



Donovan Preserve Conservation Management Plan

Purpose and Policy for Land Trust Natural Areas

The Richmond Land Trust (RLT) owns and maintains its properties for the purpose of preserving open space and representative forest communities in the Town of Richmond. Preservation means that no alteration of existing conditions is permitted with the exception of boundary marking, trail development and maintenance, limited posting of preserve designation, regulations and interpretative signs, and establishment of parking areas. Natural succession will proceed unhindered, except in areas designated for growth of native shrubs or trees for conservation purposes, or for agricultural purposes. Lands preserved by RLT provide outdoor laboratories for the study of natural forest succession and river and floodplain dynamics.

Preserved lands owned by RLT are open for hiking, cross-country skiing, photography, picnicking, horseback riding, educational field trips, nature study, and scientific research. Mountain bicycles must be ridden only on designated trails. Motorized vehicles of any kind are prohibited except for maintenance, agricultural purposes or emergency use.

Preserves are open to public use daily from dawn until dusk. The following activities are not permitted: overnight camping, fires, or trapping. Deer hunting and fishing are permitted in accordance with Vermont statutes, but otherwise no killing, injuring, harassing or collecting of animals or fish is permitted. No cutting, uprooting, collecting or injuring of vegetation is permitted except for designated trail clearing and maintenance, seasonal, non-commercial harvesting of wild edibles, control of exotic species, selective logging according to a forest management plan and nursery and agricultural purposes.

General Description of the Property

The 3.3-acre parcel (ID # 633) was donated to the Richmond Land Trust in 2000. The Land Trust was pleased to accept this donation because it helped fulfill one of the organization's primary objectives of conserving riparian areas along the Winooski River. The parcel is triangular in shape and lies between Rt. 117 and the Winooski River, extending 300 meters along the shore of the river. Approximately 40% of the parcel is open field, 30% is early successional forest, and 30% is floodplain forest and shoreline. The preserve is bordered to the south by an industrial property owned by Southworth-Milton, and to the east by the railroad line. Since the presence of the railroad line prohibits safe access from Rt. 117, primary public access to the site is from the river by canoe or kayak.

Donovan Parcel

Richmond, VT
3.57 ac

E 111,000 m

E 111,500 m

N 214,500

N 214,500

N 214,000

N 214,000



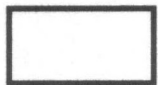
100 0 100 200 Meters

400 0 400 800 Feet

Map Scale 1:5000

Orthophoto number 108212

LEGEND



Donovan Parcel Boundary
Conservation Land
includes all 3.57 ac



Contour Lines 10m interval



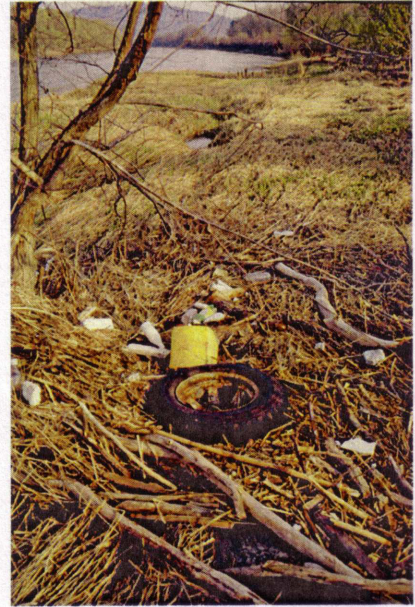
Richmond Land Trust
P.O. Box 605
Richmond, Vermont 05477

Map created by Jens Hilke
10/24/02

Photos of the Donovan Parcel taken in Spring 2002:



Viewing north along western boundary



Trash pile in center of property



Viewing North along eastern boundary



Viewing north along eastern boundary



Viewing south along southern boundary (toward Southworth-Milton property)

Current Conditions (based on inventory and research conducted during 2002 by Walter Poleman, UVM Field Naturalist and RLT Stewardship Chair)

Geology

The bedrock underlying the preserve is part of the Pinnacle Formation, a highly metamorphosed schistose greywacke that is rich in minerals including quartz, albite, chlorite, biotite, and sericite. It was originally deposited as shoreline sediments in the rift basin of the ancient Iapetus Ocean over 500 million years ago. The surficial geology of the site is mapped as recent alluvium, mainly sands and silts deposited by the Winooski River during flood events.

Soils

The soils of the site are mapped as Hadley very fine sandy loam (Hf), which is considered a prime agricultural soil in the state of Vermont.

Vegetation

The woody plant species on the site include:

Hackberry

Staghorn Sumac

Boxelder

White Birch

Eastern Cottonwood

American Elm

Goldenrod, Milkweed, and various grasses dominate the field.

Wildlife (preliminary list)

Beaver

Mink

White-tailed Deer

Red-winged Blackbird

Warbling Vireo

Yellow Warbler

Common Yellowthroat

Tree Swallow

Uses of the Property

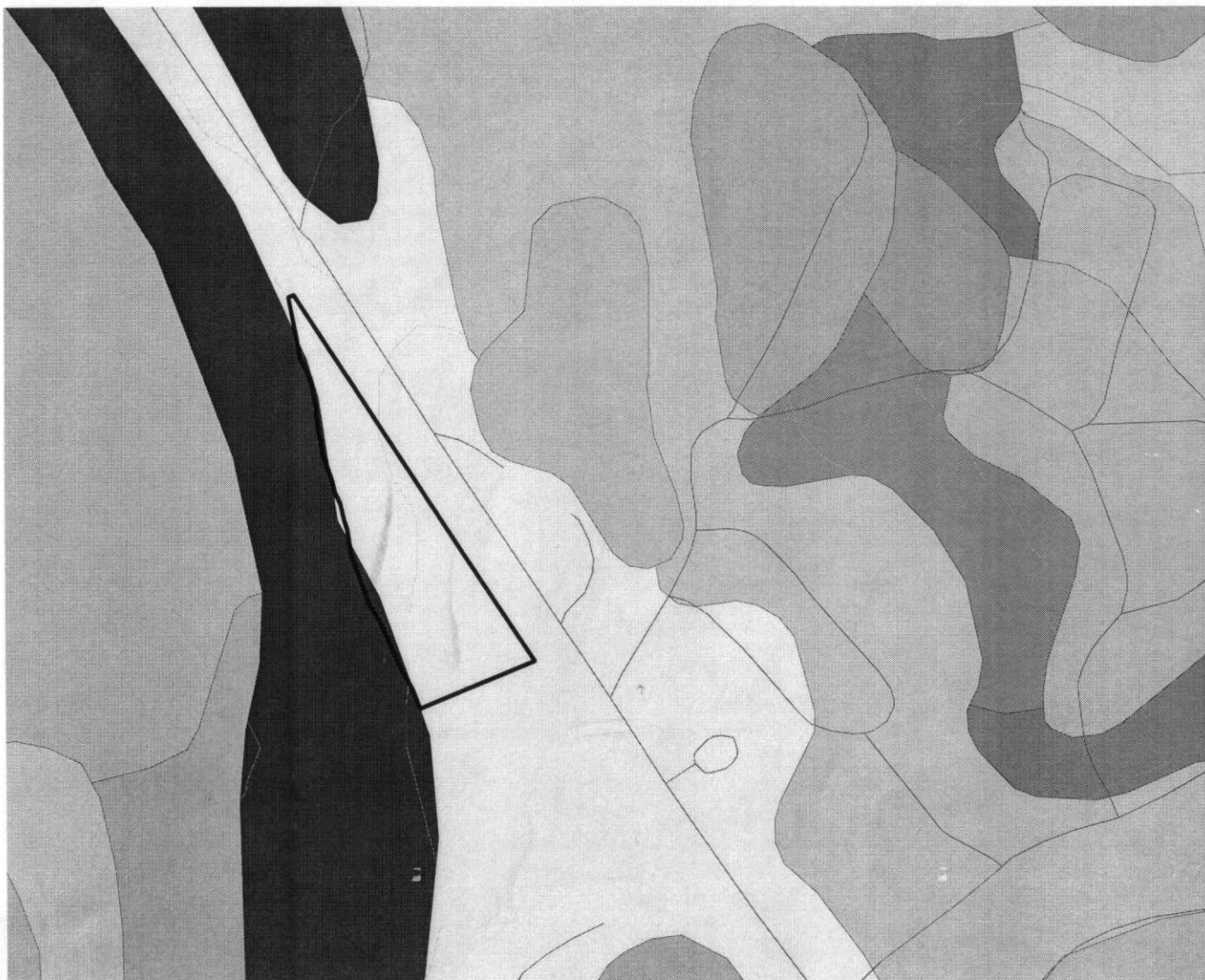
Past uses of the property include agriculture, fishing, storage of trailers and recreational vehicles, and trash dumping. The trash is in the process of being removed, though additional work remains to be done (see photo). The property is used now for fishing, picnicking, and canoe access.

Stewardship Activities

Taxes

The RLT Treasurer pays Richmond property taxes annually. The property is currently listed as having a value of \$8,900 by the town.

Donavan Parcel Soils Map



Insurance

RLT carries a General Liability Policy in the amount of \$1,000,000 with Ford Insurance Company, Woodstock, Vermont. Use of the Preserve is at the public's risk.

General Monitoring

The RLT Stewardship Committee maintains the property. There is a trash cleanup each Green-Up day (first Saturday in May), and in mid June RLT holds a Canoe Clean-Up of the river and its banks in Richmond. The Stewardship Committee also completes monitor reports annually.

Parking

There is a small pull-off for one car off route 117 across from the Lucky Spot convenience store. However, accessing the parcel from this location is discouraged, since it involves crossing the railroad tracks. Primary access to the site is by boat.

River Access

RLT actively encourages anglers and boaters to use the preserve when traveling on the river. There is a parking area and canoe launch located at RLT's Rivershore Preserve one mile upstream on Cochran Road. The Donovan has become an increasingly popular destination for canoeists since it was conserved two years ago.

Conservation Management Activities**Exotic/Nuisance Vegetation**

Several non-native species of plants occur on the Preserve. These include some forage grasses and forbs in the hayfields, and goutweed, Japanese knotweed, and dame's rocket in the floodplain forest. Exotic species in the flood plain forest outcompete native vegetation and are not as useful to wildlife as native species. Also, restoration of a natural flood plain forest community is desirable. Therefore, control of exotic vegetation by environmentally acceptable means will be attempted. Japanese knotweed can be successfully controlled during the growing season in two ways: 1) when few plants exist, remove plants and roots, or 2) when plants are numerous, cut plants to ground level several times to exhaust energy reserves and kill plants. Some efforts toward these measures have already been made.

Wildlife Habitat Enhancement

Bluebird houses will be installed along the perimeters of the field during 2003. Local schools, scout groups etc. will be encouraged to construct and install the boxes.

Trash Removal

The remaining trash on the property will be removed during Green-up Day 2003.

Research

The Preserve is available for ecological, agricultural and forestry research.