

## Cato's Ridge Conservation Area Opening

The Plympton Open Space Committee is pleased to announce that temporary access has been established that will allow Plympton residents to enjoy historic trails and cart paths as they explore the Cato's Ridge Conservation Area.

In May, 2012, Plympton residents turned out to the Town Meeting in record numbers and voted in favor of a proposition to permanently designate a 77-acre parcel of town-owned land on Ring Road (Cato's Ridge) as a conservation area. Additionally, the residents voted to support a proposal from the Open Space Committee to the Community Preservation Committee to acquire a 10-acre parcel of land on Main Street (Churchill Park) to be used as a park and as the access point to the Cato's Ridge area, which is surrounded by private property. The net cost of the Churchill Park acquisition is approximately \$20,000. Together, these adjacent parcels established an 87-acre conservation area in the heart of Plympton for outdoor recreation. Hiking, horseback riding, mountain biking, and cross-country skiing will be permitted in the Cato's area, with hunting allowed in season. No motorized vehicles are allowed. These areas, which will be managed by the town's Conservation Commission, have conservation status in perpetuity, and are the cornerstone of the Plympton Parks.

Since the 2012 Town Meeting, members of Plympton's Open Space Committee have worked with the Conservation Commission and the Selectmen to finalize the purchase and sale of the Churchill Park parcel, which required navigating some unexpected legal hurdles that are now behind us. In June of 2013, the planning stage of the Plympton Parks project began to merge with the physical efforts that are now making the project a reality.

Ultimately, Churchill Park on Main Street will be the entrance to the Cato's Conservation Area via a boardwalk that will be constructed over the wetlands that separate Churchill Park from Cato's Ridge. In recognition that the planning and construction of Churchill Park trails and the connecting boardwalk are going to take some time to complete, temporary access to the Cato's Ridge area has been negotiated with two residents on Ring Road. We are extremely grateful to these families for making it possible for all Plympton residents to begin enjoying the Cato's Conservation Area while Churchill Park is under construction. Since this temporary access requires passage through private residential property, we urge all visitors to be respectful of our neighbors who have so generously allowed this access. Look for the brown and white Cato's Ridge sign for access to the path. Please note that parking is at the Dennett School, not on the resident's property. **Only pedestrian access into Cato's Ridge is allowed via this route.**

For updates concerning the Parks, and ways you can participate and contribute, check back to the Friends of Plympton Parks ([PlymptonParks.org](http://PlymptonParks.org)) and/or the Town of Plympton's Conservation Commission websites.

**At 10:00 am on Saturday August 31, volunteers will be offering guided walking tours of the Cato's Ridge area. Please pack a snack and some water and join us as we muster at the Dennett Elementary School. This is a rain or shine event.**

**Bring your whole family. We look forward to seeing you!!**