



Vermont Forest Legacy Program Assessment of Need



Purposes of this Meeting

- **Present Information about the Vermont Forest Legacy Program**
- **Provide Examples of Forest Legacy Projects**
- **Explain the Assessment of Need and the Process Used to Create the Draft**
- **Offer Opportunities for Public Comment on:**
 - Vermont Program Goals**
 - Area Boundaries**
 - Criteria for Selecting Projects**

What is the Forest Legacy Program?

- Partnership between states and USDA Forest Service created by 1990 Federal Farm Bill
- Identifies and protects important private forestlands from conversion to other uses
- Provides up to 75 percent of costs of easement or fee-simple acquisition

Goals of the Vermont Forest Legacy Program

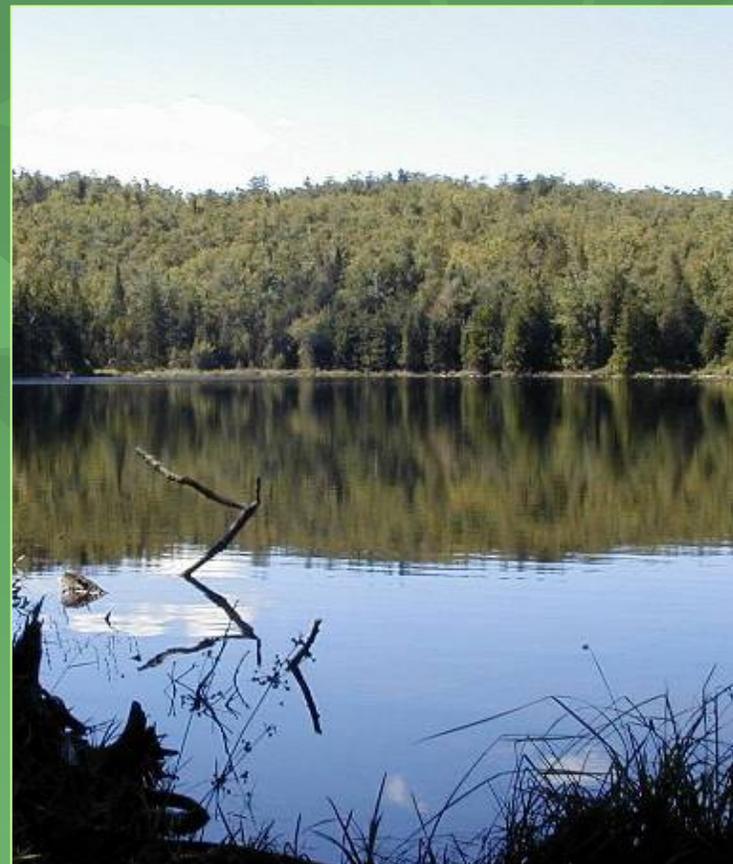
- Sustain economic, ecological, and social values of forests:

- Productive working forests
- Habitats and natural communities
- Clean water and fish habitat
- Public recreation
- Cultural resources
- Scenic Landscapes

- By identifying and maintaining forestlands at risk
- Primarily through purchase of conservation easements with willing owners
(CE held by FPR. Fee purchases by town or FPR.)

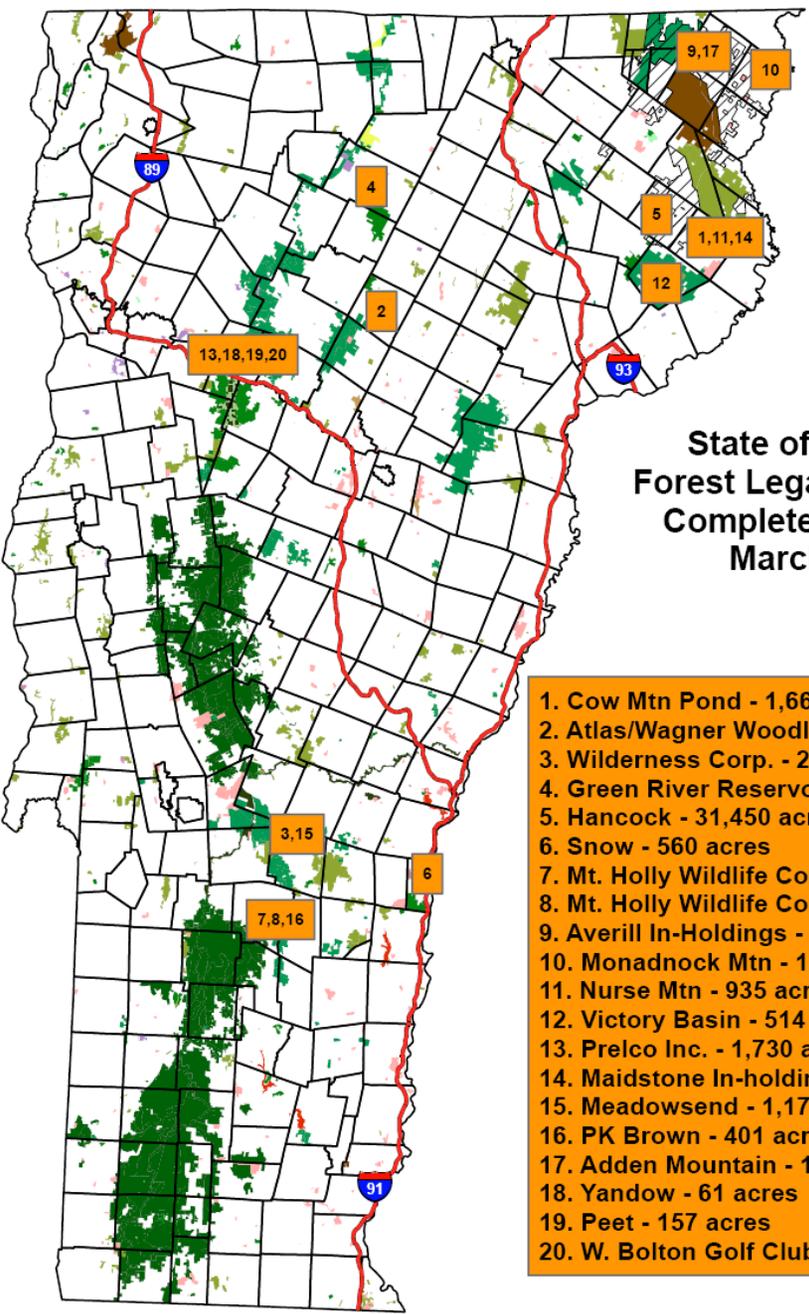
Vermont Accomplishments 1992-2008

- 20 Projects Completed
- Nearly 53,000 Acres of Forestland Conserved
- \$11,220,500 in FLP Funding Spent



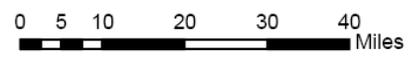
**Cow Mountain Pond – 1,660 acres –
First project in the nation**





**State of Vermont
Forest Legacy Program
Completed Projects
March 2008**

- 1. Cow Mtn Pond - 1,660 acres
- 2. Atlas/Wagner Woodland - 2,281 acres
- 3. Wilderness Corp. - 2,086 acres
- 4. Green River Reservoir - 5,113 acres
- 5. Hancock - 31,450 acres
- 6. Snow - 560 acres
- 7. Mt. Holly Wildlife Corridor - 391 acres
- 8. Mt. Holly Wildlife Corridor - 425 acres
- 9. Averill In-Holdings - 207 acres
- 10. Monadnock Mtn - 1,471 acres
- 11. Nurse Mtn - 935 acres
- 12. Victory Basin - 514 acres
- 13. Prelco Inc. - 1,730 acres
- 14. Maidstone In-holding - 233 acres
- 15. Meadowsend - 1,175 acres
- 16. PK Brown - 401 acres
- 17. Adden Mountain - 1,357 acres
- 18. Yandow - 61 acres
- 19. Peet - 157 acres
- 20. W. Bolton Golf Club - 426 acres



Vermont Forest Legacy Program

Map of Completed Projects

As of March 2008



Examples of Types of Projects

- Forest management by private landowners and public access
- Municipal lands
- Wildlife corridors
- State park recreation



Large Scale Forest Management and Public Access: Hancock Lands



- Conserves 31,450 acres in 9 towns of Essex and Orleans Counties
- Remains as privately-owned forest
- Protects exceptional natural water resources and mountains
- Guarantees pedestrian public access



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Distant View of Hancock Lands





Camps of Hancock Lands



Forestry Focus: Chittenden County Uplands Project



Conserves and protects:

- Ecological integrity;
- Family-owned business;
- Rural character; and
- Working landscape of the northeastern uplands of Chittenden County.



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Aerial Photo of a Chittenden County Uplands Property



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Municipal Focus: Town of Lemington

Local community initiative



- Acquisition of Monadnock Mtn.
- Protection of 3 State listed RT&E plants and 1 State listed rare bird
- Protect working forests
- Protect trail to summit and fire tower



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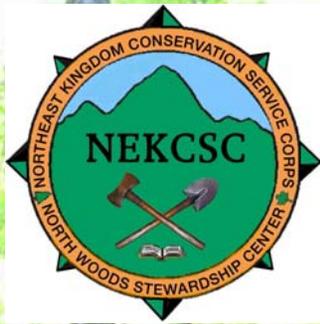
Firetower on top of Monadnock Mtn.

Monadnock Mtn. Trail Work



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National Trails Day 2005

Work day on Monadnock Mountain Trail



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Wildlife Focus: Mt. Holly Wildlife Corridor



- Protects critical bear habitat and wildlife corridor
- Enhances connectivity between northern and southern sections of the Green Mt. National Forest

Mt. Holly Wildlife Corridor



Public Recreation Focus: Green River Reservoir State Park



- **Managed public access and overnight camping**
- **Buffer areas to protect water quality**
- **Forest management on 4,000 acres**



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Purposes of Assessment of Need

- Satisfy requirement for participation in the Forest Legacy Program
- Update assessment of forest resources
- Review program goals and purposes
- Revise Forest Legacy Area boundaries
- Update Project Selection Criteria
- Opportunities for public input



Public Input Opportunities

- Vermont Forest Stewardship Committee and smaller working group
- Comments from additional stakeholder groups
- Regional commissions host public meetings
- Public comment period
- Letters to towns in proposed FL Area



FL Area: Development of Boundaries

- Project must be located in a FL Area
- Focus on program goals
- Assessment of private forestland resources and values
- Determination of priority forestlands via computer modeling



FL Area: Development of Boundaries

CRITERIA

**200-acre contiguous forest patches, excluding buffers for roads
(weight=5)**

**Most productive forestlands: carbonate-rich rock layers.
Each county has a Soil Potential Index of Forest Values
(weight=3)**

**Ecological resources: RTE species in towns, state
significant natural communities, forest matrix
communities, priority aquatic features and deer
wintering areas
(weight=2)**

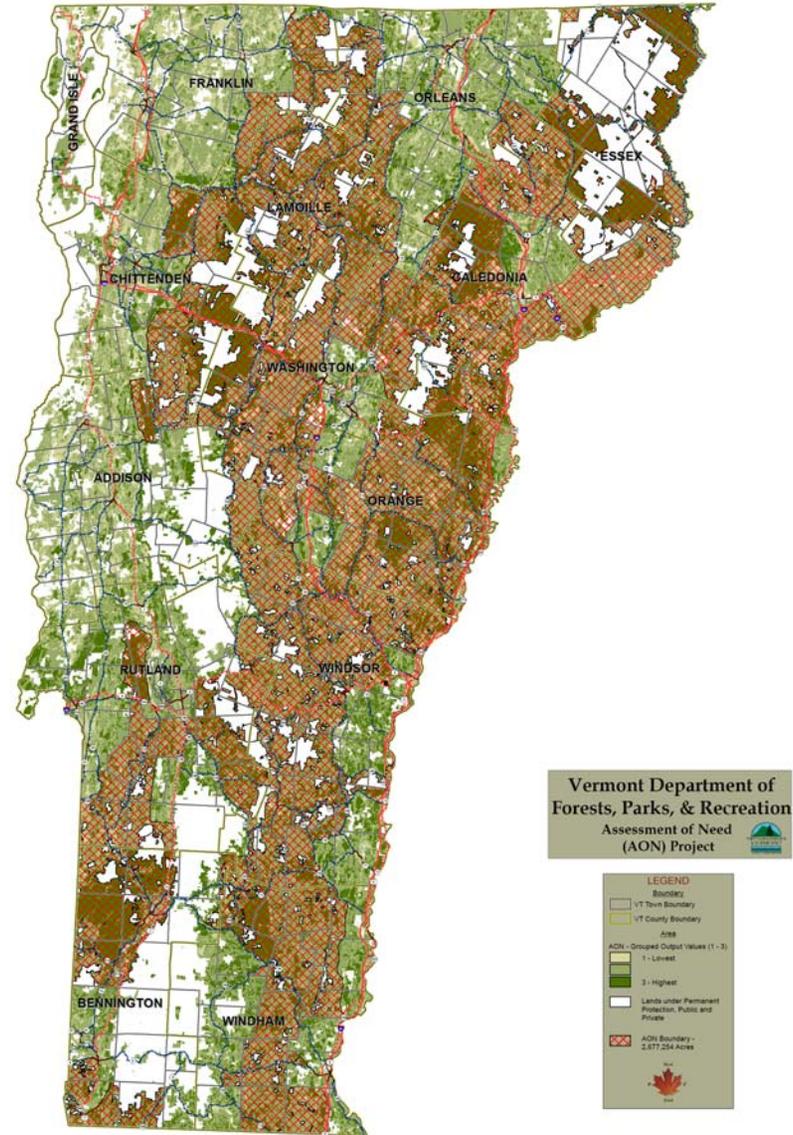
REFINING THE CRITERIA

2500-acre contiguous blocks selected

Boundaries refined for administrative purposes



Draft Map of the Proposed Forest Legacy Area for Vermont



Description of Proposed FL Area

- Now 1 Area proposed of 2.6+ million acres vs. 3.3 million acres in 3 Areas in 1994
- All existing Forest Legacy projects are located within the proposed Area
- Overview of changes: new towns proposed in Rutland and Bennington Co., fewer towns in Orleans Co., 1994 Area 3 not included (Addison Co.)



Area Criteria vs. Criteria for Selecting Projects

- **Area Criteria: Done on a Statewide Basis**

Key Factors: Size; Productivity; Ecology

- **Project Selection Criteria:
Done by Individual Project Application**

Additional Factors Considered:

Threats; Location (regional context);
Other Values—scenic, hydrology,
recreation, historic

Project Selection Criteria

Minimum Criteria

- **Must be in the FL Area**
- **Must have local and regional support**
- **At least 100 acres--part of larger area preferred**
- **Must include dispersed pedestrian public access**
- **Must have approved Forest Stewardship Plan**



Other Criteria for Selecting Projects

When ranking projects, Vermont Forest Stewardship Committee considers the following:

- **Primary Purposes—forestry, ecological**
- **Secondary Purposes—scenic, public recreation, riparian/hydrologic, cultural/historic**
- **Threats to conversion—types and degree**
- **Strategic relevance, i.e. adjacent to conserved land**
- **Readiness of project**



Annual Application Cycle: Local and State

- Applications are submitted in advance of funding
- Application deadline in July
- FPR/FW staff review and comment on projects submitted, late summer
- Forest Stewardship Committee reviews and ranks projects, September
- FPR Commissioner reviews and submits recommendations to the Forest Service regional office, September



Annual Application Cycle: Regional and National

- Regional Forest Service offices submits “Project Recommendation List” to Forest Service’s Washington office, January
- A national “Forest Legacy Project Recommendation List” developed and submitted to President’s Administration, January
- Congressional Committees pass annual budget, projects follow it



Other Programs for Landowners

- **Use Value Appraisal (Current Use)**
- **Landowner Incentive Program (LIP)**
- **Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP)**
- **Wetland Protection and Restoration Program**
- **Local Land Trusts and Vermont Housing and Conservation Board**



Next Steps

- 11 meetings hosted by regional commissions 4/29-6/24
 - AON document and maps on website
 - Towns receive letter/Decide to be in program
 - Public comment period until mid-August, esp. goals/Area boundaries/project criteria
 - Vermont Forest Stewardship Committee considers public input, September
- Final AON submitted to U.S. Forest Service, December



Thank you for your comments

Website:

<http://www.vtfpr.org/lands/flp.cfm>

Send comments by August 20th, 2008 to:

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