

# Chapter X

## Recreation



"If bread is the first necessity of life,  
recreation is a close second."

*~Edward Bellamy*

# Chapter X

## Recreation

### 10.1 INTRODUCTION

Located in the northeastern portion of New Hampshire's Lakes Region and abutting the southern boundary of the White Mountain National Forest, Tamworth offers its residents and visitors extraordinary recreational opportunities. This area's rich natural landscape and four-season climate have been an increasing draw for people interested in hiking, fishing, boating, biking, camping, hunting, snowmobiling and skiing, both alpine and cross-country. These opportunities are an important ingredient in the personal health and well-being of the local residents and are a critical part of the inhabitants' identity and economic development.

Tamworth's natural recreational facilities include 226 acres of the White Mountain National Forest, two state forests and a state park. These federal and state lands comprise 6% of town lands. In addition, the Tamworth Conservation Commission holds nine conservation lands in fee simple and 22 conservation easements, totaling 1,613 acres. Seven private trusts own land either in fee simple or hold easements on a total of 7,093 acres, most of which are open to the public for passive recreation. Together, these properties encompass another 22.8% of town lands.

The town owns both outdoor and indoor recreational facilities and supports a recreation department and director. These programs and facilities enable people of any age to pursue a vast array of athletic, intellectual and spiritual endeavors. To complement this, Tamworth has a varied assortment of clubs and organizations which provide exceptional recreational opportunities. Two notable examples: the Tamworth Outing Club's Junior Ski Program, which provides affordable skiing to Tamworth's youth, and the Arts Council of Tamworth, which has actively supported the performing arts, in particular, live music.

This chapter describes the existing conditions of Tamworth's recreational programs, facilities, trails, lakes, ponds and parks and includes a brief description of clubs and organizations which promote recreational activities.

"Recreation is intended to the mind as whetting is to the scythe, to sharpen the edge of it, which otherwise would grow dull and blunt. . . . as good no scythe as no edge."

*~Joseph Hall*

## 10.2 TOWN RECREATION DEPARTMENT

The town hires a full-time recreation director to maintain the town's recreational facilities and to direct the following programs, by season:

Spring: Easter egg hunt, softball, baseball, children's entertainment events.

Summer: Hiking, soccer, softball, basketball, arts and crafts, biking, swimming and field trips. Field trips may include trips to amusement parks and baseball games. Swimming lessons are provided by the Tamworth Red Cross Water Safety Program for children ages two through eighteen at White Lake State Park. Family Day on July 4<sup>th</sup> offers a host of activities: a parade, music, food, games, horseback riding and fireworks at the Kenneth A. Brett School. Here, many local organizations participate in activities and provide information about their programs.

Fall: Flag football, soccer (grades 1-6).

Winter: Basketball (grades 1-6, high school, adults), squeaky sneakers (1½ to 4yrs.), volleyball (adults) and indoor soccer.

Year round: Contract bridge, karate, step aerobics, yoga, Strong Living Program (seniors), adult trips and workshops. Workshops feature classes in the arts, crafts and theatrical skills.

The school officials and the town recreation director have a long history of cooperation in sharing and scheduling their respective activities and facilities.

## 10.3 TOWN RECREATION FACILITIES

### *The Kenneth A. Brett School*

Beyond the school's regular curriculum, the K. A. Brett School offers after-school sports for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students. The following sports are offered with a competitive schedule of approximately 10 games: soccer (mixed boys/girls, some 6<sup>th</sup> graders), basketball (boys and girls), baseball (boys, some 6<sup>th</sup> graders) and softball (girls). The team roster is open to any academically qualified student who wants to participate.

The Junior Ski Program, sponsored by the Tamworth Outing Club: For seven afternoons during January and February, students from 1<sup>st</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> grades are offered an affordable skiing experience. Alpine skiers and snowboarders ski and ride at King Pine in Madison. Cross-country skiers ski at the various touring centers within the Mount Washington Valley or ski locally in Wonalancet, where the Tamworth Outing Club grooms for classical skiing. Those who choose to ski race are trained and coached at King Pine one evening per week. Competitions are held weekly during this time period. The Junior Ski Program culminates in "Snow Day", an all day ski experience at one of the local ski areas. Over 30 volunteers supervise approximately 130 children.

Students who choose to ice skate, snowshoe or study, are given that opportunity.

## *Town-Owned Outdoor Recreational Facilities*

Kenneth A. Brett School (5 acres): Basketball court, baseball field, softball field, soccer field, and playground.

Recreational department: Soccer field, softball/baseball fields (2), playground and tennis courts (2).

Old Town Common (2 acres): Historic site.

Chocorua Lake beaches, north and centrally along Rt. 16: Swimming and picnicking. The southerly “grove area” beach is owned by the Chocorua Lake Conservation Foundation and offers a picnic area and a boat launch (non-motorized).

Ordination Rock (0.3 acres): This prominent glacial erratic was the site of the ordination of Samuel Hidden in 1792. It is a place to view the cemetery across Cleveland Hill Road, to contemplate our local history and to picnic.

Remick Park (1 acre) - Donated to the town by the late Dr. Edwin C. Remick in 1992, this public park offers a quiet retreat and a place for special events. The landscaping won the 1996 New Hampshire Beautification Award. The park is adjacent to the Tamworth Congregational Church in Tamworth Village.

## *Town-Owned Indoor Recreational Facilities*

Town House (4,000 sq. ft.): Yoga lessons, contra dances, events and meetings.

Kenneth A. Brett School gymnasium: Basketball, volleyball and indoor soccer.

Cook Memorial Library: Reading, reference, access to the internet (including wireless), art exhibits, books on tape, DVDs, CDs, videos, children’s room, story hour, summer reading program, local history and genealogy materials, educational/recreational programs for adults, and meeting rooms. The library is open Tuesday/Wednesday 10 to 8; Friday/Saturday 10 to 4.



## 10.4 PRIVATE RECREATION FACILITIES

### *Privately-Owned Indoor Recreational Facilities*

Chocorua Public Library (1,700 sq. ft., 14,000 volumes): Reading, reference, access to the internet, art exhibits, tapes, Karly Goodson Children's Corner, story hour, and book sale. The library is open Sundays 1- 5, Mondays 1- 7, and Thursdays 1-7.

Runnells Hall (1,500 sq/ft): Meetings, concerts, art exhibits and dinners. A rental fee is charged.

Historical Society: Meetings and exhibits. The museum's new home is the Hall/Dyer house at 25 Great Hill Road.

St. Andrew's Church and parish hall: Community services, dinners and meeting room.

Union Hall (2,000 sq/ft.): Meetings and suppers. A rental fee is charged.

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of the Eastern Slopes: Group functions for non-profit organizations.

### *Commercial Recreation Facilities*

#### Campgrounds:

- Chocorua Camping Village and Wabanaki Lodge
- Tamworth Camping Area
- The Foothills Family Campground
- Riverbend RV Resort

#### Accommodations:

- Gilman Tavern Inn – B&B.
- The Highland House – B&B, catering.
- Red Hill Farm – B&B, horse stalls, training and lessons.
- Riverbend Inn – B&B.
- Samantha's Inn – lodging and dining.
- The Brass Heart Inn – lodging, dining, events.
- The Lazy Dog Inn – B&B (dogs allowed).
- The Tamworth Inn – lodging, dining.

#### Other facilities:

- The Barnstormers Theatre – the performing arts, since 1931.
- The Community School – classes and events, community services.
- The Other Store – summer concerts by the river.
- White Lake Speedway, Inc. – go-karts, miniature golf.

"He that will make a good use of any part of his life  
must allow a large portion of it to recreation."

~John Locke

## 10.5 TRAILS

There is an abundance of trails located in Tamworth (see trail map). Many trails are for hiking only, while others are multi-use. Frequently these trails cross private property. In general, motorized vehicles are not permitted on trails, with the exception of snowmobiles on trails maintained by the Ossipee Valley Snowmobile Club.

The trails are maintained by various clubs and organizations, listed below:

Sandwich Conservation Commission (SCC) – The Bearcamp River Trail follows the banks of the Bearcamp River for 17 miles from Beede Falls in Sandwich Notch to Bartlett Mill Bridge in South Tamworth. The walk features a variety of riverside ecosystems of trees, plants, flowers and abundant wildlife.

The Chocorua Lake Conservation Foundation (CLCF) – The CLCF owns or manages 515 acres in the Chocorua Lake Basin. Clark Reserve (268 acres, CLCF) and the Frank Bolles Nature Preserve (247 acres, The Nature Conservancy) offer trails through forests by swamps and streams: these trails are open to hikers, skiers and snowshoers. Prominent features include Heron Pond, Bickford Heights and frontage on Chocorua Lake. Fires, camping and motorized vehicles are not permitted.

Chocorua Mountain Club (CMC) – The CMC maintains seven trails for the Appalachian Mountain Club: four trails on Mount Chocorua - the Brook, Beeline, Hammond, and Weetamo Trails; and three on Mount Paugus - the Beeline, Old Paugus and Whitin Brook Trails. Descriptions for these trails can be found in the AMC White Mountain Guide.

The Mill Brook Trail Association (MBTA) – Established in 1998 by a community of landowners and neighbors along the Mill Brook, the MBTA has constructed and currently maintains 12 miles of trails on private property for low impact, non-motorized uses, as permitted by the landowners.

The Tamworth Conservation Commission (TCC) – The TCC continues to play a key role preserving and managing natural areas for outdoor use. Their conservation plan, initially developed in 1973, described specific areas to be owned or controlled by the TCC and made specific recommendations for their future use. Furthermore, options were listed to guide the community and individuals in the protection of these natural areas. Presently, the TCC manages nine town-owned properties, four of which have self-guided interpretive trails:

Black Spruce Bog Natural Area (65 acres) – adjacent to White Lake State Park.

Earle Remick Natural Area (14.6 acres) – on the west side of Rt. 113, one mile north of the Bear Camp River Bridge.

Jackman Pond Wildlife Area (38 acres) – provides three walking trails plus 300 acres of adjacent land opened to the public through various easements and rights of way.

Bearcamp Natural Area (9.3 acres) – a short path along the Bear Camp River accessed from the north side of Route 25 between Whittier and South Tamworth.

The TCC holds 22 conservation easements and maintains trails on the following:

Ambrose – The trail is part of the system circumnavigating Jackman Pond.

Page Hill – This is a short trail from Page Hill Road to the summit of Page Hill.

The Perkins Trail – This trail connects the trails from Jackman Pond to the Bear Camp River Trail.

Big Pines Natural Area, a portion of the Hemenway State Forest, is managed by the TCC through a permit from the state's Department of Resources and Economic Development. There are three trails within this area:

Easy Walker Trail – self guided, flat and easy.

Betty Steele Loop – a more moderate loop trail beginning on the south side of the footbridge over the Swift River.

Spur Trail – a steeper trail that ascends from the Betty Steele Loop trail to the Great Hill fire tower. The fire tower is maintained by the TCC and offers exceptional views in every direction.

All TCC trails are described in a pamphlet which is available at some of the trail heads, the town offices, libraries and stores in town.

White Lake State Park – There is one trail around the lake and one connecting to a pitch pine trail and the TCC Black Spruce Bogs trails. There is more information about the White Lake State Park under the "Parks and Forests" section.

The Tamworth Outing Club (TOC) – The TOC grooms and maintains trails for classic style cross-country skiing:

Wonalancet Trail System – access is adjacent to the Ferncroft hiking kiosk and parking area, a right turn off the Ferncroft Road in Wonalancet.

The Ned Behr Tower to Town Trail – This is a back country ski trail (not groomed) which is marked with blue diamonds. Access is from the Four Corners parking area in the Hemenway State Forest, 3.5 miles up Great Hill Road from Tamworth Village. Initially, the trail passes a loop up to the Great Hill fire tower. It then continues down through the Hemenway State Forest and onto private lands until it reaches and passes through the Remick Country Doctor Museum and Farm property.

The Ossipee Valley Snowmobile Club (OVSC) – The OVSC grooms 33 miles of multi-use trails in Tamworth for snowmobile travel. These trails continue northerly into Sandwich and Albany and southerly to Mt. Shaw in the Ossipee Range. Trails in Tamworth include The Bowles Trail, James Pond Loop, Binsack Trail, Great Hill Pond Loop, Great Hill Fire Tower and the Wonalancet Loop.

The Wonalancet Outdoor Club (WODC)- The WODC has built and maintained trails in the Sandwich Range since 1892. Their fifty-two miles of trails are maintained in cooperation with the Forest Service through volunteer and professional efforts. The Sandwich Range contains large wilderness areas that have been set aside by the US Congress to remain natural and protected. The WODC trail map and guide has a recent June 2007 edition.

The Remick Country Doctor Museum and Farm: The Swift River Trail (0.4 mile) parallels the Swift River before looping back to the farm. Access to the trail is off Cleveland Hill Road opposite the museum. The Joe Binsack Trail (0.6 mile) meanders through the various pastures and is accessed from the museum area from Cleveland Hill Road or Great Hill Road. Both trails are open to the public year round.



## 10.6 LAKES AND PONDS WITH PUBLIC ACCESS

Bearcamp Pond – Although located in Sandwich, Tamworth residents have access to Bearcamp Pond by obtaining a modified Town of Sandwich sticker. Tamworth residents may obtain the sticker from Tamworth's town clerk. Bearcamp Pond is a favorite swimming site for young children because the lake is shallow near the beach and has a gentle gradient.

Chocorua Lake – Located just west of a scenic stretch of Rt. 16, the town's largest body of water, Chocorua Lake provides a large amount of public access. The "Tamworth Residents Only" area has a small sandy beach, and parking there is for residents with a Tamworth resident sticker on their vehicle. Visitors are welcome to the remaining beach areas, including the grove area near the bridge on the Chocorua Lake Road. The beaches and a picnic area are maintained by the Chocorua Lake Association, which also maintains a boat launch. No motorized boats are allowed on

the lake. In winter, this is a popular location for ice fishing and bob houses adorn the lake. Weather depending, this and other lakes may offer periods of ice skating.

Great Hill Pond – The land around Great Hill Pond is privately owned but public pedestrian access to a boat launch is located off Great Hill Road.

Jackman Pond – This small body of water has an extensive variety of aquatic plants and birds. A trail around the pond provides easy public access.

James Pond – This remote pond is most frequently visited during the winter by cross-country skiers and snowmobilers.

White Lake – This shallow kettle lake is the result of a depression caused during the glacial period. It is located within White Lake State Park in the southeastern corner of Tamworth and is the town's second largest body of water. It is a popular swimming and picnicking site and the associated boat launch and camping areas are all maintained by the state. The trail circling the lake meanders through a rare pitch pine and scrub oak forest and connects to the town-owned Black Spruce Bogs. In winter, it is a popular location for ice fishing.



"Leave all the afternoon for exercise and recreation, which are as necessary as reading. I will rather say more necessary because health is worth more than learning."

*~Thomas Jefferson*

## 10.7 PARKS AND FORESTS

Bowditch-Runnells State Forest (56 acres) – This is a forested area in northeastern Tamworth.

Hemenway State Forest (1,998 acres) – Consisting of glacially carved foothills, this forested area lies northerly and centrally within Tamworth. Great Hill, Duck Pond and the 135 acre Big Pines Natural Area are located within the forest. The park's many trails provide access for hikers and snowmobilers. The outstanding view from Great Hill fire tower is obtained via a short hike from the Four Corners parking area on Great Hill Road or via the Spur Trail from Big Pines Natural Area.

Ordination Rock (0.3 acres) – This is an historic site, as described under "Town Owned Outdoor Recreational Facilities".

Remick Park (1 acre) – This is a landscaped park, as described under "Town Owned Outdoor Recreational Facilities".

White Lake State Park (756 acres, state owned) - This park features swimming and boating on White Lake as well as camping on their 204 camp sites, with amenities. The park is linked to the adjacent 35 acre Black Spruce Ponds Preserve by trails managed by the Tamworth Conservation Commission. The 72 acre forest of tall pitch pine trees on the western shore of White Lake was declared a National Natural Landmark in 1980. The park is located in the southeastern portion of Tamworth.

White Mountain National Forest – The northern border of Tamworth abuts the White Mountain National Forest, 226 acres of which are located in Tamworth. Along with the Sandwich Range Wilderness, this area provides abundant recreational opportunities for those who enjoy hiking, fishing, camping and grand scenery. The prominent peaks of the Sandwich Range include Sandwich Dome, the Tripyramid peaks, Mt. Whiteface (4,015 ft.), Mt. Passaconaway (4,043 ft.), Mt. Paugus and Mt. Chocorua.



## 10.8 CLUBS AND ORGANIZATIONS

The following groups promote recreational activities in Tamworth:

Arts Council of Tamworth – produces numerous arts events, including monthly music or performing arts events, youth workshops, a film series at Cook Memorial Library and art shows.

Bearcamp Valley Garden Club – promotes gardening and horticulture.

Bearcamp Valley Sportsmen's Club – promotes hunting and fishing and offers a safe shooting range.

Boy Scout Troop 151 – promotes traditional scouting activities and community service for boys, 10-1/2 to 18 years old.

Chocorua Lake Association – monitors the water quality of Chocorua Lake and maintains its beaches, boat launch and picnic area.

Chocorua Lake Conservation Foundation – protects and preserves the scenic environment of the Chocorua Lake region and maintains trails in this area.

Chocorua Mountain Club – maintains four trails on Mt. Chocorua and three trails on Mt. Paugus.

Cub Scout Pack 151 – promotes traditional scouting activities for boys in grades 1-5.

Girl Scouts of Swift Water Council – provides events, camping and community service opportunities for girls 5 to 17 (predominantly) and 18 and older.

Mill Brook Trail Association – maintains trails on private property in the Mill Brook Valley area.

Mountain Top Music Center – provides music lessons (based in Conway).

Onaway Club (for women) – Established in 1918, the original purpose of the Onaway Club was "to give each member an opportunity to lay aside her daily cares and to enjoy the congenial friendship of one another". Ninety years later, this spirit of friendship and good will is still an essential part of the club. Meetings, which are held twice a month in members' homes from October to May, include a brief business meeting and an afternoon of "lighthearted" bridge. Additionally, the club makes a contribution each year to a selected service organization as a way of helping the community.

Ossipee Valley Snowmobile Club – constructs, maintains and grooms trails for snowmobiling.

Remick Country Doctor Museum and Farm – provides monthly special events relating to the agricultural way of life and that of the country doctor.

Runnells Hall – provides a place for special events and suppers.

Tamworth Chamber Orchestra – develops musical skills while playing classical music.

Tamworth Outing Club – promotes outdoor recreation. Examples include the Junior Ski Program, baseball programs, contra dances, grooming and maintaining trails for cross country skiing, the mid-winter Tamworth Sled Dog Race on Chocorua Lake and day trips.

The Barnstormers Theatre – promotes the performing arts. It is the oldest professional summer theater in the United States, offering eight different plays each summer and an increasing number of theatrical events during the winter months. The theater also offers various theater workshops and training opportunities for all ages.

Tin Mountain Conservation Center – provides educational programs about our natural environment at the Kenneth A. Brett School and summer camps, including a day camp in South Tamworth.

Union Hall Association – provides a place for meetings, parties and events.

Wonalancet Outdoor Club – maintains trails in the Wonalancet area and promotes the conservation of mountain and forest.



## 10.9 EXCEPTIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

The natural resources in and around Tamworth provide exceptional recreational opportunities in the following areas:

Boating, canoeing, kayaking and sailing – The Saco and Bearcamp Rivers are well known for exceptionally fine canoeing and kayaking. Chocorua Lake, Silver Lake, Ossipee Lake, Conway Lake, Squam Lake, White Lake and Lake Winnepesaukee offer myriad boating and swimming opportunities. Our many smaller lakes and ponds provide an intimate setting for these activities and for those who simply wish to appreciate our beautiful natural environment.

Bird watching – The Tamworth Conservation Commission offers “bird walks” on Wednesday mornings in May. The records and observations of the participants have been useful in providing ongoing qualitative data on changes in local breeding bird populations.

Biking – The multi-use trails in Tamworth offer exceptional terrain for mountain biking. For those who prefer the road, Route 25 is a part of the statewide bicycle

system, and Route 113 and Route 113A are regional bicycle routes for the Lakes Region.

Horseback riding – There are a number of horse farms and stables in Tamworth which offer horseback riding both commercially and privately along selected trails.

Hunting – Hunting is managed by the New Hampshire Fish and Game Department. New Hampshire is divided into six regions for this purpose and Tamworth is in region #2 with the headquarters located in New Hampton. Hunting regulations, hunting seasons and licensing requirements are available on-line at [www.wildlife.state.nh.us](http://www.wildlife.state.nh.us). In general, all federal, state, municipal, county and private lands are open to hunters, unless the land is posted otherwise. The large percentage of open and undeveloped land makes Tamworth particularly conducive to good hunting. Bird season opens in early fall and the hunters in our area, some with bird dogs, seek to hunt woodcock, partridge and waterfowl. Moose hunting is allowed in late October for a limited time period to those hunters who are able to obtain a permit by lottery. Black bears are hunted in early to mid fall. White tailed deer are hunted by bow, muzzleloader, or firearms according to season. Hunters often favor Tamworth's south facing hardwood forests as the bear and deer are eating the mast, mostly consisting of beech nuts and acorns. In November, during the rutting season, these large animals are roaming during the day, but the best hunting is typically in the early morning. Wild turkey and small game also are hunted according to season. Trapping for the prime fur of fox, fisher, beaver and coyote must be done in season with written landowner permission.

Fishing – The Town of Tamworth offers anglers of all abilities excellent fishing opportunities. Rainbow trout and brook trout are liberally stocked in streams throughout the season. The Swift River, which runs from the Wonalancet area through Tamworth Village, is reserved by Fish and Game regulations for fly fishing only. The river is easily accessible from route 113A, in Tamworth village and behind the Tamworth Inn. The Bearcamp River runs along old Route 25 and may be fished by any kind of tackle for its state stocked rainbow trout and brook trout. Both the Swift and Bearcamp rivers contain many naturally bred brook trout. Lake Chocorua provides good opportunities for bass and other warm weather species of fish. White Lake is stocked with trout in the spring and provides a good chance to pond fish for trout. The Remick Country Doctor Museum and Farm offers fishing for youngsters 15 and younger in its stocked pond and sponsors a fishing derby in the spring.

Tennis – Beyond the two hard surface courts near the Kenneth A. Brett School, there is an abundance of privately-owned tennis courts in town. Many of these are clay courts with red brick dust. The annual tennis tournament in Chocorua, held on Labor Day weekend, is a long-standing tradition on many of these clay courts.

Walking, sightseeing, hiking and camping – It cannot be overstated that Tamworth offers a unique opportunity for anyone who appreciates the outdoors. The high percentage of open space and lands with public access in Tamworth is exceptional. Walking trails within town are abundant. Hikers have choices of trails in the immediate vicinity on the Ossipee Range, the Squam Range and the Sandwich Range. The White Mountain National Forest is our prominent neighbor to the north. State-owned and privately-owned campgrounds abound in and around Tamworth. Our exceptional scenery and natural resources make Tamworth and the surrounding towns a year-round destination for tourists.

## 10.10 RECOMMENDATIONS

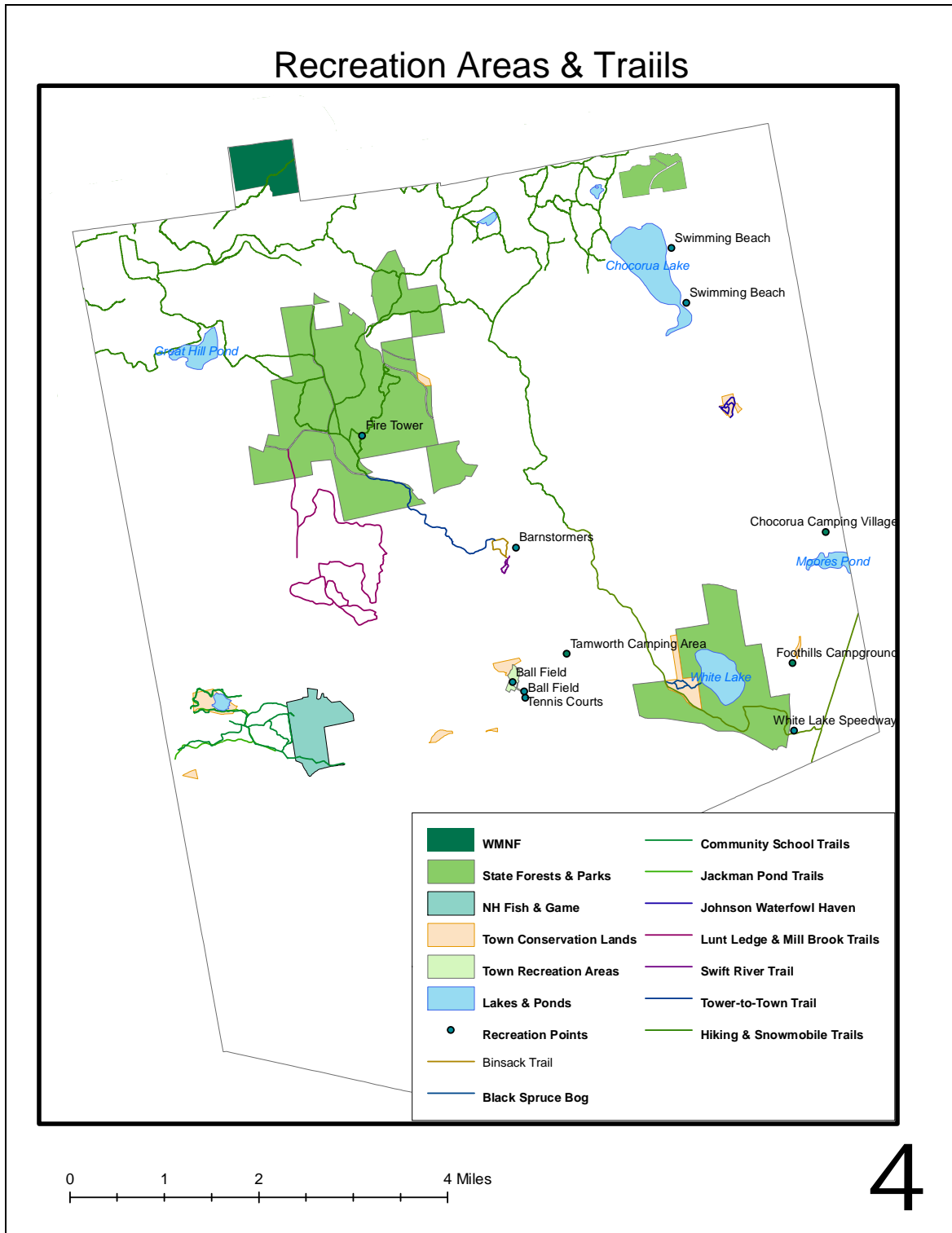
The following recommendations about Recreation are listed in Chapter III – Implementation:

- A. The Recreation Director should post recreational opportunities on the Tamworth web site which can be accessed at [www.tamworthnh.org](http://www.tamworthnh.org).
- B. The Conservation Commission should coordinate efforts to expand and publicize the network of hiking, horseback riding, cross country skiing, and snowmobile trails thereby enhancing outdoor activity opportunities to both town residents and visitors.
- C. A network of trails should connect Hemenway State Forest, Tamworth Village, Jackman Pond, Chocorua Lake, White Lake State Park and other recreational areas.
- D. These trails should provide linkages between Tamworth's largest village and the major recreational resources of the town promoting recreational use while preserving the natural beauty and maintaining wildlife corridors and habitats.

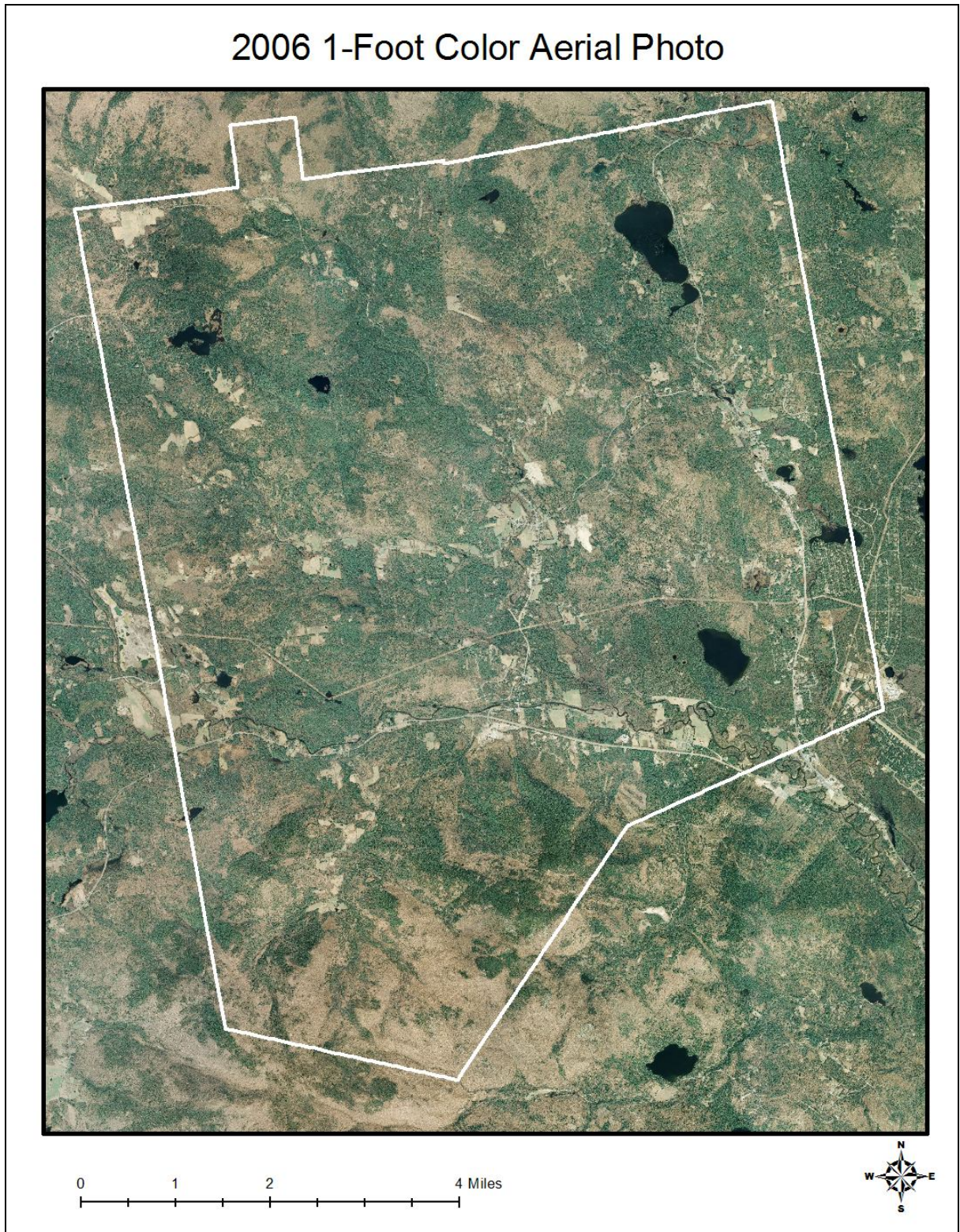
"People who cannot find time for recreation are obliged sooner or later to find time for illness."

*~John Wanamaker*





Map 10.1 Recreation Locations



**Map 10.2 Color Aerial Photo**