

Stowe Mountain Golf Club: Sample environmental charter

Environmental Charter for Spruce Peak at Stowe

"Great things are done when men and mountains meet."
William Blake

INTRODUCTION

To the many people who love Stowe, the natural environment of Mt. Mansfield, Spruce Peak and the surrounding area is precious. This is a refreshing, clean, beautiful place and we want to keep it that way. Please join me in celebrating – and protecting – the tremendous natural bounty of this landscape.

FOREWARD

When *Spruce Peak at Stowe* was just a glimmer in this community's collective eye, preservation of the environment was a primary consideration. An award-winning collaborative planning effort then established a strong and clear future vision for the resort. This plan, based on the concepts of sustainability and environmental stewardship, has been endorsed by Vermont's environmental organizations, local and state government and the business community. The heart of this plan is focused on *Spruce Peak at Stowe*, a residential and commercial alpine recreation community located at the base of Spruce Peak. This charter establishes the principles and guidelines that are the foundation for environmental stewardship at *Spruce Peak at Stowe*.

MISSION STATEMENT

Spruce Peak at Stowe will be a leader in environmental responsibility through the creation of a sustainable community that is respectful of existing natural resources and protects the future of the Stowe environment. "Green development" construction and design techniques will be used to enhance the quality of life, to maximize energy efficiency and to connect people to the natural environment and their community.

PRINCIPLES

1. Collaborative Planning
The vision of Spruce Peak at Stowe belongs to no one person. It is the collective dream of many thoughtful people, each deserving to be heard. The concerns, ideas and inspirations of all stakeholders will continue to be actively considered. Positive working partnerships with environmental groups, state and local government and the business community will continue to be cultivated. As Spruce Peak at Stowe moves through construction and beyond completion, healthy partnerships between customers, investors, managers and employees will be a model for future collaborations.
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2. Water Conservation

Water is a precious resource that will not be wasted. For example:

- Water use will be conserved through the installation of water efficient fixtures in all buildings.
- Native plant species requiring limited irrigation will be used for all landscaping.
- The Spruce Peak Golf Course irrigation system will make maximum use of recycled storm water for irrigation.

3. Energy Conservation and Green Building Design

With every building, a “tread lightly upon the earth” approach will be taken. For example:

- All lighting, heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems are designed to achieve maximum energy efficiency.
- Energy systems have been engineered in coordination with Efficiency Vermont, an innovative Vermont program created to insure energy efficient development.
- EPA Energy Star Guidelines will be used for all construction and, in certain cases, certification under the national green building program; LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) will be obtained.

4. Chemical Use Management

No doubt about it: golf courses are beautiful places. The Spruce Peak at Stowe vision is to achieve that beauty with natural materials. The altitude of this site, combined with sophisticated drainage systems and disease resistant grass types, will help achieve that goal. The Spruce Peak Golf Course Management Plan has been prepared with the assistance of environmental organizations and will significantly limit the use of pesticides or herbicides. It is our objective to create the most environmentally sensitive golf course within Vermont.

5. Waste Management

The principles of “Reduce / Reuse / Recycle” must be embraced in order to manage society’s growing landfill needs. *Spruce Peak at Stowe* will minimize waste production through the use of convenient recycling opportunities, in turn minimizing its contribution to growing landfills. All new construction will be managed under a Solid Waste Management Plan, prepared in coordination with both the State and the County Solid Waste Authority, that requires recycling of both construction and demolition material.

6. Transportation

Public transportation is an important tool for improving air quality and decreasing dependence on petroleum fuels. It helps maintain a level of traffic consistent with the expectations that people have for rural Vermont. *Spruce Peak at Stowe* is served by the Stowe Trolley system, allowing residents and visitors to leave their cars parked while staying at the resort and still visit Stowe Village and the Mountain Road for shopping or dinner.

Spruce Peak at Stowe is designed to encourage pedestrian access; a parking garage and underground parking will house cars. Pedestrian paths will connect all activities and a heated plaza and walkways will serve the core area. A transfer lift will connect the Spruce and Mansfield base areas. Convenience and environmental protection go together nicely.

7. Stormwater Management

The protection of streams and wetlands has been incorporated into all facets of the *Spruce Peak at Stowe* design. For instance:

- Sidewalks will be heated to eliminate snow and ice without the use of salt and gravel.
- Two new snowmaking ponds will allow the resort to take less water from the river at critical times, increasing stream flows during the winter snowmaking season.
- Innovative stormwater collection systems have been engineered throughout *Spruce Peak at Stowe* and a comprehensive Water Quality Management Plan will guide all future activities at both Stowe Mountain Resort and *Spruce Peak at Stowe*.
- A strict erosion and sediment control plan has been implemented for all phases of construction, and significant wetland areas have been preserved and protected.
- Native grasses and grassy swales will be utilized to filter stormwater before it is discharged through a large settling pond that will also store snowmaking water.

8. Environmental Education

Can we go beyond responsible stewardship of the environment? Absolutely! Visitors to *Spruce Peak at Stowe* will have abundant opportunities to learn and be inspired by nature.

- In cooperation with the University of Vermont and other environmental organizations, we will pursue the establishment of an environmental education center to promote research and educational opportunities.
 - We will continue to coordinate with the Smugglers Notch Scenic Highway Partners to protect and preserve the Smugglers Notch Scenic Corridor, one of only two federally designated scenic highways in Vermont.
 - Continued participation in Mt. Mansfield Summit Management Partnership will ensure the future quality and management of the mountain's backcountry and summit hiking system.
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9. Natural Habitat

Spruce Peak at Stowe embraces the principles of compact, clustered development; land management that deters non-native plant species, and protection of habitat for rare animals.

- Over 2,000 acres surrounding *Spruce Peak at Stowe* has been permanently protected through either state ownership or the use of conservation easements.
- Only naturalized native vegetation will be used for all landscaping and, whenever possible, existing mature vegetation will be maintained throughout the project site.
- The summit of Spruce Peak will be allowed to naturally re-vegetate after the Big Spruce lift's top terminal has been relocated. This will increase habitat of the Bicknell's Thrush, an important high altitude bird species.

10. Landscape Aesthetics

Thoughtful development should consider whether man-made structures are in conflict or harmony with their surroundings. *Spruce Peak at Stowe's* clustered design employs state-of-the-art community planning principles combined with rustic mountain architecture that compliments the historic and natural elements of the site. Local business participation in future retail development will be encouraged. *Spruce Peak at Stowe* has been derived from the context of its surrounding setting. The dramatic terrain and spectacular natural setting will be reflected in the architecture. The natural use of materials and forms will allow the blending of man-made structures into nature. This style will convey the luxury of the resort within both the history and natural environment of Mt. Mansfield and Spruce Peak.

" Climb the mountains and get their good tidings. Nature's peace will flow into you as sunshine flows into trees. The winds will blow their own freshness into you... while cares will drop off like autumn leaves."

John Muir
