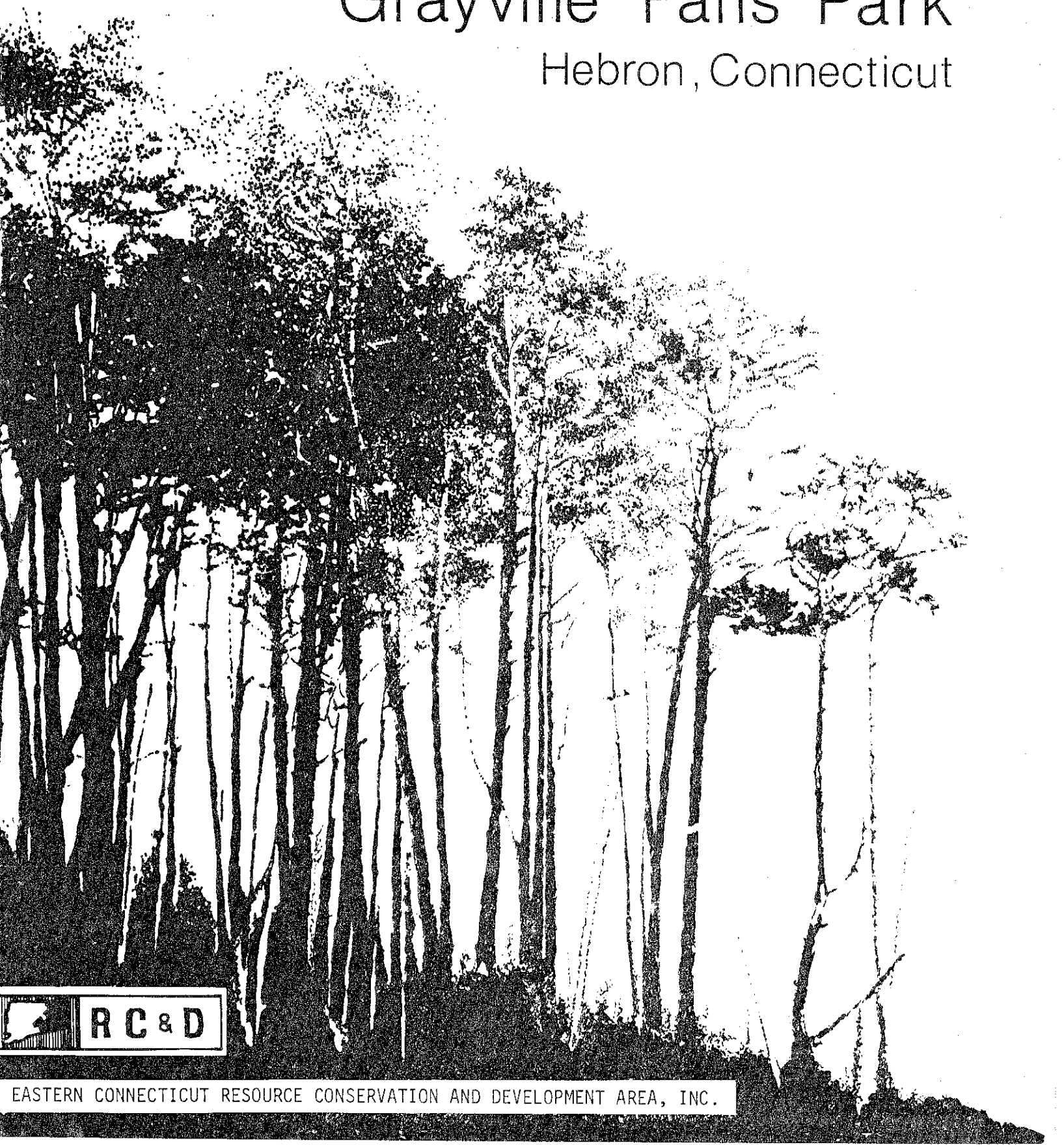
Environmental Review Team Report

Grayville Falls Park

Hebron, Connecticut



R C&D

EASTERN CONNECTICUT RESOURCE CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT AREA, INC.

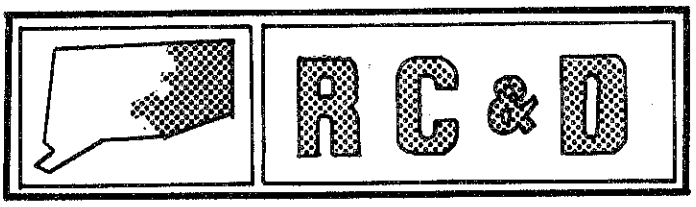
Environmental Review Team Report

on

Grayville Falls Park

Hebron, Connecticut

August 1980

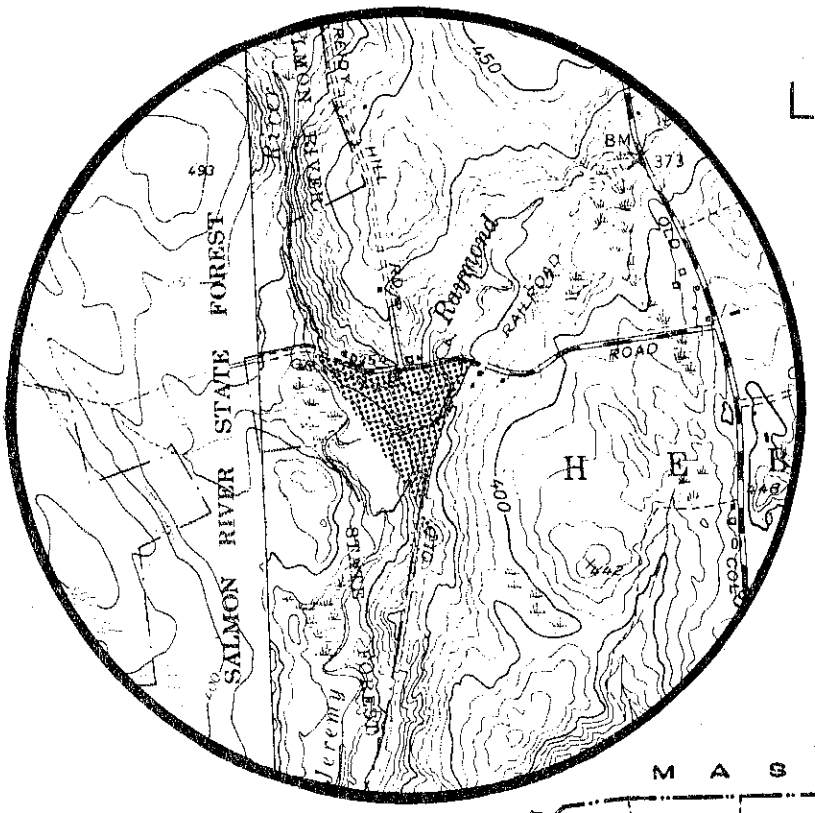


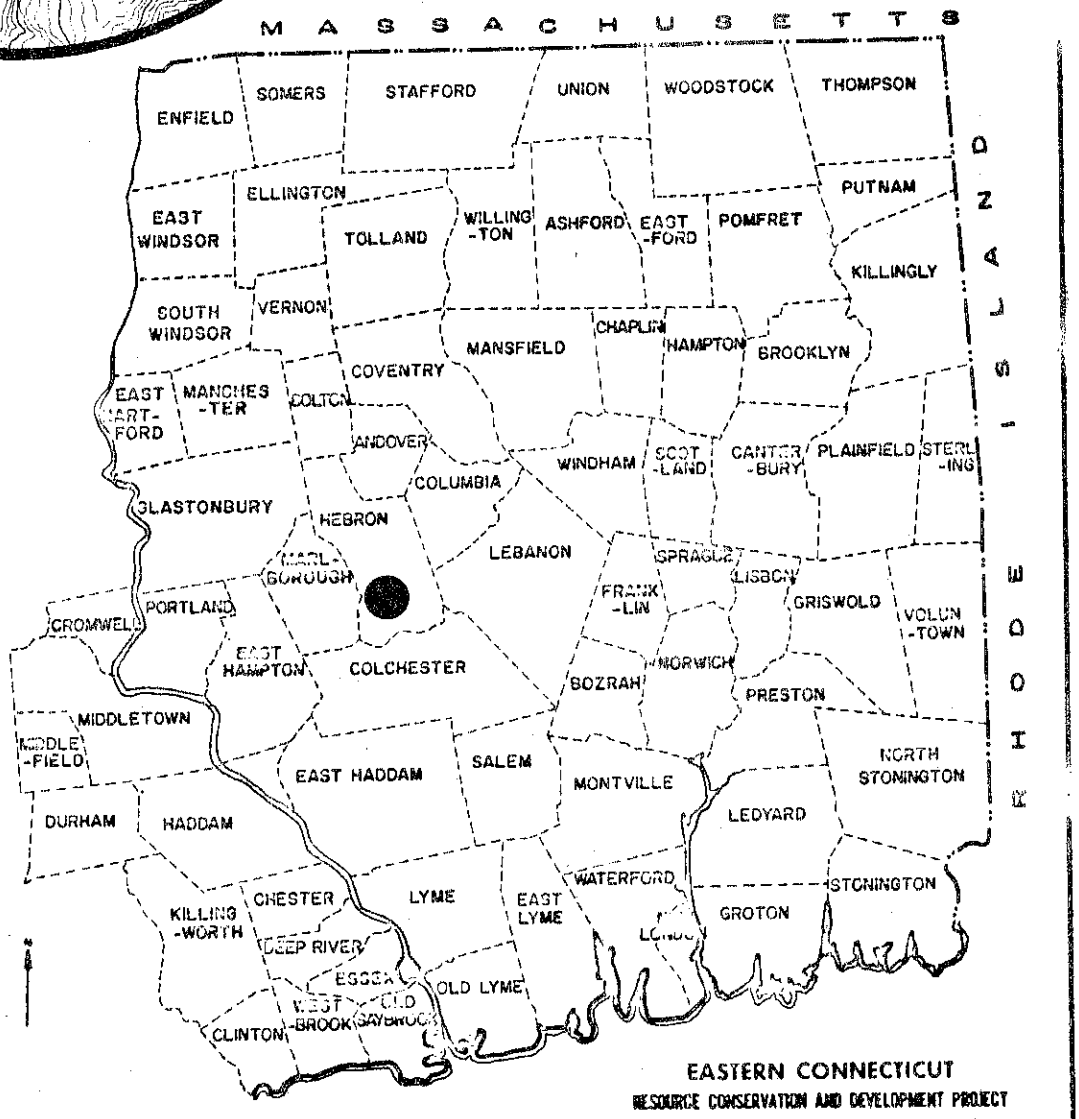
eastern connecticut resource conservation & development area

environmental review team
139 boswell avenue
norwich, connecticut 06360

Location of Study Site

Grayville Falls Park
Hebron, Connecticut





EASTERN CONNECTICUT
RESOURCE CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW TEAM REPORT
ON
GRAYVILLE FALLS PARK
HEBRON, CONNECTICUT

This report is an outgrowth of a request from the First Selectman of Hebron to the Tolland County Soil and Water Conservation District (S&WCD). The S&WCD referred this request to the Eastern Connecticut Resource, Conservation and Development (RC&D) Area Executive Committee for their consideration and approval. The request was approved and the measure was reviewed by the Eastern Connecticut Environmental Review Team (ERT).

The soils of the site were mapped by a soil scientist from the United States Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service (SCS). Reproductions of the soil survey map, a table of soils limitations for certain land uses and a topographic map showing property boundaries were distributed to all Team members prior to their review of the site.

The ERT that field-checked the site consisted of the following personnel: Joseph Neafsey, District Conservationist, SCS; Rob Rocks, Forester, Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection (DEP); Michael Zizka, Geologist, DEP; Andy Petracco, Recreation Specialist, DEP; Chuck Phillips, Fisheries Biologist, DEP; and Jeanne Shelburn, ERT Coordinator, Eastern Connecticut RC&D Area.

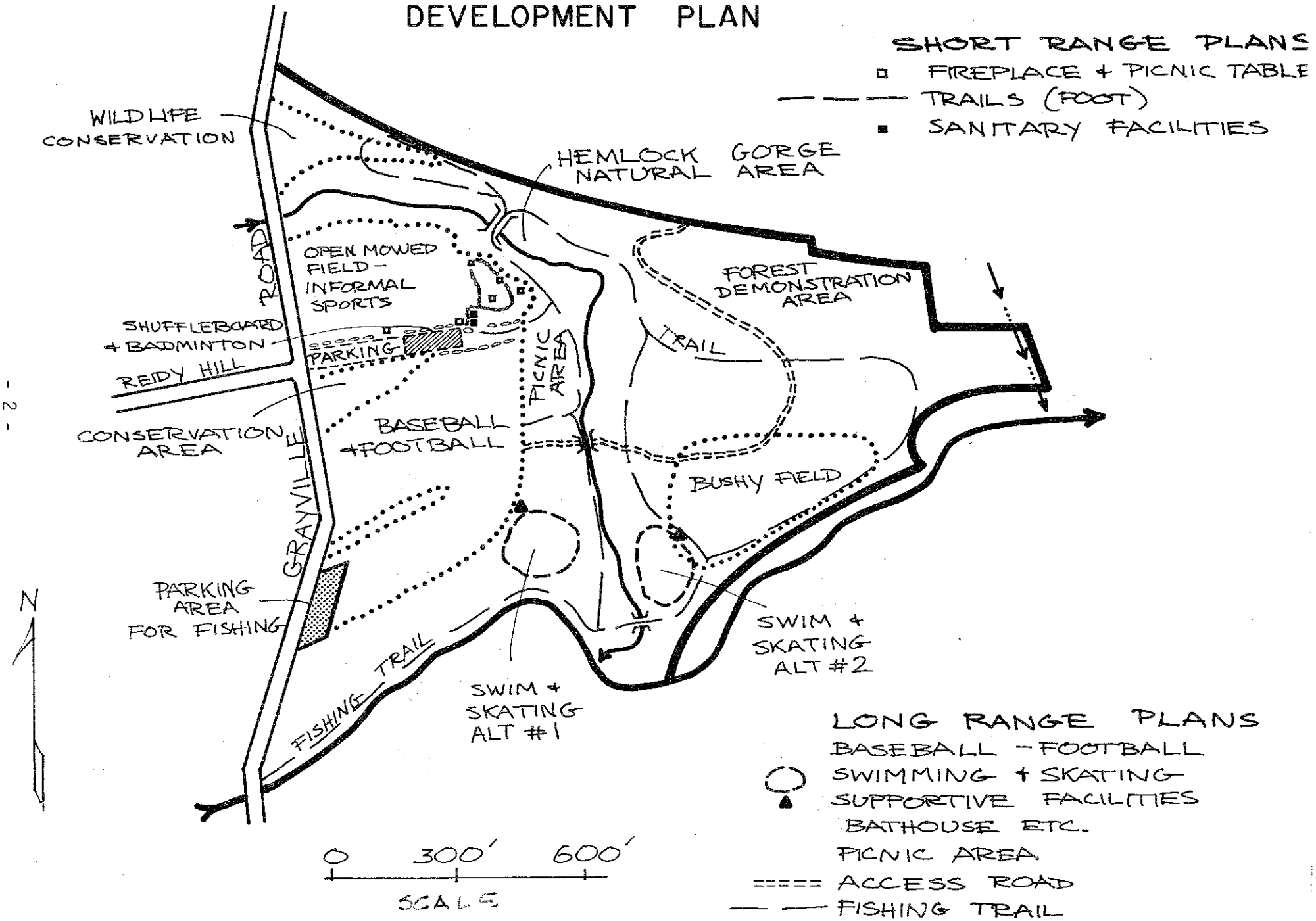
The Team met and field checked the site on Thursday, May 15, 1980. Reports from each contributing Team member were sent to the ERT Coordinator for review and summarization for the final report.

This report is not meant to compete with private consultants. As requested by the Town, this report, which identifies the existing resource base of Grayville Falls Park, shall constitute the environmental assessment portion of the Town's open space application for Federal Department of the Interior, Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service funds to assist in the development of this property.

The Eastern Connecticut RC&D Area Committee hopes that this report will be of value and assistance in making any decisions regarding this particular site.

If you require any additional information, please contact: Ms. Jeanne Shelburn, Environmental Review Team Coordinator, Eastern Connecticut RC&D Area, 139 Boswell Avenue, Norwich, Connecticut, 889-2324.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT PLAN



DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSAL

The Eastern Connecticut Environmental Review Team was asked to provide an environmental assessment for additional development in the Grayville Falls Park. The town of Hebron currently owns the 37± acre parcel located on Grayville Road near its intersection with Reidy Hill Road. It is presently used for limited recreation purposes. A large open field has been established for ball games, nature trails have been cut through some of the park's most scenic areas, picnicking and parking have also been accommodated. The town is applying for development funding from the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

The site has a diversity of ecological habitats. Raymond Brook flows through the site to its confluence with the Jeremy River. Jeremy River forms the site's western boundary. A scenic gorge has been cut through the site by Raymond Brook. Several large fields in the southern and western portions of the property are in their natural state and appear to be reverting to forest land from open pasture. Salmon River State Forest forms a major buffer to the west of the property.

The town intends to further develop the area with baseball and football fields, swimming facilities, shuffleboard and badminton, additional picnic grounds, a trail system and fishing access. These facilities would supplement those already offered at the facility and provide for future town recreational needs.

DESCRIPTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT

PAST/PRESENT LAND USE

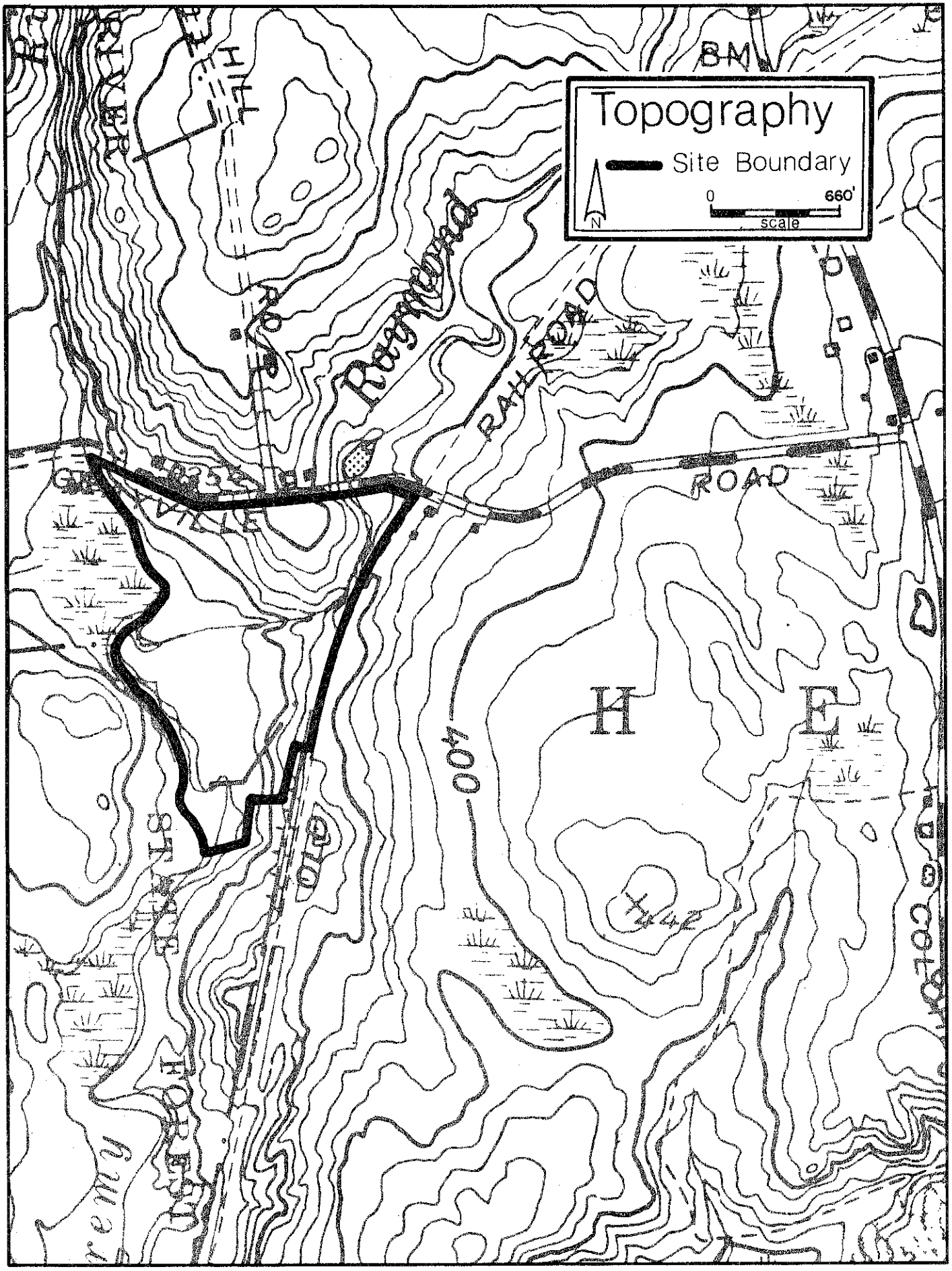
The site is presently owned and maintained by the town as a recreation/picnic area. It was formerly used for farm and pasture land.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

Hebron is expected to experience a moderate rate of growth during the next 20 years. Population projections range from 7250 in 1995 to 7500 in the year 2000. Numbers of dwelling units will grow from 2408 in 1995 to 2500 in the year 2000. Most residents are employed in the city of Hartford, as industrial and retail employment opportunities within the town are limited.

TRANSPORTATION ROUTES

The site is located on Grayville Road, a narrow, winding local street. The roadway is in good repair. The site is not centrally located in the town and development in the immediate vicinity is sparse. Access would be expected to be via automobile on Grayville Road and Reidy Hill Road.


Topography
Site Boundary
0
660'
scale
N
BM
Railroad
RAILROAD
ROAD
H
E
400
410
420
430

SURFACE/SUBSURFACE GEOLOGIC CONDITIONS

In the following description of the geology of the parcel, the geologic terms "till", "alluvium", "schist", and "gneiss" are used. Till is a glacial sediment composed of rock particles and fragments of widely varying sizes and shapes. The rock materials were accumulated by an ice sheet as it overrode preexisting soils and bedrock outcrops, scraping and scouring the surface. The sediment was redeposited directly from the ice by being either plastered onto the glaciated surface or let down gently as the ice wasted. Till is variable in texture, ranging from stony, sandy, and gravelly to silty and tightly compact.

Alluvium is a sediment deposited by modern streams in channels or on floodplains. The floodplain sediment is usually thinly layered, reflecting different periods of deposition during successive floods. Textures vary from coarse to fine, depending upon the energy of the stream at a particular area and during a particular flood. Sand and silt are the predominant components, with gravel occasionally being found in and near the stream channel. Organic material (partially decayed vegetation) is also found in some parts of these deposits.

Schist is a crystalline rock in which platy, flaky, or elongate minerals have become aligned to form distinct layers. This structure gives the rock a slabby appearance and often allows the rock to be easily split along the layers.

Gneiss is a crystalline rock in which thin layers of elongate minerals, which are often dark-colored, alternate with layers of rounder or blockier minerals, which are usually light-colored. This structure gives the rock a banded appearance and does not produce the distinct parting surfaces that are typical of schists.

Bedrock-controlled areas in the eastern half are cut by a stream (Raymond Brook) flowing westward into the flat floodplain of Jeremy River. A variably thick blanket of till overlies interbedded brownish-gray quartz-biotite-plagioclase schist and greenish-gray calc-silicate gneiss. The rock is widely exposed in the eastern half of the site along the banks and in the bed of Raymond Brook. The till in this part of the property generally ranges in thickness from 0-10 feet, with the thicker sections being located in the higher, more moderately sloping areas. On the floodplain in the western half of the site, the average thickness of the overburden probably is greater than in the eastern half, possibly ranging up to 20 feet. The upper portion of the overburden is alluvium, which on this site consists primarily of sand and silt with some gravel. The alluvium probably extends no deeper than 5 feet in most places. Sandy and gravelly sediments deposited by glacial meltwaters may underlie the alluvium, but no test hole or well records were available to confirm this. The alluvium may be partly deltaic in origin; the abrupt change in the topography from east to west may have caused Raymond Brook to drop suspended particles very rapidly at the end of its rocky ravine.

SOILS

Soils typical of this site include the Charlton series, the Leicester, Ridgebury, Whitman series, the Sutton series, the Hollis series and the Saco series.

Charlton fine sandy loam, 8-15% slopes, (CaC), Charlton stony fine sandy loam, 3-8% slopes, (ChB), 8-15% slopes, (ChC), and Charlton very stony fine sandy loam,

15-25% slopes, (CrD) are well drained upland soils which have developed in glacial till. Surface runoff is medium to rapid and internal drainage is medium. Permeability is moderate or moderately rapid. Moisture holding capacity is high to moderate. As natural soil fertility is moderate, grasses and legumes will require an application of lime and fertilizer. In Charlton fine sandy loam (CaC) there is a moderate risk of erosion on unprotected slopes. Use of Charlton stony fine sandy loam is limited by the number of stones found in this soil type. Stones interfere with most uses for Charlton very stony fine sandy loam and there is a high risk of erosion on unprotected slopes.

Leicester, Ridgebury, Whitman very stony complex (Lg) is a poorly drained, nearly level to gently sloping series. Stones and wetness are its major limitations to development. Surface runoff is slow to medium and internal drainage is slow. A perched fluctuating water table above the fragipan is at or near the surface for 7 to 9 months of the year. The soil has low erosion potential and low fertility in an undrained condition. Activities in this soil type are regulated under P.A. 155.

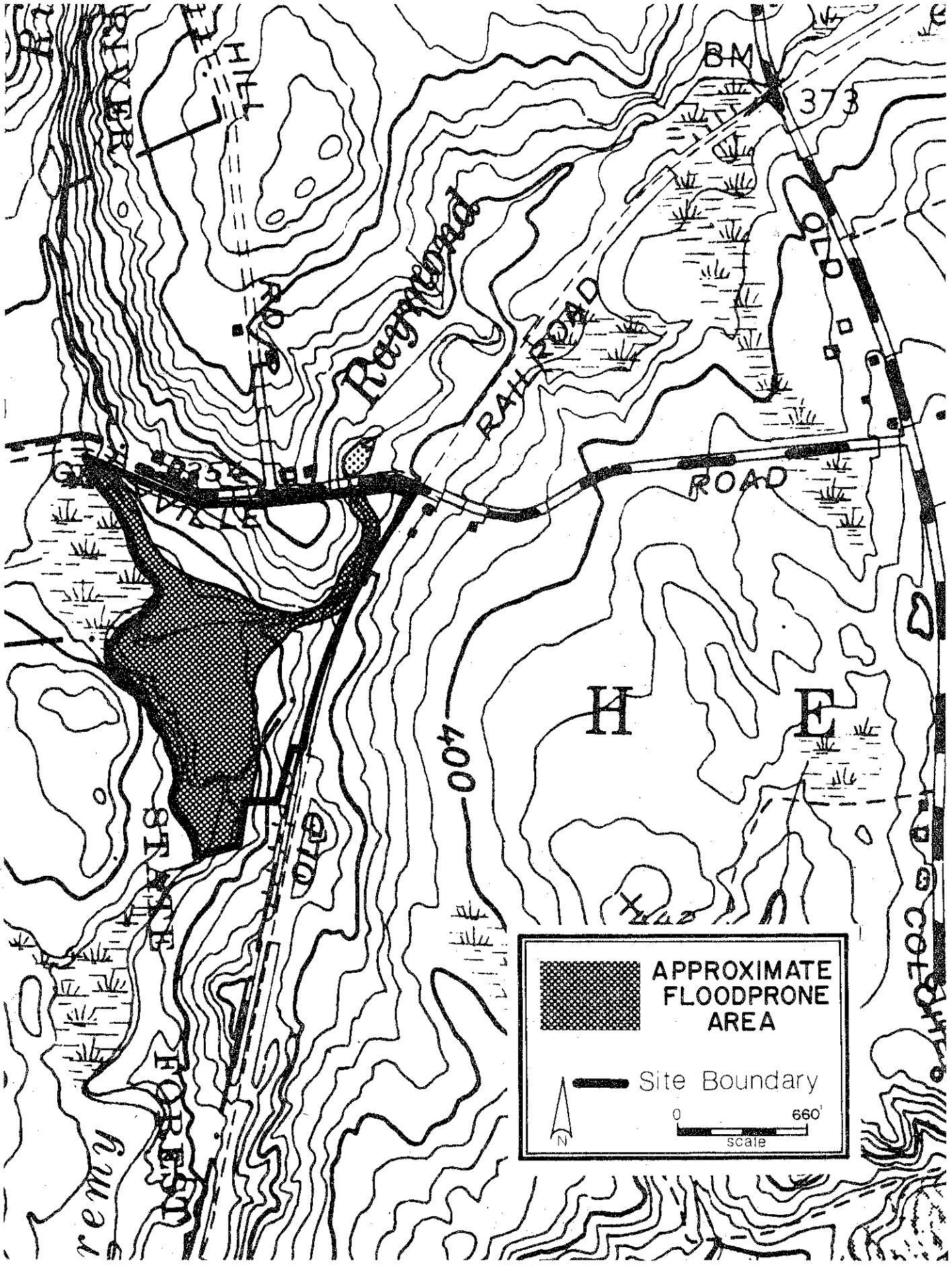
Sutton, stony fine sandy loam, 0-3% slope (SwA) is a very stony soil developed on deep gravel till. It is moderately well drained, has a seasonal high water table, and a high moisture holding capacity. Surface runoff is slow to medium and internal drainage is slow to medium. Permeability is moderate or moderately rapid. The risk of erosion is slight on unprotected slopes. These soils have slight limitations for trail development and severe limitations for septic tank absorption fields due to wetness.

Hollis very rocky fine sandy loam, 3-15% slope (HrC) is a shallow very rocky soil generally 10 to 20 inches in depth to bedrock. It is well drained to somewhat excessively drained. Bedrock outcrops are frequent. Surface runoff is medium to very rapid, internal drainage is medium to rapid. Permeability is moderate to moderately rapid. Natural fertility in these soils is low to moderate. The risk of erosion is moderate to high on unprotected slopes. Limitations range from slight to moderate for trail, path, or picnic area development.

Saco fine sandy loam (Sa) is a deep very poorly drained soil found on flood plains. These soils are nearly level and have formed in recently deposited alluvium. Surface runoff is slow to very slow; internal drainage is very slow; permeability is moderate. Flooding from stream overflow is common in early spring and after periods of heavy rainfall. Saco soils have severe limitations for most uses.

WATER RESOURCES

Two major watercourses are found within the site. Jeremy River forms the western boundary of the parcel, flowing south through a flat floodplain area. Raymond Brook, which is tributary to the river, transects the property into northern and southern sections of approximately equal size. The brook features a scenic cascade in the eastern portion of the site as it curves southwest to west through a narrow ravine carved into the underlying schist bedrock. This site is located entirely within the upper portion of the Salmon River drainage basin. Salmon River is specially protected from effluents that are less than tertiary treated (Conn. Gen. Stat. Section 25-26 (b)).


BM
373
OLD
Raymond
RAILROAD
ROAD
H
E
400
APPROXIMATE
FLOODPRONE
AREA
Site Boundary
0
660'
scale
N

Jeremy River and Raymond Brook each drain areas of several square miles. The drainage areas are only lightly built up at present. The most heavily developed sections are (1) around Amston Lake, located two miles east of the site in the Raymond Brook watershed; (2) in the Hebron village center, approximately three miles north of the site and including areas within each watershed; and (3) in a series of new residential subdivisions along Old Colchester Road, one to two miles north of the site and primarily within the Jeremy River watershed.

On-site water supplies from the eastern section of the site would have to be provided by the bedrock aquifer. If a septic system were established in this section, however, protection of the groundwater would be of more concern than it would in the other parcels because of the shallow depth to bedrock. The western, floodplain section of the property may have more potential for the establishment of moderate- to high-yielding wells, since sand and gravel deposits may underlie the alluvial surficial cover. Present indications are that such deposits, even if present, are unlikely to be either thick enough or coarse enough to present good opportunities for such yields; nevertheless, further testing of these sediments may be desirable in the future.

The approximate extent of areas in this parcel that are subject to inundation during a 100-year flood is shown in an accompanying illustration. This information was modified from a preliminary flood-hazard map released by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Federal Insurance Administration.

WILDLIFE

The parcel has a variety of habitat types for wildlife. Woodland, wetland, managed fields, overgrown fields, streams, a rock gorge and proximity to large areas of open space makes the area suitable for a variety of plant life and wildlife forms. Elements of habitat exist for birds, small and large mammals, reptiles, amphibians and fish.

Insects, grasses, legumes, fruiting trees and shrubs, berries, nuts and seeds provide food for wildlife. Water cover and nesting areas are present for many types of animals.

FISH

The Jeremy River and Raymond Brook flowages constitute the primary natural resources on the parcel. Each is stocked with trout above the town property. Trout were observed feeding in the Jeremy River immediately below the junction of Raymond Brook. Both streams are tributaries in the Salmon River watershed which is largely owned by the State of Connecticut. Fish species inhabiting the streams in addition to trout are red fin pickerel, blacknose dace, longnose dace, briddle shiner, darters and white suckers. Other minnow species may be present as well. Aquatic insect life is abundant in lower Raymond Brook and the Jeremy River.

At present both streams have well developed canopies which provide full shading and help to sustain cool water temperatures. A minimum buffer strip of one-hundred (100) feet should be maintained along both streams to maintain shade.

Runoff from developed areas should be designed to minimize sediment loads in order to protect the lower section of Raymond Brook and the Jeremy River where silt would be expected to settle out,negatively impacting aquatic insect life.

The ponds proposed as part of the recreation area would be too small to support an important recreational fishery and would serve as no benefit to fishery resources in the area.

Developing this area for active recreation is not desirable from a fisheries resource perspective.

VEGETATION

Vegetation types found on the property are described as follows:

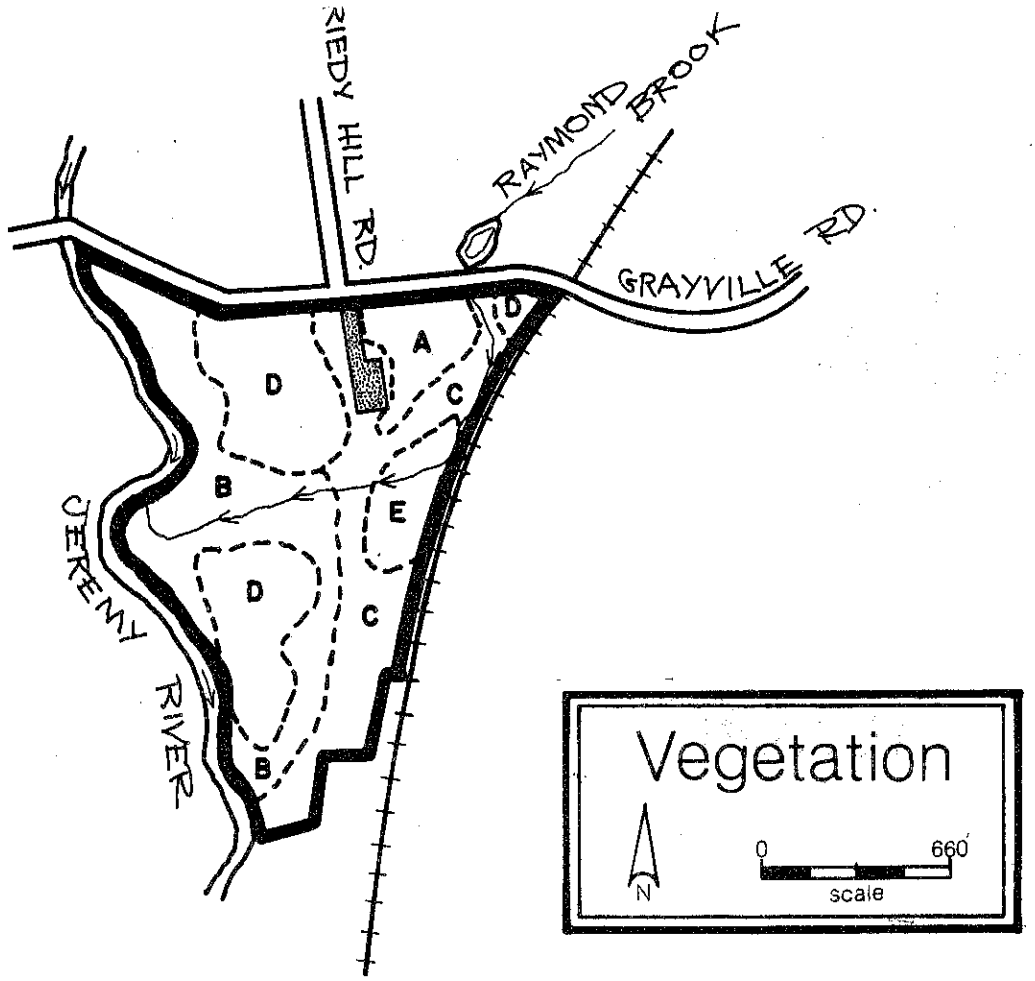
Type A. (Open Fields) - Grasses are the dominant form of vegetation. Wild flower and weed species are also present, they include; goldenrod, clover, cinquefoil, violets, buttercup, wild strawberry, bluets, wild parsnip and wood-betony.

Type B. (Hardwood Swamp) - Sapling to pole size red maple in clumps are present along with scattered white ash and yellow birch in these stands. The dense understory present in all of these areas is made up of highbush blueberry, maleberry, spice-bush, swamp azalea and arrowwood. Ground cover is made up of skunk cabbage, false hellebore, sensitive fern, cinnamon fern, Christmas fern, trout lily, Solomon's seal, violets, trillium, Jack-in-the-pulpit, horse-tails, mosses, tall meadow-rue, tussock sedge and sphagnum moss.

Type C. (Mixed Hardwoods) - This fully-stocked stand is made up of medium quality pole to sawtimber size red oak, white oak and red maple, with scattered sugar maple and white ash. Highbush blueberry, witch hazel, blue beech, arrowwood and hardwood tree seedlings are present in the understory. Club moss, Canada Mayflower, hayscented fern and grasses dominate the ground cover in this stand.

Type D. (Old Fields) - Many shrub species have become established, these include gray stemmed dogwood, multiflora rose, high bush blueberry, maleberry and silky willow. Less abundant are sapling size eastern red cedar, gray birch, bigtooth aspen, quaking aspen, multiflora rose and red maple. Ground cover is made up of grasses, goldenrod, bayberry, poison ivy, black-eyed Susan, Queen Ann's lace, cinquefoil and wild strawberry.

Type E. (Hemlock) - Pole and sawtimber size hemlock are present in this fully-stocked stand, along with occasional black birch and black oak. Hemlock saplings and seedlings are present in the understory along with scattered hardwood tree seedlings. Ground cover, where present, is made up of Christmas fern, Canada Mayflower and club moss.



LEGEND

- Road
- Abandoned Railroad
- Stream
- River
- Property Boundary
- Vegetation Type Boundary
- Pond
- Parking Area

VEGETATION TYPE DESCRIPTIONS*

TYPE A. Open Fields.
TYPE B. Hardwood Swamp.
TYPE C. Mixed hardwoods.
TYPE D. Old Fields.
TYPE E. Hemlock.

* Seedling Size = trees less than 1 inch in diameter at 4 1/2 feet above the ground (d.b.h.)
Sapling Size = trees 1 to 5 inches in d.b.h.
Pole Size = trees 5 to 11 inches in d.b.h.
Sawtimber Size = trees 11 inches and greater in d.b.h.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

EFFECT ON LAND USE

This proposal will have no appreciable effect on land uses in the area.

EFFECT ON SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

This proposal will not have a significant effect on the present socio-economic conditions in the town or the region.

EFFECT ON TRANSPORTATION ROUTES

This proposal will have minor effect on traffic conditions in the area. The site is already used for recreation purposes, additional development may generate a slight increase in traffic.

EFFECT ON WATER RESOURCES

Usage of the parcel for the suggested recreational activities should not noticeably affect the quality or quantity of surface waters or of groundwater. The greatest potential for problems would arise if septic systems were to be established on any of the sites. In the eastern part of this site, special care would be needed to prevent unpurified wastewater from entering the bedrock fracture network, which may be the source of a local wellwater supply. In the western part of that parcel, high groundwater conditions and occasional surface flooding must both be considered.

The potential problems cited above are by no means restricted to recreational uses; indeed, other types of development on the site might be expected to generate substantially greater risks to local water quality. In addition, proper engineering of septic systems and allowance for appropriate separating distances between leaching fields and wells would reduce the probability of significant water-quality deterioration or well contamination to a negligible level.

EFFECT ON WILDLIFE

If a majority of the area is developed for active recreation (swimming, ballfields, etc.) rather than passive recreation (hiking, nature study, fishing, wildlife habitat) impacts could be negative if the area is heavily used. Intrusion and disturbance by humans and elimination of habitat would be causing factors.

EFFECT OF VEGETATION

The establishment of nature study trails, picnic areas and fishing access will have a relatively small impact on the vegetation in this area.

Initial development will result in some understory and ground cover vegetation losses, these, however, should be minimal. Later, soil compaction, mechanical root injury, direct trampling of herbaceous vegetation, and vandalism along the trails and within picnic areas may eliminate more vegetation. Such vegetation losses will reduce the aesthetic quality of the area and potentially cause accelerated erosion in the steeply sloped areas. These disturbances may also accelerate the mortality of low vigor, unhealthy trees. Dead and dying trees along the trails and within picnic areas may be hazardous to people using these areas.

Development of the proposed baseball fields, football fields, parking lots, sanitary facilities and also the establishment of ponds for swimming and skating will require complete removal of woody vegetation in the areas set aside for these activities. Some of this development may take place in the old fields, reducing the amount of forested areas being cleared. The size of the areas to be cleared and the amount of woody vegetation to be removed will depend largely on the extent of this development. The changes in water relations as a result of this development should not have a major impact on surrounding vegetation. These areas should be revegetated with sod as soon as possible after development to prevent erosion.

Development of this nature on this parcel will also require extensive grade changes. These grade changes should be kept to a minimum near trees that are going to be retained for their aesthetic and shade value, to avoid causing them injury.

Impact on the vegetation of this area after the initial clearing and development takes place should be slight.

MITIGATING MEASURES

Careful planning and wise layout of the proposed trail network, picnic areas and fishing access is essential to minimize potential problems with erosion and maintenance.

Trails should be laid out in such a way as to generally follow land contours, and to avoid steep slopes and wetlands. Where wetland crossings are unavoidable or are proposed for educational purposes, board-walks should be constructed.

Picnic sites should be located in partially shaded areas which are relatively flat, yet still afford good drainage.

The loss of ground cover vegetation, shrubs and trees through extensive soil compaction, root injury, and trampling can be kept to a minimum if trails and picnic areas are well defined and clearly marked. This will limit the actual area which is intensively used. Soil compaction may be reduced by spreading wood chips several inches deep along heavy-use trails and picnic areas. As wood chips rot they lose their effectiveness and should be replaced. Wood chips are also used as kindling for campfires at picnic sites. Crushed stone or cinders also reduce soil compaction and are more permanent than wood chips, however, they are usually more costly.

Eventual loss of some trees caused by soil compaction, even with the addition of wood chips, crushed stone or cinders is unavoidable. As these trees die they should be removed to prevent a possible hazard to area users.

Provisions for adequate parking, trail, picnic and athletic field maintenance and litter pick up, should be established prior to development of this area.

A wildlife management plan if developed and implemented for the area designated as wildlife land would further enhance the area and help offset any negative impacts caused by construction of ball fields, etc.

ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Development of a small portion of the parcel for active recreation and dedication of the remainder as wildlife land is a feasible alternative.

RECREATION POTENTIAL

This tract is partially developed and being used as a park. Development has been confined primarily to the northeast corner of the tract where picnic areas have been established and fields are being mowed and maintained.

The tentative plan offered for development of the tract appears reasonably sound in concept. The proposal for a swimming area may be difficult to implement however. Stream flow and dillution rates expected during times of peak summer use should be determined and also the ramifications of a swimming area established here on downstream water quality. If the waters feeding from this point downstream are being used for public drinking water, the swimming proposal would have to be eliminated. The swimming proposal does not appear to be a highly feasible component of a plan for development. Swimming is ordinarily a desirable component of a recreational area when it can be provided, however.

The southern portion of the site should be reserved for passive use as it is only accessible by foot. This would help to minimize the maintenance factor associated with active recreation areas. A "carry in-carry out" arrangement for maintenance and garbage pickup would not be practical for anything but the most modest facility.

If the brushy field (so called on the conceptual sketch map) is kept open by periodic mowing, this would enhance the options for informal uses such as frisbee toss, kite and model airplane flying, pickup ball games, and other open field type activities when the fields near the parking areas are in full use. The wetland characteristics of the soils would serve to limit its usability.

Sledding and tobogganing on the pathway connecting the footbridge to the "brushy field" to the south of the stream appears to be possible on at least a portion of the trail, after some trail improvement work.

In regard to the northern or active recreation portion of the tract, the proposed plan offers activities appropriate to what the site can accommodate. Terracing by cut and fill method, may be necessary to provide for maximum use

of the area being proposed for baseball, football, and parking. Supplemental parking will be necessary to accommodate the additional ballfields and expanded picnic facilities. Additional picnic sites could be accommodated in the stand of spruce and old apple trees located on the southern end of the proposed baseball and football fields.

Fishing would be an important component of recreational considerations for the tract because of the high quality streams on the property. The accessibility of the streams from nearby parking and picnic areas make fishing a positive factor to those persons using the park.

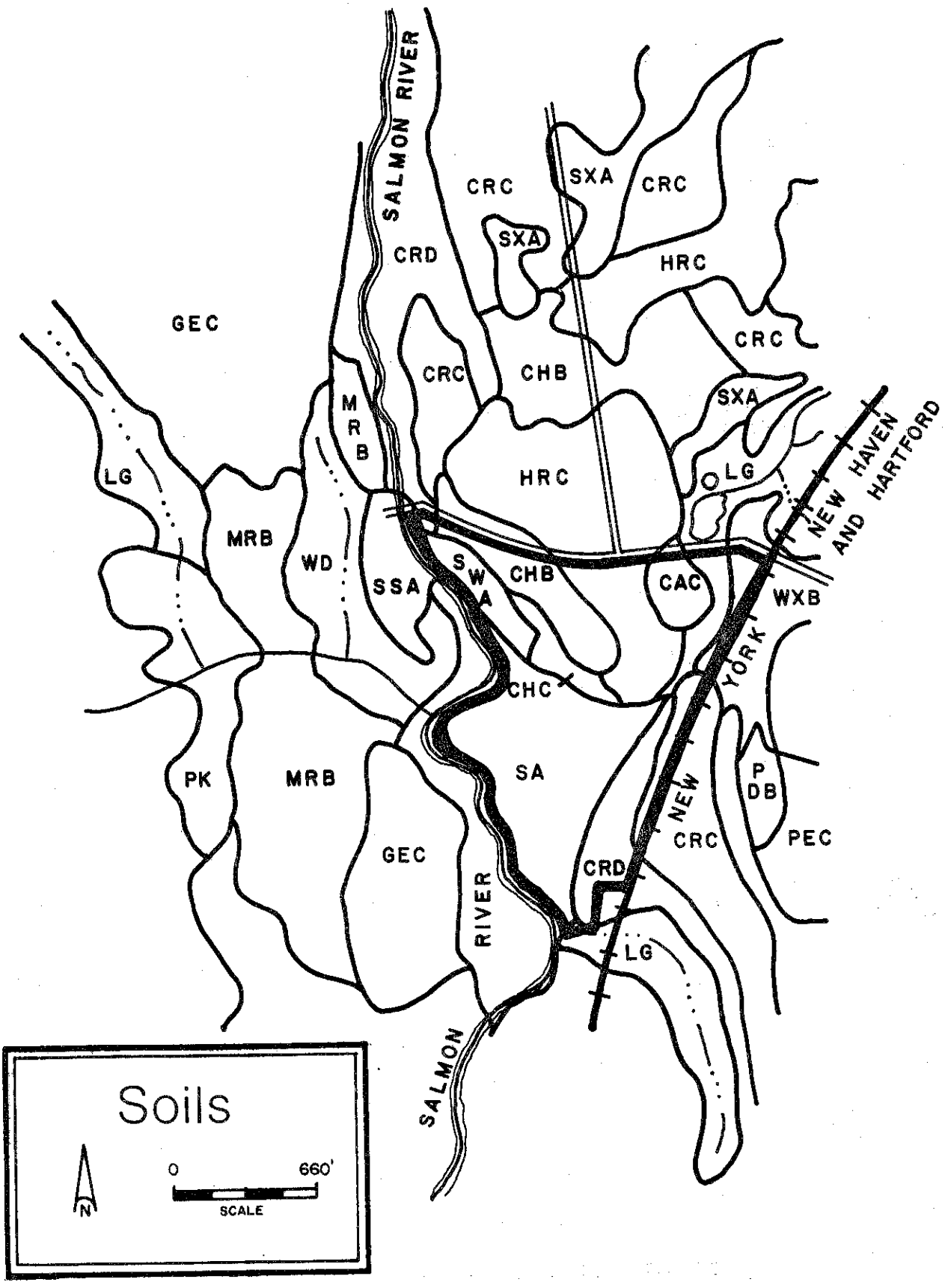
An access road which crosses the stream and connects to the "brushy field" is shown on the proposed sketch map. There is currently no bridge crossing the stream affording access to the "brushy field". The expense associated with erecting a vehicle bridge appear prohibitive when weighed against the potential benefits derived from providing cross-stream vehicle access. Soils lying south of the stream offer limited potential for recreational development because of slope and wetness. Site modification costs necessary to accommodating active recreation facilities would further add to the development costs. The pattern of soil types found and the limited accessibility accordingly make for convenient zones of recreational use. These zones could provide active recreation to the north of the stream and passive recreation to the south.

Nature study areas could be a component of a designated passive recreational use area. The variety of terrain containing: wetlands, open field, woodland, fast and slow flowing streams, and ledge outcrop offer much for nature study. In a relatively small area the diverse features found can help illustrate the geological forces at work in shaping the area and how these forces help create varied habitats, supporting different types of plant and animal life in close proximity to one another. The gorge near the footbridge and through which the stream rapidly flows provides graphic evidence of the role moving water plays in shaping landforms. A relatively compact outdoor classroom study area is thereby conveniently provided by the site's diversity of form.

Toilet facilities will have to be provided for the increased public use anticipated. Pit-type or chemical toilets, strategically located, should adequately meet this need. When possible, shaded locations for these toilets are preferable.

Any historical aspects of the tract, such as an old mill site, could provide further educational/interpretive opportunities and should be incorporated in a development plan.

Appendix


SALMON RIVER
CRC
SXA
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CHB
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SXA
LG
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LG
NEW HAVEN AND HARTFORD
MRB
WD
SSA
SWA
CHB
CAC
WXB
YORK
CHC
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RIVER
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SALMON
Soils
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SCALE

RECREATION SITES
HEBRON, CONNECTICUT

PROPORTIONAL EXTENT OF SOILS AND THEIR LIMITATIONS FOR CERTAIN LAND USES

Soil Series	Soil Symbol	Approx. Acres	Percent of Acres	Principal Limiting Factor	Urban Use Limitations*				
					On-Site Sewage	Buildings with Basements	Streets & Parking	Land-Scaping	Play-grounds
Charlton	CaC	3		Slope	2	2	2	2	2
Charlton	ChB	4		Stones	1	1	1	2	2
Charlton	ChC	2		Slope	2	2	2	2	2
Charlton	CrC	1		Slope	1-2	1-2	1-2	2	3
Charlton	CrD	4		Slope	3	3	3	3	3
Hollis	HrC	4		Depth to bedrock	3	3	3	3	3
Leicester**	Lg	2		Wetness	3	3	3	3	3
Saco**	Sa	13		Wetness	3	3	3	3	3
Sutton	SWA	3		Wetness, stoniness	3	3	2	2	2
Woodbridge	WxB	1		Wetness	3	3	3	2	2

* Limitations: 1=slight; 2-moderate; 3=severe.

** Regulated Wetland Soil Under PA 155.

SOIL INTERPRETATIONS FOR URBAN USES

The ratings of the soils for elements of community and recreational development uses consist of three degrees of "limitations:" slight or no limitations; moderate limitations; and severe limitations. In the interpretive scheme various physical properties are weighed before judging their relative severity of limitations.

The user is cautioned that the suitability ratings, degree of limitations and other interpretations are based on the typical soil in each mapping unit. At any given point the actual conditions may differ from the information presented here because of the inclusion of other soils which were impractical to map separately at the scale of mapping used. On-site investigations are suggested where the proposed soil use involves heavy loads, deep excavations, or high cost. Limitations, even though severe, do not always preclude the use of land for development. If economics permit greater expenditures for land development and the intended land use is consistent with the objectives of local or regional development, many soils and sites with difficult problems can be used.

Slight Limitations

Areas rated as slight have relatively few limitations in terms of soil suitability for a particular use. The degree of suitability is such that a minimum of time or cost would be needed to overcome relatively minor soil limitations.

Moderate Limitations

In areas rated moderate, it is relatively more difficult and more costly to correct the natural limitations of the soil for certain uses than for soils rated as having slight limitations.

Severe Limitations

Areas designated as having severe limitations would require more extensive and more costly measures than soils rated with moderate limitations in order to overcome natural soil limitations. The soil may have more than one limiting characteristic causing it to be rated severe.

About the Team

The Eastern Connecticut Environmental Review Team (ERT) is a group of professionals in environmental fields drawn together from a variety of federal, state, and regional agencies. Specialists on the Team include geologists, biologists, foresters, climatologists, soil scientists, landscape architects, archeologists, recreation specialists, engineers and planners. The ERT operates with state funding under the supervision of the Eastern Connecticut Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) Area.

The Team is available as a public service at no cost to Connecticut towns.

PURPOSE OF THE TEAM

The Environmental Review Team is available to help towns and developers in the review of sites proposed for major land use activities. To date, the ERT has been involved in reviewing a wide range of projects including subdivisions, sanitary landfills, commercial and industrial developments, sand and gravel operations, elderly housing, recreation/open space projects, watershed studies and resource inventories.

Reviews are conducted in the interest of providing information and analysis that will assist towns and developers in environmentally sound decision-making. This is done through identifying the natural resource base of the project site and highlighting opportunities and limitations for the proposed land use.

REQUESTING A REVIEW

Environmental reviews may be requested by the chief elected officials of a municipality or the chairman of town commissions such as planning and zoning, conservation, inland wetlands, parks and recreation or economic development. Requests should be directed to the Chairman of your local Soil and Water Conservation District. This request letter should include a summary of the proposed project, a location map of the project site, written permission from the landowner allowing the Team to enter the property for purposes of review, and a statement identifying the specific areas of concern the Team should address. When this request is approved by the local Soil and Water Conservation District and the Eastern Connecticut RC&D Executive Council, the Team will undertake the review on a priority basis.

For additional information regarding the Environmental Review Team, please contact Jeanne Shelburn (889-2324), Environmental Review Team Coordinator, Eastern Connecticut RC&D Area, 139 Boswell Avenue, Norwich, Connecticut 06360.