

BASELINE DOCUMENTATION REPORT



Willis Hill Property

Richmond, Vermont

VHCB Project # 2014-052-001



Prepared by:

Kristopher Hammer

Vermont Housing and Conservation Board

Montpelier, VT 05602

(802) 828-5068

Vermont Housing and Conservation Board: Conservation and Stewardship Program

Established by the Vermont State Legislature in May 1987 under 10 V.S.A. Chapter 15, the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board (VHCB) was created for the dual goals of creating affordable housing for Vermonters, and conserving and protecting Vermont's agricultural land, historic properties, important natural areas and recreational lands. Acting as an independent entity of the state, VHCB is charged by the state with administering the Vermont Housing and Conservation Fund. Awards are given to nonprofit organizations, municipalities and qualifying state agencies for the purpose of supporting projects that serve one or both of VHCB's dual goals.

As a conservation organization, VHCB has protected numerous properties through the use of perpetual conservation easements. Critical to the success of a conservation program is the stewardship and monitoring of these conservation easements. Integral to a successful Conservation Stewardship Program are the following responsibilities: maintaining land related documents, tracking changes in land ownership, monitoring conserved properties at least once a year, periodically photo-documenting land uses, performing landowner outreach, approving permitted activities, and correcting easement violations through voluntary compliance, or, if necessary, legal proceedings.

In order to facilitate the stewardship process, VHCB has created a Baseline Documentation Report (BDR) for each of its sole-held conservation easements. The BDR provides a description of the property at the time of acquisition that then serves as; 1) a reference point for future monitoring efforts and easement enforcement actions (if necessary); and 2) a summary of the permitted and restricted uses to help the landowner manage the property in accordance with the conservation restrictions.

This Report Contains the Following Information:

- Signature pages
- Introduction and description of the current uses of the property
- Summary of Grantor's and Grantee's Rights
- References
- Conserved Property Location map
- USGS Topographic map
- Orthophoto map
- Conservation Easement map
- Photopoint map
- Photographic Documentation

I, **Louis Borie**, Duly Authorized Agent of the **Richmond Land Trust**, have signed this Baseline Documentation Report with the understanding and agreement that this Report will be used for, but not limited to, monitoring the property depicted and described in this Report for compliance with the Grant of Development Rights and Conservation Restrictions dated December 19, 2014. I have read this Report and understand it. I agree that this Report, including the maps and photographs, accurately describes and depicts the physical features, relevant site conditions, and current structures and land uses on our property conserved by the Grant. I affirm that there are no activities ongoing on our property that are inconsistent with the Grant.

RICHMOND LAND TRUST

1/16/15
Date

By *Louis Borie*
Duly Authorized Agent

STATE OF VERMONT
WASHINGTON COUNTY, SS

At Montpelier, this 16th day of January, 2015, **Louis Borie**, Duly Authorized Agent of the **Richmond Land Trust**, personally appeared and acknowledged this instrument, by him sealed and subscribed, to be his free act and deed.

Before me, *Laura Kraviec*
Notary Public
My Commission Expires: *2/19/15*

I, **Kristopher Hammer**, Duly Authorized Agent of the **Vermont Housing and Conservation Board**, have signed and prepared this Baseline Documentation Report with the understanding and agreement that this Report will be used for, but not limited to, monitoring the property depicted and described in this Report for compliance with the Grant of Development Rights and Conservation Restrictions dated May 31, 2007. I affirm that this Report including the maps and photographs accurately describes and depicts the physical features, relevant site conditions, and current structures and land uses on the property conserved by the Grant and that I visited this property personally.

VERMONT HOUSING AND CONSERVATION BOARD

1/16/2015
Date


Kristopher Hammer

STATE OF VERMONT
WASHINGTON COUNTY, SS

At Montpelier, this 16th day of January, 2015, **Kristopher Hammer**, Duly Authorized Agent of the **Vermont Housing and Conservation Board**, personally appeared and he acknowledged this instrument, by him sealed and subscribed, to be his free act and deed.

Before me, 
Notary Public
My Commission Expires: 2/10/15

Willis Hill
Richmond, Vermont

Introduction

The purpose of the enclosed information is to describe the physical features and current land uses of the Willis Hill Property (hereafter “Protected Property”) on which the development rights and conservation restrictions were conveyed to the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board by the Richmond Land Trust on December 19, 2014 and recorded in the Richmond Land Records.

This report is based, in part, on a documentation visit by Kristopher Hammer for the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board (hereafter “VHCB”) on January 14, 2015. Kris prepared this report for the VHCB.

Description and Current Use

The ±19.53 acre Protected Property consists of a partially wooded hillside that forms part of the scenic gateway to the Village of Richmond from the west. Richmond Land Trust acquired the parcel from the Beverly Willis Trust and will own and manage the parcel for year-round recreational and education use, including winter sledding and use by Camel’s Hump Middle and Richmond Elementary School as an outdoor classroom and for extracurricular school activities.

The parcel is bound on the west by US Route 2, on the east by Camel’s Hump Middle School, and on the south by Riverview Cemetery. The parcel has access from Route 2, the adjacent school recreation fields and the cemetery. Richmond Land Trust plans to construct a driveway and parking area from Route 2 to provide better public access to the property. The parcel is depicted as “Lot 2 Adjusted Area” on a plan prepared by Button Professional Land Surveyors, PC entitled “Boundary Adjustment-Richmond Land Trust and Mount Mansfield School District” dated December 2014.

The wooded hillside is primarily northern hardwoods with a stand of white pine along the northeasterly boundary. Donahue Brook flows through the property along near the northerly boundary. Much of the flat area has been mapped as a Class II wetland. A network of trails crosses the upper portion of the property.

The Purpose of the Grant

The primary purpose of the easement is to conserve and protect productive agricultural land, biological diversity, important wildlife habitat and natural communities on the Protected Property and the ecological processes that sustain these natural resource values on the Protected Property; a secondary purpose is to provide for dispersed public outdoor recreation use that is low-impact, non-commercial and non-motorized, as well as, the quiet enjoyment of the Protected Property.

The purposes of the easement will be advanced by conserving the protected property because it possesses the following attributes:

- Provides a scenic gateway to the Village of Richmond;

- 810 feet of frontage on West Main Street (US Route 2), a public highway with scenic vistas;
- 5 acres of statewide rated soils;
- 7.5 acres of wetlands;
- 1060 feet of frontage on Donahue Brook;
- Is used as an outdoor classroom by the Camel's Hump Middle and Elementary Schools;
- Provides public access, including a network of trails used by the school sports programs; and
- Includes the potential to develop a winter sledding hill available to the public.

Management Plans

The landowner will develop a long-term Management Plan for the Protected Property (hereafter "Management Plan"). The Management Plan shall provide for the use and management of the Protected Property in a manner which is consistent with applicable law and the Purposes of this Grant. Prior to the final adoption of each Management Plan and any amendments thereto, the Richmond Land Trust shall: (a) secure appropriate input from residents of the Town of Richmond and the general public; and (b) provide VHCBC with a copy of each such Management Plan (as well as, any subsequent revisions, amendments or updates) in a timely manner.

Inventory of Existing Buildings and Structures

There are no existing buildings or structures on the protected property.

Excluded Parcels

There are no excluded parcels.

Public Access

The Protected Property shall be available to the general public for all types of non-commercial, non-motorized, non-mechanized, dispersed recreational and educational purposes (including, but not limited to, bird-watching, cross-country skiing, fishing, hiking, hunting, snowshoeing, walking, and wildlife observation) consistent with the Purposes of this Grant. The landowner may limit or restrict public access to the Protected Property to assure compliance with the requirements of this Grant, to protect habitats, or to protect the public health or safety (including the right to permit and regulate hunting). If VHCBC approves a conveyance of the Protected Property, then VHCBC may also require that a separate Grant of Public Access Easement also be conveyed to VHCBC in a form approved by the Grantee.

Riparian Buffer Zone

The Riparian Buffer Zone consists of all lands and premises on the Protected Property lying within fifty feet (50') of the Donahue Brook (hereinafter "the Brook"), as it may exist from time to time, measured outward away from the Brook from the top of the bank, as it passes over the Protected Property, and including any land located between the top of said bank and the Brook. The general location of the Riparian Buffer Zone

(hereinafter "RBZ") is depicted on the Conservation Plan, and shall be subject to the following limitations and restrictions which shall supersede the foregoing Sections II and III of this Grant to the extent these limitations and restrictions are inconsistent with those sections:

The principal goal for management within the RBZ is the establishment and maintenance of a high quality buffer that provides an array of ecological benefits including, but not limited to:

- a) buffering aquatic and wetland plants and animals from disturbance;
- b) preventing wetland and water-quality degradation;
- c) providing important plant and animal habitat; and,
- d) providing organic matter, nutrients, and structure to aquatic systems.

Within the RBZ the following restrictions shall apply:

1. All vegetation management activities planned and conducted within the RBZ, including the silvicultural system, harvest timing, equipment employed, and harvest intensity, shall be focused on the goals of retaining soil integrity, natural hydrology, water quality values, and the natural structure and species composition of the RBZ and other natural communities present.
2. All vegetation management activities shall be consistent with the Purposes of this Grant and this Section. Any such activities must meet or exceed the requirements of the "Vermont Water Quality Standards."

The landowner shall have the right to use the RBZ for all types of non-motorized dispersed recreational purposes not inconsistent with the Purposes of this Grant; however, no agricultural, forestry, residential, commercial, industrial, or mining activities shall be permitted, and no building, structure, or appurtenant facility or improvement shall be constructed, installed, erected or moved into the RBZ.

Summary of Grantor's¹ Rights and Restrictions

Conservation rights and restrictions allow the protected property to be used for agricultural, forestry, education, non-commercial recreation, and open space purposes. The following is a summary of restricted and permitted uses included in the grant (referred to as the easement throughout this document).

Restricted Uses of the Property

The following are limitations on the landowner's use of the property:

1. **General:** No residential, commercial, industrial, or mining activities, no driveways, roads, or utility lines shall be permitted, and no building, structure, or appurtenant facility or improvement shall be constructed, created, installed, erected or moved onto the Protected Property. The

¹ Grantor includes **the Richmond Land Trust**, its successors and assigns.

Protected Property shall be used for public outdoor non-motorized recreation, natural area protection, forestry, and open space purposes only.

2. **Rights of Way and Easements:** No rights of way, easements of ingress or egress, driveways, roads or utility lines shall be constructed, developed, or maintained into, on, over, under, or across the Protected Property, except as specifically permitted under this Grant.
3. **Signs:** There shall be no signs, billboards, or outdoor advertising of any kind erected or displayed; provided, however, that the landowner may erect and maintain reasonable signs indicating the name of the property, organizations providing funding or sponsorship, boundary markers, directional signs, signs informing the public about reasonable use, memorial plaques, historical markers and signs informing the public that agricultural or timber products are for sale or are being grown on the premises. VHCB, with the permission of the landowner, may erect and maintain signs designating the Protected Property as land under the protection of VHCB.
4. **Trash:** The placement, collection or storage of trash, human waste or any other unsightly or offensive material on the property is prohibited unless VHCB provides written approval of such storage in advance. No permission is required for temporary trash storage.
5. **Excavation:** Except as permitted by the Grant or as may reasonably be necessary to carry out the uses permitted by this Grant, there shall be no disturbance of the surface of the Protected Property including, but not limited to, filling, excavation, removal of topsoil, sand, gravel, rocks or minerals, or change of topography of the land in any manner. In no case shall surface mining or subsurface oil, gas or other mineral extraction be permitted.
6. **Conveyance:** The landowner shall not give, grant, sell, convey, subdivide, transfer, mortgage, pledge, lease or otherwise encumber property, without the prior written approval of the VHCB.
7. **Motorized Vehicles:** There shall be no operation of motor vehicles on the Protected Property except for uses specifically reserved such as wildlife management, trail grooming and/or maintenance, handicap access and for emergency purposes. Snowmobiling may be permitted at the discretion of landowner.
8. **Water Resources:** Except as reasonable necessary to carry out the uses permitted under the Grant, there shall be no manipulation of natural watercourses, wetlands, or other water bodies, except as provided for in the Management Plan.
9. **Consistency Clause:** No use shall be made of the Protected Property, and no activity thereon shall be permitted which, in the reasonable opinion of the VHCB, is or is likely to become inconsistent with the Purposes of this Grant.

Permitted Uses of the Property

The following are permitted activities on and uses of the conserved property:

1. **Recreation:** The landowner may use the Protected Property for non-motorized, pedestrian recreational purposes (including, but not limited to, bird watching, cross-country skiing, fishing, hiking, hunting, snowshoeing, walking and wildlife observation) consistent with the Purposes of this Grant and allowed by the Management Plan.

2. **Trails:** The landowner may clear, construct, and maintain trails for non-motorized, non-commercial recreational activities.
3. **Management Plans:** The landowner may use the protected property to conduct all activities allowed by the Management Plan, provided that such activities are reasonably necessary to carry out, the Purposes of the Grant. Such activities may include, but shall not necessarily be limited to the management of vegetation, woods, fields, riparian buffers, wildlife, community gardens and recreational access.
4. **Parking Area:** The landowner may construct, maintain, repair and replace a permeable surfaced driveway and parking area, at the location generally depicted as "Parking Area" on the Willis Hill Conservation Plan (the "Conservation Plan"), or at such other location mutually agreed upon in writing by the landowner and VHCB. The parking area shall be used only in connection with uses permitted under this Grant and the capacity of said parking area shall not exceed fifteen (15) passenger automobiles without the prior written approval of VHCB, provided that the number, location, scale, management, and volume of use of said parking areas is consistent with the Purposes of this Grant and permitted by the Management Plans.
5. **Structures:** the landowner may construct, maintain, repair and replace permanent or temporary structures drives and utilities reasonably necessary to support the uses permitted by this Grant (including modest structures to support public outdoor recreation and/or public outdoor education; including without limitation such structures and facilities as warming huts, picnic tables, benches and other seating, and other rustic shelters, and sanitary facilities);
6. **Events:** The landowner may conduct periodic, temporary community and public entertainment events on the Protected Property, including concerts, fairs and celebrations, together with the right to erect tents and other temporary structures for such events.
7. **Admission Fees:** The landowner may charge the public reasonable fees for admission to and use of the Protected Property and may charge organizations reasonable fees for recreational use of a portion of the Protected Property provided that such use does not unreasonably interfere with the access of the general public to the Protected Property. Fees shall not be based on place of residency. All fees charged for admission to or use of the Protected Property shall be consistent with the Purposes of this Grant, especially that of public access, and shall be provided for in the Management Plans.
8. **Issuing Permits:** The landowner may issue temporary special use permits or licenses authorizing commercial or non-commercial use of the Protected Property for recreational, educational, forestry, or scientific research purposes, provided that any such permit or license does not unreasonably interfere with the access of the general public to the Protected Property, and is for uses consistent with the Purposes of this Grant.

This is a summary of the actual legal rights. For a more complete description of these rights, refer to the Grant of Development Rights and Conservation Restrictions.

Summary of Grantee's² Rights

The Grantee's primary intent is to conserve and protect productive agricultural and forestry uses, and secondarily to encourage sustainable management of land and water resources. Other goals in conserving this property include promoting non-commercial recreational opportunities and activities and other natural resource and scenic values of the Protected Property for present and future generations. Aside from holding the development rights on the Protected Property, the Grantees have the right to periodically monitor the property and enforce the Conservation Restrictions.

This is not a description of the actual legal rights. For a more complete description of these rights, refer to the Grant of Development Rights and Conservation Restrictions.

² Grantee refers to the **Vermont Housing and Conservation Board**, its successors and assigns.



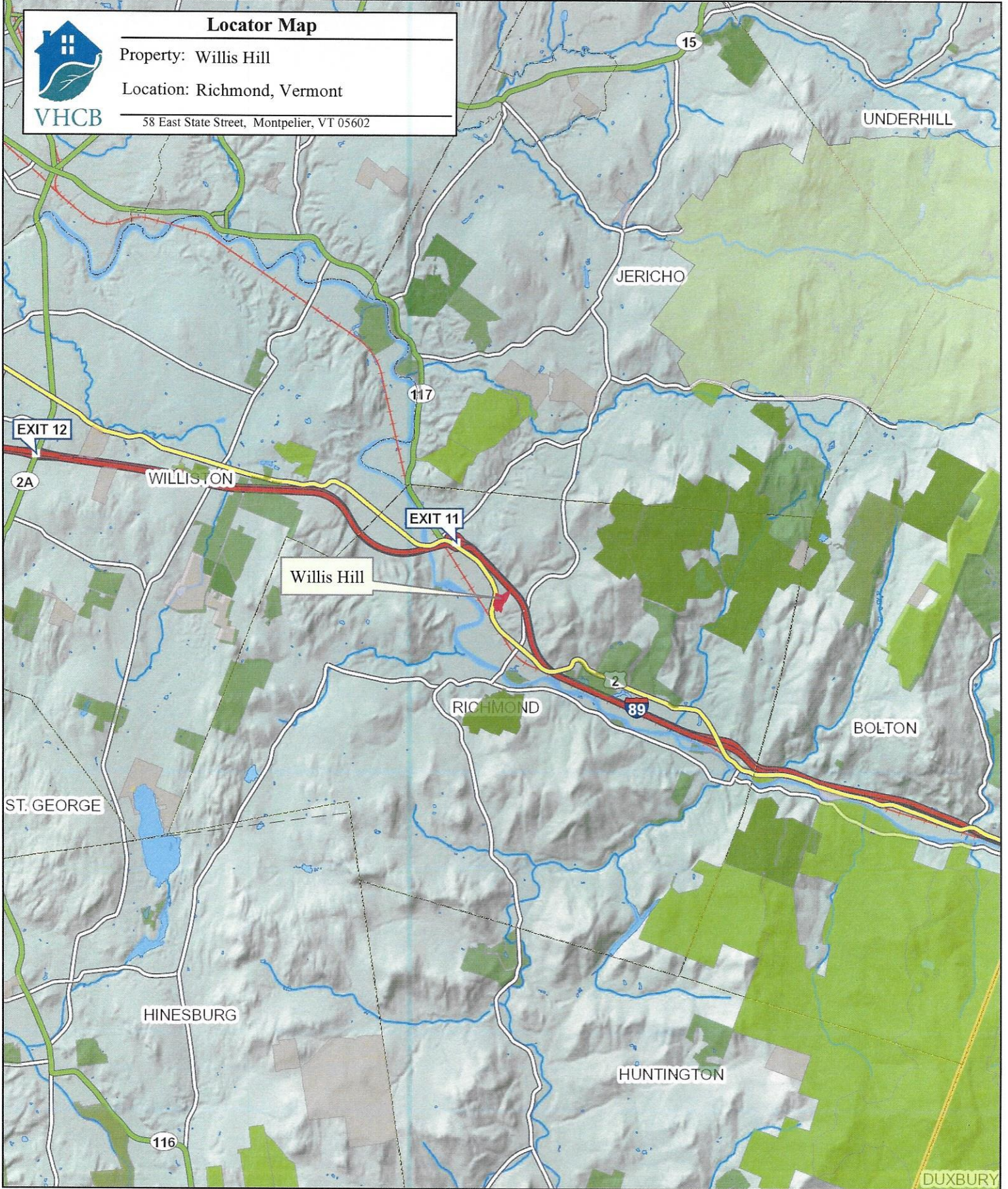
Locator Map

Property: Willis Hill

Location: Richmond, Vermont

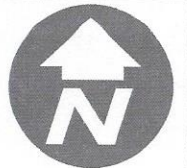
VHCB

58 East State Street, Montpelier, VT 05602



Directions to the property:

From Montpelier, take I-89 west to the Richmond exit (Exit 11). Turn left onto US Route 2 and travel approximately 0.7 mile. Property is on the left immediately before the cemetery. Approximate travel time is 30 minutes.



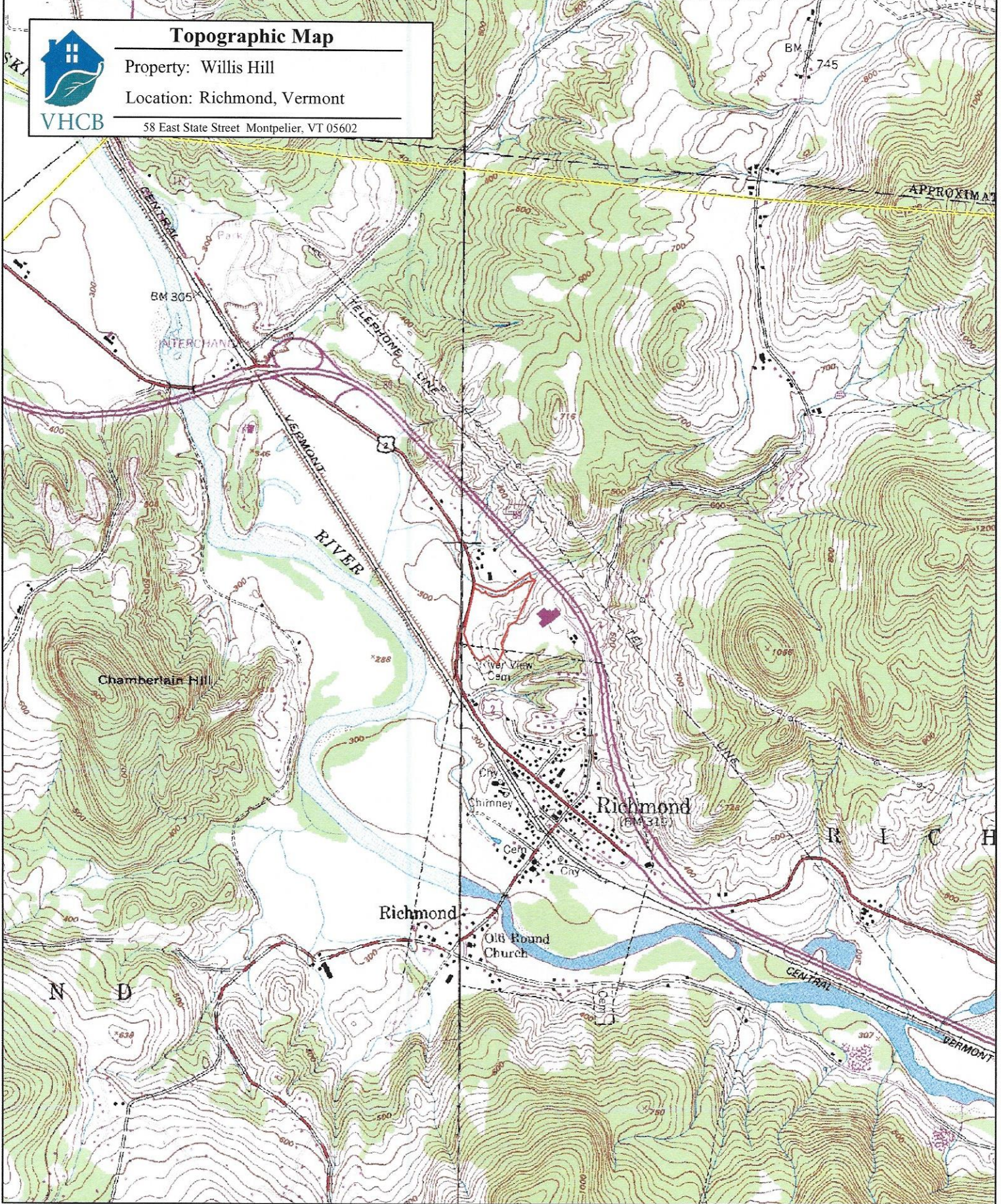


Topographic Map


Property: Willis Hill

Location: Richmond, Vermont

58 East State Street Montpelier, VT 05602



USGS 7.5 Minute Quadrangles:
Essex Junction, 1987, Richmond, 1983

 Protected Property

Scale: 1:24,000



* Vermont Nongame and Natural Heritage Program, Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife. 2003. The Biological and Conservation Data System, Rare Species and Significant Natural Community Digital Data Set. Waterbury, Vermont.

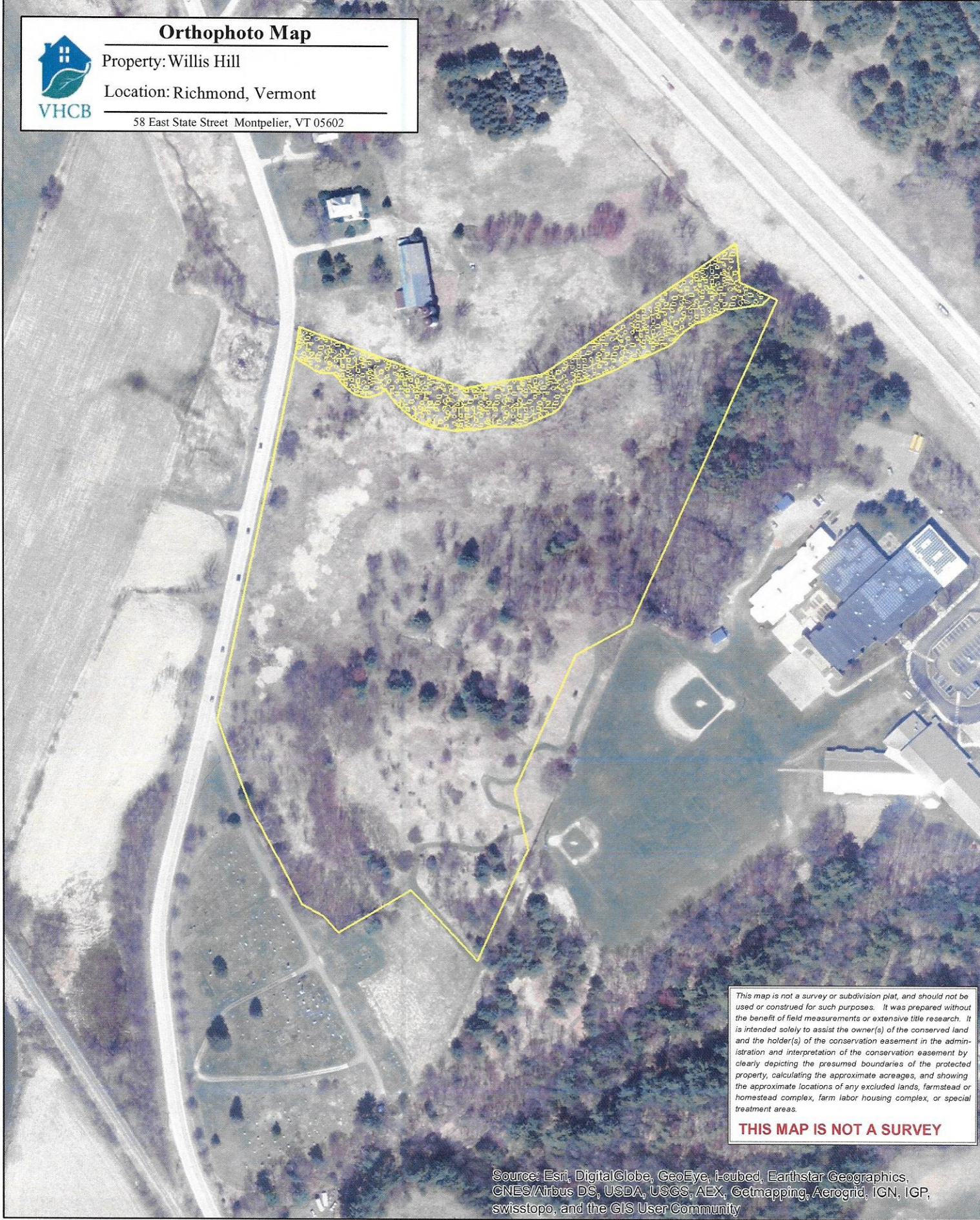


Orthophoto Map

Property: Willis Hill

Location: Richmond, Vermont



58 East State Street Montpelier, VT 05602



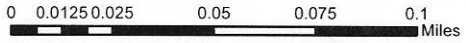
This map is not a survey or subdivision plat, and should not be used or construed for such purposes. It was prepared without the benefit of field measurements or extensive title research. It is intended solely to assist the owner(s) of the conserved land and the holder(s) of the conservation easement in the administration and interpretation of the conservation easement by clearly depicting the presumed boundaries of the protected property, calculating the approximate acreages, and showing the approximate locations of any excluded lands, farmstead or homestead complex, farm labor housing complex, or special treatment areas.

THIS MAP IS NOT A SURVEY

Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, i-cubed, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AEX, Getmapping, Aerogrid, IGN, IGP, swisstopo, and the GIS User Community

 Protected Property  Riparian buffer

Scale: 1:3,000



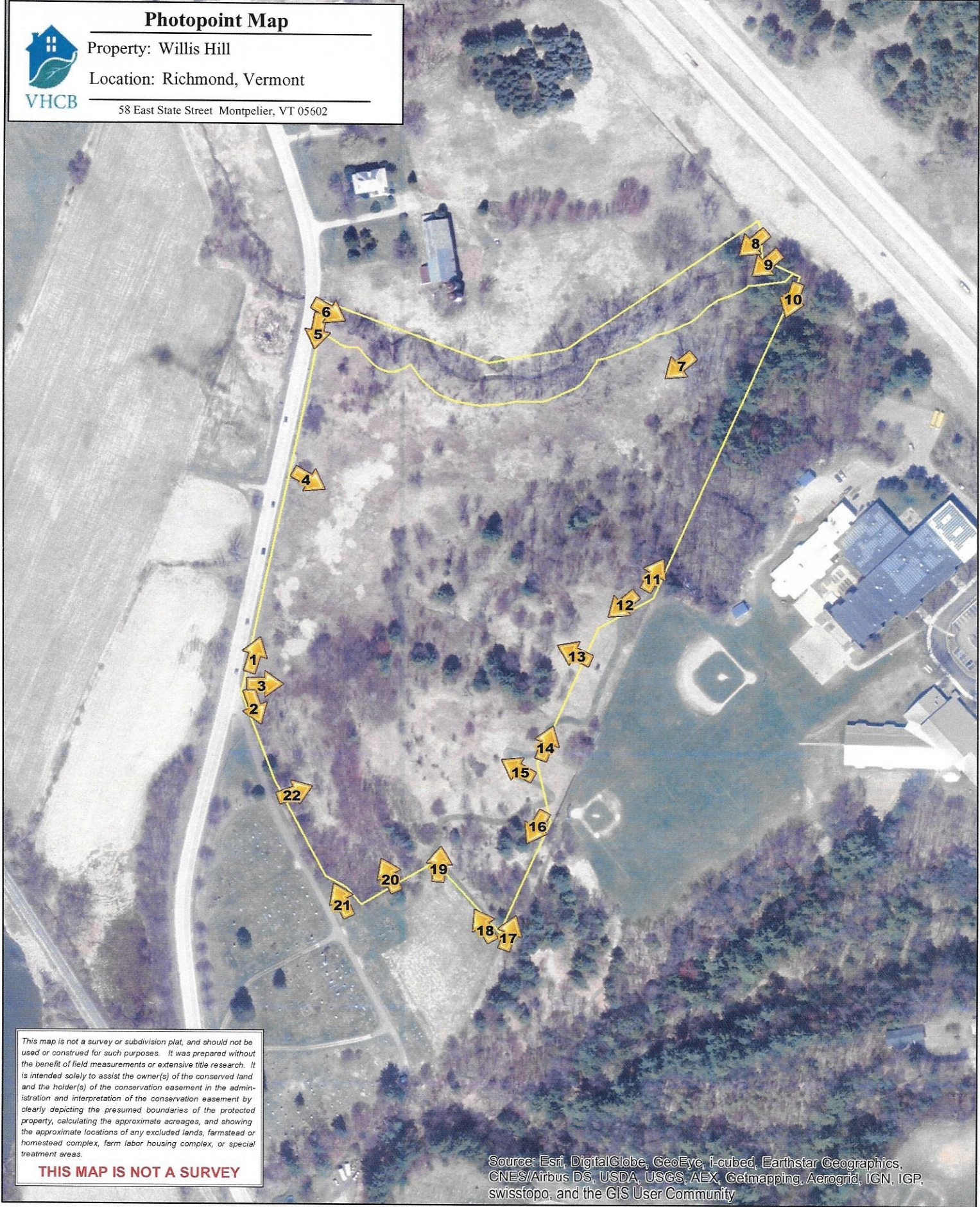


Photopoint Map

Property: Willis Hill

Location: Richmond, Vermont

58 East State Street Montpelier, VT 05602



This map is not a survey or subdivision plat, and should not be used or construed for such purposes. It was prepared without the benefit of field measurements or extensive title research. It is intended solely to assist the owner(s) of the conserved land and the holder(s) of the conservation easement in the administration and interpretation of the conservation easement by clearly depicting the presumed boundaries of the protected property, calculating the approximate acreages, and showing the approximate locations of any excluded lands, farmstead or homestead complex, farm labor housing complex, or special treatment areas.

THIS MAP IS NOT A SURVEY

Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, i-cubed, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AEX, Getmapping, Aerogrid, IGN, IGP, swissTopo, and the GIS User Community

 Protected Property

Scale: 1:3,000

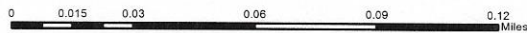




Photo: 1 Facing NE Date 1/14/2015
 Subject: Route 2 road frontage, property on the right

Photo: 2 Facing SE Date 1/14/2015
 Subject: View along cemetery access road, property on the left

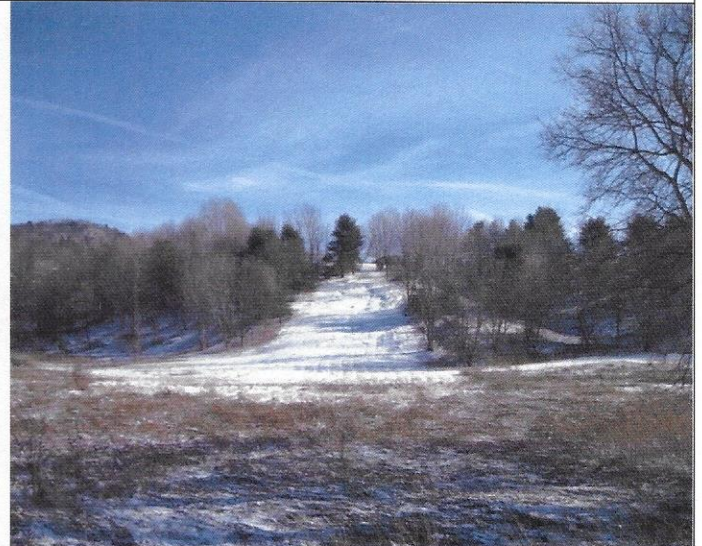


Photo: 3 Facing E Date 1/14/2015
 Subject: View from property corner

Photo: 4 Facing SE Date 1/14/2015
 Subject: Sledding hill



Photo: 5 Facing S Date 1/14/2015
 Subject: Route 2 road frontage, property on the left

Photo: 6 Facing SE Date 1/14/2015
 Subject: Donahue Brook from Route 2



Photo: 7 Facing SW Date 1/14/2015

Subject: Wetlands

Photo: 8 Facing SW Date 1/14/2015

Subject: Donahue Brook



Photo: 9 Facing E Date 1/14/2015

Subject: Concrete monument at property corner

Photo: 10 Facing SW Date 1/14/2015

Subject: Pine stand along property boundary

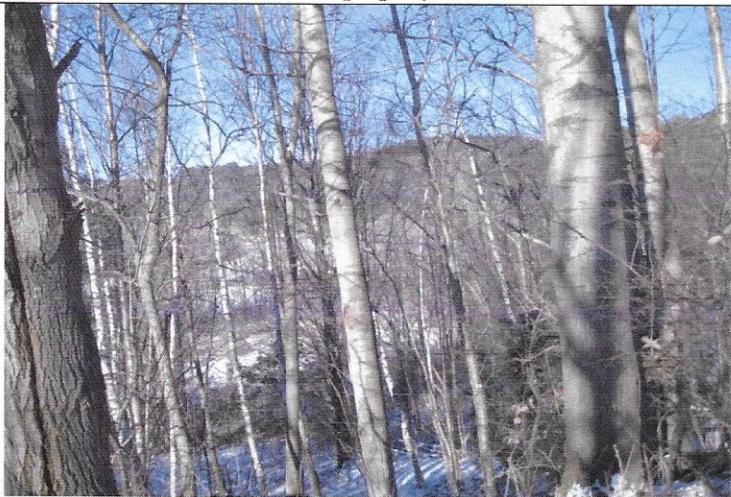


Photo: 11 Facing NE Date 1/14/2015

Subject: Northern hardwoods

Photo: 12 Facing SW Date 1/14/2015

Subject: Trail



Photo: 13 Facing NW Date 1/14/2015

Subject: Top of sledding hill

Photo: 14 Facing NE Date 1/14/2015

Subject: Trails from adjoining school property



Photo: 15 Facing NW Date 1/14/2015

Subject: View from height of land

Photo: 16 Facing SW Date 1/14/2015

Subject: View along property boundary



Photo: 17 Facing NE Date 1/14/2015

Subject: Trail along boundary, property on the left

Photo: 18 Facing SW Date 1/14/2015

Subject: Trail



Photo:	19	Facing N	Date	1/14/2015
Subject: Trail				

Photo:	20	Facing NW	Date	1/14/2015
Subject: View from property boundary				



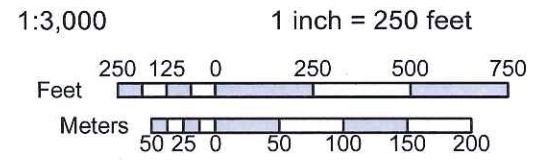
Photo:	21	Facing NW	Date	1/14/2015
Subject: View along cemetery, property on the left				

Photo:	22	Facing E	Date	1/14/2015
Subject: Site of proposed parking area				



Willis Hill
 Town of Richmond
 Chittenden Co., VT
 January 2015
 VHCB #2014-052

The Willis Hill Property Conservation Plan is based on 2013 USDA Aerial Photography Field Office 1:40000 source scale NAIP images.



Note:

The boundaries of the Protected Property are based on a survey entitled: "Lot 2, Adjusted Area" on a plan prepared by Button Professional Land Surveyors, PC, entitled "Boundary Adjustment - Richmond Land Trust and Mount Mansfield School District No. 17," dated December 2014.

213000

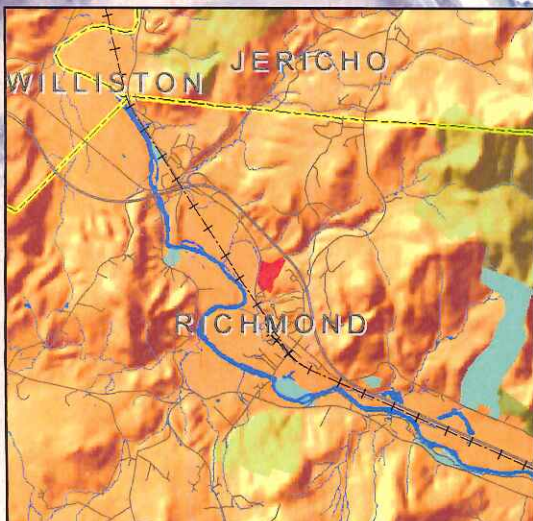
213000

Parking Area



This map is not a survey or subdivision plat, and should not be used or construed for such purposes. It was prepared without the benefit of field measurements or extensive title research. It is intended solely to assist the owner(s) of the conserved land and the holder(s) of the conservation easement in the administration and interpretation of the conservation easement by clearly depicting the presumed boundaries of the protected property, calculating the approximate acreages, and showing the approximate locations of any excluded lands, farmstead or homestead complex, farm labor housing complex, or special treatment areas.

THIS MAP IS NOT A SURVEY



- Protected Property
- Riparian Buffer Zone

ACREAGE INFORMATION*

Total Protected Property ± 19.53 acres

*All acreage is approximate, and exclusive of public road rights of way.

Reviewed and Accepted by:

1/16/15

Duly Authorized Agent of the Date
 Richmond Land Trust

1/16/2014

Duly Authorized Agent of Vermont Date
 Housing and Conservation Board