

TOWN OF WESTMORE
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Notice is hereby given to the residents of the Town of Westmore, VT that the Westmore Planning Commission will hold a public hearing in the Westmore Municipal Building on Wednesday, November 6th, at 5:30 p.m. This hearing will be held for public review of and comment on the proposed amendment to Westmore Town Plan pursuant to Title 24 VSA, Chapter 117.

The proposed plan amendment contains an enhanced energy plan that include estimates of energy use in thermal, electric utility, and transportation, as well as weatherization and fuel switching targets needed to achieve statewide energy goals.

The Town intends to seek an affirmative “determination of energy compliance” in order to be given “substantial deference” in the Public Utility Commission’s review of electric generation facilities. The Westmore Plan was previously updated in July of 2018 and received regional approval. This proposed amendment will not change the date of expiration of the Town Plan, which is eight years from the adoption in July 2018.

The proposed Plan amendment, if and when adopted, will affect all lands within the Town of Westmore.

WESTMORE TOWN PLAN

Purpose of the Town Plan	Energy
Overall Vision	Recreation
Policy Statements	Economic Development
History	Health Facilities
Town Profile	Security Services
Water Quality	Fire Protection
Flood Resilience	Solid Waste Disposal
Agriculture	Water Supply
Forests	Sewage Disposal
Natural Areas, Wetlands and Wildlife	Utilities
State Lands	Municipal Buildings
Scenic Features	Administrative and Management Services
Historic Features	Adjacent Communities
Education	Implementation Plan
Housing	Appendix 1: Maps
Transportation	

Copies of the proposed Westmore Town Plan may be obtained from the Westmore Town Clerk’s Office. Dated in Westmore, Vermont, May 4, 2017

TOWN OF WESTMORE PLANNING COMMISSION

Planning Commission Reporting Form for Municipal Plan Amendments

This report is in accordance with 24 V.S.A. §4384(c) which states:

*“When considering an amendment to a plan, the planning commission shall prepare a written report on the proposal. **The report shall address the extent to which the plan, as amended, is consistent with the goals established in §4302 of this title.**”*

The Westmore Town Plan has been amended in accordance with the “Energy Planning Standards for Municipal Plans.” The Town intends to seek an affirmative “determination of energy compliance” in order to be given “substantial deference” in the Public Utility Commission’s review of electric generation facilities.

The Westmore Plan was previously updated in July of 2018 and received regional approval. This amendment will not change the date of expiration of the Town Plan, which is eight years from the adoption in July 2018.

The goals, objectives, and implementation measures proposed in the amended Town Plan are consistent with the goals established in 24 V.S.A. Section 4302.

Westmore’s Energy Plan element has been amended to include the required elements of Act 174, which establishes “enhanced standards” for municipal plans if they are to receive Substantial Deference in the Section 248 process. These include estimates of energy use in thermal, electric utility, and transportation, as well as weatherization and fuel switching targets needed to achieve statewide energy goals.

The following policy has been added to the energy plan:

“Renewable energy development should not create an undue adverse impact to Westmore’s scenic ridgelines, as viewed from any public right of way, body of water, known hiking trails, or any vantage point in the National Natural Landmark area. This policy is consistent with the policies on general development and use restrictions cited throughout this plan. Westmore’s ridgelines, which are depicted on the attached Viewshed Map and accompanying photos, are highly visible from the lower elevations, leaving the town particularly vulnerable to adverse impacts of ridgeline development. Undue adverse impacts would include changing the following elements of Westmore’s scenic viewsheds: views from public roadways across open fields, especially when those fields form an important foreground; prominent ridgelines or hillsides that can be seen from many public vantage points; views from hiking trails and scenes that include important contrasting elements such as water and sites with historical significance.”

This language is consistent with general concerns about commercial development on ridgelines and high elevation already in the 2018 plan. For example:

“Protecting water quality, scenic landscapes and views, wildlife habitat, forested areas, and ridgelines is a high priority. (–Overall Vision; Water Quality; Forests; Natural Areas, Wetlands and Wildlife; Scenic Features, Historic Features, Recreation, Economic Development, Water Supply)” (*policy statement page 6 of existing plan – and proposed plan*)

“Any development 100 feet or higher that can be viewed from any point in the National Natural Landmark designation area should be considered a development of substantial regional impact.” *(policy statement, page 6 of existing plan – and proposed plan)*

“Due to their unique ecosystems and the potential for detrimental visual impacts by development, the ridgelines and mountaintops are considered important areas of town and should be protected from future development.” *(forests, page 24 of existing plan and proposed plan)*

“The visual impact of proposed commercial or large residential developments must be considered prior to construction or granting the necessary permits. The importance of the ridgelines in Westmore must be considered in the evaluating the appropriateness of any commercial or large residential development.” *(Recommended actions for scenic features, page 30 of existing plan and proposed plan; the latter statement also appears in the discussion of recreation on page 40 of the existing plan, and page 54 of the proposed plan.)*

If the proposal would alter the designation of any land area, the report should cover the following points:

- 1. The probable impact on the surrounding area, including the effect of any resulting increase in traffic, and the probable impact on the overall pattern of land use.*

The proposed update to the town plan proposes seeking Village Center Designation for Westmore *(page 52 of proposed plan)*. Designation would make funds available for establishing an EV charging station in Westmore’s tiny village core. The designation is not a regulatory program. If Westmore is able to attain it, designation would be valid for 8 years and would make available tax credit for rehabilitation of income-producing properties. It would also make some grant applications for reinvestment in public spaces for competitive.

- 2. The long-term cost or benefit to the municipality, based upon consideration of the probable impact on:*
 - (A) the municipal tax base; and*
 - (B) the need for public facilities;*

There are no long-term costs to the municipality associated with this plan amendment.

- 3. The amount of vacant land which is:*
 - (A) already subject to the proposed new designation; and*
 - (B) actually available for that purpose, and the need for additional land for that purpose.*

An area considered to be eligible for Village Center Designation under the State of Vermont designation guidelines is considered “the core of a traditional settlement, typically comprised of a cohesive mix of residential, civic, religious, commercial, and mixed use buildings, arranged along a main street and intersecting streets that are within walking distance for residents who live within and surrounding the core.” By that definition, Westmore’s village core – which would consist of the municipal offices and the community church area – is very small. Given the dispersed settlement patterns elsewhere in town, it is the only area suitable for such designation.

4. *The suitability of the area in question for the proposed purpose, after consideration of:*
 - (A) *appropriate alternative locations;*
 - (B) *alternative uses for the area under consideration; and*
 - (C) *the probable impact of the proposed change on other areas similarly designated*

There are no alternative areas to be considered for Village Center Designation.

5. *The appropriateness of the size and boundaries of the area proposed for change, with respect to the area required for the proposed use, land capability and existing development in the area.”*

The size and boundaries of the designation area would ultimately be determined by the Vermont Village Center Designation program.

Please Note:

- ❖ The planning commission must hold at least one public hearing within the municipality after public notice on any proposed plan or amendment.

- ❖ At least **30** days prior to the first hearing, a copy of the proposed plan or amendment and the written report must be delivered with proof of the receipt, or mailed by certified mail, return receipt requested, to each of the following:
 1. the chairperson of the planning commission of each abutting municipality, or in the absence of any planning commission in an abutting municipality, to the clerk of that municipality;
 2. the executive director of the regional planning commission of the area in which the municipality is located;
 3. the Department of Economics, Housing and Community Development within the Agency of Commerce and Community Development; and
 4. business, conservation, low income advocacy and other community or interest groups or organizations that have requested notice in writing prior to the date the hearing is warned.

- ❖ The planning commission may make revisions to the proposed plan or amendment and to any written report, and must thereafter submit the proposed plan or amendment and any written report to the legislative body of the municipality.

- ❖ If the legislative body changes any part of the proposed plan, the planning commission must submit to the legislative body, at or prior to the public hearing, a report that analyzes the extent to which the changed proposal, when taken together with the rest of the plan, is consistent with the legislative goals established in 24 V.S.A. §4302.

- ❖ Simultaneously with the submission, the planning commission must file with the clerk of the municipality a copy of the proposed plan or amendment, and any written report, for public review.

CERTIFICATE OF MUNICIPAL BYLAW
___ADOPTION ___AMENDMENT ___REPEAL

I, _____, Clerk of the Town/Village/City of _____, in _____ County, State of Vermont, do hereby certify pursuant to 24 VSA, §§ 4441, 4442, 4444, and 4447 that the following actions were taken by the designated parties with the respect to the adoption/amendment/repeal of the proposed municipal bylaw for the Town of _____, of which the attached is a true copy.

Signed: _____
Date: _____

Attach herewith all documentation, tear sheets, notices, etc. resulting from and confirming this adoption process.

I PLANNING COMMISSION HEARING(S), SUBMITTALS

A) Transmittal of Proposed Bylaw/Amendment/Repeal

Deadline for action: 15 days prior to first hearing date

Mail by **certified mail, return receipt requested**, or **delivered with proof of receipt**, copies of each of the following :

- proposed bylaw/amendment/repeal; hearing notice; and
 report;

To:

- Planning commission chairs, of adjoining municipalities (or municipal clerk if no planning commission exists)

- Executive Director, (Name and address of Regional Planning Commission)
 DHCD, *electronic submissions only*. See instructions: <http://accd.vermont.gov/community-development/town-future/plans-bylaws>

Statutory reference(s): §4441

Mailing Date: _____

Initialed: _____

On file: copy of proposed bylaw/amendment/repeal, hearing notice and report as mailed

B) Hearing Notice

Deadline for action: 15 days prior to first hearing date

The planning commission shall hold at least one public hearing on the proposed bylaw/amendment/repeal following 15 days notice. All hearings must be warned in accordance with the notice requirements under §§4441(d) and 4444. *Note: In calculating the warning/notice period, the first day shall not be counted, and the final day shall be counted.*

The planning commission has two options under §4444:

1. Publication in a newspaper of general circulation and posting a notice in three places in the municipality one of which must be in or near the clerk's office including date, time, place and purpose of the hearing, with either the full text of the material, **or** a summary, including a statement of purpose, geographic areas affected, table of contents/listing of

section headings, and a description of the place within the municipality where the full text and/or maps may be examined; *or*

2. Publication in a newspaper of general circulation designated by the legislative body and posting a notice in three places in the municipality one of which must be in or near the clerk's office including date, time, place, and purpose of the hearing; and mailing or delivery of the hearing notice with copies of the full text or a summary (as noted above), to each voter on the voter checklist, and to each landowner on the grand list.

Statutory reference(s): §4444
Posting Dates: *Version Warned* _____
 Municipality (*2 locations minimum*) _____
 Municipal Clerk's Office _____
Newspaper: _____ **Publication Date** _____

AND, either:

- 1) Post the full text or a summary including: a statement of purpose; geographic areas affected; table of contents/listing of section headings; and a description where the full text may be examined;

OR

- 2) mail/deliver to each voter on the voter checklist and each landowner on the grand list:
 the hearing notice; a copy of the full text; **or** summary **Initialed:** _____

On file: copies of posted and published notices, dated copy of proposed plan/amendment/repeal as warned, copies of voter checklist and grand list, if applicable

C) Planning Commission Hearing

Deadline for action: *15 days after notice publication*

As noted, the planning commission must hold at least one public hearing, following public notice, on the proposed bylaw/amendment/repeal as warned. *Note: No changes may be made between the time the public notice is posted/published and the public hearing.*

Statutory reference(s): §§4441 (d), 4444
Hearing Date: _____
Location: _____

On file: board minutes; comments submitted

D) Submittal of proposed bylaw/amendment/repeal to the legislative body and clerk.

Deadline for action: *After planning commission’s changes to the proposed bylaw/amendment/repeal and any written report unless supported by petition or requested by legislative body in which case the planning commission must promptly submit the amendment and only those changes necessary to correct any technical deficiencies along with any recommendations or opinions the planning commission considers appropriate.*

The planning commission may make changes to the proposed bylaw/amendment/repeal and to any written report and thereafter submit them to the legislative body. Simultaneous with its submissions the planning commission shall file with the clerk of the municipality a copy of the proposed bylaw/amendment/repeal and written reports as submitted to the legislative body, for public review.

Statutory reference(s): §4441(g)

Filing Date: _____

Initialed: _____

On file: dated copy of proposed bylaw/amendment/repeal with revisions, reports as submitted by the planning commission to the legislative body and clerk following final planning commission hearing

II. LEGISLATIVE HEARING(S)

A) Changes to proposed bylaw/amendment/repeal

Deadline for action: 15 days prior to final hearing date

The legislative body may change the proposed bylaw/amendment/repeal, but shall not do so less than 14 days prior to the final public hearing. If substantial changes are made in the concept, meaning, or extent of the proposed bylaw/amendment/repeal, it shall warn a new public hearing(s). If any part of the proposal is changed, the change shall be filed at least 10 days prior to the public hearing with the municipal clerk and with the planning commission. The planning commission shall amend its report to reflect the changes made and submit it thereon to the legislative body prior to or at the public hearing.

Statutory reference(s): §§4442

Filing Date: _____ **Initialed:** _____

On file: copy of proposed changes as warned, and filed with clerk and planning commission. Planning commission report if submitted prior to hearing

B) Hearing Notice

Deadline for action: 15 days prior to the first hearing date

Not less than 15 nor more than 120 days after a proposed bylaw/amendment/repeal is submitted to the legislative body of the municipality, the legislative body shall hold one or more public hearings, following 15 days public notice, on the proposed bylaw/amendment/repeal. All hearings must be warned in accordance with the notice requirements under §4444. The legislative body must make copies of proposal and written report by PC available to the public upon request. *Note: In calculating the warning/notice period, the first day shall not be counted, and the final day shall be counted.*

The legislative body has two options under §4444

- 1) Publication in a newspaper of general circulation and posting a notice in three places in the municipality one of which must be in or near the clerk's office including date, time, place and purpose of the hearing, with either the full text of the material, **or** a summary, including a statement of purpose, geographic areas affected, table of contents/listing of section headings, and a description of the place within the municipality where the full text and/or maps may be examined; *or*
- 2) Publication in a newspaper of general circulation designated by the legislative body and posting a notice in three places in the municipality one of which must be in or near the clerk's office including date, time, place, and purpose of the hearing; and mailing or delivery of the hearing notice with copies of the full text or a summary (as noted above), to each voter on the voter checklist, and to each landowner on the grand list.

Statutory reference(s): §§4442 and 4444

Posting Dates: _____ *Version Warned* _____
Municipality (2 locations minimum) _____

Municipal Clerk’s Office _____

Newspaper: _____ **Publication Date** _____

AND, either:

- 1) post the full text or a summary including: a statement of purpose; geographic areas affected; table of contents/listing of section headings; and a description where the full text may be examined;

OR

- 2) mail/deliver to each voter on the voter checklist and each landowner on the grand list:

the hearing notice; a copy of the full text; **or** summary **Initialed:** _____

On file: copies of posted and published notices, dates copy of proposed plan/amendment/repeal with planning commission report, as warned, copies of vote checklist and grand list, if applicable

C) Legislative Body Hearing(s).

Deadline for action: *not less than 15 nor more than 120 days following submission by the planning commission (for the first hearing); as warned*

As noted, not less than 15 nor more than 120 days after a proposed bylaw/amendment/repeal is submitted to the legislative body, it shall hold the first of one or more public hearings, after public notice on the proposed bylaw/amendment/repeal. Also as noted above, if the legislative body makes any substantial changes, it shall warn a new public hearing or hearings and file the proposed changes with the clerk and planning commission at least 10 days prior to the final public hearing as warned. *Note: Failure to hold a hearing within 120 day period does not invalidate the adoption of the bylaw/amendment/repeal.*

Statutory reference(s): §§4442 and 4444

Hearing Date(s): _____

Locations: _____

Initialed: _____

On file: record of proceedings, attendance, planning commission report as submitted

III. ADOPTION OF MUNICIPAL BYLAW/AMENDMENT/REPEAL

A) Legislative Body Adoption.

Deadline for action: *Within one year of date of final planning commission hearing*

Bylaws, amendments, and/or repeals, unless otherwise noted under subsection III. B and C (Australian ballot options and exceptions to routine adoptions) shall be adopted or rejected by a majority of the member of the legislative body at a meeting which is held after final public hearing, and shall be effective 21 days after adoption, unless petitioned for popular vote (see below).

Statutory reference(s): §4442(c)

Date of Meeting/Vote: _____

Action: Adopted Rejected **Initialed:** _____

On file: meeting minutes, record of vote, dated copy of proposed bylaw/amendment/repeal as accepted or rejected by legislative body

- (1) Petition for Popular Vote. A vote by the legislative body on a bylaw, amendment, or repeal shall not take effect if five percent of the voters of the municipality petition for a meeting

of the municipality to consider the bylaw, amendment, or repeal, and the petition is filed within 20 days of the vote. In that case, a meeting of the municipality shall be duly warned for the purpose of acting by Australian ballot upon the bylaw, amendment, or repeal.

Statutory reference(s): 24 V.S.A., §4442(d)
Deadlines for action: petition filed within 20 days of vote

Date petition filed: _____

Within 20 days: Yes No

Validity confirmed by: _____

Date: _____

Date of Meeting/Vote: _____

Posting Date: _____ NA

Publication Date: _____ NA

Procedures for adoption by Australian Ballot have been certified and are included under separate attachment.

Action: Adopted _____ Rejected _____ **Initialed:** _____

On file: copy of petition; certification of action by Australian Ballot with attached documentation; dated copy of bylaw as adopted/rejected by voters

B) Australian Ballot Options (*legislative body may put the bylaw before the voters for adoption via Australian Ballot, or a rural municipality with a population of less than 2,500 that has previously elected at a special or regular town meeting to require bylaws/ amendments/repeals be adopted by Australian ballot*)

A proposed bylaw, amendment or repeal for a municipality shall be adopted or rejected by the vote of the municipality by Australian Ballot (17 VSA, §2641) at the next regular or special town meeting duly warned and held after final public hearing. The adoption or rejection shall be effective immediately.

Vote by Australian Ballot. Questions voted on by Australian Ballot must be warned according to 17 VSA, §2641. The warning must be posted in **two** locations, and in or near the municipal clerk’s office. The warning must also be distributed using one of the following methods:

- published in a newspaper designated by the legislative body; or
- published and distributed as a warned article in the municipal report; or
- otherwise distributed in written form to all town or city postal patrons at least 10 days before the meeting.

Note: A public informational hearing is not required for bylaws adopted via Australian ballot; however, if the town would like to hold a public informational hearing it may.

Statutory reference(s): Title 17 V.S.A., §§2641 and 2642

Deadlines for action: Posting: not less than 30 nor more than 40 days prior to vote; and
Publication, newspaper: at least 5 days prior to vote; or
Publication, report: distributed at least 10 days prior to meeting
Vote: within one year of date of final planning commission hearing.

Posting Dates:

Municipality (2 locations minimum) _____

Municipal Clerk's Office _____

Newspaper: _____ **Publication Date** _____

Meeting/Vote Date: _____

Action: Adopted Rejected

Initialed: _____

On file: copy of notice as posted, published, meeting minutes, record of vote; dated copy of proposed plan/amendment/repeal as accepted or rejected by voters

D. Exceptions to routine adoptions

Petition for action past one-year deadline

As noted, if a bylaw, amendment or repeal is not approved or rejected by the municipality within one year of the date of the final planning commission hearing, it shall be considered disapproved unless 5 percent of the voters of the municipality petition for a meeting of the municipality to consider the bylaw, amendment or repeal, and the petition is filed within 60 days of the end of that year. In that case, a meeting of the municipality shall be duly warned for the purpose of acting upon the bylaw or amendment by Australian Ballot.

Statutory reference(s): §4442(g)

Deadline for action: filing within 60 days of end of year as defined

Date petition filed: _____

Within 60 days: Yes No

Validity confirmed by: _____

Date: _____

Date of Meeting/Vote: _____

Posting Date: _____ NA

Publication Date: _____ NA

Procedures for adoption by Australian Ballot have been certified and are included under separate attachment.

Action: Adopted Rejected **Initialed:** _____

On file: copy of petition; certification of action by Australian Ballot with attached documentation; dated copy of bylaw/amendment/repeal as adopted/rejected by voters

Planning Commission Reporting Form for Municipal Bylaw Amendments

This report is in accordance with 24 V.S.A. §4441(c) which states:

“When considering an amendment to a bylaw, the planning commission shall prepare and approve a written report on the proposal. A single report may be prepared so as to satisfy the requirements of this subsection concerning bylaw amendments and subsection 4384(c) of this title concerning plan amendments..... The report shall provide(:)

(A) brief explanation of the proposed bylaw, amendment, or repeal andinclude a statement of purpose as required for notice under §4444 of this title,

(A)nd shall include findings regarding how the proposal:

- 1. Conforms with or furthers the goals and policies contained in the municipal plan, including the effect of the proposal on the availability of safe and affordable housing;*
- 2. Is compatible with the proposed future land uses and densities of the municipal plan;*
- 3. Carries out, as applicable, any specific proposals for any planned community facilities.”*

Please Note:

- ❖ The planning commission shall hold at least one public hearing within the municipality after public notice on any proposed bylaw, amendment or repeal and;
- ❖ At least **15** days prior to the first hearing, a copy of the proposed plan or amendment and the written report shall be delivered with proof of the receipt, or mailed by certified mail, return receipt requested, to each of the following:
 1. the chairperson of the planning commission of each abutting municipality, or in the absence of any planning commission in an abutting municipality, to the clerk of that abutting municipality;
 2. the executive director of the regional planning commission of the area in which the municipality is located;
 3. the Department of Economic, Housing and Community Development within the Agency of Commerce and Community Development.

- ❖ The planning commission may make revisions to the proposed bylaw, amendment, or repeal and to the written report, and shall then submit the proposed bylaw, amendment or repeal and the written report to the legislative body of the municipality. If requested by the legislative body or supported by petition the planning commission shall promptly submit the amendment with changes only to correct technical deficiencies, together with any recommendations.

- ❖ Simultaneously, with the submission, the planning commission shall file with the clerk of the municipality a copy of the proposed bylaw, amendment, or repeal, and the written report for public review.

1 WESTMORE TOWN PLAN

2
3 Adopted on July 9, 2018

4
5 Proposed Amendment to Energy Plan

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8 First hearing date:
9 Wednesday November 6, 2019
10 Westmore Town Offices
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12

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1. PURPOSE OF THE TOWN PLAN

This plan will be effective only to the degree the community wishes to work together to make it so. Westmore is a very unique and special place. This belief gives rise to a sense of identity, affection, loyalty, and shared commitment to the town’s welfare. These feelings are among Westmore’s greatest resources and important assets.

The plan serves several functions. It helps define the community by laying out the general vision or direction for future development in the town. It identifies local needs and desires which are then written into an “implementation plan” which guides the actions and priorities of public officials. It clearly defines the Town’s position on certain issues which leads to increased standing in Act 250 hearings and offers suggestions for improving local land use regulations. The plan also plays a role in Public Utility Commission (PUC) (Section 248) hearings. Before issuing a Certificate of Public Good, for most projects, the PUC must find that the “purchase, investment, or construction, with respect to an in-state facility, will not unduly interfere with the orderly development of the region with due consideration having been given to the recommendations of the municipal and regional planning commissions, the recommendations of the municipal legislative bodies, and the land conservation measures contained in the plan of any affected municipality.” (30 V.S.A., §248(b)(1) Finally, an approved town plan is necessary for certain grant applications, including Municipal Planning Grants, and Community Development Block Grants. The plan itself has no regulatory power but it establishes a legal basis for adopting and enforcing zoning bylaws and flood hazard regulations, and it can help influence future decisions by setting a framework for the discussion, identifying issues and recommending actions.

The desire of the Planning Commission (PC) is to pull together the information we have received throughout the planning process into a document that reflects the vision and goals of the people who live in Westmore. Adoption of a plan represents a community decision about the town’s future character, its priorities for land use, conservation of physical resources, and the encouragement of well-considered, responsible development. Westmore does not exist in isolation from the region and will be affected by what happens in other municipalities.

The residents of Westmore are custodians of a town with unquestioned natural beauty and significant resources which require diligent attention. Through adoption and implementation of the Plan, the Town and its residents are exercising their best stewardship for those resources which nature, history, and geography have so abundantly endowed.

2. OVERALL VISION

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The unique and special character of Westmore is derived from a combination of two principal factors: the historic, rural, seasonal character of the community and the infinite magnificence of Westmore’s Willoughby Lake along with its other pond, mountain and farm settings. The Town’s existing rural and seasonal character is partially an outgrowth of its agrarian and tourist/recreational past and is apparent today in its seasonally dynamic but tranquil community. The diversity of scenery, geographic location, natural beauty, natural resources and people of the

1 Town of Westmore create an essence of the town. These qualities can be found, and maintained,
 2 only in a community that continues to cultivate a close association with the land, and to nourish
 3 an appreciation and respect for both the productivity and physical limitations on the natural
 4 environment.

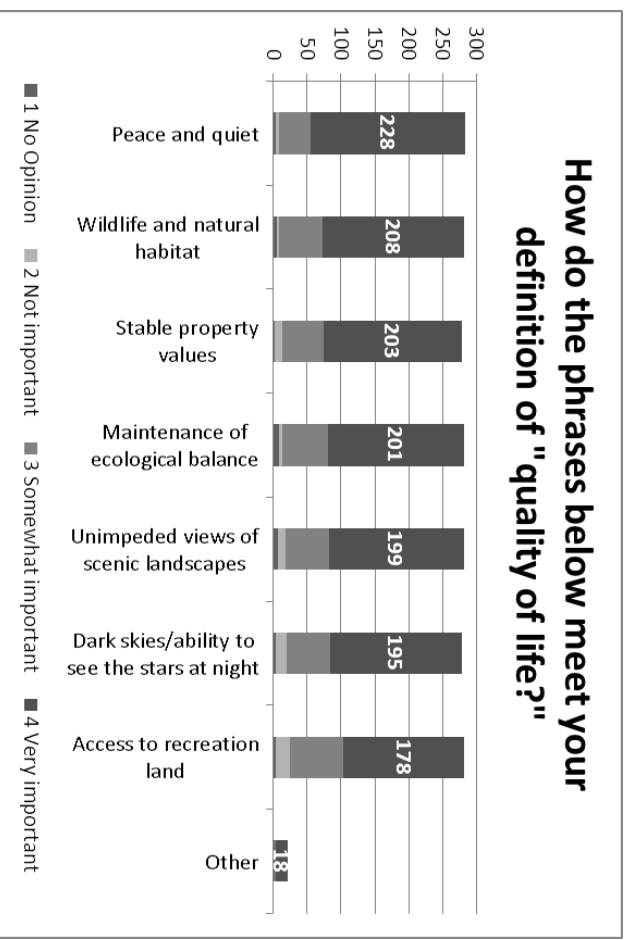
6 We recognize that although there may be general agreement on the need to maintain the natural
 7 and cultural quality of life in Westmore, people have different ideas on how to accomplish this.
 8 Therefore, the Town should provide information to landowners of the various options available
 9 to them and let them decide. In general, the Town should encourage actions through knowledge
 10 and the landowner's desire to enhance her/his position and quality of life. Land use regulations
 11 should be kept to a minimum and be enacted only on those areas critically important to
 12 maintaining the quality of life in Westmore and to protect the public health, safety, and welfare.
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14 The community should strive to reach a sustainable balance in using our natural resources. With
 15 the underlying goals of maintaining water quality, scenic resources, and critical habitat, the
 16 town's natural resources should be used to support the local economy in forestry, farming and
 17 tourism. Westmore's economy should focus on local self-sufficiency and creating jobs from
 18 within the community. Industries that produce "value added" products from local natural and
 19 cultural resources should be encouraged. It is through greater self-reliance that our economy and
 20 future will be self-sustaining.
 21

22 Westmore's rich array of natural resources has long been considered an integral part of the
 23 community's cultural heritage, and this has been reflected in the town plan. Unless updated and
 24 readopted, the town plan expires every eight years, creating an opportunity to reassess long-held
 25 beliefs and identify new and emerging concerns. In the summer of 2012, the Westmore Planning
 26 Commission conducted a community survey to reassess views on natural resources and gain
 27 insights into how the town plan may better reflect community values. The survey asked
 28 respondents to rank the significance of natural areas and means to protect them. The survey also
 29 sought feedback on a
 30 variety of strategies for
 31 protecting the town's
 32 scenic resources and for
 33 defining quality of life in
 34 Westmore. The Planning
 35 Commission received
 36 nearly 300 responses,
 37 representing a 44% return
 38 rate.

39
 40 **Rural Ambiance**
 41

42 Not surprisingly, survey
 43 respondents cherished the
 44 rural ambiance of the
 45 community. "Peace and
 46 quiet" was the most



1 defining attribute of quality of life, yet all other factors ranked high as well. One of the important
2 features of living on a rural lake is the opportunity to be able to enjoy the moon from a canoe, to
3 look out from your dock and see the stars and night sky, to feel like you live in a quiet remote
4 area. As more people have built homes, walkways and docks, the amount of outside lighting has
5 increased. There are more street lights, walkways are lit-up, and flood lights illuminate the night
6 woods. The traditional lights flickering in the warm windows have been changed by bright deck
7 lights and lighted stairways. The qualities of a rural lake have been diminished. The rural
8 ambiance has been decreased. And as more people move to the area, the problem may get
9 worse. The lake residents should be aware that the lights on their stairway illuminate more than
10 just the stairs themselves.

11
12 Our community's rural character, is seen by many to be in peril. A number of respondents had
13 much to say regarding impacts from existing wind developments in nearby towns of Sheffield
14 and Lowell, both of which can be seen heading west from Hinton Hill toward Willoughby Lake,
15 and both of which add flashing red lights to Westmore's otherwise dark night skyline. Other
16 threats to Willoughby's rural ambiance include runoff and loss of active farming and its
17 associated working landscape.

18 **Willoughby as a National Natural Landmark**

19
20
21 The Willoughby Lake area was designated as a National Natural Landmark (NNL) in 1967, just
22 five years after the NNL program was created. This designation is permanent and should factor
23 prominently into any local, state, or federal land use policies.

24 To be designated, NNL sites must demonstrate the best remaining examples of specific
25 biological and/or geological features. Today there are fewer than 600 sites that have earned this
26 designation through the U.S. and U.S. territories, and there are only 12 sites in Vermont. Here is
27 how the Willoughby Lake Area is described in the National Natural Landmarks Directory
28 (2009).

29
30 *"Lake Willoughby, a deep, cold-water lake within Lake Willoughby Natural Area*
31 *lies in a u-shaped trough cut into granite by glacial scouring. Mountains and*
32 *1,500-foot cliffs rise abruptly from the lake's east and west shores. It is the*
33 *deepest lake in Vermont and one of the most significant and scenic examples of*
34 *glacial erosion in the northeast."*

35
36 The NNL program regulations require the National Park Service to monitor the condition of each
37 designation site in order to ensure that they still contain the values and conditions that qualified
38 them for designation in the first place. A guiding principle for monitoring is to ensure that the
39 resource remains unimpaired or in a natural condition, and that the site's "natural integrity has
40 not been diminished." (<http://www.nature.nps.gov>) The designation also impacts any
41 development that requires federal permits (such as National Environmental Protection Act).
42 Finally, although the designation is permanent, it may be removed if the resources for which the
43 site was designated are lost or destroyed.

44
45 NNL designation can include public and/or private lands, and the designation is not tied to any
46 administrative boundary. Although the Willoughby designation area is identified as "state-

1 owned” land, it is impossible to evaluate the significance of the Willoughby Lake and Cliffs area
2 without considering its dramatic backdrop of forested high elevation areas that rise from every
3 point on the horizon surrounding it. The lake area and the village are at the bottom of a unique
4 topographical bowl configuration that creates a spectacular 360-degree viewshed.

5
6 While scenic natural beauty is a hallmark of life in the Northeast Kingdom, Westmore’s iconic
7 viewshed of Willoughby defines the community both culturally and economically. Westmore’s
8 identity is tied to a landscape that has served as inspiration for artists and writers and has made
9 the community a destination for more than a century. The lake area draws visitors worldwide,
10 who spend on recreation, dining, and entertainment establishments all over the Northeast
11 Kingdom. While the NNL designation can and should be taken into account for all federal
12 permitting process, it should be a critical factor in local land use decisions as well, including Act
13 250 and Section 248. Given the significance of this designation, the Westmore Town Plan asserts
14 that any development of 100 feet or higher that can be viewed from any point in the NNL
15 designation area be considered a development of substantial regional impact.

16 17 18 19 **3. POLICY STATEMENTS** 20

- 21 1. Land use regulations should be kept to a minimum and be enacted only on those areas
22 critically important to maintaining the quality of life in Westmore and to protect the
23 public health, safety and welfare of the community. (throughout plan)
- 24 2. Protecting water quality, scenic landscapes and views, wildlife habitat, forested areas,
25 and ridgelines is a high priority. (–Overall Vision; Water Quality; Forests; Natural
26 Areas, Wetlands and Wildlife; Scenic Features, Historic Features, Recreation, Economic
27 Development, Water Supply)
- 28 3. Retaining the quality of life, scenic attributes, diversity of wildlife, and environmental
29 harmony and beauty that are the products of responsible farming and forestry is a
30 priority. (Overall Vision; –Water Quality; Agriculture; Forests)
- 31 4. Any development 100 feet or higher that can be viewed from any point in the National
32 Natural Landmark designation area should be considered a development of substantial
33 regional impact. (Overall Vision)
- 34 5. Retain or increase the number of working family farms while encouraging acceptable
35 agriculture practices. (–Overall Vision, Agriculture)
- 36 6. Maintaining a healthy and vibrant forest and forestry industry in Westmore through long
37 term forest stewardship is important. (Overall Vision, Forests)
- 38 7. Maintaining the diversity of habitat and species that exist in Westmore is a priority. (–
39 Overall Vision; Natural Areas, Wetlands and Wildlife)
- 40 8. Maintain and enhance the important role that public lands play in Westmore. (State
41 Lands)

- 1 9. The important economic and social role recreation plays in Westmore is recognized and
2 should be enhanced. (–Overall Vision; Forests; State Lands; Recreation, Economic
3 Development)
- 4 10. Enhance the historic and cultural features in town. (Historic Features)
- 5 11. Maintaining the high quality of education for Westmore’s young people and providing
6 ongoing educational opportunities for all ages is important. (Education)
- 7 12. Maintaining and enhancing a diversity of housing in Westmore is important. (–Housing)
- 8 13. Maintaining and improving the existing road network is important. (Transportation)
- 9 14. Promote a reduction in local dependence upon costly non-renewable energy resources by
10 encouraging conservation and the development of local, residential-scale renewable
11 energy resources. (Energy)
- 12 15. Businesses and services which will enhance the economic potential of our renewable
13 natural resources, recognizing that tourism and recreation resources are important to the
14 economy, are a priority. (–Overall Vision; Forests; Recreation; Economic Development)

15 16 17 **4. HISTORY**

18 Westmore was incorporated with the name of Westford on August 17, 1781 with a Land Grant
19 Charter signed by then Governor Thomas Chittenden. The town was to be six miles squared.

20
21 As with all Land Grant Charters, each proprietor had to fulfill certain conditions to retain land
22 ownership. Each family must clear, plant, and cultivate at least five acres of land, and build a
23 house of at least 18 square feet. A family must be settled on the parcel within three years after it
24 became safe to do so due to the war. All pine timber suitable for naval use was reserved for the
25 government.

26
27 The charter also recognized the overall needs of community development because lots were left
28 for the support of the worship of God (Church lot), minister’s lot, school, and seminary.

29
30 On October 26, 1787 the General Assembly of Vermont acted to change the name of the town
31 from Westford to Westmore. This was due to the fact that there was another town named
32 Westford in Vermont.

33
34 On November 15, 1821 the General Assembly changed the county lines so that Westmore, which
35 had been in Essex County, ended up in Orleans County where it is today.

36
37 At the time of the War of 1812, the town was abandoned due to fears they would not be able to
38 protect themselves from possible attack from the north, and yet were too far removed from others
39 and too few in number to be able to be safe. The town was re-settled in the 1830’s.

40
41 In 1838 Peter Gilman, with two others, petitioned the legislature for the right to levy a four cent
42 per acre municipal tax to complete the lake road. This was granted by the legislature and is
43 probably the first “municipal” property tax to be assessed in Westmore. It was a “single” issue

1 tax and there is no record that it was continued at this time.

2
3 The seasonal, resort character of Westmore began to develop after the Lake Road was
4 completed.

5
6 The population peak of Westmore appears to have been 480 in 1889. The present population
7 (year round) is 350. .

8
9 At one time Westmore had six one-room schools and a school census of 119 pupils; today's is
10 57. This figure is derived from the American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimates (2012-
11 2016). The ACS reports that there are 57 residents aged three and older who are enrolled in
12 school. Of this number, 12 are enrolled in college or graduate school.

13 14 **5. TOWN PROFILE**

15 16 **Physical Attributes**

17 The town of Westmore occupies 22,193 acres, five percent of the landmass of Orleans County.
18 Westmore has several lakes and ponds, including Willoughby Lake (1,653 acres) which lies in
19 the dramatic Willoughby Gap. The town is also home to Sentinel Rock State Park (387 acres)
20 and the 215 acres of the Bald Hill Wildlife Management Area, which also contains land in
21 Newark. The southwestern corner of the town contains 2,177 acres of the Willoughby State
22 Forest, which extends into Sutton and includes the 950-acre area composed of the cliffs of Mount
23 Pisgah and Mount Hor. This section is known as the "Willoughby Cliffs Natural Area" which is
24 part of the National Natural Landmark designation.

25 26 **Population**

27 Westmore has the smallest population of any town in Orleans County with 350 persons (2010
28 Census). This represents practically a 14% change from the 2000 census population of 306, in
29 comparison to a 3.6% increase in the Orleans County population and a 2.8% statewide increase
30 over the same period.

31
32
33 Westmore's 350 persons represent just a little over 1% of the county's population, and the
34 town's population density is lowest in Orleans County at 8.8 persons per square mile. (The vast
35 majority of Orleans County has fewer than 30 persons per square mile and the statewide average
36 is 67.9).

37 38 39 **Age Distribution**

40 Westmore's population is getting older, following the national trend of the aging of "baby-
41 boomers". The table below shows a comparison of the breakdown of the 1990, 2000 and 2010
42 populations into age groups, and also illustrates the percent change from 1990 to 2010 in each
43 age group.

1 **TABLE 1 Percent Changes in Age Groups 1990 - 2010**

Ages	Under age 5	5-19	20-44	45-64	65 and over
1990	10	78	108	53	56
2000	13	46	85	111	51
2010	12	43	75	139	81
Change	+20%	-45%	-31%	+162%	45%

2 Source: U.S. Census 1990-2010.

3
 4 The above shows a 162 % increase in the 45-64 age group, a 45% increase in 65 and older.
 5 While there is a modest increase in the 0 -4 age group, there is a significant decline in the other
 6 groups, aged 5-44. This skewed age distribution may have an effect upon the type of public
 7 services and housing opportunities which will be in demand over the coming years.

8
 9 In 2010 Westmore had a population of 350. Of that population 12 were under 5 years old, 257
 10 were between 5 and 65, and 81 were over 65 years old. The median age was 53.1(up from 45.9
 11 years in the 2000 Census) , compared to the current statewide median of 40.4 years.

12
 13 Westmore’s changes in age group distribution reflect long-term trends in the county and state. In
 14 August 2013, the State of Vermont released a new set of population projections to 2030. Unlike
 15 earlier projections, these projections use TWO scenarios. “Scenario A” assumed an in-migration
 16 rate similar to what occurred from 1990 to 2000, when the economy was more robust. “Scenario
 17 B” assumes an in-migration rate in line with what occurred from 2000 to 2010, a decade plagued
 18 by lingering recession and economic turmoil. Scenario A projected a fairly robust population
 19 increase in Westmore of 12% by the year 2030, while Scenario B shows very modest gains of
 20 only 3.4% over the same period. In either scenario, population gains will likely be among age
 21 groups 60 and older. County-wide age projections show significant gains in those age groups, as
 22 well as a decrease in younger groups.¹

23
 24 **Household Types**

25 According to the Census, the 2010 population of Westmore lived in 165 households, which can
 26 be broken down into the following categories:

27

Total households	165
Family households	105
with own children under 18 years	29
Husband-wife family	89
with own children under 18 years	17
Single householder, no spouse present, with own children under 18 year	12
Nonfamily households	60
Householder living alone	51

28
 29 The total number of households in town increased by 11.8. % between 1990 and 2000, from 119
 30 to 133 and by 24.1% between 2000 and 2010, to a total of 165. In 1990, there were 11

¹ Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development: Vermont Population Projects 2010-2030, August 2013.

1 households with children under 18 which were headed by a single parent; in 2010 there were 12.

2
3 **Income**

4 According to the American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimates 2012-2016 the median
5 household income in Westmore is \$41,071, which is 7% lower than the county-wide median
6 household income of \$43,959.

7
8 **Where People Work**

9 According to ACS 5-Year Estimates 2012-2016 (U. S.), 315 residents in Westmore are over the
10 age of 16. Of this population, 170 are in the labor force and are employed. Like many NEK
11 towns, Westmore is highly auto-dependent. There are 155 workers who drive to work, with an
12 average commute of 34.6 minutes. There are only 7 who work at home; the rest either walk to
13 work or use other means.

14
15 **Regional Employment**

16 According the Vermont Department of Labor, the average wage for all covered employment
17 (private and government employment covered by Vermont unemployment insurance) in
18 Westmore was \$34,643, 2.5% below that of \$35,504 for the county and 31.4% below that of the
19 state's \$45,054. The primary form of covered employment is in the services providing domain –
20 1 in the retail sector, 1 in professional and technical services, and 2 in hospitality and food
21 services. Employee counts are largely suppressed, but there are 33 covered employees in
22 Westmore, 10 of which are in the government sector.

23
24 The three dominant categories of covered employment in Orleans County during 2016 were:
25 services (annual average of 6,350 covered employees), goods producing (2,341 employees), and
26 government (2,044 employees, working at the federal, state, or local level).² The services
27 category included leisure and hospitality (1,473 employees); education and health services
28 (1,814 employees), and retail trade (1,519 employees). Goods producing included manufacturing
29 (1,413 employees), construction (653 employees), and the natural resources and mining
30 supersector, which includes agriculture and forestry (275 employees). In this supersector, 192
31 were employed in animal production, 27 in logging, and another 20 in agriculture and forestry
32 support. These figures, however, do not account for the many people in these fields who are self-
33 employed and are not covered by unemployment insurance.

34
35 Employment activity in Westmore is covered in greater detail in Section 18 Economic
36 Development.

37
38 **6. WATER QUALITY**

39
40 Protecting water quality is a high priority in the Town of Westmore. Activities such as logging
41 on steep slopes or down to the water's edge, building houses close to the water, run-off from
42 gravel roads, and cutting vegetation along the shore all affect the quality of water.

43
44 Due to the steep topography which increases the likelihood of run-off, the lakes and ponds in

² Vermont Department of Labor, Economic & Labor Market Information, Covered Employment 2016,
<http://www.vtlni.info>, accessed February 2018.

1 Westmore are especially vulnerable. Long Pond has a small watershed and drains directly into
2 Willoughby Lake. Therefore, precautions in this area of town are especially important.

3
4 Westmore’s forest cover provides stability to Westmore’s lakes, ponds, and streams. Westmore’s
5 forest cover – which is largely located on higher and steep terrains -- intercepts precipitation,
6 which then gets percolated into subsurface water systems. Loss of the tree cover, however, can
7 mean a loss of ability to intercept precipitation and slow down surface runoff. The result can be
8 non-point source contamination and flash flooding.

9

10 **Non-Point Run-Off**

11 Non-point pollution comes from a variety of sources such as erosion due to house construction,
12 deforestation, failing septic systems, grass clippings from lawns, manure spread on fields, gravel
13 washing off the roads, improper or excessive application of lawn fertilizers, herbicides and
14 pesticides, etc. By definition non-point pollution tends to be dispersed and diluted. However, all
15 these activities combined contribute to downgrade the water quality. Nutrient inputs such as
16 phosphorous, nitrogen and organic matter lead to eutrophication (the increase in the amount of
17 nutrients available for water plants such as algae) which increases the growth of these plants thus
18 leading to a decrease in the amount of oxygen available for fish and other life in the water.
19 Increased nutrients reduce water transparency resulting in increased water temperature.
20 Undesirable chemical products like pesticides and heavy metals threaten human health and the
21 survival of the aquatic ecosystem.

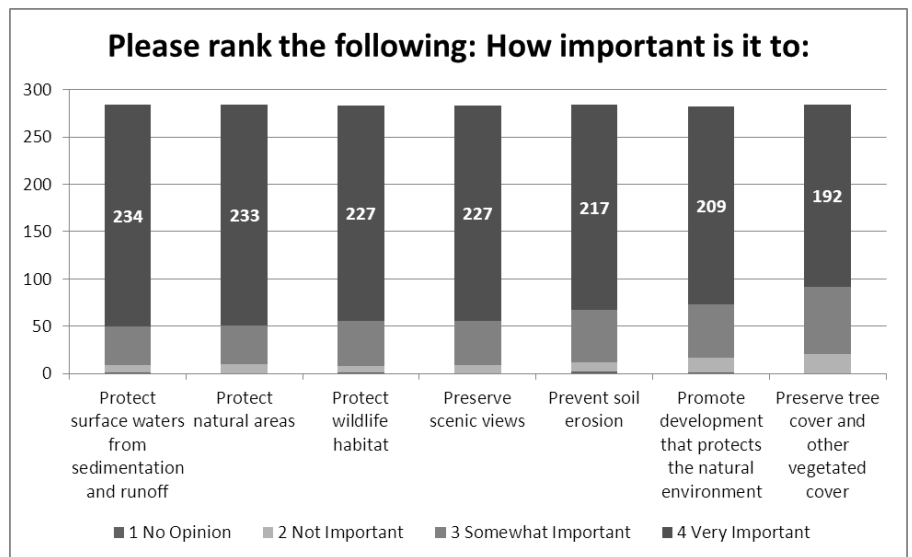
22

23 In 1990-93 the governments of Vermont and Quebec set up a task force to look into water

24 quality issues in the Lake
25 Memphremagog watershed. The
26 Quebec/Vermont Working Group
27 on Managing Lake
28 Memphremagog and Its
29 Environment Report states the
30 nutrient content of run-off from
31 various land uses. It found water
32 coming from agricultural land
33 contained four times more
34 phosphorus than water running
35 off undisturbed forest land. Run-
36 off from urban/built-up land
37 contained twelve times more
38 phosphorus than run-off from
39 forested land.³

40 **Tactical Basin Planning**

41 The Vermont Clean Water Act of 2015 was enacted to authorize and prioritize proactive
42 measures to limit phosphorous concentrations in Lake Champlain and Lake Memphremagog and
43 improve water quality across the state. This legislation, as well as other clean water efforts, have
44 strengthened cooperation among municipalities, regional planning commissions, and the



³ Quebec/Vermont Working Group on Managing Lake Memphremagog and Its Environment, Final Report, page 24, 1993.

1 Department of Environmental Conservation in maintaining and implementing *Tactical Basin*
 2 *Plans*. The plans are guidance documents for the Agency of Natural Resources because they
 3 identify and prioritize the necessary actions to protect or restore specific bodies of water across
 4 each of the 15 planning basins in Vermont.

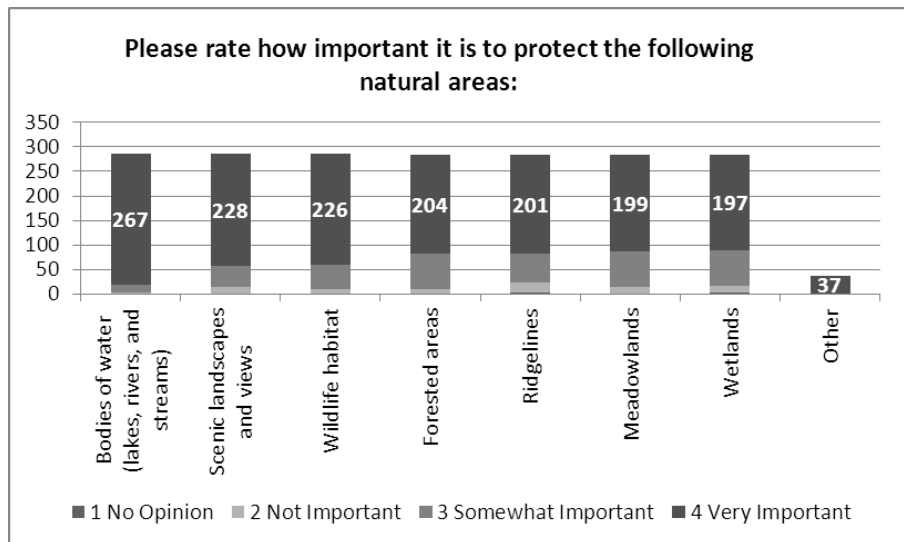
5
 6 Most of Westmore is located in Basin 17, which encompasses 589 square miles of Lake
 7 Memphremagog drainage and the Tomifobia and Coaticook River watersheds. Basin Plan 17
 8 attributes nearly half of phosphorus runoff – which can contribute to occasional cyanobacteria or
 9 blue-green algae blooms – to agricultural lands (46%), followed by developed lands (21%), river
 10 instability (20%), and forest lands and wetlands (12%). Collectively, the Plan attributes 52.6
 11 metric tons of phosphorus per year into the basin. In September 2017, the US. Environmental
 12 Protection Agency set new phosphorus limits (also known as Total Maximum Daily Load –
 13 TMDL) for Lake Memphremagog. The new TMDL target is 40.6 metric tons/year, representing
 14 a 23% reduction in phosphorus pollution. To achieve this target, the Tactical Basin Plan
 15 identifies specific reduction measures in each municipality. Watershed sampling on Willoughby
 16 and on Long Pond show statistically significant increasing phosphorus trends, and Willoughby is
 17 rated as “fair” for shoreland disturbance due to higher levels of development along its shoreline.
 18 The watershed projects for Westmore identified below can address both the concerning trends on
 19 Willoughby and Long Pond, and to help meet Lake Memphremagog phosphorus loading
 20 reduction targets set in the TMDL:
 21

Project description	Project Type	Status
Culvert replacements on 5A: Dorin Brook, Myers Brook, Wells Brook, and Schoolhouse Brook	Road Project	Final Design
Road Erosion Inventory and Capital Budget*	Inventory	Ongoing
LakeWise Master Plan for Willoughby Lake	Lake Shoreland Identification	Ongoing
Willoughby Lake North Beach tree plantings	Lake Shoreland	Final Design

22 *More information on the road erosion inventory is in the Transportation Section of this plan.

23 **High Elevation Forest Cover**

24 Non-point runoff due to deforestation of an acre or more in high elevation areas is a key concern
 25 to Westmore, where the unique topography places the developed core of the community in a
 26 “bowl” surrounded by
 27 ridgelines and a network
 28 of rivers and streams that
 29 drain into Westmore’s
 30 lakes and ponds. Impacts
 31 from the storms of 2011
 32 in neighboring
 33 communities only
 34 reinforce this concern.
 35 Subsequent microbursts
 36 and storms from
 37 deforested ridgelines are
 38 likely to produce flooding
 39 and damage to



1 downstream properties and siltage in Westmore’s most cherished bodies of water, including
2 Willoughby Lake.

3
4 Many of the same problems and corrective measure apply to other surface waters in Westmore as
5 well. The town has a real opportunity to develop these lands in a way to prevent problems in the
6 future and maintain the water quality in town. If the town of Westmore is serious about
7 maintaining and improving water quality, the question of non-point pollution must be addressed.
8

9 When asked to rank the protection of Westmore’s natural resources, survey respondents
10 identified protection of Westmore’s bodies of water as being most important (267 responses).
11 Protecting surface waters from sedimentation and runoff was also ranked as most important.
12

13 **Lakes and Ponds**

14 Lake front development has traditionally had second homes that add taxes to the community
15 while not requiring a lot of public services. Even though this trend has begun to change
16 somewhat the Planning Commission generally supports the development of lakeshore property,
17 keeping in mind that increased impervious coverage decreases the ability of the land to absorb
18 run-off.
19

20 Traditionally camps were built close to the water’s edge to afford the best view from the living
21 room and front porch. The camps were used only two or three weeks a year and the number of
22 people staying at a camp were usually few. The dishes were done by hand, laundry done in the
23 sink and taking a bath meant jumping in the lake. The toilet consisted of an outhouse set back
24 from the water’s edge.
25

26 Life around some of Westmore’s bodies of water is different today. People use their camps for
27 much longer periods and some have been converted to year-round homes. Many camps now
28 have showers, dishwashers, washing machines, and flush toilets. Where does all this “gray
29 water” go? When these camps were built, they had such infrequent use that people were not very
30 concerned about their impact on water quality. But today things have changed - perhaps
31 significantly. Since most of these camps are built on wet soils and close to the lake, when dish
32 water is drained out of the sink it ends up in the lake. Granted, the gray water may initially drain
33 into a sand filter or “dry well” but this treatment is superficial at best. The “black water” may go
34 to a sealed holding tank. If properly managed and cleaned out this system could be very
35 effective. Ensuring that this happens is an administrative nightmare.
36

37 The question is “so what if this gray and black water enters the lake?” The answer has several
38 parts. As the use of the lake has increased, so has the amount of gray water and other pollution.
39 A lake can naturally treat a certain amount of pollution but, if the amount surpasses the lake’s
40 natural ability to treat the waste, it starts to accumulate in the sediments and water column.
41 Willoughby Lake is a cold water lake, which means it has a much harder time breaking down
42 soap and other pollution. Once a particular concentration of pollution is reached, large algae
43 blooms will occur and the overall water quality will diminish rapidly. This is already occurring
44 on the back side of Willoughby. And since it takes a long time to build up, it will also take a
45 long time to correct the problem once it has occurred. Run-off contributes to increased
46 phosphorus levels which allows the establishment of Eurasian Milfoil, a problem already

1 experienced in Willoughby Lake. When the water quality goes down, so may tourism and
2 associated revenues.

3
4 Large amounts of algae, a small plant which needs phosphorus to grow, in the water decreases
5 the oxygen available for fish, warms the temperature and is an indicator of possible other
6 pollution. Contaminating the lake with untreated septage is not only distasteful it may add
7 dangerous virus and pathogens to the water -- a real public health concern.

8
9 There are ways to prevent the degradation of water quality. It is clear that if strict measures are
10 not adopted and enforced the bodies of water may end up polluted and containing a significant
11 algae bloom, Eurasian Milfoil, or other nuisance aquatic growth.

12
13 Preventative measures include ensuring that no black water and very little gray water enter the
14 lakes, use of biodegradable soaps, establishing and/or maintaining vegetative buffer strips along
15 the shore to help prevent run-off and erosion, setting the camps back from the water's edge to
16 allow a greater filtering distance before any pollution that does occur enters the lake, and
17 requiring that all year round or enlarged camps have properly designed and installed septic
18 systems.

19 20 **Buffer Strips**

21 Buffer strips are areas of natural, undisturbed vegetation along the shoreline of lakes, ponds, and
22 streams. They provide many functions including providing wildlife habitat, a visual screen from
23 the water, and reducing the run-off and nutrients that enter the water. This works by slowing
24 down run-off, allowing time for water to soak into the ground and the nutrients to be absorbed
25 into the soil and plants.

26
27 The size of the buffer strip is determined by its intended function and the topography of the
28 shoreline. Any sized buffer strip, even a few feet, is better than no buffer at all. Certain wildlife
29 species such as black bear need large strips (perhaps as large as 1 mile), other species such as
30 most birds need only 25 to 50 feet. The size of the buffer strip required to effectively eliminate
31 nutrients from run-off is debated. Most sources suggest 50 - 350 feet. The Vermont guidelines
32 for acceptable logging practices (AMPs) suggest a minimum of 50 feet on areas with slopes less
33 than ten percent and an additional 20 feet for each additional 10 percent slope.⁴ In 2000,
34 Westmore amended its zoning bylaw to require natural vegetation buffers for lots on Willoughby
35 Lake, Bald Hill Pond, Long Pond, Job's Pond, and all other ponds, lakes, rivers, and year-round
36 streams. In 2014, Vermont's Shoreland Protection Act established a permitting and regulatory
37 process for lands within 250 feet of the mean water level of lakes and ponds greater than 10
38 acres. In Westmore, this regulatory jurisdiction includes Bald Hill Pond, Brown Pond, Jobs
39 Pond, Long Pond, and Willoughby Lake. The new State buffer management standards supersede
40 the local zoning standards, but Westmore's zoning regulations may continue to specify what
41 types – and what intensities – of development are appropriate for the shorelands.

42 43 **Undeveloped Lakeshore**

⁴ Vermont Department of Forest, Parks and Recreation, Acceptable Management Practices for Maintaining Water Quality on Logging Jobs in Vermont (http://fpr.vermont.gov/forest/vermonts_forests/amps) , Accessed February 2018

1 In 1992 the Northeastern Vermont Development Association completed a resource inventory of
2 the undeveloped lakeshore in northern Vermont. The study identified undeveloped tracts of
3 lakeshore on lakes over 10 acres. An “undeveloped tract” was defined as having a minimum of
4 1000 feet of shore frontage with a depth of 250 horizontal feet with no human structures or 2-
5 wheel drive roads.

6
7 Six lakes and ponds are in the Town of Westmore. They have 97,649 feet of shoreline of which
8 46.6% (45,552 feet) is undeveloped. Westmore ranks second in Orleans County (after Newport
9 City) for the amount of shoreline and third for having the most undeveloped lake shoreline (after
10 Derby and Morgan). See the attached map for location of the undeveloped portions.

11
12 Undeveloped shoreline contains many valuable attributes including critical wildlife habitat, it
13 helps maintain high water quality and enhances recreation opportunities.

Lake/Pond Name	Total Shore Length (ft)	Undeveloped Length (ft)	Percent Undeveloped	Public Ownership
Willoughby	57,795	19,853	34%	Partial
Long	12,250	5,912	48%	Access Only
Bald Hill	10,232	7,143	70%	Partial
Jobs	7,111	4,468	63%	Access Only
Brown	6,742	4,657	69%	Access Only
Mud	3,519	3,519	100%	No

14
15 **Ice Fishing**

16
17 As more people use the lakes in the wintertime for ice fishing, skiing and snowmobiling, there is
18 growing concern over the impact on water quality due to human waste, trash, and oil/gas
19 pollution.

20
21
22 **ISSUES/CONCERNS**

- 23 1. In order to decrease the amount of siltation caused by building construction, logging, and
24 farming, erosion control standards were included in the 2000 revision to the Westmore
25 Zoning Bylaw and should continue to be enforced.
- 26 2. The lakes and ponds should be treated in two categories: one to remain essentially
27 unchanged (Bald Hill, Brown, Mud, Jobs and Long Ponds) and the other to address
28 concerns caused by development around the shore (Willoughby Lake).
- 29 3. In order to protect the water quality, wilderness character, wildlife habitat, and rare plant
30 species, undisturbed buffer strips should be maintained or/or established around the
31 undeveloped ponds and streams. The Lake Association and Planning Commission should
32 work together to encourage reestablishment of native vegetation along the lakes and
33 ponds.
- 34 4. In order to alleviate unnecessary burdens on the camp owners, protect the water quality,
35 and streamline the permit process, revisions to the zoning by-law were adopted in 2000.
36 Revisions include:

- a. requiring a properly engineered and installed septic system, as enforced through state regulations, before a camp can be significantly enlarged or used for year-round occupancy
 - b. restricting additions or expansion of existing structures from getting closer to the water's edge than where they already are
 - c. enacting appropriate setbacks from the water for all new structures
 - d. creating vegetative buffer strips along the lakes and streams
5. Logging and agricultural practices in Vermont are addressed in the Acceptable Management Practices guidelines defined by the Commissioner of Forests and Parks and the Commissioner of Agriculture. Presently local municipalities are not authorized to enact any stricter regulations on logging or agricultural practices. However, they can adopt regulations that reflect the same standards that are contained within the AMP guidelines. Due to increasing concerns about the effect of logging and agriculture on water quality, the AMPs should be carefully reviewed and considered.
6. The people who own camps around a lake have a vested interest in maintaining the high level of water quality in the lake. The Town works to ensure the proper installation and monitoring of septic tanks, buffer strips and the like.
7. When natural land cover is removed (i.e. clear-cuts and logging), or roads are built with improper drainage, there is an increased threat of flash floods which might destroy property, increase erosion, and reduce the amount of water being "recharged" into the ground water.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

1. Erosion control standards should continue to be enforced.
2. Comply with the current zoning by-law to address the stated concerns about the protection of water quality.
3. Refer to the standards set forth in the Acceptable Management Practices for Maintaining Water Quality on Logging Jobs and Required Agricultural Practice Regulations.
4. Work closely with the lake associations to encourage the maintenance of water quality in the lakes.
5. The Lake Association and Planning Commission should work together to encourage native vegetation along the lakes and ponds.
6. Assemble and have available information on existing laws regarding use of the lakes in the winter.
7. Inform the Water Resources Board about the growing concern over the use of the lakes in the winter.
8. Development that would significantly contribute to runoff should be prohibited.
9. Commercial and residential development with a density greater than one single-family dwelling per 10 acres should be prohibited in high elevation areas.

1
2
3 **7. FLOOD RESILIENCE**

4 **Existing Conditions**

5 The majority of Westmore is located in the Barton River watershed, which drains north into the
6 Lake Memphremagog basin, an area that includes more than 3,400 lakes and ponds in Vermont
7 and Quebec, the largest of which is Willoughby Lake. The Barton River watershed, which
8 includes the Willoughby River subwatershed, flows north into the southernmost end of Lake
9 Memphremagog’s South Bay. The Barton River is 22 miles long and its watershed drains 174
10 square miles. The principal tributary of the Barton River, the Willoughby River, originates at
11 Willoughby Lake. The northern portion of Westmore that borders Charleston is located in the
12 Clyde River watershed, which also drains into Lake Memphremagog in Newport City.

13 The remaining southern portion of Westmore, bordered by Sutton and Newark, drain into the
14 Passumpsic River basin. This area contains tributaries of the West Branch of the Passumpsic,
15 which drain southeast into Newark, East Haven, Burke, and on to Lyndon.

16 Westmore has a limited history of flooding, and no properties have been identified as repetitive
17 loss structures under FEMA. After Tropical Storm Irene, the town did receive public assistance
18 for road damage along Hinton Hill, Long Pond, and LaCross Roads. These roads contain
19 segments with steep slopes and will be subject to stormwater management conditions under the
20 Municipal Roads General Permit, which is discussed in greater depth in the Transportation
21 Section. Westmore has many areas with steep slopes in upper watershed areas where minimal
22 alteration of vegetative cover through logging or changing drainage patterns through building
23 roads or other large-scale development and deforestation may significantly increase the
24 likelihood of flash floods. Although flash floods may not seem like a large problem, their
25 potential should be recognized and monitored.

26
27 **Floodplains**

28 Floodplains are low-lying areas adjacent to a river channel that become inundated as floodwaters
29 rise up and spill out over a river bank. They provide an important ecological function by storing
30 and conveying floodwaters, reducing downstream flood velocities, and mitigating riverbank
31 erosion. Floodplains also help to protect water quality by filtering nutrients and impurities from
32 runoff, processing organic wastes, and moderating temperature fluctuations.⁵

33
34 Westmore’s floodplains are depicted on a FEMA flood hazard boundary map that was created in
35 1976. This map depicts the Special Flood Hazard areas, which are floodplains that would likely
36 become inundated during a significant flood known as a “base flood.” The base flood is often
37 referred to as the “100-year flood.” Westmore’s map is not accompanied by any insurance
38 studies or base flood elevations, which would indicate how high the water would rise in a 100-
39 year flood event. Areas subject to inundation include Westmore’s lakes and ponds, including
40 Willoughby, as well as segments on Willoughby Lake Road and Route 5A.

41
42 Unfortunately, the term “100-year flood” is misleading, because it creates the false impression
43 that a flood of that magnitude will only occur once a century. What the term really means is that
44 the base flood has a 1% chance of flooding in ANY given year. With a one percent annual

⁵ Floodplain Management Requirements A Study Guide and Desk Reference for Local Officials, FEMA 2005

1 chance, a structure in the Special Flood Hazard Area has more than a one-in-four chance of
2 being affected by a flood during a thirty-year mortgage. By comparison the same structure has
3 less than a one-in-ten chance of being affected by fire over the same mortgage. ⁶
4 Westmore’s FIRM is a paper map. Its age and lack of detail make interpretation difficult.
5

6 **River Corridors**

7 About two-thirds of Vermont’s flood-related losses occur outside of mapped floodplains, and
8 this reveals the fundamental limitations of the FEMA FIRMs: A mapped floodplain makes the
9 dangerous assumption that the river channel is static, that the river bends will never shift up or
10 down valley, that the river channel will never move laterally, or that river beds will never scour
11 down or build up.
12

13 In reality, river channels are constantly undergoing some physical adjustment process. This
14 might be gradual, resulting in gradual stream bank erosion or sediment deposit – or it might be
15 sudden and dramatic, resulting a stream bank collapse. The losses experienced during the May
16 2011 storms and Tropical Storm Irene were most often related to the latter. In fact, this type of
17 flood-related damage occurs frequently in Vermont, due in part to the state’s mountainous
18 terrain.
19

20 Land near stream banks are particularly vulnerable to erosion damage by flash flooding, bank
21 collapse, and stream channel dynamics. The Vermont Department of Environmental
22 Conservation, Agency of Natural Resources, has identified river corridors, which consist of the
23 minimum area adjacent to a river that is required to accommodate the dimensions, slope,
24 planform, and buffer of the naturally stable channel and that is necessary for the natural
25 maintenance or natural restoration of a dynamic equilibrium condition. In other words, the river
26 corridor provides “wobble room” for a stream as its channel changes over time. Keeping
27 development out of the river corridors therefore reduces vulnerability to erosion. The statewide
28 river corridors map identifies the Willoughby River and Mill Brook as river corridors. For all
29 other streams in Westmore, a 50-foot natural vegetation buffer is considered sufficient measure
30 for streambank stabilization.
31

32 **Uplands and Wetlands**

33 As previously noted, Westmore’s mountainous terrain can contribute to flash flooding. Limiting
34 clearing of upland slopes will help to attenuate flood flows and reduce stormwater runoff. Proper
35 management of Westmore’s forest cover, particularly in areas with steep slopes and high
36 elevations (where headwaters are located) is therefore critical. Conservation easements,
37 enrollment in the Current Use Program, and encouragement of best management forestry
38 practices will protect existing forested cover.
39

40 Wetlands also have the capacity to retain significant amounts of water. The State of Vermont
41 regulates activities in and adjacent to wetlands. These rules apply to the wetlands and associated
42 buffer zones within 100 feet of Class 1 wetlands, and 50 feet of Class II wetlands. Any activity in
43 a Class I or II wetland requires a state permit. Westmore contains 308 acres of Class 2 wetlands
44 throughout the town, and there is a large wetland complex to the north of Willoughby Lake
45 which also provides habitat for rare, threatened, or endangered species.

⁶ www.floodready.Vermont.gov

1
2 **Emergency Relief and Assistance Fund**

3 The Town has received nearly \$34,000 in public assistance for two federally-declared disasters –
4 to repair roads in the aftermath of Tropical Storm Irene and to remove debris following a severe
5 ice storm in 2013. When a community requires public assistance to repair infrastructure, FEMA
6 funds generally cover 75% of the loss. Prior to 2014, the State’s Emergency Relief and
7 Assistance Fund (ERAF) has provided half of the matching funds (about 12.5%), and the town
8 has assumed the remainder of the cost. In October 2014, however, new legislation tied the level
9 of ERAF funding to specific local initiatives to reduce flood-related risks and prepare for
10 emergencies. ERAF will now contribute half of the required match only if the town has taken all
11 the following steps to reduce flood damage. Otherwise, the level of State funding will be reduced
12 to 30% of the remaining match, which will usually be about 7.5% of the total cost:
13

- 14 1. Adopt the most current Town Road and Bridge Standards (which can be found in the
15 *VTrans Orange Book: Handbook for Local Officials*).
- 16 2. Adopt flood regulations that meet the minimum standards for enrollment in the National
17 Flood Insurance Program (NFIP)
- 18 3. Maintain a Local Emergency Operations Plan (adopt annually after town meeting and
19 submit before May 1)
- 20 4. Adopt a FEMA-approved Local Hazard Mitigation Plan.

21
22 Currently, Westmore only meets requirement #1.
23

24 **National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP)**

25 The primary benefit of joining the NFIP (other than meeting the ERAF requirement) is enabling
26 Westmore residents to obtain flood insurance at more affordable rates. Federally-backed lending
27 institutions require flood insurance on any mortgage in the Special Flood Hazard Area,
28 regardless of whether the Town participates in the National Flood Insurance Program. This could
29 therefore be very helpful to property owners who are attempting to refinance or sell flood-prone
30 properties. Property owners outside of the Special Flood Hazard Area also would be able to
31 purchase flood insurance, and at preferred risk rates.
32

33 In order to participate, the Town would have to adopt regulations that meet FEMA’s minimum
34 standards (found in CFR44), and the development standards would have to be enforced in the
35 Special Flood Hazard Areas shown on the FEMA map. In fact, the town’s zoning bylaws already
36 regulate development in these areas. Unfortunately, the town of Westmore did not apply for
37 participation in the NFIP. Because the flood hazard regulations were adopted several years ago,
38 it is unlikely that they would be approved for inclusion in the NFIP. If the town wishes to join
39 the NFIP, the planning commission will have to amend the flood hazard regulations. The existing
40 regulations are close to meeting minimum FEMA standards, so the changes would probably not
41 be substantive.
42

43 The legislative changes to ERAF funding propose to address the limitations of the National
44 Flood Insurance Program by providing an incentive: Under ERAF, the Town may receive an
45 increased state match for federally declared losses, if the town adopts flood regulations that
46 exceeds the minimum standards of the NFIP. These above-and-beyond standards include

1 prohibiting most forms of new development in the river corridor, prohibiting most forms of new
2 development in the Special Flood Hazard Area, and requiring structures in the Special Flood
3 Hazard Areas that are more than 50% damaged to be elevated to at least one foot above the base
4 flood elevation. All of these measures should be explored as way to minimize taxpayer expense
5 in the event of future flood-related losses.

6
7 **Local Emergency Operations Plan**

8 The Local Emergency Operations Plan (LEOP) establishes lines of responsibilities in the critical
9 hours immediately following a disaster. This information is particularly important in
10 coordinating responses through mutual aid towns, and regional and state entities. The LEOP is
11 updated and adopted annually after Town Meeting Day. NVDA regularly assist towns with
12 preparing the LEOP. Westmore has a draft LEOP, but local officials will need to complete a
13 training before it can be adopted.

14
15 **Local Hazard Mitigation Plan**

16 A local hazard mitigation plan prioritizes hazard issues and details next steps for addressing
17 them. It is required by FEMA to receive grant funding to reduce or eliminate hazards such as
18 moving or elevating structures, acquiring repetitive loss structures, or purchasing emergency
19 generators. A local hazard mitigation plan was developed for Westmore, but it was never
20 adopted by the town. Since that time, the FEMA approval process has become more rigorous.
21 The State of Vermont Emergency Management and FEMA regularly make funds available for
22 local hazard mitigation planning, so technical assistance may be available if Westmore is ready
23 to develop and adopt a plan.

24
25 **ISSUES/CONCERNS**

- 26 • The town needs to mitigate the risk of flood hazards and associated expense to tax payers
27 in the most cost-effective manner possible
- 28 • Westmore officials need to ensure the town and its facilities are prepared to meet the
29 demands of the next flood.
- 30 • The town needs to explore ways to receive the maximum amount of financial assistance
31 for repairing flood-damaged roads, bridges, and other infrastructure.

32
33 **RECOMMENDED ACTIONS**

- 34 • Identify and protect Westmore’s natural flood protection assets, including floodplains,
35 river corridors, other lands adjacent to streams, wetlands, and upland forested cover.
- 36 • Areas with great potential for flash floods should be identified and residents be made
37 aware of the potential hazards.
- 38 • Adopt flood hazard regulations that at a minimum, ensure eligibility for flood insurance
39 through the National Flood Insurance Program.
- 40 • Review and evaluate statewide river corridor information. Consider adopting regulations
41 that will protect erosion prone areas from additional development and encroachment.
- 42 • Maintain and regularly update the Local Emergency Operations Plan.
- 43 • Continue to meet the VTrans Road and Bridge standards. Participate in regional road
44 foreman trainings and Transportation Advisory Committee meetings to stay abreast of
45 flood resilience measures for the Town’s roads and bridges.

- Continue to update the Town’s transportation infrastructure information in the Vermont Online Bridge and Culvert Inventory Tool.
- Replace undersized and failing culverts.
- Develop a Local Hazard Mitigation Plan.

8. AGRICULTURE

Westmore’s active farms are concentrated in the northeast and southwest quadrants of the town. These farms total approximately 2, 644 acres, with active dairy farms consisting of approximately 1,497 acres. Less than half the land is in use as pasture and cropland, with the remainder consisting of woodland. In addition, these farms borrow or lease land from others for hay or pasture in Westmore. These 2,644 acres represent 11.9% of Westmore’s total land area of 22,092.8 acres. For comparison, Westmore’s lakes and ponds occupy 1,926 acres. Occasionally farmers also use farmland in Barton and Brownington.

Three of the local farms are participants in the Vermont Current Use Tax Abatement Program. As of January 2018, Westmore had a total of 11,129 acres in the Current Use Program, however, only 835 acres were enrolled as farmland. The town was reimbursed \$39,552 dollars in taxes on all land in the Program in 2017.

The Northeast Kingdom has more farms per capita than the Vermont average, and significantly more than the national average.⁷ (Source: Northeast Kingdom Food Systems Plan). According to the 2012 Census of Agriculture, Orleans County remains the most agricultural county in the Northeast Kingdom, and one of the most agricultural counties in the state (sixth in terms of number of farm operations, fourth in terms of total acreage). As of the most recent Census of Agriculture, there are 638 farm operations, totalling an estimated 132,240 acres, or 11% of the farm acreage in the state. Total farm operations are up from the 2007 Census, from 635 to 638 farms, while total acreage is down slightly from 132,308 acres. On a whole, the average acreage of a farm operation has decreased in recent years, possibly because dairy farming increasingly accounts for a smaller percentage of the total number of farms. As of the latest Agricultural Census, “very small farms” (fewer than 50 acres) now account for 35% of all farms in the region, up from 31% in 2007 and 28% in 2002.

In 2012, the farms in Orleans County produced about 13% of the state’s agricultural output (as measured in terms of market value of all agricultural products sold), representing a very slight increase from the previous Census.

According to the most current Agricultural Census, the average age of the principal farm operator in Orleans County is 57, up from 55.4 in 2007. This is also significantly higher than the county median age of the general population (43.7). The continued aging trend among the region’s farming population creates uncertainty about the future. A 2016 American Farmland Trust study found the vast majority of Vermont farmers ages 65 and older do not have a younger

⁷ Center for an Agricultural Economy, and the Northeastern Vermont Development Association (2016). Regional Food System Plan for Vermont’s Northeast Kingdom

1 farmer (under age 45) working alongside them. While this does not necessarily mean that these
2 senior farmers do not have a succession plan, the future of many of these farms is uncertain. In
3 fact, of the 173 farms in Orleans County with a principal operator age 65 or older, only 13 were
4 found to have a potential successor. Technical services, outreach, and public policy must be
5 better aligned to facilitate succession planning.

6 Several of Westmore’s farmers are the third generation on their farms. They all see themselves
7 remaining in farming, but want to retain their option to sell land as needed for capitalizing their
8 operations or for retirement. Some farm owners expressed their intent to sell residential lots.
9 Some also are interested in selling their development rights to ensure that their land remains in
10 agricultural use.

11
12
13 The Northeast Kingdom has seen a renaissance in agriculture in recent years, and the viability of
14 farming may have been enhanced by the growth in agricultural and value-added processing
15 opportunities in the region. In 2016, Northeastern Vermont Development Association and the
16 Center for an Agricultural Economy published an extensive update to the Regional Food System
17 Plan for the Northeast Kingdom. The purpose of this plan is to drive the development of new and
18 more diverse agricultural activity within the region’s economy and to develop a more
19 comprehensive strategy to stimulate the food system sector for the Northeast Kingdom. The plan
20 contains multiple indices for tracking progress and development
21 (<http://www.nvda.net/agriculture.php>)

22 While agriculture is an important part of Westmore’s cultural heritage, and it also accounts for
23 employment activity in the region. An independent report commission by NVDA found that the
24 region’s agricultural processing sector accounts for 700 jobs in the Northeast Kingdom, which
25 pay, on average, more than \$30,000 a year.

26 27 28 **ISSUES/CONCERNS**

- 29 1. In general, Westmore has soil conditions that support sound agricultural practices.
- 30 2. Retain the quality of life, scenic attributes, diversity of wildlife, and the environmental
31 harmony and beauty that are the products of responsible farming and forestry.
- 32 3. Refer property owners to the appropriate agencies for information on various options for
33 subdividing and developing land, estate planning, the Current Use Program, etc.
- 34 4. Listing land at its current use instead of its “highest and best use” is important for farmers
35 and would help reduce high property taxes which make farming more difficult and
36 jeopardizes the long term viability of family farms.
- 37 5. Many farmers depend on leased land to sustain their farms. Changing access and fees for
38 using this land make it difficult for the farmers to do long term financial planning or
39 investments into the land.
- 40 6. Farmers and owners of agricultural lands need to learn about the different conservation
41 options for their land.

42 43 **RECOMMENDED ACTIONS**

- 44 1. Actively support and encourage the maintenance of the State of Vermont Use Value

1 Appraisal Program (Current Use).

- 2 2. Assist and support landowners seeking ways to keep land open while remaining
3 economically viable.
- 4 3. Explore local tax alternatives that would help farmers afford to maintain their productive,
5 open land. A committee should be established to look into a local tax stabilization
6 program for the farming community.
- 7 4. Follow closely the alternatives brought forward in the Legislature regarding property tax
8 reform; monitor the impact they might have on the town.
- 9 5. Recommendations might be developed for applicants seeking to convert active farmland
10 to non-agricultural uses. The process could encourage the siting of buildings, roads and
11 other structures to have the least significant impact to agriculture. An example might be
12 to locate a proposed house along the edge of a field instead of in the middle thus
13 preserving the field's agricultural potential.
- 14 6. Sponsor workshops and buy written materials on land conservation techniques and
15 creative ways to subdivide and/or develop land that minimize the impact on the
16 agricultural resources, estate planning, the Current Use program, etc.
- 17 7. Work with non-agricultural landowners to stabilize lease agreements and conserve their
18 lands which are vital to the farming community.
- 19 8. In order to work on conservation projects that are important at the local level, residents
20 should consider establishing a local land trust such as the Newark Trust Fund or
21 becoming actively involved with a regional land trust such as the Passumpsic Valley
22 Land Trust in St. Johnsbury.
- 23 9. The Town should consider setting up a conservation trust fund so the mechanism would
24 exist to raise money through a bond vote or by individual gifts to be used for local
25 conservation projects.
- 26 10. Encourage ongoing education about diversifying farming.

27
28
29
30 **9. FORESTS**

31
32 Forest land plays a critical role in supporting the local and regional timber economy, recreation,
33 and hunting.

34 Timber harvesting is a traditional way of life in Westmore. Most of the land in town is owned by
35 large landowners and harvesting timber has gone on for several hundred years.

36
37 Forests also play an important role in maintaining a healthy local and global environment. They
38 enhance air and water quality, provide important habitat for wildlife, and supply quiet places to
39 walk. Forests are also critically important in maintaining the biosphere and helping to slow
40 down the trend toward global climate change. Westmore's forests play an important role both
41 locally and globally. They are more than trees growing in the woods.
42

1 **Mountaintops/Ridgelines**

2 Due to their unique ecosystems and the potential for detrimental visual impacts by development,
3 the ridgelines and mountaintops are considered important areas of town and should be protected
4 from future development.

5
6 The Willoughby Lake Area has been designated a Registered Natural Landmark under
7 provisions of the Historic Sites Act of 1935. According to the US Department of the Interior, this
8 site possesses “exceptional value in illustrating the natural history of the United States.” The
9 area, which includes the Willoughby Cliffs, is also surrounded by unique topography, which
10 makes maintaining the integrity of Westmore’s ridgelines especially important. The core of the
11 town –including the Willoughby Lake Area – are virtually enclosed on all sides by ridgelines,
12 effectively placing the center of the community in a “bowl”. All of these ridgelines, which are
13 depicted on the attached Viewshed Map and accompanying photos, are highly visible from the
14 lower elevations, leaving the town particularly vulnerable to adverse impacts of ridgeline
15 development. Westmore maintains a vast network of recreational and hiking trails that traverse
16 these ridgelines and afford access to a multitude of spectacular views. This asset is at the core of
17 the community’s identity as a tourism destination and is critical to the long-term economic health
18 of the community. The community’s ridgelines therefore must be treated as a whole, rather than
19 a series of viewsheds.

20
21 **ISSUES/CONCERNS**

- 22 1. Clear-cutting is an ongoing issue. There is concern about the natural and social
23 implications of such a practice.
- 24 2. There is also concern about the rate at which the forest is being harvested especially
25 using whole tree chippers. There is a perceived detrimental impact on water quality,
26 biological diversity, soil erosion and the visual quality of the area. To ensure sustainable
27 forest harvesting techniques are used, individual landowners should be encouraged to
28 work with a knowledgeable forester to draw up a forestry plan.
- 29 3. In order to stabilize the tax burden on town residents by reducing the need for future town
30 services and maintain large tracts of forest land required by the timber industry, new
31 development would be encouraged to take place along existing town roads.
- 32 4. There are creative ways to develop land with minimal impact on forest land such as
33 encouraging creative development ideas, encouraging sensible land subdivision, and
34 placing year-round homes on town roads.
- 35 5. Westmore has unique topography with many beautiful ridgelines contrasting with the
36 valleys, lakes, and ponds. These attributes are often not fully recognized until they are
37 altered. The ridgelines in town must be preserved and protected when planning any new
38 development. Any development on the ridgelines should not
- 39 a. Create a visual intrusion into the viewshed as viewed from any public right of
40 way, body of water, or from any vantage point in the National Natural Landmark
41 designation area.
- 42 b. Result in clear-cutting of core habitat forested area, migratory routes and wildlife
43 travel corridors as mapped by the state or the municipality or fragment large tracts
44 of forested land. Trees of 10” to 12” in diameter shall be preserved.

- 1 c. Create a threat to Westmore wildlife and natural communities, including, but not
- 2 limited to plants, birds, reptiles, and aquatic life.
- 3 d. Traverse or impede travel along known hiking trails or create visual intrusion
- 4 along hiking trails.
- 5 6. Any development on or near ridgelines should employ landscaping screening techniques
- 6 to prevent undue adverse impact to Westmore’s scenic ridgelines, as viewed from any
- 7 public right of way, body of water, known hiking trails, or any vantage point in the
- 8 National Natural Landmark Area.
- 9 7. Westmore should work with neighboring municipalities to help protect their ridgelines
- 10 that would a significant environmental or visual impact on Westmore.
- 11 8. As with agricultural lands, taxes on forest land often exceed the ability of that land to
- 12 generate income. Therefore a statewide Use Value Appraisal Program was set up to
- 13 assist landowners maintain large tracts of forest land.

14
15 **RECOMMENDED ACTIONS**

- 16 1. The Planning Commission encourages individual landowners to consider working with a
- 17 knowledgeable forester to draw up a forestry plan. Such plans should consider
- 18 sustainable harvesting techniques, timber stand mix, and continuous renewal of the forest
- 19 resource.
- 20 2. Encourage new development to use creative ways to develop land with the least impact
- 21 on the resource such as encouraging creative land development.
- 22 3. Sponsor workshops and buy written materials on land conservation techniques and
- 23 creative ways to subdivide and/or develop land that minimize the impact on the forest
- 24 resources, explain estate planning and the Current Use program, etc.
- 25 4. Actively support and encourage the maintenance of the State of Vermont Use Value
- 26 Appraisal Program (Current Use).
- 27 5. Assist and support landowners seeking ways to keep land open while remaining
- 28 economically viable.
- 29 6. Amend bylaws with regard to development on the ridgelines.

30
31
32 **10. NATURAL AREAS, WETLANDS AND WILDLIFE**

33
34 **Natural Heritage Sites**

35 The Vermont Natural Heritage Program completed an inventory of the natural heritage sites
36 within Westmore. Although the study was not necessarily all inclusive, meaning there may be
37 sites still not identified, it does supply a good first step at locating areas with special natural
38 features such as rare and endangered plants and special wildlife habitat. The intent of the
39 inventory is for educational purposes so landowners are aware of what they have on their land
40 and may take actions to preserve it. Working with the landowners to protect these sites is a
41 priority for the Commission. The attached maps give a general idea of the location of the sites:
42 Natural Resource Constraints, Forest Blocks, Habitat Connectors, and Wildlife Habitat Blocks.

1
2 Identifying areas that are important to wildlife (ie. deer yards, beech stands, spruce/fir forests) is
3 needed. This information would be used to encourage landowners to maintain the areas most
4 important to wildlife. It could also be used in an advisory fashion by the Zoning Administrator
5 and Zoning board of Adjustment.

6
7 **Wetlands**

8 Based on the National Wetland Inventory Maps, Westmore has 262 acres of wetlands mostly of
9 2-3 acres in size or larger. These maps are not conclusive, however, and there are many smaller
10 areas that have not been mapped by either the federal government or the state. Wetlands perform
11 a variety of functions, which vary from one wetland to another, but which together combine to
12 form an integrated system of environmental benefits. These include, but are not limited to, water
13 quality protection, flood control, shoreline stabilization, contributions to groundwater and
14 streamflows, and wildlife and fisheries habitat. In recognition of the importance wetlands play in
15 the environment, they are protected by the State of Vermont Wetland Rules, and there are
16 substantial penalties for not adequately protecting them. Wetlands are an important part of
17 Westmore and should be preserved and enhanced.

18
19 Maintaining critical wetland areas is important to the town, and must be diligently pursued to
20 avoid destruction of or damage to wetlands and the imposition of penalties by the state.

21
22 **Deer Yards**

23 Deer in Vermont live near the northern limit of white-tail deer range in eastern North America.
24 This forces deer to use very specific winter habitat when severe climatic conditions become a
25 threat to the animals' survival. Areas which are used year after year by deer seeking winter
26 shelter are called "wintering areas" or deer yards. These areas consist of two basic habitat
27 components. The "core range" is often characterized by concentrations of relatively tall, dense
28 softwoods. This reduces the snow depth, protects from the wind and increases the average
29 temperature and relative humidity. South facing slopes are often preferred due to increased solar
30 gain. The second component consists of mixed hardwood and softwood adjacent to or within the
31 core range which provides accessible browse.

32
33 The availability of quality wintering areas is the limiting factor for whitetail deer in most of
34 Vermont. Since only 6 percent of Vermont is considered deer wintering areas, the State of
35 Vermont has made protection of these areas a priority. Considering the economic contribution
36 and the important place that deer hunting has in Vermonters' traditional lifestyle, the priority is
37 state-wide understandable. These lands receive more scrutiny by State agencies when
38 development is proposed on them. The State goal of protecting deer yards may be good, but
39 State agencies should consider the overall impact on the local towns and landowners before
40 making any decisions.

41
42 According to the Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife maps, Westmore has two significant
43 deer yards. One is at the northeast end of Willoughby Lake behind Route 5A . The other deer
44 yard is between the Mill Brook and the Town Hall Road.

1 **Habitat Blocks and Connectivity**

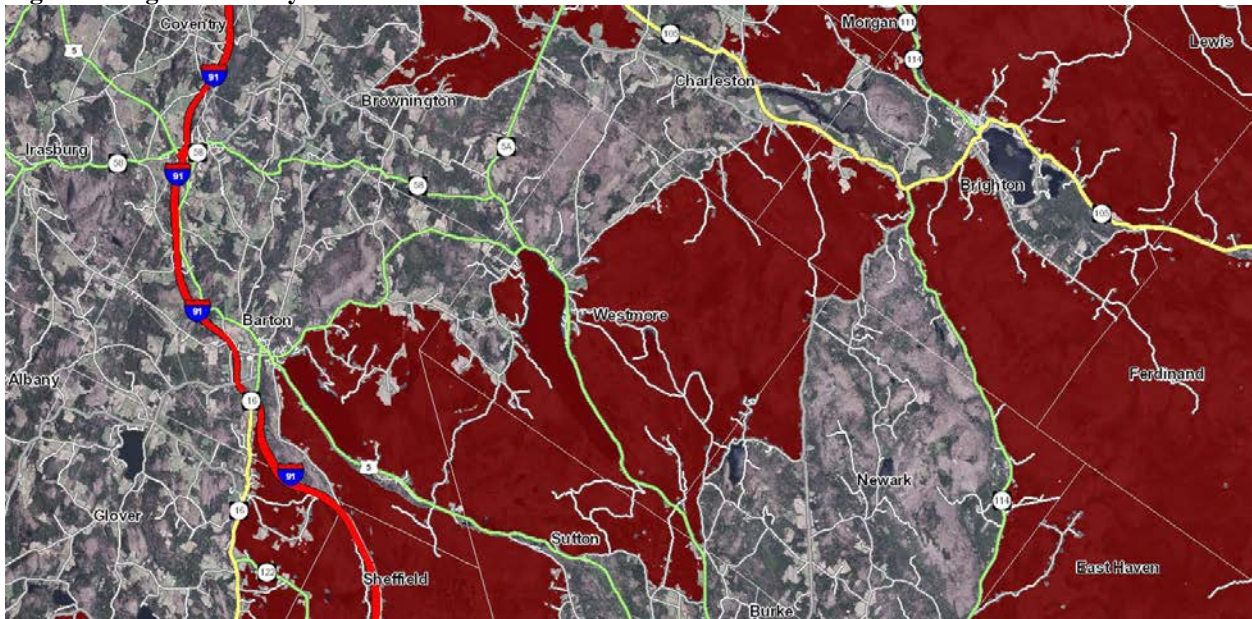
2 An inventory of the region’s wildlife habitat connections demonstrates interdependence with
3 neighboring towns, the Northeast Kingdom, and beyond. Coordinated conservation efforts in
4 New York, Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine are working to identify important areas within
5 the larger northern forest region that provide a wildlife corridor from the Adirondacks in New
6 York through the northern forest of Maine and beyond. A “wildlife corridor” at this larger,
7 regional scale is composed of blocks of forest and connecting lands that many animals need for
8 sufficient food, cover, and access to mates. The forest blocks provide prime wildlife habitat
9 while the connecting lands—often small forest and woodland patches, wetlands and river
10 corridors—allow wildlife movement across the landscape between larger forested blocks.

11
12 A key component of this work involved the identification and mapping of large unfragmented
13 forest blocks by the Department of Fish & Wildlife and the Vermont Land Trust, which can be
14 viewed on the Agency of Natural Resource’s “Biofinder” mapping tool.
15 (<http://anr.vermont.gov/maps/biofinder>) Forest blocks larger than 20 acres are mapped statewide,
16 but are identified generally as “habitat blocks”. Although smaller areas may support some
17 biological diversity and connectivity, such areas provide little interior forest habitat.

18
19 An assessment of Biofinder data subsets helps to identify priority planning areas for Westmore:

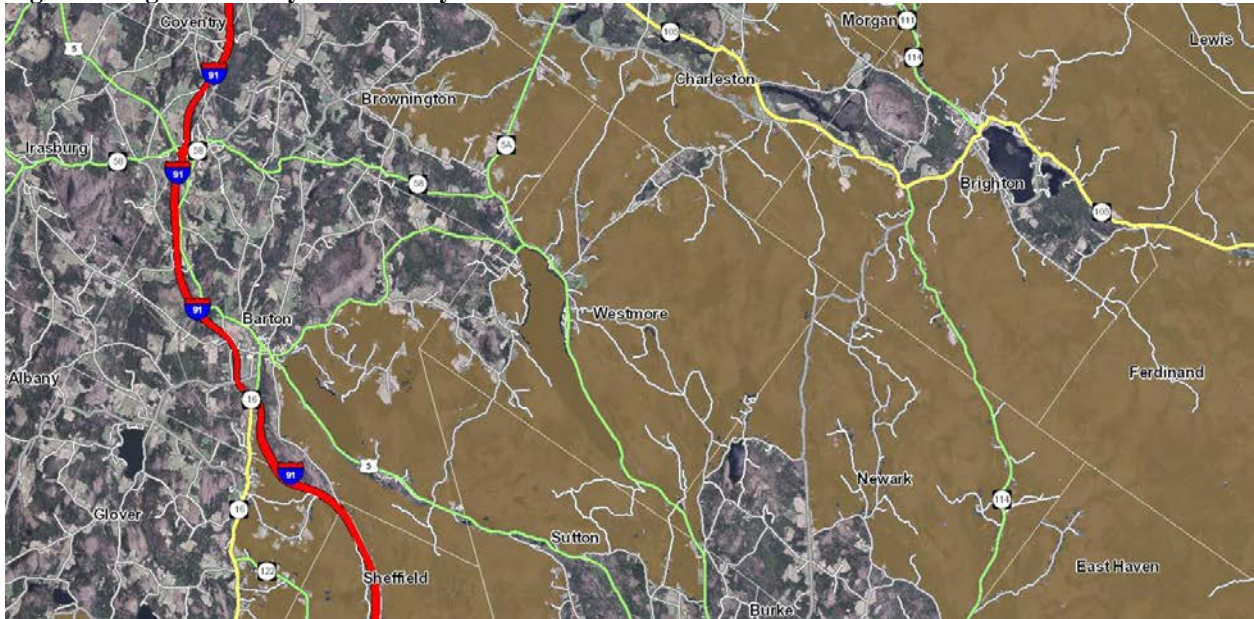
20
21 **Highest priority interior forest blocks (Figure 1):** Areas with high-quality interior,
22 unfragmented core forest cover (i.e. land that is more than 100 meters from the non-forest
23 boundary.

24 **Figure 1: Highest Priority Interior Forest**



25
26
27 **Highest quality connectivity blocks (Figure 2):** Land or water that function as “stepping
28 stones” between core forest, as well as riparian habitat, or strips of forest cover between
29 developed areas.

1 **Figure 2: Highest Priority Connectivity**



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9

When viewed together, it becomes apparent that Westmore’s forested resources support critical wildlife movement to the east toward Essex County, through Newark, Charleston, and Morgan, as well as north-south movement through the eastern portion of the town.

10 **ISSUES/CONCERNS**

- 11 1. A local pool of money could be considered to be used as a local match when trying to
12 obtain public conservation money.
- 13 2. The availability of resources on proper land management and conservation planning
14 should be increased for residents.
- 15 3. Areas important to wildlife (ie. deer yards, beech stands, spruce/fir forests) need to be
16 identified and mapped.

17
18 **RECOMMENDED ACTIONS**

- 19 1. Encourage a local conservation fund which can be used for conservation projects. The
20 fund could accept donations or municipal funds.
- 21 2. Hold workshops on natural resources management, estate planning, woodlot
22 management, and land conservation techniques.
- 23 3. Contact local sports clubs to assist in identifying areas important to wildlife such as deer
24 yards, beech stands, and spruce/fir forests.
- 25 4. Identify, with the assistance of the state, all protected wetlands in Westmore, and notify
26 all landowners of the locations of wetlands on their properties, as well as restrictions that
27 may apply to their use of the wetlands.
- 28 5. Prohibit commercial and large-scale residential development that would have undue

1 adverse impact on wildlife.

2
3 **11. STATE LANDS**
4

5 The State of Vermont, Agency of Natural Resources manages approximately 3,000 acres within
6 the Town of Westmore. This is about 11% of the town.

7
8 The State Forest is one of the crown jewels among State owned lands. It draws thousands of
9 people to the town and supplies a steady flow of wood-fiber for the timber industry. As the
10 regional economy turns more toward recreation/tourism and people see the loss of public access
11 to private lands in other areas of the state, Willoughby State Forest will become even more
12 important. The public lands provide a steady flow of wood fiber which employs loggers and can
13 be used for manufacturing wood products and paper.

14
15 Enhancing tourism is another important contribution the public lands can do for the local
16 economy. The recreation opportunities that the State provides should continue to be rustic and
17 less developed allowing private sector to develop the more lucrative “developed” recreational
18 opportunities such as cabins, RV parks, etc.

19
20 The District Office in St. Johnsbury revises the management plan for the State lands in
21 Westmore every few years. This gives Westmore residents an opportunity to influence how
22 these lands are managed.

23
24 The State lands are managed by the office in St. Johnsbury.

25
26 **RECOMMENDED ACTIONS**

- 27 1. Remain involved with writing the long term management plan for the State lands to
28 ensure Westmore’s interests are addressed.
- 29 2. Encourage frequent contact with the State officials to make our interests known.
- 30 3. Encourage the State officials to come to town and meet with local residents so our issues
31 can be known.
- 32 4. Encourage the State to come up with a solution to the mooring problem at the south end
33 of Willoughby Lake.

34
35 **12. SCENIC FEATURES**

36 **Landscape Forms**

37 Westmore’s uniqueness and appeal to visitors is in great part due to the beauty and serenity of
38 the physical surroundings.

39
40 Visual contrasts in land forms provide some of the most beautiful landscapes. Westmore is
41 endowed with many such visual pleasures such as the rolling countryside, farmland surrounding
42 Willoughby Lake, the steep rocky cliffs of Hor, Pisgah, Wheeler, etc.

43
44 All “entrances” to Westmore are spectacular whether it be coming around the corner going east

1 on Route 16, and suddenly being on the shores of Willoughby or coming in over the heights of
2 the other roads.

3
4 Westmore also has several ponds which give a similar landscape contrast as Willoughby Lake
5 but on a smaller scale. These are less visible to the general public due to the remote location, but
6 nonetheless, important to recognize.

7
8 The importance of scenic views in Westmore should not be underestimated as an important part
9 of the overall character of the town.

10 11 **RECOMMENDED ACTIONS**

- 12 1. The visual impact of proposed commercial or large residential developments must be
13 considered prior to construction or granting the necessary permits.
- 14 2. The importance of the ridgelines in Westmore must be considered in the evaluating the
15 appropriateness of any commercial or large residential development.

16 17 **13. HISTORIC FEATURES**

18 The unique character of a community comes from both its natural and built environments.
19 Westmore is blessed with rolling topography and fertile soils that provide for a variety of land
20 uses. The community is also fortunate to have many historic and interesting buildings. These
21 add to the “specialness” of the community as much as the scenery.

22
23 This plan’s intent is to work toward protecting both the natural and built environments. In order
24 to do that, a comprehensive inventory and plan needs to be developed. The inventory should
25 identify those areas with historic or cultural qualities such as cemeteries, monuments, buildings,
26 old cellar holes, spiritual grounds, and the like. A partial list includes Balance Rock, Sliding
27 Falls, the Long Pond Area, Sentinel Rock, Boulders, the School House, Cheney House and Fox
28 Hall.

29 30 **ISSUES/CONCERNS**

- 31 1. A comprehensive inventory and preservation plan needs to be developed to identify and
32 protect historic and cultural features in town.
- 33 2. The Schoolhouse is a historic building and has been upgraded to serve as a new
34 municipal building.

35 36 **RECOMMENDED ACTIONS**

- 37 1. Develop an inventory and preservation plan for the historic and cultural features in town.
- 38 2. Encourage and assist property owners to list their structures on the historic registers.

39 40 41 **14. EDUCATION**

42 Although Westmore does not have a school it does have a committed school board that makes
43 every attempt to participate in district meetings and respond to citizen questions and concerns.
44 Our elementary students may elect to attend a school of their choice. Westmore tuitions students

1 to Barton, Charleston, Orleans, Lyndonville, Newark, and West Burke. The Town of Westmore
2 is responsible for tuition rates established by the school(s) chosen but no higher than district
3 tuition.

4
5 Westmore, with three hundred fifty (350) full-time residents, spends over one million nine
6 hundred sixty-five thousand (\$1.965M) dollars on education for our thirty-one (31) students K-
7 12. This includes, but is not limited to, tuition payments(s) of approximately thirteen-thousand
8 five hundred (\$13,500.00) dollars per elementary student and fifteen-thousand one-hundred per
9 secondary school student, our contribution to the “sharing pool”. Under Act 60, Westmore was
10 designated a “Gold Town”. As a “Gold Town” we were mandated, based on the Act 60 formula,
11 to send tax dollars to support “receiving towns”. Westmore’s school tax obligation, before Act
12 60, was approximately three hundred twenty thousand (\$320,000.00) dollars. At present our
13 school tax obligation has significantly increased, with \$1,579,500 going to support for receiving
14 towns. This impacts all property owners. The legislature continues to study this issue and
15 Westmore participates in the process.

16
17 Westmore, as a member of Orleans Central Supervisory Union, sends its students to Lake Region
18 Union High School. We are most pleased with the high-quality educational experience our
19 students receive within the district.

20
21 Home schooling is supported through financial assistance voted at Westmore’s Annual School
22 Meeting. On average we have not had more than two or three home school students.

23
24 Westmore has been approached, informally, by other schools in the district requesting that
25 Westmore consider tuitioning students to their respective schools. There has been some
26 discussion (reduced tuition as an incentive) regarding sending students to a different school.
27 This option will, we suspect, be the subject of more serious consideration as Act 60 further
28 impacts Town taxpayers.

30 31 **RECOMMENDED ACTIONS**

- 32 1. Encourage the parents of the town to be active in school decisions and to reconsider
33 periodically, the possibilities of having a town school or forming an elementary union
34 district with one of the two main schools our students attend, thus giving representation
35 on said school board.
- 36 2. The Planning Commission will supply the School Board with information about
37 population projections and other items as requested.

38 39 **15. HOUSING**

40 Westmore has a dichotomy of housing available. The homes along the shoreline of the lakes are
41 considerably more expensive and abundant than those in other parts of town. This impacts the
42 Grand List but it makes the number of units available for lower income people more limited.
43 Having a diversity of housing available is important to maintaining the character of the town.

44 45 **What is Affordable?**

46 National and state housing policies agree that renters and homeowners should expend no more

1 than 30% of their gross income on housing costs. Lenders typically will not issue loans which
2 require borrowers to expend more than 28% of their gross income for mortgage or rent
3 payments, insurance, and taxes. Affordable housing is defined as housing costs (gross rent or
4 mortgage plus taxes and insurance) that are below 30% of the median household income for the
5 area.

6
7 “Affordability” is further defined by statute.

8 A household’s total housing costs should be 30% or less of the household income in order to be
9 considered affordable. While the 30% rule generally applies to housing costs for all income
10 brackets, Vermont statute sets different income limits for owner-occupied housing and for rental
11 housing. Rental housing is classified as “affordable” if it serves households earning no more than
12 80% of area median income (AMI), while owner-occupied housing is considered affordable if it
13 is priced to serve households earning up to 120% of AMI. This change in statutory definition
14 accounts for the number of higher income individuals who still have difficulty finding suitable
15 housing.

16 According to the ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2012-2016, the median household income for Orleans
17 County is \$43,959, and \$41,071 for Westmore. The standard method for calculating
18 affordability is using 80% of the county-wide median income as a low- to moderate guideline, or
19 \$35,167. Of that amount, no more than 30% should be spent on housing -- \$10,550 annually
20 \$879 monthly. Households with less than 50% of the county median are defined as very low
21 income (\$21,980 or less), and those with less than 30 % are defined as extremely low income
22 (\$13,188 or less).

23
24 In addition to monthly payments, the home buyer must have the savings necessary to cover the
25 down payment plus purchase costs.

26
27 **Renting**

28 Accessory dwelling units, which by law are treated as a permitted use of a single family owner-
29 occupied dwelling, are one form of affordable housing in Westmore, and probably the most
30 feasible solution for renters in Westmore. According to the 2010 Census, 17 (10.3%)of
31 Westmore’s 165 occupied housing units are occupied by renters. This represents a decrease in
32 the proportion of renter-occupied units from 21% in 2000. Median gross rent according to the
33 ACS 5-Year Estimate, 2012-2019 is \$856. Assuming a household is paying the median rent,
34 then a household income of more than \$2,853 a month would be necessary for the rent to be
35 affordable.

36
37 **Number of Households**

38 The way the population groups itself into households affects the demand for housing.
39 Nationwide and within Vermont household size declined dramatically during the 1970s, and has
40 continued to decline more slowly since. This trend is partly due to families having fewer
41 children. However, the decrease in the number of individuals living together is also due to the
42 breakup of extended family households, an increasing number of single-parent households, and
43 the larger number of elderly who are choosing to remain in their own homes.

44
45 In Orleans County, average household size decreased from 2.66 in 1990 to 2.45 in 2000, and to
46 2.33 in 2010. Westmore’s average household size was 2.07 in 2010, down from 2.30 at the 2000

1 Census, and down from 2.56 in 1990.

2
3 **Number of Units**

4 **TABLE 3: Number, Occupancy, & Use of Housing Units, Town of Westmore**

	Total Units	Vacant	Owner Occupied	Renter Occupied	Seasonal
1980	481	386	87	8	Not available
1990	542	9	103	16	414
2000	530	34	105	28	363
2010	598	27	148	17	406

5
6 Source U.S. Census 1980, 1990, 2000, 2010

7
8 Some of these Census figures, particularly the total units in 1990, seem to have some
9 inconsistency which is assumed to be due to differences in definition and counting methods.

10
11
12 **TABLE 4: Population and Number of Households, –1980-2010 - Westmore**

Number of Household % Increase			Population % Increase		
1980-1990	1990-2000	2000-2010	1980-1990	1990-2000	2000-2010
20%	12%	24.1%	19%	.3%	14.4%

13 Source: U.S. Census 1990, 2000, 2010

14
15
16 **Age of Units**

17 Like the rest of the region, a substantial portion (34%) of Westmore’s year-round housing stock
18 was built before 1940. (This figure comes from ACS 5-Year Estimates) Another 12.7% was
19 constructed pre-1950. There was a building boom between 1960 and 1975, and the 1990 Census
20 figures show another active building cycle emerged during the 1980’s. Local sources suggest
21 that recent building involves remodeling and/or replacement of older structures and limited
22 amounts of new construction.

23
24 The number of households in Westmore is increasing more rapidly than its population. The
25 number of households in Westmore increased from 119 in 1990 to 133 in 2000, and to 165 in
26 2010. (U.S. Census 1990, 2000, 2010).

27
28 **Land Prices**

29 The cost of land is an important factor in the price of housing. The sale price of open land in
30 Westmore, according to property transfer tax reports during 2016 was an average \$1,732/acre for
31 7 parcels with a median acreage of 29 acres. (The 2017 report does not have sufficient data on
32 property transfers to characterize the sale of open land.)

33
34 **ISSUES/CONCERNS**

- 35 1. The household income figures indicate that there is a need for more affordable housing
36 throughout the county and in Westmore. Given Westmore’s small size this might be

1 addressed with very few units.

- 2 2. The increase in house prices has outpaced increases in income, exacerbating the previous
3 affordability gap.

4
5
6 **RECOMMENDED ACTIONS**

- 7 1. Study the feasibility of adopting a Transfer of Development Rights program within the
8 Zoning Ordinance to encourage development in some parts of town while preserving
9 open space and agriculture in other parts of towns.
- 10 2. Many seasonal homes have in the past become year-round homes without improving their
11 septic system to handle the increased use. State law now requires adequate septic
12 systems prior to the conversion of use.
- 13 3. Study whether it might be helpful to have subdivision regulation for the purpose of
14 promoting orderly growth and the provision of municipal services at an affordable cost to
15 the community.
- 16 4. Inform residents about federal and state programs for weatherizing, rehabilitation and
17 home financing by making the information available through the town clerk and zoning
18 administrator.
- 19 5. Ensure the current zoning by-law does not needlessly discriminate against affordable
20 housing through requiring excessive lot sizes or building standards.
- 21 6. A survey should be conducted to determine if current and future housing options
22 encourage young people to reside in Westmore and if the needs of elderly and retired
23 residents are being met.
- 24 7. Conduct an annual review of the number of mobile homes on rented lots within the town
25 because a disproportionate increase in this type of housing may indicate a lack of
26 alternative affordable housing in the community.

27
28 **16. TRANSPORTATION**

29 Westmore's geography dictates that travel within its boundaries, and to and from neighboring
30 towns, be primarily by individual conveyance over the existing road system. State Route 5A and
31 Town Road 16 provide year round access to the Willoughby Lake part of town, and to the
32 secondary roads that serve the remote areas.

33
34 Westmore residents are dependent upon a well-maintained road system. The road network
35 within Westmore consists of:

- 36
37
 - 7.22 miles of State highways (Route 5 A)
 - 38 ▪ 1.50 miles of Class II town highways. These are designated by the selectboard and
39 approved by the Vermont State Highway Board.
 - 40 ▪ 24.89 miles of Class III town highways. These are certified as Class III after consultation
41 with the district highway engineer. Minimum requirements are that Class III highways
42 be negotiable under normal conditions, all seasons of the year, by standard manufactured

1 pleasure cars, and thus such highways must have sufficient surface and base, adequate
2 drainage, and enough width to allow winter maintenance.

- 3 ■ 3.77 miles of Class IV town highways. These highways are maintained for summer
4 service only; persons erecting dwellings served by these roads cannot expect winter
5 service.

6 7 **Highways**

8 In addition to State Route 5 and Town Road 16, the town maintains 24.89 miles of Class III
9 roads which serve the part of town west of the lake abutting Sutton and Barton, and areas to the
10 east abutting Charleston, Brighton and Newark. Only the roads serving year round residents are
11 kept open in winter, and are posted to exclude travel by heavy vehicles during spring thaw when
12 travel by any type vehicle may be impractical. There are also 3.77 miles of Class IV roads which
13 provide access to seasonal homes and receive minimal maintenance from the town. There is also
14 a system of trails which provide recreational access to remote and scenic areas with special
15 natural characteristics. Some of these are on state land and others are on private holdings, but
16 have been traditionally open to public use. The snowmobile trail system uses private trails, as
17 permitted by landowners, and public roads as authorized by the town.

18 19 **Northeast Kingdom Byway**

20 Early in 2013 the Vermont Byways Council and the Vermont Agency of Transportation
21 approved the designation of the **Northeast Kingdom Scenic Byway**, a 51-mile corridor that
22 includes Route 5A in Westmore. The route terminates in St. Johnsbury and Newport, and also
23 passes through Lyndonville, East Burke, West Burke, Charleston, and Derby.

24
25 To earn Byway designation, a proposed route must possess intrinsic historic, cultural,
26 archeological, natural, recreational, or scenic values. Although the designation is not a regulatory
27 program (no special zoning is required, for example), the Byway must have a Corridor
28 Management Program (CMP) that assesses the intrinsic qualities of the byway and presents
29 strategies for protecting and promoting them. The Byway designation is expected to increase
30 tourism, create new jobs, and foster economic development. The CMP must therefore propose a
31 marketing strategy. The Northeastern Vermont Development Association (NVDA) and the
32 Northeast Kingdom Travel and Tourism Association (NEKTTA) are partnering to establish a
33 more formal Byway committee that can raise awareness of the Byway assets. Important next
34 steps will include developing signage for the route and training for regional tourism personnel.
35 Key leaders from each community in the Byway shall be active on this committee.

36 37 **Roads and Water Quality**

38 Research and water quality monitoring has indicated that roads are responsible for 6-10% of
39 phosphorus loads to Lake Champlain, and other waterways, and roads contribute over 10% of
40 sediment loads. Excessive sediment and phosphorus can cause algae blooms, increase water
41 turbidity (cloudiness), and degrade fish and invertebrate habitat.

42 The 2015 legislative session created a new regulatory framework addressing all work on Town
43 Highways, **The Municipal Roads General Permit**, as part of the Act 64- the Vermont Clean
44 Water Act. This general permit is intended to achieve significant reductions in stormwater-
45 related erosion from municipal roads, both paved and unpaved.

1 Municipalities will develop and implement a customized, multi-year plan to stabilize their road
2 drainage system. The plan will include bringing road drainage systems up to basic maintenance
3 standards, and additional corrective measure to reduce erosion. The town is currently working to
4 NVDA to identify erosion-prone road segments connected to water bodies. This work will
5 identify a series of stormwater improvements needed to meet the Municipal Roads General
6 Permit Conditions.

7 **Short Structures**

8 VTrans is required to inspect all bridges with a span of 20 feet or longer, whether they are
9 located on a federal-aid system or a town highway. These inspections occur once every two
10 years, and reports of the inspections are sent to the Town.

11 The bridge and culvert inventory does not, however, contain information on town highway
12 “short structures,” which are bridges with a span of less than 20 feet but equal to or greater than
13 6 feet. These are neither inspected nor prioritized by the state, and no formal system for
14 identifying or assessing them currently exists. In fact, short structures have not been depicted on
15 the Town Highways Maps since 2003. Towns are responsible for the inspection of their own
16 short structures. In 2015, NVDA performed condition assessments on town short structures,
17 classifying them as “Good,” “Fair,” or “Poor.” The conditions assessment will be an important
18 tool for identifying medium- to long-range costs for maintaining, upgrading, and repairing short
19 structures.

20

21 **Rail, Bus and Air Facilities.**

22 No scheduled public transportation facilities or service are available in Westmore. A subsidized
23 commuter bus service, connecting Lyndonville and Newport, existed for a while but did not
24 prove to be economically viable. The nearest rail service is in Barton with potential for future
25 passenger service. Starting in 2007, an Agency on Aging grant has provided a bus service for
26 seniors twice a month, for a three hour stopover, from Westmore to Barton.

27

28 **Water Transportation.**

29 Navigation is feasible only on the lakes and ponds within Westmore. Boat launching facilities
30 are available at the fishing accesses maintained by the state fish and wildlife department. Many
31 private landowners maintain docks and launching facilities for their private use. Commercial use
32 of bodies of water is regulated by the town and state.

33

34 **Parking Facilities.**

35 Space for parking vehicles is provided by the activities which attract the occupants. The town
36 provides parking for north beach users, and the fellowship hall provides space for church,
37 community hall and town clerk’s office patrons. The town clerk’s office has recently upgraded
38 its parking area, which also provides overflow parking, especially for the church and fellowship
39 hall activities. The state owned fishing accesses include parking space for the vehicles used to
40 launch and recover fishing boats, and trail heads within Willoughby State Forest provide parking
41 space for hikers. All private residences make provision for off-road parking for the vehicles of
42 the occupants and their guests.

43

44 **Sidewalks and Bicycle Paths.**

45 Sidewalks and bicycle paths are extremely limited in Westmore, and existing construction along

1 5A complicates the construction of bicycle paths or sidewalks paralleling it. Thus on road
2 cycling and walking can be hazardous in areas of relatively heavy vehicular traffic. The
3 potential exists for the development of better pedestrian and bicycle pathways within the town.
4

5 **Traffic**

6 Traffic in Westmore is generated by transients using Route 5A and Town Road 16, by residents
7 commuting on local errands, and by tourists enjoying the unique scenery. The areas of most
8 concern are the north beach of Willoughby Lake along Town Road 16, from the cemetery to the
9 Willoughvale, the stretch of 5A from the Northern Exposure General Store to the Willoughby
10 Lake Store and the portion of 5A adjacent to the south beach. The existing road system provides
11 adequate access to the remote areas of town and its rugged condition limits speed and frequency
12 of travel to safe levels. The State has been approached to do a traffic study of Route 5A and a
13 study of the idea of dual traffic regulations for the section of Route 16 along the north beach is
14 currently underway.
15

16 **RECOMMENDED ACTIONS**

- 17 1. The Town shall cooperate with other agencies in maintaining an efficient infrastructure
18 supporting travel required by residents to use facilities and services within the town and
19 in other localities.
- 20 2. Westmore shall maintain the town highway system in safe and usable condition.
21 Extension of the town road system shall be made entirely at the expense of potential users
22 of the extensions, and with prior approval of the planning commission and selectboard
23 who will establish minimum standards for the road extensions. Land owners should be
24 encouraged to allow access to existing trails unless users abuse the private property
25 traversed. Approval of extension, or deletion, of the existing road and trail systems will
26 take into consideration the preservation of natural remote areas which give the town its
27 basic character.
- 28 3. Westmore shall cooperate with other communities within the area to encourage the
29 availability of public transportation in that area. Provision of transportation for the
30 handicapped and aged will be encouraged along with energy saving systems.
- 31 4. Each individual, agency or activity shall be responsible for providing adequate parking
32 for vehicles using its services or facilities, to the number of people whose vehicles can be
33 safely accommodated within the available parking space. Permits for new development
34 shall be contingent upon demonstrating that adequate parking will be available.
- 35 5. Westmore shall encourage the development of better bicycle-pedestrian pathways within
36 the developed areas of town, and the construction of bicycle-pedestrian lanes to relieve
37 congestion along the main traffic arteries. Development and maintenance of trails in
38 remote areas by public or private sector, shall be encouraged to provide opportunity for
39 serious hiking.

40
41

17. ENERGY

1
2
3 There is a growing awareness of the long-term costs - economic, environmental and social - of
4 our energy choices. The use of energy is an important consideration in local decisions about
5 municipal services and facilities, land use, building standards, and our local economy. Our
6 consumption of energy also adds to the build-up of carbon dioxide which is causing global
7 warming known as the green-house effect. While compact, mixed use development centers
8 commonly lead to lower energy consumption, the rural character of Westmore does not make
9 this easy to achieve.

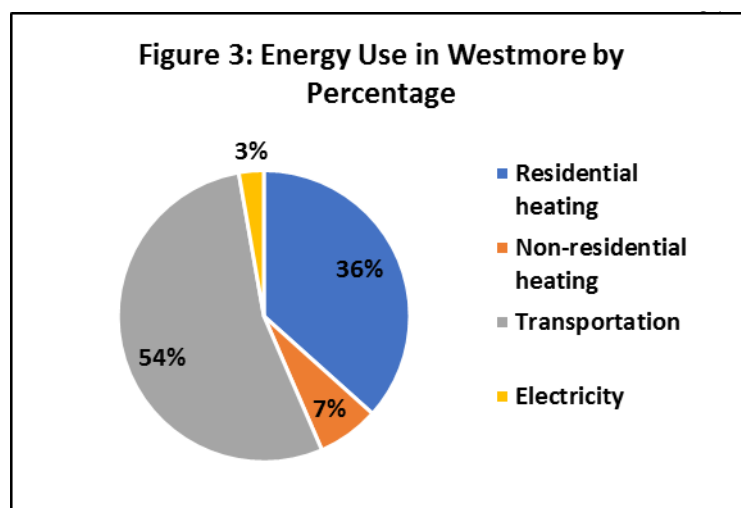
10
11 The Town of Westmore acknowledges that despite the challenges of our rural terrain, it is
12 necessary to work toward a sustainable energy future in a manner that minimizes environmental
13 impacts and supports Westmore's local land-based economy. This chapter is aligned with the
14 standards of Act 174 so that the Town of Westmore may play a vital role in determining future
15 energy use and generation.

16
17 This plan supports the overarching goals of the Vermont Comprehensive Energy Plan of 2016:

- 18 • Meet 90% of all energy needs from renewable resources by 2050
- 19 • Reduce greenhouse gas emissions to 50% below 1990 levels by 2028 and 75% by 2050
- 20 • Improve the energy efficiency of 25% of homes by 2025
- 21 • Meet the Vermont Renewable Energy Standard through renewable generation and energy
22 transformation

23 24 **Analysis and Targets: Current and Future Energy Use**

25 *Note: the following estimates are targets were developed with the assistance of NVDA and follow*
26 *the same data methodologies used for the 2018 amendment to the Regional Plan for the*
27 *Northeast Kingdom. Unless otherwise noted, data and figures in this chapter are from*
28 *Northeastern Vermont Development Association. Addenda A and B to the Regional Plan*
29 *document the methodologies used to develop usage estimates and targets. (www.nvda.net)*
30



Westmore has a small village center and a densely settled lake community surrounded by extensive rural settlement and open space. According to latest American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, nearly all of the community's housing stock consists of detached single-family homes, with one-unit detached structures accounting for about 94% and mobile homes about 4%. With little commercial development, nearly all of its residents travel out of town for

45 work, shopping, and other necessities. This pattern of development is linked with considerable
46 energy use to meet transportation, heating, and electricity needs. According to NVDA estimates,

1 the town of Westmore uses nearly 43,000 million British Thermal Units (MM BTUs), the
 2 majority of which are spent on transportation, followed closely by heating. (Figure 3)

3
 4 **Current Thermal (Heating) Use**

5 Collectively, total energy use for heating space and water in all occupied units in Westmore
 6 accounts for about 15,619 MM BTUs at an annual cost of more than to \$239,000.

7
 8 **TABLE 5: Residential Heating Estimates for Occupied Housing**

Fuel Type: Space Heating	Households	Total avg. Use (Annual)		% Use: (All HHs)	Percent of Use: Owner	Percent of Use: Renter	% of Cost (All HHs)
Tank/LP/etc. Gas	36	31541	gallons	20.8%	20.9%	20.0%	33.5%
Electricity	2	48144	KwH	1.2%	1.3%	0.0%	3.0%
Fuel Oil	76	42718	gallons	43.9%	40.5%	80.0%	39.8%
Wood	56	230	cords	32.4%	35.4%	0.0%	21.8%
Coal/Coke	3	13	tons	1.7%	1.9%	0.0%	1.9%
Other	-	0		0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

9
 10 Wood, a very popular heating source in Westmore, is the second most use source of heating for
 11 owner-occupied residences. Renters, who generally have less control over their heating fuel
 12 sources rely primarily on fuel oil.

13
 14 Although this calculation uses best available data, it clearly has some limitations. First, like most
 15 Northeast Kingdom residents, Westmore residents are likely to use multiple heating sources.
 16 Second, this estimate does not account for the large share of seasonal housing units in Westmore,
 17 for which no published heating datasets are available. Department of Public Service guidelines
 18 suggest that it is reasonable to assume that seasonal units account for a mere fraction of the
 19 average owner-occupied housing unit – about 5%. There are currently 436 seasonal units in
 20 Westmore. Assuming 5% of the average owner-occupied housing unit (about 110 MM BTUs),
 21 they could collectively account for another 1,790 MM BTUs annually.

22
 23 Age of housing stock also affects thermal energy use. According to ACS 5-year estimates, nearly
 24 one-fifth of Westmore’s owner-occupied housing stock predates 1940. Nearly one-half of renter-
 25 occupied housing predates 1940. This is significant because pre-1940 structures are likely to be
 26 “leaky” and poorly insulated, which can nearly double the average thermal use to 80,000 BTUs
 27 per square foot. (Department of Public Service). NVDA therefore assumed 80,000 BTUs per
 28 square foot for pre-1940 housing stock, 45,000 BTUs for all other.

29
 30 Non-residential thermal estimates were developed using data from the Department of Public
 31 Service (DPS) and the Vermont Department of Labor’s economic and Labor Market
 32 Information. (Table 6) The Census does not have estimates on heating sources, but the DPS is
 33 able to estimate average heating loads on types of business. Additionally, this estimate excludes
 34 commercial operations likely to be home-based, such as daycares, in order to avoid double-
 35 counting.

1 **TABLE 6: Non-Residential Heating Use in Westmore**

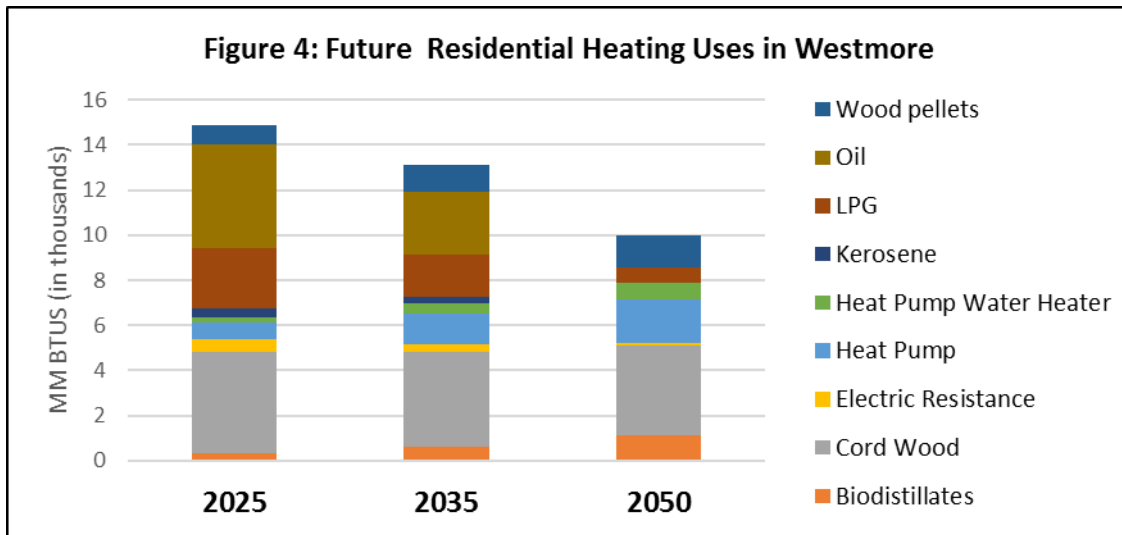
NAICS Code	Estimated Avg. Consumption (MMBTU)	# of Structures in Town	Total MM BTUs
44-45. Retail trade	295	1	295
54. Professional and technical services	109	1	109
72. Accommodation and food services	812	3	2439
TOTAL		5	2841

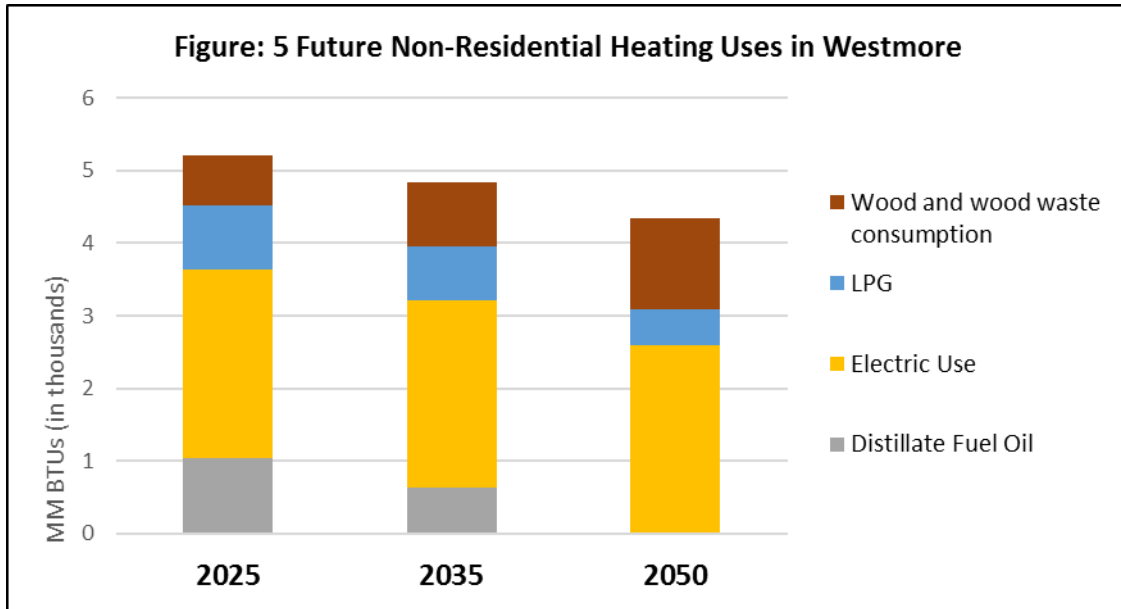
2
 3 The Westmore town clerk’s office, a 1,464 square foot one-story building, is occupied regularly
 4 about 28 hours and 4 days a week during the heating season. The structure is heated by an oil
 5 boiler, which accounts for about 80 MM BTUs annually.
 6

7 **Future Thermal Use and Pathways to 2050**

8 Figures 4 and 5 illustrate potential pathways for Westmore to achieve the 2050 statewide energy
 9 goals. (LEAP stands for Long-Range Energy Alternative Planning Systems, a widely used
 10 software tool for energy policy analysis.) These figures are derived from statewide projections.
 11

12 According to these LEAP scenarios, residential thermal use decreases from existing levels by
 13 nearly half in the 2050. By contrast, Westmore’s non-residential/commercial thermal use (which
 14 is already very small) decreases by about 25% over the same period.
 15





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Achieving Westmore 2050 thermal energy goals is predicated on two overarching strategies:

1. Reduce overall heat energy consumption through aggressive weatherization and efficiency upgrades. (Table 7)

The Planning Commission strongly advocates the conservation of energy and energy efficiency. This plan recommends the use of energy-saving products such as insulation, efficient appliances, and, when necessary the use of winter weatherization products such as weather stripping, window plastic, and water heater wraps. New construction and the replacement of old appliances, doors, and/or windows should always be done with energy efficient products. In addition, energy efficient behavior (shutting lights off when leaving the room, turning the thermostat down at night, etc.) should be taught and used, at home and in the workplace.

The Town Clerk’s Office received a thermal energy efficiency audits in 2011. The Planning Commission recommends that improvements be made to make it more energy efficient, thereby reducing costs and saving taxpayer dollars.

The US. Energy Information Administration estimates that new homes generally consume 21% less energy for space heating than homes built before 2000. Nevertheless, there are several siting techniques for development that are likely to result in additional conservation of energy. Building on south facing slopes will generally make a house less expensive to heat. Shade trees can also be planted to reduce cooling costs on warm days, just as evergreen trees can be planted to lessen the effect of winter’s freezing winds.

1 **TABLE 7: Weatherization Targets for Westmore**

	2025	2035	2050
Estimated number of residential structures	183	194	206
# of residences to be weatherized	57	99	106
Estimated number of commercial establishments	5	6	6
# of commercial establishments to be weatherized	0	1	1

2
3 **2. Switch from fossil-fuel heat to clean renewable sources. (Table 8)**

4 Fuel oil use will be virtually eliminated by 2050, although some LP gas use may remain. Most of
5 the money Vermonters spend on fossil fuels leaves the state and local economy. Only 20 percent
6 of the dollars spent on non-renewable fuels stays in the state, while 80 percent of that spent on
7 wood remains in Vermont. Replacing fossil fuel systems with wood energy systems would keep
8 the energy dollar within our local economy. Through the use of local, residential scale
9 renewable energy resources, residents decrease the money they spend on energy while increasing
10 the local economy.

11
12 Although cord wood will continue to be a popular choice in the region, wood pellets, which are
13 cleaner burning and more efficient than cord wood, are gaining popularity among residents.
14 Their prices have remained relatively stable, although there have been some shortages in recent
15 heating seasons.

16
17 Geothermal, or “ground source heat pump systems”, extract natural low-temperature thermal
18 energy from the ground during colder months for heating, and transfer thermal energy from the
19 building to the ground in warm months for cooling. A geothermal system in Vermont can save
20 roughly \$1,000 to \$2,000 annually in heating costs and have a “simple payback time” of between
21 10-20 years. This technology operates much like a refrigerator, utilizing a heat pump, heat
22 exchanger, and refrigerant. While geothermal systems do require electricity to operate the
23 pumps, the systems generally deliver between 3 to 5 times more heat than the electrical energy
24 they consume (depending on the type of system).

25
26 Geothermal pumps require excavation and duct work, pricing the technology out of reach for
27 many residents. In recent years, however, manufacturers have developed a similar air-sourced
28 heat pumps that operate more consistently over Vermont’s vast temperature ranges. Also called
29 “cold climate heat pumps” or “mini splits”, these units can be two to three times more efficient
30 than propane and fuel oils. Unlike geothermal units, they do not require excavation or duct work
31 and can be much less expensive to install. Cold climate heat pumps have the capacity to heat
32 about only 50% to 70% of a building, depending on the size and layout of the structure. Some
33 structures with multiple heating zones may be difficult to heat with heat pumps alone, but the
34 pumps may be effective for boosting colder underserved zones. They also may be useful in
35 outdoor workspaces. Despite recent improvements in effectiveness on cold days, a backup
36 heating source is usually required for sub-zero temperatures. Nevertheless, the superior
37 efficiency in heat pump technology, compared to combustion-based heating sources, accounts
38 for the overall decrease in the reliance on wood heat systems by the year 2050.

1 **TABLE 8: Fuel Switching Targets for Westmore**

	2025	2035	2050
New Efficient Wood Heat Systems in Residences	151	126	91
New Efficient Wood Heat Systems in Commercial Establishments	1	2	2
New Heat Pumps in Residences	45	96	122
New Heat Pumps in Commercial Establishments	0	1	1

2

3 **Current Transportation Energy Use**

4 Energy use in transportation is most greatly influenced by the development patterns of the
 5 region. According to NVDA estimates, long commutes and incidental trips require NEK
 6 residents to drive an average of 14,000 miles per year. That means collectively, Westmore
 7 residents drive nearly 4.3 million miles annually, accounting for more than \$437,000 in fuel
 8 costs. Nearly all of this energy is non-renewable. Ethanol currently accounts for all renewable
 9 transportation energy usage in Westmore – about 6% of total BTUs.

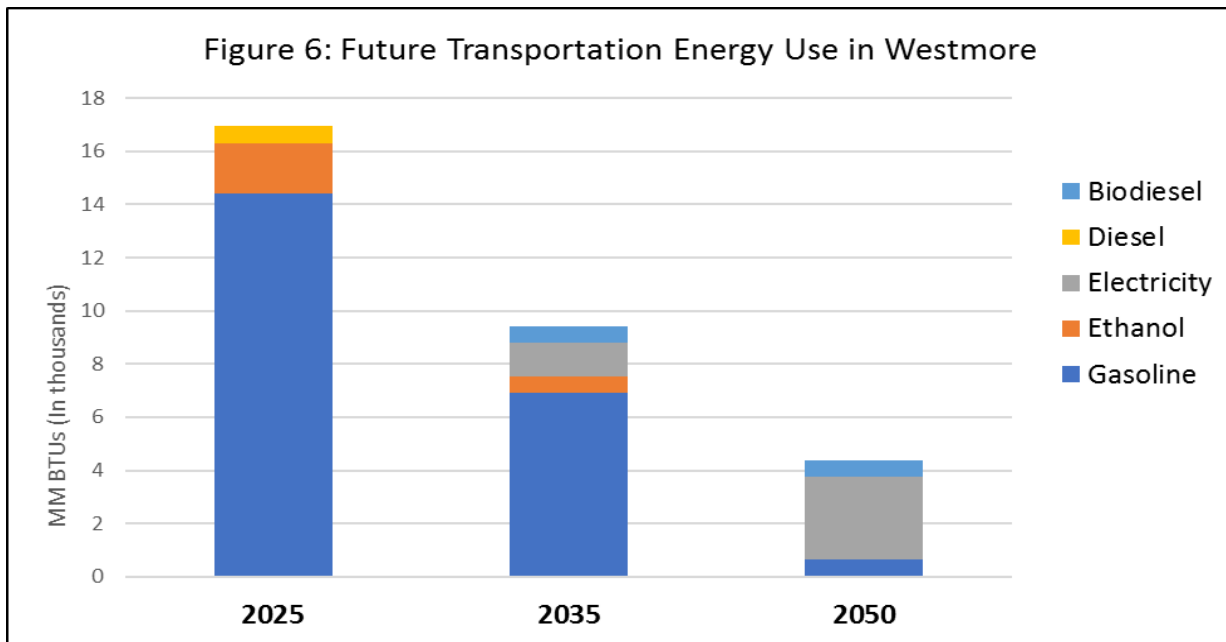
10

11 There are three kinds of electric vehicles (EVs) available: all-electric, plug-in hybrid electric, and
 12 hybrid electric. The first two require a plug-in, and the latter simply recharges from the
 13 combustion motor and from braking). According to Efficiency Vermont data, there were no all-
 14 electric or hybrid electric vehicles registered in Westmore as of January 2017. There are limited
 15 opportunities to charge electric vehicles away from home. The nearest public charging stations
 16 are in Derby Line and in Barton. Both are level 2 (240 volt), which can produce about 10 to 20
 17 miles of range per hour of charge, depending on the weather. Nevertheless, EVs have the greatest
 18 potential to reduce Vermont’s statewide greenhouse gas emissions. “Refueling,” which is as
 19 simple as plugging into an electric outlet, costs the equivalent of about \$1.00 per gallon.

20

21 **Future Transportation Energy Use and Pathways to 2050**

22 Figure 6 shows one possible pathway for Westmore to meet the “90 by 2050” challenge.



23

1 According to the LEAP scenario, Westmore’s total transportation use will have fallen to **just**
 2 **over one-fifth of current levels by the year 2050**. Electricity, the largest share of fuels by then,
 3 account for 3,000 MM BTUs. Biodiesel will account for 1,000 MM BTUs. Gasoline use will
 4 drop by 96% over that same period. Electrification will account for much of the overall
 5 reduction: EVs currently have a fuel efficiency many times greater than that of combustion
 6 engines. Latest figures from the EPA show that EVs in the northeastern US get the equivalent of
 7 102 miles per gallon.⁸ This estimate also accounts for technological gains by 2050, gradually
 8 increasing range from 3 miles per kWh to 4 miles per kWh.

10 **TABLE 9: Fuel Switching Targets for Transportation**

	2025	2035	2050
# of Light-duty vehicles (e.g. cars, non-commercial trucks) in Westmore*	343	386	434
# of LDVs powered by electricity	28	122	263
# of LDVs using biofuel blends	261	179	31

11 *figures are derived from American Community Survey estimates

12
 13 According to LEAP estimates, more than half of all light-duty vehicles in Westmore are
 14 expected to be powered by electricity by the year 2050. Despite the lack of infrastructure and
 15 rough rural terrain of the region, industry forecasts predict that more than half of all new car
 16 sales will be EVs by the year 2040⁹. Although EVs are expected to play a major role in reducing
 17 transportation energy use; however, Westmore will still have to reduce its overall reliance on
 18 light duty vehicles in order to meet 2050 LEAP projections. This is a tall order for any rural
 19 community where development patterns directly impact energy use, especially in regards to
 20 individual behaviors. With limited transit infrastructure, the region is dominated by single-
 21 occupancy light-duty vehicles. Residents typically commute to disparate labor market areas,
 22 reducing opportunities for carpooling.

23
 24 VTrans offers grant assistance to municipalities who wish to establish park and rides on
 25 municipal, state, or leased property on or near state highways. While mixed-use, higher density
 26 neighborhoods encourage more pedestrian use, these land use principles will be hard to achieve
 27 in a small community like Westmore, which has no off-site water or sewer. However, clustering
 28 development, wherever possible, should be encouraged in the town’s zoning bylaws.

29
 30 Alternative transportation accommodations, such as bike and pedestrian lanes, can help to reduce
 31 reliance on vehicles. Such amenities are particularly needed on Route 5A. There is no transit in
 32 and out of town. Rural Community Transportation runs a weekly “shopper” bus line with nearest
 33 stop in East Charleston. Daily inter-state bus service is available from White River Junction. This
 34 plan advocates for expanded transit opportunities for Westmore residents.

35

⁸ <https://blog.ucsusa.org/dave-reichmuth/new-data-show-electric-vehicles-continue-to-get-cleaner>

⁹ Bloomberg New Energy Financial: Electric Vehicle Outlook 2018 <https://about.bnef.com/electric-vehicle-outlook/>

1 Additionally, improved telecommunications infrastructure in this region has the potential to
 2 reduce annual VMTs by allowing more workers to telecommute. Given the vast majority of
 3 Westmore residents are employed outside of the community, ride sharing is another opportunity
 4 to reduce transportation consumption.

5
 6 **Existing Electricity Use**

7 Reports from Efficiency Vermont show that electricity use has been relatively stable for
 8 Westmore residences over the most recent three-year period. (No data is available for
 9 commercial uses.)

10

11 **TABLE 10: Westmore Electricity Use by Year and Sector (in kWh)**

	2015	2016	2017
Commercial & Industrial, kWh	--	--	--
Residential, kWh	356,545	299,376	347,128

12

13 The same dataset indicates that most efficiency rebates issued to Westmore residences have been
 14 from of switching to more efficient (LED) light bulbs and by replacing hardwired lighting
 15 fixtures.

16

17 **Future Electricity Use and Potential Pathways**

18 While electricity use in Westmore accounts for the smallest share of overall energy use, it is
 19 important to remember that total electricity use is expected to increase exponentially by 2050 due
 20 to fuel switching in thermal and transportation uses. (LEAP projections for the town indicate a
 21 300% increase for electricity for thermal and transportation uses.) This increase seems
 22 counterintuitive to energy use reduction goals, but because electricity is more efficient than the
 23 fuels it will replace, total energy consumption will decline even as electricity use rises.
 24 Nevertheless, meeting efficiency goals through ongoing replacement of equipment, bulbs,
 25 hardwiring, and appliances, will be critical for meeting the 2050 energy use goals. Efficiency
 26 Vermont offers rebates for a number of equipment upgrades, including advanced power strips
 27 and EnergyStar appliances. The Town should help to get the word out about these rebate
 28 programs.

29

30 **TABLE 11: Westmore Residences with Upgraded Electrical Equipment by Year**

	2025	2035	2050
Estimated number residential customers	275	292	309
Number of residential customers to upgrade electrical equipment	66	103	151

31

32 **Existing Energy Generation and Distribution**

33 Westmore has no hydro or biomass facilities. Existing generation consists of two residential
 34 scale roof-mounted solar installations with a combined capacity of 4.9 kW, producing about six
 35 MWh a year. Another residence also uses solar panels to heat water.

36

1 Westmore is served by three electric utilities. Barton Electric Department serves most of the
2 town, the Vermont Electric Coop (VEC) serves a few residences in the northernmost area of the
3 town bordering Charleston and Brownington, and Lyndonville Electric serves a few residences
4 in the eastern portion of town, from Bald Hill Pond to the border with Newark. An electric
5 franchise area map showing service areas is attached to this plan.
6

7 All three utilities operate in an area known as the Sheffield Highgate Export Interface (SHEI),
8 where generation exceeds load and causes grid congestion. In essence, excess generation runs the
9 risk of exceeding the capacity of the export line, which can ultimately lead to grid instability.
10 The continued addition of new sources of generation forces existing resources, like Kingdom
11 Community Wind and Sheffield Wind to curtail their output due to the lack of capacity to export
12 power. Adding more renewables to an already full grid at this point can simply mean replacing
13 other renewables. While modest transmission upgrades may help to alleviate some congestion in
14 the short-term, the situation will require robust, long-term solutions that are complex and
15 possibly costly.¹⁰ Utilities, clean energy advocates, regulators and other stakeholders are
16 currently discussing ways that the SHEI limitations can be addressed to reduce or eliminate
17 curtailments of generation located within the interface.

18 While the Town of Westmore encourages appropriately scaled renewable energy development in
19 accordance with our siting guidelines, it has a commitment to ensure that such development is
20 sustainable and feasible and does not merely substitute one renewable resource with another. The
21 Town of Westmore supports energy development that will not exacerbate curtailment at issue
22 within the SHEI. It is unlikely that any single solution will solve congestion within the SHEI
23 and, as such, it is anticipated that incremental progress will be achieved as partial solutions are
24 implemented. In the meantime, we will support projects that are consistent with the land use and
25 conservation measures in this plan. Additionally, we will expect project developers to work with
26 utilities and other stakeholders to explore innovative strategies that shift generation away from
27 the hours when generation exceeds load within the SHEI area or otherwise avoids exacerbating
28 congestion on the grid. An example of such a project would pair a battery with a solar facility to
29 control when the project's power is exported to the grid.

30 **Siting Resource Maps and Guidelines for Generation**

31 Westmore would need to generate at least 99 MWh of renewable energy to meet the goals of the
32 regional energy plan. The Town of Westmore actively encourages the use of local, residential
33 scale renewable energy, provided that it does not adversely impact the town's natural resources.
34 There are places in Westmore where solar power and residential scale wind power may be
35 feasible. The following map analyses, closely follow the Northeast Kingdom's Regional Energy
36 Plan and meet Act 174 standards for renewable resource mapping.
37

38 **Known and Possible Constraints (Unsuitable areas)**

39 Westmore's energy maps were generated using GIS (geographic information systems) data
40 layers developed by the Vermont Center for Geographic Information. "Known constraints" were
41 removed entirely from available resource areas:

- 42 • Vernal pools
- 43 • River corridors (areas prone to fluvial erosion)
- 44 • Floodways (where floodwaters run the deepest and fastest)

¹⁰ Frank Etori, SHEI Overview, VSPC, July 12, 2017 v. 2

- 1 • State significant natural communities
- 2 • Rare, threatened, and endangers species
- 3 • Natural wilderness areas
- 4 • Class 1 and 2 wetlands

5
 6 **“Possible constraints,”** areas that would likely require some form of mitigation if they were to
 7 be developed, were then identified to as potential complications for development generation
 8 facilities:

- 9 • Soils of agricultural importance (e.g. prime agricultural soils, soils of statewide
 10 importance)
- 11 • Special flood hazard areas (outside of floodways and river corridors)
- 12 • Protected and conserved lands
- 13 • Deer wintering areas
- 14 • Hydric soils (soils that are either permanently or seasonally saturated with water.
 15 Although these soils may function as wetlands, they are not necessarily mapped as Class
 16 1 or Class 2 wetlands)
- 17 • Conservation design highest priority forest blocks (contiguous habitat areas that are
 18 unfragmented by roads, development, or agriculture)

19
 20 **Regional Known Constraints (i.e. “Unsuitable areas)**

21 Westmore’s maps also incorporate a regional constrain from NVDA’s Regional Plan, adopted
 22 April 26, 2018, and Certified by the Department of Public Service June 22, 2018. Rural lands
 23 containing one or more of the following conservation attributes, shall be considered
 24 exceptionally sensitive and shall therefore not be designated as appropriate for commercial or
 25 industrial development that is not directly related to the region’s lands-based economy (i.e.
 26 forestry, agriculture, and recreation):

- 27 • State natural areas and fragile areas: This includes the Willoughby Cliffs area
- 28 • Lands managed by the Department of Forest Parks and Recreation
- 29 • Highest priority forest habitat blocks
- 30 • Forested coverage of Site Class 1, 2, and 3 soils of 25 acres or more
- 31 • Headwaters
- 32 • Upland areas of 2,000 or higher

33 Lands containing one or more of these attributes shall not be developed, as their best uses are a
 34 combination of forest and conservation purposes. Appropriate uses include sustainable forestry
 35 and logging practices, maple syrup production, wildlife habitat, and passive recreation.
 36 Maintaining forest and vegetation coverage on upland areas is particularly important in that it
 37 provides natural floodwater attenuation and minimizes contribution to flash flooding in
 38 downslope areas, as well as increased sediment loads to headwaters. Ridgelines in these sensitive
 39 areas are a particular concern as developments can be seen from multiple locations including
 40 neighboring communities. From our experience, distance is not an effective strategy to mitigate
 41 impacts to such viewsheds. In accordance with NVDA’s duly adopted regional plan, the Town of

1 Westmore will not support proposed development or re-designation of sensitive rural lands that
 2 include any of the following impacts:

- 3 • Loss of forest cover and introduction of impervious surface coverage
- 4 • Incursion of roads intended for uses other than resource-based activities (i.e. sustainable
 5 wood harvesting and recreation) that result in the fragmentation of habitat
- 6 • Uses that introduce smoke or other emissions
- 7 • Uses that introduce light trespass or sustained noise

8
 9 **Local Constraints**

10 The town of Westmore has added possible constraints to the Energy Resource Maps. Renewable
 11 energy development should not create an undue adverse impact to Westmore’s scenic ridgelines,
 12 as viewed from any public right of way, body of water, known hiking trails, or any vantage point
 13 in the National Natural Landmark area. This policy is consistent with the policies on general
 14 development and use restrictions cited throughout this plan. Westmore’s ridgelines, which are
 15 depicted on the attached Viewshed Map and accompanying photos, are highly visible from the
 16 lower elevations, leaving the town particularly vulnerable to adverse impacts of ridgeline
 17 development. Undue adverse impacts would include changing the following elements of
 18 Westmore’s scenic viewsheds: views from public roadways across open fields, especially when
 19 those fields form an important foreground; prominent ridgelines or hillsides that can be seen
 20 from many public vantage points; views from hiking trails and scenes that include important
 21 contrasting elements such as water and sites with historical significance.

22
 23 Additionally, unfragmented tracts of working lands (agriculture or forestry) of 20 acres or more
 24 are unlikely to meet the requirements of Westmore’s screening ordinance for ground-mounted
 25 solar plants (GMSPs).

26
 27 Resource areas that do not overlap with any known or possible constraints are considered
 28 “**Prime**” resource areas. Areas that overlap with possible constraints are consider “**Secondary**”
 29 resource areas.

30 **TABLE 12: Constraints and Unsuitable Areas for Renewable Energy Development**

Known Constraints (Statewide layer developed in support of Act 174)	Regionally Unsuitable Areas (NVDA Regional Plan)	Possible Constraints (Statewide layer development in support of Act 174)	Local constraints
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vernal pools • River corridors • Floodways • State significant natural communities • Rare, threatened, and endangered species • Natural wilderness areas • Class 1 and 2 	Rural lands, which contain one or more of the following conservation attributes: State natural areas and fragile areas: This includes the Willoughby Cliffs area <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lands managed by the Department of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VT agriculturally important soils • Special flood hazard areas • Protected and conserved lands • Deer wintering areas • Conservation design highest priority forest blocks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scenic ridgelines • Unfragmented working lands

wetlands	Forest Parks and Recreation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highest priority forest habitat blocks • Forested coverage of Site Class 1, 2, and 3 soils of 25 acres or more • Headwaters • Upland areas of 2,000 feet or higher 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hydric soils 	
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Solar Siting Guidelines

The following areas are specifically identified as preferred areas for solar facilities, as they are most likely to meet the siting requirements of this plan and screening requirements of the Town of Westmore’s Zoning Bylaw for GMSPs:

- Roof-mounted systems;
- Systems located in proximity to existing agricultural buildings that provide screening;
- Areas with no known or possible constraints that are near existing hedgerows or other topographical features that naturally screen the entire proposed array;
- Former brownfields;
- Facilities that are sited in disturbed areas, such as gravel pits, closed landfills, or former quarries;
- Working farms, where more than 50% of the energy generated by the solar development is used by the farm.
- Other preferred areas as indicated on Westmore’s solar resources map.

Specific sites may be added to the Westmore solar resources map, provided they do not conflict with the Town’s siting criteria. Preferred sites will be selected by the Planning Commission following a public hearing and submitted to the Selectboard for approval prior to being added to the Town Plan. Criteria for selection will include a request by the property owner, visibility from public highways, visibility from nearby residences, ease of connection to the electric grid and the current land use.

The importance of roof mounted solar cannot be understated. Using conservative estimates of one out of every ten residences, Westmore could generate as much as 300 MWh by 2050.

For policy purposes of this plan, solar energy facilities are grouped into three categories:

Small-Scale Solar: Solar electricity and transmission facilities up to and including 15 kW capacity;

1 **Mid-Scale Solar:** Solar electricity generation and transmission facilities greater than 15 kW
2 capacity and less than or equal to 150 kW capacity or up to two acres of developed area
3 including fencing; and

4 **Large-Scale Solar** (also known as ‘utility-scale’): Solar electricity generation and transmission
5 facility greater than 150 kW in capacity or more than 2 acres of developed site area.

- 6
- 7
- 8 • While the Town of Westmore encourages rooftop solar, installations shall be sited in such
9 a way to prevent adverse impacts to historic sites and structures. Prohibited impacts
10 include:
 - 11 ➤ Full or partial removal or demolition of the structure;
 - 12 ➤ Physical or structural damage,
 - 13 ➤ Impairment of a vista or viewshed from a historic resource that is a significant
14 component of its historic character and history of use;
 - 15 ➤ Visually overwhelming a historic setting, such as by being dramatically out of scale;
 - 16 ➤ Isolating a historic resource from its historic setting, or introducing incongruous or
17 incompatible uses.
 - 18 • Open agricultural fields or contiguous fields (separated only by hedge rows, fence lines,
19 drainage ditches, roads, etc.) larger than five acres should not be used for solar facilities
20 except for on-farm solar generation that can help farms reduce expense and remain
21 viable. Such installations shall not replace productive agricultural fields. Examples of
22 appropriate integration of on-farm solar siting include roof-mounted solar on farm
23 structures, or ground-mounted solar plants (GMSPs) that support grazing; the
24 establishment of pollinator crops; or the creation of buffers between organic and non-
25 organic production areas.
 - 26 • Small-scale GMSPs shall be sited and screened so that visual impacts are mitigated when
27 viewed from public streets, scenic viewpoints, and/or adjacent properties. If topography
28 alone does not provide sufficient screening, a combination of landscaping materials (such
29 as trees and shrubs) are strongly preferred over a large expanse of uninterrupted, uniform
30 material.
 - 31 • Mid- and large-scale solar development must meet Westmore’s solar screening
32 requirements for GMSPs.
 - 33 • All large-scale solar developments shall be sited only on preferred areas.
 - 34 • GMSPs with a coverage of more than three acres, individually or cumulatively, cannot be
35 adequately screened or mitigated to blend into the municipality’s landscape and are,
36 therefore, explicitly prohibited.
- 37

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Wind Siting Guidelines

For policy purposes of this plan, wind energy facilities are grouped into three categories:

Small-Scale Wind, defined as systems with generating capacities up to and including 10kW;
Mid-Scale Wind, defined as systems with generating capacities greater than 10kW (AC) and less than 1MW; and
Utility-Scale Wind, defined as systems with a generating capacity per turbine of 1 MW or greater.

Because of existing constraints, utility scale wind generation facilities, including test towers, are not considered feasible in Westmore. Westmore’s high elevation lands and ridgelines are deemed unsuitable for large-scale commercial and industrial development.

Mid-scale wind power generation is only appropriate for the purpose of supplementing onsite energy consumption for farms and other businesses; however, it cannot be adequately screened in the National Natural Landmark Area, or in areas depicted on the Viewshed Map, and is therefore prohibited in those areas.

While small-scale wind may be suitable for residences and farms in Westmore, they should be carefully sited to minimize noise to neighboring properties. Small-scale shall not cause a sound pressure level in excess of 5dB above the background noise during the day and 3 dB at night, measured at the nearest neighboring residential property.

Biomass

The Woody Biomass Energy Potential Map attached to this plan indicates sources of woody biomass energy, but it does not provide an estimate of how much energy could be produced, nor does it indicate potential locations for a biomass-fueled energy generation facility. Westmore residents have long used wood to heat their homes, and that tradition will likely continue. However, the extremely limited scale of commercial activity in Westmore makes any industrial application such as cogeneration highly unlikely.

While Westmore’s forested lands play a critical role in supporting the local and regional timber economy, this plan supports only responsible harvesting practices that address the issues and concerns identified in the Forests chapter of this plan. These practices include drawing up forest management plans; minimizing forest fragmentation through careful site design; protecting wildlife, natural communities, and core forested habitat areas; and avoiding any visual intrusion created by clearcutting which can be seen from the National Natural Landmark Area or any of the scenic resources depicted on the Viewshed Map.

ISSUES/CONCERNS

1. The public buildings may not be energy efficient and meet contemporary building standards.
2. Many people commute long distances to work each day.
3. Use of local, residential-scale renewable energy resources and energy efficient techniques should be encouraged.

- 1 4. As more people are lighting their walkways at night, the amount of light pollution and
2 energy consumption is going up. Not only does it use energy, it detracts from the rural
3 character of the town.

4
5 **RECOMMENDED ACTIONS**

- 6 1. Support the efforts of the Westmore Energy committee and its public outreach efforts on
7 conservation and weatherization efforts.
- 8 2. Pursue and publicize efficiency and fuel switching incentives as appropriate (e.g. Tier 3,
9 Efficiency Vermont rebates, etc.)
- 10 3. Explore fuel switching options for the Town Clerk’s office, such as a pellet stove or a heat
11 pump.
- 12 4. Work with the zoning administrator to ensure that all zoning permit applicants have a copy of
13 the Vermont Residential Building Energy Standards.
- 14 5. Consider adopting stretch energy codes.
- 15 6. An energy audit for the Westmore Town Clerk’s Office was completed in 2011. Energy audits
16 should be completed on other public buildings in town, and audits of private buildings should
17 be encouraged.
- 18 7. Energy efficiency should be encouraged through green and efficient building techniques, use
19 of Energy Star appliances, efficient lightbulbs.
- 20 8. Encourage car and van pooling by providing a parking area for commuters.
- 21 9. Establish an EV charging station in the Village area. Consider pursuing Village Center
22 designation, which would make funds available for doing this, as well as other projects.
- 23 10. Establish a town policy that when new roads are built or existing roads are reconstructed,
24 provisions are considered for a bike lane and/or walking path along the road.
- 25 11. Promote small woodlot management practices which would supply locally grown wood fuel.
- 26 12. Encourage residents and commercial establishments to use the least number of outside lights
27 required to ensure safety.
- 28 13. Consider installing automatic vehicle location equipment in all town vehicles to improve
29 efficiency.
- 30 14. Work to improve telecommunication and internet infrastructure so that more people can work
31 from home.

32
33 **18. RECREATION**

34
35 Westmore is one of the recreation meccas of Vermont. Traditionally recreation has been an
36 important part of the local economy beginning in the 1800s when people traveled long distances
37 to relax near Willoughby Lake. This tradition continues to play an important part in the town
38 today as the majority of the local taxes are generated from summer camps and recreation
39 property.
40

1 Westmore is very fortunate to possess many recreation attributes with numerous clean lakes,
2 Willoughby State Forest, Sentinel Rock State Park, mountains with an extensive trail network, a
3 town park, and of course Willoughby Lake with its boat access site and several swimming
4 beaches. All of these attributes combined, make Westmore a very special recreation community
5 - perhaps the core to Westmore’s economic future.
6

7 The town attracts tourism due to the fact that it has Willoughby Lake, Long Pond, Jobs Pond,
8 Bald Hill Pond, Willoughby State Forest, and the many mountains and ridgelines in public and
9 private ownership with spectacular vistas and hiking trails. Westmore’s trail network consists of
10 more than 20 linear miles, and includes the “Westmore Challenge,” an east-west trail across the
11 town, the Long Pond Trail to the summit of Bald Mountain, trails to Mount Pisgah, Mount Hor,
12 Haystack Mountain, Wheeler and Moose, and even trails that go into neighboring communities.
13 Therefore, the town’s concerns include maintenance of the water quality of these bodies of
14 water, and the accessibility of the mountains for hiking. However, all recreation opportunities do
15 not come without some challenges which need to be addressed.
16

17 **Willoughby Lake**

- 18 ▪ Grant money could be sought to construct adequate bath houses.
- 19 ▪ The south end swimming area is part of Willoughby State Forest. Following public
20 hearings, the master plan calls for low impact recreation and little development.
21 However, in order to maintain the high quality of the area, parking, trails, sanitary
22 facilities and long term maintenance need to be addressed.
- 23 ▪ The State boat launch site allows a limited number of large boats to access Willoughby
24 Lake. Although the planning commission does not endorse enlarging the access site or
25 creating new sites, it does recognize a growing problem with traffic and parking safety at
26 the boat launch site.
- 27 ▪ As more boats are being moored on Willoughby Lake, especially at the south end, greater
28 involvement between Westmore and appropriate state agencies would be desirable.

29
30 **Throughout Town**

- 31 ▪ There are over ten miles of trails on private land and 12 miles on public land. In order to
32 ensure the protection of the resource, they need constant maintenance. This can be
33 accomplished by supporting the trail committee of the Westmore Association and the
34 Conservation Commission.
- 35 ▪ Undeveloped lakeshore, forest, and undeveloped ridgelines provide important wildlife
36 habitat, a peaceful place to reflect on life, and protection of water quality. Westmore has
37 many opportunities to protect these areas.
- 38 ▪ Hiking, fishing, horseback riding and hunting are enjoyed on public lands and on much of
39 the privately owned land in Westmore. However posting of private land against public
40 recreation has been on the increase and may further increase unless users are careful to
41 respect the rights of property owners.
- 42 ▪ Infestation of eurasian milfoil and zebra mussels into Vermont lakes is an ever growing
43 concern. Boaters should be encouraged to check their boats and motors for eurasian

1 milfoil before using Westmore’s lakes and ponds.

- 2 ■ Many of the mountain peaks do not have permanent public access through rights of way.
3 The Conservation Commission should work to secure permanent public access to the
4 mountain peaks.

5
6 **RECOMMENDED ACTIONS**

- 7 1. The town should continue involvement in promoting a mooring management plan for the
8 lake.
- 9 2. The Recreation Committee and North Beach Committee should be encouraged to work
10 specifically on recreation issues.
- 11 3. Notify the State of Vermont agencies that the planning commission should be included
12 when corresponding with the Town of Westmore on issues concerning the lakes, ponds,
13 and any other environmental or developmental issues in the town.
- 14 4. The Town of Westmore should actively support strengthening the liability laws
15 protecting landowners for allowing public access to their private lands.
- 16 5. The importance of the ridgelines must be considered in evaluating the appropriateness of
17 any commercial or large residential development.

18
19
20 **19. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**
21

22 The purpose of planning for orderly development is to encourage and promote the kind of
23 community growth which preserves the town’s physical beauty, unique character, quality of life,
24 and economic welfare of its citizens. In recent years, nearly all of Westmore’s development has
25 been residential, both year-round and seasonal. This trend will probably continue and can be
26 compatible with a working agricultural and silvicultural (science of forestry) landscape when
27 planning techniques are effectively applied.
28

29 Westmore has only four covered employment establishments in town. (“Covered” employment
30 refers to those employers who fall under the coverage of the state and federal unemployment
31 insurance programs and pay unemployment taxes on their workers.) Two of those establishments
32 fall under the leisure and hospitality category. Because Westmore is a small rural community its
33 economic development strategies are best evaluated against a regional context. In 2011,
34 Northeastern Vermont Development Association provided this context when it commissioned an
35 analysis of “Strategic Industries in the Northeast Kingdom.”
36

37 The first part of the analysis provided an economic overview. The Northeast Kingdom’s labor
38 market is undergoing fundamental changes. Services, trade, transportation, and finance and
39 insurance combined now employ about three in every four workers in the region. While
40 employers in the Northeast Kingdom have not added much employment in recent years, there
41 has been a marked increase in self-employment. The study reports that in 2008, there were 6,391
42 self-employed (considered “non-employers”) in the Northeast Kingdom, amounting to \$2.42

1 million in revenues. Self-employed workers in the Northeast Kingdom account for a third of total
2 employment.

3
4 The second part of the study provides an industry cluster analysis of the Northeast Kingdom. The
5 process of identifying the Northeast Kingdom’s industry clusters entailed analyzing detailed
6 sector data, including employment concentration, wage performance and stability, growth and
7 change, and supply chain interrelationships. Clusters were ranked as “mature, challenge,
8 opportunity, or star.” Clusters identified as “stars” had high levels of employment concentration
9 and solid recent performances.

10
11 One such “star” cluster for the Northeast Kingdom was found to be “visitor and tourism,” a
12 sector that showed solid growth during the study period of 2001-2009. The study also indicated
13 that significant investments would help make the region a year-round destination and would
14 continue to add jobs to its solid base of nearly 1,000 workers. Arts, entertainment and recreation
15 (NAICS category 71) experienced a 10.6% growth rate during this study period, compared to a
16 7.7% change nationwide.

17
18 Westmore is located between the Burke and Jay areas and stands to benefit from the recent
19 investments – but can only do so if its natural assets are maintained. In 2006, the Northeast
20 Kingdom was one of only a handful of destinations selected by National Geographic to
21 participate in its Geotourism program. This concept embraces “sustainable tourism” – enhancing
22 the local economy while minimizing the negative impacts on the environment and the local
23 culture. Westmore and the Willoughby Lake area, which has been designated as Registered
24 Natural Area under the Historic Site Act epitomizes the values and assets of geotourism. Among
25 Westmore’s most marketable assets are its abundant natural resources and dramatic viewsheds .
26 The lake and the core of the community are virtually encircled by forested ridgelines, lending to
27 the beauty of its landscape and creating a visitor experience that is altogether unique and
28 authentic.

29
30 Willoughby State Forest and other forested land in Westmore can play a major role in the town’s
31 economic future. A Northeastern Forest Alliance study states that, on the average, each thousand
32 acres of Vermont forest land produces 4.2 forest tourism jobs and 1.1 forest manufacturing jobs.
33 Forests support wood-using industries vital to continuing the economic viability of rural
34 economies. Forests provide the environment for a host of non-timber forest activities ranging
35 from hunting, fishing, and viewing fall foliage to camping and water storage. Westmore’s lakes,
36 the scenic roads, recreational opportunities, and the unspoiled rural landscape attract visitors who
37 come to enjoy our natural resources.

38
39 Residents of the Northeast Kingdom are coming to realize that their economic future may lie
40 more in “geotourism,” the wise use of our abundant natural resources rather than attracting
41 manufacturing or industrial development. Seasonal and vacation visitors make a substantial and
42 growing contribution to the local and regional economy.

43
44 The economic future of Westmore lies substantially in the wise stewardship of our natural
45 resources: the water and the land. Sustainable development in Westmore should be based on
46 providing recreation opportunities and related services for visitors which are compatible with our

1 active agricultural and forestry traditions. The underlying strategy of a development plan is to
2 plan for orderly growth which maintains a sound tax base and anticipates the potential tax
3 burdens for current and future needs.

4
5 **RECOMMENDED ACTIONS**

- 6 1. Create an inventory of the existing and potential recreational opportunities in the town.
7 2. Encourage a diversity of sustainable uses which would allow a variety of low-impact
8 commercial and recreational uses in different districts.
9 3. Inform local entrepreneurs about the availability of small business development services
10 and funds.
11 4. Encourage a diversity of local commercial and service enterprises which use local labor
12 as much as possible.

13
14 **20. HEALTH FACILITIES**

15 Health services are provided at North Country Community Hospital in Newport and the Northern
16 Vermont Regional Hospital in St. Johnsbury. Glover ambulance services respond to calls from
17 Westmore. Barton responds to the west side of Willoughby, and Orleans to the east side. A First
18 Response Team has been organized in the Town of Westmore.

19
20 **RECOMMENDED ACTIONS**

- 21 1. Due to the rural setting of Westmore, home health care should be encouraged.
22 2. Periodically, Westmore and the surrounding towns should consider whether to establish a
23 local health care center.

24
25 **21. SECURITY SERVICES**

26 Police protection is provided by the State Police dispatched from Newport and St. Johnsbury and
27 the Orleans County Sheriff.

28
29 **RECOMMENDED ACTIONS**

- 30 1. Due to the rural setting of Westmore, a Neighborhood Watch program should be
31 encouraged.

32
33 **22. FIRE PROTECTION**

34 Fire protection is provided by the Westmore Fireman's Association, with assistance, when
35 needed, through Westmore's participation as part of Northeast Mutual Aid. The Town
36 contributes annually to the Westmore Firemen's Association.

37
38 **RECOMMENDED ACTIONS**

- 39 1. Consult with the local fire departments to ensure their needs are adequately met.
40 2. Maintain existing dry hydrants.
41 3. Encourage Westmore residents to become involved with the existing fire association and
42 to become trained in fighting fires.

1 **23. SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL**

2 Westmore is a member of the Northeast Kingdom Waste Management District (NEKWMD).
3 Since the situation with solid waste in Vermont is so dynamic, the Selectboard should continue
4 to stay informed and involved with this issue.
5

6 Statewide, diversion rates have stagnated at around 30% to 36% for more than a decade. Act 148
7 was signed into law in 2015 to introduce sweeping changes to the way we manage wastes.

8 Act 148 has been phased in over a six-year timeframe to give municipalities and waste districts
9 an opportunity to better align their facilities and services in order to comply with the law. In
10 essence, the Act enforces unit-based pricing (also known as “pay as you throw”) to minimize
11 waste generation, bans recyclables from the landfill. Additionally, all organics – such as food
12 scraps and yard wastes – are banned from the landfill by 2020. The NEKWMD reports that 1.35
13 tons of food scraps were collected at the Westmore Recycling Center in 2016.

14
15 **RECOMMENDED ACTIONS**

- 16 1. Westmore will cooperate and participate in the state and regional solid waste disposal
17 activities including such efforts as the reduction of disposables, recycling of as much
18 material as is feasible, enforcement of strict littering laws, and the operation of an
19 efficient waste collection system.
20
21

22 **24. WATER SUPPLY**

23 There is no public water supply in Westmore. Numerous free flowing springs, ground water
24 from wells, and reasonably pure lakes, ponds and streams make it possible for residents to
25 depend exclusively upon private sources of water. State and federal regulations of community
26 water systems discourage the creation and expansion of water systems serving relatively
27 congested areas. During periods of extended drought, or severe cold, some residences and farms
28 have experienced water shortage and have been forced to transport water from off-premise
29 sources. In spite of some inconvenience and occasional hardship, there exists a general
30 appreciation of the fact that installation and maintenance of a public water system is impractical
31 from economic and technical viewpoints.
32

33 When water is drawn from a well in the ground, it creates a “cone of depression” as the water is
34 removed. New water will fill in the cone as the existing water is drawn out. As many camps on
35 small lots have shallow surface water wells, there is a growing concern about the separation
36 distance of septic systems, leach fields and wells. It is very possible that some wells are drawing
37 inadequately treated waste water. Not only is this practice distasteful, it presents real public
38 health concerns.
39

40 In general, water which is located deep in the ground (ground water) is travelling in underground
41 rivers or aquifers. The water originates from “recharge areas” of surface water such as wetlands,
42 ponds, and areas with gravel soils. The recharge areas which restore the water may be a long
43 way from where people pump the water from the ground into a house or barn. Protecting these
44 recharge areas from inappropriate development and pollution is vital to people who drink the
45 water, and assume it is pure.

1
2 Availability of water for fire fighting is a problem, particularly in the winter, in many locations.
3 Residents are aware of this problem and many have taken extra precautions, or developed
4 convenient water sources, to compensate for the lack of fire hydrants. The town does now have
5 some dry hydrants in central locations.
6

7 **RECOMMENDED ACTIONS**

- 8 1. Westmore shall encourage enforcement of federal, state and local regulations to ensure
9 the highest possible ground and surface water quality standards. In general, protection of
10 Westmore’s high quality waters will be a primary consideration in the approval of any
11 future developments.
12 2. Groundwater recharge areas should be identified and protected from inappropriate
13 development.
14 3. Prohibit large-scale development that would lead to runoff and ultimately degrade water
15 quality.
16

17 **25. SEWAGE DISPOSAL**

18 Individual owners have always been responsible for the installation and maintenance of sewage
19 disposal systems that meet existing standards in order to ensure the sanitary protection of the
20 community. In 2007, the State of Vermont took delegation of all enforcement of local potable
21 water and wastewater systems. Systems that were previously considered exempt from state
22 regulation may now require a permit. (*Environmental Protection Rules, Chapter 1, Wastewater
23 System and Potable Water Supply Rules, Effective Sept. 29, 2007*) Some activities that may now
24 require a permit include: construction of single-family residences; construction or modification
25 of a wastewater system or potable water supply; new connections to an existing wastewater
26 system or potable water supply, subdivisions of land; and repair and replacement of a failed
27 wastewater system or potable water supply. Inspection of these systems has only been on the
28 basis of complaints registered by offended parties or by state agencies involved in licensing or
29 approval functions. No public sewer system has ever been considered for essentially the same
30 reasons that a public water system has never been an issue. These two factors are inherent in
31 Westmore’s character of being a rural community without the problems associated with high
32 density development.
33

34 **RECOMMENDED ACTIONS**

- 35 1. Every effort will be made to ensure that private systems are effective. Enactment and
36 enforcement of state and local standards will be promoted to ensure minimal
37 environmental damage attributable to sewage disposal.
38 2. Look into ways to assist home-owners in monitoring and updating their septic systems,
39 especially in sensitive areas.
40 3. If homes are significantly enlarged or the use changes from seasonal to year round, the
41 septic systems must be adequately functioning prior to any local permits being issued.
42

43 **26. UTILITIES**

1 The only public utilities available to Westmore are electricity and telephone. Installation of
2 natural gas lines is not economically feasible resulting in a dependence on propane, fuel oil or
3 wood for heating. Barton Village Electric Department supplies power to most of the town with
4 the southern and eastern fringe areas supplied by Lyndonville Electric Department. Constant
5 attention is required to ensure that existing equipment is maintained and upgraded so that the
6 power available keeps up with the increasing demand. Telephone service is provided by
7 Fairpoint through its Barton exchange for most of the town, with fringe areas covered by the
8 West Burke, Charleston, or Island Pond exchanges.

9
10 **RECOMMENDED ACTION**

- 11 1. Individual and collective efforts to ensure reliable high quality utility service is provided
12 to all residents should be encouraged. The environmental impact of providing such
13 service will be minimized, and the cost of extending such service will be borne by the
14 beneficiaries of that extended service.

15
16 **27. MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS**

17 The Town of Westmore owns several public buildings including the Old Schoolhouse, recently
18 converted into new municipal offices, the old Town Clerk's Office, the Town Garage and Fire
19 Station, and the transfer station. Public meetings are held in the church's community building,
20 the new municipal building, and the old Town Clerk's Office.

21
22 **RECOMMENDED ACTION**

- 23
24 1. The Town depends on using the church's hall for community meetings. Therefore the
25 relationship between the Church and Town is a very important one to maintain.

26
27
28
29 **28. ADMINISTRATIVE AND MANAGEMENT SERVICES**

30 Westmore has relied upon the town clerk, selectboard, school board members, road
31 commissioner or road foreman, listers and auditors for the performance of all town
32 administrative and management functions. With the increase in the scope and number of tasks
33 mandated by increasing governmental regulations, a growing population, real estate transfers and
34 other activities, the requirements for expanded administrative and management services have
35 resulted. This expanded workload has been absorbed by increasing the time and effort expended
36 by the elected officials and by volunteers. Also, advantage has been taken of available advisory
37 services provided by such organizations as the Vermont League of Cities & Towns and the
38 Northeastern Vermont Development Association. However, there is a very high likelihood that
39 the administrative and management workloads will continue to grow and that consideration will
40 have to be given to ways of handling it. Possibilities include the hiring of additional part-time
41 staff, and purchase of additional computerized office equipment.

42
43 **RECOMMENDED ACTIONS**

- 44 1. Westmore shall provide the administrative and management services needed for the
45 efficient operation of the town.
46 2. The Town of Westmore should encourage the discussion of municipal issues ie. creative

1 educational possibilities, lake quality, and economic development.

2
3
4
5 **29. ADJACENT COMMUNITIES**
6

7 Westmore depends on the adjacent communities for many services. The Town depends on a
8 mutual aid agreement for fire fighting, children go out of town for their education, and many jobs
9 that residents rely on are in another community. Westmore has always maintained an excellent
10 relationship with our neighbors, a relationship that should continue.
11

12 Westmore is surrounded by six communities: Sutton, Newark, Brighton, Charleston,
13 Brownington, and Barton. Of those communities, only Sutton, Barton, and Brighton have
14 adopted zoning bylaws. Brownington’s Town Plan will expire in 2020. Charleston’s plan expired
15 early in 2018, giving the town no say in developments that are subject to Act 250 and Section
16 248, even though such developments may have an impact on Westmore’s viewsheds recreation
17 opportunities, environmental integrity, and economic livelihood.

18 Newark, while it has no zoning, recently adopted a plan that recommends special consideration
19 to the following areas:

- 20 ■ The ridgeline historically known as Hogback Mountain, which consists of Walker
21 Mountain, Hawk Rock, and Packer Mountain

- 22 ■ The high-elevation areas along Newark Street, Abbott Hill Road, Pinnacle Road, Spruce
23 Ridge Road, Maple Ridge Road, and Kinney Hill Road

- 24 ■ The town’s ponds including Newark Pond, Center Pond, Beck Pond, Walker Pond,
25 Sawdust Pond, and Brown Pond
- 26 ■ The towns rivers and streams including the East and West Branch of the Passumpsic,
27 Bean Brook, Sleeper Brook as well as the smaller tributaries, wetlands, and vernal pools.
28

29 The plan also states that “commercial and industrial development at elevations greater than 1,700
30 should be strictly avoided.”
31

32 Sutton’s plan also voices concern over development in high elevation areas. Norris Mountain and
33 adjacent summits, and the higher elevation summits and ridgelines in the Willoughby State
34 Forest, are not seen as areas that are appropriate for wind energy development due to “their
35 visual impact, their accompanying noise, their potential impact on wildlife and the environment,
36 and their impact on property values”. The plan also recommends that any development above
37 2,000 feet in elevation not exceed 100 feet in height. Finally, the plan discourages the erection of
38 wind towers on lands above 2,000 feet.
39

40 **30. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**
41

42 The plan recommends many different actions to work toward our vision for the future. The
43 implementation plan lists each recommendation and suggests a time frame in which it will be
44 accomplished. Since planning is a dynamic process, the priorities may change somewhat over

1 time.

2

3 The priorities are: 1=2018, 2=2019, 3=2020, 4=2025, 5=ongoing.

4

5 PC= Planning Commission, S=Selectboard, L=Listers, CC=Conservation Commission, EC=
6 Energy Committee, RC=Recreation Committee, LA= Lake Association, ZA=Zoning
7 Administrator, ZBA=Zoning Board of Adjustment, HO=Health Officer

8

9 Note: These are abbreviated versions of the recommendations. For the full text, please refer to
10 the section within the plan.

11

ACTION	WHEN	WHO
WATER QUALITY		
1. Erosion control standards should continue to be enforced.	5	ZA
2. Work closely with the lake associations to encourage the maintenance of water quality in the lakes.	5	PC/S/CC
3. Work together to encourage reestablishment of native vegetation along the lakes and ponds.	5	PC/LA/ZA
4. Areas with great potential for flash floods should be identified and residents be made aware of the potential hazards.	5	S
5. Assemble and have available information on existing laws regarding use of the lakes in the winter.	5	PC
6. Inform the Water Resources Board about the growing concern over the use of the lakes in the winter.	5	PC, HO
7. Monitor water quality.	5	LA/HO
8. Monitor and control aquatic nuisance weeds.	5	LA/SB
9. Prohibit development that would significantly contribute to runoff.	2	PC
10. Prohibit commercial and residential development with a density greater than one single-family dwelling per 10 acres in high elevation areas.	2	PC
FLOOD RESILIENCE		
1. Identify and protect Westmore’s natural flood protection assets, including floodplains, river corridors, other lands adjacent to streams, wetlands, and upland forested cover.	2	PC/S
2. Areas with great potential for flash floods should be identified and residents be made aware of the potential hazards.	2	PC/S
3. Adopt flood hazard regulations that at a minimum, ensure eligibility for flood insurance through the National Flood Insurance Program.	2	PC/S
4. Review and evaluate statewide river corridor information. Consider adopting regulations that will protect erosion prone areas for additional development and encroachment.	2	S
5. Maintain and regularly update the Local Emergency Operations Plan.	5	S
6. Continue to meet the VTrans Road and Bridge standards.	5	S

7. Participate in regional road foreman trainings and Transportation Advisory Committee meetings to stay abreast of flood resilience measures for the Town's roads and bridges.	5	S
8. Continue to update the Town's transportation infrastructure information in the Vermont Online Bridge and Culvert Inventory Tool.	5	S
9. Replace undersized and failing culverts.	5	S
10. Develop a Local Hazard Mitigation Plan.	2	S/PC
AGRICULTURE		
1. Actively support and encourage the maintenance of the State of Vermont Use Value Appraisal Program (Current Use).	5	L/S/CC/PC
2. Assist and support landowners seeking ways to keep land open while remaining economically viable.	5	CC/PC
3. Follow closely the alternatives brought forward in the Legislature regarding property tax reform; monitor the impact they might have on the town.	5	L/S/PC/CC
4. Recommendations should be developed for applicants seeking to convert active farmland to non-agricultural uses.	5	PC
5. Promote workshops and buy written materials on land conservation techniques and creative ways to subdivide and/or develop land that minimize the impact on the agricultural resources, estate planning, and the Current Use Program.	5	CC
6. Work with non-agricultural landowners to stabilize lease agreements and conserve their lands which are vital to the farming community.	5	CC/PC
7. Consider establishing a local land trust.	5	PC/CC/LA
8. Consider setting up a conservation trust fund.	5	PC/CC/LA
9. Encourage ongoing education about diversifying farming.	5	CC/PC
FORESTS		
1. Encourage individual landowners to consider working with a knowledgeable forester to draw up a forestry plan, such plans should consider sustainable harvesting techniques, timber stand mix, and continuous renewal of the forest resource.	5	PC/CC
2. Encourage new development to use creative ways to develop land with the least impact on the resource such as encouraging creative development.	5	PC
3. Promote workshops and buy written materials on land conservation techniques and creative ways to subdivide and/or develop land.	5	PC/CC
4. Actively support and encourage the maintenance of the State of Vermont Use Value Appraisal Program (Current Use).	5	S/L/CC/PC
5. Assist and support landowners seeking ways to keep land open while remaining economically viable.	5	CC/PC
6. Amend bylaw with regard to development on ridgelines.	2	PC
NATURAL AREAS, WETLANDS, WILDLIFE		

1. Encourage a local conservation fund which can be used for conservation projects.	5	PC/CC
2. Promote workshops on natural resources management, estate planning, woodlot management, and land conservation techniques.	5	PC/CC
3. Contact local sports clubs to assist in identifying areas important to wildlife such as deer yards, beech stands, and spruce/fir forests.	3	PC/CC
4. Provide information and education about the function of wetlands and the Vermont wetland Rules. Work on identifying wetlands in Westmore and notifying landowners of the location of wetlands to avoid problems at a later date.	5	PC/CC
5. Prohibit commercial and large scale residential development that would have undue adverse impact on wildlife.	2	PC
STATE LANDS		
1. Remain involved with writing the long term management plan for the State lands.	5	PC/S/CC
2. Encourage frequent contact with the State officials to make our interests known.	5	PC/S/CC
3. Encourage the State officials to come to town and meet with local residents.	5	PC/S/CC
4. Work with the State to come up with a solution to the mooring problem at the south end of Willoughby Lake.	1	PC
SCENIC FEATURES		
1. The visual impact of proposed commercial or large residential developments must be considered prior to construction or granting the necessary permits.	5	PC/ZBA
2. The importance of the ridgelines in Westmore must be considered in evaluating the appropriateness of any commercial or large residential development.	5	PC/ZBA
HISTORIC FEATURES		
1. Maintain an inventory and consider a preservation plan for the historic and cultural features.	4	PC
2. Encourage and assist property owners to list their structures on the historic registers.	5	PC
EDUCATION		
1. Encourage the parents of the town to be active in school decisions and to reconsider periodically, the possibilities of having a town school or forming an elementary union district with one of the two main schools our students attend, thus giving representation on said school board.	5	SB
2. Planning Commission will supply the School Board with information about population projections and other items as requested.	5	PC
HOUSING		
1. Study the feasibility of adopting a Transfer of Development	3	PC

Rights program within the Zoning Ordinance.		
2. Study state and local subdivision regulations.	5	PC/ZA/ZBA
3. Inform residents about federal and state programs for weatherizing, rehabilitation and home financing by making the information available through the town clerk zoning administrator.	5	PC/CC
4. Ensure the current zoning bylaw does not needlessly discriminate against affordable housing through requiring excessive lot sizes or building standards.	5	PC
5. Be aware of the current and future housing needs of the retired and elderly.	5	PC
6. Conduct periodic reviews of the number of mobile homes on rented lots within the town because a disproportionate increase in this type of housing may indicate a lack of alternative affordable housing in the community.	5	L
TRANSPORTATION		
1. The Town shall cooperate with other agencies in maintaining an efficient infrastructure supporting travel required by residents to use facilities and services within the town and in other localities.	5	S
2. Westmore shall maintain the town highway system in safe and usable condition. Extension of the town road system shall be made entirely at the expense of potential users of the extensions.	5	S
3. Westmore shall cooperate with other communities to encourage the availability of public transportation in the area.	5	PC
4. Permits for new development shall be contingent upon demonstrating that adequate parking will be available.	5	PC
5. Westmore shall encourage the development of better bicycle-pedestrian pathways.	5	PC
ENERGY		
1. Support the efforts of the Westmore Energy committee and its public outreach efforts on conservation and weatherization efforts.	5	PC, S
2. Pursue and publicize efficiency and fuel switching incentives as appropriate (e.g. Tier 3, Efficiency Vermont rebates, etc.)	5	EC
3. Explore fuel switching options for the Town Clerk's office, such as a pellet stove or a heat pump.	1	EC
4. Work with the zoning administrator to ensure that all zoning permit applicants have a copy of the Vermont Residential Building Energy Standards.	1	EC
5. Consider adopting stretch energy codes.	3	PC
6. An energy audit for the Westmore Town Clerk's Office was completed in 2011. Energy audits should be completed on other public buildings in town, and audits of private buildings should	5	EC, S

be encouraged.		
7. Energy efficiency should be encouraged through green and efficient building techniques, use of Energy Star appliances, efficient lightbulbs.	5	EC
8. Encourage car and van pooling by providing a parking area for commuters.	2	EC, S
9. Establish an EV charging station in the Village area. Consider pursuing Village Center designation, which would make funds available for doing this, as well as other projects.	1	EC, S
10. Establish a town policy that when new roads are built or existing roads are reconstructed, provisions are considered for a bike lane and/or walking path along the road.	2	PC, S
11. Promote small woodlot management practices which would supply locally grown wood fuel.	5	EC
12. Encourage residents and commercial establishments to use the least number of outside lights required to ensure safety.	5	EC, PC
13. Consider installing automatic vehicle location equipment in all town vehicles to improve efficiency.	2	EC, PC
14. Work to improve telecommunication and internet infrastructure so that more people can work from home.	5	EC, PC
RECREATION		
1. The town should continue involvement in promoting a mooring management plan for the lake.	5	PC
2. The Recreation committee and North Beach committee should be encouraged to work specifically on recreation issues.	5	S
3. Notify the State of Vermont agencies that the planning commission should be included when corresponding with the town of Westmore on issues concerning the lakes, ponds, and any other environmental or developmental issues in the town.	5	S
4. The Town of Westmore should actively support strengthening the liability laws protecting landowners for allowing public access to their private lands.	5	S/PC
5. Amendment bylaw with regard to development on the ridgelines.	2	PC
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT		
1. Create an inventory of the existing and potential recreational opportunities.	4	PC
2. Encourage a diversity of sustainable uses which would allow variety of low-impact commercial and recreational uses in different areas.	1	PC
3. Inform local entrepreneurs about the availability of small business development services and funds.	5	PC

4. Encourage a diversity of local commercial and service enterprises which use local labor.	5	PC
HEALTH FACILITIES		
1. Home health care should be encouraged.	5	PC
2. Periodically Westmore and surrounding towns should consider whether to establish a local health care center.	5	PC/S
SECURITY SERVICES		
1. Neighborhood Watch program should be encouraged.	5	LA
FIRE PROTECTION		
1. Consult with the Westmore Fireman's Association and other fire departments to ensure their needs are adequately met.	5	S
2. Maintain existing dry hydrants in ponds.	5	S
3. Encourage Westmore residents to become involved with the existing fire association and to be trained in fighting fires.	5	PC/S
SOLID WASTE		
1. Cooperate and participate in the state and regional solid waste disposal activities.	5	S
WATER SUPPLY		
1. Encourage enforcement of federal, state and local regulations to ensure the highest possible ground and surface water quality standards.	5	CC/PC, HO
2. Groundwater recharge areas should be identified and protected from inappropriate development.	5	PC
SEWAGE DISPOSAL		
1. Every effort will be made to ensure that private systems are effective. Enactment and enforcement of state and local standards will be promoted to ensure minimal environmental damage attributable to sewage disposal.	5	PC, HO
2. Look into ways to assist home owners in monitoring and updating their septic systems.	5	PC, HO
3. If homes are significantly enlarged or the use changes from seasonal to year-round the septic systems must be adequately functioning prior to any local permits being issued.	5	ZA/PC, HO
4. Prohibit large-scale development that would lead to runoff and ultimately degrade water quality.	5	PC
UTILITIES		
1. Individual and collective efforts should be encouraged to ensure that reliable high-quality utility service is provided to all residents.	5	PC
MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS		
1. The Town depends on using the Church's hall for community meetings. Therefore the relationship between the Church and the Town is a very important one to maintain.	5	S
ADMINISTRATIVE AND MANAGEMENT SERVICE		

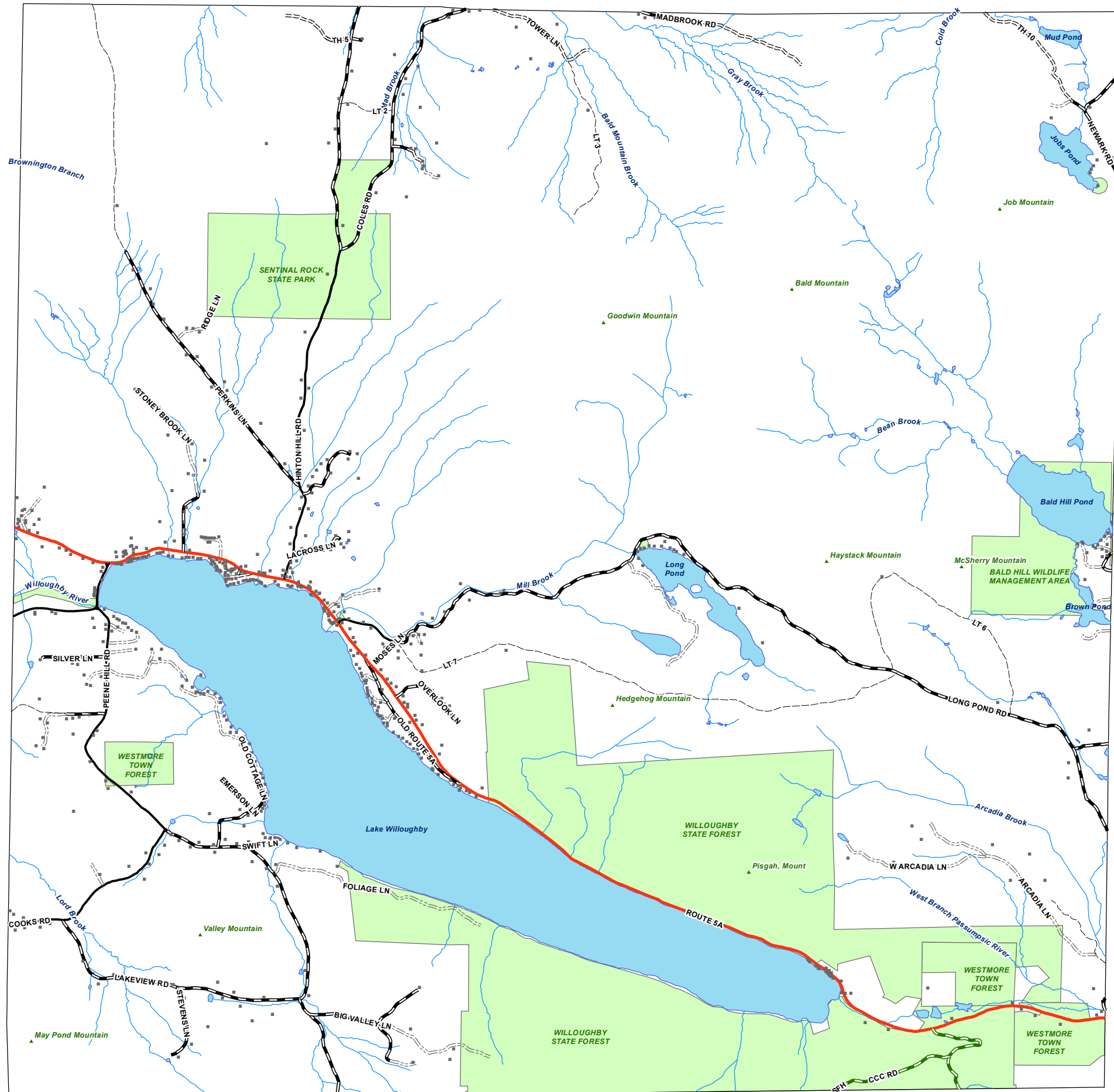
1. Provide the administrative and management services needed for the efficient operation of the town.	5	S
2. The Town of Westmore should encourage the discussion of municipal issues, i.e. creative educational possibilities, lake quality, and economic development.	5	S/PC/LA

1
2

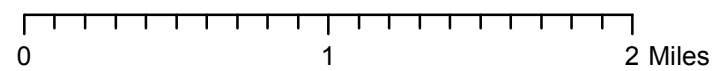
1
2

Westmore, VT Base Map

04/11/2018



- ▲ Peaks
- Building Locations
- US & State Highways
- State Forest Highway
- Paved Town Road
- Unpaved Town Road
- ==== Class 4 Town Road
- Legal Trail
- ==== Private Road
- Streams
- Lakes, Ponds & Rivers
- Town Boundary
- Protected Lands



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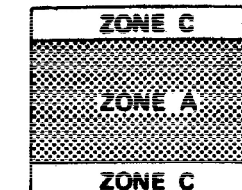
Westmore, VT Flood Hazards and River Corridors Map

04/11/2018



- Building Locations
- US & State Highways
- State Forest Highway
- Paved Town Road
- Unpaved Town Road
- ==== Class 4 Town Road
- Legal Trail
- ==== Private Road
- 20' Interval Elevation Contours
- Streams
- Lakes, Ponds & Rivers
- Protected Lands
- ANR River Corridors

KEY TO SYMBOLS



ZONE DESIGNATIONS*

- Base Flood Elevation Line with elevation in feet 513
- Base Flood Elevation where uniform within zone (EL 557)
- Elevation Reference Mark RM7_{1/2}
- River Mile • M1.5

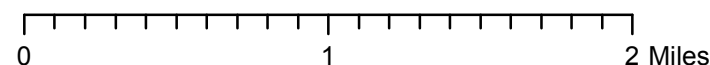
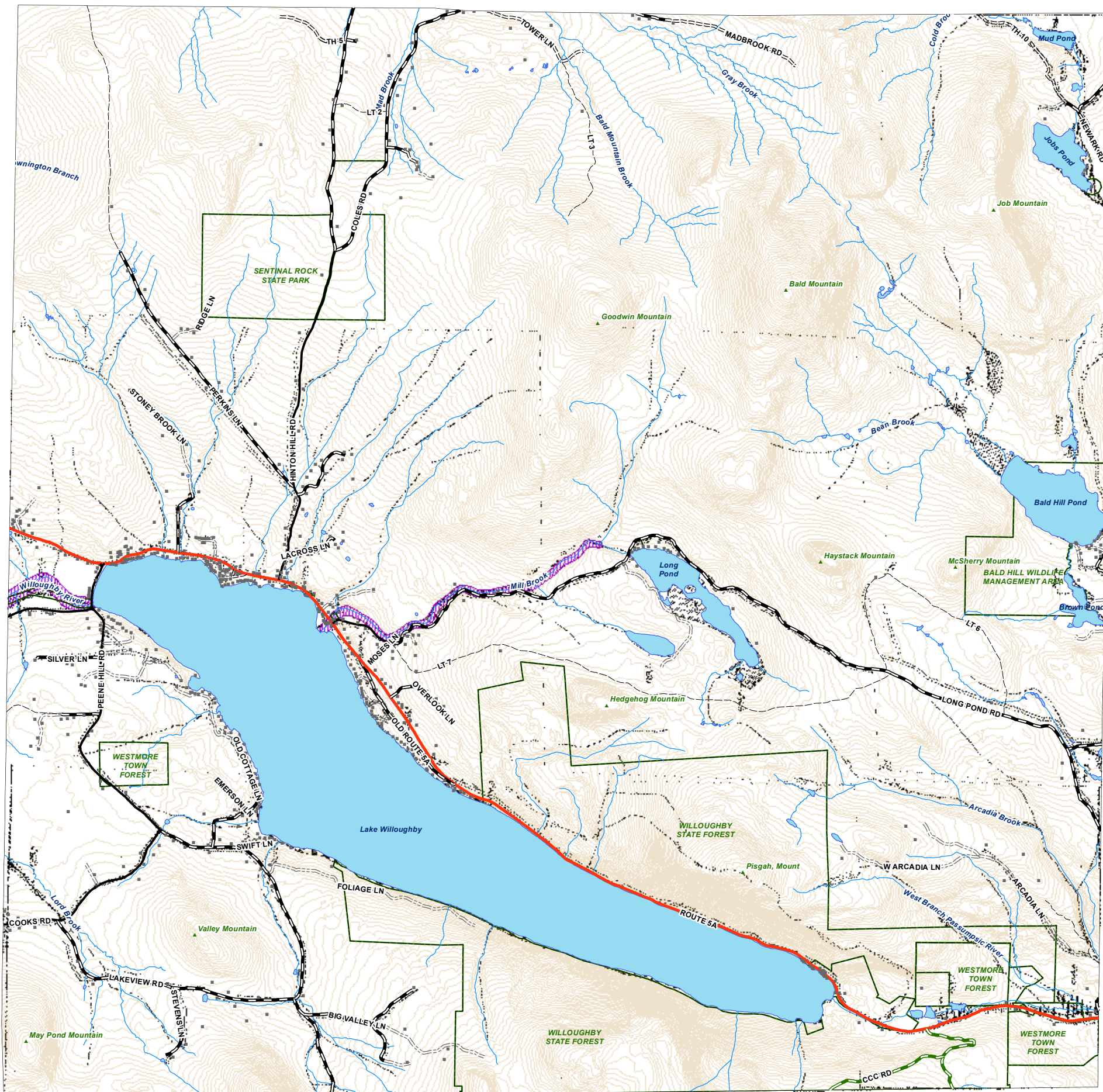
*EXPLANATION OF ZONE DESIGNATIONS

A flood insurance map displays the zone designations for a community according to areas of designated flood hazards. The zone designations used by FEMA are:

Zone	Explanation
A	Areas of 100-year flood; base flood elevations and flood hazard factors not determined.
A0	Areas of 100-year shallow flooding; flood depth 1 to 3 feet; product of flood depth (feet) and velocity (feet per second) less than 15.
AH	Areas of 100-year shallow flooding where depths are between one (1) and three (3) feet; base flood elevations are shown, but no flood hazard factors are determined.
A1-A30	Areas of 100-year flood; base flood elevations and flood hazard factors determined.
A30	Areas of 100-year flood to be protected by a flood protection system under construction; base flood elevations and flood hazard factors not determined.
B	Area between limits of 100-year flood and 500-year flood; areas of 100-year shallow flooding where depths less than 1 foot.
C	Areas outside 500-year flood.
D	Areas of undetermined, but possible, flood hazards.
V	Areas of 100-year coastal flood with velocity (wave action); base flood elevations and flood hazard factors not determined.
V1-V30	Areas of 100-year coastal flood with velocity (wave action); base flood elevations and flood hazard factor determined.

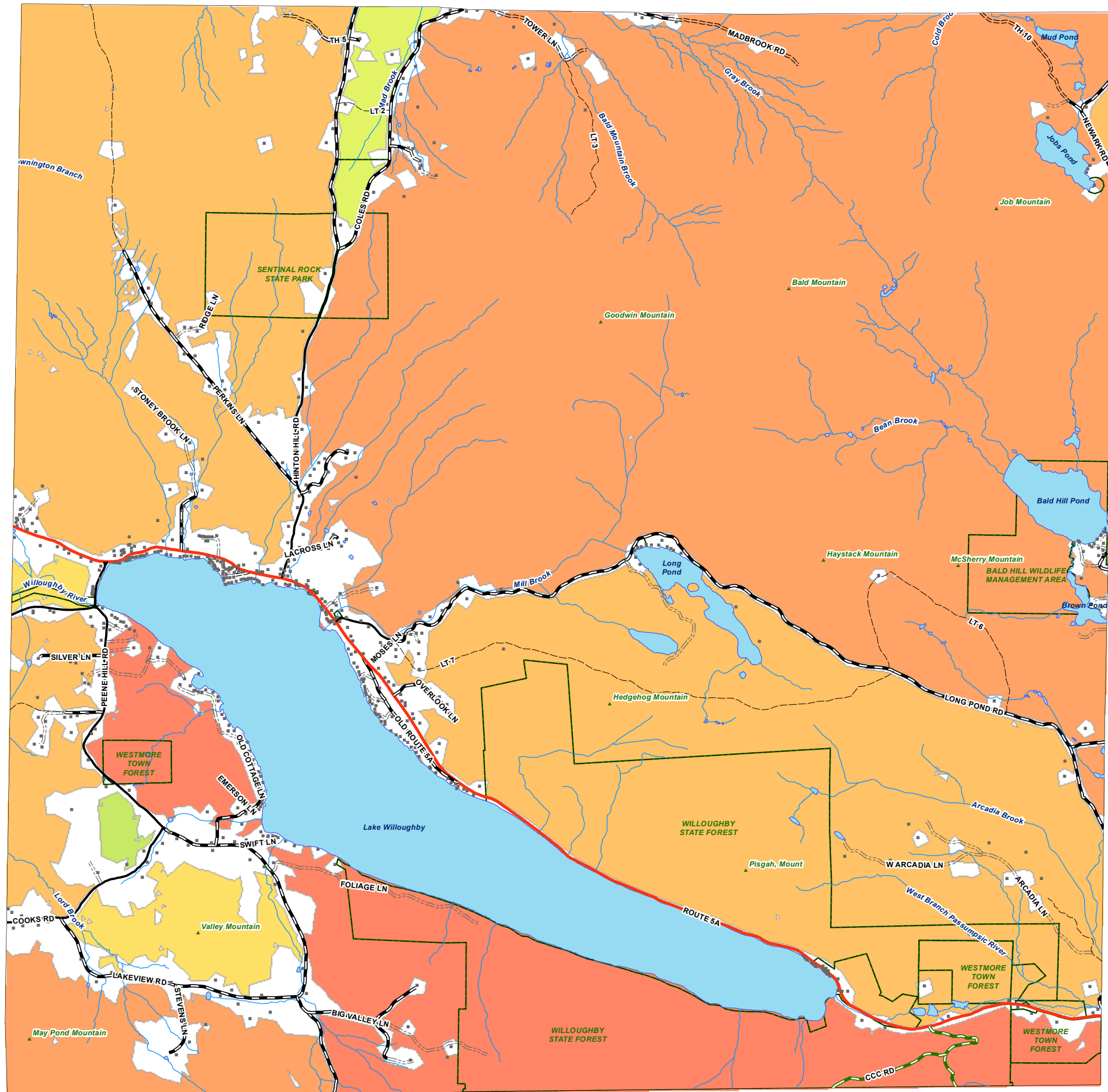
Warning- This Data is for planning purposes only and does not replace a survey and/or engineering study. Because this map is developed from various scale sources, there may be some discrepancies between data layers.

This map should NOT be used to make determinations about whether structures and/or activities are in or out of a flood hazard area. In ALL cases, a flood specialist should be contacted to make any determination about the status of a structure/activity or proposed structure/activity.

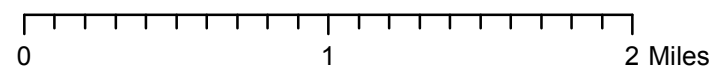


Westmore, VT Wildlife Habitat Blocks Map

04/11/2018



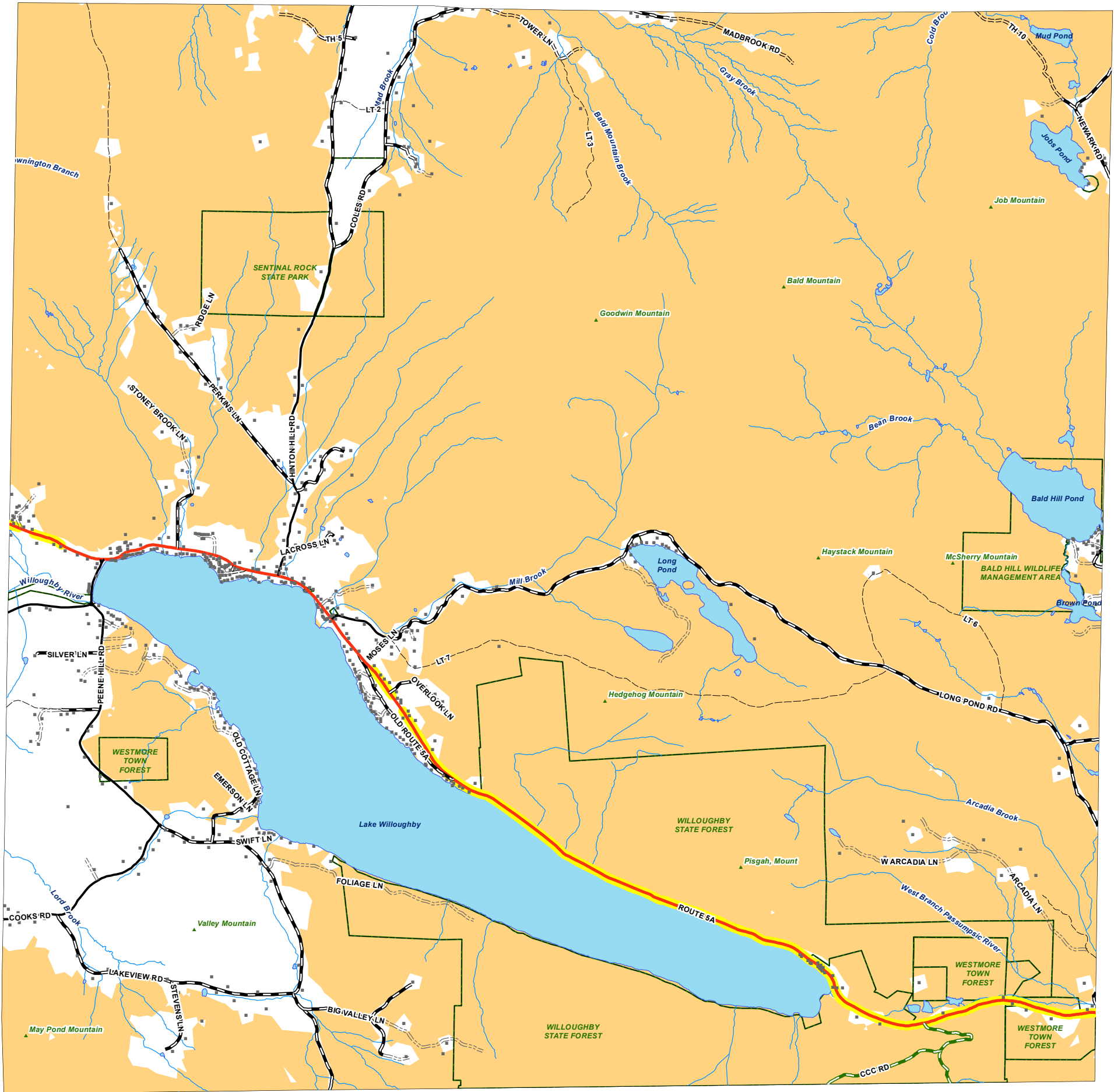
- ▲ Peaks
 - Building Locations
 - US & State Highways
 - State Forest Highway
 - Paved Town Road
 - Unpaved Town Road
 - ==== Class 4 Town Road
 - - - - Legal Trail
 - - - - Private Road
 - Streams
 - Lakes, Ponds & Rivers
 - Town Boundary
 - Protected Lands
- Habitat Block Importance**
- Lowest Value
 - 1
 - 2
 - 3
 - 4
 - 5
 - 6
 - 7
 - 8
 - 9
 - 10 Highest Value



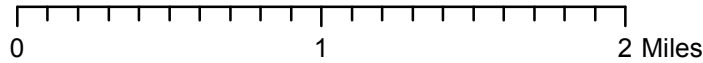
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Westmore, VT Habitat Connectors Map

04/11/2018



- Peaks
- Building Locations
- US & State Highways
- State Forest Highway
- Paved Town Road
- Unpaved Town Road
- Class 4 Town Road
- Legal Trail
- Private Road
- Highest Priority Wildlife Road Crossings
- Streams
- Lakes, Ponds & Rivers
- Town Boundary
- Protected Lands
- Highest Priority Connectivity Blocks

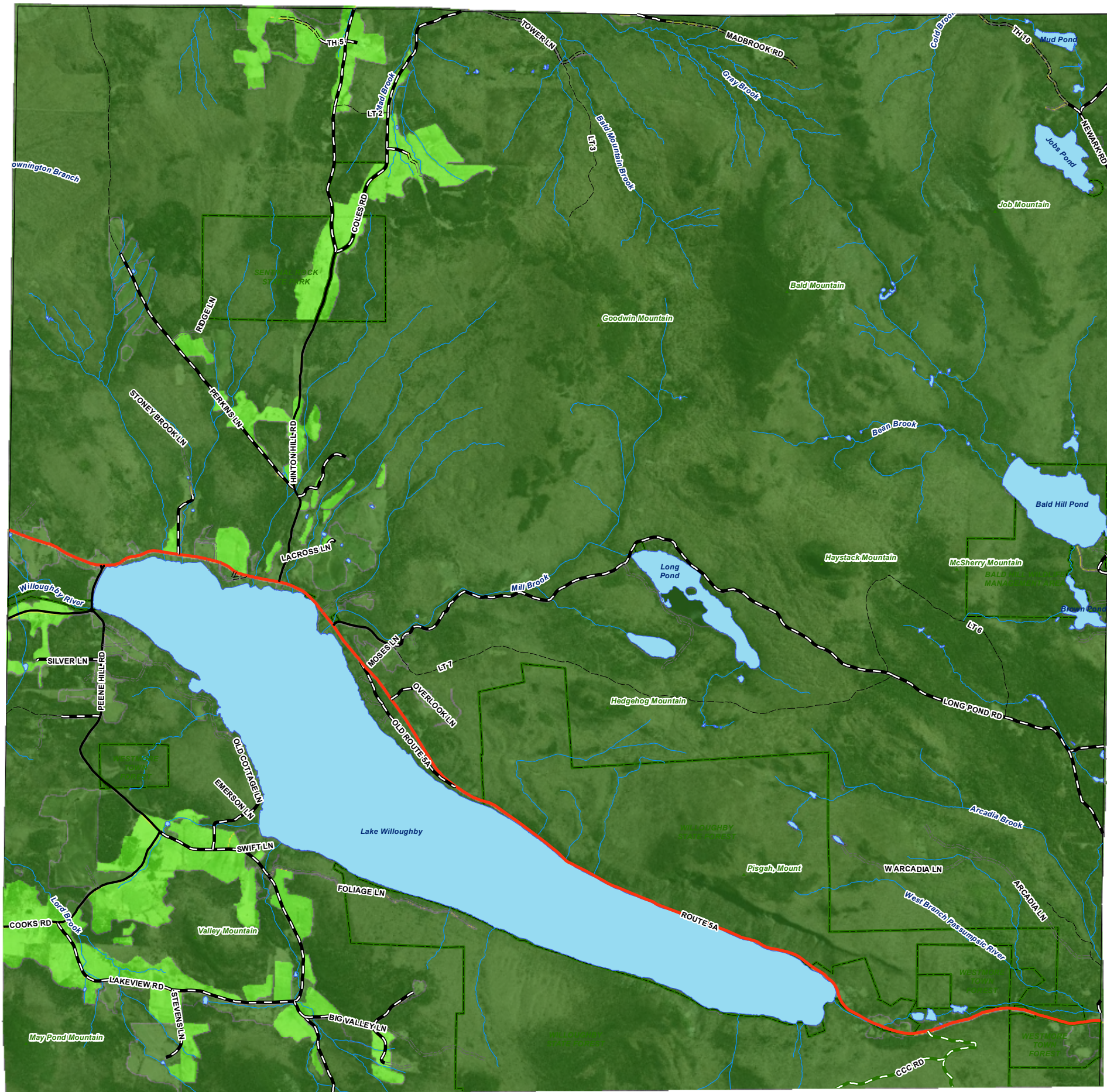


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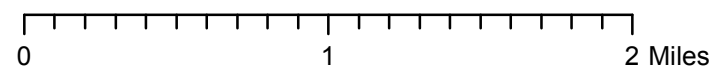


Westmore, VT Land Cover/Use Map

04/11/2018



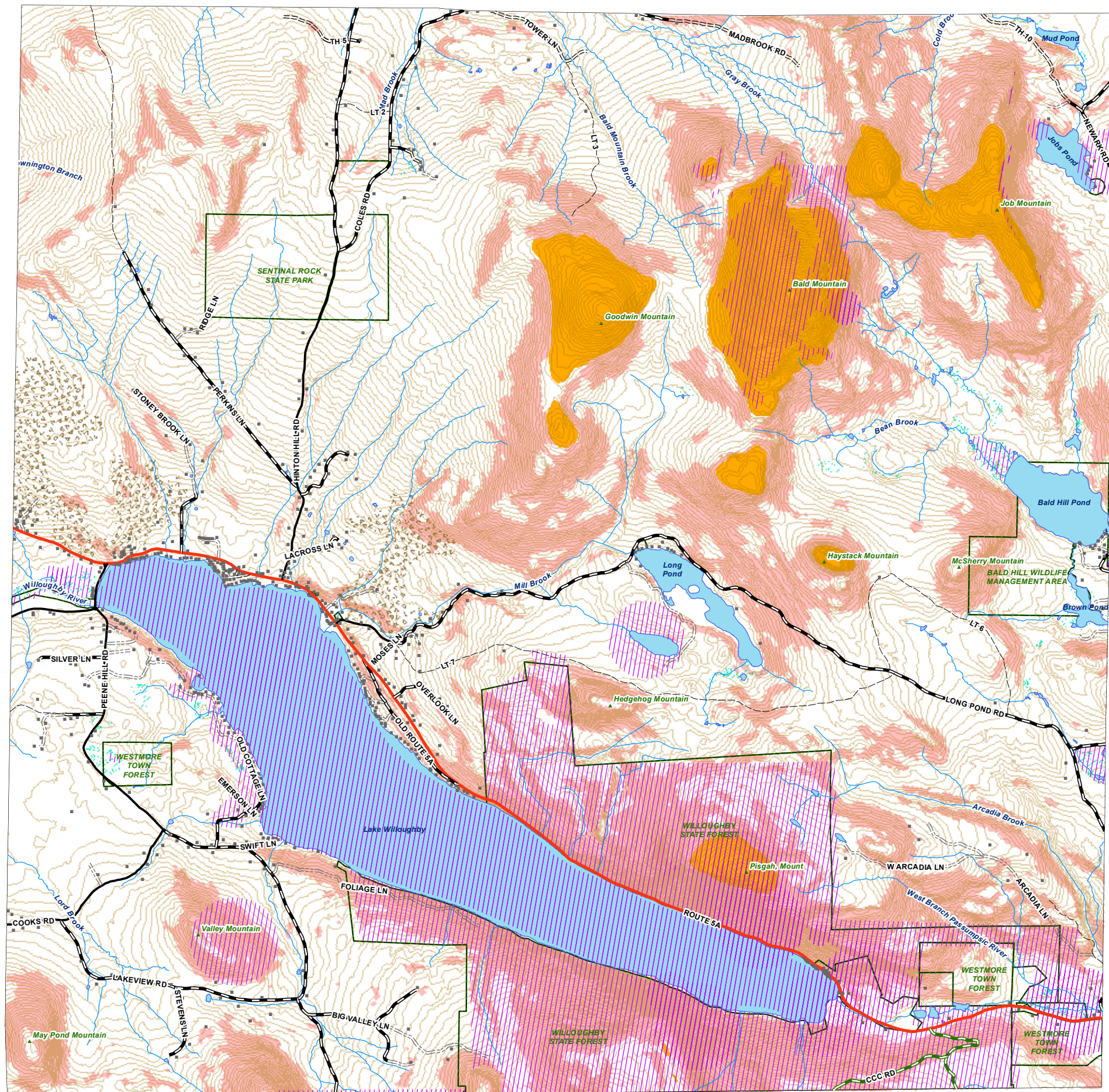
- US & State Highways
- State Forest Highway
- Paved Town Road
- - - Unpaved Town Road
- = = = = Class 4 Town Road
- - - - Legal Trail
- - - - Private Road
- Streams
- █ Lakes, Ponds & Rivers
- █ Protected Lands
- █ Developed
- █ Open
- █ Forested



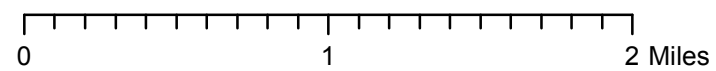
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Westmore, VT Natural Resource Constraints Map

04/11/2018



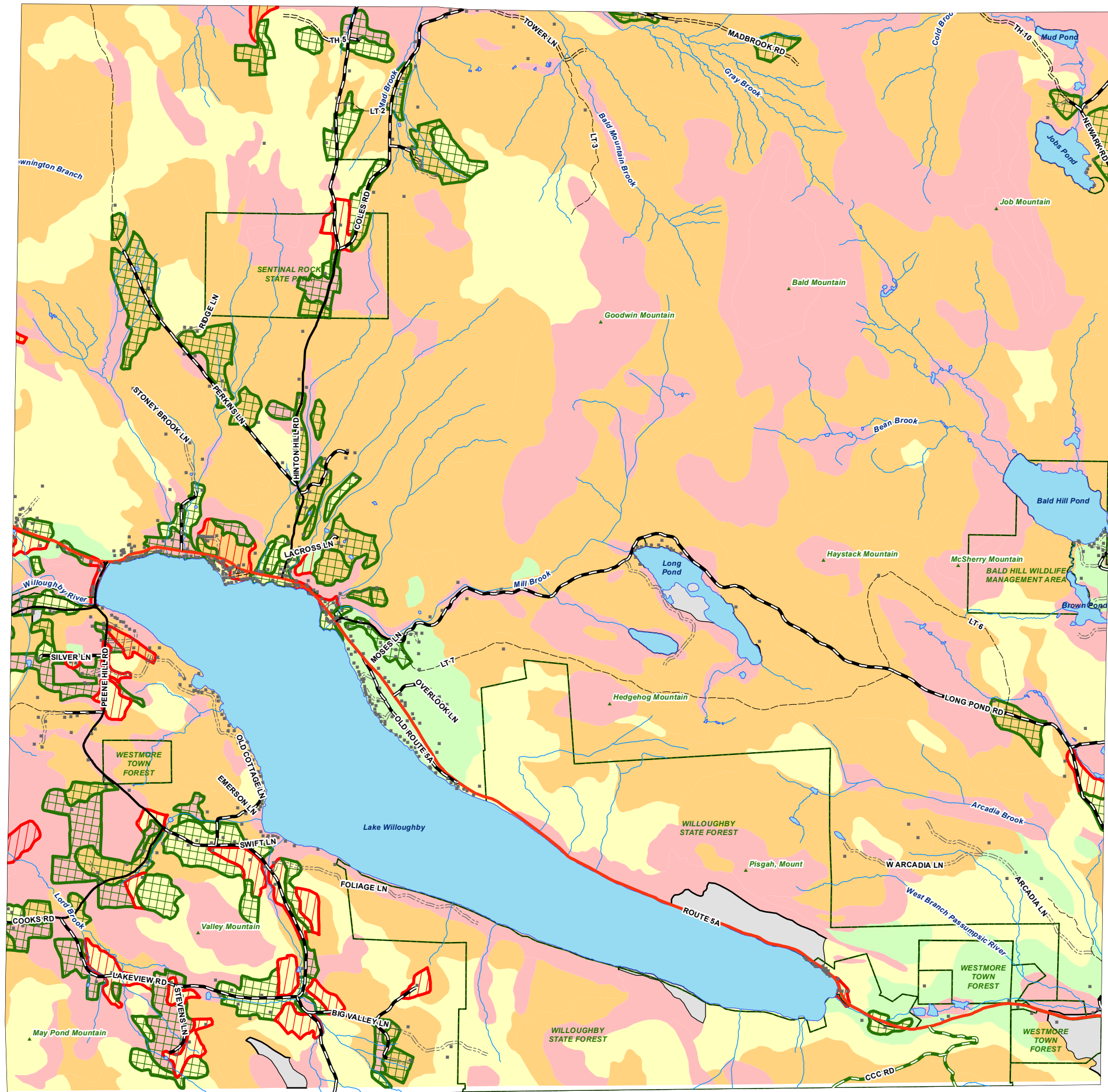
- ▲ Peaks
- Building Locations
- US & State Highways
- State Forest Highway
- Paved Town Road
- Unpaved Town Road
- ==== Class 4 Town Road
- Legal Trail
- Private Road
- Streams
- ▨ Threatened/Endangered Species/Habitat
- Lakes, Ponds & Rivers
- Town Boundary
- Protected Lands
- 20' Interval Elevation Contours
- ▲ Deer Wintering Areas
- ▨ Wetlands
- Areas Over 2500' in Elevation
- Slopes over 20% Grade



Warning- This Data is for planning purposes only and does not replace a survey and/or engineering study. Because this map is developed from various scale sources, there may be some discrepancies between data layers.

Westmore, VT Soils Constraints Map

04/11/2018

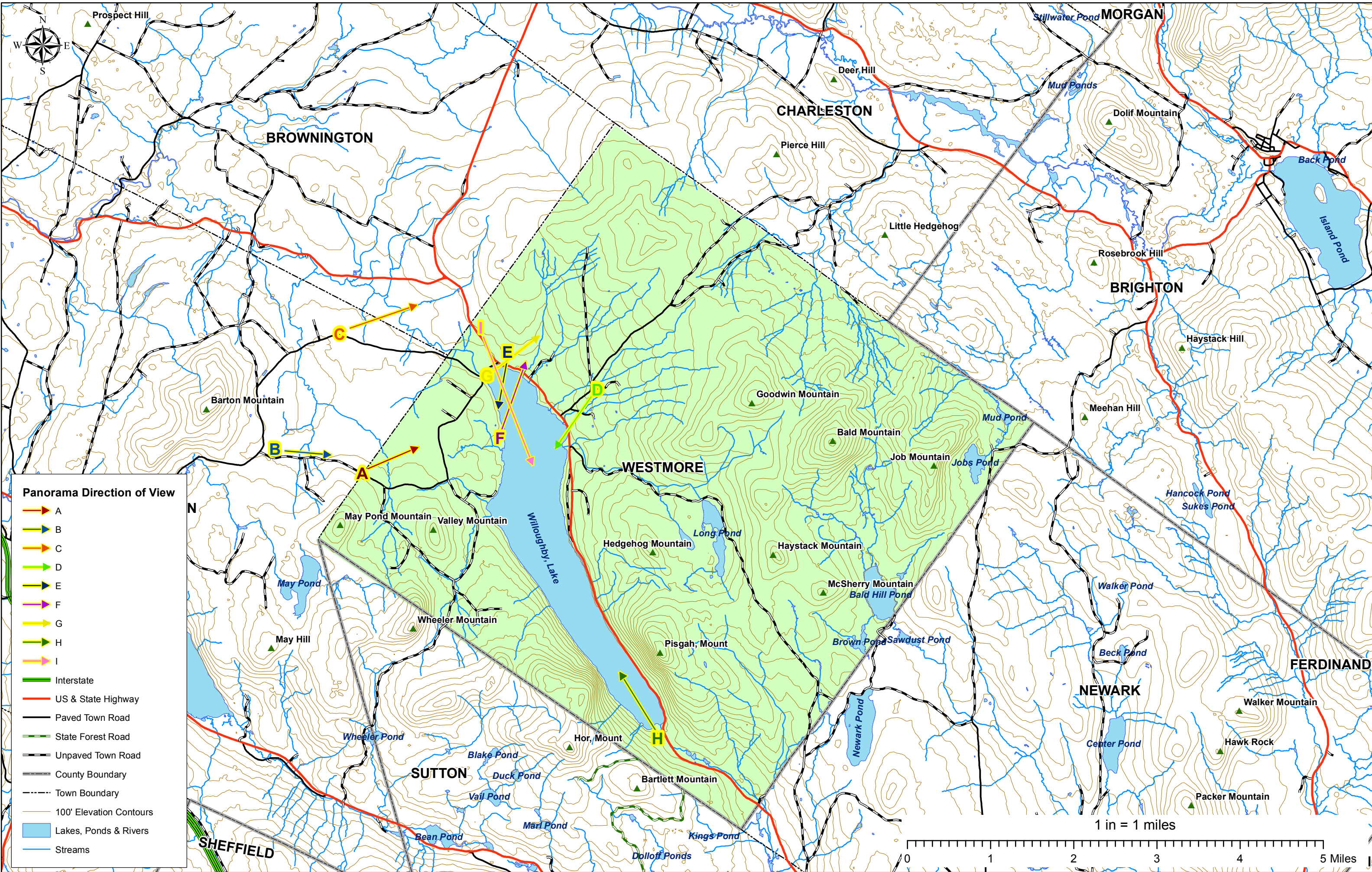


- Building Locations
 - US & State Highways
 - State Forest Highway
 - Paved Town Road
 - Unpaved Town Road
 - ==== Class 4 Town Road
 - Legal Trail
 - Private Road
 - Streams
 - Lakes, Ponds & Rivers
 - Protected Lands
 - ▨ Prime Ag Soils
 - ▩ Statewide Important Soils
- Onsite Septic Suitability**
- Well Suited
 - Moderately Suited
 - Marginally Suited
 - Not Suited
 - Not Rated

Warning- This Data is for planning purposes only and does not replace a survey and/or engineering study. Because this map is developed from various scale sources, there may be some discrepancies between data layers.

Soils Data - Was developed by the The U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service. They warn the following:

"This data set is not designed for use as a primary regulatory tool in permitting or citing decisions, but may be used as a reference source."



Panorama Direction of View

- A
- B
- C
- D
- E
- F
- G
- H
- I
- Interstate
- US & State Highway
- Paved Town Road
- State Forest Road
- Unpaved Town Road
- County Boundary
- Town Boundary
- 100' Elevation Contours
- Lakes, Ponds & Rivers
- Streams

1 in = 1 miles



WESTMORE VIEWS

PANEL A - VIEW FROM COOK ROAD NEAR THE BARTON LINE, LOOKING EAST TOWARDS WILLOUGHBY LAKE



PANEL B - VIEW FROM ROUTE 16 COMING FROM BARTON TOWARDS WESTMORE, TAKEN APPROXIMATELY 1/4 MILE EAST OF COOK ROAD



PANEL C - VIEW FROM THE ROUTE 16 ENTRANCE TO WESTMORE TAKEN EAST OF HUNT LANE



PANEL D - VIEW FROM A LOCATION JUST OFF HINTON HILL ROAD BELOW PERKINS LANE LOOKING WEST TOWARDS WILLOUGHBY LAKE



PANEL E - VIEW FROM LAKEVIEW CEMETERY



PANEL F - VIEW FROM A LOCATION OFF OF BLUEBERRY POINT LANE
LOOKING EAST ACROSS WILLOUGHBY LAKE



PANEL G - VIEW FROM NORTH BEACH OF WILLOUGHBY LAKE LOOKING
EAST



PANEL H - VIEW OF WILLOUGHBY LAKE FROM THE CCC ROAD

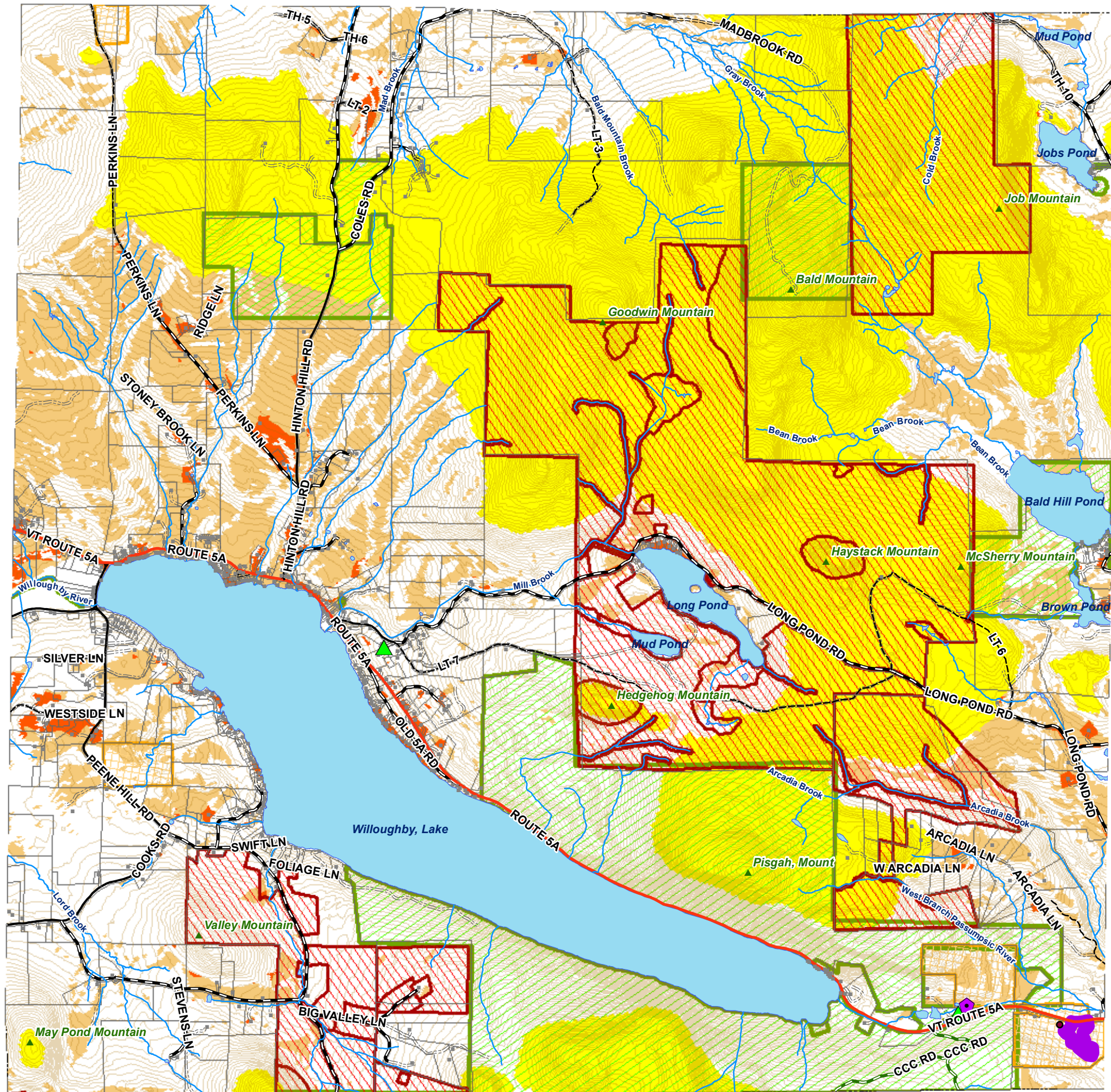


PANEL I - VIEW OF WILLOUGHBY LAKE JUST OFF ROUTE 5A NEAR THE WESTMORE-BROWNINGTON LINE

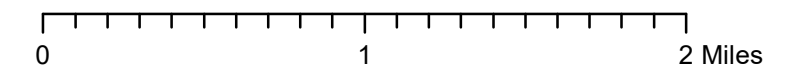


Westmore, VT Solar Energy Potential Map

10/22/2018



- Old Landfill
- ▲ Roof Mounted - Electricity
- ◆ Roof Mounted - Hot Water
- Substation
- ▲ Peaks
- E911 Address Points
- Streams
- US & State Highways
- State Forest Highway
- Paved Town Road
- Unpaved Town Road
- ==== Class 4 Town Road
- Legal Trail
- ==== Private Road
- ==== Emergency_DW_line
- Old Landfill (Preferred Site - 9.5 acres)
- Lakes, Ponds, and Rivers
- 20' Interval Elevation Contours
- Parcel Boundaries
- TB_Parcels
- Protected Land**
- Municipal Land
- State Land
- Other Protected Land
- Areas Over 2000' in Elevation (Regional Constraint)
- Areas for Prime Solar Energy Generation**
- No State Constraint
- Possible State Constraint

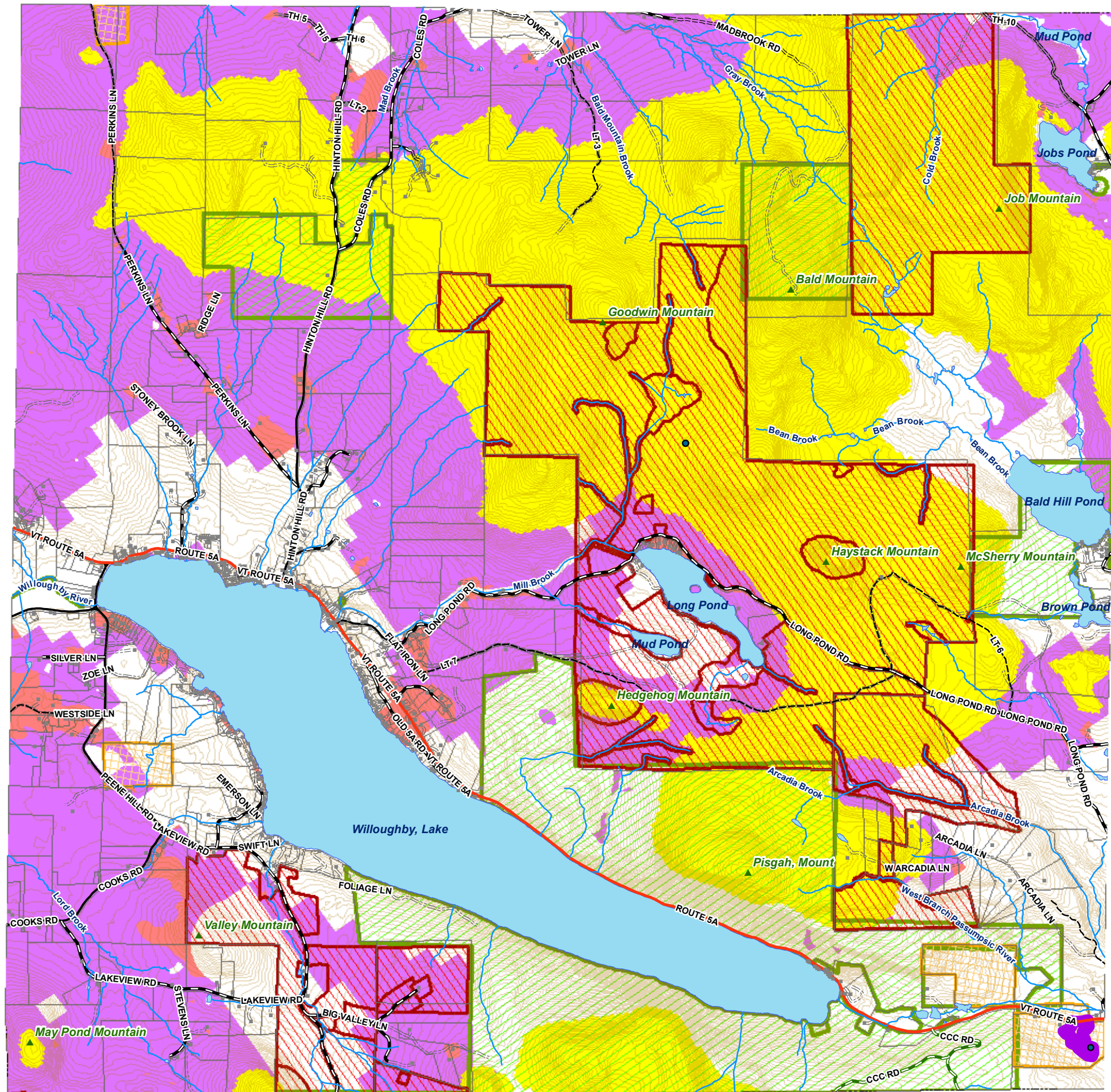


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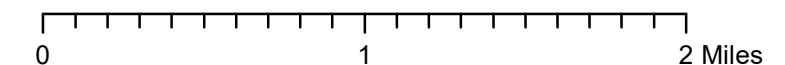


Westmore, VT Wind Energy Potential Map

10/22/2018



- Old Landfills
- Substation
- ▲ Peaks
- E911 Address Points
- Streams
- US & State Highways
- State Forest Highway
- Paved Town Road
- Unpaved Town Road
- Class 4 Town Road
- Legal Trail
- Private Road
- Emergency_DW_line
- Old Landfill (Preferred Site - 9.5 acres)
- Lakes, Ponds, and Rivers
- 20' Interval Elevation Contours
- Parcel Boundaries
- TB_Parcels
- Protected Land**
- Municipal Land
- State Land
- Other Protected Land
- Areas Over 2000' in Elevation (Regional Constraint)
- Areas for Prime Wind Energy Generation**
- No Constraint
- Possible Constraint

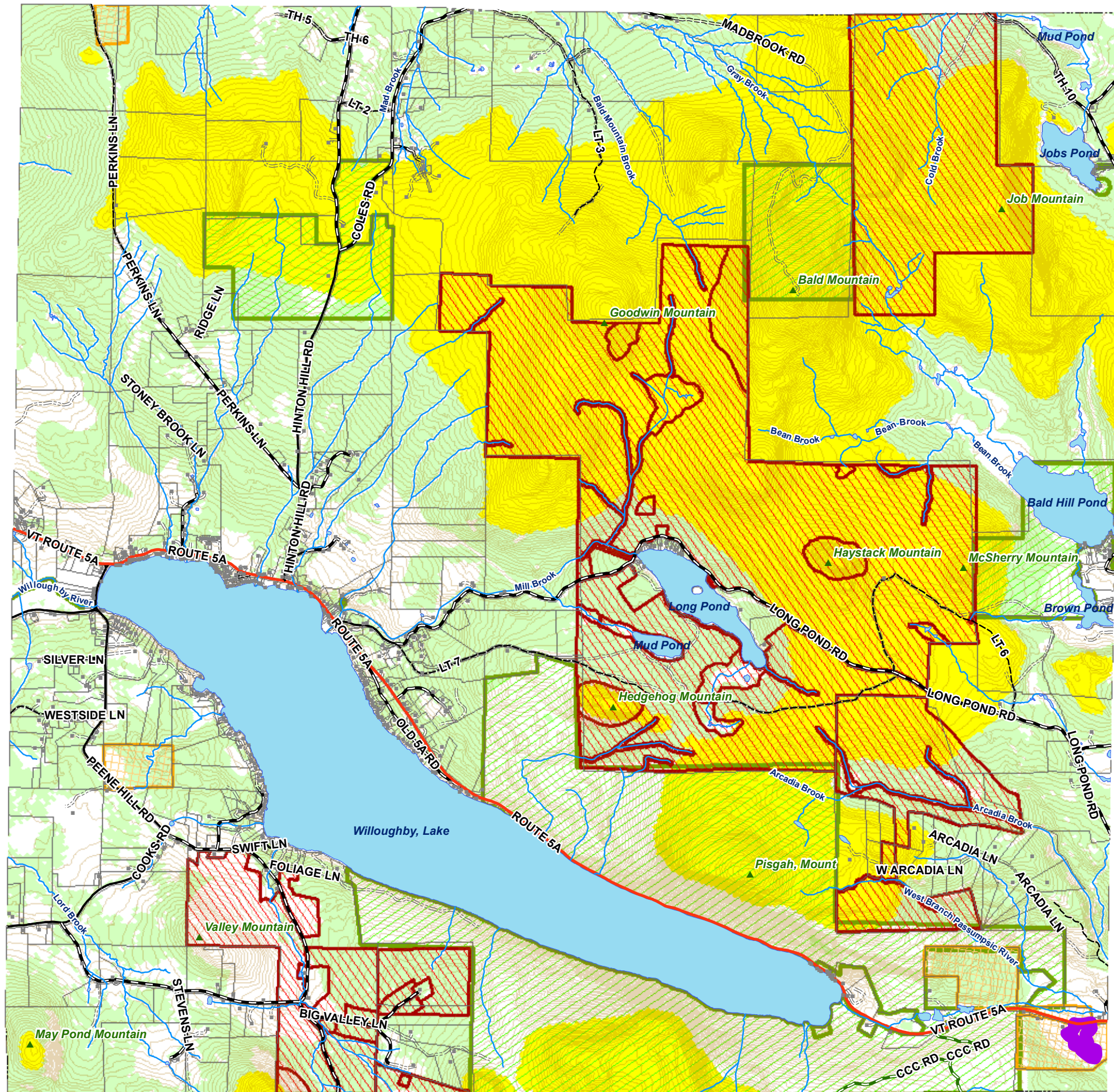


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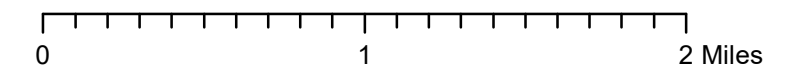


Westmore, VT Woody Biomass Resource Map

10/22/2018



- Substation
- ▲ Peaks
- E911 Address Points
- Streams
- US & State Highways
- State Forest Highway
- Paved Town Road
- Unpaved Town Road
- ==== Class 4 Town Road
- Legal Trail
- ==== Private Road
- ==== Emergency_DW_line
- Old Landfill (Preferred Site - 9.5 acres)
- Lakes, Ponds, and Rivers
- 20' Interval Elevation Contours
- Parcel Boundaries
- TB_Parcels
- Protected Land**
- ▨ Municipal Land
- ▨ State Land
- ▨ Other Protected Land
- Areas Over 2000' in Elevation (Regional Constraint)
- Woody Biomass Resource Areas



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