



Photo: Jerry Monkman/EcoPhotography.com

ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF THE BARRE TOWN FOREST BARRE TOWN, VERMONT



A former quarry property in Barre Town, Vermont—already a regional destination for mountain biking and cross-country skiing—is now a

new, 355-acre town-owned forest. The Trust for Public Land worked with the Town of Barre, the nonprofit Millstone Trails Association (MTA), Vermont Land Trust, and local community members to permanently protect this property as the Barre Town Forest. A town forest for Barre helps connect local citizens to the natural landscape by expanding recreational opportunities, conserving a variety of natural and historical features, and strengthening the local economy in one of Vermont's most economically challenged areas.

An analysis conducted by the Gund Institute at the University of Vermont concluded that the creation of the Barre Town Forest will yield positive economic returns to the town and central Vermont region.

BARRE TOWN FOREST SUSTAINS OUTDOOR RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES

Conserving Barre Town Forest sustains and enhances existing outdoor recreational features.

- The property contains 20 miles of Millstone Trails, a 70-mile trail network, which travels across rolling forested hills. In 2009, the Boston Globe ranked the Millstone Trails as one of the top ten mountain biking destinations in New England.
- In winter, the trails are groomed for cross-country skiing and snowshoeing. The trail network connects to the Cross-Vermont Trail, a multi-use path that will ultimately span the width of Vermont.
- The trail network also connects to the Barre School Forest and adjacent Barre Town Middle & Elementary School, providing recreational opportunities to more than 900 students.

An estimated 7,150 visitors from outside the local community visited the Millstone Trail Network (and

future Barre Town Forest) in 2011. Non-local visitation is conservatively estimated to grow 10 percent annually (compared to nearby Kingdom Trails in East Burke, Vermont with an annual growth rate of 18 percent since 2004), or to increase to 10,500 visitors by 2015.

BARRE TOWN FOREST WILL GROW THE LOCAL ECONOMY

Tourists visiting Barre Town Forest and the Millstone Trail Network to bike or ski spend money on local goods and services (e.g., food and lodging). According to a 2012 study by the Gund Institute at University of Vermont, approximately **\$481,000** was spent by mountain bike and winter use visitors to the Millstone Trail Network in 2011. With a conservative annual growth rate of 10 percent in the number of visitors and the protection and maintenance of the trail system, visitor spending could reach **\$640,000** by 2015.

BARRE TOWN FOREST WILL CREATE JOBS

Nearly 74 percent of visitor spending could be captured in the local economy, creating local jobs. Visitor spending is projected to bring \$269,000 as labor income, and generate **20 jobs** by 2015 through an increase in visitation of 10 percent. The restaurant and lodging sectors alone are expected to gain 13 additional jobs. Within 2 months of the creation of Barre Town Forest, a new bike shop opened up nearby.

BARRE TOWN FOREST WILL GENERATE TIMBER REVENUE

Barre Town Forest has medium-to-high value timber and sustainable timber management can generate a steady flow of revenues for the Town. The current timber value is \$143,000. A full time job can be created as a result of sustainable timber management.

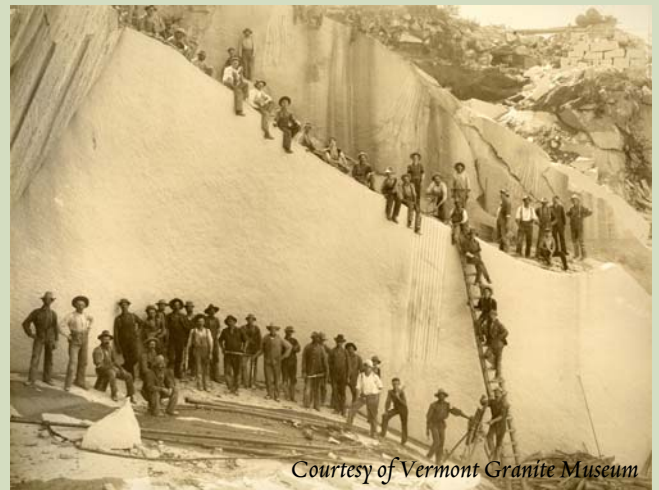
BARRE TOWN FOREST HELPS TO CURB LOCAL TAX EXPENDITURES

Protecting open space saves local governments money. Residential development imposes costs on communities in

the form of increased demand for schools, roads, and other community services—costs that usually exceed related tax revenue. The national median across 151 communities over 25 years is that for every \$1 paid in local taxes, working lands and open space require \$0.35 in services compared to \$1.16 in services for the average home.¹ In nearby Cambridge, Vermont a 2006 study found that for every \$1 in revenues residential development required \$1.25 in municipal services, while town-owned land (like a town forest) required \$0.92 in municipal services.²

Source: Posner, Steve, and Marta Ceroni. *Potential Economic Impact of Outdoor Recreation in the Barre Town Forest, Vermont*. Gund Institute for Ecological

EVERY \$1 INVESTED BY BARRE TOWN



Courtesy of Vermont Granite Museum

WILL RETURN \$22 BY 2015

Barre Town contributed \$100,000, and the State invested \$310,000 through the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board towards the acquisition cost of \$1.3 million to create the Town Forest. The property was going to be sold on the open market, thus threatening the entire trail network, causing a loss of the current 7,000 annual visitors and their spending of \$480,000. With the creation of the Barre Town Forest, visitorship is expected to increase to 10,500, and their spending to \$640,000, by 2015. From 2012

Economics, University of Vermont. Burlington, Vermont. Prepared for The Trust

¹ American Farmland Trust. 2010. *Cost of Community Services Fact Sheet*. Farmland Information Center, Northampton, Massachusetts

² Town of Cambridge Planning Commission. *Cost of Community Services Study For Cambridge, Vermont*. Prepared by Lamoille County Planning Commission. March, 2006

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