

Community Forests: A path to prosperity and connection

BARRE TOWN FOREST

NOTABLE BENEFITS



RECREATION



TOURISM



EDUCATION

ACRES: 355

YEAR: 2012

OWNERSHIP: Town of Barre, Vermont

MANAGEMENT: Town of Barre and Millstone Trails Association

COMMUNITY SERVED: Barre Town and Barre City, Vermont

POPULATION: 16,452

TOTAL ACQUISITION COST: \$1,378,600

FUNDING BREAKDOWN:



Community Forest and Open Space Conservation Program

Cost Share

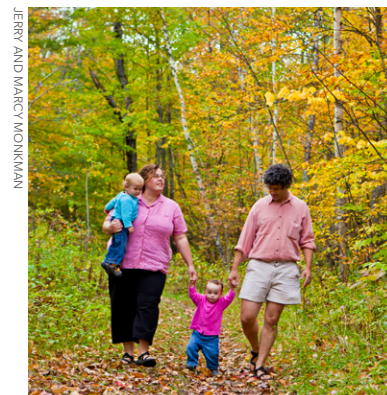
For a comprehensive review of the community and economic benefits provided by this forest and others, go to the full report at www.tpl.org/economic-benefits-community-forests



JERRY AND MARCY MONKMAN

The Barre Town Forest (BTF), which contains the core 20 miles of the regionally popular Millstone trail system, is a 381-acre community forest that is owned and managed by the Town of Barre, Vermont. The forest was created when the Town acquired 355 acres from five different landowners and combined it with a 26-acre parcel they already owned. This project's success relied on the formation of a broad partnership and funding from the U.S. Forest Service Community Forest and Open Space Conservation Program (CFP), state, trails association, non-profits, many individual private donors, and the town itself.

The Barre Town Forest provides numerous benefits to the local community, including recreation, education, health, tourism, economic development, water quality, and timber. These varied benefits demonstrate the importance of programs like the CFP to creating economic opportunity, bolstering quality of life, and sustaining local economies.



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Recreation: Millstone Hill, which includes BTF, offers a variety of recreation options, including cross country skiing, hiking, swimming, snowshoeing, snowmobiling, hunting, fishing, skiing, and disc golf. Trails range from short, scenic hiking paths to technical mountain biking routes. The Trust for Public Land estimates that the forest provides **\$25,000** in recreational use cost savings to residents. The COVID-19 pandemic has led to an increase in use. In fact, Millstone Trails Association reports a 26 percent increase in pass and membership revenue compared to last year. While this higher level of use could continue after the pandemic, it is not included in this baseline calculation of recreational value.

Education: Millstone Trails Association works closely with local schools to involve children in various activities including mountain bike races, festivals, trail walks, clinics, and trail-building days. Websterville Baptist School currently uses the property for biology classes and trail walks. Spaulding High School's cross-country team practices and holds meets on the property. The Boy Scouts also use the property for hiking, mountain biking, and other outdoor excursions.

Tourism: BTF is also used by visitors from outside the community. This out-of-town use attracts new money to the local economy as nonlocal visitors spend money on

items like gas, food, and lodging. The Trust for Public Land estimates that visitors to BTF directly spend **\$130,000** each year in the local community.

Economic development: The forest also supports the local economy by generating opportunities for new businesses and helping retain existing residents and employees. Prior to becoming a community forest, Darren Winham, the former director of Barre Area Development, Inc., said, "The town forest will have an immense positive impact on the economy of the region. Retail and restaurants will spring up. Other employers see the bike trails as a recruiting tool for attracting new employees." Barre Area Development, Inc. continues to see BTF and the trails as a recreational asset to the Barre Area and continues to promote it heavily.

Timber: The forestland within the BTF is sustainably managed to produce forest products that will provide income for the Town of Barre over time.

Drinking water: The forest also safeguards drinking water for over **1,600 people**, with significant portions of both the Websterville Water District Source Water Protection Area and the Town of Barre Source Water Protection Area within the forest.

This project was completed in partnership with the U.S. Forest Service and would not have been possible without generous support from the U.S. Endowment for Forestry and Communities and the U.S. Forest Service.

The Trust for Public Land creates parks and protects land for people, ensuring healthy, livable communities for generations to come.

www.tpl.org

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