



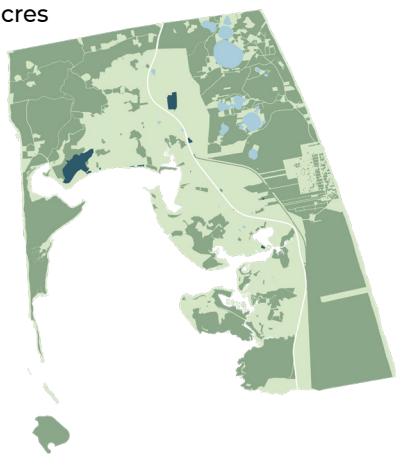
Wellfleet Open Space Profile



The 2025 Regional Policy Plan open space goal is to conserve, preserve, or enhance a network of open space that contributes to the region's natural and community resources and systems. Understanding the broad issues that impact Cape Cod's open space will help direct and prioritize the protection of remaining vulnerable and ecologically or otherwise significant lands, while considering and supporting new development and infrastructure the region needs. [Learn more at: capecodcommission.org/regional-open-space-plan](https://capecodcommission.org/regional-open-space-plan)

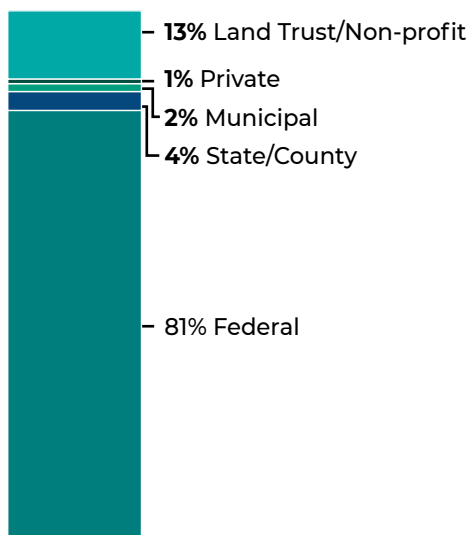
Wellfleet

Total Land Area:
13,442 acres



- Open space protected in perpetuity
- All other open space (not permanently protected)
- Freshwater ponds

Ownership of Permanently Protected Open Space



**Open Space
Protected in
Perpetuity**

7,373
ACRES

57%
of all land area
in the Town*

8%
of all open space
in the County*

Level of Protection

Most open space on Cape Cod is protected in perpetuity and recorded as such in a deed or other official document. Other levels of protection include less stringent restrictions for shorter time periods, through other legal mechanisms, or no restriction at all. **Other open space in Wellfleet: 116 acres.**

Types of Land Protection

ARTICLE 97 LANDS



372 acres
84 parcels

A subset of open space protected in perpetuity are those lands protected by [Article 97](#) of the Massachusetts Constitution which establishes a right to a clean environment and ensures no net loss of state-owned and municipal conservation lands.

LEGAL RESTRICTIONS

Acres with a Conservation Restriction: 144
Acres with Other Restrictions: 1,289



A common form of permanent land protection is a Conservation Restriction – a legal agreement between a landowner and conservation organization that limits future development and uses of land to preserve its conservation values. Other restrictions protect different interests and include: Agricultural Preservation Restriction, Historic Preservation, Easement, Right-of-Way, Lease Holding, Deed Restriction, and License.

CHAPTER 61 PROGRAMS

[Chapter 61](#), 61A, and 61B are tax deferment programs for the voluntary restriction of development activity on forest, agricultural, and recreational lands respectively.



Chapter 61
0 acres
0 parcels



Chapter 61A
0 acres
0 parcels



Chapter 61B
2 acres
5 parcels

*Includes acreage of freshwater ponds and lakes

Opportunities for Preserving Land as Open Space

There are currently unprotected and undeveloped areas within the Town of Wellfleet that have the potential to be protected as open space.

11%

of the land area in town is not yet developed or protected (**1,410 acres**)



Funding/Acquisitions | Towns have accessed local funding through several mechanisms:

Established by vote in 1999, the Cape Cod Land Bank generated funds for open space through a 3% property tax surcharge. Cape-wide, between 1999 and 2007, towns acquired a total of 4,450 acres using \$143 million in Land Bank funds together with \$68 million in leveraged state and federal grants and private funds. (The Land Bank Act sunsetted in 2020). **Wellfleet acquired 60 acres with Land Bank funds during this period.**

After 2000, most towns voted to convert their Land Bank Fund to the multi-purpose Community Preservation Fund. Towns now generate money through the implementation of a local Community Preservation Act (CPA) surcharge of 3% (2% in Mashpee and Sandwich), matched by a statewide CPA trust fund. CPA funds must be used for open space protection, affordable housing, historic preservation, or recreation purposes. **Wellfleet has not made open space acquisitions using CPA funds in the last 10 years. Most recently, in 2012 the town partnered with the Wellfleet Conservation Trust to acquire the 3 acre Clover property.**



Towns may also utilize other municipal funds, partner with conservation trusts, and/or apply for grant funds to purchase open space. **The Wellfleet Conservation Trust recently acquired four new properties through private donations.**

Partially Protected and Undeveloped Lands within Sensitive Natural Resource Areas

Undeveloped lands within sensitive and vulnerable natural resource areas that are unprotected or only partially protected should be priorities for protection.

228 acres

in Wellhead Protection Areas

693 acres

in [NHESP](#) Priority Habitat

95 acres

in Potential Public Water Supply Areas

850 acres

in [BioMap](#) Core Habitat

95 acres

in the 100 Foot Wetland Buffer Area

568 acres

in [BioMap](#) Critical Natural Landscapes

405 acres

in the 2050 [MCFRM](#)

28 acres

within 300 Feet of a Pond

Acres within resource areas may overlap.



A photo of Fox Island Marsh and Pilgrim Spring Woodlands Conservation Area, one of Wellfleet's many open spaces that promote conservation and recreation, in addition to other values.

Open Space and Recreation Plans (OSRP)

OSRPs are tools through which a community plans for the future of its conservation and recreation resources. When a community has a Commonwealth approved OSRP, it becomes eligible for Division of Conservation Services grant programs for up to ten years.



OSRP status: **In Progress**

State grant eligibility:
Not eligible to apply

Open Space Definition: The term open space is used to refer to lands with natural, cultural, agricultural, and passive recreational resource values. These lands include protected open spaces dedicated to conservation or recreation, as well as undeveloped lands with potential for protection for their open space resource values. Here, freshwater ponds and lakes have been included as permanently protected open space.