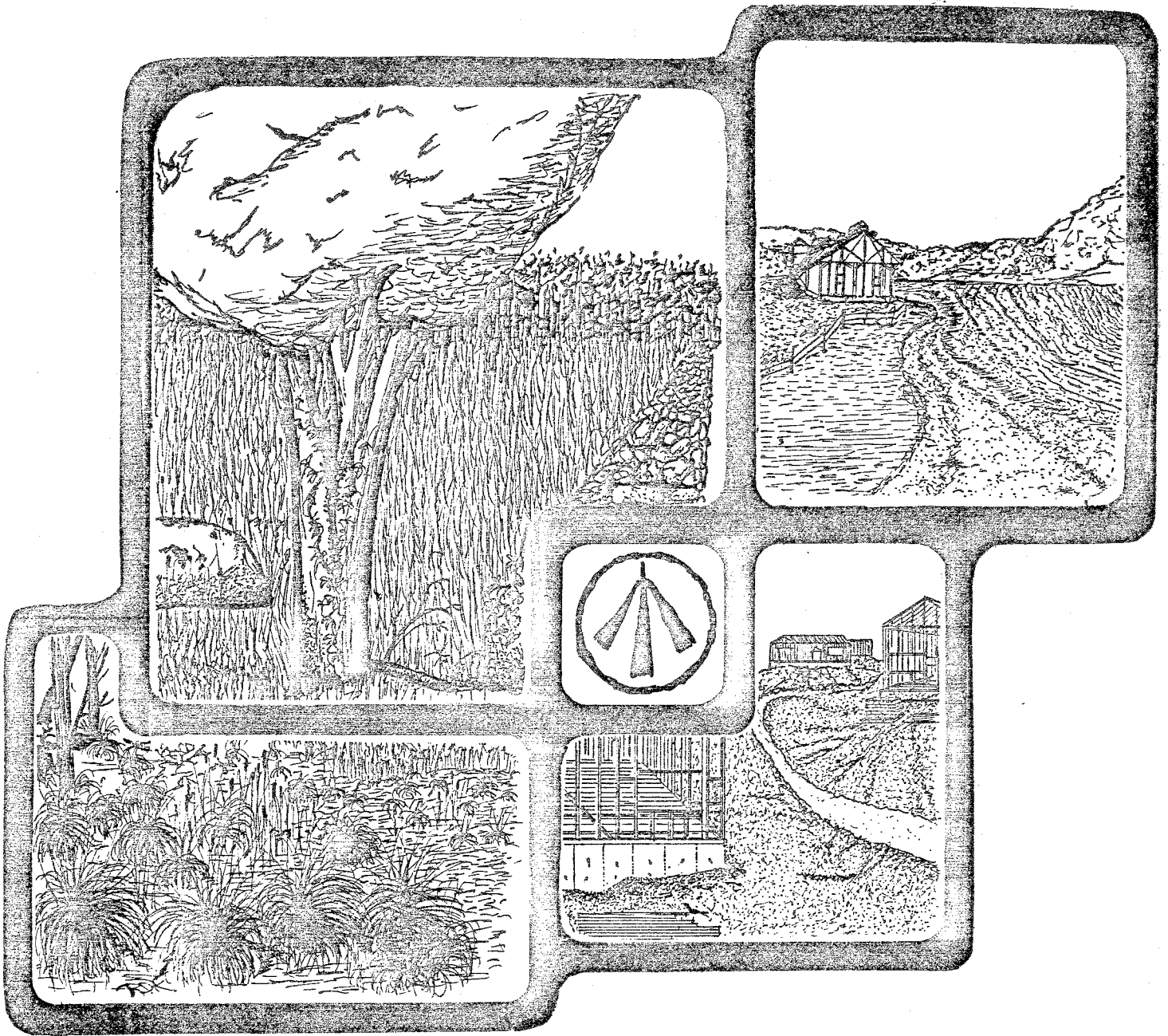


# ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW TEAM REPORT



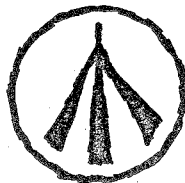
## SOUTHBURY LAND TRUST PROPERTIES SOUTHBURY, CONNECTICUT

KING'S MARK  
RESOURCE CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT AREA

KING'S MARK  
ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW TEAM REPORT

SOUTHBURY LAND TRUST PROPERTIES  
SOUTHBURY, CONNECTICUT

JUNE 1981



King's Mark Resource Conservation and Development Area  
Environmental Review Team  
Sackett Hill Road  
Warren, Connecticut 06754

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The King's Mark Environmental Review Team operates through the cooperative effort of a number of agencies and organizations including:

## Federal Agencies

U.S.D.A. Soil Conservation Service

## State Agencies

Department of Environmental Protection

Department of Health

University of Connecticut Cooperative Extension Service

## Local Groups and Agencies

Litchfield County Soil and Water Conservation District

New Haven County Soil and Water Conservation District

Hartford County Soil and Water Conservation District

Fairfield County Soil and Water Conservation District

Northwestern Connecticut Regional Planning Agency

Valley Regional Planning Agency

Central Naugatuck Valley Regional Planning Agency

Housatonic Valley Council of Elected Officials

Southwestern Regional Planning Agency

Greater Bridgeport Regional Planning Agency

Regional Planning Agency of South Central Connecticut

Central Connecticut Regional Planning Agency

Capitol Regional Council of Governments

American Archaeological Institute

X X X X X

## FUNDING PROVIDED BY

State of Connecticut

## POLICY DETERMINED BY

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ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW TEAM REPORT  
ON  
SOUTHBURY LAND TRUST PROPERTIES  
SOUTHBURY, CT.

I. INTRODUCTION

The Southbury Land Trust has acquired four parcels of land varying in size from +3 acres to + 10.5 acres. Figure 1 shows the location of the parcels within the town of Southbury. The four parcels include:

- 1) Forest Glen, 10.5 acres located in the northcentral portion of town between Roxbury Road and Bates Rock Road.
- 2) Watch Hill, 5.3 acres located at the eastern edge of town off Watch Hill Road.
- 3) Ridgewood Estates, 3 acres in the eastern section of town located off Munn Road.
- 4) Mitchell Homestead, 5.8 acres located in the southwestern quarter of town off South Flat Hill Road.

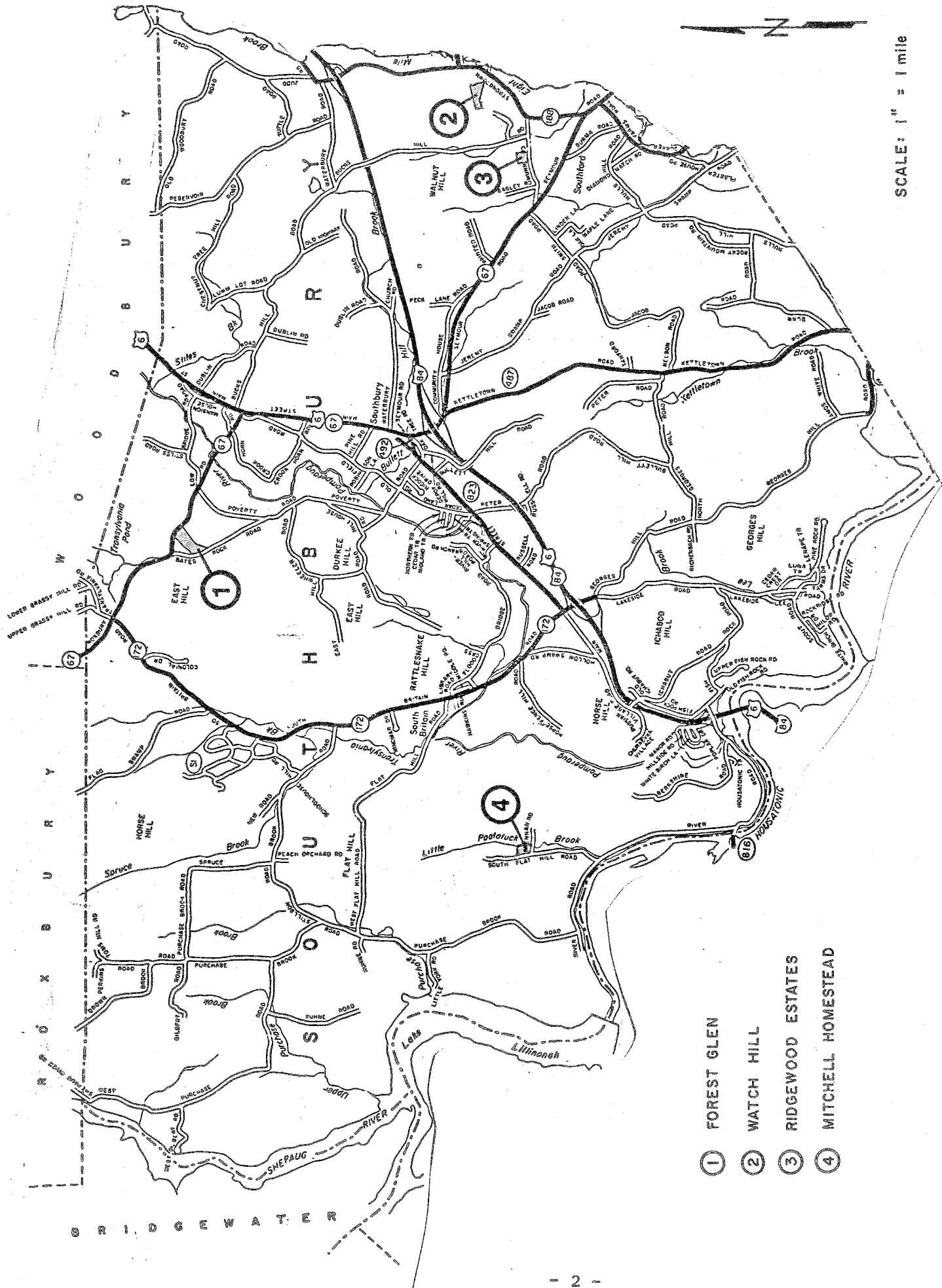
The Southbury Land Trust and First Selectman of Southbury requested the assistance of the King's Mark Environmental Review Team to help them in better understanding the environmental characteristics of the properties. Specifically, the Team was requested to prepare a natural resource inventory of the sites and also to comment on the potential of the properties for forest management, wildlife management, and recreational use. The King's Mark Executive Committee considered the town's request, and approved the project for review by the Team.

The ERT met and field reviewed the site on March 18, 1981. Team members participating on this review included:

Frank Indorf.....	District Conservationist.....	USDA Soil Conservation Service
Hiram Peck.....	Regional Planner.....	Central Naugatuck Valley Regional Planning Agency
Robert Rocks.....	Forester.....	Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection
Mike Zizka.....	Geohydrologist.....	Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection

Prior to the review day, each team member was provided with a summary of the proposed study, a checklist of concerns to address, a general location map, an existing conditions map, and a soils limitation chart. The day of the field review, team members met with representatives from the Land Trust and walked the four properties. Following the field review, individual reports were prepared by each team member and forwarded to the ERT Coordinator for compilation and editing into this final report.

FIGURE I.  
GENERAL LOCATION MAP



This report presents the team's findings. The report identifies the natural resource base of the properties and discusses opportunities and limitations for land management. All conclusions and final decisions with regards to future land use rest with the Southbury Land Trust. It is hoped the information contained in this report will assist the Southbury Land Trust in making environmentally sound decisions. If any additional information is required, please contact Richard Lynn (868-7342), Environmental Review Team Coordinator, King's Mark RC&D Area, Sackett Hill Road, Warren, Connecticut 06754.

\* \* \* \* \*



## II. PARCEL 1, FOREST GLEN

### A. GEOLOGY AND HYDROLOGY

#### 1. Introduction

In the geological sections of this report the word "till" is used several times. Till is a glacial sediment composed of clay, silt, gravel, and boulders mixed in varying proportions. The different rock particles were collected by an ice sheet as it flowed southward into and through Connecticut, scraping and breaking exposed bedrock and bulldozing preexisting soils. Most of the till was plastered onto the ground from beneath the ice sheet but some was let down gently as the ice melted. The till in some areas was washed by meltwater, which removed fine particles and gave the sediment a crude layering. The texture of the till varies from coarse-grained and relatively loose to silty and very tightly compact.

Bedrock descriptions include the terms "schist" and "gneiss". Both terms refer to metamorphic rocks; that is, rocks which have been altered by high pressures and temperatures. In schists, minerals with an elongate shape are prominently arranged into parallel layers, giving the rock a flaky or slabby structure. Gneisses, in contrast, contain alternate layers or bands of elongate minerals and granular minerals, and tend to have a more coherent structure.

#### 2. Geology

Forest Glen is a relatively low-lying, wet parcel of land. Swamp sediments, consisting of thin to thick accumulations of clay, silt, sand, and decomposed organic matter, are the predominant surficial geologic materials on the site. These sediments may be directly underlain by bedrock or by a compact layer of till. The "saddle" topography of the site (see Figure 2a) and impeded subsurface drainage probably account for the wet conditions. Along the site's northwestern and southeastern borders, the land becomes drier as it rises out of the saddle. Till is the surficial deposit at these borders. Bedrock is not exposed on the site.

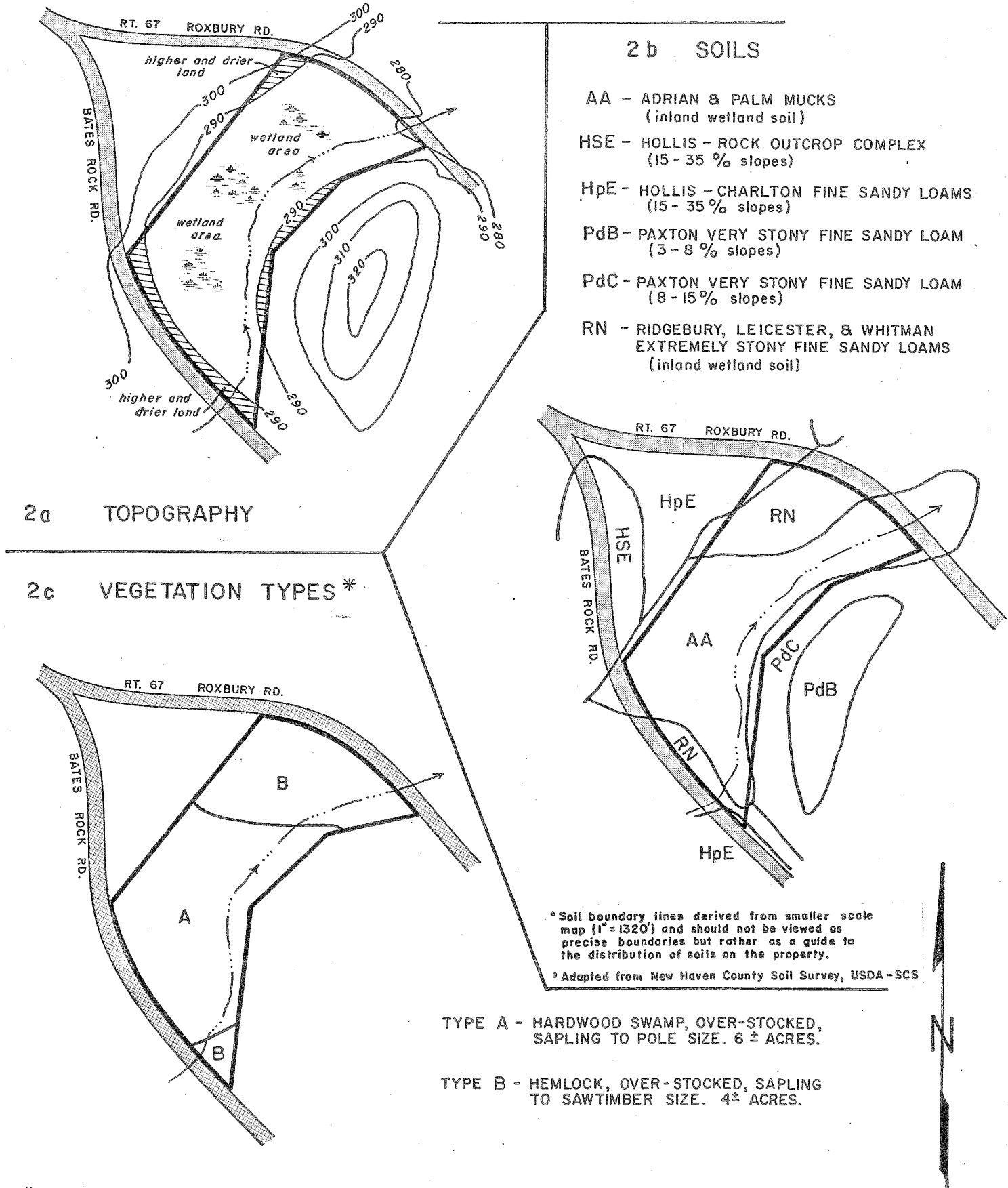
#### 3. Hydrology

The principal feature of Forest Glen is the central swamp. The stream draining the swamp leaves the site at the northeastern corner, and then flows southeastward to Pomperaug River.

In addition to its potential ecological value, the swamp has several hydrologic attributes. It serves as a temporary storage area for runoff during periods of precipitation and during the spring thaw. This mitigates peak flows in the outlet stream, reducing the extent of flooding and erosion that would otherwise occur. The swamp also acts as a sediment trap, retaining materials that have washed in from adjoining roads or from areas of local soil erosion.

FIGURE 2.

# EXISTING CONDITIONS - FOREST GLEN



2a TOPOGRAPHY

2c VEGETATION TYPES\*

## 2b SOILS

- AA - ADRIAN & PALM MUCKS  
(inland wetland soil)
- HSE - HOLLIS - ROCK OUTCROP COMPLEX  
(15 - 35 % slopes)
- HpE - HOLLIS - CHARLTON FINE SANDY LOAMS  
(15 - 35 % slopes)
- PdB - PAXTON VERY STONY FINE SANDY LOAM  
(3 - 8 % slopes)
- PdC - PAXTON VERY STONY FINE SANDY LOAM  
(8 - 15 % slopes)
- RN - RIDGEBURY, LEICESTER, & WHITMAN  
EXTREMELY STONY FINE SANDY LOAMS  
(inland wetland soil)

\*Soil boundary lines derived from smaller scale map (1" = 1320') and should not be viewed as precise boundaries but rather as a guide to the distribution of soils on the property.

\*Adapted from New Haven County Soil Survey, USDA-SCS

TYPE A - HARDWOOD SWAMP, OVER-STOCKED, SAPLING TO POLE SIZE. 6 ± ACRES.

TYPE B - HEMLOCK, OVER-STOCKED, SAPLING TO SAWTIMBER SIZE. 4 ± ACRES.

\*SEEDLING SIZE - Trees less than 1" in diameter at 4 1/2' above the ground (d.b.h.)  
 SAPLING SIZE - Trees 1" to 5" in d.b.h.  
 POLE SIZE - Trees 5" to 11" in d.b.h.  
 SAWTIMBER SIZE - Trees 11" and greater in d.b.h.

1" = 500'

The site contains no normally high-yielding aquifers. Bedrock, which is generally capable of delivering only small amounts of groundwater, would probably be the only practical water-supply source on the parcel.

## B. SOILS

As shown in Figure 2b, two soil types dominate the Forest Glen site. These include:

### 1. Adrian and Palms Mucks (AA)

This undifferentiated soil group consists of organic soils with slopes of 0 to 3 percent. The soils of this map unit were not separated in mapping because they react similarly to most uses and management. This soil group consists of about 45 percent Adrian soils, 40 percent Palms soils and 15 percent other soils.

Adrian soils have moderately rapid permeability. Palms soils have moderately rapid permeability in the organic layer and moderate permeability in the substratum. The soils in this unit have a high available water capacity. Runoff is slow. These soils remain wet most of the year and are ponded for several weeks from fall through spring and after heavy rains in summer. Unless limed, the Adrian soils are very strongly acid through slightly acid. The Palms soils are medium acid to neutral in the organic layer and slightly acid to neutral in the substratum.

This is an inland wetland soil type. It has a good potential for the development of wetland wildlife habitat. It has severe limitations for passive recreation however due to wetness and excess humus. These soils are suited to dugout pond construction for warm water fish production.

This mapping unit is poorly suited to forest management. These soils have moderate productivity for woodland use, but they have severe limitations for using equipment because of wetness. Seedling mortality is high and plant competition is severe. These soils also have a severe windthrow hazard as the trees are shallow rooted because of the high water table.

### 2. Ridgebury, Leicester, and Whitman extremely stony fine sandy loams (Rn).

This undifferentiated soil group consists of nearly level to gently sloping, poorly drained and very poorly drained soils. Slopes range from 0 to 5 percent and stones and boulders cover 3 to 25 percent of the surface. The Ridgebury and Leicester soils have a seasonal high water table at a depth of about 8 inches from late fall until mid-spring. The Whitman soils have a water table at the surface from fall through spring and after heavy rains. In many places, they are ponded for several weeks in winter. In summer, the water table may drop to a depth of 5 feet or more.

These soils have moderate or moderately rapid permeability in the surface layer and subsoil. The Ridgebury and Whitman soils have slow or very slow permeability in the substratum, and the Leicester soils have moderate or moderately rapid permeability in the substratum. These soils have a high available water capacity. Runoff is slow or very slow. They have a low shrink-swell potential. Unless limed, the Leicester and Ridgebury soils are very strongly acid through

medium acid; the Whitman soils are very strongly acid through slightly acid.

Rn is also an inland wetland soil type. It has good potential for wetland wildlife habitat. It is suited to dugout ponds, however the stoniness will cause limitations to excavation. Rn has severe limitations for passive recreation use due to the wetness and large stones.

This mapping unit has fair suitability for use as woodland. The Ridgebury and Leicester soils have moderate productivity; the Whitman soils have low productivity. These soils are limited mainly by their wetness and stoniness. Seedling mortality is high and windthrow is common because of the high water table restricting the rooting depth for trees during much of the year. Woodland may, however, be one of the best uses of this unit.

### C. VEGETATION & WILDLIFE

#### 1. Vegetation

The Forest Glen wetland area may be divided into two vegetation types. These include a 6 + acre hardwood swamp area, and a 4 + acre hemlock area (see Figure 2c).

The hardwood swamp area (vegetation type A) is over-stocked with sapling to pole-size red maple in clumps on hummocks, with white ash, yellow birch and scattered eastern hemlock. The understory consists of a dense growth of spice bush, highbush blueberry, swamp dogwood and winterberry with occasional poison sumac, swamp rose and nannyberry. Tussock sedge, skunk cabbage, sphagnum moss, cinnamon fern, evergreen wood fern, and sensitive fern form the ground cover in this area.

The hemlock stand (vegetation type B) is dominated by pole to small saw-timber-size eastern hemlock. Sapling to pole-size red maple, white ash, sugar maple, yellow birch and occasional swamp white oak are also present in this over-stocked stand. Spice bush, highbush blueberry, winter berry and shadbush, which is present on the drier portions of this site, form a dense understory in this stand. Ground cover is made up of tussock sedge, sphagnum moss, skunk cabbage, poison ivy, club moss, cinnamon fern, christmas fern and sensitive fern.

The potential for management of the vegetation in this stand is extremely limited due to the high water table and saturated soils which are present.

Development of the properties which abut this parcel may negatively impact vegetation within this tract. The trees which are present within this tract are susceptible to windthrow, because they are unable to become securely anchored in the saturated soils which are present. Clearing operations adjacent to this property may accelerate the loss of these trees to windthrow.

Sudden exposure of sawtimber-size hemlock to direct sunlight, caused by clearing surrounding trees, may cause a condition known as sun scald. This condition causes a severe browning of the needles and often results in tree mortality. Sun scald occurs when soil temperatures are increased to a point where feeding roots are damaged.

To minimize the potential for windthrow and sunscald on this property,

clearing operations on adjacent properties should be minimized.

## 2. Wildlife

Both of the vegetation types present within the Forest Glen area, taken together, provide a wetland habitat type which has high value for wildlife. The excellent cover which is provided by the hemlock and dense understory vegetation, is most note worthy. It is utilized by many bird and small mammal species for nesting and breeding, because it offers good escape protection from predators and shelter from adverse weather conditions.

The great variety of fruiting shrubs present in this area produces a good supply of food for wildlife throughout much of the year. These factors, together with the abundant supply of water which is present, make this area valuable to many forms of wildlife. Wildlife species known to utilize this habitat type include many species of small birds, white tailed deer, raccoon, fox, turtles, snakes, frogs, salamanders and occassional migratory waterfowl.

### D. PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

As shown in Figure 1, this parcel is comprised of land bounded by Bates Road on the south and Route 67 (Roxbury Road) on the north. Route 67 is an arterial roadway and Bates Rock Road is a local street (public, improved). The access to the site may only be realistically thought of as through the Bates Rock Road side. The traffic volume, speed and relatively poor sightlines make any planned parking or access through the Route 67 side impractical and potentially hazardous.

Access to the parcel through the Bates Rock Road side is much more feasible. The roadway, while a dirt surface road, does not appear to be in poor condition. Traffic volume is much less and vehicle speeds are also much slower than on Rte.67. There are also two or more locations where small areas to park 2 - 4 cars may be quite feasible.

The surrounding land uses are residential in nature. Lot sizes vary from about 1.4 to 4.0 acres in size. The surrounding land uses seem generally compatible with the preservation of this particular parcel of land although the adjacent state highway may serve as a detractor in regards to the site's total desirability from this standpoint.

The potential for recreational use of this parcel is limited due to wet soil conditions. However, a pleasant trail system has been created around the periphery of the property on the higher and drier land. This trail loop will provide a walk of about one-half mile and the opportunity to view the interior of the tract. Provisions should be made for the continued maintenance of this trail system.

The proximity of this parcel to others which offer different types of recreational opportunities is interesting. The Forest Glen parcel is approximately halfway between Janie Pierce Pond area ( approx. 60 acres) and George Bennett Park (approx. 4.5 acres). The habitat diversity among these areas is significant. Although no comparisons with other sites in the area were asked

of the ERT, the potential for connecting these areas by foot paths with a minimum of road crossings may be a possibility that would bear looking into at a future time.

Forest Glen is approximately 2000 feet from the Janie Pierce Pond area and about 3000 feet from Bennett Park. While it is not yet determined whether these links are desired or even possible, they are presented as one way of making the parcel a much more usable and integral part of the entire open space park network than presently is the case.

\* \* \* \* \*

### III. PARCEL 2, WATCH HILL

#### A. GEOLOGY AND HYDROLOGY

The Watch Hill parcel is relatively flat at the western end and steeply sloping at the eastern end (see Figure 3a). Till covers almost all of the site. Bedrock outcrops occur in a few places, but the average thickness of the till probably exceeds 5 feet. The exposed rocks consist of schists and schistose gneisses composed of biotite, quartz, muscovite, kyanite, sillimanite, feldspar, and garnet.

The Watch Hill parcel features no substantial surface or subsurface water resources. There are no streams, ponds, or swamps on the site. A water supply could most likely be derived from the underlying bedrock, however bedrock wells generally yield only small amounts of groundwater.

#### B. SOILS

As shown in Figure 3b, Watch Hill consists of three soil types. These include:

1. Paxton fine sandy loam, 3 to 8 percent slopes (PbB).

This is a gently sloping well drained soil. Permeability is moderate in the surface layer and subsoil and slow in the substratum. The available water capacity is moderate. Runoff is medium. This soil tends to dry out and warm up slowly in spring. It has a low shrink-swell potential. Unless limed, this soil is strongly acid through slightly acid.

This soil is well suited to growing trees and productivity is moderately high. Trees to plant in open areas are eastern white pine, European larch, and Norway spruce.

This soil has good potential for the development of both open land and woodland wildlife habitat. It also has the best potential for passive recreation uses of any of the soils on sites #1 through #4.

2. Paxton fine sandy loam, 8 to 15 percent slopes (PbC).

This soil is similar to PbB except that it has steeper slopes and more rapid runoff. This will slightly increase the erosion hazard for any use of the soil on this site.

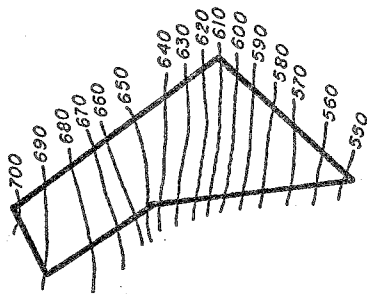
Woodland productivity is moderately high. This soil has good potential for both open land and woodland wildlife habitat development.

3. Hollis-Charlton fine sandy loams, 15 to 35 percent slopes (HpE).

This map unit consists of moderately steep and steep, somewhat excessively drained and well drained soils on uplands where the relief is affected by the underlying bedrock. 3 to 25 percent of the surface is covered with stones and

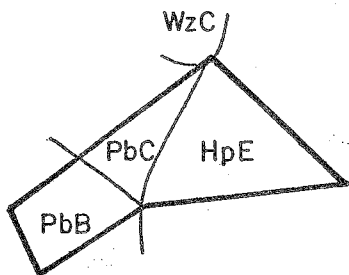
FIGURE 3.

# EXISTING CONDITIONS - WATCH HILL



3a TOPOGRAPHY

1" = 500'



HpE - HOLLIS - CHARLTON FINE SANDY LOAMS  
(15 - 35 % slopes)

PbB - PAXTON FINE SANDY LOAM  
(3 - 8 % slopes)

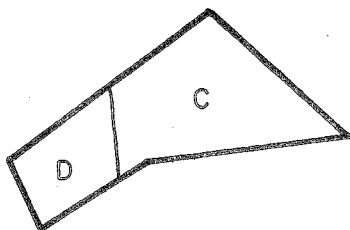
PbC - PAXTON FINE SANDY LOAM  
(8 - 15 % slopes)

WzC - WOODBRIDGE EXTREMELY STONY FINE  
SANDY LOAM (3 - 15 % slopes)

3b SOILS

\* Soil boundary lines derived from smaller scale map (1" = 1320') and should not be viewed as precise boundaries but rather as a guide to the distribution of soils on the property.

\* Adapted from New Haven County Soil Survey, USDA-SCS.



TYPE C - MIXED HARDWOODS, OVER-STOCKED,  
POLE TO SAWTIMBER SIZE. 4± ACRES.

TYPE D - OPEN FIELD, GRASSES. 1± ACRE.

3c VEGETATION TYPES \*

\* SEEDLING SIZE - Trees less than 1" in diameter at 4 1/2' above the ground (d.b.h.)  
 SAPLING SIZE - Trees 1" to 5" in d.b.h.  
 POLE SIZE - Trees 5" to 11" in d.b.h.  
 SAWTIMBER SIZE - Trees 11" and greater in d.b.h.



boulders. Approximately 40 percent of this map unit is Hollis fine sandy loam, 35 percent Charlton fine sandy loam, and about 25 percent is other soils and rock outcrops.

The Hollis soil has moderate or moderately rapid permeability above the bedrock. It has a low available water capacity. Runoff is rapid. The Charlton soil has moderate or moderately rapid permeability. It has a high available water capacity. Runoff is rapid. Both soils have a low shrink-swell potential. Unless limed, they are medium acid through very strongly acid.

This map unit is not well suited to trees; however, woodland may be one of its best uses. The Hollis soil has low productivity. Seedling mortality is severe because the Hollis soil does not have enough moisture during dry periods to sustain seedlings. Windthrow of the larger trees is common because the rooting depth is shallow. The Charlton soil has moderate productivity. Care must be taken in laying out logging roads and trails to prevent erosion. The steep slopes restrict the use of many kinds of equipment.

## C. VEGETATION AND WILDLIFE

### 1. Vegetation

Two vegetation types are present within the Watch Hill parcel (see Figure 3c). These include a mixed hardwood stand (vegetation type C) and an open field area (vegetation type D).

The 4 + acre mixed hardwood stand is over-stocked with high quality pole to sawtimber-size white ash, red oak, sugar maple, mockernut hickory, shagbark hickory and occasional american beech. At this time, these trees are declining in vigor due to crowding. A sparse understory made up of sugar maple seedlings and barberry is present within this stand. Ground cover vegetation is composed of poison ivy, christmas fern and evergreen wood fern.

The one acre open field is vegetated with grasses. This area is periodically mowed which discourages the establishment of woody plant species.

A thinning in the mixed hardwood stand would be very beneficial at this time. The trees are slowing in growth and starting to decline in health. A thinning which removes approximately 1/3 of the trees in the overstory would reduce the competition between residual trees for space, sunlight, water and nutrients and would result in a more vigorous forest over time.

This thinning should be focused on removal of the poorest quality trees which are present. These include trees with damage, poor form, very small crowns and trees which are directly competing with high quality trees.

The steep slopes which are present in the eastern section of this parcel may limit management practices.

### 2. Wildlife

At present the mixed hardwood stand present within this tract has relatively low value for wildlife. Several species of birds and signs of squirrels and

chipmunks were observed on the tract, however the lack of adequate cover discourages the use of this area by many other wildlife species.

The open field is likewise not utilized by many wildlife species because of a general lack of cover vegetation. The value of this open field for wildlife could be enhanced in several ways. One option is to stop mowing this lot and allow woody vegetation to become established. Another option would be to plant the area with species that would provide elements of cover and food. Eastern white pine, larch and eastern hemlocks planted between 8 and 10 feet apart would eventually provide excellent cover. Planting shrub species such as autumn olive, highbush cranberry, silky dogwood and crab apple approximately 8 feet apart would provide many species of wildlife with food. Planting the area will attract more species than allowing the field to be encroached upon by hardwood species. Implementation of either of these options, however, will greatly improve the food and cover value of this area for wildlife.

#### D. PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

As shown in Figure 1, this parcel is located off of Strongtown Road (Rte 188).

The roads providing access to this parcel are an arterial highway (Rte 188), and 2 secondary collectors (Munn Road and Watch Hill Drive ). Access to the site is hampered considerably because of the location and nature of the access road to the open space parcel itself. It is not likely that the site will attract a substantial number of people at any one time; therefore, traffic should not be a problem at this site. Nevertheless, parking in the cul de sac area of Watch Hill Drive should be carefully considered so as not to cause any traffic problems in the area.

The adjoining land uses are residential and are either part of the Watch Hill subdivision or privately owned open fields. The adjoining land uses are deemed to be generally compatible with the land trust property.

A future need may exist for this open space area if and when the rest of the Watch Hill subdivision is completed. Presently a needed use for the site is not obvious from a planning standpoint.

One possibility for recreational use of the site may lie in its potential for a no fires allowed picnic area. Problems may arise however due to the fact that cars would generally be used to get to the area. Unless other facilities for recreation are provided, which does not seem likely, the combination of the "out of the way" location of this site and lack of other facilities may cause the site to be far better left undeveloped. As discussed in the previous section, this site does have good potential for woodland and wildlife management.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### IV. PARCEL 3, RIDGEWOOD ESTATES

##### A. GEOLOGY AND HYDROLOGY

The Ridgewood Estates parcel contains a mixture of steep slopes, large bedrock outcrops, and depressed wet areas (see Figure 4a). The outcrops form an impressive knoll near the western border of the site. The rocks are non-rusty-weathering, schistose gneisses composed of quartz, biotite, plagioclase, and muscovite with minor garnet, kyanite, and microcline. Till covers the bedrock in most other areas. The texture of the till is probably sandy and very stony. A small wet area just east of the bedrock knoll may contain a very thin cover of organic-rich fine sediments over till.

Although a small, wet basin is present on this site, it cannot be considered a significant hydrologic feature. No other surface watercourses or ponds are present on the site. Groundwater resources would probably be limited to whatever yields could be obtained by tapping bedrock.

##### B. SOILS

Two soil types have been identified and mapped on the Ridgewood Estates site (see Figure 4b). These include:

###### 1. Paxton fine sandy loam, 15 to 25 percent slopes (PbD).

This soil is similar to the Paxton soils described for the Watch Hill site. The slopes are steeper however, and runoff is more rapid.

This soil is suited to trees and productivity is moderately high. Use of equipment is somewhat limited however by the steepness of slopes.

This soil has good potential for woodland wildlife habitat. Although steep, it is also suitable for paths and trails.

###### 2. Woodbridge extremely stony fine sandy loams, 3 to 15 percent slopes (WzC).

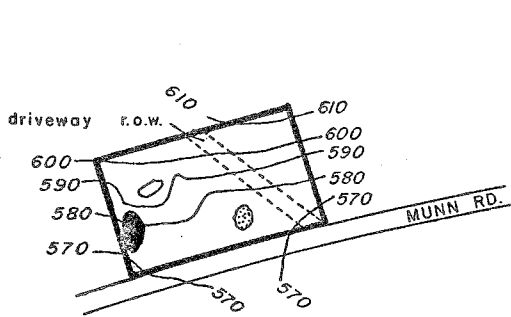
This is a gently sloping to sloping, moderately well drained soil. It has 3 to 25 percent of its surface covered with stones and boulders.

From late in fall until mid-spring, this soil has a water table at a depth of about 20 inches. This soil has moderate permeability in the surface layer and subsoil and slow permeability in the substratum. The available water capacity is high. Runoff is medium to rapid. This soil tends to dry out and warm up slowly in the spring. It has a low shrink-swell potential. In areas that are not limed, this soil is strongly acid through medium acid.

This soil is well suited to trees and productivity is moderately high. The stones and boulders somewhat hinder the use of some harvesting equipment and make planting generally not feasible.

FIGURE 4.

# EXISTING CONDITIONS - RIDGEWOOD ESTATES

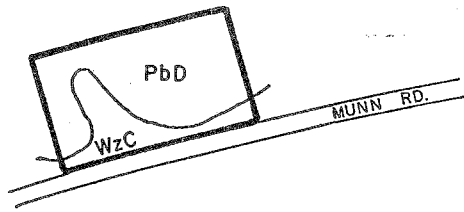


4 a TOPOGRAPHY

- - LARGE BOULDER OUTCROP
- - SMALL, WET BASIN



1" = 500'



4 b SOILS

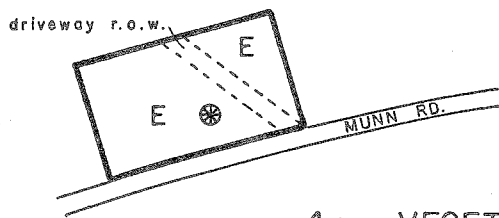
Pbd - PAXTON FINE SANDY LOAM  
(15 - 25% slopes)

WzC - WOODBRIDGE EXTREMELY STONY FINE  
SANDY LOAM (3 - 15% slopes)

\* Soil boundary lines derived from smaller scale map (1" = 1320') and should not be viewed as precise boundaries but rather as a guide to the distribution of soils on the property.

- Adopted from New Haven County Soil Survey, USDA-SCS

TYPE E - MIXED HARDWOODS, FULLY-STOCKED,  
SAPLING TO POLE-SIZE. 3 1/2 ACRES.



4 c VEGETATION TYPES\*

- ⊗ - SPRING

\*SEEDLING SIZE - Trees less than 1" in diameter at 4 1/2' above the ground (d.b.h.)  
 SAPLING SIZE - Trees 1" to 5" in d.b.h.  
 POLE SIZE - Trees 5" to 11" in d.b.h.  
 SAWTIMBER SIZE - Trees 11" and greater in d.b.h.

C. VEGETATION AND WILDLIFE

1. Vegetation

This three acre parcel is vegetated with a young mixed hardwood stand over remnant old field shrub species. Sapling to pole size white oak, black oak, black birch, shagbark hickory and pignut hickory are present on the dry sections of this fully stocked stand, while red maple and american elm are present in the wettest sections. The understory is dominated by eastern red cedar, gray birch and old field juniper with spice bush present in the wet pockets. Raspberry, barberry, poison ivy, striped pipsissewa, christmas fern and club moss form the ground cover on this tract with skunk cabbage, tussock sedge and sensitive fern growing in the wet areas.

Gypsy moth infestation is high in this area. Two consecutive years of complete defoliation may cause mortality in the oaks which are the preferred food of the gypsy moth. The other species which are present in this stand will quickly fill up the voids left by the dying oaks.

A fuelwood thinning in this stand, much like the thinning proposed for vegetation type C on the Watch Hill site, would help this area become more stable. Trees which are growing vigorously are less susceptible to the secondary insects and diseases which follow gypsy moth attack.

2. Wildlife

The food and cover value of this site is fair for wildlife. The eastern red cedar and old field juniper provide good cover for small song birds. The oaks and hickories produce high quality mast for squirrels and chipmunks.

The small spring which is present in the center of this property (see Figure 4c) is a good source of water for wildlife. Raccoons and shrew tracks were observed in this area during the field investigation. The spring area could be improved by removal of several over story trees in the area. This would allow direct sunlight to stimulate the growth of herbaceous vegetation.

D. PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

As shown in Figure 1, this parcel is comprised of land located on Munn Road in Southbury.

Although the parcel is not located far from the intersection of Munn Road and Bucks Hill Road, the only access to the site is that which exists on Munn Road.

The land adjoining this parcel of open space has been committed to residential use. The zoning in the area and for some distance around is R-60 or 60,000 sq.ft. minimum lot size. The lots in the general area of the open space parcel contain from 1.4 to 12.5 acres each. It should be noted that the "parcel" of 3.0 acres is actually 2 smaller parcels of (A) 2.171 acres and (B) .88 acres. The right of way retained by the developer has negated the use of the entire parcel as a completely natural open space area.

Although the use of the right of way will probably not be intensive, it significantly limits the potential of the parcel for future land trust activities.

Parking in the area of either parcel A or B of Ridgewood Estates should not prove vastly difficult. Small off-road parking areas along Munn Road may be quite possible to construct without providing significant impediments to the normal flow of traffic.

This area offers potential for creating a pleasant short walk in the woods. Consideration should be given to creating a loop trail through the property following the contours as much as possible. This trail should provide the opportunity to view the bedrock outcrop to the west and the small, wet basin in the central portion of the property.

\* \* \* \* \*

## V. PARCEL 4, MITCHELL HOMESTEAD

### A. GEOLOGY AND HYDROLOGY

The Mitchell Homestead parcel straddles Little Pootatuck Brook (see Figure 5a). The hillsides are composed of till, which appears to be relatively thick. A bank cut along Brennan Road showed as much as 10 feet of till. Most of the till was a coarse-grained, loose variety, but toward the bottom of the exposure a silty, compact, fissile till was exposed. Bedrock is not exposed on this site. Undercutting and slumping have been active processes along Little Pootatuck Brook, resulting in significant erosion of its streambank. Significant erosion is also occurring along the road drainage ditch between the property and Brennan Road. Consideration should be given to preparing an erosion and sediment control plan for these eroding areas.

Little Pootatuck Brook, an attractive, erosive stream flows north to south through the site. At Brennan Road, where the brook passes out of the parcel, the overall watershed of the brook comprises approximately 415 acres (see Figure 5D). The brook is fed by numerous perennial or intermittent streams that originate in the highlands of Flat Hill. The brook itself is a tributary of the Housatonic River. Although the brook is not gaged, it may be estimated that the mean annual streamflow at Brennan Road is approximately 754,000 gallons per day, or about 1.17 cubic feet per second. In contrast, it may be estimated that during a 24 hour, 100 year rainfall, the peak flow in the brook could be as much as 1600 cubic feet per second. Because of the only lightly developed condition of its watershed, the quality of the brook's water is probably high.

Either a large-diameter dug well or a drilled well in bedrock could probably provide modest groundwater yields on this site. There does not appear to be a high-potential aquifer on or near the parcel.

### B. SOILS

As shown in Figure 5d three soil types have been identified and mapped on this site. These include:

1. Ridgebury, Leicester and Whitman extremely stony fine sandy loams, (Rn)  
A description of this soil can be found for site #1.
2. Hollis-Charlton fine sandy loams, 15 to 35 percent slopes, (HpE)  
This soil is described for site #2.
3. Charlton very stony fine sandy loam, 8 to 15 percent slopes, (ChC)  
This sloping, well drained soil occupies most of this property. Up to 3 percent of the surface of this soil is covered with stones and boulders.

Permeability is moderate or moderately rapid. The available water capacity is high. Runoff is rapid. This soil tends to dry out and warm up fairly early in spring. It has a low shrink-swell potential. Unless limed, it is very strongly acid through medium acid.

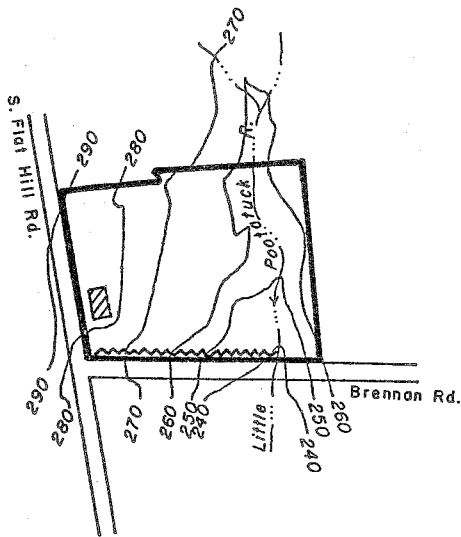
This soil is suited to forest management although stones and boulders somewhat hinder the use of harvesting and planting equipment. Productivity is moderate.

This soil has good potential for woodland wildlife habitat development. It is also suited to passive recreation.

FIGURE 5.

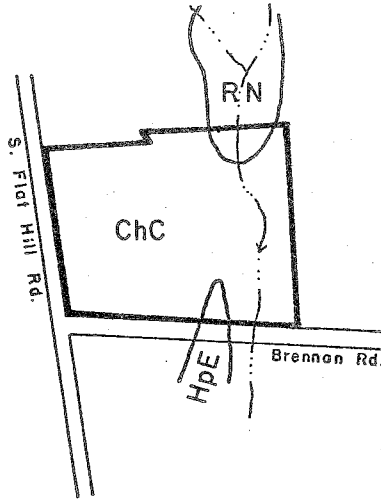
# EXISTING CONDITIONS - MITCHELL HOMESTEAD

5 a TOPOGRAPHY



~~~~~ ERODING DRAINAGE DITCH  
 ▨ OLD FOUNDATION

5 b SOILS



ChC - CHARLTON VERY STONY FINE SANDY LOAM (8-15% slopes)

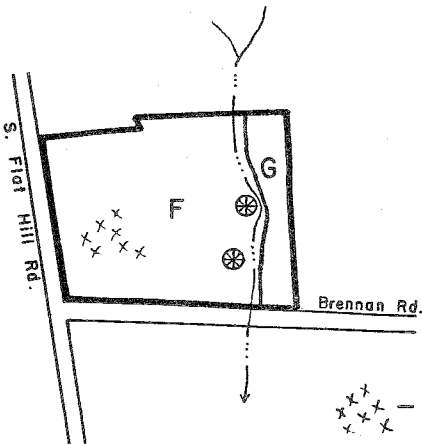
HpE - HOLLIS-CHARLTON FINE SANDY LOAMS (15-35% slopes)

RN - RIDGEBURY, LEICESTER & WHITMAN EXTREMELY STONY FINE SANDY LOAMS

\* Soil boundary lines derived from smaller scale map (1" = 1320') and should not be viewed as precise boundaries but rather as a guide to the distribution of soils on the property.

\* Adapted from New Haven County Soil Survey, USDA-SCS

5 c VEGETATION TYPES \*



xxxx - RASPBERRY PATCH  
 ⊗ - SPRING SEEPS

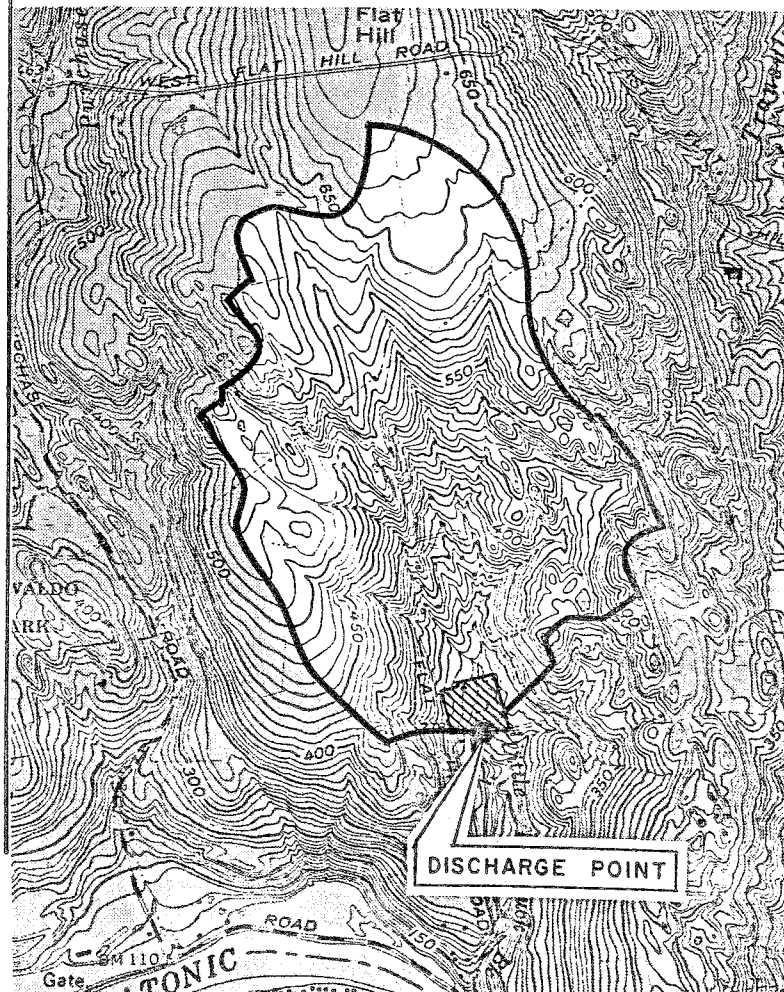
TYPE F - NORTHERN HARDWOODS, FULLY-STOCKED, POLE WITH OCCASIONAL SAWTIMBER SIZE. 5± ACRES.

TYPE G - MIXED HARDWOODS, FULLY-STOCKED, POLE TO SMALL SAWTIMBER SIZE. 1± ACRE.

\* SEEDLING SIZE - Trees less than 1" in d.b.h.  
 SAPLING SIZE - Trees 1" to 5" in d.b.h.  
 POLE SIZE - Trees 5" to 11" in d.b.h.  
 SAWTIMBER SIZE - Trees 11" and greater in d.b.h.

5 d WATERSHED OF LITTLE POOTATUCK BROOK AT BRENNAN ROAD

1" = 500'





## C. VEGETATION AND WILDLIFE

### 1. Vegetation

The 5.8 acre Mitchell Homestead is completely forested and may be divided into two vegetation types (see Figure 5c). These include a 5+ acre northern hardwood stand (vegetation type F) and a 1+ acre mixed hardwood stand (vegetation type G) located to the east of the stream which crosses this parcel.

The fully-stocked northern hardwood stand is made up of pole and occasional sawtimber size sugar maple with scattered black birch, black cherry, red maple and white ash. Several sawtimber size sycamore are present along the stream which runs through this stand. Spice bush, flowering dogwood, alternate leaved dogwood, hardwood tree seedlings, hemlock seedlings and scattered apple trees form the understory in this area. Ground cover is made up of poison ivy, Christmas fern, cinnamon fern, evergreen wood fern, club moss, wild strawberry, patches of barberry and partridge berry.

Pole and sawtimber size white oak, red oak, shagbark hickory and occasional bigtooth aspen are present in the fully-stocked mixed hardwood stand east of the stream. Along the stream fox grape has become established in the overstory. Eastern red cedar, blue beech, flowering dogwood and alternate leaved dogwood are present in the understory. Ground cover in this area is made up of grasses, goldenrod, club moss and Canada mayflower.

The majority of trees in this parcel are relatively healthy and growing vigorously. A fuelwood thinning, to stimulate growth, is not necessary at this time. However, if the removal of fuelwood is desired it should be limited to the poorest quality trees and undesirable species such as red maple. Damaged trees which have the potential to become a hazard to the users of this area, could also be removed without lowering the future quality of residual trees. The quality and health of this area should be re-evaluated in approximately 10 years to determine future management needs.

### 2. Wildlife

This area presently has fair value for wildlife. Both of the vegetation types found on this tract fall into the upland woodland habitat type. Signs of utilization of this area by white tailed deer, ruffed grouse, gray squirrel, gray fox, raccoon and several species of woodpeckers were observed during the ERT field investigation. The value of this area for wildlife is enhanced by the stream which passes through it. This area also has several small (less than 1/3 of an acre) seep areas where ground water comes to the surface before reaching the stream. The herbaceous vegetation growing in these areas provides excellent cover for many bird species and amphibians. It also provides high quality hunting areas for small mammals (shrews, raccoon, skunk) and snakes.

The quality of this area to support wildlife could be enhanced by removing overstory vegetation in selected areas. Specifically it would be desirable to stimulate the growth of the raspberry patches which are present by removing the overstory vegetation shading these plants. Raspberry not only provides many species of wildlife with food, but produces dense thickets which offer wildlife excellent cover. The flowering and fruiting of the apple trees which are present on this property could also be stimulated if direct sunlight were allowed to reach them. Once again this could be accomplished by removing several trees from around the apple trees which now block the sunlight. Pruning these apple trees will also help to stimulate their growth.

#### D. PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

As shown in Figure 1, this parcel is comprised of land bounded by Brennan Road on the south and South Flat Hill Road on the west. A private road is located just to the east of this property.

Brennan Road and South Flat Hill Road are both secondary collectors. The site is served from Southbury by River Road which is a primary collector.

The surrounding land uses in this R-80 zone are primarily residential or agricultural in nature and do not detract from the concept of the land trust properties.

The Mitchell Homestead is perhaps the parcel with the most potential for the land trust. The potential for historic value certainly exists with the presence of an old foundation on-site. The cultural resource value of this foundation should be further explored. The site itself is well served by existing roads and will accommodate a small number of vehicles with a small amount of parking construction.

The slopes on this property are favorable for passive recreational development. Picnic areas and a trail network off South Flat Hill Road could be easily constructed. The attractive woodland and presence of Little Pootatuck Brook are additional amenities of this site.

In addition to being one of the most desirable of the parcels evaluated, the Mitchell Homestead has potential for being linked with George C. Waldo State Park (147.7 acres) or perhaps even with some lands of the Shepaug Dam Site (383.4 acres). The possibility of linking some of these parcels through a network of foot path hiking trails should be explored.

It may also be possible to link some of these areas to the Town owned Little York Road area (13.8 acres). The coordination of these areas so that they complement each other and serve to address some of the policy statements in the adopted "Open Space and Conservation Plan" is a formidable, but worthwhile task.

#### VI. ADDITIONAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The Southbury Land Trust has acquired four parcels of land that are widely divergent in their potential for use even as passive recreation areas. The parcels are divergent not only in terms of potential but also in terms of geographic location and natural habitat type.

Difficulty may be experienced in the use of some of these parcels, particularly Watch Hill and Ridgewood Estates, due to their rather segmented location and very real isolation. Although this factor may be attractive as regards some aspects of the Land Trust's concepts it is not true for the utilization aspect of these parcels.

As a result of this brief analysis the following recommendations are presented by the Team Planner for consideration. In some regards these recommendations may not directly apply to utilization of these parcels. It should be noted however that consideration should be given to not only how these parcels "fit" the recommendations, but also how future parcels should address the Land Trust needs.

It is felt that only through a well formulated and designed program can the acquisitions obtained be made to be worthwhile for the Land Trust and the entire environmental community.

Recommendations:

1. Criteria for acceptance of parcels of Open Space and Conservation land should be established.
  - a. Criteria should be function or performance oriented.
  - b. Criteria should have foundations in the adopted Open Space and Conservation Plan. (Currently Amendment #4 to the Comprehensive Plan of Development for the Town of Southbury.)
2. An active effort to consolidate existing parcels of land now owned by various organizations into a town wide functional network should be investigated and pursued.
3. An effort to substantially improve on the "action program" section of the Open Space and Conservation Plan should be begun.
4. Development of recreational possibilities for especially the Mitchell Homestead and Forest Glen should be begun.
5. The Town should establish a formal policy of land consideration, acquisition, and appropriate development in accordance with adopted plans. This policy should establish various areas of concern and "rights of consideration" for various parcels being considered for donation, acquisition or permanent easement. Presently the order in which boards or commissions are asked to consider various sites is unclear. The formulation of such a policy would help clarify such a process.
6. Future considerations of acquisition by the Land Trust should directly reflect not only the criteria developed in Recommendation #1 but also the local Plan of Open Space and Conservation as well as the pertinent sections of the State Plan of Conservation and Development. The Regional Plans for Open Space and Recreation and Open Space Standards and Criteria and Alternative Legal Methods of Preservation should also be consulted and integrated into development of presently controlled parcels as well as future parcels.
7. It should be noted that in several instances, conflicting information on the acreages of the parcels has been received by the Team. For example, Forest Glen is reported to be 10.06 acres but the figure on the subdivision map is 10.594 acres. Watch Hill has been reported to be 5.2 acres while the subdivision map shows it to be 5.335 acres. The Mitchell Homestead is shown as 5.3 acres on some maps, and 5.8 acres on others. Although these acreage differences are not particularly significant, it would be desirable to straighten out the discrepancies.
8. On sites with wet or steeply sloping soils, erosion and sedimentation problems may arise. Erosion should only become a problem if the present vegetation is disturbed such as during wood harvest or path and trail construction. A conservation plan to control this erosion should be developed for any site on which the vegetation will be disturbed.

9. Roadbank erosion is currently occurring along the road drainage ditch which borders the Mitchell Homestead and Brennan Road. The banks of Little Pootatuck Brook are also eroding in this area. Streambank erosion is also occurring along the brook at Forest Glen. Sediment from these areas is a pollutant to the receiving brooks. Technical assistance is available from the Soil Conservation Service in Wallingford (269-7509) to prepare an erosion and sediment control plan for these areas.

\* \* \* \* \*

## VII. APPENDIX

SOILS LIMITATION CHART - RECREATIONAL LAND USES

| MAP SYMBOL | SOIL NAME                                           | CAMP AREAS                           | PICNIC AREAS                  | PLAYGROUNDS                         | PATHS & TRAILS                |
|------------|-----------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| AA         | Adrian and Palm mucks                               | Severe: wetness, excess humus        | Severe: wetness, excess humus | Severe: wetness, excess humus       | Severe: wetness, excess humus |
| ChC        | Charlton very stony fine sandy loam, 8 - 15% slopes | Moderate: large stones slope         | Moderate: slope               | Severe: slope                       | Moderate: large stones        |
| HpE        | Hollis - Charlton fine sandy loams, 15 - 35% slopes | Severe: slope, large stones          | Severe: slope, large stones   | Severe: slope, large stones         | Severe: slope, large stones   |
| HSE        | Hollis - Rock outcrop complex, 15 - 35% slopes      | Severe: slope large stones           | Severe: slope large stones    | Severe: slope large stones          | Severe: slope large stones    |
| PbB        | Paxton fine sandy loam, 3 - 8% slopes               | Moderate: percs slowly               | Slight                        | Moderate: percs slowly slope        | Slight                        |
| PbC        | Paxton fine sandy loam, 8 - 15% slopes              | Moderate: percs slowly, slope        | Moderate: slope               | Severe: slope                       | Slight                        |
| PbD        | Paxton fine sandy loam, 15 - 25% slopes             | Severe: slope                        | Severe: slope                 | Severe: slope                       | Moderate: slope               |
| PdB        | Paxton very stony fine sandy loam, 3 - 8% slopes    | Moderate: percs slowly, large stones | Slight                        | Moderate: percs slowly large stones | Moderate: large stones        |

| MAP SYMBOL | SOIL NAME | CAMP AREAS | PICNIC AREAS | PLAYGROUNDS | PATHS & TRAILS |
|------------|-----------|------------|--------------|-------------|----------------|
|------------|-----------|------------|--------------|-------------|----------------|

|     |                                                   |                                     |                 |               |                        |
|-----|---------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------|---------------|------------------------|
| PdC | Paxton very stony fine sandy loam, 8 - 15% slopes | Moderate: percs slowly large stones | Moderate: slope | Severe: slope | Moderate: large stones |
|-----|---------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------|---------------|------------------------|

|    |                                                                    |                               |                               |                               |                               |
|----|--------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| RN | Ridgebury, Leicester, and Whitman extremely stony fine sandy loams | Severe: wetness, large stones | Severe: wetness, large stones | Severe: wetness, large stones | Severe: wetness, large stones |
|----|--------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|

|     |                                                          |                      |                      |                             |                      |
|-----|----------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| WzC | Woodbridge extremely stony fine sandy loam, 3-15% slopes | Severe: large stones | Severe: large stones | Severe: slope, large stones | Severe: large stones |
|-----|----------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|

- EXPLANATION OF RATING SYSTEM
1. SLIGHT LIMITATION: indicates that any property of the soil affecting use of the soil is relatively unimportant and can be overcome at little expense.
  2. MODERATE LIMITATION: indicates that any property of the soil affecting use can be overcome at a somewhat higher expense.
  3. SEVERE LIMITATION: indicates that the use of the soil is seriously limited by hazards or restrictions that require extensive and costly measures to overcome.

NOTE: Limitation Ratings Based Upon U.S.D.A. Soil Conservation Service Criteria.

WILDLIFE HABITAT POTENTIALS

| Soil name & map symbol                               | Potential for habitat elements |                   |                        |                |                   | Potential as habitat for |                     |                   |                   |                  |
|------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------|------------------------|----------------|-------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------|
|                                                      | Grain & Seed Crops             | Grasses & Legumes | Wild herbaceous plants | hardwood trees | coniferous plants | wetland plants           | shallow water areas | openland wildlife | Woodland wildlife | Wetland Wildlife |
| Adrian & Palms Muck (AA)<br>Adrian part:             | Very poor                      | Very poor         | Very poor              | Poor           | Poor              | Good                     | Good                | Very poor         | Poor              | Good             |
| Palms part:                                          | Very poor                      | Very poor         | Very poor              | Poor           | Poor              | Good                     | Good                | Very poor         | Poor              | Good             |
| Charlton ChC                                         | Very poor                      | Poor              | Good                   | Good           | Good              | Very poor                | Very poor           | Poor              | Good              | Very poor        |
| Hollis (HpE)<br>Hollis part                          | Very poor                      | Very poor         | Fair                   | Poor           | Poor              | Very poor                | Very poor           | Very poor         | Poor              | Very poor        |
| Charlton part                                        | Very poor                      | Very poor         | Good                   | Good           | Good              | Very poor                | Very poor           | Poor              | Fair              | Very poor        |
| Paxton:<br>PbB                                       | Fair                           | Good              | Good                   | Good           | Good              | Poor                     | Very poor           | Good              | Good              | Very poor        |
| PbC                                                  | Fair                           | Good              | Good                   | Good           | Good              | Very poor                | Very poor           | Good              | Good              | Very poor        |
| PbD                                                  | Poor                           | Fair              | Good                   | Good           | Good              | Very poor                | Very poor           | Fair              | Good              | Very poor        |
| Ridgebury<br>Leicester & Whitman (RN)<br>Ridgebury - | Very poor                      | Very poor         | Fair                   | Fair           | Fair              | Good                     | Fair                | Poor              | Fair              | Fair             |
| Leicester -                                          | Very poor                      | Very poor         | Fair                   | Fair           | Fair              | Good                     | Fair                | poor              | Fair              | Fair             |
| Whitman -                                            | Very poor                      | Very poor         | Fair                   | Fair           | Fair              | Good                     | Fair                | Poor              | Fair              | Fair             |
| Woodbridge (WxC)                                     | Very poor                      | Very poor         | Good                   | Good           | Good              | Very poor                | Very poor           | poor              | Fair              | Very poor        |

# ABOUT THE TEAM

The King's Mark Environmental Review Team (ERT) is a group of environmental professionals drawn together from a variety of federal, state, and regional agencies. Specialists on the team include geologists, biologists, foresters, climatologists, soil scientists, landscape architects, recreation specialists, engineers, and planners. The ERT operates with state funding under the aegis of the King's Mark Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) Area - a 47 town area in western Connecticut.

As a public service activity, the team is available to serve towns and developers within the King's Mark Area --- free of charge.

## 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 the review of a wide range of significant activities including subdivisions, sanitary landfills, commercial and industrial developments, and recreation/open space projects.

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 official of a municipality or the chairman of an administration agency such as planning and zoning, conservation, or inland wetlands. Requests for reviews should be directed to the Chairman of your local Soil and Water Conservation District. This request letter must include a summary of the proposed project, a location map of the project site, written permission from the landowner/developer 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 King's Mark RC&D Executive Committee, the team will undertake the review. At present, the ERT can undertake two reviews per month.

For additional information regarding the Environmental Review Team, please contact your local Soil Conservation District Office or Richard Lynn (868-7342), Environmental Review Team Coordinator, King's Mark RC&D Area, P.O. Box 30, Warren, Connecticut 06754.