

Town of Monkton, Vermont

Mission Statement for Monkton's Agricultural and Natural Areas Committee

The Monkton Agricultural and Natural Areas Committee is dedicated to protecting the farmland, woodland, natural, and recreational areas, and other open spaces that help give Monkton its distinctive rural character and quality of life.

Criteria for Use of Monkton's Agricultural and Natural Areas Fund

The following criteria have been created to assist applicants who are interested in applying for funding from the Agricultural and Natural Areas Fund. These criteria are intended to help determine whether a project meets the terms of the article passed at the March 2007 town meeting.

These terms can also be helpful when describing a project on the "Application for Monkton Agricultural and Natural Areas Funding" form.

The Town seeks the acquisition and perpetual protection of critical agricultural and natural resources within the Town of Monkton. The application form refers to these criteria.

The Selectboard shall consider the following resources to be particularly compelling:

- Working farms and farm land
- Water quality protection
- Forested lands
- Recreational resources
- Significant wildlife habitat and connectivity
- Scenic vistas

It is recognized that not all projects will meet all criteria, and that some criteria are inappropriate for some projects.

1. General Criteria for Agricultural and Natural Areas Funding

The Project:

- a. Contributes toward the acquisition or perpetual protection of agricultural or natural resources in Monkton
- b. Is sustainable over the long-term, financially and human resource-wise
- c. Leverages additional funds (e.g., from grants and land trusts), bringing better value for the dollars spent towards conservation efforts

General Criteria of the Agricultural and Natural Areas Fund (cont.)

- d. Facilitates the vision for Monkton as articulated in the Town Plan
- e. Is in compliance with the laws and regulations of the Town
- f. Would not be protected without the assistance of this fund

2. Criteria for Agricultural Resources

- a. Conserves working farms that are ecologically and economically sustainable
- b. Is situated on primary (prime and statewide importance) agricultural soils
- c. Has potential for diversified agricultural uses
- e. Uses local and state or federal farm support services and local and state tax incentives
- f. Uses local businesses and human resources
- g. Adheres to acceptable (AMP) or best (BMP) farm management practices as outlined by the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets.

3. Natural Resource Criteria

- a. Conserves or restores biodiversity, especially for rare or endangered species, and wildlife habitat and connectivity
- b. Maintains open and green spaces (e.g., meadows, pastures, and wooded areas)
- c. Provides recreational areas (e.g., fishing, hunting, foot paths)
- d. Preserves outstanding scenic views or landscape features, or is scenic itself (e.g., preserves aesthetic functions of wetlands)
- e. Conserves wetlands and water resources, including vegetation along waterways and groundwater recharge areas
- f. Provides for the conservation and long-term, sustainable use of forest resources.
- g. Is located in proximity to other protected areas

Monkton's Agricultural and Natural Areas Fund Application Process

- 1) Most of the projects the Agriculture and Natural Areas Committee (ANAC) will consider for funding may include, but not be limited to, the purchase of conservation easements on agricultural land or natural areas. Related expenses such as legal and consultant fees, survey and appraisal costs, and other expenses associated with the process of conservation may also be included in a project.
- 2) Requests for Agricultural and Natural Areas Funds are presented in writing to the Chair of the Agricultural and Natural Areas Committee via the application form.
- 3) Proposed projects must address and support the intended purpose and criteria for the acquisition and perpetual protection of critical agricultural and natural resources within the Town of Monkton. Refer to the document *Criteria for Use of Monkton's Agricultural and Natural Areas Fund*, which has been created to assist this purpose. No single criterion is intended to exclude a proposal from consideration.
- 4) The Agricultural and Natural Areas Committee will initiate review of applications at their next posted meeting. This review usually includes a site visit and collaboration with partners in the conservation community.
- 5) Once the project review is finalized, the committee will make recommendations to the Selectboard regarding the appropriateness and feasibility of proposed conservation projects.
- 6) Based on recommendations from the Agricultural and Natural Areas Committee, the Selectboard will determine whether to proceed with consideration of proposed conservation projects.
- 7) A duly warned public meeting by the Selectboard will be held to solicit community input for the conservation project(s) selected.
- 8) The Selectboard will make the final determination for expenditures of Agricultural and Natural Areas Funds.

Application for Monkton Agricultural and Natural Areas Funding

Please describe the attributes of your proposal and its advantages to Monkton using the topics presented below. Please limit each answer to one page, double-spaced, using 12 pt. font, if possible.

1. Property/Project description

Describe the property or project work and attach relevant site plans, photographs, deed restrictions, planning/zoning approvals, etc. Include total acreage and total acreage being conserved. (If total property is not being conserved, please explain why, and why the portions that are excluded were selected).

2. Project significance/The extent to which the project aligns with the *Criteria for Use of Monkton's Agricultural and Natural Areas Fund*.

Every proposal should address the degree to which it meets the "General" criteria (Section 1) as listed in the document *Criteria for Use of Monkton's Agricultural and Natural Areas Fund*. Proposals should also address all relevant criteria (from the same document) under the categories of "Agricultural" and "Natural Resources" (Sections 2&3). These are guidelines – it is recognized that not all projects will meet all criteria, and that some criteria are inappropriate for some projects.

3. Project schedule

If available, give timetable for closing dates and/or completion of project work. Attach relevant documents such as draft easements, cost estimates, appraisals, Purchase and Sale Agreement.

4. Financial Information

Is the allocation requested in one lump sum or over a period of years?

What matching contributions are included in the project (Criterion 1c)? What is the value of any local in-kind, service resources or other resources involved? (value per cost). Include well-detailed, itemized budget.

☐ Budget (must be submitted with application)

5. Long-term Plans

What long-term plans are in place for the resources of this project with regard to management and/or conservation?

Please be aware most easement holders will need the following supporting materials:

Check all supporting materials already obtained, as relevant (provide date of document if noted):

- ☐ Project Appraisal (date: _____)
- ☐ Farm Business Plan (date: _____)
- ☐ Easement Draft (date: _____)
- ☐ Forest Management Plan (date: _____)
- ☐ Other (i.e. maps) _____