

Agenda Summary October 22, 2025

Agenda Item No. B-1

Cady Hill Forest Management Plan – Recommended Amendments

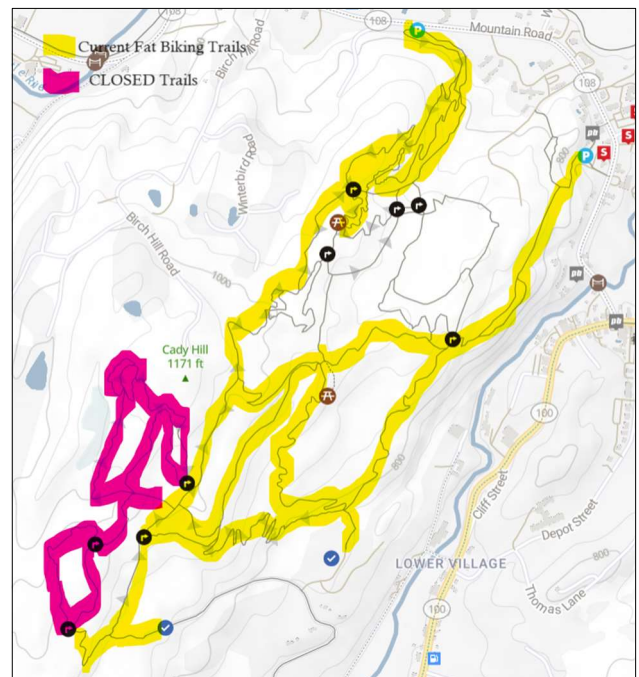
Summary: Enclosed for your review and consideration are proposed updates and amendments to the Cady Hill Forest Management Plan. Acquired by the Town in 2012, the majority of Cady Hill Forest is permanently protected by a conservation easement, co-held by the Stowe Land Trust (SLT) and the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board (VHCB). The easement covers all areas except the former Macutchan Forest parcel. The conservation easement was established to ensure permanent protection of the property while providing public access for low-impact, non-commercial recreational activities; conserving and protecting biological diversity and critical wildlife habitat; supporting sustainable timber management and harvesting; and preserving the property's undeveloped character, scenic qualities, and open space resources.

The conservation easement requires the Town to develop and maintain a management plan for the property. The management plan provides a framework for decision-making, establishing guidelines for the stewardship and management of the entire forest, including the former Macutchan Forest. Additionally, the Town maintains a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Stowe Trails Partnership (STP), designating STP as the official trail corridor manager for all trails suitable for mountain biking. Primary management objectives for Cady Hill Forest include sustainable outdoor recreation, maintaining and enhancing wildlife habitat, particularly deer wintering areas, and managing the property for timber production.

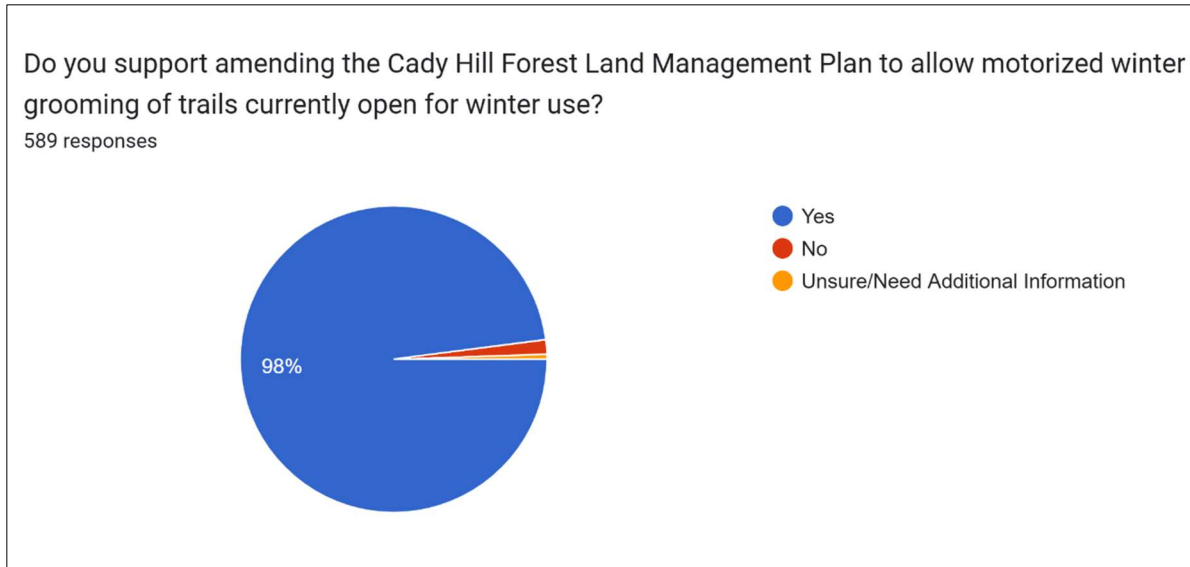
In close collaboration with municipal staff, STP, and VT Fish & Wildlife, the Conservation Commission has developed the enclosed recommended updates. Presented in track-changes format, key amendments include:

- Factual updates reflecting changes since the last plan adoption.
- Permits motorized winter grooming on select trails with approved equipment, provided there is at least 3–4 inches of snow on frozen ground. Currently, these trails are used in winter but are groomed manually rather than with motorized equipment.

As required by the conservation easement, staff and STP met with SLT and VT Fish & Wildlife Department and invited them to participate in the management plan update process. In June 2024, wildlife biologists with the Department granted permission for the continued winter grooming of the current fat biking trails (highlighted in yellow on the map) using motorized means, excluding the seasonally closed Schween Haus Loops (highlighted in pink). SLT has reviewed the proposed amendments and confirmed they are consistent with the conservation easement requirements.



In addition, the Conservation Commission solicited public input, receiving 589 responses, 98% of which supported the proposed amendments.



The Conservation Commission serves as an advisor to the Selectboard regarding the management, stewardship, and use of Cady Hill Forest. Conservation Commission Chair Catherine Gott will be available to answer any questions from the Selectboard regarding these proposed updates and amendments.

Town Plan Impact: Conforms with the following Stowe Town Plan policies:

The Town Plan and related planning documents will be reviewed on an ongoing basis and amended as appropriate to address changing circumstances.

The Stowe Conservation Commission serves as the primary steward for town-owned conservation land.

Sterling Forest, Cady Hill Forest and other appropriate Town-owned forests will be managed for sustainable timber harvesting operations in accordance with approved forest management plans, with special consideration given to enhancing wildlife habitat and the protection of historic sites.

Fiscal & Human Resource Impact: The Conservation Commission serves as the primary stewards for town-owned conserved lands, including Cady Hill Forest. Planning & Zoning Director Sarah McShane provides professional and administrative support to the Conservation Commission and coordinates projects on town-owned conserved land with easement holders to ensure compliance with easement terms. An estimated 35 staff person hours were involved in the preparation of the plan amendments, coordinating with interested parties, and supporting the Conservation Commission throughout the plan update process.

Recommendation: Move to approve the proposed recommended updates to the Cady Hill Forest Management Plan. The proposed amendments will become effective immediately upon passage.

Sarah McShane

From: Blouin, Josh <Josh.Blouin@vermont.gov>
Sent: Friday, June 28, 2024 12:24 PM
To: Carolyn Lawrence; Grady Vigneau; Sarah McShane
Cc: Dodge, Noel
Subject: [EXTERNAL] RE: Motorized Grooming in Cady Hill
Attachments: WinterGrooming.png

You don't often get email from josh.blouin@vermont.gov. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hi Carolyn and Grady,

I hope this letter finds you both well. I am writing on behalf of Vermont Fish and Wildlife to address the management of trails and conservation efforts concerning Deer Wintering Areas (DWAs) on the Cady Hill parcel in Stowe.

After careful consideration and in accordance with our conservation objectives, the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department grants permission for the continued winter grooming of the current fat biking trails (highlighted in yellow on attached map) using motorized means, excluding the seasonally closed Schween Haus Loops (highlighted in pink on attached map). It's important to highlight the significance of maintaining the winter closure of the Schween Haus Loop to ensure its integrity as a functional Deer Wintering Area (DWA). Motorized grooming should be minimized to the extent possible across the forested parcel where softwood cover exists. Hemlock cover within these areas plays a critical role in providing essential shelter for overwintering deer, mitigating the risk of mortality during harsh winter conditions.

As discussed during our site visits, particularly with Grady, we want to emphasize the importance of educating all recreation users about DWAs and their role in sustaining the deer population in Vermont. We would like to encourage signage near the closed-off trail intersections that provides a brief overview and possibly includes a QR code to the [Vermont Fish and Wildlife](#) website for more information. This education aims to foster a responsible and informed approach to recreational activities, ensuring minimal disruption to wildlife habitats and promoting the long-term conservation of our natural resources. We would be happy to help in this process, so please feel free to reach out as that progresses.

Thank you for your cooperation and commitment to wildlife conservation efforts in Vermont. Should you have any questions or require further information, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

Josh Blouin and Noel Dodge



Josh Blouin (he/him) | Wildlife Biologist

Vermont Agency of Natural Resources | Dept. of Fish & Wildlife



Cady Hill Forest Management Plan

ADOPTED BY THE STOWE SELECTBOARD

~~(INSERT DATE)~~ MAY 26, 2015



CADY HILL MANAGEMENT PLAN

Document Name CHFMP_5.26.15 adopted.doc
 Document Date May 26, 2015
 Document Status Approved by the Stowe Selectboard
 Approval Status

Organization	Version	Status	Date
Stowe Selectboard	<u>1.0</u>	Adopted	May 26, 2015
Stowe Conservation Commission	<u>1.0</u>	Recommended	April 15, 2015
<u>Stowe Selectboard</u>	<u>2.0</u>		
<u>Stowe Conservation Commission</u>	<u>2.0</u>	<u>Recommended</u>	<u>September 8, 2025 & September 25, 2025</u>

Document notes:

Management Plan text is presented in 12-point Times New Roman Aptos text.

Easement or other cited text is presented in 10-point Courier

Please contact the Director Department of Planning & Zoning for any inquiries regarding this document.

Town of Stowe, Planning & Zoning Department
 P.O. Box 216730
 Stowe, Vermont 05672
 Telephone 802-253-2705

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A. Purpose of this Plan

The purpose of this management plan is to provide a framework for decision making and a set of guidelines for the supervision and management of Cady Hill Forest. The management plan pertains to lands purchased through the Cady Hill Forest conservation project as well as the former town-owned Macutchan Forest.

A management plan for the lands purchased through the Cady Hill Forest conservation project is a requirement of the conservation easement on those portions of the Cady Hill Forest property. The following language is included in the conservation easement:

Grantor will, from time-to-time develop comprehensive Management Plans, including forest management plan updates, revisions and amendments, for the Protected Property (hereafter "Management Plan(s)"). The Management Plan(s) shall:

1. Provide for the use and management of the Protected Property in a fashion which is consistent with the Purposes of this Grant; and,
2. At a minimum, the Management Plan shall identify actions necessary to accomplish the following and shall appropriately balance all the resource attributes of and human uses for the Protected Property:
 - (a) Identify and address the management needs of the recreational uses that may need special or more intensive management focus;
 - (b) Provide for meaningful recreational links to private and public lands, in particular, Macutchan Forest;
 - (c) Identify objectives for the timber management and harvesting of timber;
 - (d) Provide for the sustainable use of fish and wildlife resources;
 - (e) Provide for the identification and protection of natural communities, plant, wildlife and aquatic habitat and other ecologically sensitive or important areas;
 - (f) Provide for parking areas; and,
 - (g) Provide for the construction and use of any minor structures permitted under this Grant.
3. Be designed to provide reasonable public access to recreational values and opportunities associated with the Protected Property; and,
4. Be consistent with the purpose of conserving biological diversity, wildlife habitat, natural communities and the ecological processes that sustain these natural resource values of the Protected Property; and,
5. Otherwise be consistent with the terms and conditions of this Grant.

Management prescriptions specific to maintaining and enhancing wildlife habitat, including the deer wintering habitat, shall be developed in

consultation with the Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife, and shall be designed to perpetuate the function and value of the habitat.

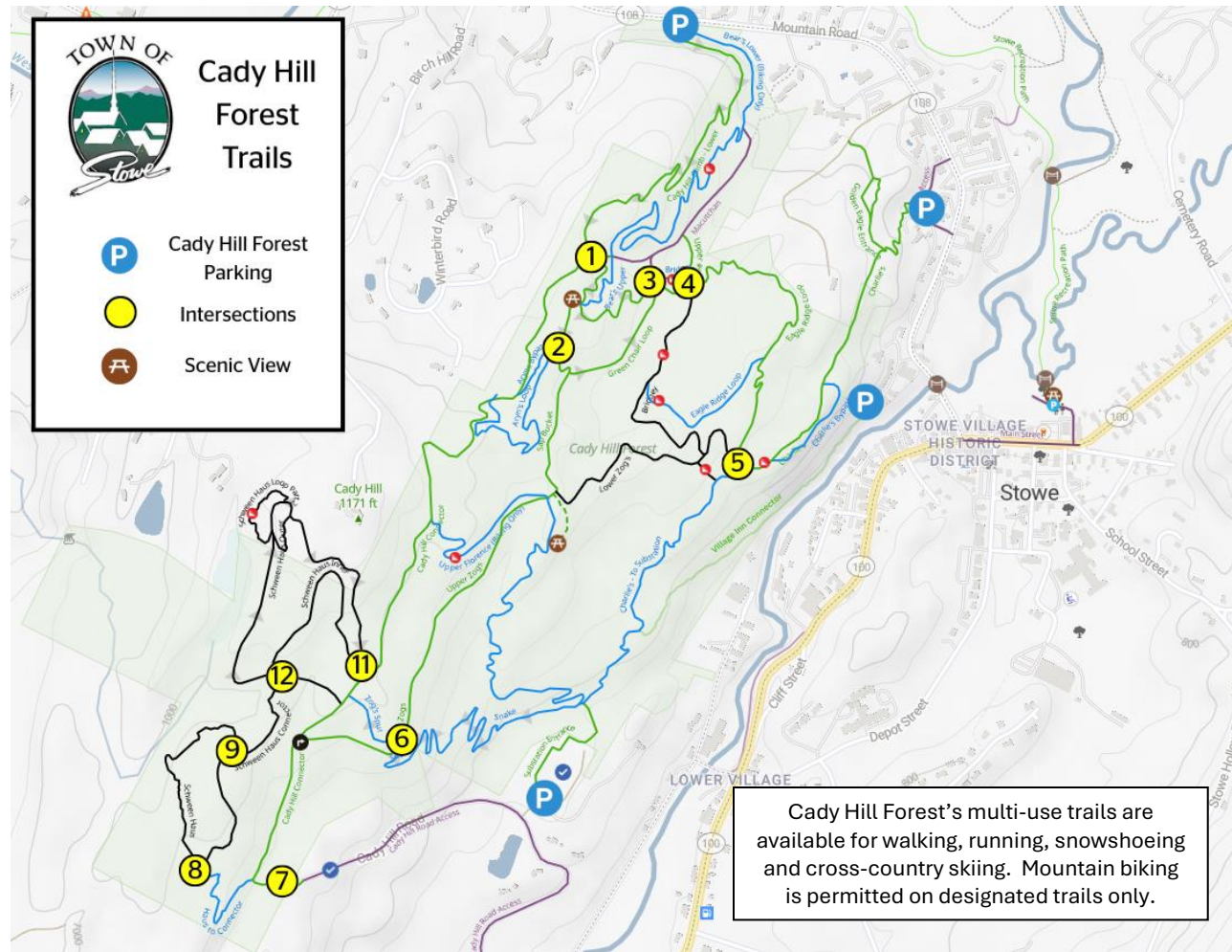
B. Property Description

The 320-acre Cady Hill Forest is comprised of several parcels previously owned by the Cabral family, totaling 217 acres, and 41 acres previously owned by the Hillman Family of Golden Eagle Resort. These properties were combined with the 60-acre Town-owned Macutchan Forest parcel to form one property officially designated as Cady Hill Forest.

The property is bisected by a north-to-south running ridgeline, the apex of which is Cady Hill, located to the west of the project area on the former Cabral 2004 Trust property. The east side of the project area slopes gradually from an elevation of approximately 1,150 feet and then steeply down to the Little River at just under 700 feet. The west side of the property drops gradually away from Cady Hill to the southwest and terminates in a large, highly functioning wetland complex. This southwestern portion of the property is also an area of significant deer wintering habitat. The forest cover in this area is a dense mixture consisting primarily of softwoods and wetland species. Moving across the ridgeline to the north and east, the forest cover is predominantly mixed hardwoods and softwoods and is more open in nature, providing less cover for deer and other species. Minor wetland complexes exist in the ridgeline hollows that run north to south.

This area was settled and the suitable land was cleared for farming around the late 1700's. Most of the property was at one time used either as pasture or cropland. These uses were abandoned in various stages based on ownership, from about 35 to 120 years ago. An approximately 5-acre area near the northwest boundary line was used as a sugarbush for an extended period of time. At least two old road beds or carriage trails exist on the property. These were maintained and used for generations for a variety of purposes including timber harvests and equestrian use. The old roads stand in contrast to the newer single track trails that have been built and maintained in recent years. The single track trails were built primarily for the purpose of mountain biking. Approximately 11 miles of trails currently exist on the property and are regularly used for non-motorized recreational activities including: hiking, biking, running, hunting, ~~Nordie-cross-country~~ skiing and snowshoeing.

The lands comprising Cady Hill Forest have long been identified as one of the highest priority areas for conservation in the town of Stowe. The combination of wildlife habitat, scenic viewshed and recreation trails within walking distance of Stowe Village has made this area immensely popular with the community for its ease of accessibility and wilderness-like experience. ~~The property has become the centerpiece of mountain biking in the Stowe area. In 2024, Cady Hill welcomed an estimated 92,000 unique visitors, solidifying its role as the centerpiece of mountain biking in Stowe.~~



C. Responsible Parties

Cady Hill Forest is owned by the Town of Stowe.

The Stowe Conservation Commission is responsible for the primary stewardship of the property.

The conservation easement on all but the former Macutchan Forest portion of the property is co-held by Stowe Land Trust (SLT) and the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board (VHCB). SLT is the primary party responsible for ensuring that all activities on the property are in conformance with the conservation easement.

The Town has a Memorandum of Understanding with the [Stowe Mountain Bike Club Stowe Trails Partnership \(SMBCSTP\)](#) which designates the club as the trail corridor manager for all trails on the property that are suitable for mountain biking.

The Stowe Director of Planning & Zoning serves as the liaison between the Conservation Commission, SLT and [STP SMBC](#) and is the primary contact for information regarding Cady Hill Forest.

D. Conservation Easement

This Management Plan is consistent with the conservation easement on the former Cabral and Golden Eagle portions of the property, co-held by the Stowe Land Trust and the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board. All management activities on, and uses of, these portions of the Cady Hill Forest property must comply with the conservation easement.

The following language, taken from the conservation ~~ee~~ easement, is included here to articulate the purposes of the Cady Hill Forest conservation project:

A. Statement of Purposes.

1. Grantor and Grantees acknowledge that the Purposes of this Grant are as follows (hereinafter "Purposes of this Grant"):

- (a) To provide perpetual public, outdoor recreational use of the Protected Property that is low-impact, non-commercial and non-motorized, including but not limited to mountain biking, bird watching, cross-country skiing, fishing, hiking, hunting, snowshoeing, trail running, trapping, walking and wildlife observation and other recreational uses which are compatible with the foregoing uses, provided all such uses are consistent with the other Purposes of this Grant.
- (b) To conserve and protect biological diversity, important wildlife habitat and natural communities on the Protected Property and the ecological processes that sustain these natural resource values as these values exist on the date of this Grant and as they may evolve in the future.
- (c) To provide opportunities for timber management and harvesting of timber and non-timber resources on the Protected Property.
- (d) To conserve and protect the Protected Property's undeveloped character and scenic and open space resources for present and future generations.
- (e) To insure that the Protected Property will be owned in perpetuity by a qualified nonprofit, public or other entity approved by Grantee VHCB.

2. These purposes will be advanced by conserving the Protected Property because it possesses the following attributes:

- (a) 258 acres of mixed northern hardwood and softwood forest situated in on prominent ridgeline near the center of Stowe Village.
- (b) Critical wildlife habitat including approximately 215 acres of deer winter habitat as identified by the State of Vermont.
- (c) A network of recreational trails that are suitable for pedestrian use, mountain biking, and cross-country skiing;

- (d) Located within the viewshed of the Green Mountain Scenic Byway and Route 100 Corridor, which contributes to the historic character of Stowe Village.
- (e) Adjacent to the Town of Stowe' Macutchan Forest, protected by deed restrictions as a forest preserve.
- (f) 23+/- acres of State designated Class II wetlands.

E. Management Objectives

Managing the outdoor recreational use of Cady Hill Forest in a sustainable manner is a primary management objective for the property. The other primary management objectives are: maintaining and enhancing wildlife habitat, with particular emphasis on the deer wintering habitat; and managing the property for timber production. The guidelines herein will help address and balance these objectives, and ensure the protection of the property's significant resources.

Management objectives include:

1. To provide and maintain access to a system of sustainable multi-use recreational trails.
2. To provide and maintain biodiversity and quality wildlife habitat, specifically for white tailed deer.
3. To maintain a healthy forest through best forest management practices.
4. To protect the hillside viewshed as seen from from the Route 100 & 108 corridors.

1. Property-wide Management Considerations

Trail-based Recreation

The primary purpose of the Cady Hill Forest conservation easement is to provide perpetual public non-motorized outdoor recreational use of the property. The enthusiasm that was generated in the acquisition of the property was significantly due to the existing network of trails that had been constructed over the years by the [Stowe Trails Partnership Stowe Mountain Bike Club \(SMBC STP\)](#) and the Golden Eagle Resort. The 11-mile network of multi-use trails in Cady Hill Forest is regularly used by bikers, walkers, trail runners and snowshoers. [SMBC-STP](#) has a signed Memorandum of Understanding with the Town of Stowe that designates [SMBC-STP](#) as the official trail corridor manager for the trails on the property that are suitable for mountain biking. The trail network's close proximity to Stowe Village makes this an important hub for recreation in the community.

All trails in Cady Hill Forest are considered multi-use and open to all users unless signed otherwise. Cyclists must be wary of, and yield to, foot and ski traffic at all times. Biking is discouraged during periods of extreme wetness if such use has the potential of permanently degrading trails.

Mountain Biking

In 2012, the Stowe Mountain Bike Club ([now known as Stowe Trails Partnership \(STP\)](#)) commissioned the development of the Cady Hill Forest Trails Plan, which was approved by the Stowe Selectboard. The Plan was substantially implemented during the 2013 and 2014

construction seasons with funding from the Town of Stowe, the Vermont Recreational Trails Program and [SMBC-STP](#). The new trails that were constructed included an extension of Cady Hill Climb, Cady Hill Connector, Upper Bear's Trail, the Green Chair Loop, Snake and Florence (see map on page 5). Any additional proposed new trails that are not included in the Trails Plan must be approved by the Conservation Commission and the Stowe Selectboard.

Mountain biking is restricted to designated trails only. Off trail mountain biking is prohibited.

As the official trail corridor manager of the property, [SMBC-STP](#) has the primary responsibility for ensuring that the trails are sustainably managed to be able to withstand the level of use that is anticipated as the trail system increases in popularity. To ensure the sustainable maintenance of the trail system, it is the responsibility of [SMBC-STP](#) to:

- Submit a yearly maintenance plan to the Stowe Conservation Commission by April 1st of each year for trail work that is anticipated for that upcoming work season as well as any other planned activities or events;
- Decide when to open the trail system for mountain biking each spring once the trails have sufficiently dried out after snowmelt;
- Monitor the condition of the trails during the seasons and open and close trails as appropriate, depending on the amount of use and frequency and amount of rainfall during the season;
- Notify the public of trail conditions and closures at the main trailheads and through their website and social media;
- Remove blow-downs and any other trail hazards as they occur on an ongoing basis; and
- Submit a yearly end of the season report by December 1st of each year to the Conservation Commission documenting trail work that was completed and any issues that may have arisen during the season.

[With the passage of Act 40 in 2021, Vermont statute clarified that an electric bicycle is not a motor vehicle and is a vehicle to the same extent that a bicycle is a vehicle \[23 VSA §4\(46\)\(B\)\]. As such, after receiving confirmation from conservation easement holders, the Selectboard approved the use of Class 1 electric bicycles in June 2023. Use of Class 1 electric bicycles is allowed in Cady Hill Forest under the same terms as a traditional mountain bicycle.](#)

The ~~Stowe~~ Director of Planning & Zoning serves as the primary liaison between the Conservation Commission and [SMBC-STP](#) on a day-to-day basis for trail-related matters.

Fat Biking

The use of 'fat bikes', also known as "snow bikes" to bike on snow is permitted during the winter months with the following restrictions:

- Fat bikes must yield the right of way to walkers, snowshoers, runners and cross country skiers.
- Winter use of fat bikes is prohibited on the Schween Haus Loops trail.

- Winter use of fat bikes is restricted to the following trails: Cady Hill Climb, Cady Hill Connector, Florence, Snake, Zog's, Charlie's, ~~and Bear's~~, Baby Bear's, and Eagle Ridge Loop.
- ~~There shall be no motorized grooming of the trails for fat biking. Motorized grooming of trails for fat biking is prohibited unless there is a minimum of 3–4 inches of snow on frozen ground and grooming is performed using a hybrid or fully electric grooming machine, such as a Snow Dog Groomer. Motorized grooming is only allowed on the following trails: Cady Hill Climb, Cady Hill Connector, Florence, Snake, Zog's, Charlie's, Bear's, Baby Bear's, and Eagle Ridge Loop. Effective November 1, 2027, and thereafter, the operation of motorized grooming machines shall be limited to fully electric models only.~~

~~SMBC-STP~~ will maintain the following sign at the two primary Cady Hill Forest trailheads during the winter months:



Hunting

The conservation easement allows for hunting at the discretion of the grantor (Town of Stowe). Hunting is currently permitted on the property and it is therefore important to alert the recreational users of the property when the primary hunting seasons are in effect. The Town will post notice of the various deer hunting seasons at the trailhead kiosk and other access points to the property at the beginning of deer season.

Snowmobiling

The conservation easement allows for snowmobiling at the discretion of the grantor. Snowmobiling is currently not permitted on the property, but permission may be granted by the Stowe Selectboard upon submission of a proposal by the Stowe Snowmobile Club with written approval by the Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Horseback Riding

Horseback riding is currently not permitted on the property due to the intensity of other recreational uses and the impact on the recreational trails.

Dogs

Dogs are welcome in Cady Hill Forest under the following conditions:

- a. Dogs must be under owner control at all times (leash, voice or other.)

- b. Pet waste in the trail corridor or near waterways must be ~~buried or~~ carried out.
- c. Consideration should be given to other users who may not be comfortable with encountering unleashed pets.

Dispersed Recreation

Off-trail users engaged in wildlife tracking, nature observation, and other similar activities are welcome and encouraged in Cady Hill Forest. Off-trail users should be mindful not to create new trails that others are likely to follow, thus increasing undue impact on the property.

Forest Management

In October 2017, a windstorm with gusts up to 90 mph severely damaged Cady Hill Forest, flattening about 60 acres and leaving many trails, including Bear's, Cady Hill Climb, Florence, and Charlie's, impassable.

In response, the Town of Stowe partnered with Stowe Trails Partnership, Stowe Land Trust, the County Forester, Northern Stewards LC, local logger Jed Lipsky, and others to carry out a salvage harvest. The work removed most, but not all, downed trees, while also selectively cutting low-vigor or high-risk trees to promote healthier, more diverse forest conditions. Trails were reopened and new habitat features such as downed logs, standing dead trees, and root balls were intentionally retained to benefit wildlife.

Careful planning minimized erosion and trail damage, while timber revenue helped offset recovery costs. The project not only restored recreation access but also strengthened long-term forest health and habitat diversity, turning a destructive event into an opportunity for renewal. Moving forward, the Town and its many partners should continue to seek creative ways to balance recreation and forestry, ensuring both can thrive together.

Prohibited Uses

The following uses are prohibited in Cady Hill Forest:

- a. Unauthorized use of motorized vehicles
- b. Trapping
- c. Paintball
- d. Camping
- e. Open fires unless specifically approved by the Town for an organized winter event and with a permit from the Town's Fire Warden

If a use is not listed in this section, it does not necessarily mean that it is permitted.

Group Recreational Use

Any group activity (hikes, workshops, group rides, etc.) involving a party of 10 or more people, regardless of whether a fee is charged to participants is considered a group recreational use. Large groups may do unintentional damage based solely on their size, so the Town of Stowe may limit the size and/or numbers of groups using the property. Special scheduling may be required to avoid

flooding the property with people on popular dates and occasions. A written agreement with the Town of Stowe should be developed if a group would like to use the property repeatedly or regularly for a particular use.

Guided & Commercial Activities

Guided and commercial activities are those for which a fee is charged to participants or clients (e.g. guided hikes, workshops, or ski tours; dog walking services). Guided and commercial activities may not interfere with public access to and enjoyment of Cady Hill Forest. If a guide or business owner would like to use a property repeatedly or regularly for a particular use, a written agreement with the Town of Stowe should be developed. The business should also provide a Certificate of Liability Insurance naming the Town of Stowe as an “additional insured.”

Local businesses that benefit directly or indirectly from use of Cady Hill forest lands and trails by their guests or clients are encouraged to maintain a Stowe ~~Mountain Bike Club~~ [Trails Partnership](#) Corporate Membership at an appropriate level to help support the maintenance and management of the recreational trail recourses.

Events

Organized trail-based events such as races or guided tours, that are not organized or sanctioned by ~~the Stowe Mountain Bike Club~~ [STP](#), require authorization from the Town of Stowe. Festivals, contests, plays and performances, family reunions, and weddings also require authorization from the Town of Stowe.

Authorization is generally needed when the activity:

- a. Is organized or publicized;
- b. Involves a fee (charged to participants);
- c. Alters a site or alters/removes natural resources; or
- d. May conflict with other established uses such as hiking, cross country skiing, scientific research, hunting, etc.
- e. When group size exceeds 10 people, including guides.

Requests should include:

- a. Contact – Name and contact info
- b. Purpose – The purpose of the proposed use; if applicable, a description of the organization, participants, and what services are provided to the Stowe community
- c. Type of Use – Location, activity, dates/timeframe, # clients, # guides
- d. Fees charged – What fees – if any – will be charged?
- e. Proof of insurance, if applicable

Organizers of events should provide a Certificate of Liability Insurance naming the Town of Stowe as an “additional insured.” For organizers of events that do not carry liability insurance, they can

[Cady Hill Forest Management Plan 2025.doc](#)~~Cady Hill Forest Management Plan 2025.doc~~

purchase short-term, low-cost liability insurance through the Town's participation in the Tenant Users Liability Insurance Policy (TULIP) Program.

Any organized event involving 300 or more people must receive a Special Event Permit from the Stowe Selectboard.

Academic Research

Academic research in Cady Hill Forest is permitted. Any groups wishing to do so should contact the Director of Planning to coordinate the activity with any others that might be planned.

Plants, Wildlife, Mineral, and Historical/Cultural Resource Collecting

Such collecting is only permitted with approval of the Stowe Conservation Commission if it is a necessary part of an academic investigation through an educational institution or research entity and will have minimal impact on the disturbed resource.

Geocaches and Letterboxes

Geo-cache groups must obtain approval from the Stowe Conservation Commission for cache locations and types. Caches should not be placed in sensitive sites such as wetlands and watercourses, and should be removed when not in use.

Signs, Trail Markers, and Memorials

No signs, trail markers, and memorials may be placed in Cady Hill Forest without authorization from the Stowe Conservation Commission.

Invasive Species Management

Numerous instances of the invasive Japanese barberry have been observed in Management Area #2 in the area of "Charlie's Trail" but have not been mapped. Due to the property's proximity to the Green Mountain Power utility line corridor it is likely that seed sources for non-native invasives are close by. Consideration should be given to developing a strategy for eradicating or at least preventing the spread of more of these invasive plants onto the property.



2. Management Areas

To assist in management for these multiple objectives, the property has been divided into five management units, depicted on the map on page 16 and described below. Each area describes a primary management objective and identifies other secondary management objectives.

Management Area # 1: (130+/- acres)

Natural Community Type: Hemlock-Northern Hardwood Forest. Also includes a portion of a large beaver wetland complex and numerous acidic rock outcrops.

General Description: Area 1 is a mid-successional hemlock-dominated community located in the southwestern portion of the property. Soils are till-derived and consist of shallow, rocky, fine sandy loams. Bedrock is exposed in numerous places as outcrops and ledge. The large wetland complex in the far western portion of the property includes open water, shrub swamps, and sedge meadows which is likely periodically influenced by beaver activity.

Dominant Tree Species: Eastern Hemlock, Red Maple, and Eastern White Pine. Yellow Birch, Paper Birch, and Red Spruce are also present.

Associated Wildlife:

- Mature Forest: Wood thrush, black-throated green warbler, black bear, fisher, red-backed salamander, white-tailed deer
- Wetland: Beaver, dragonflies, white-throated sparrow, mink, swallows, herons, flycatchers, bull frog
- Rock Outcrop: Porcupine, bobcat, coyote

Condition Assessment:

- Native plant diversity: Good, although naturally low in Hemlock-Hardwood Forest. Non-natives, invasive honeysuckle is present in the wetland, which is a threat to native species diversity.
- Forest structure: Fair. Forest is still quite young and has not yet had the chance to develop a dense understory and midstory, canopy gaps, large-diameter trees, abundant standing and downed dead wood. Given time and/or appropriate management, these features will continue to develop.
- Habitat quality: Good at unit-level; will improve as forest structure is enhanced. Movement across the landscape is limited by neighboring development. Trails are closed in winter, minimizing disturbance to winter residents – particularly deer. Impact of summer trail use is unknown.

Management Objectives

In this area the primary management objective is the protection of the State-designated deer wintering area. According to the VT Department of Fish & Wildlife, the wintering area found on this

property is a portion of a larger wintering area encompassing several hundred acres over other adjacent properties offering essential relief to white tailed deer from winter conditions. These areas of softwood cover provide protection from deep snow, cold temperatures, and wind. They provide a dense canopy of softwood trees, a favorable slope and aspect, generally moderate elevation, and low levels of human disturbance in winter within close proximity to sources of food. Hemlock is the dominant softwood species in this unit with areas of hardwood browse production including species like red maple, sugar maple and yellow birch.

Management Area #1 contains a beaver meadow and pond that is designated as a Class 2 wetland by the State of Vermont. It is an alder swamp approximately 20 acres in size that extends onto private land. The trail known as "Easy Out" dead-ends at the wetland.

In order to meet the primary objective in this area, management will focus on the following themes:

- a. Maintain softwood cover.
- b. Maintain core softwood areas and travel corridors.
- c. Maintain and enhance the most producing components of the forest.
- d. Create and maintain browse in key locations.
- e. Minimize recreation use in periods of deer winter use.
- f. Maintain the integrity of the Class 2 wetland that is located within the management area, including maintaining an existing sign to keep bike traffic from traversing it.
- g. Maintaining and enhancing the existing recreational trails to minimize erosion and ensure sustainability as use increases over time.

A secondary management objective in this area is to support recreational activity that does not conflict with deer wintering. Winter recreational use is restricted to a designated winter use trail corridor now known as the Cady Hill Connector. Trail maps and signage will inform recreational uses of these restrictions. Timber harvests will occur where appropriate in conjunction with a forest management plan approved by the Lamoille County Forester.

Approximately 190 acres of the land purchased from the Cabrals had been enrolled in the State of Vermont Current Use Program prior to the transfer of the property to the Town of Stowe. Because the Town is tax exempt and therefore not eligible for Current Use, the land was withdrawn from the program. No Land Use Change tax was charged to the Town; however, a lien still remains on the property in the amount of \$114,133. Even though the property is no longer enrolled in Current Use, the Town is still required to have an approved forest management plan. The ~~current~~ forest management plans ~~are set to expire~~d on March 31, 2018. No timber harvest activity ~~is was~~ required under the ~~current~~ prior plans however the plans should now be re-evaluated and updated.

Construction of new trails, other than necessary minor reroutes, are prohibited in Management Area #1.

Management Areas #1 and #2 are under the jurisdiction of State of Vermont Land Use Permit #5L 0267-19 (Act 250), issued to Stowe Land Trust on February 23, 2012.

Management Area # 2: (125 +/- acres)

Natural Community Type: Hemlock-Northern Hardwood Forest. Also includes a shrub wetland and numerous acidic rock outcrops.

General Description: Area 2 is an early to mid-successional hemlock-dominated community located in the southeastern portion of the property. Soils are till-derived and consist of shallow, stony, fine sandy loams on steep, east-facing slopes. White pine plantations are present throughout the Area and were likely planted on old fields. Bedrock is exposed in numerous places as outcrops and ledge with one particularly dramatic ledge located along the Florence trail. The shrub wetland in the eastern portion of the Area is dominated by alder. The power line corridor runs along the eastern edge of the unit and is dominated by rubus species, small tress, and shrubs, including non-native, invasive species.

Dominant Tree Species: Eastern White Pine, Eastern Hemlock, and Red Maple. Yellow Birch, Paper Birch, and Red Spruce are also present.

Associated Wildlife:

- Mature Forest: Blackburnian warbler, black-throated green warbler, ruffed grouse, black bear, fisher, red-backed salamander, white-tailed deer
- Wetland: Swallows, flycatchers
- Rock Outcrop: Porcupine, bobcat, coyote
- Power line Corridor: Song sparrow, northern flicker, red fox, vole, insects and butterflies

Condition Assessment:

- Native plant diversity: Fair. Pine plantations have low diversity and have not yet transitioned to a more diverse community. Non-natives, invasive honeysuckle and barberry is present in high concentrations along and adjacent to the power line corridor.
- Forest structure: Fair. Forest is still quite young and has not yet had the chance to develop a dense understory and midstory, canopy gaps, large-diameter trees, abundant standing and downed dead wood. Given time and/or appropriate management, these features will continue to develop.
- Habitat quality: Fair at unit-level; will improve as forest structure and species diversity is enhanced. Movement across the landscape is limited by neighboring development. Impact of trail density and use is unknown.

Management Objectives

Management in this area will focus on the maintenance and enhancement of recreational resources and conducting timber harvests to maintain a healthy forest and generate income to offset management expenses. Secondary objectives will focus on maintaining existing deer wintering areas.

Forest stand data for lands comprising Management Area #2 are incomplete because prior forest management plans for the Cabral property focused on the undevelopable Act 250 constrained land. No forest management plans exist for the former Golden Eagle Resort land or the former Macutchan Forest. The Town of Stowe will make an effort to mitigate potential conflicts with recreational use of the property during timber harvests by implementing harvest activities in the winter months and instituting trail closures when necessary. Where appropriate, vegetation management to enhance deer wintering areas will be incorporated in the forest management plan.

Management Area #2 contains a State-designated Class 2 wetland that is an alder swamp approximately 10 acres in size. It is located near the southern end of Zog's Trail and extends to Cady Hill Rd.

The Act 250 permit for the property allows for the construction of up to 3 miles of new trails in this management area. The implementation of the Cady Hill Forest Trail Plan, developed by the Stowe Mountain Bike Club resulted in the construction of two new trails, Snake and Florence with a total length of approximately 1.5 miles. The final build-out of the Trails Plan ~~will~~ resulted in a final total of less than 2 miles of new trail in this management area. In 2024, the Selectboard approved the Stowe Village Inn Connector Trail, -a beginner, bi-directional trail that connects from the parking area of the Stowe Village Inn, over the town-owned Palisades Park property and municipal sewer line corridor, into Cady Hill Forest and connecting to the existing Charlie's Trail. Approximately ±0.28 miles of the trail are located within Management Area #2. Once constructed, Management Area #2 will contain a total of ±2.19 of trails.

Management Area # 3: (3+/- acres)

This management area was developed into a 20-car parking lot in 2012 to provide year-round recreational access to Cady Hill Forest. It serves as the main trailhead for the property. An informational kiosk and a road sign were also installed in 2012 and a new trail connector was constructed to improve access to the trail network from the parking area.

The construction of permanent accessible restroom and a tool storage and/or maintenance shed has also been contemplated for this ~~unit~~ area and is permitted by the conservation easement. The size and design of any proposed structure will be determined through a collaborative process between the Town of Stowe and SMBC-STP prior to construction. Any new construction will require approval from the Stowe Selectboard.

Management Area # 4 (61 +/- acres)

Natural Community Type: Hemlock-Northern Hardwood Forest and Red Spruce – Northern Hardwood Forest. Also includes a small Hemlock Swamp.

General Description: The western portion of Area 4 (former Macutchan Forest) is largely dominated by white pine and Norway spruce. Soils in this area are fine sandy loams that are less rocky than those in the rest of the forest. Hemlock and hardwoods are also present, and dominate along with large white pine in the eastern portion of the property. A small hemlock swamp is present in the middle of the Bridgely Trail loop. The power line corridor runs along the eastern edge of the unit and is dominated by rubus species, small trees, and shrubs, including non-native, invasive species.

Dominant Tree Species: Eastern White Pine, Norway Spruce, Eastern Hemlock, and Red Maple. Yellow Birch, Paper Birch, Black Cherry, White Ash, Balsam Fir, Red Pine, and American Beech are also present.

Associated Wildlife:

- Mature Forest: Golden-crowned kinglet, magnolia warbler, barred owl, black bear, fisher, red-backed salamander, white-tailed deer
- Swamp: Brown creeper, winter wren, white-tailed deer (winter cover)
- Power line Corridor: Song sparrow, northern flicker, red fox, vole, insects and butterflies

Condition Assessment:

- Native plant diversity: Good. These appear to be the most diverse forests on the property likely due to site-factors – particularly soils. Non-native, invasive honeysuckle and barberry is present in high concentrations along and adjacent to the powerline corridor.
- Forest structure: Good; excellent in Norway spruce/pine area where a dense understory is present. Large-diameter pine, snags and downed logs are present. Given time and/or appropriate management, understory and other structural features will continue to develop where lacking.
- Habitat quality: Good at unit-level; will improve as forest structure and species diversity is enhanced. Movement across the landscape is limited by neighboring development. Impact of trail density and use is unknown.

Management Area #4 consists of the 41 acres previously owned by the Hillman Family of Golden Eagle Resort and the 60-acre former Macutchan Forest. The conservation easement held by Stowe Land Trust covers the former Hillman property, but not Macutchan Forest. The Macutchan parcel ~~is~~ **was** covered by Land Use Permit 5L-1529 issued to the Vermont Mountain Biking Association as part of the Stowe portion of the Vermont Ride Center, a network of trails including the Macutchan Forest, Trapp Family Lodge and Sterling Forest. ~~However, these trails were never constructed and the Land Use Permit has now expired.~~

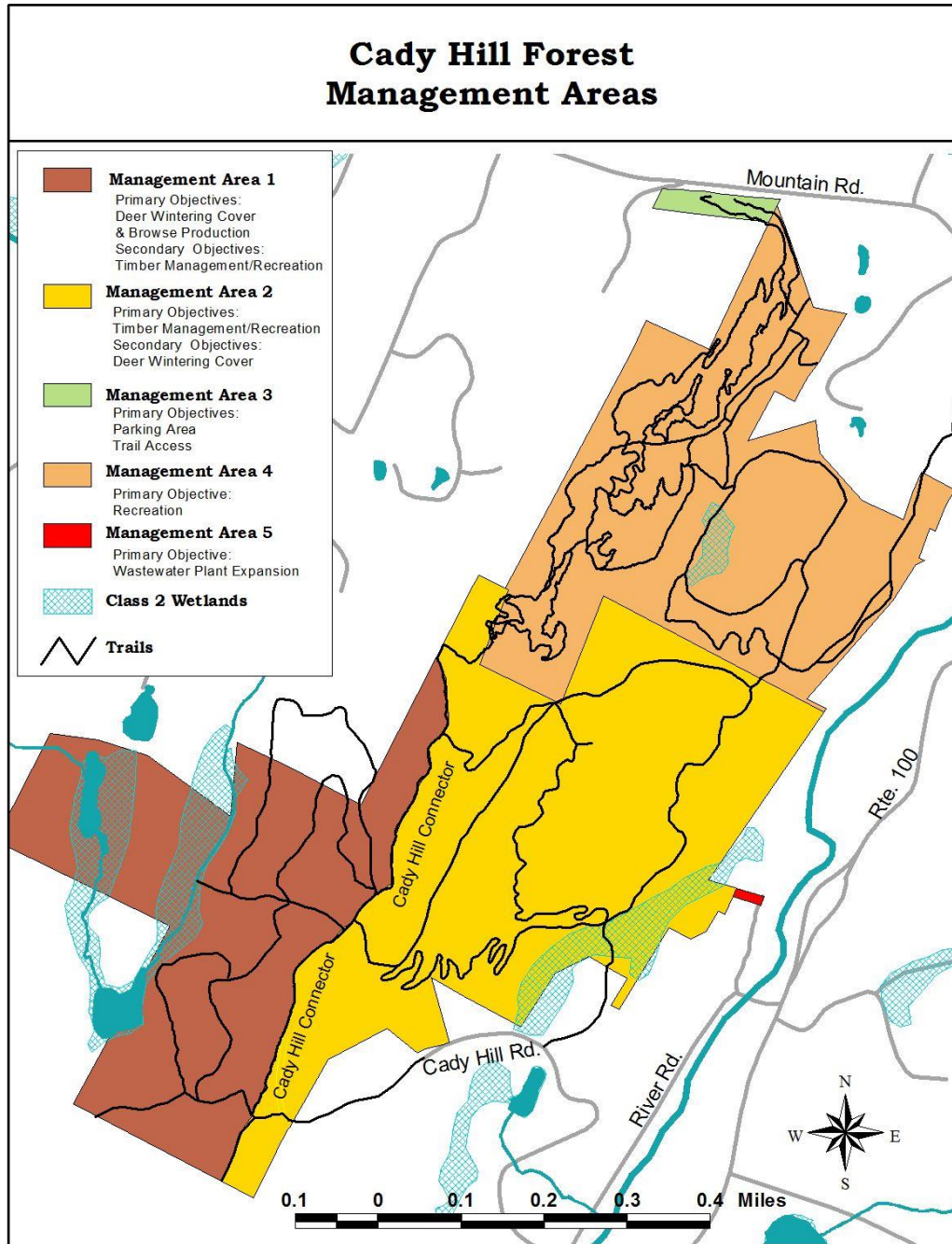
Trail-based recreation is the primary management objective of this management area. The dense network of trails in this area makes the possibility of any timber management activities undesirable.

The trails ~~originally~~ named Trail #7 and Trail #8 ~~in this area were not originally developed for~~ **have been optimized for** mountain biking ~~and are now known as Eagle Ridge Loop. It would be possible to improve them to the standards of the International Mountain Bike Association, which may be desirable at some point of time. The gentle terrain in this area would make the trails appropriate for novice bikers.~~

Management Area # 5 (1 +/- acre)

Within this Management Area, the Town has the right to construct, maintain, repair, replace and use permanent or temporary structures necessary to support the function and purpose of

wastewater treatment for the Town of Stowe. All other activities in the management area shall serve a municipal purpose and must be approved in writing by Stowe Land Trust & VHCB.



F. **Recommendations**

1. Work with Stowe Land Trust to develop an action plan to prevent the spread of Japanese Barberry and on the property.
2. Conduct an inventory of other invasive species on the property, including honeysuckle.
3. Work with Green Mountain Power to eradicate the Japanese Barberry that is prevalent throughout the power line ROW.
4. ~~Install~~ Maintain a shelter for the portable toilet at the Mountain Rd. parking lot to screen it from view of the highway. Explore options for a permanent, accessible restroom.
- ~~5.~~ Spread topsoil and hydro-seed the front edge of the parking lot.
- ~~6.~~ 5. Work with Stowe Land Trust to Maintain and enhance the trail head kiosk at the Mountain Road parking lot.
- ~~7.~~ 6. Work with a professional forester to develop a forest management plan for the property by 2018.
- ~~8.~~ 7. Develop Work with STP to maintain up-to-date trail conditions and trail information. a Cady Hill Forest brochure.
- ~~9.~~ 8. Relocate a portion of the outer Schween Haus Loop away from house site.
- ~~10.~~ Assign permanent trail names to Trail #2, Trail #7 and Trail #8.
- ~~11.~~ Consider improving Trails #7 & #8 to make them suitable for mountain biking.
- ~~12.~~ 9. Consider engaging the services of an intern or working with the University of Vermont to develop a comprehensive natural resource inventory for the property and update the Plant & Animal Inventory.-
- ~~13.~~ 10. Review and update the Cady Hill Forest Management Plan a minimum of every 5-10 years, or as needed.
- ~~14.~~ 11. Locate and assess vernal pools. Associated species (wood frog and spotted salamander) have been identified on the property (see BDR inventory); where are they breeding and what's the quality of their habitat?
- ~~15.~~ 12. Consider working with Audubon Vermont to conduct a Continue to work with partners to host educational events and activities. Forest Bird Habitat Assessment.
- ~~16.~~ 13. Continue to work with the Stowe Mountain Bike Club STP to monitor use of the property and potential parking and access needs.

Plant & Animal Inventory

Source: Baseline Documentation Report, 2012. This species list is not to be considered a complete inventory. The species listed are those that were documented on the property during 5 separate site visits in 2012.

FAUNA	PHORBSFORBS	WOODY PLANTS
Birds	Sessile-leaf Bellwort (<i>Uvularia sessilifolia</i>)	White birch (<i>Betula papyrifera</i>)
Ruffed Grouse (<i>Bonasa umbellus</i>)*	Canada Mayflower (<i>Maianthemum canadense</i>)	Yellow birch (<i>Betula alleghaniensis</i>)
Barred Owl (<i>Strix varia</i>)	Solomon's Seal (<i>Polygonatum biflorum</i>)	Balsam fir (<i>Abies balsamea</i>)
Black Throated Green Warbler (<i>Setophaga virens</i>)	Dwarf Ginseng (<i>Panax trifolius</i>)	Eastern white pine (<i>Pinus strobus</i>)
Downy Woodpecker (<i>Picoides pubescens</i>)	Trout Lily (<i>Erythronium americanum</i>)	Red spruce (<i>Picea rubens</i>)
Blue Jay (<i>Cyanocitta cristata</i>)	Wood sorrel (<i>Oxalis acetosella</i>)	Eastern hemlock (<i>Tsuga canadensis</i>)
Oven Bird (<i>Seiurus aurocapilla</i>)	Jack in the pulpit (<i>Arisaema triphyllum</i>)	Sugar maple (<i>Acer saccharum</i>)
American Robin (<i>Turdus migratorius</i>)	Eastern Spring beauty (<i>Claytonia virginica</i>)*	Red maple (<i>Acer rubrum</i>)
Black Capped Chickadee (<i>Poecile atricapillus</i>)	Red trillium (<i>Trillium erectum</i>)	White ash (<i>Fraxinus americana</i>)
White Throated Sparrow (<i>Zonotrichia albicollis</i>)	Painted trillium (<i>Trillium undulatum</i>)	American Beech (<i>Fagus grandifolia</i>)
Mourning Dove (<i>Zenaida macroura</i>)	Wood Anemone (<i>Anemone quinquefolia</i>)	Black cherry (<i>Prunus serotina</i>)
Winter Wren (<i>Troglodytes hiemalis</i>)	Goldthread (<i>Coptis trifolia</i>)	American basswood (<i>Tilia americana</i>)
Mallard (<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>)	Christmas Fern (<i>Polystichum acrostichoides</i>)	Eastern hophornbeam (<i>Ostrya virginiana</i>)
Mammals	Ostrich Fern (<i>Matteuccia struthiopteris</i>)	Big toothed aspen (<i>Populus grandidentata</i>)
White Tailed Deer (<i>Odocoileus virginianus</i>)	Hay Scented Fern (<i>Dennstaedtia punctilobula</i>)	English hawthorn (<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>)
Red squirrel (<i>Tamiasciurus hudsonicus</i>)	Oak Fern (<i>Gymnocarpium dryopteris</i>)	Shadbush (<i>Amelanchier canadensis</i>)
	Sensitive Fern (<i>Onoclea sensibilis</i>)	Speckled alder (<i>Alnus incana</i>)
Amphibians and Reptiles	Bracken Fern (<i>Pteridium aquilinum</i>)	Red Osier Dogwood (<i>Cornus sericea</i>)
Red-backed salamander (<i>Plethodon cinereus</i>)	Interrupted Fern (<i>Osmunda claytoniana</i>)	Japanese Barberry (<i>Berberis thunbergii</i>)
Northern dusky salamander (<i>Desmognathus fuscus</i>)	Foam Flower (<i>Tiarella cordifolia</i>)	Bush honeysuckle (<i>Lonicera maackii</i>)
Eastern newt (<i>Notophthalmus viridescens</i>)	Water horsetail (<i>Equisetum fluviatile</i>)	Japanese Knotweed (<i>Fallopia japonica</i>)
Green frog (<i>Lithobates clamitans</i>)	Woodland horsetail (<i>Equisetum sylvaticum</i>)	Striped Maple (<i>Acer pensylvanicum</i>)
Wood frog (<i>Rana sylvatica</i>)	Stiff Clubmoss (<i>Lycopodium annotinum</i>)	Pin cherry (<i>Prunus pensylvanica</i>)
Spotted Salamander (<i>Ambystoma maculatum</i>)*	Ground Cedar (<i>Lycopodium digitatum</i>)	Staghorn sumac (<i>Rhus typhina</i>)
Common garter snake (<i>Thamnophis sirtalis</i>)	Ground Pine (<i>Lycopodium obscurum</i>)	Blueberry (<i>Vaccinium corymbosum</i>)
Grey Tree Frog (<i>Hyla versicolor</i>)	Star flower (<i>Trientalis borealis</i>)	
	White violet (<i>Viola canadensis</i>)	
	Marsh marigold (<i>Caltha palustris</i>)	