

# NATURAL, CULTURAL & HISTORIC RESOURCES

## ***Natural Resources***

### **Regional Resources**

Many of Franklin's decisions concerning its resource protection will have affects on a much greater scale than the local level. Water conservation, land use planning, and habitat protection are just a few issues that have an impact beyond local planning. A number of important natural resources in the Town cross municipal boundaries and must be managed jointly with other local governments. One of the most significant natural resources in the region is the Charles River Watershed. With the Charles River as its northern border, Franklin is part of this watershed whose vitality requires a broad level of resource protection and planning between multiple municipalities and local and regional planning agencies.

Another shared resource is the Southern New England Trunkline Trail (SNETT), which runs 22 miles through six nearby communities. A further description of the trail is found in the Open Space & Recreation section of the Master Plan.

## ***Topography, Geology & Soils***

### **Topography**

Repeated advances of glacial ice are primarily responsible for the current topography of the area, which is characterized by low, rounded hills and open valleys. Overall, the topography of the majority of Franklin is 250-350 feet above sea level. It drops to about 200 feet in the north near Mine Brook and the Charles River, and to less than 150 feet near Populatic Pond. The highest elevations are found in the southern portion of town with elevations reaching 470 feet above sea level. There are also portions of northern Franklin that reach elevations over 400 feet.

### **Bedrock Geology**

Bedrock is the solid rock that underlies the soil and other materials that are exposed at the surface. Franklin's bedrock consists primarily of two types of granite, Dedham Granite and Quincy Granite. Dedham Granite runs through the lower half of Franklin, from the Town's eastern border with Norfolk to the southern border with Wrentham. Quincy Granite runs through the northern half of Town from the northwestern border of Franklin with Medway and Millis to its southern border with Wrentham.<sup>1</sup> (See Map NCH-1: Bedrock & Till).

In addition to granite, a small band of diorite and diabase dikes and sills are found along the Town's eastern border with Norfolk. Along the southeastern boarder with Wrentham there is a strip of the Wamsutta Formation, a red to pink conglomerate of sandstone shale and rhyolite found primarily in North Attleboro. The Bellingham-Franklin line shows the most variation of bedrock formations, straddled with a strip of the Blackstone Group, consisting of quartzite, schist, phyllite, marble and metavolcanic rocks, to the north and south with Mattapan Volcanic Complex between the two areas of the Blackstone Group.<sup>2</sup>

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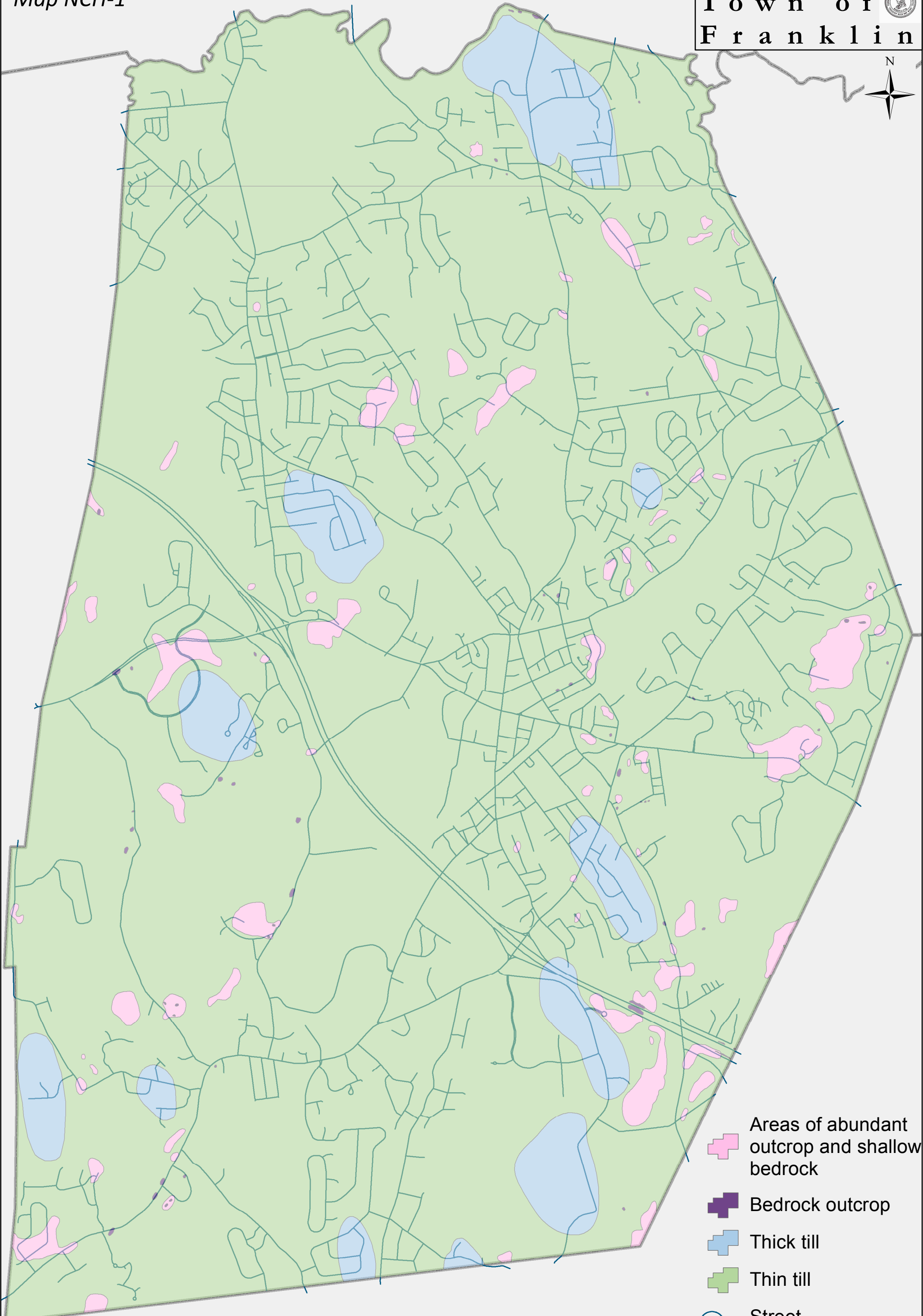
<sup>1</sup> United States Department of Agriculture- Soil Conservation Services. Soil Survey of Norfolk and Suffolk Counties, Massachusetts. *Generalized Bedrock Geology Map*. Issued September 1989.






<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*.

# B e d r o c k   &   T i l l

Map NCH-1

Town of  
Franklin



-  Areas of abundant outcrop and shallow bedrock
-  Bedrock outcrop
-  Thick till
-  Thin till
-  Street

## Surficial Geology

An area's surficial geology is the loose materials, till, sand and gravel, or clay, which cover its bedrock. The bedrock throughout Franklin is covered by stratified glacial deposits of sand and gravel and glacial tills (unsorted glacial sediment). Franklin's surficial geology consists primarily of deep, moderate to well drained fine, sandy loams on top of hills and low areas within uplands. The composition of Franklin's surficial geology in the northwest and southwest corners of Town categorize it as prime farmland, making it ideal for growing cultivated crops, hay, pasture or use as orchards. Other areas of Franklin that are not classified as prime farm lands are more suitable for woodland growth and tend to have soils that consist of fine, sandy loam with outcroppings of large stones covering the surface area.

## Soils

Knowledge of the soil types located within Franklin is a valuable tool for land use planning. Farming, development and construction uses, flood management and many other uses can be sited in appropriate locations by looking at soil conditions. From the homeowner wishing to plant a flower garden, to the developer wanting to construct a large housing subdivision with septic systems, all the way to the Town Engineer planning roadway construction, soil types are a key component for determining where particular land uses would be most appropriate. Table NCH-1 shows the most abundant soil types found throughout Franklin.

**Table NCH-1: Top Five Most Prevalent Soil Types in Franklin**

Soil Type	Approximate Acres ± in Franklin	Percent of Total Acres
Canton Fine Sandy Loam	2,188	14.3%
Charlton-Hollis-Rock Outcrop Complex	2,043	13.4%
Montauk Fine Sandy Loam	1,711	11.2%
Woodbridge Fine Sandy Loam	1,572	10.3%
Merrimac Fine Sandy Loam	1,085	7.1%
<b>Total Acres in Franklin</b>	<b>15,242</b>	<b>-</b>

Source: <http://www.mass.gov/mgis/soi.htm>

Map NCH-2: Soils & Geologic Features shows soil types throughout Franklin with a small sub-map showing the distribution of the top five soil types and their associated qualities. Understanding the Town's soils will enable better land use planning and development.

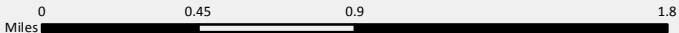
Historically, Franklin has been a Town with a rich agricultural history due to the high quality of its soil. The U.S. Department of Agriculture defines prime farmland as land that produces the highest yields while requiring minimal amounts of energy and economic resources, and results in the least damage to the environment when it is utilized or farmed.<sup>3</sup> Four of the five largest soil types in Franklin are classified as prime farmland (Woodbridge Fine Sandy Loam, Merrimac Fine Sandy Loam, Canton Fine Sandy Loam and Montauk Fine Sandy Loam). The prime farmland soils in Franklin are all moderately deep to very deep soils with a 0 to 8 percent slope. Each of the soils classified as prime farmlands are well suited for the growth of cultivated crops, pastures, gardens and orchards.

<sup>3</sup> United States Department of Agriculture- Soil Conservation Services. Soil Survey of Norfolk and Suffolk Counties, Massachusetts. Page 71. issued September 1989.

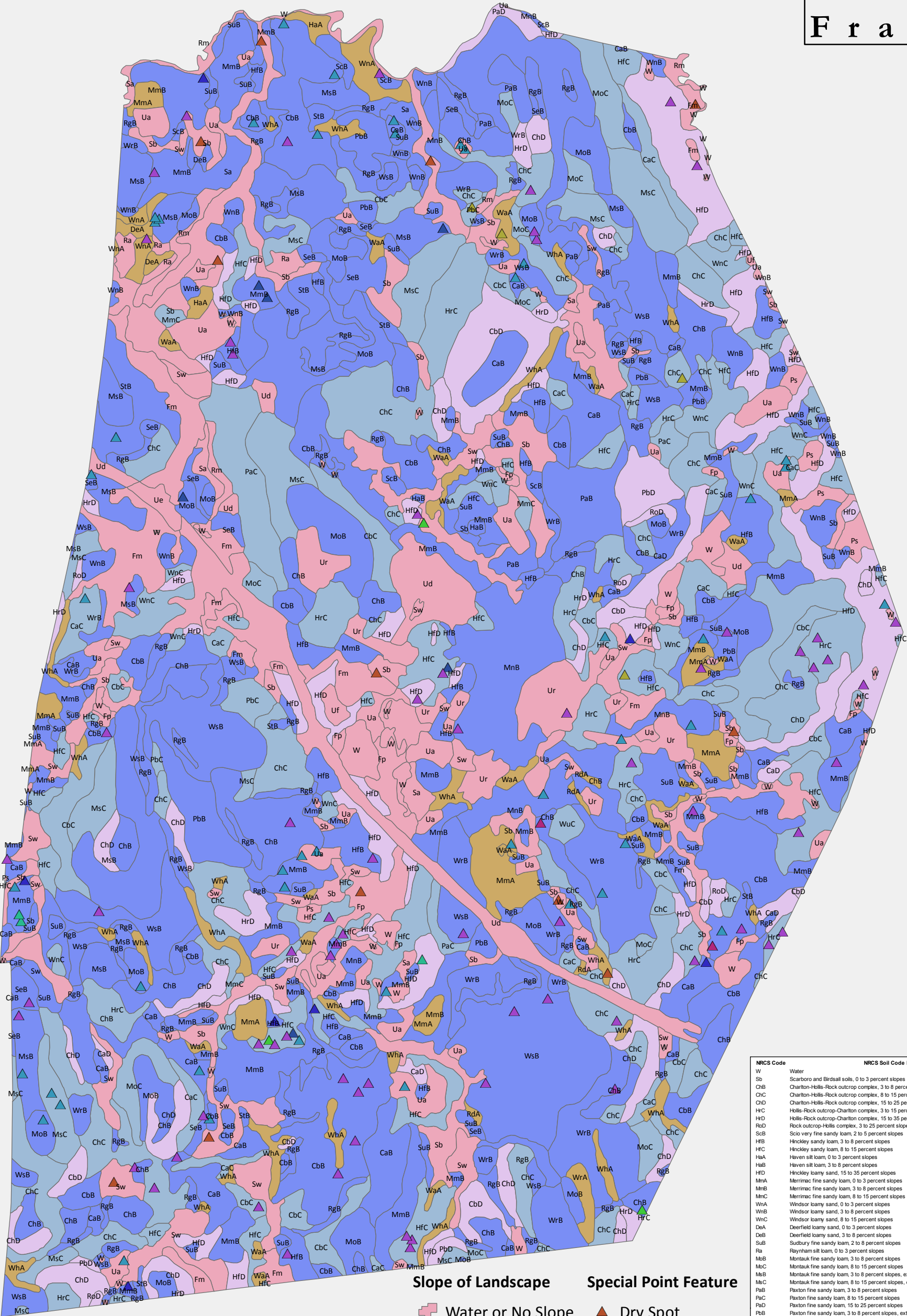


# Soils & Geological Features

Map NCH-2



Town of Franklin



### Slope of Landscape

- Water or No Slope
- 0-3%
- 3-8%
- 8-15%
- 15-25%

### Special Point Feature

- Dry Spot
- Gravel Pit
- Marsh or Swamp
- Rock Outcrop
- Sandy Spot
- Spoil Area
- Stony Spot
- Very Stony Spot
- Wet Spot

NRCS Code	NRCS Soil Code Description	Total Acreage
W	Water	7245
Sb	Scarboro and Birdsall soils, 0 to 3 percent slopes	25353
ChB	Charlton-Hollis-Rock outcrop complex, 3 to 8 percent slopes	27810
ChC	Charlton-Hollis-Rock outcrop complex, 8 to 15 percent slopes	40356
ChD	Charlton-Hollis-Rock outcrop complex, 15 to 25 percent slopes	14514
HrC	Hollis-Rock outcrop-Charlton complex, 3 to 15 percent slopes	18860
HrD	Hollis-Rock outcrop-Charlton complex, 15 to 25 percent slopes	3796
RdA	Rock outcrop-Hollis complex, 3 to 25 percent slopes	1204
ScB	Scio very fine sandy loam, 2 to 5 percent slopes	1547
HfB	Hinckley sandy loam, 3 to 8 percent slopes	11896
HfC	Hinckley sandy loam, 8 to 15 percent slopes	26258
HfA	Haven silt loam, 0 to 3 percent slopes	932
HfB	Haven silt loam, 3 to 8 percent slopes	267
HfD	Hinckley loamy sand, 15 to 35 percent slopes	27943
MmA	Merrimac fine sandy loam, 0 to 3 percent slopes	7625
MmB	Merrimac fine sandy loam, 3 to 8 percent slopes	35479
MmC	Merrimac fine sandy loam, 8 to 15 percent slopes	818
WnA	Windsor loamy sand, 0 to 3 percent slopes	2344
WnB	Windsor loamy sand, 3 to 8 percent slopes	7217
WnC	Windsor loamy sand, 8 to 15 percent slopes	8151
DeA	Deerfield loamy sand, 0 to 3 percent slopes	819
DeB	Deerfield loamy sand, 3 to 8 percent slopes	316
SuB	Sudbury fine sandy loam, 2 to 8 percent slopes	11344
Ra	Raynham silt loam, 0 to 3 percent slopes	1462
MoB	Montauk fine sandy loam, 3 to 8 percent slopes	17492
MoC	Montauk fine sandy loam, 8 to 15 percent slopes	7765
MeB	Montauk fine sandy loam, 3 to 8 percent slopes, extremely stony	25650
MeC	Montauk fine sandy loam, 8 to 15 percent slopes, extremely stony	17874
PaB	Paxton fine sandy loam, 3 to 8 percent slopes	7652
PaC	Paxton fine sandy loam, 8 to 15 percent slopes	7103
PaD	Paxton fine sandy loam, 15 to 25 percent slopes	996
PbB	Paxton fine sandy loam, 3 to 8 percent slopes, extremely stony	7181
PbC	Paxton fine sandy loam, 8 to 15 percent slopes, extremely stony	1705
PbD	Paxton fine sandy loam, 15 to 25 percent slopes, extremely stony	2902
WnA	Woodbridge fine sandy loam, 0 to 3 percent slopes	858
WnB	Woodbridge fine sandy loam, 3 to 8 percent slopes	29709
WnB	Woodbridge fine sandy loam, 3 to 8 percent slopes, extremely stony	33085
SeB	Scituate fine sandy loam, 3 to 8 percent slopes	5553
SfB	Scituate fine sandy loam, 3 to 8 percent slopes, extremely stony	5848
WnA	Walpole sandy loam, 0 to 5 percent slopes	4305
Rn	Rippowam silt loam, 0 to 3 percent slopes	2645
CaB	Canton fine sandy loam, 3 to 8 percent slopes	17492
CaC	Canton fine sandy loam, 8 to 15 percent slopes	8151
CaD	Canton fine sandy loam, 15 to 35 percent slopes	3229
CbB	Canton fine sandy loam, 3 to 8 percent slopes, extremely stony	35002
CbC	Canton fine sandy loam, 8 to 15 percent slopes, extremely stony	16410
CbD	Canton fine sandy loam, 15 to 25 percent slopes, extremely stony	8281
Sa	Saco silt loam, 0 to 3 percent slopes	9031
Sw	Swansboro muck, 0 to 1 percent slopes	17007
Fm	Freetown muck, 0 to 1 percent slopes	16573
Fp	Freetown muck, ponded, 0 to 1 percent slopes	7078
Rs	Rs, sand and gravel	2419
Ur	Urban land, 0 to 15 percent slopes	10431
WnA	Woodbridge-Urban land complex, 3 to 15 percent slopes	723
MmB	Merrimac-Urban land complex, 0 to 8 percent slopes	15690
Uf	Udorthents, refuse substratum	592
Ua	Udorthents, sandy	15477
Ud	Udorthents, loamy	17520
Ue	Udorthents, w et substratum	811
RdA	Ridgebury fine sandy loam, 0 to 5 percent slopes	492
RgB	Ridgebury fine sandy loam, 2 to 8 percent slopes, extremely stony	25733
WnA	Whitman fine sandy loam, 0 to 5 percent slopes, extremely stony	8424

Areas in the southeastern portion of Town where large sections of Woodbridge soils are found may require some small to mid-sized rocks to be removed prior to farming, but after minor preparation, the land can be highly productive. Merrimack soils (located primarily in the northern section of Franklin) may need extra preparation to hold water during times of drought. With some extra work, this soil type could successfully be able to yield a substantial vegetable garden.

While another of the top five largest soil types in Franklin, Charlton-Hollis-Rock Outcrop Complex, is not classified as prime farmland, it is very well suited for dwellings with basements (Charlton soils) and some small commercial buildings. Before building, it would be ideal if the Hollis soils, related to the complex, were either filled or blasted due to the shallow depth of the bedrock.<sup>4</sup>

## **Vegetation**

The Town of Franklin consists of a variety of soil types and hydrologic conditions which support a wide variety of vegetation. The native forests of the area are a mixture of coniferous and hardwood trees; Appendix NCH: Species Lists, Table 1: Native Tree Species is a list of species that are native and well adapted to the area's climate. While the forests of this region support a variety of tree species, the primary types are varieties of oak, red maple and white pine. These tree types are abundant because of the Canton and Charlton soils, which are common in the area; these soil types are well suited to oak and pine growth. Red maples, which grow well in Woodbridge and Walpole soils, are also found within Franklin.

The Conservation Commission is responsible for maintaining Town owned forested areas. Franklin has a Forest Stewardship Plan in place that recommends tree thinning to occur at regular intervals within the Town Forest. Recently, the Commission hired a certified forester to mark trees within the Town Forest for removal. As of June 2013, tree thinning at the Town forest is on hold.

Franklin's upland and wetland areas sustain a wide variety of vegetation ranging from deciduous shrubs, herbaceous plants, small fruit producing shrubs to groundcovers; other wetland plants include multiple varieties of rushes, sedges and reeds. Not only are many of these species native to the Franklin area, but many are also recommended habitat-creating species that are generally well-suited for planting in constructed wetlands, wet swales and other Storm water management areas. (See Appendix NCH: Species Lists, Table 2: Wetland Species).

Franklin provides numerous protected areas of habitat for both flora and fauna. With nearly 2,000± acres of protected open space, the Town is able to provide a sheltered area to some of the more vulnerable plant species in the area. The National Heritage & Endangered Species Program (NHESP) reports two endangered vascular plant species in Franklin: the tiny-flowered buttercup and rigid flax. (See Table NCH-2: Endangered, Threatened, or Special Concern Plants in Franklin). It should be noted that neither of these species have been observed within Franklin in over 100 years.

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<sup>4</sup> United States Department of Agriculture- Soil Conservation Services. Soil Survey of Norfolk and Suffolk Counties, Massachusetts. Pages 25-26. Issued September 1989.

**Table NCH-2: Endangered, Threatened, or Special Concern Plants in Franklin**

<b>Taxonomic Group</b>	<b>Scientific Name</b>	<b>Common Name</b>	<b>State Listed Status</b>	<b>Most Recent Observation</b>
Vascular Plant	<i>Linum medium</i> var. <i>texanum</i>	Rigid Flax	Threatened	1886
Vascular Plant	<i>Ranunculus micranthus</i>	Tiny-flowered Buttercup	Endangered	1910

Source: Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife. Natural Heritage & Endangered Species, Rare Species by Town: Massachusetts Endangered Species Act and Federal status; Franklin.  
[http://www.mass.gov/dfwle/dfw/nhesp/species\\_info/town\\_lists/town\\_f.htm](http://www.mass.gov/dfwle/dfw/nhesp/species_info/town_lists/town_f.htm)

## ***Hydrology and Water Resources***

### **Watersheds**

As shown on Map NCH-3: Water Resources, Franklin is located within the Blackstone and Charles River Watersheds; however, only a small portion of Franklin falls within the Blackstone Watershed area. The Water Resources map also shows Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) approved Zone I and II Wellhead Protection Areas as well as MassDEP Interim Wellhead Protection Areas.

There are two major types of aquifers in the area: sand and gravel aquifers; and those found in the bedrock formations. Sand and gravel aquifers were formed by melting glaciers at the end of the last ice age. The other type of aquifer, which underlies the area, is in the bedrock and has cracks and crevices through which water travels. Unlike aquifers found in bedrock formations, sand and gravel aquifers, which are not very deep and are located near surface water bodies, are capable of producing hundreds of gallons of water per minute. Sand and gravel aquifers are the most important aquifer type for the Town of Franklin's municipal wells. Such wells range in diameter from 10 to 24 inches and in depth from 20 to 80 feet with an average depth of about 50 feet. The wells' capacity averages approximately 500 gallons per minute. Within Franklin there are nine (9) public wellheads that operate to fulfill the Town's water requirements; it should be noted that all 9 wells do not operate at the same time.

### **Water**

A major environmental concern in Franklin is both the quality and quantity of its water supply. Franklin is completely dependent upon wells for its water supply. Therefore, it is imperative that both the quality and quantity of the water sources be maintained. Franklin created a Water Resource District to protect, preserve and maintain the existing and potential ground and surface water resources that provide water supply to Franklin. The State's efforts to encourage keeping wastewater local and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Phase II Storm water Management Regulations ensure that more water is returned to the ground to recharge aquifers in a way that maintains quality. Preservation of open space as well as education efforts regarding the use of fertilizers and pesticides, are key components in addressing water quality in Franklin Map NCH-3: Water Resources

### **Surface Water**

Approximately 1.5% (265.727± acres) of Franklin's land area consists of lakes and ponds, while an additional 6.14% (1,052± acres) includes marshes, rivers and streams.<sup>5</sup>

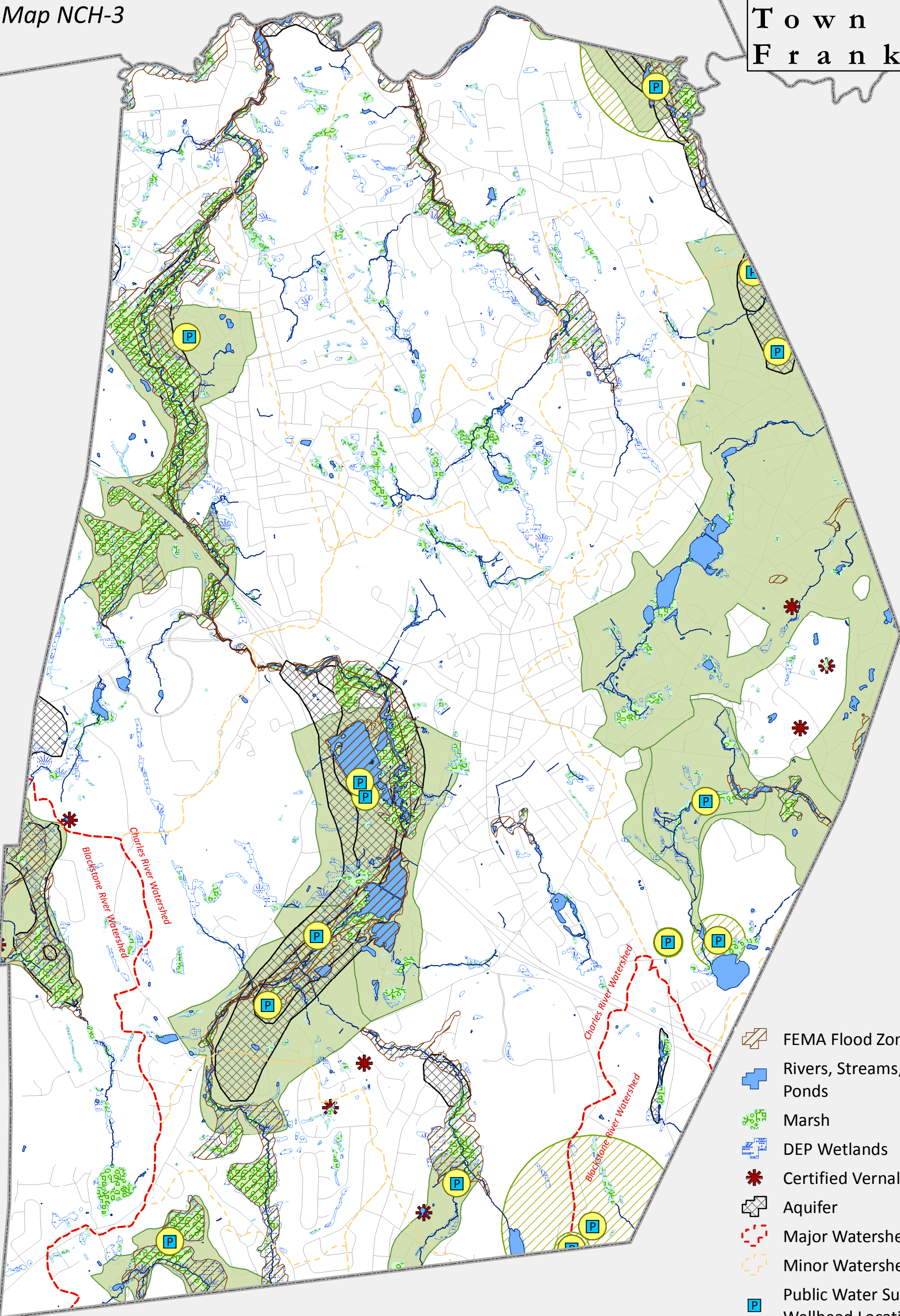
<sup>5</sup> Town of Franklin GIS, February 2010.



# Water Resources

Map NCH-3

Town of  
Franklin



- FEMA Flood Zones A & AE
- Rivers, Streams, Lakes & Ponds
- Marsh
- DEP Wetlands
- Certified Vernal Pools
- Aquifer
- Major Watershed Basin
- Minor Watershed Basin
- Public Water Supply Wellhead Location
- DEP Approved Zone I Wellhead Protection Area
- DEP Approved Zone II Wellhead Protection Area
- DEP Approved Interim Wellhead Protection Area (IWPA)

As Map NCH-3: Water Resources, illustrates, most of Franklin's aquifers are associated with and are in close proximity to surface water bodies; however, none of Franklin's major surface water bodies serve as a source for drinking water. Franklin draws its public water supply from wells that tap aquifers associated with these water bodies. Surface water resources located within Franklin are shown in Table NCH-3: Franklin's Surface Water Bodies

**Table NCH-3: Franklin's Surface Water Bodies**

Beaver Pond	Shepherd's Brook	Mine Brook
Western Shore of Populatic Pond	Spruce Pond	Franklin Reservoir
Uncas Pond	Ray's Pond	Dix Brook
Uncas Brook	Joachim Pond	Miscoe Brook
Charles River	Green Pond	Miller Brook

## Wetlands

The Town of Franklin amended its wetlands bylaw in 1997 to be a more comprehensive and restrictive wetlands protection bylaw. The Town's Bylaw is used for permitting in conjunction with the State Act to help protect all of the Town's wetlands. The Town of Franklin has an estimated 1,950± acres<sup>6</sup> of State delineated wetlands (see Map NCH-4: Wetlands & Certified Vernal Pools). No matter how big or small a wetland is in Franklin, the Town's Bylaw requires a Conservation Permit for any development proposed within or adjacent to them.

Since wetlands are dynamic in nature, Franklin requires a wetlands scientist to delineate the line between uplands (any non-wetland areas) and wetlands, in order to establish a surveyable line. A three pronged methodology consisting of vegetation identification, soils identification, and the height of ground water are used by the wetland scientist to form one line. This line is the line of demarcation between wetlands and uplands.

Many of the wetlands within Franklin are located along the sides of streams, brooks, creeks, or channels. Any stream, creek, or brook that flows throughout the year is considered perennial; there are approximately 295,760± linear feet of perennial waterways within Franklin.<sup>7</sup> While perennial waterways flows year round, any stream, creek, or brook that dries out so there is no flow throughout the year is considered intermittent; within Franklin there are approximately 155,940± linear feet of intermittent waterways.<sup>8</sup> The wetlands that surround both intermittent and perennial waterways, the surface water bodies, and the many isolated wetlands have very important functions in the community. They provide recharge for both public and private wells, act as storage for flood control, provide for storm damage prevention, aid in water quality and pollution control, and provide habitat for all types of flora and fauna.

The Town's Conservation Commission actively protects the interests of the waterways and wetlands within Franklin to ensure that the wetlands will continue to function in their natural capacity and continue to benefit the community.

## Flood Areas

Franklin has a large area of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Charles River Natural Valley Storage Area (CRNV) within its borders, which consists of wetlands, marshes and wet meadow areas. The area is a small subsection of over 8,000 acres of a larger area of protected land located throughout the Charles River Natural Valley Storage Area which is owned by the Army Corps of Engineers and managed by the Massachusetts Department of Fisheries and Wildlife. The lands of the CRNV provide a passive means of avoiding flooding within Franklin and the Towns located downstream along the Charles River watershed, by allowing flood waters to be

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*



stored on low lands that have been kept free of development rather than constructing a large system of floodwalls, pipes, dams and other such measures. In addition to flood protection, this area provides the added benefits of maintaining open space and recreation lands, scenic views, wildlife habitats and more.

## **Vernal Pools**

According to the National Heritage & Endangered Species Program (NHES), a vernal pool, also known as an ephemeral pool, is a small area that fills with water in the autumn or winter as a result of rising ground water and rainfall and remains through the spring and into summer. Vernal pools are important areas to protect as they provide habitat for invertebrates and amphibians during breeding season; these pools provide a safe place for species to lay eggs that are free from fish. As of April 13, 2007 the Town of Franklin has six (6) NHES certified Vernal pools; three are located in the northeast side of town near Chestnut Street and Jordan Road and three are located in the southern portion of Town in the vicinity of Jefferson Road (see Map NCH-4: Wetlands & Certified Vernal Pools).

## **Wildlife & Fisheries**

The large variety of wildlife habitats in Franklin, ranging from open fields to dense wooded areas to abundant water supplies, makes Franklin attractive to a diversity of wildlife. Since there isn't a list of species specific to Franklin, it's easier to discuss the types of wildlife that may be found in areas of Franklin as described by the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife. The kind and abundance of wildlife depends to a large extent on the amount and distribution of food, cover and water.

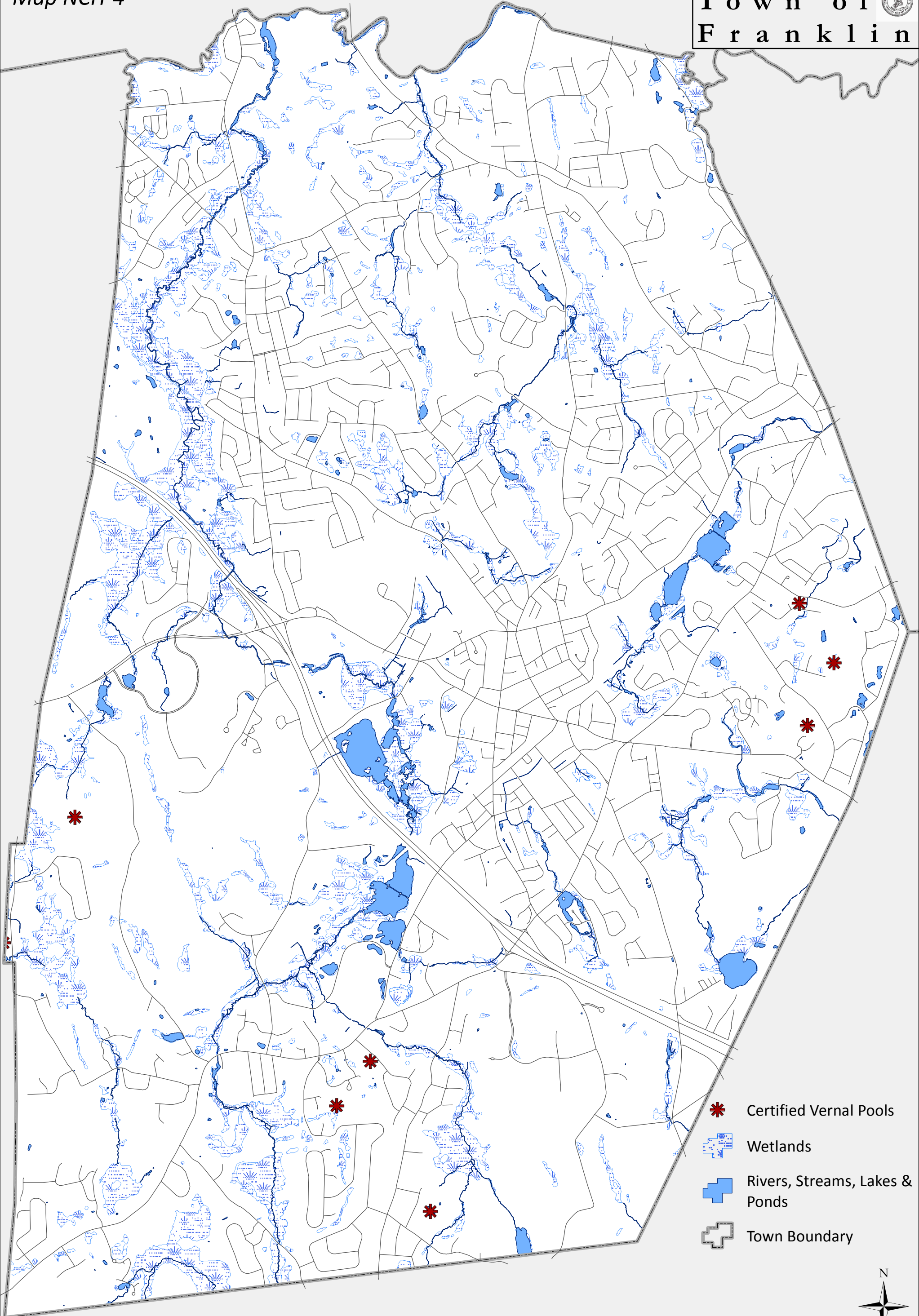
The Charles River, plus numerous other streams and ponds, provide habitat for fisheries in Franklin. The varieties of fish that are found in the water bodies of Franklin depends on the type of water area in which the fish are located. In the muddy waterways of Franklin, it is possible to find varieties of catfish such as the yellow or brown bullhead. In the clear, bustling brooks and rivers of Town, brown, rainbow and brook trout are likely feeding in the swift currents. Other varieties of fish, such as the pumpkinseed or redbreasted sunfish, are likely to be found in a majority of the local ponds of Franklin. Appendix NCH: Species Lists, Table 3: Freshwater Fish is a list of the freshwater fish that inhabit the waterways and water bodies of the Franklin area.

The array of habitats available to wildlife in Franklin include croplands, pastures, meadows, dense woodlands, vegetated lowlands, wetlands, including ponds and marshes and many other environments. All of these areas vary in size and location, from large farms and forested areas, to smaller neighborhoods and even backyards. Franklin's busy commercial areas and recreational playing fields also provide a habitat for numerous birds and animals. The tables found in Appendix NCH: Species Lists, Tables 4, 5 & 6: Birds, Reptiles & Mammals are only a partial list of the numerous species that have been seen or are likely to live within Franklin's abundant habitats.

# Wetlands & Certified Vernal Pools

Map NCH-4

Town of  
Franklin



## Endangered, Threatened or Species of Special Concern in Franklin

The Town of Franklin has four National Heritage & Endangered Species Program (NHESP) delineated priority habitats of rare species and also estimated habitats of rare wild life. The locations are described as follows:

1. The area around Beaver Pond and Mine Brook: from the railroad tracks just south of Route 140, across Interstate 495 to, and including, Spring Pond on Washington Street.
2. Located primarily within the U.S. Army Corps of Engineer Charles River Natural Valley Storage area.
3. The area encompassing Wampanoag Drive up to Concetta Way located in the eastern part of Franklin on the border of Norfolk and Wrentham.
4. The area surrounding Miscoe Brook on the southwestern portion of town within proximity of Washington and South Street.

According to the National Heritage and Endangered Species Program, Franklin provides habitat for several endangered, threatened, and species of special concern. While not an endangered, threatened or species of special concern in Franklin, it should be noted that the number of spotted salamanders found in Franklin are declining due to the impact of acid precipitation (See Appendix E: Species List, Table \_: Reptiles). Tables NCH-2 listed above and NCH-4 detailed below show the five (5) plant and animal species that are listed by the NHES as endangered, threatened or species of special concern in Franklin.

**Table NCH-4: Endangered, Threatened or Special Concern Animals in Franklin**

<b>Taxonomic Group</b>	<b>Scientific Name</b>	<b>Common Name</b>	<b>State Listed Status</b>	<b>Most Recent Observation</b>
Bird	<i>Ixobrychus exilis</i>	Least Bittern	Endangered	1992
Reptile	<i>Glyptemys insculpta</i>	Wood Turtle	Special Concern	1982
Reptile	<i>Terrapene carolina</i>	Eastern Box Turtle	Special Concern	1997

Source: Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife. Natural Heritage & Endangered Species, Rare Species by Town: Massachusetts Endangered Species Act and Federal status; Franklin.  
[http://www.mass.gov/dfwle/dfw/nhesp/species\\_info/town\\_lists/town\\_f.htm](http://www.mass.gov/dfwle/dfw/nhesp/species_info/town_lists/town_f.htm)

## Unique Features and Scenic Resources

There are many scenic and unique locations within Franklin, as shown in Map NCH-5: Unique Features and Scenic Resources. Scenic vistas are found throughout the Town, from major water bodies such as the Charles River to quaint, winding, stonewall and old growth lined scenic roads, to active farmlands like those on Lincoln Street and Koshivas Drive. Beaver Pond provides a venue for viewing wildlife as well as swimming. Resources such as these allow residents to enjoy the beauty of natural landscapes within their community.

Franklin's scenic roads include: Daniels St., Forest St., Jordan Rd., Mount St., Partridge St., Prospect St. (from Town line to Washington St.), South Street, Spring St., and Upper Union St. (from King St. to Wrentham Town line).

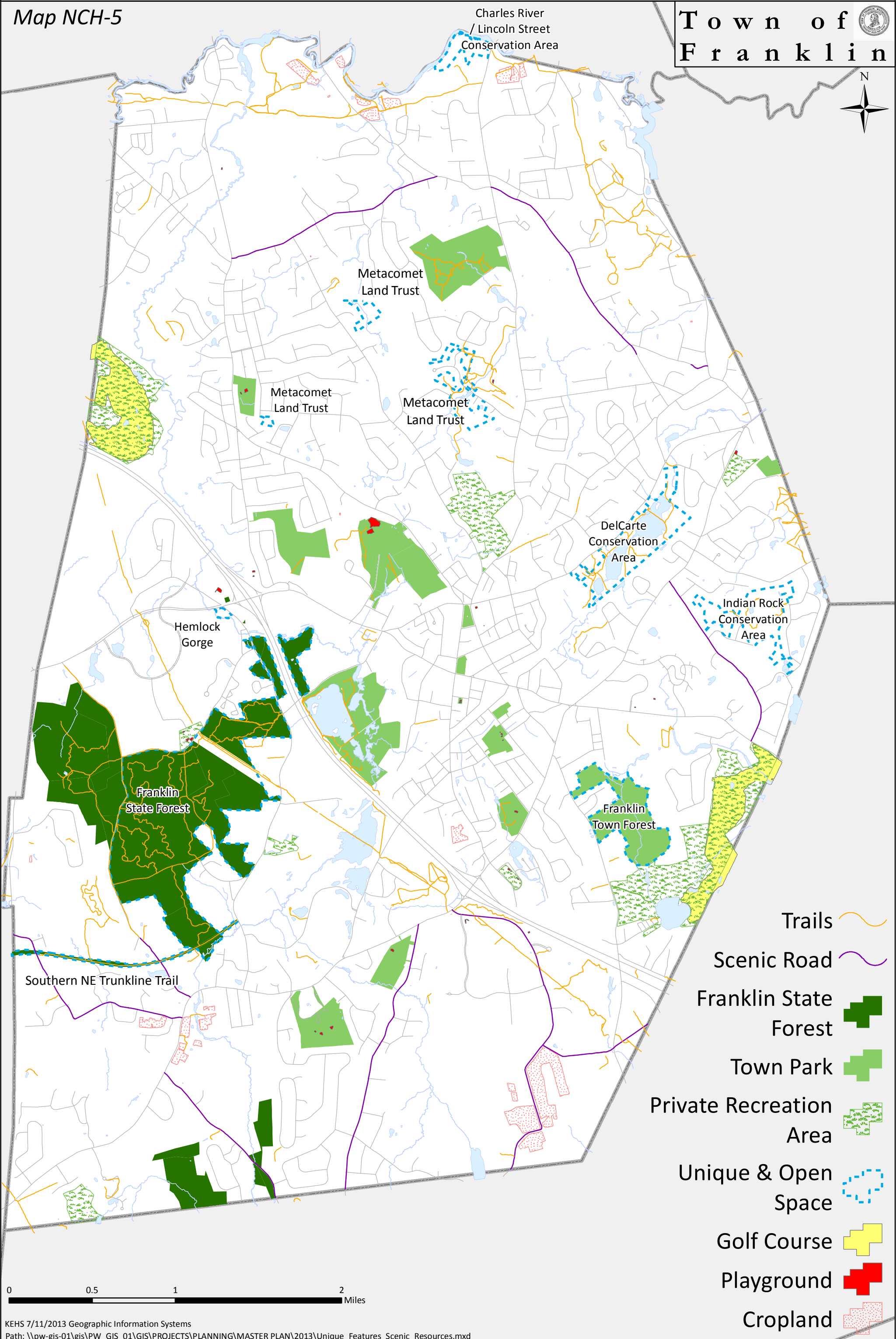
Franklin residents, as well as those from around the region, are able to enjoy many of the Town's natural landscape features such as access to forest lands, including the Franklin State Forest, the Franklin Town Forest, and other conservation lands. In addition to the many scenic and distinctive features provided by these forest and conservation areas, the Town has many other unique resources. Together these natural assets help provide the community with the quintessential New England landscape that so many of Franklin's residents enjoy.



# Unique Features and Scenic Resources

Map NCH-5

Town of Franklin





## **CULTURAL RESOURCES**

There are numerous cultural resources available to the residents of Franklin. Organizations such as the Franklin Art Association, Franklin Cultural Council, Franklin Garden Club, Franklin Lions Club, The Rotary Club of Franklin and Franklin Historical Commission, hold regular meetings, organize special events, in which community members can participate.

The Franklin Downtown Partnership (FDP) is a collaboration of community leaders, business and residents who see Franklin's downtown as the heart of the community: a center of civic and cultural activities. FDP not only works with local organizations but also with Regional organizations such as The MetroWest Visitors Bureau who are responsible for promoting regional events in the MetroWest area such as those held by the FDP.

Established in 1971, The Franklin Art Association provides a forum for the promotion of visual arts through exhibitions, classes and lectures, as well as other artistic activities. Meetings are held monthly and feature demonstrations by regional artists and studio experiences, and allow for exchanges among painters, photographers, sculptors and those interested in the fine arts. The Art Association also sponsors several fine art shows and workshops each year, and funds a scholarship competition for local high school seniors. The LiveARTS Sunday Concert Series, begun in 2003, is a non-profit performing arts organization that hosts classical music concerts at the First Universalist Society in Franklin in an effort to broaden this region's access to high-caliber artists from the Boston area, such as members of the Boston Symphony Orchestra. At this same venue is the widely-popular Circle of Friends Coffeehouse, founded in 1990, presenting nationally-renowned folk and acoustic music performers. In the center of town, the Franklin School for the Performing Arts, begun in 1985, has served thousands of students over the years from more than 40 surrounding communities. The school's programs in music, dance, and drama are offered under one roof through private instruction, classroom instruction, and extensive performance opportunities.

Other organizations within Franklin are dedicated to charitable work and provide a place for their members to gather; Benevolent and Protective Order of the Elks at the Franklin Lodge #2136, Franklin Lions Club, and Franklin Odd Fellows are just a few of these organizations. The Benevolent and Protective Order of the Elks at the Franklin Lodge #2136 is located on Pond Street; the Elks are the second largest giver of college scholarships next to the Federal Government and participate in many other benevolent activities. The Franklin Lions Club is a group of men and women committed to serving the Town of Franklin by raising scholarship funds and sponsoring Franklin's 4<sup>th</sup> of July festivities among other activities. The Franklin Odd Fellows, also strive to provide aid to the community and support the youth of the community, and work to elevate the character of mankind, in addition to many other charitable functions. The Franklin Odd Fellows meet at the William F. Ray Lodge #71 located on West Central Street.

Franklin has many cultural and religious-based organizations. Two of these organizations are the Order of the Sons of Italy, and The Knights of Columbus (K of C). The Order of the Sons of Italy membership includes men and women of Italian heritage who are dedicated to promoting Italian culture, traditions, language, the legacy of their ancestors, and their contributions to the U.S. and the world. The K of C, a Catholic family fraternal service organization, currently meets bimonthly; it is the mission of the K of C to put faith into action. Franklin is also the home to the Franklin Interfaith Council whose membership is composed of faith communities throughout Franklin. Franklin offers over a dozen religious facilities with numerous opportunities to practice one's beliefs. Further details about other groups and committees are found at the Town of Franklin's Community Links website:

[http://franklinma.virtualtownhall.net/Pages/FranklinMA\\_WebDocs/community](http://franklinma.virtualtownhall.net/Pages/FranklinMA_WebDocs/community)

## ***HISTORIC RESOURCES***

### **National Register of Historic Places**

Franklin has a rich history that is highlighted in its two historic districts, the *Franklin Common National Register Historic District*, and *Dean Junior College National Register Historic District*. Buildings and houses in these two districts represent structures built in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries by some of Franklin's most prominent members of society. The National Register of Historic Districts defines the Franklin Common Historic District as including properties on portions of Main Street, High Street, Union Street, Pleasant Street and Church Square (including 95 properties); the Dean Junior College Historic District is comprised of 10 buildings. (See Map NCH-6: Cultural & Historic Resources)

Individual properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places consist of the following Town-owned structures:

Red Brick Schoolhouse: Located at 2 Lincoln Street and established in 1833, it was at one time considered to be the Country's oldest continually running one room schoolhouse. It is now being used by the Benjamin Franklin Classical Charter Public School and the property is one of the 95 included in the Franklin Common Historic District.



Ray Memorial Library: The Town of Franklin owned Ray Memorial Library, now known as the Franklin Public Library, is located at 118 Main Street and houses the 116 books donated by Benjamin Franklin in 1786. The property is one of the 10 buildings included in the Dean Junior College Historic District.

The following buildings have preservation restrictions that run with their deeds in perpetuity:

Aldis Homestead: The Aldis Homestead at 146 Brook Street is a Federal style farmhouse built in approximately 1710.

Joseph P. Ray – Arthur W. Peirce House: The Joseph Ray/Arthur Peirce House was home to members of the Ray family, who owned many mills in Franklin and were generous benefactors to the Town for many years.

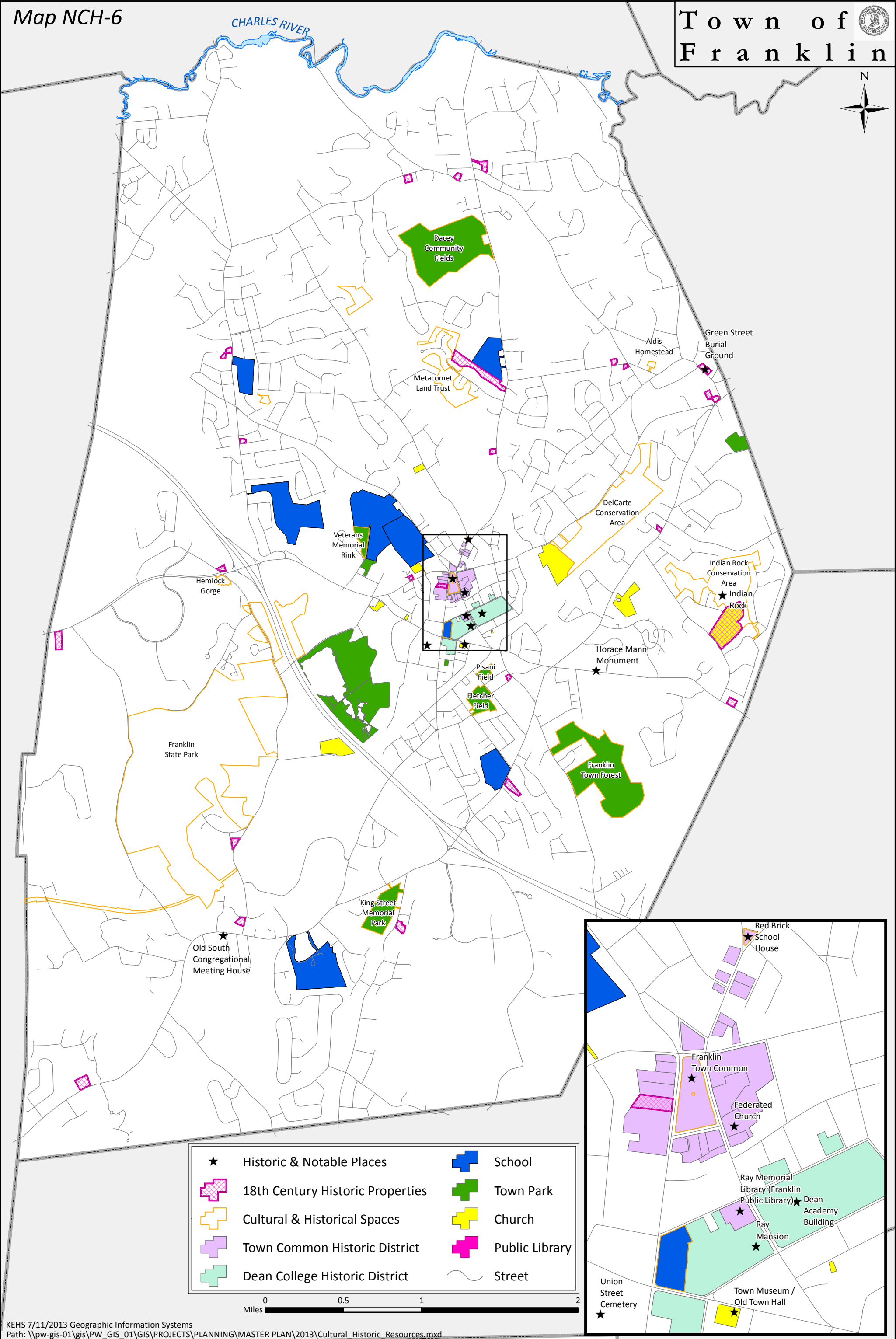
Dean Junior College Administration Building and Chapel: The Dean Junior College Administration Building and Chapel, also known as Dean House, is the main academy building at 99 Main Street.

During the 1970's and 1980's historic property surveys were conducted to identify historic resources that qualify for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places.

# Cultural & Historic Resources

Map NCH-6

Town of Franklin



The surveys were conducted by completion of survey forms, which were submitted to the Massachusetts Historic Commission (MHC). Over the years, over 400 forms were submitted and are currently contained within an electronic database called MACRIS (Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System) managed by MHC.<sup>10</sup> Historic areas within Franklin that have been documented and now included on MACRIS are as follows:

**Table NCH-5:** Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System documented properties

Areas	Names
A	Franklin Center
B	Franklin Manufacturing District
C	Unionville
D	North Franklin
E	South Franklin
F	Dean Junior College Historic District
G	West Central Streetscape
H	Garfield Streetscape
I	Emmons Streetscape
J	Dale Streetscape
K	Charlotte Court Streetscape
L	North Park Streetscape
M	Ray Hill Streetscape
N	Franklin State Forest - CCC Camp
O	Franklin Common Historic District

The majority of Franklin's historic resources listed on MACRIS are residential buildings, including roughly two dozen homes from the 18th century, the oldest being the Aldis Homestead (c. 1710) mentioned above, and the Blake House (c. 1710) at 365 Grove Street. The approximate location of Franklin's 18<sup>th</sup> century homes are shown on Map: Cultural and historic Resources.



**World War I Monument – Franklin Town Common**  
Photo by: Robert Wierling, Franklin Resident, 2012

In addition to historic buildings, MACRIS includes various objects of historical significance, including the Franklin Civil War Soldiers Monument (1903), G. A. R. Memorial Boulder (1913), the Franklin World War I Monument (1929) on the Town Common, and the Horace Mann Birthplace Monument on East Central Street.

Several historic sites are located throughout Franklin, the oldest of which is likely the site known as Indian Rock. Indian Rock, located on Jordan Road, is where the Battle of Indian Rock took place during King Philip's War in 1675. The Union Street Cemetery serves as the resting

place for many revolutionary soldiers. Many of the gravestones in this historic cemetery, dating back to the 1700's, still remain intact.

<sup>10</sup> <http://mhc-macris.net/>





**Franklin Historic Museum – 80 West Central Street**

Photo by: Robert Wierling, Franklin Resident, 2012

Franklin also has a rich industrial history. Many of Franklin's historic mill buildings date back to the early industrial revolution. Production of straw hats started in the 1790s<sup>11</sup>, and several other industries popped up throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Franklin's manufacturing facilities produced a wide range of products, including J.W. Clark's foundry and factory for making textile equipment, and many textile mills were constructed. By the late 1880's members of the Ray family alone owned and managed fourteen mills.

Many of these mill buildings are still visible in Franklin today, having been rehabilitated into commercial buildings, condominiums, or apartment buildings, and some are still utilized for industrial uses. Examples of mill buildings and other prominent buildings built in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and very early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries include the following:

- Clark, Cutler and McDermott Factory at 5 Fisher Street (1910);
- Bassett Snow and Company Straw Works at 115 Dean Street (1880);
- Ray Woolen Mill at 305 Union Street (1876);
- Rathburn and McKenzie Ray Felting Mill on Union Street (1972);
- Franklin Cotton Manufacturing Company at 860 West Central Street (1883);
- Franklin Railroad Station;
- E.A. Staples Straw Factory at 23 Winter Street (1906);
- Ray Mills - Franklin Mills Worker Housing at 349 Union Street (1890);
- A.J. Cataldo Building at 7-13 East Central Street (1923);
- Palmer and Woodworth House at 85 Hillside Road (1910);
- Aaron Hartwell House (Dean College) at 131 Main Street (1890);
- Hayward Mansion at 195 Main Street (1921);
- Hayward Mansion Gardeners Bungalow at 36 Pleasant Street (1915);
- First Congregational Church of Franklin (1895), and related Parsonage (1868) both at 183 Main Street; and
- Asa Austin Fletcher House at 164 Main Street (1877).

<sup>11</sup> Johnston, Jr., James C., Images of America. Arcadia Publishing, 1996. Page 13.

The Town's name itself is also a historic resource, being named after Benjamin Franklin. While the Town's people hoped if they named the Town after Mr. Franklin he would donate a bell for the newly constructed church, instead he donated a small collection of books, eventually leading to the establishment of the oldest public library in the United States.<sup>12</sup> Another noteworthy person from Franklin is Horace Mann. Often called the father of the "common school" or public education, Horace Mann promoted the idea of education for all children, supported by the financing of local taxes.

Significant historic artifacts also contribute to a community's historic resources, and many of Franklin's can be found at the Town's Historic Museum, 80 West Central Street in Downtown Franklin. Built in 1842, the building was originally Franklin's Town Hall.

All of these historic resources are important in understanding a community's character. According to the MA Historical Commission, a community's character is reflected in its development patterns and historic resources within its specific neighborhoods. "The MHC uses Area Forms to record information about concentrations or clusters of individual historic resources. An area encompasses a distinct group of interrelated buildings, objects, structures, landscapes, or sites and their settings. An area should be geographically defined and the resources within the area unified by a common history of use, association, and/or form and appearance".<sup>13</sup>

## ***Goals and Objectives***

**Policy Statement:** Preserve Franklin's New England, small town character through controlled growth, preserving scenic vistas, supporting local arts and culture, and protecting historic architecture.

**Goal 1:** Protect, preserve and enhance Franklin's natural resources.

Objective 1.1: Identify properties within Franklin with important natural resources (including flora, fauna, waterways and land masses).

Objective 1.2: Identify important natural resources and prioritize protection activities on Town-owned properties.

Objective 1.3: Preserve and protect existing Town open space resources.

**Goal 2:** Provide quality arts and cultural resources as a vital part of the creativity and growth of our community.

Objective 2.1: Develop greater coordination between municipal, business, and cultural entities on all matters related to arts, culture, and the creative economy to strengthen the overall vitality of the community.

Objective 2.2: Maintain and increase public and private support for the arts and cultural organizations and facilities.

Objective 2.3: Build on partnerships with Dean College and other non-profit organizations to increase arts and cultural opportunities, and develop and enhance resources and collaboration.

Objective 2.4: Expand the presence of public art in desired locations.

Objective 2.5: Maintain and increase arts instruction to be valued as an integral part of every child's education in the public school system.

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<sup>12</sup> Johnston, Jr., James C., Images of America. Arcadia Publishing, 1996. Page 7.

<sup>13</sup> Massachusetts Historical Commission, Historic Properties Survey Manual. September 1995. Page 81.

Objective 2.6: Support artists in the community by providing affordable living, office, presentation, performance, and rehearsal space for artists and cultural organizations in Franklin.

Objective 2.7: Create an expanded base of business and other community financial support for artists, cultural organizations, and cultural resources.

**Goal 3:** Preserve and protect community resources representative of the Town's natural or cultural history and community attributes imparting a New England town character to Franklin, including scenic vistas, streetscapes, historic structures, and the architectural integrity of certain town areas.

Objective 3.1: Protect, preserve and enhance Franklin's natural, cultural and historic resources.

Objective 3.2: Inventory community resources and other structures built before 1930 (See §71-3.B Demolition Delay. Regulated buildings, structures, and sites) by identifying their locations and other pertinent information necessary for moving forward with preserving them, and identify threats and opportunities related to their preservation.

Objective 3.3: Develop and maintain a comprehensive database of historic resources that includes local historic districts, National Register properties, and inventoried properties built before 1930 (See §71-3.B Demolition Delay. Regulated buildings, structures, and sites).

Objective 3.4: Archive and Manage the Town's Historic Records.

Objective 3.5: Develop Local Historic Preservation Districts where appropriate.

Objective 3.6: Provide incentives for adaptive reuse and restoration for historic resources.

Objective 3.7: Nominate the Town's significant historic resources for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places.

Objective 3.8: Designate Local Scenic Roads<sup>14</sup> to help protect trees and stone walls within the Town's right-of-way which are shown to contribute to the Town's history and character.

**Goal 4:** Advocate for the preservation and protection of Franklin's natural, cultural and historic resources.

Objective 4.1: Utilize public outreach and media resources to advocate for the preservation and protection of Franklin's natural, cultural and historic resources.

Objective 4.2: Encourage and support existing citizen advocacy groups and the creation of new citizen advocacy groups responsible for the protection, acquisition and preservation of natural, cultural and historic resources within Franklin.

Objective 4.3: Educate residents and organizations about best practices for protecting, preserving and enhancing the Town's natural, cultural and historic resources.

Objective 4.4: Develop a reference guide of natural, cultural and historic resource areas in Franklin.

**Goal 5:** Implement growth management, sustainable development and low impact development techniques to preserve, protect and enhance the Town's natural, cultural and historic resources.

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<sup>14</sup> Franklin's Scenic Roads can be found at:  
[http://www.town.franklin.ma.us/Pages/FranklinMA\\_BComm/planningboard/planningforms/scenicroadlist.pdf](http://www.town.franklin.ma.us/Pages/FranklinMA_BComm/planningboard/planningforms/scenicroadlist.pdf)

Objective 5.1: Create Zoning Bylaws that require low impact development (i.e. development that works with nature to manage stormwater as close to its source as possible) in sensitive natural resource areas.

Objective 5.2: Research and implement best practices for preserving the health and longevity of the Town's natural, cultural and historic resources.

Objective 5.3: Seek financial assistance through donations, grants and other resources to support natural, cultural and historic resource preservation, protection and enhancement efforts.

Objective 5.4: Seek to adopt the Community Preservation Act.

**Goal 6:** Continue to implement the Goals, Objectives and Action items of the *"Town of Franklin 2008 Open Space and Recreation Plan."*