Buffalo Mountain Town Forest Plan

A municipal forest for the Town of Hardwick made possible with significant funding from the Vermont Housing & Conservation Board

Hardwick
Caledonia County, Vermont
Xx/xx/xxx



All photos by Josh Kuckens

Submitted by: Hardwick Town Selectboard

Prepared by:
The Buffalo Mountain Forest Steering Committee
Emily Sayers, Lamoille County Forester
Jack Travelstead, Northern Rivers Land Trust *and*
Hannah Redmon, Trust for Public Land

THIS COMMUNITY FOREST PLAN MUST BE UPDATED AND APPROVED BY [Insert date]

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Special Thanks to

Emily Sayers, Lamoille County Forester
Jack Travelstead, Northern Rivers Land Trust Board Chair

I. OWNERSHIP and CONTACT INFORMATION

Easement Names: **Buffalo Mountain Town Forest Conservation Easement**

Easement Location: Hardwick
Caledonia County, Vermont

Roads: Wright Farm Road

Landowner: Town of Hardwick
Address:
Contact:
Phone:
Email:

Easement Co-Holder: Northern Rivers Land Trust
Address: P.O. Box 112
Hardwick, VT 05843
Contact: Jack Travelstead, Chair
Phone: 802-472-3332
Email: jgtravel54@gmail.com

Easement Co-Holder: Vermont Housing and Conservation Board
Address: 58 East State Street
Montpelier, VT 05602
Contact: Isaac Bissell, Conservation Stewardship Director
Phone: 802-828-5068
Email: I.Bissell@vhcb.org

II. PROJECT BACKGROUND

Introduction



A picture of Hardwick, Vermont, taken from any vantage point north of the village, at once identifies the cluster of buildings and church spires below as Hardwick. Buffalo Mountain establishes an iconic 1,555-foot backdrop to Hardwick. The village is squeezed into space along the banks of the Lamoille River, with neighborhoods extending immediately to the northern base of Buffalo Mountain, and along its eastern flank. Next to the Lamoille River, the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail (LVRT) provides bike, pedestrian, and snowmobile access across northern Vermont, to St. Johnsbury in the east and Swanton to the west.

The first settlement of Hardwick (ca. 1780) was actually a few miles away, along the eighteenth-century Bayley-Hazen Road, which had previously been an Abenaki trail. The Abenaki frequented this countryside, but no evidence exists to suggest that they ever actually settled at this site along the Lamoille.

Our current town center was first known as South Hardwick, but the draw of the river, along which mills could be built, enabled it to become the economic and population center for the region. The U.S. Post Office changed the village's name to Hardwick in 1867, and in 1890 the Vermont General Assembly followed suit, officially incorporating the village.



In the intervening 150+ years, most of Buffalo Mountain has been privately owned, but for many townspeople, the idea that it might one day become property of the town has held an appeal. In 2025, that wish came closer to reality when the Hardwick Conservation Commission, working with the Trust for Public Land (TPL) and the Northern Rivers Land Trust (NRLT), proposed a plan to the Town of Hardwick for the purchase of approximately 329 acres that includes the mountain's summit from the long-time owners, Ken, Chris, and Maragaret Davis.

This Management Plan for the Buffalo Mountain Town Forest (BMTF) is submitted on behalf of the Town of Hardwick. This project was completed as part of TPL's Community Forest Program and funding was provided by the Town of Hardwick, the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board (VHCB), The Nature Conservancy's Biodiversity Protection Fund, and many foundations and private individual donors. A grant of Development Rights, Conservation Restrictions, and Public Access Easements (the "Conservation Easement") was conveyed to NRLT and VHCB to protect BMTF's conservation values and ensure public access in perpetuity.

The purpose of this Town Forest Management Plan is to assemble information about BMTF and prescribe management and conservation activities for the next ten (10) years. Completion of a

Town Forest Management Plan is a requirement of the Conservation Easement. This plan will be updated at least every ten years.

Existing Municipal Land on Buffalo Mountain

This document pertains to the 329.5-acre property acquired by the town of Hardwick in 2026 that extends from Route 15 west of Hardwick to the summit of Buffalo Mountain. The Town of Hardwick already owns a 70-acre parcel of land on Buffalo Mountain that is sometimes referred to as "Buffalo Mountain Town Forest." The 70-acre parcel is not conserved, unlike the new Town Forest. The new Buffalo Mountain Town Forest does not border this 70-acre parcel, but the properties are connected by Wright Farm Rd.

While plans for the 70-acre parcel have been discussed over the years, such as in the 2018 Town Recreation Plan, the property is not often visited or even widely known about. The limited use of this town forest is largely due to the relative difficulty of access, at the intersection of two class IV roads a mile outside of the village.

The 70-acre Town Forest parcel was originally a farm and granite quarry built by H. R. Mack in the 1880s. The "Old Mack Farm" and quarry changed hands a few times over the years, eventually coming into town possession in 1953. There is record of Hazen Union Forestry students marking and logging trees in the forest not long after it became town land, but there has been little other activity there over the years.

Points of historical and scenic interest on this parcel include the cellar holes of the Old Mack Farm at the intersection of Wright Farm Road and Buffalo Mountain Road, and the abandoned 10-acre granite quarry lower down on Buffalo Mountain Road. The quarry offers interesting possibilities for future use and offers a seldom-seen view above the treeline from atop some of the granite features.

Buffalo Mountain Town Forest Steering Committee

A Steering Committee of 16 Hardwick residents or landowners was formed by the Hardwick Selectboard in May 2026 to solicit public input and draft this management plan. The BMTF Steering Committee worked diligently and thoughtfully to consider the multiple aspects of the forest in order to develop this Management Plan for the consideration of the Selectboard.

The Steering Committee met approximately twice a month from June 2026 until the completion of this Management Plan. The minutes from all meetings of the Steering Committee are publicly available online and meetings met the requirements of Vermont Open Meeting Law.

The Steering Committee consulted resources such as the Management Plans for other town forests including forests in Wolcott, Huntington, and Barre, existing Hardwick town plans regarding recreation and flood resilience, information about the history of Buffalo Mountain, USGS geological reports, and the ecological assessment of BMTF completed by Matt Peters. The Committee also consulted subject matter experts in trail building and maintenance.

The public outreach completed by the Steering Committee is detailed below.

The Steering Committee members were as follows and the Committee was advised by Jack Travelstead of NRLT and Hannah Redmon of TPL.

Lucian Avery
Brendan Buckley
Tyler Buswell
Paul Cillo
Renaud Demers
Andrew Gilbert
Leif Goldberg
Rachel Kane
James Kelley
Dylan Laflam
Marie LaPre' Grabon
Joe Nudell
Margie Prevot
Eric Remick
Sue Rivard

Julie Sullivan

See Appendix F: Governance and Planning Framework.

Public Input

I. Community Survey

A. Survey design

The Steering Committee conducted a community survey in June, July, and August of 2026. The survey was based on community surveys distributed for similar projects, such as the Wolcott Community Forest. The goal of the survey was to gauge public opinion on a variety of both broad and concrete issues pertaining to the management of Buffalo Mountain. Survey results were used to guide further conversations with the public and the development of management priorities and activities set forth in this Management Plan.

The survey asked respondents to rate suggestions for land use, development, and activities on a Likert scale, using five scale ratings. For example, respondents would rate "Snowshoeing" on the scale of "Love it," "Like it," "Neutral," "Rather not," "Oppose it." We also solicited open-ended comments and suggestions within the survey.

The survey was conducted on a voluntary basis, open to anyone who wished to fill it out. We required respondents to indicate place of residence so that the Committee could distinguish preferences of Hardwick residents from non-residents. Respondents were also asked to indicate their age range (such as "35-44") but were not asked for any other demographic information.

The Steering Committee promoted the survey on Front Porch Forum, in local Facebook groups, with fliers at businesses around town, at various community events, and by word of mouth. Respondents were also asked to share the survey with their friends and family.

B. Bias

Because the survey was voluntary, it does not constitute a probability sample. In particular, this means the survey is biased towards those who both knew about the survey and decided to respond. Since we could not measure the non-response rate—i.e., the number of people who had the opportunity to respond but chose not to—we do not know how well the preferences shown in the survey represent the town as a whole.

C. Survey results - who responded?

The Steering Committee received 287 survey responses, with 197 coming from Hardwick residents. This represents roughly 8% of the adult population of Hardwick, which is a reasonably strong response rate relative to other surveys and voter turnout seen in town. Of the non-resident responses, most were residents of nearby towns, while just 13 lived out of state. Most surveys were filled out completely, 11 were not.

Respondents skewed older than the town population. Younger adults were underrepresented in the survey. Less than 13% of resident respondents were in the 18-35 age range, while Census data suggests that 18-35 year olds comprise roughly 25% of the population of Hardwick.

D. Survey results - what it showed?

The survey showed the most consensus around natural resource preservation and light recreation, with a sensitivity towards budget and ongoing maintenance costs, especially as they might impact property taxes.

The most popular, and least opposed, items on the survey were reserving a portion of the forest for an old growth / sanctuary, along with developing rustic paths for hiking, snowshoeing, and vistas.

The most opposed items on the survey were trapping and unleashed dogs. Developing built infrastructure such as playgrounds and treehouses was generally unpopular. Using the forest for revenue sources from forest products such as timber management and sugaring leases were also less popular than other activities.

Most respondents gave some response to the open-ended questions, though many of these were either general statements thanking the Steering Committee for the survey, or expressing opposition to the project. We received dozens of suggestions for specific ideas not listed on the survey, including disc golf, a shooting range, green burial sites, and even nude tanning. While none of these suggested ideas have been incorporated into this initial Management Plan, future iterations of the Management Plan may take inspiration from these community suggestions should they prove popular, feasible, and consistent with the purposes of the Conservation Easement. The largest concern raised in the open-ended discussion was around potential conflicts in use, questioning how the forest area could be safely used for recreation like hiking while also allowing hunting and trapping.

Respondents generally did not feel favorable towards charging fees to access the property for managed uses like groomed skiing, with only about 25% being open to the idea. Respondents ranked grants and private donations as their preferred sources of funding for Town Forest management, followed by revenue from the timber resources on the property, and felt least favorably towards using property tax revenue to fund management and activities.

Charts and tables showing our survey results are available in Appendix I.

II. Community outreach

In addition to the twice-monthly meetings that were open to the public, the Steering Committee also scheduled public events to discuss and raise awareness about the project, learn about forest management, and enjoy the property. Future Management Plan updates will involve further solicitation of public input.

A. August 28: Farmers' Market survey discussion

The Committee held a discussion of the community survey results with the public at a Farmers' Market. Members of the Committee were available at the pavilion at Atkins Field at the foot of Buffalo Mountain for the entire duration of the Farmers' Market. Printed handouts with the results of the community survey, a poster showing the property boundaries, a pad of paper for people to make comments about the project, and door prizes to drive more engagement were available.

Approximately twenty to thirty people engaged with Steering Committee members and offered ideas like quiet nature spaces, an outdoor pool, and hiking trails.

B. September 12: Mountain Bike Ride

The Steering Committee hosted a public mountain bike ride circumnavigating Buffalo Mountain on September 12, 2026. The route started at the Lamoille River access parking area on Route 15 and headed up the steep Wright Farm Rd, turned left onto Buffalo Mountain Road at the top of the hill, and followed the Vermont Association of Snowtravelers (VAST) connector trail back north along the base of the mountain.

Six people participated in the ride, made up of three committee members and three members of the public. The group experienced a steep, rough climb that was challenging to ride, an old pasture being reclaimed by forest, an abandoned granite quarry, and a varied boundary line which included the Lamoille River, a steep wooded town road, and a short section of VAST trail.

Participants were curious about the potential uses and future management of BMTF and expressed interest in joining future informational walks in BMTF.

C. Ongoing Community Engagement

Further walks and one public community presentation of this Management Plan were planned for the fall of 2026 but not completed by the time of drafting of this Management Plan.

History And Local Significance



BMTF incorporates much of the northern and western sections of the ridge and summit of Buffalo Mountain. At 1,555 feet, the summit is about 700 feet above the center of town. The entire hill is a prominent feature visible from nearly everywhere in the village as well as from many other locations in town.

A 1909 U.S. Geological Survey bulletin identifies a granite quarry on "Buffalo Hill." Although this was slightly to the south of BMTF, it speaks to the identity of both the mountain and Hardwick's history. The bed of the Hardwick and Woodbury railroad, used to move granite from Woodbury to present day Atkins Field, lies within and near the forest. Allen Davis in his memoir "The Lucky Generation," about life in Hardwick in the 30s and 40s, talks of diving "naked into water-filled abandoned quarries" on the mountain's flanks.

Allen Davis talks of berry picking, cliff exploration, and sugaring on the slopes of the mountain. Other local residents recall skiing. More recent owners have cut timber on the mountain. It remains a popular area for hunting, snowmobiling and ATV riding, hiking, and general exploring.

One of the common themes from a search of area land records is farming, with many references to transfers of farms as well as livestock and equipment. A walk through the area surrounding BMTF reveals old foundation walls and abandoned orchards. Photographs show pastures on the ridge of Buffalo Mountain. Hill farming in northern Vermont was never for the faint of heart. Unfortunately, these farms often ended up abandoned and foreclosed upon. The Wright Farm, namesake of Wright Farm Road, was abandoned around the 1930s. The legacy of these families is embodied in the land.

The name "Buffalo Mountain" has been used in Hardwick for years. It has been adopted by the local food co-op and a power sports business. Buffalo Mountain Road itself may have been the origin of the name. Legend has it that the surveyors that laid it out claimed it would be so steep that "you would need a buffalo to get up there." References to "Buffalo Hill" and "the mountain"

exist in geological and land record documents. However, the actual peak was not officially named until a local effort in 2021 resulted in the designation of Buffalo Mountain by the USGS.

Conserving land on Buffalo Mountain is a continuation of the history of the mountain. Much as the name was commonly used before formal designation, BMTF formally preserves the prominence, history, and uses of the mountain for the community and for future generations.

Summary of the Conservation Easement

BMTF is owned by the Town of Hardwick. NRLT and VHCB jointly own the development rights, perpetual conservation easement restrictions, and public access easement, referred to herein as the "Conservation Easement." The Town is responsible for the day-to-day management of BMTF. NRLT is responsible for annual monitoring to ensure the terms of the Conservation Easement are upheld and the conservation values of the land are protected. There is no reason to believe that the timber rights, mineral rights, or other rights that run with the land are owned by any entity other than the Town, other than a non-exclusive right on part of BMTF for previous owners to hunt wild game on the land.

The following is a summary of the terms of the Conservation Easement. It has been edited to show, in plain language, the relationship between the Town of Hardwick, the Easement Holders and the public. Please see Appendix A for the full recorded copy of the Conservation Easement. This summary should not be relied upon to guide decision making without consulting the full Conservation Easement.

Purposes of this Easement and Management Plan

1. The Town of Hardwick and the Easement Holders acknowledge the objective of ensuring the availability of the land for public use and enjoyment, including, but not limited to, educational, recreational and other appropriate community activities and, to that end, the purposes of the Conservation Easement are as follows:

    a. To conserve productive forestland, wildlife habitats, biological diversity, natural communities, riparian buffers, wetlands, soil productivity, water quality and native flora and fauna and the ecological processes that sustain these natural resource values as they exist now and as they may develop in the future.

    b. To provide for non-motorized, non-commercial recreational, educational and other appropriate community uses;

    c. To conserve open space values, and scenic resources for present and future generations; and

    d. To require that management be guided by a public management planning process.

2. Recognizing that conservation of productive forestland is included in the purpose of this Town Forest, and that both the resource values and responsible forest management standards will evolve over time, the forest management objectives are to:

    a. Manage forest stands for long rotations which maximize the opportunity for the production of maple sap and/or for harvesting, sustained over time, high quality saw logs while maintaining a healthy and biologically diverse forest. Given site limitations, biological factors and public uses may preclude the production of

high-quality sawlogs. However, production of a variety of forest products can be consistent with the goal of producing high-quality sawlogs and/or maple sap.

b. Conduct all sugaring and/or forest management and harvesting activities (including the establishment, maintenance, and reclamation of log landings and skid roads) using the best available management practices in order to prevent soil erosion and to protect water quality.

3. To ensure that the property will be owned in perpetuity by the State of Vermont, a municipality, or other qualified organization.

4. These purposes will be advanced by conserving the property because it possesses the following attributes:

   a. It includes 329 acres +/- of forest and wetland that support a wide diversity of wildlife and plants, including rare communities and threatened terrestrial and aquatic species contributing significantly to landscape-scale wildlife connectivity, ecological function, carbon sequestration, climate resilience, and water quality.

   b. It protects approximately 15 acres of wetlands, 9 acres of floodplain, and 2 miles of stream frontage, including 1.1 miles along the Lamoille River. Together, these areas enhance flood resilience, improve water quality, and support diverse, ecologically productive native communities.

   c. It is well suited as a community forest and will provide public access and can be used for numerous recreational, cultural, and educational purposes, including hunting, fishing, wildlife observation, and hiking; and

   d. Vermont Conservation Design identifies the Town Forest as located within a Highest Priority Interior Forest and Connectivity Block, and as containing Highest Priority Surface Waters and Riparian Areas. The Property forms part of the Worcester Range-Northeast Kingdom Wildlife Linkage and strengthens ecological protection of nearby tracts of conserved land.

Restricted Uses of the Protected Property

1. The property shall be used for educational, forestry, non-motorized, non-commercial recreation, habitat conservation, natural area, and open space purposes only, except as otherwise specifically permitted under the Easement.

2. No rights-of-way, easements of ingress or egress, driveways, roads, or utility lines or easements shall be constructed, developed or maintained into, on, over, under, or across the property without the prior written permission of the owners, except as specifically permitted under the Easement.

3. There shall be no signs, billboards, or outdoor advertising of any kind erected or displayed on the property; provided, however, that the Town of Hardwick may erect and maintain reasonable signs, boundary markers, directional signs, memorial plaques, informational and interpretive signs, and signs limiting access or use.

4. The placement, collection or storage of trash, human, hazardous or toxic waste, or any other unsightly, harmful or offensive material on the Protected Property shall not be

permitted except at such locations, if any, and in such a manner as shall be approved in advance in writing by Easement Owners.

5. There shall be no disturbance of the surface, including but not limited to filling, excavation, removal of topsoil, sand, gravel, rocks or minerals, or change of the topography of the land in any manner, except as may be reasonably necessary to carry out the uses permitted on the property.

6. The Town of Hardwick shall not give, grant, sell, convey, subdivide, partition, convey in separate parcels, transfer, mortgage, pledge, lease or otherwise encumber the Protected Property without the prior written approval of the Easement Owners.

7. There shall be no operation of motor vehicles on the property except for agriculture, wildlife and forest management, education, trail grooming, maintenance, and for safety or emergency purposes, and for certain limited recreational uses as provided in the Permitted Uses section.

8. Easement Owners may determine whether proposed uses or proposed improvements not contemplated by or addressed in this Easement, or alterations in existing uses or structures, are consistent with the Purposes of this Easement.

Permitted Uses of the Protected Property

The Town of Hardwick shall have the right to make the following uses of the Protected Property:

1. All types of non-commercial, non-motorized recreational purposes consistent with the Purposes of this Easement and the Management Plan. Mechanized recreation and animals capable of transporting humans must stay away from Ecological Protection Zones.

2. The right to establish, maintain and use fields, orchards and pastures for existing and approved agricultural uses, recreational, scenic or open space purposes and/or for the purpose of maintaining or enhancing wildlife habitat, plant habitat or scenic vistas or values on the Protected Property. Initial forest clearing activity needs prior written approval of Easement Owners.

3. The right to perform forest management activities, including maple sugaring, the harvest of timber, other wood products and commercial non-timber forest products, as long as they are in line with the Management Plan, under the supervision of a professional forester, and meet state management practices.

4. The right to construct and maintain agricultural barns, sugar houses, wood sheds or similar structures or facilities, together with necessary access drives and utilities, with prior approval in writing by the Easement Owners.

5. The right to use, maintain, establish, construct, and improve water sources, courses, and bodies without unnecessarily disturbing the natural course of the surface water drainage and runoff. The construction of ponds or reservoirs shall be permitted only upon the prior written approval of Easement Owners. In addition, the following shall be designated as water protection areas:

    a. 100 feet from the top of any stream bank

    b. all ‘significant wetlands’ and their buffer zones.

The principal goal for management within the water protection areas is to maintain or enhance their ecological benefits.

6. The right to maintain, repair, improve, relocate and replace existing recreational trails, together with the right to clear, construct, repair, improve, maintain and replace new trails.

7. The right to conduct public events, including concerts, fairs and celebrations, provided that such events shall not result in the clearing of any forested areas. The right to construct, maintain, repair and use one unpaved parking lot on the Protected Property.The Town of Hardwick shall first obtain the prior written approval of Easement Owners for these activities.

8. The right to maintain and replace existing roads, together with the right to construct new forest management and public access roads.

9. The right to charge members of the public reasonable fees for admission to and use of the Protected Property, for community and public recreation, education or entertainment events or to support the management of the Protected Property. Members of the public may not be charged a fee to walk on the Protected Property.

10. The right to conduct and authorize temporary commercial and non-commercial uses as long as they do not interfere with the access of the general public and do not detract from the Purposes of this Easement, and are detailed in an approved Management Plan.

11. The right to construct structures, drives and utilities reasonably necessary to support the uses permitted by this Easement.

12. The Town of Hardwick may allow recreational all-terrain vehicle ("ATV") use and maintenance and repair of an ATV trail across the Protected Property that connects to an existing, legal network of ATV trails, provided that the ATV connecting trail and network have no significant negative impact on the conservation or public recreation values and the Town of Hardwick has received the prior written approval of the Easement Owners for such use.

Public Access

BMTF must remain open to the public for dispersed recreational access.

Ecological Protection Zone

The Ecological Protection Zone is approximately 7.3 acres of state-significant Northern Hardwood Talus Woodland. The highest priority for all activities in the EPZ will be the protection of the Northern Hardwood Talus Woodland natural community.

Enforcement of the Restrictions

The Easement Owners have the right of reasonable access to make periodic inspection of the Protected Property for inspection and enforcement purposes.

III.TOWN OBJECTIVES

The creation of BMTF is an effort by the Town of Hardwick to preserve public access to the

Buffalo Mountain acreage forever. The forest will be managed to ensure the health of its various ecosystems so as to preserve the variety of plant and wildlife that is found there today.

The Town of Hardwick seeks to acquire the land, with assistance from TPL, NRLT, and various other entities, putting it into open public ownership, protecting it from development, and managing it for forest resources, wildlife habitat, aquatic resources, public recreation and education. The Town of Hardwick values the complex suite of both monetary and non-monetary benefits that forests provide including timber revenues, non-timber forest product revenues, tourism and recreation, water supply and water quality protection, carbon sequestration, open space protection, education, wildlife habitat protection, and a sense of community and increased civic pride.

Administration of the Buffalo Mountain Town Forest

The Buffalo Mountain Community Forest Stewardship Committee will take the lead role in managing BMTF and the implementation of the goals established by this Management Plan. The Hardwick Selectboard will have ultimate decision-making authority over BMTF after receiving recommendations from the Stewardship Committee. Further details are discussed below in section XI (Proposed Governance Structure).

The Lamoille County Forester will provide assistance and advice pertaining to forest treatments. The Lamoille County Forester oversees Hardwick in addition to Lamoille County municipalities. Overall management will be done in accordance with the Conservation Easement and this Management Plan, as approved by NRLT and VHCB.

General Purposes and Goals

- To preserve and conserve the 329.5-acre property on Buffalo Mountain so that residents and visitors have access to explore and recreate within a healthy northern New England ecosystem.
- Where possible, to expand public use, educational programming, and enhanced recreational opportunities, while preserving the health and natural diversity of the land.

Wildlife Habitat and Natural Resource Goals:

- Maintain and protect the existing biodiversity and ecological integrity.
- Contribute to environmental resilience, particularly by providing terrain for wildlife mobility.
- Protect and conserve rare species and habitats.
- Maintain healthy surface and groundwater sources and availability.
- Protect forested and non-forested wetlands, vernal pools and other aquatic habitats.
- Maintain and protect the diversity of habitats and the plant and wildlife that flourish therein.
- Prevent, or at best limit, the introduction and spread of invasive species.
- Adhere to current best practice guidelines in our approach to management of the land, the forest and the wildlife.

Educational Goals

- Partner with local educational institutions, conservation organizations, and people of all ages to use the forest as a classroom.
- Install low-impact signage and offer guided programming highlighting natural communities, biodiversity, and good stewardship practices.
- Educate visitors on Leave No Trace principles, protect sensitive features, and promote safe co-existence across recreational uses through seasonal hunting notices and trail etiquette.

Recreational and Cultural Goals:



- Preserve existing forest recreational uses.
- Support and encourage a diverse array of compatible recreational uses.
- Improve upon existing access points with clear signage and trail maps. Consider developing new access points if they would improve users' experience.
- Encourage community engagement with the property, and in so doing, enhance awareness of and pride in a special town resource.
- Increase accessibility on BMTF wherever possible, considering different abilities.

Forest Stewardship Goals

- Maintain the health and biodiversity of the property.
- *See also forest management plan goals.*

III. INFRASTRUCTURE

(see also Baseline Documentation Report)

General Topographic Description

BMTF encompasses the summit and most of the northern extent of Buffalo Mountain. This is most of the mountain that can be seen from the village of Hardwick. The lowest elevation is around 780' by the Lamoille River on the northern edge of the property, while the highest elevation is the summit at 1,555' near the southern boundary. The terrain ranges from flat floodplains in the north along the river to sheer cliffs along the east and northeast sides. The north and west sides of the property are gently to moderately sloped and encompass land that still shows evidence of historical agricultural use. In contrast, the eastern side is rugged, with cliff bands, steep talus slopes, and channels that rise and fall sharply down the mountain. This eastern escarpment is part of the Richardson Memorial Contact, a large-scale geologic discontinuity (i.e., the meeting of two differently aged bedrock formations; see V. Bedrock Geology for more information) that delineates the Northern Green Mountains and the Northern Vermont Piedmont

biophysical regions. The southern end of the property is just south of the summit, which is rounded and very gently sloped. The grade becomes steep again south of this point, on property that is not part of the Town Forest. Several small, unnamed streams which form cascades in several locations drain the mountain into Cooper Brook and the Lamoille River.

Scenic Values

The village of Hardwick is nestled along the east side of Buffalo Mountain, which rises steeply from the banks of Cooper Brook. Because of this proximity to the village, Buffalo Mountain occupies an outsize place in the local viewscape, despite not being the largest mountain in the area, nor even the highest point in town.

The mountain is visible from practically every vantage in the village of Hardwick. Many residents of the village and most, if not all, of our public buildings feature views of Buffalo Mountain directly out of their windows. All roads into town feature their own unique views of the mountain.

Perhaps the best views of the mountain are from the surrounding hills in town. Hazen Union High School on Bridgman Hill has a particularly picturesque vista over the athletic fields, where people can often catch dramatic sunsets over Buffalo Mountain. Similarly, Slapp Hill, Holton Hill, and Hopkins Hill all offer astonishing views of the mountain rising over the village.

Apart from being a central feature of our town's landscape, there are a number of points of scenic interest on Buffalo Mountain itself.

- **River Floodplain:** The Town Forest includes 9.3 acres of floodplain along the Lamoille River as it bends along Route 15 and the LVRT west of the village. This area today is mostly open meadow, with a mature stand of shady Silver Maples and sandy banks along the river which could all serve as easily accessible picnic spots. This area also features several uncommon and rare plant species.
- **Orchard:** On the east side of Wright Farm Road near its highest elevation an old apple orchard still produces, and old pastureland is being reclaimed by forest. Some views towards West Hill are currently visible even in summer from this area. There is also an old cellar hole and other remnants of the historical use as farmland.
- **Summit:** There are limited views from the summit of the mountain, which is currently forested, though some views open to the north (especially in winter) on a logging road that winds down from the summit.



- **Waterfalls:** A few streams flow down the mountain, forming cascades in several areas. A trail leading up from Union Street in the West End follows an especially scenic brook with one such cascade.
- **Cliffs:** There are several impressive cliff brows along the eastern side of the mountain. The cliffs and the talus woodland they rise above are beautiful in their own right, and some of them also offer unique views of the village of Hardwick. Presumably due to the difficulty of logging this area, some of the oldest trees in the area are found here, including large yellow birch and red spruce upwards of 200 years old.
- **Granite Industry:** Traces of the old granite industry are apparent near Atkins Field. Part of the access from this area was developed for the railroad to the quarries. Grout from granite operations is scattered in some locations. The remnants of the concrete footings for the traveling crane that served the granite works at Atkins Field are also still visible on this property.

The seasonal changes on Buffalo Mountain are typical for the area. In summer, much of the woods is mature enough to keep undergrowth low. The forest is dominated by mixed hardwoods, which turn a luxurious palette of reds, yellows, and oranges in the fall. Views open up around the mountain when leaves are down in the winter, and the cascading streams rush energetically down in the spring, meandering through a carpet of ramps and wildflowers.

Access Points and Roads

BMTF is primarily accessed by the public from Wright Farm Road or from Atkins Field. The property is also crossed by both the LVRT and a roadbed used as a VAST and Vermont ATV Sportsmen's Association (VASA) trail and benefited by a right-of-way for management purposes through an adjacent log yard.



Wright Farm Road

ATV and snowmobile users, as well as pedestrians, cyclists, and equestrians, can access BMTF from the Class Four road that borders the western boundary of BMTF. Wright Farm Road provides the only public road access to BMTF. Wright Farm Road provides legal and physical access to the property for management and recreation. Wright Farm Road is not affected by the creation of BMTF, in that public access is currently allowed at the discretion of the Town of Hardwick, but the road is an essential point of access to the land. Wright Farm Road is currently used and maintained as a VAST and VASA

trail. Wright Farm Road enters and exits BMTF to the north and the south, providing connectivity to the LVRT and Route 15 to the north and Buffalo Mountain Road to the south.

Currently, there is a parking lot on Town land adjacent to BMTF that is used by recreationalists accessing Wright Farm Road.

Atkins Field

BMTF is bordered by a 15-acre community green space located off of Granite Street. Atkins Field, owned by the Center for an Agricultural Economy (CAE) and conserved with a conservation easement held by VHCB and the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food, and Markets, is home to a community pavilion and the Hardwick Farmers Market. The trail behind the field offers recreational access to BMTF and is an established VAST and VASA trail that connects to Buffalo Mountain Road and Route 15. While there is no legal right to cross Atkins Field to access BMTF, Atkins Field is publicly accessible, meaning pedestrian traffic from the Atkins Field parking lot can cross into BMTF.

If additional access through Atkins Field is desired, the Town of Hardwick should coordinate directly with CAE to negotiate access.



Connector Trail

A VAST and VASA trail enters BMTF from Atkins Field to the north and Ken Davis's log yard to the south, providing pedestrian, cyclist, equestrian, snowmobile, and ATV access through the property.

Lamoille Valley Rail Trail (LVRT)

Pedestrians, cyclists, cross-country skiers, and snowmobile users travel through BMTF for 0.6 miles along the LVRT, a 93-mile-long rail trail stretching from St. Johnsbury to Swanton, VT. The LVRT intersects with Wright Farm Road and crosses east-west across the northern section of BMTF by the Lamoille River.

Ken Davis's Logyard

A legal right-of-way for vehicular and pedestrian access to BMTF for management purposes crosses into the southeastern side of BMTF through the sawmill property currently owned by Ken Davis. This right-of-way does not provide for public or recreational access.

Route 15

The northern boundary of BMTF borders Route 15.

Boundary Lines

Eastern Boundary

Starting at the intersection of Wright Farm Road and the LVRT, the boundary follows the high voltage power line to the southeast, with a few inholdings of private property marked by corner posts. This section is mostly steep sidehill. It joins and follows the Hardwick-Woodbury rail bed

briefly along Cooper Brook before reaching the edge of the old log yard at the end of Brook Street, where the boundary turns southwest and climbs the cliffs that overlook the village.

Southern Boundary

The boundary turns northwest, climbing to pass near the summit of Buffalo Mountain. Then it zigzags through open, rolling hardwoods down to Wright Farm Road where a corner pipe is clearly visible.

Western Boundary

The boundary then follows Wright Farm Road downhill most of the way to the Lamoille River before turning west at a corner post and zigzagging through the woods to the rail trail.

Northern Boundary

From here, the boundary follows the rail trail west before taking a hard turn northeast to the river, through the first field. The boundary follows the river back to Wright Farm Road, with the addition of a couple small sections on the north side of the river out to Route 15. These sections are just west of Jackson Bridge. The boundary then cuts south through the woods to the rail trail, then back to the start at the intersection with Wright Farm Road. This section is mostly flat floodplain with some swampy sections.

See Appendix C for the full Boundary Retracement Survey.

IV. GEOLOGY AND SOILS

Bedrock Geology

BMTF straddles the boundary between the Northern Green Mountains and the Northern Vermont Piedmont biophysical regions. These regions are essentially demarcated by the rugged cliffs on the eastern side of the mountain, along a geologic boundary that extends for miles north and south of Hardwick, known as the Richardson Memorial Contact (RMC). The RMC is defined by the meeting of two differentially aged rock formations, the Moretown and Northfield Formations, both derived from metamorphosed ancient ocean bottom sediments. The bulk of the property is underlain by the older of the two, the Moretown Formation, composed of granofels, phyllites, and quartzites that are lower Ordovician to Cambrian age (~480-500 million years ago [MYA]). The Northfield Formation is mapped in a narrow band on the eastern edge of the property and consists of younger, upper Silurian quartzites and phyllites (~420 MYA). The core of the mountain is the youngest, a Devonian granite pluton (~360-420 MYA) that pushed up through the surrounding Moretown Formation. These bedrock types are typically acidic, though locally enriched pockets can be found. There are frequent bedrock exposures throughout the property, primarily on the rugged eastern slopes, where all three bedrock formations can be seen.

Soils

See Map E: Buffalo Mountain Town Forest Soil Types Map and Appendix J: Soil Types and Descriptions

V. FOREST MANAGEMENT

See Appendix D: Buffalo Mountain Town Forest Management Plan, by County Forester Emily Sayers

VI. WILDLIFE

BMTF will protect existing contiguous forest habitat that many animals depend on, including

species like bobcats and black bears that require large forest blocks for survival. Such habitat, together with other important habitats such as wetlands, river corridors, vernal pools, also supports natural ecological processes such as predator/prey interactions and natural disturbance. Conservation of this property helps protect landscape connectivity and wildlife movement between Caledonia and Lamoille counties.

Conserving such a large portion of land is especially important for animals that require a great deal of space to meet their daily life needs, such as barred owls or northern river otters. Although connecting habitat is often associated with wide-ranging mammals, it is equally important for animals with relatively small ranges. Spotted salamanders, for example, use connecting habitat in spring to move from their hibernation sites to breeding pools.

The value of connecting habitat is a function of both seasonal and spatial patterns of wildlife behavior. For example, connecting habitat may allow black bears to access important food resources during a specific time of year (seasonal), or it may prevent isolation of bear populations by allowing free exchange of breeding adults (spatial). Ultimately, connecting habitat can ensure that the habitat, movement, migration, and behavior requirements of most native plants and animals are conserved across a broad landscape.

Important habitat features of this property include wetlands, river channel, and woodland seeps, which can serve as important spring foraging sites, breeding sites for amphibians and birds, and water catchment.

The vernal pools and seeps provide breeding habitat for amphibians like salamanders and frogs. Preservation of the Lamoille River riparian corridor is critical for species that depend on undisturbed waterways and riparian areas.



The upland forests on the property, primarily Northern Hardwood Forest, provide habitat for a range of species. White-tailed deer frequently find food resources in the herbs, shrubs, and new growth of trees in these forests. Abundant food sources in the fall allow deer to accumulate more fat going into winter, increasing their chances of survival. Fall foods consist of herbaceous material, leaves of woody plants, and mast such as beechnuts and apples. The mixture of hemlock-northern hardwoods and substantial exposed ledge systems provides ample habitat for bobcat and porcupine. The wild orchard and reclaimed meadow areas along Wright Farm Road provide nesting habitat for various birds. Additionally, open land provides a niche habitat for arthropods and small mammals. Both are critical food web elements for the apex species occupying these parcels.

A mix of tree species, size, and age classes create vertical and horizontal structure at the forest level. Periodic active management will provide/maintain habitat for a wide variety of local wildlife, including deer, black bear, moose, ruffed grouse, woodcock, turkey, songbirds, and various predators (fisher, coyote, fox, ermine, bobcat, raccoon, etc.). Beech, oak, service berry, mountain ash, and cherry mast trees are a staple for black bear and other wildlife during years of good seed crops. Softwood blowdown creates low cover for all wildlife and is generally

occurring continuously within softwood stands found on poorly drained soil or shallow soils on ledges exposed to wind. Deer, turkey, grouse, red squirrel, and various predators (fisher, fox, racoon and coyote) are the most common species found amongst the forest dwelling creatures on this property.

Food sources consist mainly of woody browse. High quality browse includes sugar maple, hobblebush, hemlock, and northern white cedar, many of which are plentiful in BMTF.

VII. RARE SPECIES AND EXEMPLARY NATURAL COMMUNITIES

The following information is from ecological assessments conducted by Matt Peters. For more information, please see the entire document in Appendix E and F.

According to the Hardwick Ecological Inventory completed on April 3, 2024, by Matt Peters, Harwick hosts a myriad of unique and ecologically important natural communities from vast forest blocks of Northern Hardwood to the tiniest rare mosses. Buffalo Mountain was identified as a home to a number of these natural communities according to his most recent work "A Rapid Ecological Assessment of the Buffalo Mountain Town Forest Expansion Tracts in Hardwick, VT" January 16, 2026.

Peters notes that there are three discrete, natural community types located on Buffalo Mountain that are deemed to be State Significant examples. These include the uncommon Northern Hardwood Talus Woodlands, the Northern Hardwood Seepage Forest as well as the Temperate Acidic Cliffs. These collectively span 14.4 acres. There are additional uncommon natural community types in addition to the state significant examples that include the following: Alluvial Shrub Swamp, River Sand or Gravel Shore, Silver Maple-Ostrich Fern Floodplain Forest, Riverside Outcrop, and a Vernal Pool.

Peters also identified 15 rare or uncommon plant species on Buffalo Mountain, one of which is globally vulnerable, three of which are regionally rare plants, nine state rare plants and species that are of greatest conservation need. These plants include nine vascular plants and six non-vascular plants (i.e. Mosses and liverworts).

The vascular plants are as follows:

Grove Hawthorn–regionally rare and the largest known concentration in New England

Welt Fern–uncommon

Northern running-pine club moss–a rare to very rare club moss

Wright's Spike rush–rare and globally vulnerable

Matted Spike-rush–uncommon

Ovate Spike-rush–uncommon

Wiegand's Wild Rye–uncommon

Meadow Horsetail–uncommon

Frank's Love-grass–uncommon

The non-vascular plants are as follows:

Four toothed Moss (two types)--one is rare (Tetrodontium brownianum) and the other is very rare (Tetrodontium ovatum)

Warrior Moss–rare

Two-ranked Moss–rare to uncommon

Oake's Wood Moss–rare

Endive Pellia liverwort–uncertain

VIII. WATER RESOURCES

Rivers and Streams

BMTF lies entirely within the Lamoille River watershed and is drained by the Lamoille River, Cooper Brook, and a few small unnamed headwater streams. The property flanks the Lamoille River for about 0.7 miles (~3,500 ft) on one or both sides of the river, and closely abuts Cooper Brook, a Lamoille River tributary, for about 880 feet along its west bank. There are also approximately 0.6 miles (3,235 ft) of small, unnamed 'blue-line' headwater streams, as mapped by the Vermont Hydrographic Dataset, plus a few additional small, unmapped, intermittent channels on the eastern slopes. Within BMTF, the Lamoille River ranges from about 35 to over 100 feet across depending on water level and location. The channel is a consistently low-gradient, relatively unconfined reach within the valley bottom, with VT Route 15, the LVRT (with a ~350 ft section of riprap), and a few localized Riverside Outcrops of bedrock as the main constraints to lateral migration. Apart from these small outcrops, the channel bed, banks, and adjacent floodplain are composed mainly of silt and fine sand, with bars of mixed sand and gravel. The tract's location directly below the Jackson Dam and the municipal wastewater treatment facility make it more likely to have ecological concerns; further assessment of river condition is available through state stream geomorphic assessments and water quality testing. Adjacent to the Town Forest, Cooper Brook has an 18–30 ft wide channel, largely with a gravel/cobble bed that includes industrial debris from the area's historical granite trade.

Wetlands

Field-verified wetlands are somewhat sparsely scattered across the tract's mostly hilly terrain, totaling about 15.2 acres, or almost 5% of the property. An additional ~9 acres of open floodplain fields along the Lamoille River (mapped as 'Openings') may contain unmapped jurisdictional wetland, though that determination was beyond the scope of the assessment. Floodplain wetlands along the Lamoille River and Cooper Brook account for about 75% of the mapped wetland area and consist mainly of Alluvial Shrub Swamp (2.8 acres), Alder Swamp (0.8 acres), River Sand or Gravel Shore (1.9 acres), and remnant patches of successional Silver Maple–Ostrich Fern Floodplain Forest (5.5 acres). The remaining wetlands include several Woodland Seeps (1.5 acres across 5 occurrences), a small Red Maple–Black Ash Seepage Swamp (0.4 acres), and the State-Significant Northern Hardwood Seepage Forest (2.4 acres), the largest wetland on the mountain, which spans a gently sloping bench above the main cliff bands and drains via two loosely parallel intermittent stream gullies. Collectively, these wetlands enhance habitat values and biodiversity disproportionate to their area, while also providing important protections for the Town Forest's streams and river, including flood mitigation functions.

Vernal Pools

A single small Vernal Pool, roughly 0.03 acres, is found along the VAST trail at the toe of Buffalo Mountain. While this shallow basin may be artificially impounded by the trail bed, it showed some level of amphibian breeding function when observed in 2023, with wood frog tadpoles noted. Additional spring surveys are recommended to determine the extent of breeding activity and to inform whether this feature warrants special management, given its extreme proximity to the VAST trail.

Source: Peters, Matt. A Rapid Ecological Assessment of the Buffalo Mountain Town Forest Expansion Tracts in Hardwick, VT. Prepared for The Trust for Public Land, January 16, 2026 (redacted version June 11, 2026).

IX. RECREATION AND EDUCATION

In general, the purpose of the BMTF, as stated throughout this document, is to ensure that the experience of being within a natural environment is accessible to the greater community. Therefore, the Town of Hardwick intends to support all forms of compatible uses that respect the terms of the Conservation Easement and the overall community and ecological intentions of the purpose statement.

BMTF offers accessible recreation and a place for people to engage with their community and connect with nature. The property is within walking distance of the town center, including the Town Office, Jeudevine Library, Atkins Field, the LVRT, Hardwick Elementary School, Hazen Union School, and Green Mountain Tech and Career Center. Visitors may park at the access to the LVRT on Rt. 15 or at Atkins Field on Granite Street.

The town will maintain a standing Town Forest Stewardship Committee, as described below, which will regularly review and evaluate the Town Forest usage patterns, and recommend updates to policies to address conflicts among supported activities or with the overarching Town Forest purpose.

Listed below are some examples of recreational and educational activities that in the future may be either supported, supported with limitations, or proscribed by the Town of Hardwick, as circumstances warrant. This list is **illustrative only** and does not limit the consideration of any BMTF Management Plan activity not mentioned.



- Establishment of hiking trails
- Private or Public gatherings of any type
- Domestic dog access
- Bike access
- Horseback riding
- Hunting
- Fishing
- Ongoing use of snowmobiles on the VAST trail
- Ongoing ATV use on the VASA trail
- Sledding
- Back-country ski/snowboard access
- Disc golf

Proposals for future recreational uses and infrastructure: All proposals for new recreational uses or expanded recreational uses shall be made to the Buffalo Mountain Town Forest Stewardship Committee.

At the time of taking ownership, the Town of Hardwick establishes the following baseline guidance for activities on BMTF:

Hunting:

Hunting in accordance with all applicable Vermont state laws and hunting seasons is allowed in the Town Forest.

Temporary tree stands and ground blinds may be used in BMTF but may only be up from the third Sunday in August through the third Saturday in December annually, both dates inclusive. Game cameras are allowed on BMTF.

All equipment must be constructed and erected in a way that does not damage a living tree. No fasteners, such as nails, wire, or screws, may penetrate the tree bark and no living branch larger than one inch in diameter may be removed. The owner's name and address must be clearly printed on any equipment left in BMTF.

Note: The BMTF rules for hunting equipment are borrowed from VT State regulations for State lands.

Fishing:

Fishing in accordance with State regulations is allowed in BMTF.

Trapping:

In accordance with Vermont State Law, trapping on BMTF requires the permission of the Town of Hardwick. Any permission granted will be recorded in the publicly available minutes of the Selectboard.

Note: Trapping was the second least popular activity in the Community Survey, with over 50 respondents objecting to trapping and over 20 comments opposing trapping. Due to the lack of consensus among Steering Committee members on trapping on BMTF, the Committee elected to direct individual requests for trapping access to the Town on a case-by-case basis.

Foraging:

Foraging is limited to personal use. Permission of the Town of Hardwick is required for other uses.

Dogs:

Dogs must be leashed on BMTF for the safety of all dogs and visitors to the Forest.

Horses:

Horses are allowed in BMTF.

Bicycles (including Mountain Bikes and E-Bikes):

Bicycles are permitted on the connector trail between Atkins Field and Buffalo Mountain Road.

Backcountry skiing:

Backcountry skiing is allowed on BMTF. Any cutting of timber or flora for the benefit of backcountry skiing must be approved by the Town of Hardwick and completed consistent with the BMTF Forest Management Plan.

Snowmobiles:

Snowmobiles are permitted on the existing VAST trails (the loop through the old orchard off Wright Farm Road and the connector trail), as conditions allow. Snowmobilers must adhere to VAST guidelines with respect to trail closures due to conditions.

All-terrain Vehicles and other motorized recreation:

ATVs are allowed on the existing VASA trail (the connector trail). ATVs must adhere to VASA guidelines with respect to trail closures due to conditions.

Public Events and Gatherings:

Public events are allowed with the permission of the Town of Hardwick. Public events may not restrict general use of BMTF by the public. Small events of under 20 people do not require permission.

Camping:

Camping is allowed by permission of the Town of Hardwick for educational programming only at this time.

Bonfires and cookouts:

No fires are allowed in BMTF.

Swimming:

Swimming is allowed where feasible, at the risk of the swimmer. No lifeguards or other life saving equipment will be provided.

Sledding:

Sledding is allowed in BMTF. No vegetation trimming is allowed without permission from the Town of Hardwick.

X. PROPOSED GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

The Hardwick Selectboard retains the final decision-making authority for matters pertaining to BMTF. The Selectboard will appoint and empower a standing BMTF Stewardship Committee. Consistent with the Stewardship Plan, the Committee will be the point of contact and provide a forum for considering proposed Town Forest activities and actions and provide well-informed and well-considered advice and recommendations to the Selectboard regarding Town Forest management. The Stewardship Committee will regularly review and evaluate the Town Forest usage patterns and recommend updates to policies to address any conflicts among approved activities or with the overarching Town Forest purpose.

Subsequent to transfer of ownership of the property to the Town of Hardwick, a Stewardship Committee consisting of seven voting members will be appointed by the Selectboard through an open application process on rotating three-year terms. It is expected the committee will meet on a regular but infrequent schedule, likely monthly to start, and its decisions will be by majority vote of members present. A quorum will be a majority of the members currently serving on the committee. The Stewardship Committee will be guided by the Buffalo Mountain Town Forest Management Plan and will regularly seek public input. The Selectboard, in consultation with the Stewardship Committee and the Grantees of the Conservation Easement, may amend the Management Plan, the structure of the Stewardship Committee, or both, if the parties agree that such amendments are necessary or beneficial for the function of the Stewardship Committee in fulfilling the goals of this Plan and the Conservation Easement.

The Stewardship Committee should include a diversity of perspectives on all topics included in the Management Plan. Encouraging new perspectives should be considered when appointing Committee members, with the goal of forming a Committee capable of addressing each element of the Management Plan and representing the wide array of interests present in Hardwick.

Active and routine management relating to approved uses may be delegated to appropriate town committees, local organizations, contractors, or community partners, as determined by the Town of Hardwick. Maintenance and grooming of existing trails by the VAST and VASA organizations will continue at the discretion of the Town of Hardwick. Construction,

maintenance, signage and public mapping of any new recreational trails may be performed by qualified contractors, organizations, or town committees as approved by the Town of Hardwick.

XII. PROPOSED ACTION SCHEDULE

- Draft signage for the primary entrances to BMTF.
- Discuss parking and signage at Atkins Field and Route 15 with CAE and Northeast Kingdom Development Corporation, respectively. VASA may own the kiosk in the parking lot on Wright Farm Road and should be consulted regarding signage. Consider roadside signage directing drivers into parking areas from the roadway.
- Meet with a trail builder on the property to discuss potential location and cost of hiking trails.
    - *Note: Consult Jon Szalawicz, professional trail designer.*
- Explore funding mechanisms for hiking trail design and construction.
    - *Note: Consult Hannah Redmon, TPL Project Manager.*
- Continue public outreach to potential forest users and community experts, such as staff at the public schools in Hardwick and other relevant town committees.
- Conduct actions recommended in the Forest Management Plan.
    - Management of invasive bush honeysuckle is the top priority identified in the FMP. *Consult with the Hardwick Conservation Commission.*
- Update Buffalo Mountain webpage on the Town of Hardwick website with maps and the management plan.
- Consult with the Hardwick Conservation Commission to coordinate a clean-up of the banks of the Lamoille River.
    - *Note: Consult Kristen Leahy.*
    - *Determine further areas for clean-up.*

XIII. SIGNATURE PAGE

Stewardship is an ethic recognizing that the land and its natural inhabitants have an inherent worth and that we have a responsibility to manage our actions as part of that. It guides us to manage our activities to the utmost of our abilities, to ensure the future health, productivity, and well-being of the land and its natural communities and species, and to allow our successors opportunities at least equal to ours to use the land and its resources. This Town Forest Management Plan will help to guide the Town of Hardwick in actively protecting and managing their forestland and related resources.

The signatures below indicate the approval and certification of this Town Forest Management Plan by the following parties.

FEE OWNER
Town of Hardwick
Selectboard Chair

By: _____
Selectboard Chair

EASEMENT CO-HOLDER
Northern Rivers Land Trust

By: _____
Jack Travelstead
Board Chair