

**From:** London, Sarah [Sarah.London@vermont.gov]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 24, 2016 10:56 AM  
**To:** Springer, Darren; Allen, Susan; Pepper, James  
**CC:** Coriell, Scott  
**Subject:** FW: Forestry bill  
**Attachments:** Overview of the Planning Sections of H.857.docx

FYI from Noelle on the Forestry Bill

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**From:** Mackay, Noelle  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 24, 2016 10:27 AM  
**To:** London, Sarah <Sarah.London@vermont.gov>  
**Subject:** RE: Forestry bill

Here it is. Let me know if there are any questions. Noelle

**Noelle MacKay** | Commissioner of Housing and Community Development  
Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development  
1 National Life Dr, Davis Bldg, 6th Floor | Montpelier, VT 05620-0501  
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Please Note: State Emails are changing!

Old address: [noelle.mackay@state.vt.us](mailto:noelle.mackay@state.vt.us) New address: [noelle.mackay@vermont.gov](mailto:noelle.mackay@vermont.gov)

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**From:** London, Sarah  
**Sent:** Monday, May 23, 2016 5:33 PM  
**To:** Mackay, Noelle <[Noelle.MacKay@vermont.gov](mailto:Noelle.MacKay@vermont.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: Forestry bill

Thanks very much Noelle...

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**From:** Mackay, Noelle  
**Sent:** Monday, May 23, 2016 5:32 PM  
**To:** London, Sarah <[Sarah.London@vermont.gov](mailto:Sarah.London@vermont.gov)>  
**Subject:** Forestry bill

Sarah,

We are putting together a summary of how the planning piece could work and what is most likely going to happen. Will send tomorrow, hopefully before noon. N

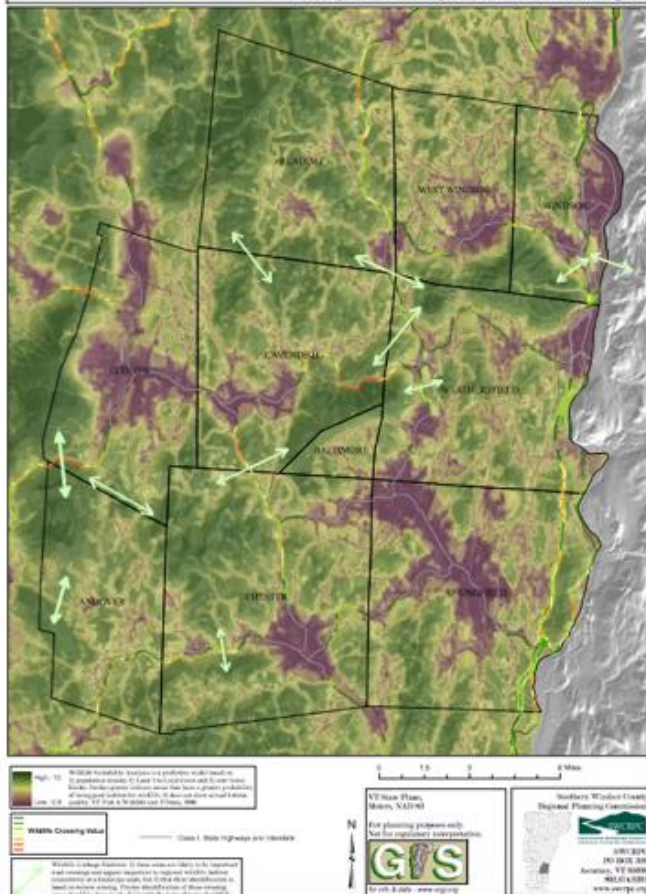
Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone

## Overview of the Planning Sections of H.857: Forestry Bill

- 1) Does not give any new authority to Municipalities or Regional Planning Commissions (RPCs).
- 2) Significantly raises the profile of 'forest blocks' and 'habitat connectors' in the required planning elements for municipal plans and regional plans.
- 3) Requires municipalities to include in their town plans maps of state identified areas that require "special consideration for aquifer protection; for wetland protection; for the maintenance of forest blocks, wildlife habitat, and habitat connectors; or for other conservation purposes." It is unclear how and when the state will identify these areas. Municipalities would not be required to regulate these areas. State identified areas of 'special consideration' aren't defined, although some recently adopted plans have referred to ANR data available on the biofinder and natural resources atlas.
- 4) Requires RPCs to include maps of identified areas of special consideration for the maintenance of forest blocks, wildlife habitat and habitat connectors. Since RPCs were already required to include maps of identified areas of special consideration for conservation purposes, this is not a significant change for the regional plans. See sample maps below.
- 5) Requires Municipalities and RPCs to indicate, in their plans, those areas that are important as forest blocks and habitat connectors and provide plans for land development in those areas to minimize forest fragmentation.
- 6) Will likely result in an increased number of municipal and regional plans that include policy statements recommending limited development in these areas. This, in turn, could eventually lead to municipal zoning bylaws that increase limitations on development in the areas. The extent to which this bill results in planning commissions adopting local regulations (that are approved by selectboards via public process) that go beyond what they would otherwise adopt is unclear. Municipal and regional land use plans must already indicate areas planned for 'forest' use and many existing plans already include policy statements regarding important wildlife habitat and the need to minimize forest fragmentation.
- 7) If they are sufficiently clear and specific, municipal and regional plan policy statements limiting development in these areas will be taken into consideration in decisions regarding Act 250 land use permits and Section 248 certificates of public good.

**Map 6**  
**2014 Regional Plan**  
 Effective Date: December 23, 2014

**Southern Windsor County**  
**Region of Vermont**  
*Wildlife Suitability and Corridor Ratings*



**NORTHWEST REGIONAL PLAN**

**MAP 5: WILDLIFE HABITAT**

