

# Dalton Master Plan Update

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## Natural Resources Section – Discussion Meeting

December 7, 2022



### *Topics to Cover:*

At the December 7th Planning Board meeting we will plan to discuss:

- Natural resources data, maps, inventories, activities, and goals.
- Highlights of Conservation Commission Meeting discussion on 11.15.22.
- And, a winter Master Plan schedule/approach.

### *Natural Resources & Master Planning*

#### **Purpose related to the Master Plan**

The primary purpose of this discussion is to identify possible Action Items, and Goals to include in the Master Plan related to the Town's natural resources preservation, access, and management goals.

Communities plan for natural resources by assessing what resources exist within the community and identifying strategies which the municipality can pursue to set and achieve goals related to those resources.

#### **Key Questions for Natural Resources**

Discussion with the Planning Board will use the same key questions and topics as discussed with members of the Conservation Commission.

#### **Conservation Commission Representatives Recap**

On November 15, 2022, NCC attended a scheduled meeting of the Conservation Commission to discuss update of the Dalton Master Plan and collect valuable input from this stakeholder group regarding natural resources in the community. While a quorum of members were not present, the group in attendance (3 members and one resident at large) had a valuable discussion focused around the following topics:

#### TOPICS

- The role of a Master Plan when it comes to natural resources preservation and use.
- Goals of the Dalton Conservation Commission within the next 10-year horizon.
- The role and impact of the Conservation Commission on public decisions today.
- Historic success and challenge points for the Conservation Commission within the community, and resources to assist.

In addition to this the Conservation Commission provided insight into the *role* that natural resources play in Dalton, answering questions like:

1. Which natural resources and resource areas contribute to the economic vitality of Dalton (e.g. like for tourism, agriculture, fisheries, increased land values, etc.)?

*Conservation Commission discussion called out: Scenic vistas, forest lake state park (the lake/beach and the wooded portions, Chase Bog, and stream/river corridors as resources that contribute to the economic vitality of Dalton.*

2. Which resources and resource areas are used recreationally? In what ways are resources used recreationally?

*Forest Lake State Park, David Dana Forest, the river, and various walking trails are used by the community recreationally.*

3. Which resources and resource areas are important to preserve so that drinking water quality is maintained?

*A large aquifer is located under portions of Dalton, additionally the areas under and surrounding Chase Bog and Forest Lake have huge impact on water quality and drinking water quality in surrounding towns with public supplies such as Whitefield.*

4. Are there scenic landscapes and vistas that are important contributors to the character of town?

*Views from Dalton Mountain were called out as important contributors to the character of the town, in particular scenic views looking from Dalton Mountain down along to the CT River valley to the west, the lakes to the east, from locations such as Wallace Hill are worthy of protection and continued public access.*

*The forest block within Forest Lake State Park contains some of the oldest and biggest trees on record in the area localized vistas within this resource area are unique. Additionally, the historic gold mine and walking trails in Dana David Forest add to local character and sense of place.*

5. Which natural resources and resource areas help to protect against or mitigate the impacts of natural hazards, including flooding and high wind?

*Forest blocks slow wind and carbon, flood plains (including wetlands) hold water.*

6. Which resource areas are likely to contain or known to contain important plant and animal habitats?

*Chase Bog, and various streams and wetland areas as indicated on the Wildlife Action Plan map show tiered categories to support this.*

#### DISCUSSION SUMMARY/RECAP

##### **Current activities:**

The Dalton Conservation Commission is updating the Natural Resource Inventory for the community, a document last refreshed in 2004. A NR inventory takes stock of the natural resources present in the community and makes key observations on it.

The Conservation Commission pointed out the efforts of outside groups, such Friends of Forest State Park to pursue trail development within portion of the Park as a positive development that will allow more residents to celebrate and view the unique forest environments present and promote healthy outdoor activity.

They would also like to increase public participation in natural resource preservation events such as bio-blitzes, which have been organized in the past and are a great way to develop a robust inventory of a property (or ecosystem area) and teach residents about the natural resource.

### **Priorities for Conservation:**

The Dalton Conservation Commission is interesting in setting priorities for land conservation in town based upon the nature resource inventory and the unique value that particular resources contribute to the town. In discuss scenic vistas, wetland and forest block were discussed as current priorities. The commission additionally discussed folding historical sites into Dalton's natural resources inventory. During discussion it was noted that one of the last posts along the CT River for Rogers Rangers was located near within town. Additionally, it was noted that the conservation commission would also consider land which will/would be open to the public as a priority.

A particular discussion focused around the Chase Bog wetland located in the eastern portions of Dalton as a priority conservation area based due to its size, relatively in-tact quality, water quality importance, and diversity of species it supports.

### **Conservation Commission Aspirations:**

- More people to help with town clean-up.
- Conduct more Bioblitzs (A bioblitz targeted assessment of a partular piece of land, or ecosystem to identify as many plant and animal species present as possible. Events are done in a quick timeline with a group of participants.)
- Find ways to rejuvenate and expand community events at Forest Lake Stake Park (beach and forest areas)
- Consider outreach to property owners located in prime natural resources areas with information about the resource, its importance, and any land owner considerations to be a steward of the resources. (i.e. wetlands, shorelands, prime aquifers, etc.)
- Consider identifying historical sites within the Natural Resources Inventory and then explore ways to highlight and celebrate those resources such as sites along the CT river, or those along scenic by-ways or other roads in town.

### **Items to include in the Master Plan Natural Resources Discussion Section:**

- A primer section (1 – 3 pages with highlights on best practices and approaches) on outreach to the community about conservation. Drawing attention to the important role and presence of natural resources in Dalton and identifying opportunities to join local efforts.
- A primer (or how-to) section on accessing and applying for resources to pursue conservation projects.

### **Data**

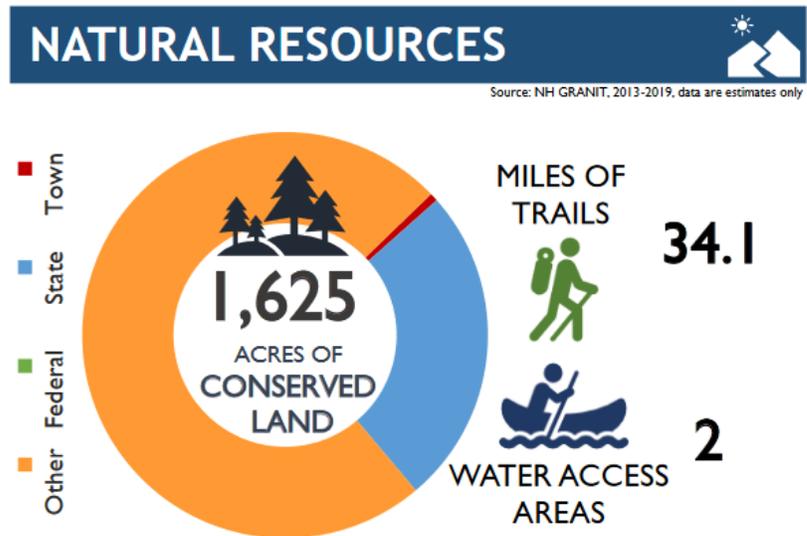
NCC staff has explored and evaluated the following data surrounding Dalton's natural resources assets, needs, opportunities and previous activities. As with all information, it is never a complete

story, local knowledge and input during the meeting is welcome to “ground truth” data and make it more accurate.

### NATURAL RESOURCES LANDSCAPE

Dalton’s abundant natural resources are located across a mix of state, local, and privately-owned property. In 2005, Dalton developed a natural resources inventory, which is not (in 2022) in the process of being updated. [Click here to view the Functional Assessment of Wetlands Developed in 2006](#). The **maps** included at the end of this document provide a visual representation of various elements of Dalton’s natural resources landscape by displaying:

- Wildlife Habitat Information
- Water Resources & Flood Information
- Forest Areas
- Farm Soils
- Recreation Assets
- Steep Slopes

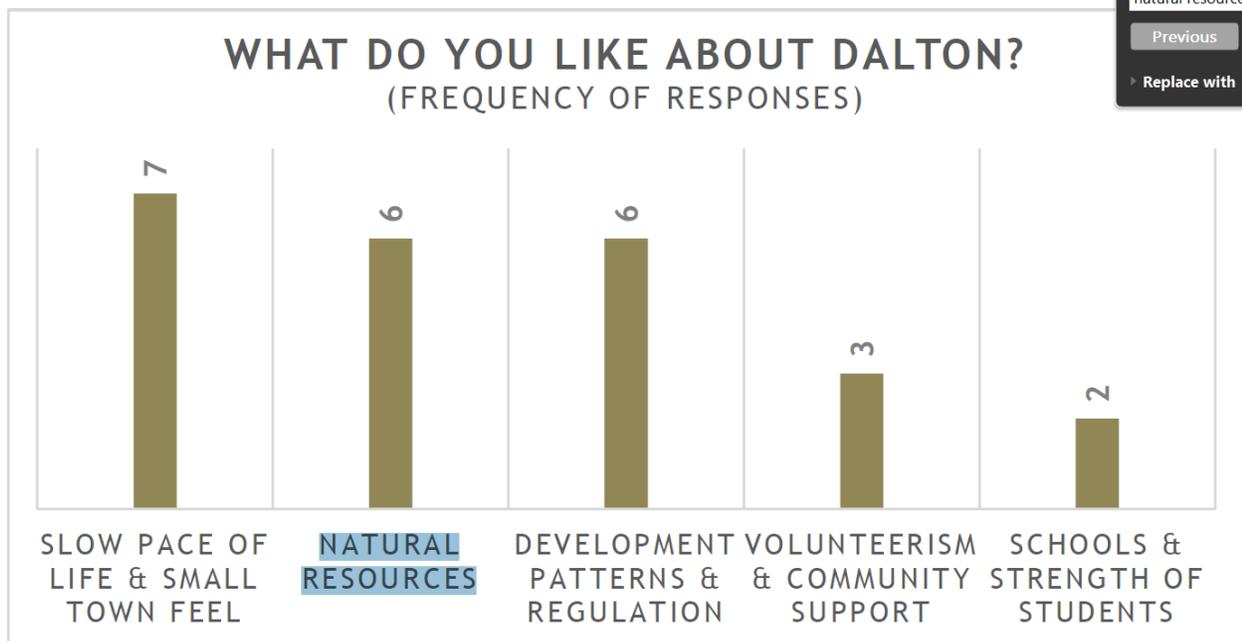


### NATURAL RESOURCES CAPACITIES & CAPABILITIES

The town of Dalton has natural resource conservation and preservation assets to put to work at local, state and federal level. Locally, conservation minded-land owners & a municipal Conservation Commission can pursue public, and private conservation projects. The recently recognized, Friends of Forest Lake group provides a local connection to State owned conservation and recreational waters and forests near the State Park.

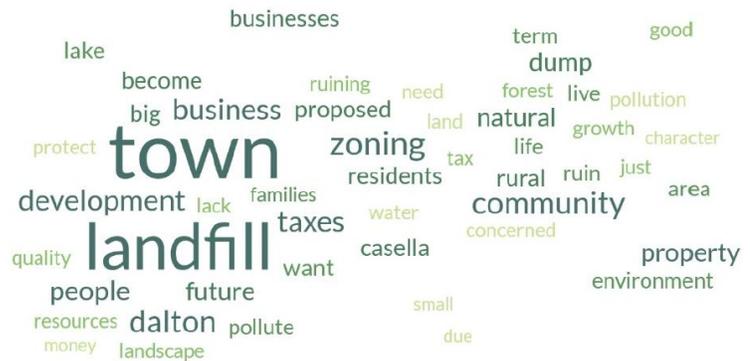
INPUT FROM COMMUNITY OUTREACH IN 2021:

- Data collected continues to support the value placed upon Dalton's **natural resources** and landscapes. Continue efforts for preservation and protection of key resources is important to both residents' quality of life and the possible growth of recreation and tourism based economic ventures.



When asked to share their biggest concern about the future of Dalton, themes emerged around: *The word cloud displayed below is a tool to display the most common words appearing in open-ended responses.*

- DEVELOPMENT OF A LANDFILL (32%)
- INCREASING TAXES (13%)
- BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT (PRO SMALL & CON LARGE)(13%)
- ZONING (7%: 4% pro & 3% con)\*\*
- IMPACT OF FUTURE DEVELOPMENT (9%)
- PROTECTION/DEGRADATION OF NATURAL RESOURCES (7%)
- POLLUTION (7%)



**When asked to share opinions on Dalton's greatest natural resource challenge and/or needs response trends centered around:**

- A need for increased or continued preservation of natural spaces, including forested areas, water resources, wetlands, wildlife habitats and the Forest Lake State Park area
- The challenges of the proposed landfill, increased business development, climate change, loss of property owner control, and lack of zoning

## Master Plan – Natural Resources Actions to Consider:

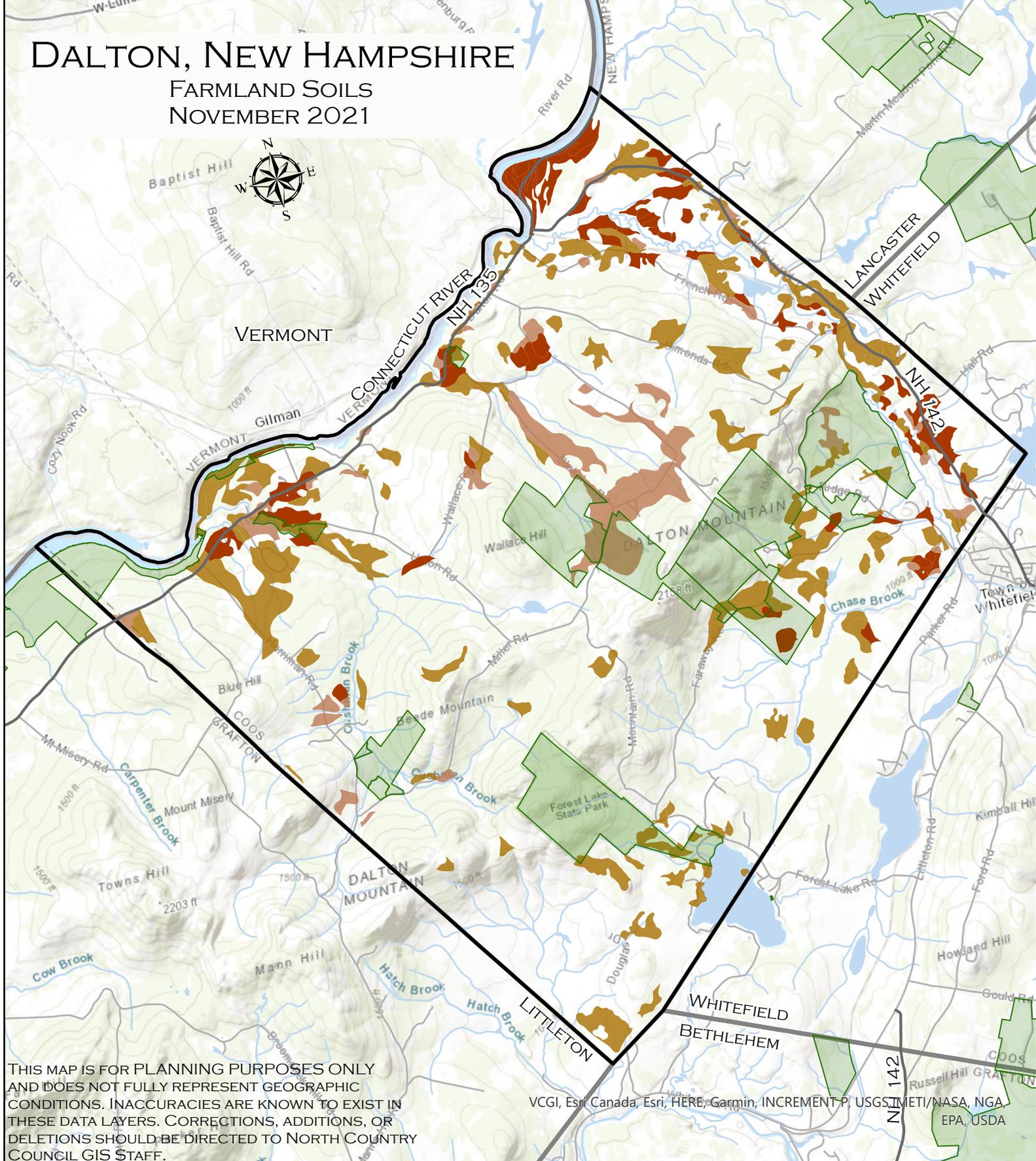
### **Actions & Strategies to Consider:**

1. The Town of Dalton shall identify a strategy for conservation of land. Such a strategy would identify priority areas for conservation based upon ecological or environmental value, and access for public recreation, while exploring grant opportunities and other vehicles for the purchase and conservation of key parcels.
2. The Town of Dalton will explore opportunities to conserve land in connection with known priorities such as Chase Bog, and priorities established in the action above.
3. Audit subdivision regulations to determine if calculations on developable land provide appropriate preservation of unique natural resources while allowing for development of private property.
4. Develop a municipal outreach campaign for property owners in the community. Focus on materials for property owners located in key natural resources areas (aquifers, wetlands, etc) to educate residents and improve stewardship and connection.
5. Work to promote community preservation days, including bio-blitz and similar events to increase inventories using volunteers. Utilize town meetings, minutes, and website to promote attendance at these, and other events that celebrate the natural resources of Dalton.
6. Development a publish maps of popular outdoor recreation amenities open to the public.

## Maps

# DALTON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

FARMLAND SOILS  
NOVEMBER 2021



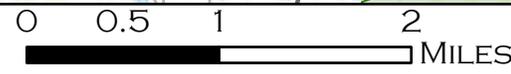
THIS MAP IS FOR PLANNING PURPOSES ONLY AND DOES NOT FULLY REPRESENT GEOGRAPHIC CONDITIONS. INACCURACIES ARE KNOWN TO EXIST IN THESE DATA LAYERS. CORRECTIONS, ADDITIONS, OR DELETIONS SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO NORTH COUNTRY COUNCIL GIS STAFF.

VCGI, Esri Canada, Esri, HERE, Garmin, INCREMENT P, USGS, METI/NASA, NGA, EPA, USDA

## FARMLAND SOILS

- ALL AREAS ARE PRIME FARMLAND
- FARMLAND OF LOCAL IMPORTANCE
- FARMLAND OF STATEWIDE IMPORTANCE

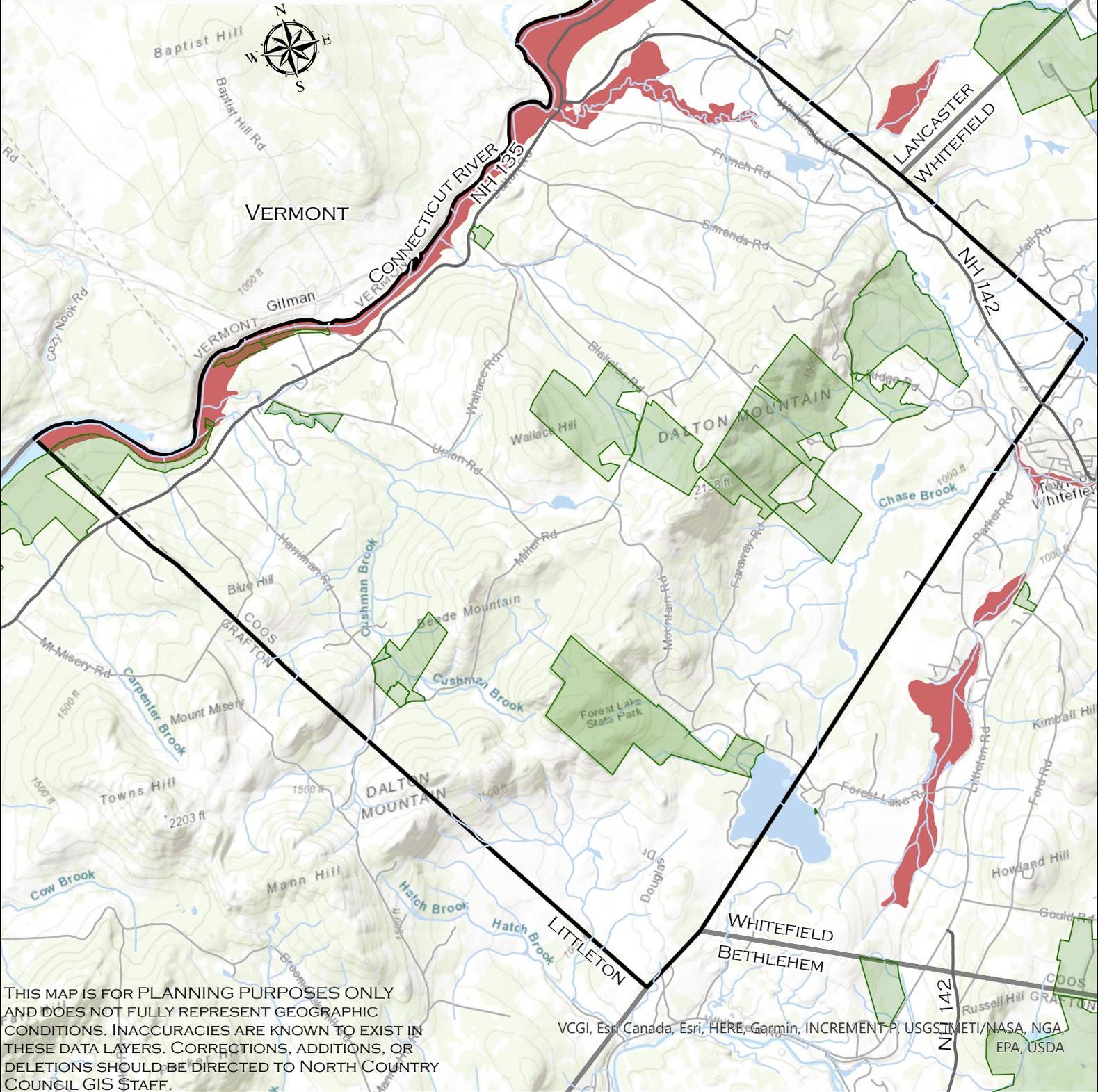
- DALTON TOWN BOUNDARY
- NEIGHBORING TOWNS
- CONSERVED LAND
- ROADS
- STREAMS
- WATER BODIES



0 0.5 1 2 MILES

# DALTON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

FLOOD MAP  
NOVEMBER 2021

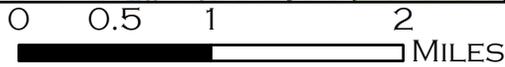


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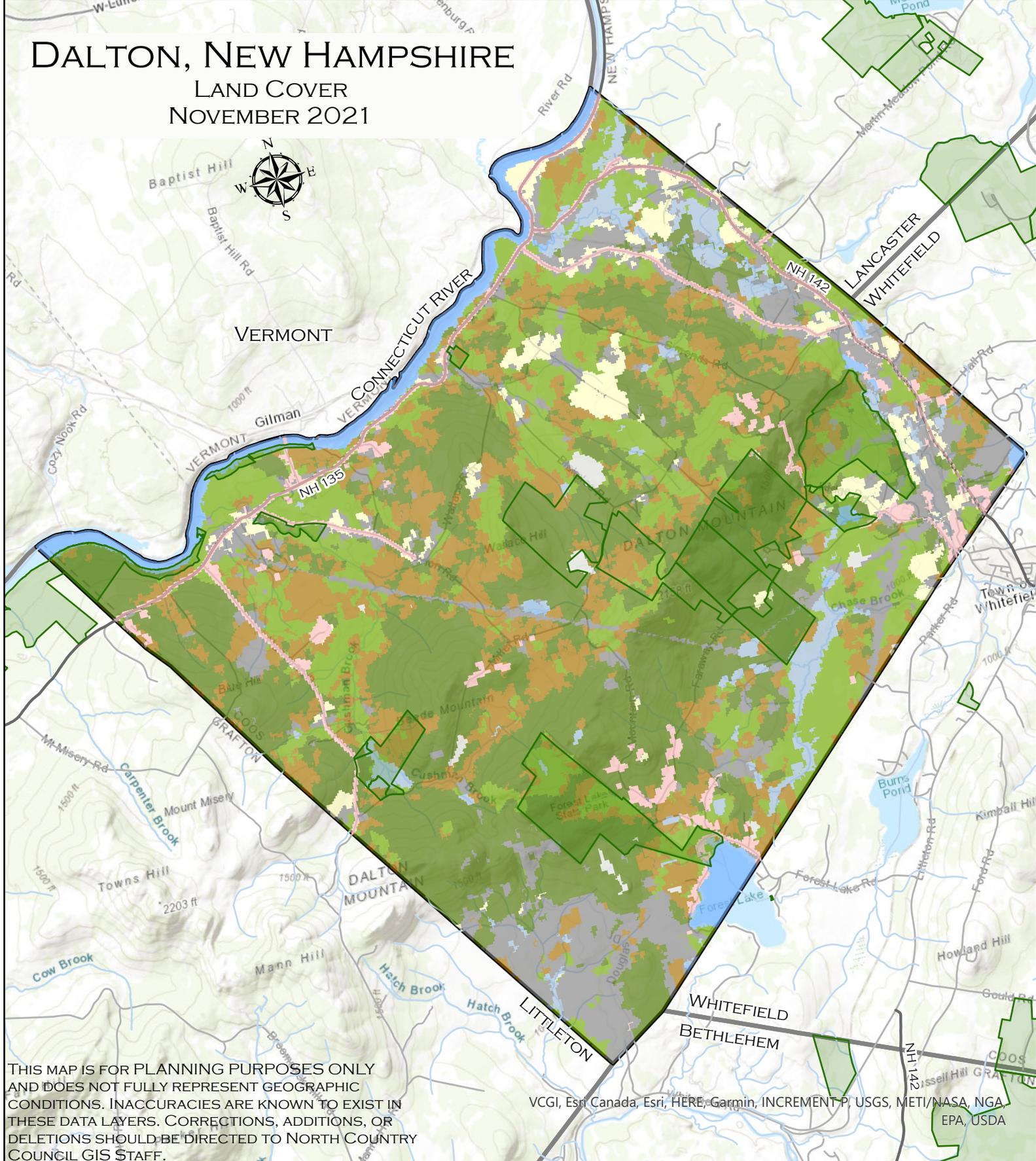
## FLOOD ZONE

- 0.2 PCT ANNUAL CHANCE FLOOD HAZARD
- A
- AE
- DALTON TOWN BOUNDARY
- NEIGHBORING TOWNS
- CONSERVED LAND
- ROADS
- STREAMS
- WATER BODIES



# DALTON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

LAND COVER  
NOVEMBER 2021



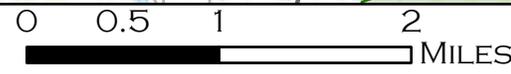
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## LAND COVER

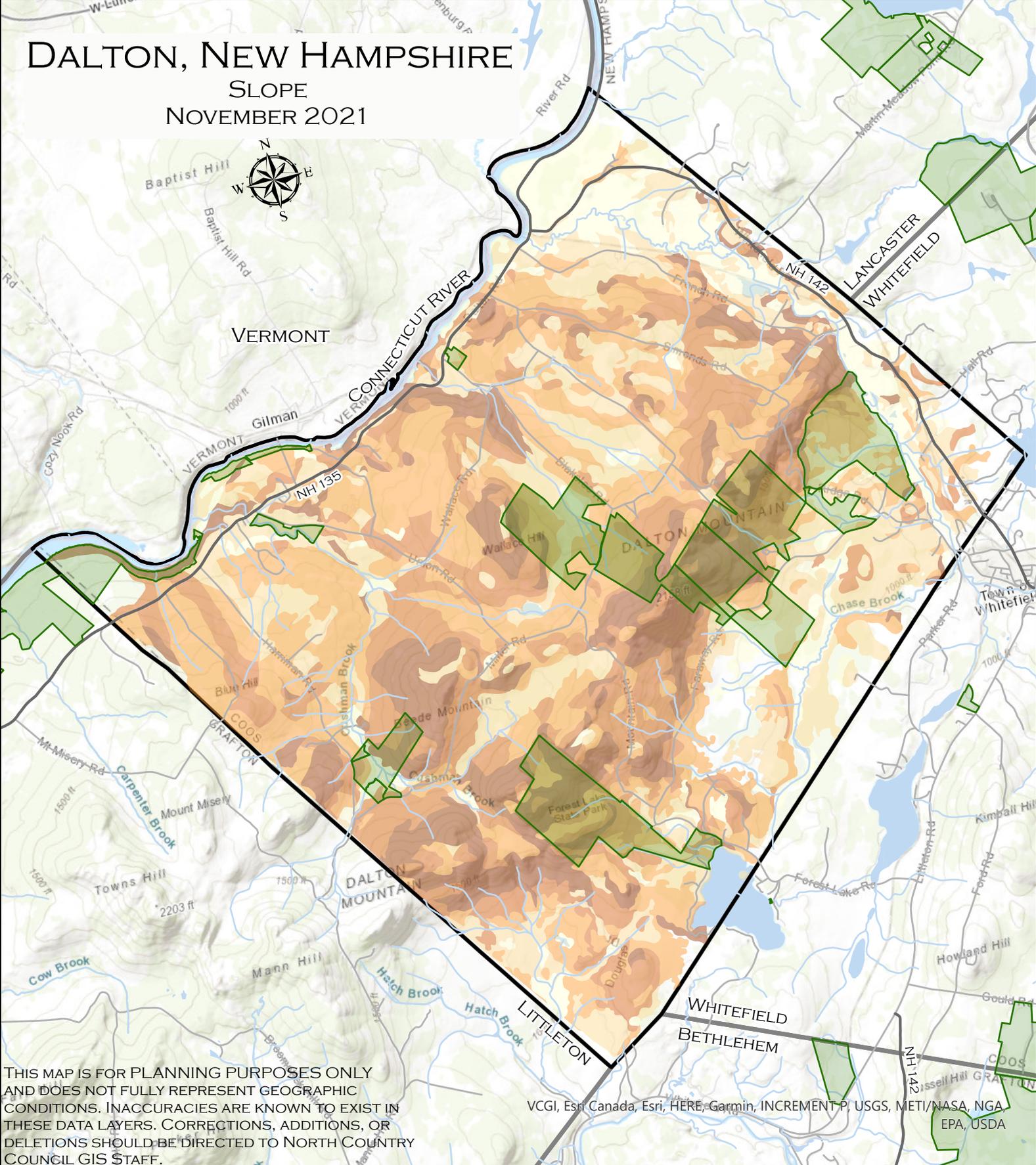
- DEVELOPMENT
- CROP / PASTURE
- CLEARCUT
- DECIDUOUS FOREST
- CONIFEROUS FOREST
- MIXED FOREST
- WATER

- WETLAND
- BEDROCK / OTHER CLEARED LAND
- DALTON TOWN BOUNDARY
- NEIGHBORING TOWNS
- CONSERVED LAND
- ROADS
- STREAMS



# DALTON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

SLOPE  
NOVEMBER 2021



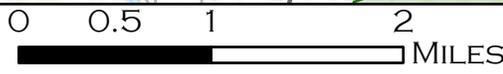
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## SLOPE (PERCENT)

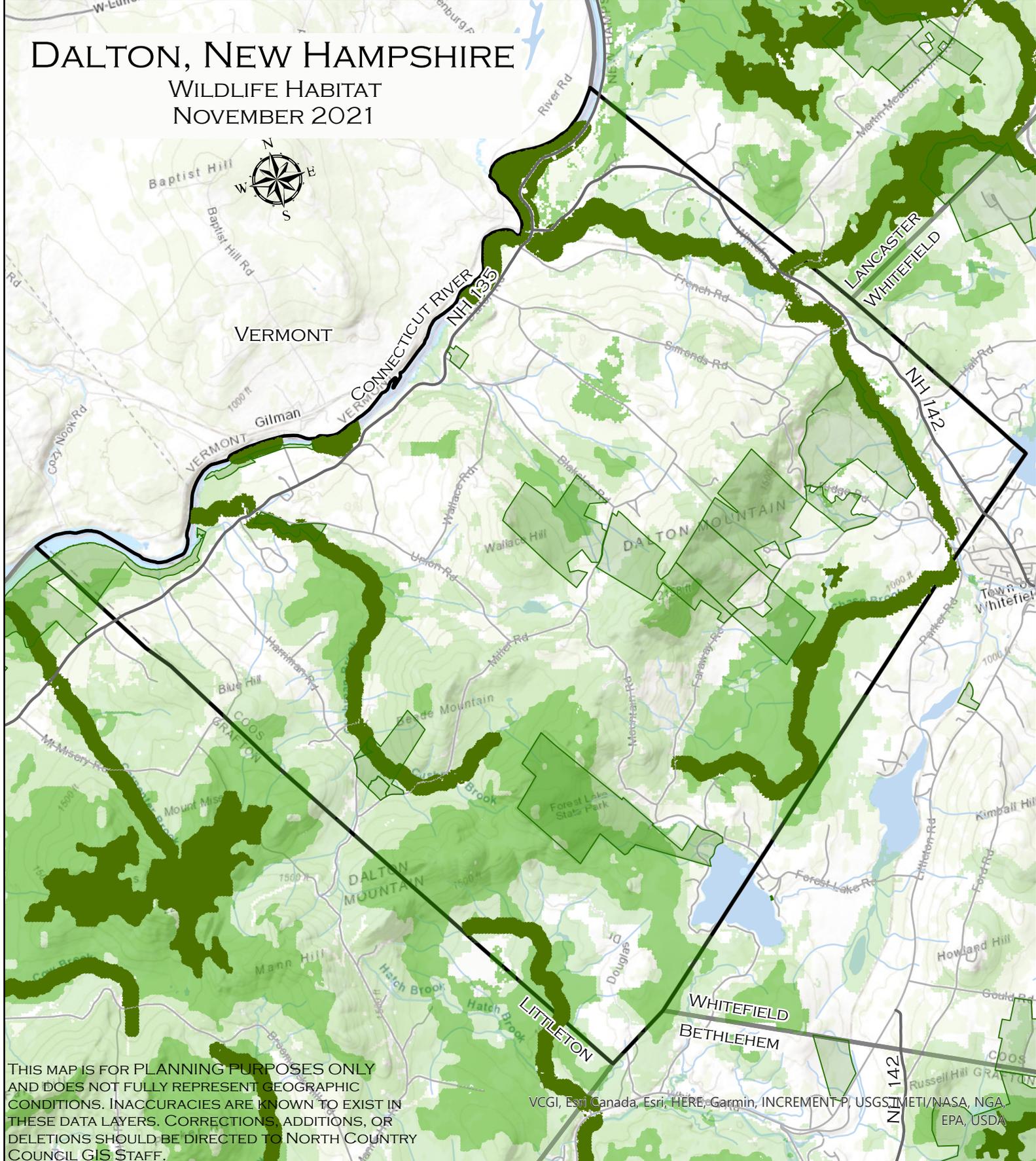
- 0-3
- >3-8
- >8-15
- >15-25
- >25

- DALTON TOWN BOUNDARY
- NEIGHBORING TOWNS
- CONSERVED LAND
- ROADS
- STREAMS
- WATER BODIES



# DALTON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

WILDLIFE HABITAT  
NOVEMBER 2021



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## WILDLIFE ACTION PLAN

- TIER 1
- TIER 2
- TIER 3

- DALTON TOWN BOUNDARY
- NEIGHBORING TOWNS
- CONSERVED LAND
- ROADS
- STREAMS
- WATER BODIES

0 0.5 1 2 MILES

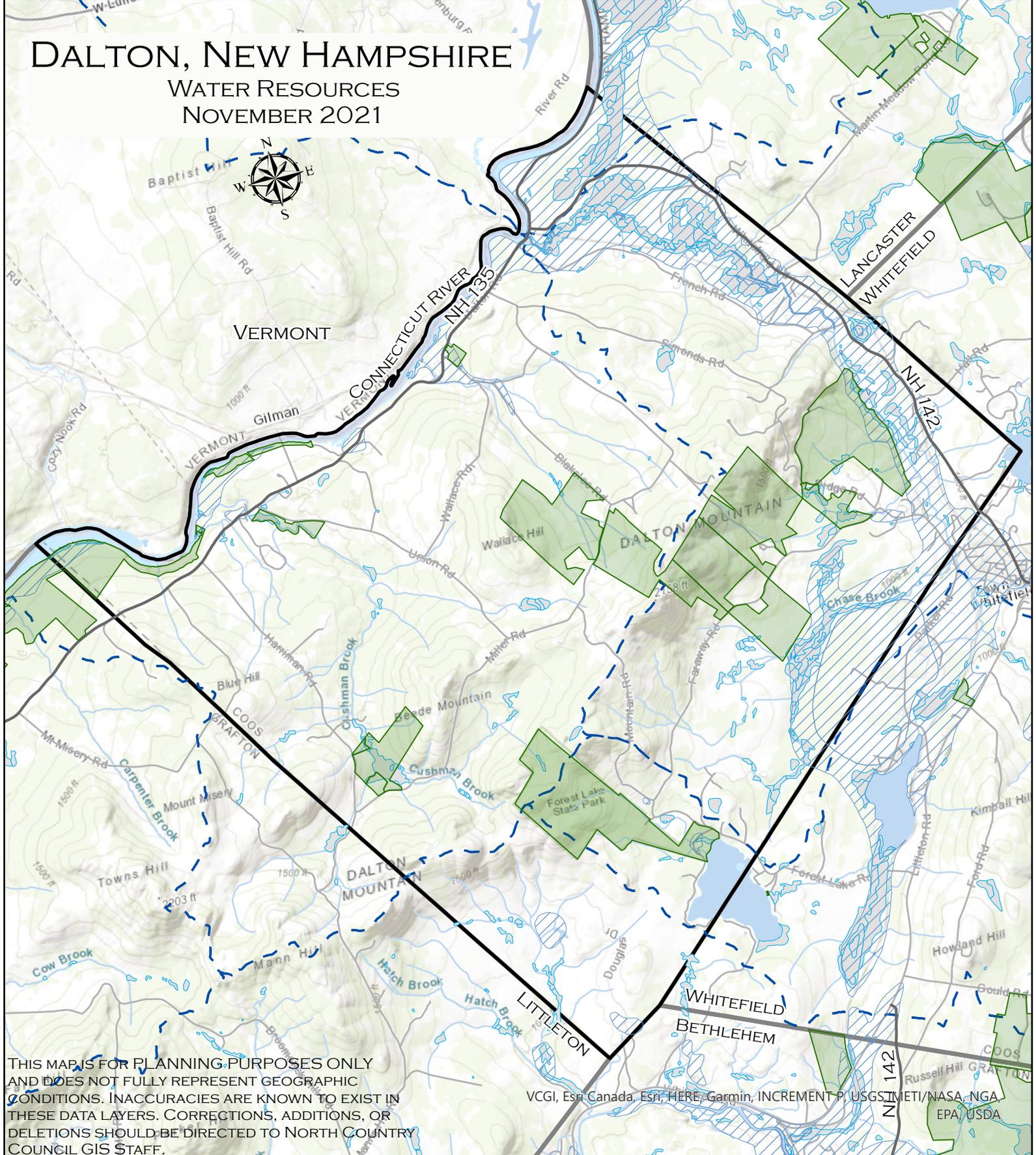
TIER 1: HABITATS OF HIGHEST RELATIVE RANK BY ECOLOGICAL CONDITION IN NH

TIER 2: HABITATS OF HIGHEST RELATIVE RANK BY ECOLOGICAL CONDITION IN BIOLOGICAL REGION

TIER 3: SUPPORTING LANDSCAPES

# DALTON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

WATER RESOURCES  
NOVEMBER 2021



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- DALTON TOWN BOUNDARY
- NEIGHBORING TOWNS
- CONSERVED LAND
- ROADS
- STREAMS
- WATER BODIES
- WATERSHEDS
- WETLANDS
- AQUIFERS

