Space Commission, in cooperation with the Conservation Commission, conducts annual invasive plant removal and litter pick up events.

A. Protect Important Land-Related Resources		Comments
1.	<u>Continue to protect steep slopes from development pressures.</u>	

B. Protect Important Water-Related Resources		Comments
1.	<u>Continue to protect watercourses / wetlands from development impacts or minimize any such impacts.</u>	

C. Protect Important Biologic-Related Resources		Comments
1.	<u>Protect important plant and animal habitats listed on the State's Natural Diversity Database.</u>	
a.	<u>Ensure that habitat area protection strategies are adequately addressed in local regulations.</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b.	<u>Continue to protect the unique habitats provided by vernal pools.</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.	<u>Encourage the preservation, maintenance, and planting of trees for their environmental, runoff, and visual benefits.</u>	
3.	<u>Continue to require the use of native species (and discourage invasive species) in Branford.</u>	

D. Protect Important Air-Related Resources		Comments
1.	<u>Promote efforts to maintain and improve air quality.</u>	Enforcement is challenging
a.	<u>Continue to consider land use strategies (transit-oriented development and mixed use) to reduce vehicle emissions.</u>	
2.	<u>Discourage the idling of vehicles with internal combustion engines.</u>	
a.	<u>Continue to evaluate air quality impacts, such as dust and odors that may result from new development.</u>	Evaluate seems like a weak word

Maintain The Natural Resources Inventory

NEW
STRATEGY

A. . Protect Important Natural Areas		Comments
1.	<u>Maintain and</u> update the Natural Resource Inventory as needed.	

Are there any other policies or action steps you believe should be included in Branford's natural resource protection strategies?

If so, please make notes below.

Reference Materials

1. Branford Plan of Conservation and Development (2008)
2. Natural Resources Inventory (2003) and 2013 Update
3. Inland Wetland Regulations
4. Inland Wetlands Department website / information
5. Branford Vernal Pool Study (2002)
6. A Salt Marsh Advancement Zone Assessment (2014)
7. Zoning Regulations
8. Stormwater Management Plan (2017)

Notes & Comments



Planimetrics

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