

***This document is meant to be used as a tool, or example for your management plan. You may use it or modify it as you see fit.**

Management Plan for [name of community land]

Town of _____



Insert a nice picture depicting your new community land here.

This Plan has been approved by:

_____, Selectboard Chair

Date

_____, for Vermont Land Trust

Date

[If you want, this table can automatically sync with your document. To make this happen you must:

- Use the “Heading 1” under styles for each new section you add to the template.
- Use “Heading 2” for any important sections headers that fall under the main section header.
- To Update Your Table: Click within the Contents section below -> Click “Update Table” -> choose “update entire table”]

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1. Overview & Summary

[You should write this section last. Include a description of the property, a summary of the planning process, management goals for the town lands, proposed improvements, responsibilities and timeline for actions. This could be pulled out and shared separately with decision makers or other interested individuals who may not have interest in reading the full plan.]

2. Vision, Process, and Responsibilities

a. Overall Vision for Community Lands

[What is the purpose of your newly acquired land? How do you want to see it used, grow, and develop for your community? How will the land support the quality of life and culture of your community? What is your vision? The vision is the destination, the point of reference you are always working toward, if all your plans and goals were fully accomplished, what would that look like?]

b. Development Process for the Management Plan

[Describe the process of developing the Management Plan. Who were the key players (conservation commission, etc.) Make sure to acknowledge any partners who helped., Describe public input sessions and any concerns, interests, opportunities or challenges that were raised. What entities need to review and approve the management plan? Include all that are applicable: nonprofit (VLT), town (Selectboard), VHCB. What's the process for finalizing the management plan? In what instances or how often will you need to update your plan]

c. Responsibilities

[Who will be responsible for all management activities? (E.g. "The conservation commission will be responsible for coordinating the implementation of the management activities. For our invasive species work, we plan to hire a third party to do the assessment...") Is there a "friends" group that might play a role, or is there a goal to establish one? Is the County Forester involved and if so, to what extent? Is there a trail group that will maintain and manage the trails? How will the town communicate with the community about management activities, e.g. trail closures during timber harvests, etc.?)]

3. Property Description

[Paint a picture of the property. Where is it located? What is the topography like? Are the boundaries well defined and marked? How do folks get to the town forest for recreation and what about timber harvest access? Feel free to expand and create more sub-sections as needed.

a. Property history

[Briefly describe the ownership and land use history, including forest management history.]

b. Current Uses of the Property

[How is the property being used, or how was it used most recently? Identify any existing physical improvements or structures on the property. Are there any zoning or land use restrictions?]

4. Natural Resources

[Specifically describe the property in the context of the surrounding landscape, and then the specific features of the property, such as geology and soils, natural communities, water features, rare and uncommon species, and wildlife habitat. Mention any special protections of the natural resources required in the conservation easement, such as a Riparian Buffer Zone, Wetland Protection Zone or Ecological Protection Zone.]

5. Management Goals and Objectives

[Outline your overall management goals for your new community land. Include a description of how you plan to meet your goals and who will be responsible for achieving these goals. Goals are broad statements describing what you are trying to achieve in your community forest and they should express desired outcomes or future conditions. For example, “provide recreation opportunities for a wide range of users”. Objectives are written to accomplish concrete steps toward each goal. Objectives refine goals into workable tasks. Each objective should be written to state what is to be accomplished, when it will be done, and at what cost.]

a. Public Access and Recreation

Access

[How will visitors access the property or trails? Is there parking? What kind of signage or other improvements will be necessary or desired?]

Trails

[Describe the existing trail system and/or proposed improvements to the trail system here. Include a trail map. Who uses the trails and who is responsible for maintaining the trails and managing user conflicts? What process will be used to resolve user conflicts? What process will be used to add trails?]

Allowed activities

[List the activities that visitors are allowed to do. (Items to consider for this section or restricted or prohibited uses include, cross country skiing, hiking, mountain biking, riding horses, snowmobiling, walking dogs leashed/not leashed, camping overnight, campfires, hunting, trapping.) Describe any details related to each use, e.g. mountain biking only on certain trails, etc.]

Restricted activities

[What activities have certain limitations, e.g. horseback riding on certain trails or recreation from dawn to dusk or hunting is allowed during the regulated hunting season, etc.?

Prohibited activities

[List the activities that visitors are not allowed to do.

b. Timber & Other Forest Products

[This section is NOT your Forest Management Plan (FMP). Do you plan to have an FMP? If not, when will it be developed and by whom? VLT will need to approve your FMP as well, and it should be included as an appendix. In this section briefly describe your goals for forest management.]

c. Wildlife

[Describe any management goals and objectives specific to wildlife. What wildlife have been observed or are likely to use the property? Are there any unique habitat features that require special care or protection, e.g. a rocky ridge that provides bobcat denning habitat? What activities will you undertake to maintain or enhance wildlife habitat? This may be more comprehensively addressed in the forest management plan.]

d. Rare Plants, Animals and Natural Communities

[If any of these have been identified on the property, how will they be protected or cared for? Does the easement have any restrictions related to their management? Who or what entity will you consult, such as the VT Nongame and Natural Heritage Program, for recommendations?]

e. Water Features

[Describe any management goals and objectives specific to water features. Will certain uses be allowed, restricted or prohibited in or near these water features? Does the easement have any restrictions related to their management?]

f. Invasive Species

[Do you have invasive species on your property? If so, will you do an inventory and assessment? How will you plan to manage them?]

g. Education

[Describe any management goals and objectives specific to education. Will you or other organizations host nature walks or other educational workshops? Are there local school groups interested in using the forest as an outdoor classroom?]

h. Historic and Cultural Resources

[Describe any historic or cultural features on the property? How will these features be identified (interpretive signage) or protected?]

i. Proposed Improvements

[What physical changes, such as parking lots, kiosks, bridges, etc., do you anticipate on the community land? Make sure to include that any changes made to the property must be approved by VLT.] Option: this portion could be incorporated into each of the above sections (i.e. under the education header, it includes the proposed improvements.)

j. Others?

Action Items

Public Access & Recreation	Target Date	Partners/Funders	Cost
Action 1			
Timber Management			
Wildlife			
Water Features			
Invasive Species			
Education			
Other			

Appendices

Conservation Easement

Conservation Easement Map

BDR

Ecological Assessment

Forest Management Plan

Legal Documents – (i.e. lease for a sugarbush, right of way, agreements, other easements)