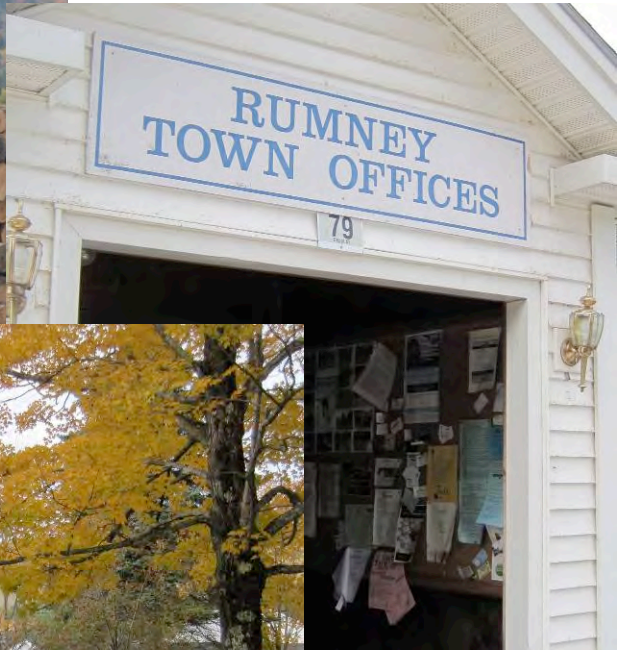


2012



Master Plan

Master Plan
Rumney, New Hampshire
Adopted April 24, 2012

Developed by the Rumney Planning Board
with the assistance of the Rumney Conservation Commission
and North Country Council, Inc.



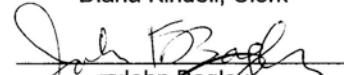
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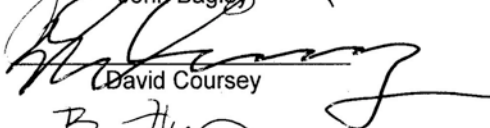
ADOPTION OF RUMNEY, NEW HAMPSHIRE MASTER PLAN

In accordance with New Hampshire RSA 674:4, Master Plan Adoption and Amendment, and New Hampshire RSA 675:6, Method of Adoption, the Rumney Planning Board, having held a duly noticed public hearing on April 5, 2012, hereby adopts and certifies the Master Plan dated April 24, 2012.

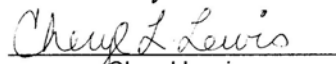

Thomas J. Grabiek, Chairman

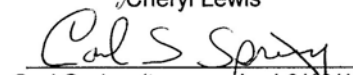

Diana Kindell, Clerk

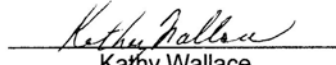

John Bagley

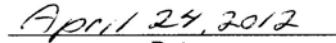

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CONTENTS	PAGE
1. INTRODUCTION	1
Master Plan Purpose and Process	1
Vision for the Future of Rumney	4
2. COMMUNITY PROFILE	7
Population	7
Housing Stock	8
Incomes and Housing Affordability	10
Wages	11
Unemployment	13
Tax Base and Property Taxes	13
3. LAND USE	15
Yesterday and Today	15
The Early Years	15
Era of Growth	15
The Villages	16
NH Route 25 Corridor	19
The Rural Areas	19
Future Land Use	20
NH Route 25 Corridor	20
Existing Village Areas	21
Stinson Lake	21
Rural Areas	21
Throughout Town	22
Potential Growth Area	23
4. NATURAL RESOURCES	25
Introduction	25
Water Resources	26
Lakes and Ponds	26
Baker River	28
Streams and Brooks	29
Wetlands	30
Groundwater and Aquifers	30
Soils	31
Farms and Agriculture	32
Forest Resources	33
Wildlife	35
Natural Resource-Based Recreation	37
5. FACILITIES AND SERVICES	41
Introduction	41
Transportation	41
Highways	41
Other Modes of Transportation	43
Schools	44
Russell Elementary School	44
Plymouth Regional High School	44
Town Buildings	45
Town Office/Police Station	45
Highway Department	46
Fire Department	46

CONTENTS CONTINUED**PAGE**

Byron G. Merrill Library	47
Historical Society	48
Waste Disposal	48
Solid Waste	48
Hazardous Waste	49
Septage	49
Cemeteries	49
Town Recreation Facilities	50
Utilities/Communications	51
Emergency Management	51
Medical	52
Emergency Medical	52
Hospitals	52
Other Services Available to Rumney Residents	52
Social Services	53
Specialized Housing Facilities	54
General Recommendations for Rumney's Facilities and Services	54
 Appendix A 2008 Master Plan Survey Results	 57
Appendix B Other Sources of Information on Natural Resources	63

1. INTRODUCTION

Master Plan Purpose and Process

The purpose of the Master Plan is to guide the future development of the town. More specifically, it will be used to guide the Planning Board as it carries out its responsibilities in a way that will best achieve the goals of the community. It will also serve as a basis for recommendations the Planning Board may make to the voters at town meeting or to other town boards. The Master Plan is a policy document. It is not regulatory.

The 1985 Master Plan for the Town of Rumney represented the town's first comprehensive look at the future development of the community. Since that time, although the population of Rumney has not grown much, the make-up of the population has changed, and, along with it, some of the needs and desires of residents have also changed. In addition, the forces affecting the town from outside have also changed. The region and the state have both continued to grow, and the economy has gone from boom to bust. Progress has been made in several areas affecting planning. For example, methods for reducing the environmental impacts of development are now better understood, state-wide and regional initiatives for addressing rural transportation needs are underway, and telecommunications have been growing and changing at a stunning pace changing the way we do many things and increasing the rate and amount of information exchanged.

One component of this Master Plan was begun in 2006 when the Rumney Conservation Commission worked with the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests to develop the Natural Resource Inventory & Constraints Analysis. The information and maps about the town's important natural resources, as well as areas where development would pose an unnecessary hazard for occupants and others, provided one important foundation for the Planning Board as it considered the town's future development.

The second essential foundation of a master plan is the goals, needs and desires of the community. The first activity to help residents brainstorm and articulate these was the Rumney Community Profile, held on May 4 and 5, 2007. There were about 75 participants on the first day and about 40 on the second day. With the assistance of University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension, residents discussed the town's strengths and challenges and key issues in each of the following areas:

- Effective Community Leadership
- Fostering Healthy Families, Individuals and Youth and Lifelong Learning
- Community Services, Facilities, Utilities & Transportation
- Sense of Community and Recreation & Cultural Heritage
- Working Landscape & the Natural Environment
- Economic Vitality and Growth & Development

Five key issues emerged over the course of the event that provided guidance to the Planning Board and other local officials regarding future priorities:

1. Conservation of Natural Resources
2. Economic Vitality
3. Building Community
4. Recreation and Youth Opportunities
5. Communication

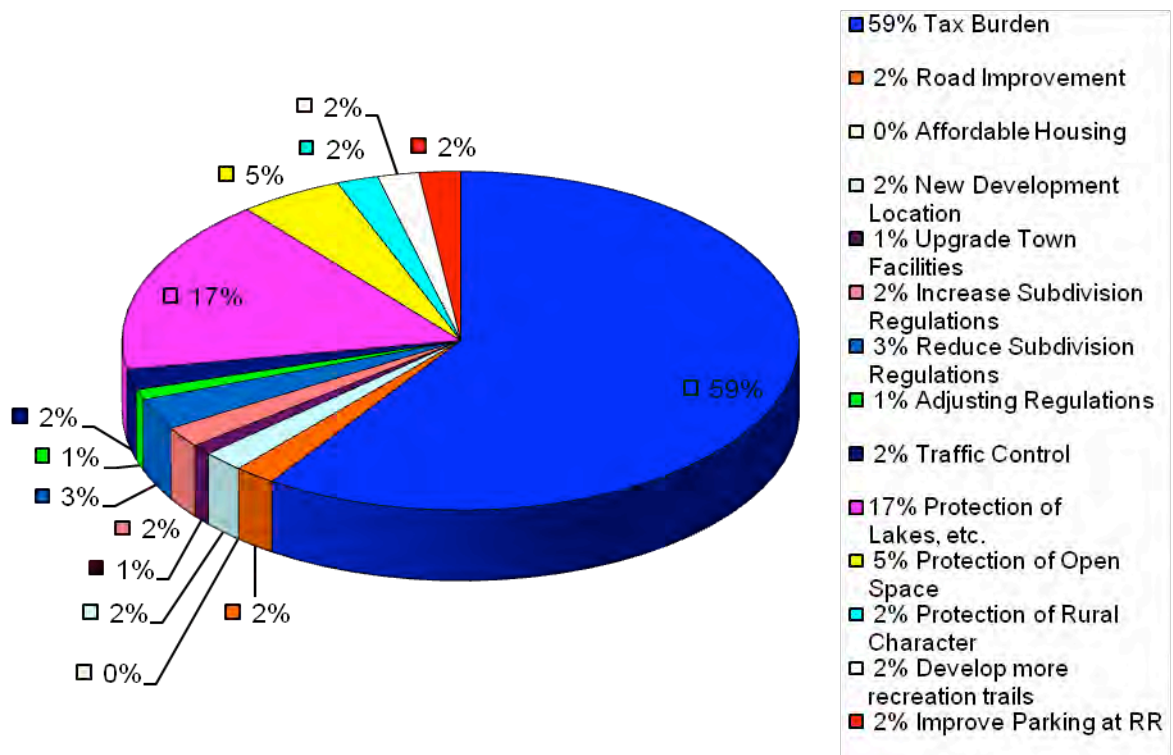
Of the potential projects discussed for furthering these goals in Rumney, "zoning and smart/development of land" was the highest ranked by those participating in the Community Profile.

To gain more information from the community on specific issues before beginning the process of updating the town's Master Plan, the Planning Board conducted a survey in 2008. The survey was sent to the approximately 1,010 property owners and 133 responses were received for a response rate of 13%. The complete results are included in Appendix A. Some of the points guiding the Planning Board in its development of this Master Plan update are highlighted below:

- Of a list of specific issues, "Tax burden" and "Protection of lakes, rivers/streams/groundwater" were ranked #1 and #2 as issues that should be addressed in Rumney over the next five years.
- Regarding economic development, respondents were asked to rank a list of types of new businesses they would like to see encouraged in Rumney. Of those listed, there was the most support for "new modest retail stores," "new light manufacturing," and "new agricultural."
- When asked to indicate if they would support various methods for guiding growth in town, a majority of respondents indicated support for each of the following methods. They are listed in rank order (with abbreviated wording) starting with the method which received the highest number of positive responses.
 - Encourage use of conservation easements.
 - Provide clear, consistent guidelines regarding impacts on water resources.
 - Encourage more development which generates more tax revenues than expenses.
 - Establish different development guidelines for different areas of town.
 - Increase the minimum lot size for residential development.
 - Require state and other regulations to be obtained at town office prior to beginning development.
 - Allow decreased lot size for clustering.
- A majority of respondents indicated support for nuisance ordinances, development guidelines, and local regulations to protect water.

- When asked about energy consumption, a majority of respondents indicated support for an in-depth study of the town's energy use, as well as support for those investing in energy efficiency.

Master Plan Questionnaire "General" Priorities Response

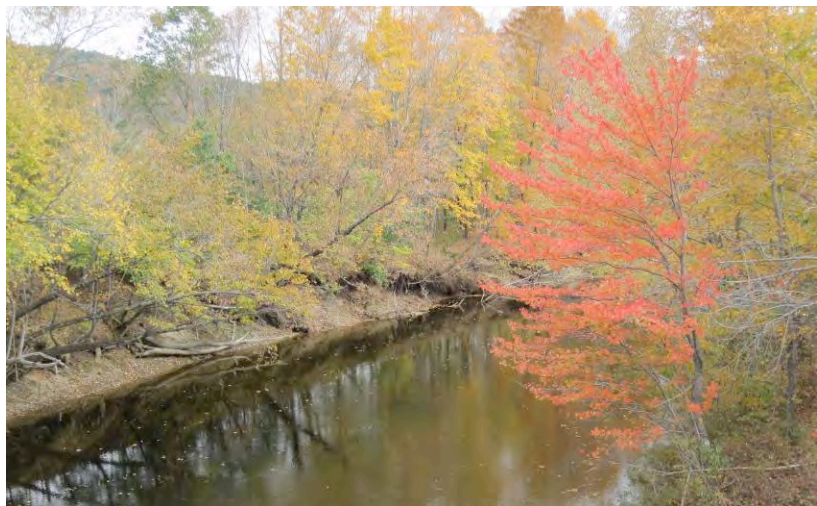


With the Natural Resource Inventory and Community Profile and Master Plan Survey results in hand, the Planning Board began examining the 1985 Master Plan, discussing issues to be addressed in this update, and gathering data and other input. In March 2011 North Country Council was hired to help the Board with the final step of consolidating and summarizing this information into a master plan document. The Plan is organized into a Community Profile summarizing some key trends affecting future development, a Land Use section discussing development trends and policies for the future, a Natural Resources section developed by the Rumney Conservation Commission highlighting issues important to consider as the town develops, and a Facilities and Services section which takes a look at the infrastructure of the town as it relates to future development.

The policies and recommendations contained in the Master Plan are based on the community's vision for the future as understood by the Planning Board.

Vision for the Future of Rumney

- Rumney will remain a rural community with residential villages served by neighborhood businesses, interspersed with productive farm and forestland.
- The town's natural and scenic resources continue to be respected.
- In order to respect private property rights, regulations set reasonable limits rather than prescribe details.
- Stewardship of the Baker River and its tributaries by the community and adjacent landowners will maintain and improve this centerpiece of the community.
- The working landscape will support a strong recreation/tourism economy; business development will be compatible with, and, when possible, support, the working landscape and recreation/tourism economy, while providing livable wage jobs.
- The N.H. Route 25 corridor will be managed as appropriate for attracting tourists and recreationists, while ensuring safe and efficient travel for through-traffic.



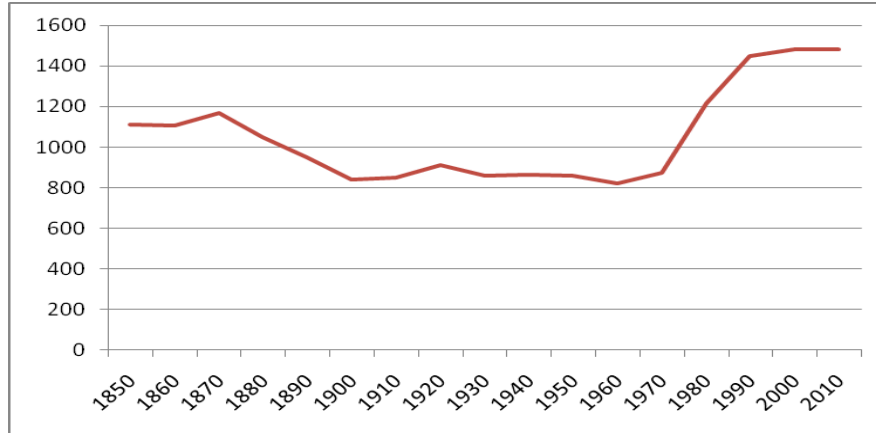
- Residents continue to travel to Plymouth and beyond for the services and retail shopping offered by larger commercial areas.
- Growth and services will be balanced, with the goal of keeping local property taxes and other housing costs affordable to existing residents and their children.
- A strong community spirit will be reflected in volunteerism, active healthy dialog on important issues, support for the needs of children and disabled and elderly residents, and participation in town events.

2. COMMUNITY PROFILE

Population

Like that of many New Hampshire communities, Rumney's population was fairly stable from 1900 (837 residents) to 1960 (820 residents) after the early years of growth followed by the exodus to urban areas and the Midwest.

Population of Rumney – 1850 - 2010



(Source: U.S. Census)

As shown in the tables below, Rumney's growth from 1960 to 1990 was similar to the state's, but since then has leveled off. The 2010 US Census figure of 1480, while just slightly above the 1990 figure, represents an eighty percent (80%) increase over the town's 1960 population.

Population Change, Rumney and Surrounding Towns, 1960-2010

	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010
Campton	1058	1171	1694	2377	2719	3333
Dorchester	91	141	244	392	353	355
Ellsworth	3	13	53	74	87	83
Groton	99	120	255	318	456	593
Plymouth	3210	4225	5094	5811	5892	6990
Rumney	820	870	1212	1446	1480	1480
Wentworth	300	376	527	630	798	911
New Hampshire	606921	737681	920610	1109252	1235786	1316470

(Source: US Census)

Rate of Population Change, Rumney and Surrounding Towns, 1960-2010

	<i>1960-1970</i>	<i>1970-1980</i>	<i>1980-1990</i>	<i>1990-2000</i>	<i>2000-2010</i>
Campton	11%	45%	40%	14%	23%
Dorchester	55%	73%	61%	-10%	1%
Ellsworth	333%	308%	40%	18%	-5%
Groton	21%	113%	25%	43%	30%
Plymouth	32%	21%	14%	1%	19%
Rumney	6%	39%	19%	2%	0%
Wentworth	25%	40%	20%	27%	14%
New Hampshire	22%	25%	20%	11%	7%

(Source: US Census)

As far as future population growth is concerned, neither state nor federal population projections based on the 2010 Census data are available yet. One approach to projecting the 2020 population of Rumney would be to assume that the population remains stable at 1480 residents as it did over the last ten years. Another approach would be to calculate the growth rate at which Rumney together with its neighbors (as listed in the table above) grew over the last ten years – 16.6% - and apply that figure to Rumney to project the next ten years. This would mean that if Rumney area towns continue to grow at the same rate as they did in the previous decade, and that growth is evenly distributed proportionate to 2010 populations, Rumney would see 1725 residents by 2020.

Although the number of residents has stayed about the same over the last twenty years, the make-up of that population has changed. Consistent with nationwide and statewide trends, the percentage of the population that is school age or younger has been decreasing while the percentage of residents 65 and older has been increasing. This will have an increasing effect on communities in future decades as the need for housing and services for seniors grows.

Age of Rumney Residents

Year	Under 5	% of Population	5-19	% of Population	20-64	% of Population	65 +	% of Population	Total
1990	106	7%	308	21%	845	58%	187	13%	1446
2000	73	5%	330	22%	838	57%	239	16%	1480
2010	64	4%	282	19%	877	59%	257	17%	1480

(Source: US Census)

Housing Stock

In 2000, the last year for which housing type was reported by the US Census, Rumney's housing stock (including year-round and seasonal) included 707 single family units , 79 duplex

and multi-family units, and 93 manufactured homes. The composition of housing stock compared to surrounding towns and the state is shown below.

Rumney Housing Types Compared with Neighboring Communities

Town	Single Family Homes	Multi-Family Homes (Includes Duplexes)	Manufactured Homes	Total Number
Campton	65%	20%	15%	1759
Dorchester	79%	3%	17%	236
Ellsworth	97%	0	3%	72
Groton	79%	0	21%	342
Plymouth	46%	40%	13%	1901
Rumney	80%	9%	11%	879
Wentworth	87%	5%	8%	437
New Hampshire	62%	31%	6%	546,524

(Source: Percentages derived from 2000 US Census data)

The total number of housing units counted by the US Census in Rumney in 2010 - 933 - was very similar to the number counted twenty years before in 1990 - 943. However, the number of occupied units increased significantly over the same period, from 549 in 1990 to 593 in 2010, while the number of seasonal units dropped from 299 in 1990 to 273 in 2010, and the number of other vacant units dropped from 95 in 1990 to 66 in 2010. The portion of occupied year-round units that are renter-occupied is about the same as it was twenty years ago (21% in 1990, 18% in 2010).

Rumney Housing Occupancy – 1990 - 2010

	1990			2000			2010		
Total Number of Housing Units	943			879			933		
Number Occupied	549			569			593		
Owner-Occupied	436			449			487		
Renter-Occupied	113			120			106		
Seasonal	299			274			273		
For Rent, For Sale, Sold or Rented but Not Yet Occupied, Other Vacant	95			36			66		

(Source: US Census)

Commonly used indicators of the condition of a town's housing stock include availability of complete plumbing facilities and the age of housing. Data from the 2000 US Census when this

information was last available showed 47 housing units in Rumney lacking complete plumbing facilities. Seven of these housing units were occupied. The percentage of housing units reported to have been built prior to 1940 was 39.9%, substantially higher than the statewide average of 23.7%.

Incomes and Housing Affordability

Incomes for Rumney residents reported by the 2000 US Census were substantially lower than statewide averages. The median household income for 1999 was reported to be \$38,125 for two person households compared with \$49,467 for the state as a whole. Similarly, the per capita income in Rumney was reported to be \$17,169 compared with \$23,844 statewide. Following a similar pattern, the poverty rate is estimated to be 13% in Rumney compared with 9.8% county-wide and 7.8% statewide (2006-2010 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates).

Incomes in turn affect a household's ability to pay for housing. The table below shows estimates for the percentage of Rumney households paying more than 30% of their income on housing for 1999 and for the most recent American Community Survey. While a direct comparison is not possible due to slightly different sampling methods, the data indicate that the percentage of owner households paying more than 30% of their incomes for housing may have increased in recent years, while the percentage of renter households paying more than 30% appears to have remained stable. These figures are consistent with regional figures. It has been estimated that region-wide approximately 43% of renter households and 30% of owner households are paying more than 30% of their household incomes for housing (*North Country Region Housing Needs Assessment - June 2011 Update*). Thirty percent is the generally accepted threshold above which not enough money is left in the household to pay for other basic necessities such as food, clothing, transportation, medical and dental care, and day care. Two significant factors affecting the ability of North Country residents to pay for housing are: 1) employment – unemployment and employment that pays below a livable wage – and 2) the influences of in-migration and second homes on housing prices (*North Country Region Housing Needs Assessment - June 2011 Update*).

Rumney Housing Affordability

	2000 US Census (1999 data)	American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates 05-09
Owner Households Paying 30% or More of Household Income for Housing	19.2%	38.6%
Renter Households Paying 30% or More of Household Income for Housing	34.1%	32.3%

Wages

Using Pennsylvania State University's on-line Living Wage Calculator, the living wage for Grafton County can be calculated as follows:

one adult	\$8.37/hour	two adults	\$12.42/hour
one adult with one child	\$15.64/hour	two adults with one child	\$19.69/hour
two adults with two children	\$25.18/hour		

Employment data are organized by labor market areas, groups of towns that share a socioeconomic center. Rumney is part of the Plymouth Labor Market Area. The 2000 Census Transportation Planning Package shows that in 1999 171 Rumney residents worked in Rumney, while the same number worked in Plymouth. Rumney employers are all small businesses such as lumber mills and restaurants. Plymouth employers include several employing over two hundred people - Plymouth State University, Speare Memorial Hospital, and the New Hampshire Electric Cooperative – and Hannaford Brothers and Plymouth Regional High School each employing over one hundred people.



As shown below, the average weekly wage in Rumney was \$569 in 2010, or about \$14.22 per hour if all jobs were 40 hours per week. Also as shown in the table below, in each category of jobs, the average weekly wage in the Plymouth Labor Market Area (LMA) was less than the statewide average. In addition, the average weekly wage in Rumney was lower than that for the LMA in each category.

2010 Average Weekly Wages for Covered Employment in Rumney
compared with Plymouth LMA and State

AREA	CATEGORY OF COVERED EMPLOYMENT	UNITS (# of industries in this category)	AVERAGE ANNUAL EMPLOYMENT(# of people working in the industry)	AVERAGE WEEKLY WAGE
RUMNEY	TOTAL, PRIVATE PLUS GOVERNMENT	40	303	\$569.00
	TOTAL GOVERNMENT	7	78	\$626.26
	Federal Government	1	5	\$711.38
	State Government	3	15	\$787.52
	Local Government	3	58	\$577.98
	TOTAL PRIVATE	33	225	\$549.04
	Goods-Producing Industries <i>(including Agri/Forest./Fish./ Constr./Manuf.)</i>	11	120	\$594.21
	Service-Providing Industries <i>(including Retail/Accom./ Food Serv./other)</i>	22	104	\$496.84
PLYMOUTH LABOR MARKET AREA	TOTAL, PRIVATE PLUS GOVERNMENT	1,061	12,480	\$616.51
	TOTAL GOVERNMENT	88	2,818	\$743.90
	Federal Government	16	150	\$982.00
	State Government	22	1,055	\$833.57
	Local Government	50	1,613	\$663.10
	TOTAL PRIVATE	974	9,662	\$579.35
	Goods-Producing Industries	168	1,539	\$794.71
	Service-Providing Industries	805	8,122	\$538.54
STATE	TOTAL, PRIVATE PLUS GOVERNMENT	43,778	600,540	\$883.88
	TOTAL GOVERNMENT	1,983	87,154	\$847.05
	Federal Government	385	8,005	\$1,289.16
	State Government	807	20,683	\$911.11
	Local Government	790	58,466	\$763.86
	TOTAL PRIVATE	41,795	513,386	\$890.13
	Goods-Producing Industries	6,055	89,428	\$1,119.47
	Service-Providing Industries	35,740	423,957	\$841.75

(Source: NH Employment Security, 2010)

Unemployment

The most recent unemployment rate reported for Rumney was 4.3% in October 2011 (not seasonally adjusted). In October 2010 the rate was 6.4%. It is important to keep in mind that unemployment rates do not reflect self-employed individuals, those whose eligibility for unemployment compensation has expired, individuals who have given up looking for jobs, left town, or are underemployed or piecing together part time or seasonal jobs. (It has been estimated that in New Hampshire only 31-40% of those who were unemployed in 2008 received unemployment benefits (USA Today, April 9, 2009.)) The figures are however a good indicator and provide a useful comparison across time and geographies. The table below shows that while unemployment has increased in recent years, over the past decade unemployment in the Plymouth Labor Market Area has consistently been slightly lower than statewide averages.

Unemployment Rates 2000-2010

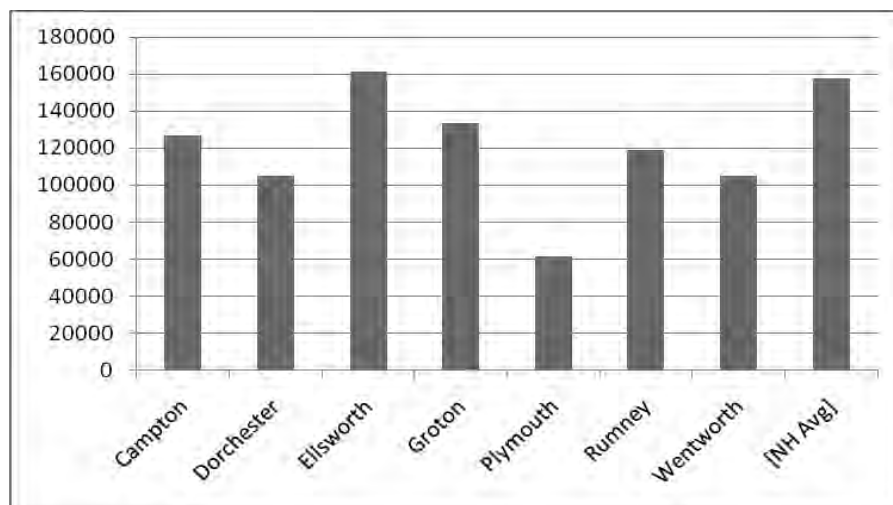
Year	Plymouth LMA	New Hampshire
2000	2.5%	2.7%
2005	2.9%	3.2%
2010	5.1%	6.1%

(Source: NH Employment Security, Economic & Labor Market Information Bureau)

Tax Base and Property Taxes

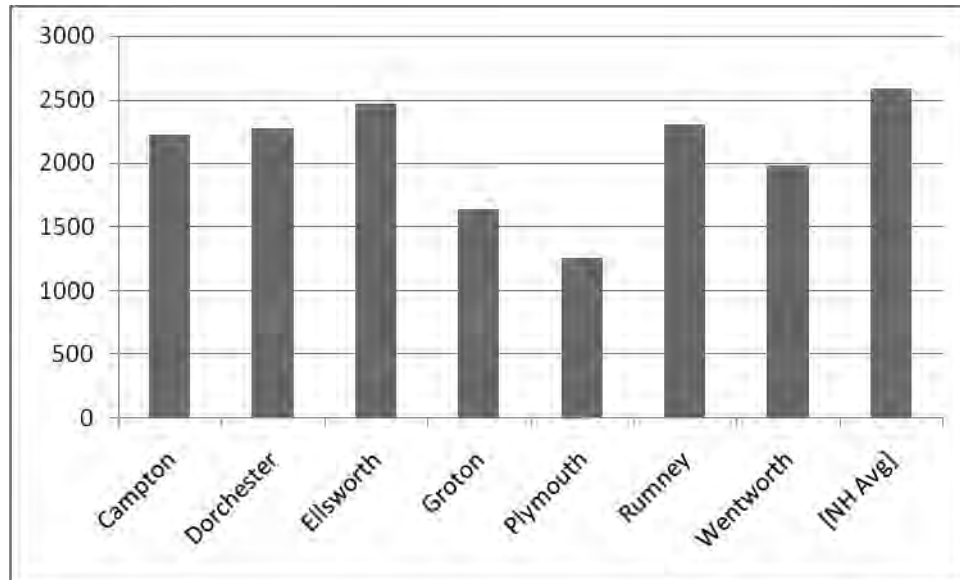
Equalized assessed valuation per capita is helpful in understanding how much property in town there is to share the tax burden. Comparing this information with neighboring towns can also help provide insight into future development pressure. As shown below, Rumney's figure of \$119,186, while substantially lower than the statewide average, is the median for the area (NH Public Finance Consortium).

Total Equalized Assessed Valuation per Capita, 2009



The other side of the property tax burden equation is spending. The total property tax commitment per capita is shown below for Rumney and its neighbors for 2010. As shown Rumney's per capita spending of \$2,306 from property taxes, while slightly less than Ellsworth's and close to the statewide average, is higher than its other neighbors.

Total Property Tax Commitment per Capita



(Source: NH Public Finance Consortium)

3. LAND USE

Yesterday and Today

The Early Years

In the early 18th century the area today known as Rumney was occupied by bands of Eastern Woodland Indians who belonged to the Pemigewasset tribe of the Abenaki family. The first documented European explorers were Captain Thomas Baker and his party in 1712, on an expedition from Massachusetts, who followed the Asquamchumake River, now called the Baker, from its source to where it joins the Pemigewasset River in Plymouth.

In 1725 and 1752 the area was again visited by explorers. The 1752 expedition was comprised of four men: John and William Stark, Amos Eastman and David Stinson. These men traveled up the Baker River to hunt and explore the territory. They set up camp on a riverbank near what is now called Stinson Brook. While camped by the river, the explorers were ambushed by Indians. William Stark escaped; John Stark and Amos Eastman were captured and later ransomed; and the ill-fated David Stinson was killed. Stinson is commemorated by the mountain, lake and brook which today bear his name. John Stark lived on to become a well-known General in the Revolutionary War.

In 1761 a group of proprietors was granted a charter by Governor Benning Wentworth, named for Robert Marsham, second Baron Romney (pronounced "Rumney"), to settle and develop the area. They were given five years in which to live up to certain development and settlement requirements set out in the charter. They were unable to satisfy those requirements and, in 1767, a second charter was applied for and received. The new charter granted 42.4 square miles of land to sixty-five families, some of whose descendants still live here. The first road in Rumney, Province Road, was also built in 1767. It was part of a longer road that connected Haverhill, New Hampshire with the coastal capital of Portsmouth. It followed the north side of the Baker River in the same way as Quincy and Buffalo Roads do now.

Era of Growth

By 1800 Rumney had six hundred and twenty-five inhabitants. These early settlers farmed, and built homes and mills to meet their needs. From 1800-1860 blacksmiths, stone cutters and road builders were common occupations in Rumney. Farmers became loggers in the winter. Twenty-nine grist and lumber mills were built along brooks and streams. A number of wood-related industries grew up in town as a result of the logging business. These industries included a shingle mill, and ladder, hoe, fork, rake and crutch factories. Rumney was known as the "crutch capital of the world." There was also a tannery, glove, shoe, and carriage makers, and a smithy.

By 1850, roads, a stagecoach line and then a railroad had been put through the area. The railroad construction brought a temporary spike in population and increased demand for goods and services. In the 1920s Route 25 was part of the New England Interstate System connecting Portland, Maine with Montpelier, Vermont. The expanded transportation infrastructure brought more opportunities to import and export products as well as workers.

The boom of the logging/forest products industry in the 1800s brought with it deforestation, fires and sedimentation of the region's rivers. In the early 1900s the federal government began purchasing these lands back to form the White Mountain National Forest. Today, the White Mountain National Forest comprises 42% of the land area of Rumney. Reforestation and multiple use forest management plans have again made these lands an asset to the region, maintaining a forest products industry along with recreation and tourism.

The Villages

Stagecoaches, followed by the railroad in 1850-51 helped Rumney's land development pattern evolve into five villages. Each village had its own post office and school (or schools). Each of the villages has its own special history, charm and attractions. For over a hundred years, people have identified with these places and today some will tell you that they live in the Village, Quincy, West Rumney, the Depot or the primarily seasonal community of Stinson Lake.

Rumney Village has always been considered the "center" of town. The village contains many of the historically and architecturally significant homes and buildings in town. Located on the north side of the Baker River at the junction of Stinson Lake Road, Buffalo Road and Quincy Road, it once had the highest concentration of residential and public buildings, as well as numerous businesses utilizing the fast-flowing Stinson Brook as their source of power. By 1904 you would have seen the general store with post office, Grange hall, town hall, Baptist church, and Byron G. Merrill library,

all nearby the town common. Today, in addition to relatively dense residential development, you'll still find the town common, the Historical Society in what was once the town hall, the library and church, along with several small businesses providing



services to Rumney's residents and tourists. (There are no longer post offices in any of the villages as they were replaced by a single post office facility between Route 25 and School Street, just east of its intersection with Stinson Lake Road.) The Mary Baker Eddy Historic House is just north of the Village. The use of the nearby WMNF Rumney Rocks Climbing Area has been bringing an increasing number of visitors to the Village.

Once a major stagecoach and then railroad stop, *Rumney Depot* grew up on the south side of the Baker River, just south of Rumney Village. Most of the settlement in this area has been along Depot Street/School Street (the old Route 25). The railroad depot was located where the present fire station stands on Depot Street. At one time Herbert's corner (the corner of Main Street and Depot Street.) had 5 taverns and 1 hotel to accommodate the passengers and residents.

The Depot now functions as the town center relative to public services. The Fire Department, town offices, the Russell School and post office are now located in the Depot area as well as several businesses. The Highway Department garage and NH Department of Transportation facilities are also nearby. Residences here are mostly year-round single-family.



Quincy, located on the north side of the river not far from the Plymouth line, with a stretch of stately houses dating back to the late 1850s, is believed to be one of the oldest parts of town. It was a railroad center with a turntable and many sidetracks. Quincy was named after the Quincy family of Massachusetts whose home remains on Quincy Road near the RR crossing. Josiah Quincy was President of the Concord and Montreal Railroad. The abandoned rail bed in this part of town now serves as a power line right-of-way and snowmobile trail.

The land use today is primarily residential, with primarily single-family year-round homes and a few seasonal homes. Baker Athletic Field and the Quincy Bog Natural Area are also located in Quincy. Quincy Bog Natural Area has been set aside as a protected natural area with a self-guided trail and public programs. Several acres in this part of town have been brought back into active agricultural use. There are also two small housing subdivisions of recent origin.



West Rumney is rich in history as well. It initially was the location of a way-station on the Concord-Haverhill Stagecoach line, and later the Swainboro Depot for the Concord and Montreal Railroad (later the Boston, Concord & Montreal, then the Boston & Maine). During the era of the stagecoach, West Rumney was known as Morseville after the coach line operator Robert Morse. Services relating to travel sprang up – hotels, taverns, and a smithery. A lumber depot and a feldspar and mica mill were located here. Another feldspar mill was situated on Halls Brook Road. For some time this village was considered the business center of town. Today, much of West Rumney is bisected by NH Route 25. Land use is primarily residential, along with several services and businesses including a Grange hall, church, fire station, the Town's Transfer Station and two sawmills.



Stinson Lake, four miles north of Rumney Village, surrounded by mountains, is one of the town's most valuable and beautiful recreational areas. A growing number of full-time residents, along with a large number of part-time residents and tourists, use the picturesque lake and its environs year-round. In addition to the lake itself with its public boat launch, there is hunting, fishing, hiking and an extensive snowmobile system nearby. In addition to single family residences on primarily small lots, there is also a condominium development, several small businesses, and a small, nonprofit residential and day school for students with certain learning or behavioral issues.



A sixth area of town – not one of the original five villages - has grown up along the eastern end of NH Route 25, almost as an extension of *West Plymouth*. It never had its own post office, but because of its highway location and proximity to Plymouth, it has the greatest mix of residential and commercial uses in town.

NH Route 25 Corridor

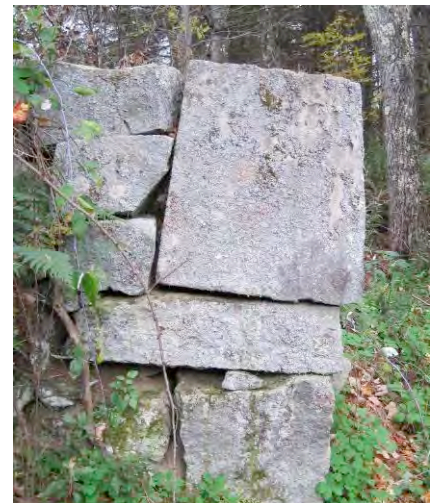
Route 25 has always been a significant link between Rumney and the rest of the state. The initial travel corridor following the east-west course of the Baker River through town was initially a stagecoach route, followed by the railroad. Each upgrade to this travel corridor, continuing through the designation of NH Route 25 as part of the New England Interstate Highway system in the 1920s, and the more recent major reconstruction of the road by the state in 1960s, enhanced its attractiveness for commerce and tourist businesses. Some of the larger establishments are the Rumney Bible Conference, a diner, two pottery businesses, and the well-known Polar Caves. Resource-based industries are also still active



here including a sawmill, lumberyard, chip plant, gravel pit, and nursery. The Baker River floodplains throughout the corridor provide a rich agricultural resource for the community as well. In addition, the fields and winding river along NH Route 25 provide scenic views for residents and visitors against the backdrop of rugged hillsides.

The Rural Areas

Low density year-round and seasonal residential development is scattered throughout town between the village areas. Along with it are home businesses, small shops and tourist businesses. Everywhere through town is the evidence of a past linked to the abundant water power and resources of the earth. Mill sites and old mines are common. Throughout town as if part of its fabric are walls, fences and forgotten stock piles of cut granite.



Future Land Use

Rumney is well positioned to build on its rich history, natural resources, good transportation access and proximity to Plymouth's services and amenities, as both an economic driver and as an incentive to property owners to invest in the preservation and restoration of the features that make the town special. Current trends that could attract investment in the features of the community valued by residents and visitors include:

- Growing interest in local foods
- Heritage tourism
- Increasing number of people who desire to live in a friendly walkable village in close proximity to varied outdoor recreation opportunities
- Growing awareness that New Hampshire's working landscape and clean water are critical foundations of the state's economic base



The next step will require a community-wide conversation involving divergent perspectives to determine the appropriate balance of land use regulations vs. other approaches to implement the land use policies and recommendations outlined below.

NH Route 25 Corridor

NH Route 25 is an asset to the town both to provide access between the town and other areas for residents and for visitors, and to provide a location for businesses which rely on through-traffic for customers, as well as those businesses that are high traffic generators. The strength of the corridor as an economic development asset for the community is in its diversity. The "charm" of rural New Hampshire for many is in the contrast between scenic views, the working landscape, diverse residential development, and a mix of business types. In addition, prime agricultural soils associated with the Baker River floodplain provide the potential to support the growing interest in local foods as an economic driver.



To ensure that one value does not lead to the decline of another, for example, the development of fast food chains or box stores making the town unattractive to visitors, or high traffic generators interfering with through-traffic, some development guidelines will be needed. These will include:

- Access management to ensure that local traffic and traffic in and out of roadside businesses does not interfere with the flow and safety of through-traffic. In addition to

local guidelines and input to developer plans and NHDOT driveway permit decisions, the town should explore the possibility of an access management memorandum of understanding with NHDOT to ensure that decisions are made jointly.

- Site plan review to ensure that business development that requires access to major transportation networks does not occur in a manner that will detract from the visitor experience.

Existing Village Areas

Whenever possible, those seeking to locate a home or business in Rumney should be encouraged to explore the rehabilitation and reuse of existing buildings in the village areas. New construction within or adjacent to the village areas is also desirable if in keeping with the character of the neighborhood. This will ensure they remain vibrant centers and will help maintain property values. The walkable, friendly nature of villages is increasingly sought after by both young people and recent retirees. Many people who are making their homes in New Hampshire now are seeking easy access to a wide range of recreation opportunities as well as to the types of services available in nearby Plymouth. Business development in Rumney's village areas should be limited to that which won't detract from residential life.

Stinson Lake

Quite a bit of land relatively free of development constraints nearby Stinson Lake was identified in the town's natural resource inventory conducted by the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests for the Conservation Commission. This area has the potential for additional low density recreational development or even a larger resort-type development if properly planned. In the area of the Lake, this means:

- Siting and design to blend with the quiet rural lake camps adjacent to the National Forest.
- Stormwater best management practices to ensure that the Lake remains a high quality asset.

Rural Areas

Both the "rural Northern New England" charm and the livelihood of many depend on the scattering of home businesses, tourist businesses, cottage industries and trades throughout the rural areas of town. This land use pattern should continue, with some guidelines to ensure that the property values and quality of life of neighboring landowners are protected. Some performance standards should be considered for:

- Traffic generation
- Noise
- Hours of operation involving noise or traffic
- Lighting

High density residential development and businesses that generate high traffic volumes should not be encouraged in the rural areas of town as they will detract from the quality of life for existing residents and cost the taxpayer in increased services.

At some point in the future residents may want to consider whether zoning is desired to establish a density of development appropriate for maintaining the property values – monetary and nonmonetary – of the rural areas.

Throughout Town

The resource-based industries that support the working landscape should be encouraged throughout town. These include agriculture, forest products, and properly managed resource extraction. Continued growth of heritage tourism and interest in local foods should help to support the agricultural economy, ensuring that agricultural land will continue to be enjoyed by residents.

Development on parcels involving prime agricultural soils or other open fields providing important scenic views should be located in a manner to minimize the reduction in these public values.

Development involving the construction of dwellings and permanent structures in the floodplain, regardless of use, should be discouraged. This includes riverbank areas with a high potential for rapidly occurring erosion during heavy rain events, including, but not limited to hurricanes that



historically extend to northern New England. Such activity poses a danger to the residents and emergency personnel as well as a substantial cost to taxpayers. The likelihood also exists for structure debris and contaminants to be carried downstream, thus creating possible hazards to persons and the environment.

In most instances development on slopes over about 25% is not appropriate as it will lead to rapid stormwater runoff causing erosion and sedimentation of downstream surface waters.

Development on more moderate slopes, between about 15% and 25%, can often be sited and designed to minimize these impacts.

Businesses that are suitable almost anywhere in town include village stores, trades, campgrounds, camps, small to moderate sized lodging, sit down restaurants, antique or book shops, crafts, cottage industries, and most offices and services.

Potential Growth Area

Development constraints such as floodplains and steep slopes were mapped as part of the town's natural resource inventory conducted by the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests for the Conservation Commission. Some lands in the West Rumney area were identified as being relatively free of development constraints and of high value natural resources such as aquifers. This is one area where industry could be encouraged to bring more livable wage employment into town. West Rumney businesses also have easy access to both NH 25 and NH 118. Growth could occur in this area with little impact on residential areas.

An area which has seen use as a small industry property is located on the east side of Stinson Lake Road approximately 1½ miles from the intersection of NH Route 25. Historically, saw/lumber mills have occupied the space, but it is currently divided into a number of smaller pieces utilized by smaller businesses. Areas to the west of the area are residential in nature and slope constraints further limit development in that direction. The old mill location is adjacent to Stinson Brook and is, therefore, restrained by environmental regulations and aesthetic concerns. Even if land across the brook to the east were accessible, steep slopes restrict development. The characteristics of the valley through which Stinson Brook flows are best described as a generally narrow bottom land and very steep and rocky terrain on each side. It appears that very little opportunity exists for even modest industry locations in this corridor.



(Photo Credit: Tom Grabiek)

4. NATURAL RESOURCES

Introduction

The natural resources of Rumney are integral with all aspects of our community – business and economics, public health and well-being, environmental quality and clean water, aesthetics and recreation. Recognition of the importance and conservation of natural resources is confirmed by the Rumney Community Profile (2007) and the Town Master Plan Survey (2008). Citizens expressed strong support for “protection of lakes/rivers/streams/ground water,” “protection of open space,” “protection of rural/scenic character,” and economic development that emphasizes resource-based businesses (agriculture/forest-related, recreation and tourism). Future land use and development in Rumney must consider, and avoid or minimize where possible, negative impacts on the natural resources.

The Rumney Conservation Commission is charged with “the proper utilization and protection of the natural resources and the protection of watershed resources of the Town of Rumney,” and

to “conduct research into local land and water resource areas” (RSA 39-A). Note that the Conservation Commission’s role is advisory only, to offer advice and express concerns to municipal and state agencies (i.e. Selectmen, Planning Board, NH Dept. of Environmental Services, etc.) and the citizens of Rumney. The Rumney Conservation Commission reviews all DES wetland permit applications as well. The town has been very supportive of its conservation commission since 1984. The Conservation Commission administers the Conservation Fund; since 1989, one-half of annual Current Use Land Use Change Taxes (if any) are added to this fund. To date, this has been used to survey and develop management plans for town forests (which have since been sold), pay for the Natural Resources Inventory, contribute to stewardship monitoring funds for conservation easements, support the town’s acquisition of the Jim Darling Natural Area, and support resource conservation education and outreach in town.

To ensure that Rumney’s natural resources continue to enrich the citizens and the community today and in the future, a commitment by the people and town officials to conserve them is required. A balance between development and protection, compliance with current environmental regulations, voluntary adoption of agriculture and forestry Best Management Practices, conservation easements, Current Use and other incentives, and perhaps carefully-crafted local regulations/ordinances with the support of the voters will be necessary to protect sensitive and vulnerable resources, and so sustain Rumney’s environmental quality and rural character.

Water Resources

Lakes and Ponds

Perhaps the most important asset of any community is fresh water. Public health, resident well-being, productive farms and forests, recreation, business and industry, wildlife and a sustainable environment are all dependent on water resources. The Town of Rumney is well-endowed with abundant, clean and accessible water supplies, both surface and subsurface. Annual rainfall and snowpack (about 45”/year) have proven adequate to recharge and sustain local water supplies at current usage patterns. Location of water features, including wetlands, is shown on the NRI Water Resources map. Surface waters cover 584 acres, about 2.1% of the town. Stinson Lake (350 acres) and Loon Lake (112 acres, about half in Plymouth) are most prominent. Two ponds, Eagle Pond and Quincy Bog, and numerous “moats,” oxbows and sloughs along the course of the Baker River comprise other surface waters in town.

The shores of Stinson Lake are well-developed with houses, cottages and cabins, many of seasonal utility and with substantial out-of-state ownership; an increasing number are being converted to year-round residences. The lake has a state-maintained public boating access at the southwest corner by the manmade dam (refurbished in 2002), which is scheduled for a much-needed upgrade including erosion/siltation control in 2012 via NH Fish and Game Department (NH F&G). This limited parking access contributes to modest though increasing use as a boating and fishing destination for residents and visitors. The lake is regularly stocked with trout via NH F&G, and is a popular ice-fishing site with local people. Stinson Lake is currently classified by NH Water Resources agencies as Class B Water, suitable for swimming, fishing

and other recreational uses, and with adequate treatment may be safe for (limited) drinking water.

Concerns and Recommendations: Maintaining the high water quality and aesthetic character of this high-elevation (1303') lake faces some challenges. Pressure for lakeside homes continues and is likely to increase should the economy and housing markets improve. Over the past decade, much of this activity is re-development, upgrades and/or replacement of existing structures and related amenities (access roads, septic systems, docks, views). Poorly-planned construction projects often result in erosion and sedimentation, pollutant release, alteration of natural drainage patterns and wooded buffers, and compromise of aesthetic values. A recent survey sponsored by North Country Resources Conservation & Development (RC&D), a USDA agency, revealed problems with non-point source pollution around the lake. Run-off within the watershed, much of it from private driveways, access roads, and roadside ditches, lead to siltation and sedimentation of watercourses, year-round and temporal, that directly affect water quality in the lake itself.

To protect the integrity of the watershed and water quality of Stinson Lake, enforcement of state environmental laws is essential, principally RSA 483-B, (1991), Shoreland Water Quality Protection Act (SWQPA, formerly Comprehensive Shoreland Protection Act (CSPA)). This law requires permits for building, septic systems, land clearing, tree cutting and soil amendments within 250' from the water's edge. Enforcement is the responsibility of the NH Department of Environmental Services (DES), though the Rumney Planning Board and Conservation Commission have made citizen awareness and compliance via outreach/education/technology transfer a priority over the last decade. Coordination/cooperation among the Planning Board, Conservation Commission and local lake-centered associations (i.e. Stinson Lake Association, Hawthorn Village Association) and other home-owner based groups with a direct interest in conserving Stinson Lake should be better coordinated. Efforts of NH F&G/DES/UNH volunteer programs to inform lake users and monitor the presence and impact of invasive aquatic species (milfoil), water quality and lake health parameters should be encouraged by the town.

Loon Lake is roughly bisected by the Rumney/Plymouth town line. The easterly (Plymouth) shoreline is well-developed with cottages, cabins and an increasing number of refurbished year-round residences. The west (Rumney) shore remains largely open and forested, thanks to long-term (generational) ownership patterns of larger parcels (vs. house lots/subdivisions) and conservation easements restricting development (i.e. Loon Lake Conservation Trust). Access is somewhat restricted due to private frontage, so public use is mostly limited to shoreland property owners, canoe/kayaking, and fishermen (warm-water species). Threats posed by development are noticeably less than Stinson Lake, though on-going conversion of seasonal structures presents risks. The same lake regulations apply, mainly RSA 483-B. The Town of Plymouth has more restrictive ordinances in place (zoning environmental protections) than Rumney.

Concerns and Recommendations are similar to those on Stinson Lake, perhaps best coordinated with the Plymouth Conservation Commission to ensure water quality and

conservation of lakeshore environments. Monitoring, compliance with and enforcement of SWQPA is necessary.

Baker River

The Baker River is the most significant water resource in Rumney. The Baker's source is Mount Moosilauke in Warren and it courses southeasterly 36 miles through Warren, Wentworth, Rumney and into Plymouth where it joins the Pemigewasset River. The watershed covers over 135,000 acres, much of it within the White Mountain National Forest (WMNF). It is rated Class B water by NH Water Resources agencies, suitable for swimming, boating, fish consumption and recreational pursuits. The river is integral to community life; swimming, raft/canoe/kayak use, fishing (stocked annually by NH F&G), and scenic beauty are enjoyed by many residents, and visitors as well.

Access to the river is primarily across private land and/or adjacent to the two major steel bridges along Sand Hill Road and Main Street. The NH State Rest Area on NH Route 25 has been recently closed by NHDOT (2011), limiting a popular put-in for canoes/kayaks. The town's Jim Darling Natural Area provides public, though limited, access in West Rumney.

The Baker River is prone to regular and often drastic flooding. About 1,265 acres of land along the Baker – almost 5% of all land in Rumney – fall within the 100-year floodzone, i.e. a 1% probability that they will be inundated annually. Much of the riverbank is subject to serious and ongoing erosion due to the force of floodwaters and the sandy, loose sedimentary soils along the river valley. The Baker River Watershed Association Plan (BRWA, 2003) details highly erodible sections along the river, with (limited) strategies and recommendations for erosion and control and mitigation, and protection of riparian areas (over 3,500 acres in town).

The Baker River corridor contains the highest concentration of natural resource features and values in the Town of Rumney. These include prime, productive farm and forest soils, floodplain forests, wetlands, hydric soils, wildlife habitat, biodiversity, scenic beauty and recreational utility. The NRI Co-occurrence map and related data from RNRI describe and rate the significance of this riparian zone.

Concerns: As development spreads inevitably westward from Plymouth up the Baker River Corridor, parallel to NH Route 25, the pressures on and risks to this resource-rich area are sure to increase. Flooding is a primary concern affecting water quality and stability of the main channel of the Baker. Septic systems are often overwhelmed, road salt and highway debris reach the river via runoff, often via tributaries. Exposed soils from construction projects, roads/driveways and roadside ditches contribute to high sediment loads. Runoff from agricultural land, residences and businesses within the floodplain poses risks and releases unknown pollutants when flooded.

Recommendations: Compliance with Shoreland Water Quality Protection Act (RSA 483-B) is necessary to protect the water quality of the Baker River. As required enforcement by NH DES is sometimes slow, the town should increase efforts to inform property owners along the river

about the constraints and rules in place and encourage Best Management Practices (BMP), proper planning, and protection vs. mitigation and remediation of problems. The Planning Board and Conservation Commission should collaborate and support/lead educational efforts, river clean-up days, and improved access to print/online information and expertise. Long-term protection via conservation easements on some private land along the river (and other watersheds in town) is in place, and there is interest by other owners to consider this option. The Conservation Commission should continue to work with willing landowners, local/regional land trusts, and interested state agencies to encourage and facilitate voluntary easements. The town should continue to support BRWA monitoring and testing for bacteria (3 sites, 3x/year) and other indicators of water quality.

Streams and Brooks

There are at least seventeen named year-round streams and brooks in Rumney and numerous other perennial and temporal water courses. Three feed Stinson Lake, two enter Loon Lake, and three drain into Campton Bog; the others are all direct tributaries to the Baker River. The nature and flow of the streams is highly variable, depending on order and gradient.

Stinson Brook drains Stinson Lake and is itself fed by several brooks. It is rocky with a steep gradient, flowing southerly and reaching the Baker River just east of Rumney Village. Clean cold water supports native brook trout, and there is a popular swimming hole just north of the village, accessed across private land. The length of the brook is largely forested, with a number of houses and buildings along Stinson Lake Road, which parallels the brook. Remnants of historic small manufacturing stoneworks and dams are common within or adjacent to the brook.

Halls Brook is another steep and rocky stream flowing northerly until its confluence with the Baker. It also holds native trout, with wooded banks and few streamside residences/buildings. Halls Brook is prone to heavy and damaging flooding. Bank stabilization (riprap) and repairs to steep, winding Halls Brook Road have been necessary following such events.

Concerns and Recommendations: As all the streams and brooks lead to the lakes, ponds or the Baker River, their own cleanliness and health directly affect those larger water bodies. Most streams are not prominent or in the public eye so problems often go undetected. Many water courses are fed by roadside ditches and culverts and are subject to salinization and/or sedimentation. In Rumney, only the Baker River, Loon Lake and Stinson Lake are subject to the Shoreland Water Quality Protection Act; however other state laws administered by NHDES Wetlands Bureau and NH Division of Forests & Lands provide some protection for water quality. Compliance with existing state laws should provide basic protection of water quality and streamside resources. Forestry and Agricultural BMPs address water crossings, natural buffer zones, run-off prevention, streamside cutting, and dredge-and-fill standards through permits and required standards. The Rumney Planning Board and Conservation Commission should make efforts to provide this information to abutting landowners and review any projects that may impact these waters.

Wetlands

Rumney has more than 700 acres of “obvious” wetlands – those with standing water (such as a river oxbow), saturated soils and/or emergent vegetation through most of the year. Most surface waters have associated wetlands, and wetland complexes are found on upland sites, but the concentration of wetlands in the Baker River Corridor is significant (reference NRI Water Resources map). These areas are important for flood control, ground water recharge and wildlife habitat, particularly for native amphibians, reptiles and waterfowl. Wetlands often support unique plant communities as well as high aesthetic values. Wetlands are under the jurisdiction of NH DES Wetlands Bureau, and state permits/notification is required for human activities in order to minimize impacts: dredge and fill, crossings, alteration of terrain, timber harvesting, etc. The Rumney Conservation Commission reviews and comments on most wetland permits and strives to inform the citizenry of the functions and importance of wetlands and BMPs to protect them.

Concerns and Recommendations: Some wetlands are not obvious, though even when evident can present constraints for some land uses i.e. access, agriculture, forestry. This can lead to negative impacts through dredge or fill, obstruction of natural drainage, dumping, soil compaction, siltation, and loss of important habitat. The town should improve efforts to inform landowners of existing regulations, BMPs, and permit requirements. Some points of contact that present opportunities include Intent-to-Cut (RSA 79) requests, Current Use (RSA 79-A) filings/review, and subdivision reviews.

Groundwater and Aquifers

Rumney residents and businesses all rely on on-site groundwater for drinking water; there is no town water (or town sewer) infrastructure or supply. Private wells are mostly dug, or drilled (Artesian); some are spring fed. Active public drinking water wells are located at Russell Elementary School (RES), Hunter School, Hawthorne Village Association, West Rumney Rest Area, town offices, Stinson Mountain Grill, and the former Hawkensen Enterprises property. These wells have mandatory sanitary radii and a designated wellhead protection area. Gravel aquifers underlie about 4,000 acres, most adjacent to the Baker River or along major tributaries. High-yield aquifers are identified on the NRI Water Resources map, including a 1,300 acre Potentially Favorable Gravel Well Area (yields > 1,000 ft³/day). The latter area has the capacity to provide future municipal wells, based on water quantity and quality, and relatively low potential for groundwater contamination at the present time (pollution sources include roads, surface water, hazardous waste storage, underground tanks, etc.). The Natural Resources Inventory identifies existing or potential contamination sources within the aquifer according to NH DES database and/or registration requirements. There are not any current incidents or knowledge of contamination in Rumney, and compliance with existing regulations and standards has proven adequate to date.

Concerns and Recommendations: Though it seems unlikely that Rumney will develop town water supplies in the near future, it is important for public and environmental health to protect existing resources. The Route 25 corridor runs the length of the Baker Valley, and increasing

traffic – including trucks with petroleum products and other hazardous wastes – pose potential, if necessary risks. Heavy road salt use is an ongoing concern. The public wells along this corridor are also vulnerable to pollution; Russell School Wellhead Protection Area already has a filling station and petroleum storage areas within it. As commercial development is likely to increase in the future, more pressures and risks will be placed on these water sources; Rumney has no zoning and thus very limited control of development and protection of its aquifers or groundwater in general.

The town should consider ways to better protect these resources, perhaps by restricting business or industry utilizing potential hazardous materials, or by requiring wider buffers around existing or proposed public wells than now exist.

Soils

The soils of Rumney, like most of the state, are a complex admixture of materials influenced by bedrock geology (parent material), glaciation, climate, topography (relief) and biological forces (including human activities). The variation in soil types is notable: thin to deep, excessively-to-very-poorly-drained, bouldery/stony to fine and stone-free, rich in organics to bereft. Soil characteristics influence, if not dictate, human use. It is important for the town and residents to understand their suitability and their constraints for residential use, infrastructure, agriculture and forestry purposes, and recreational utility.

Prime agricultural soils are those soils considered by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to be the most productive and most responsive to intensive management practices with the fewest limitations. There are only about 1,000 acres of prime/important agricultural soils in Rumney. The retention and expansion of local agriculture is highly favored by residents (Community Profile, Master Plan Survey); siting such enterprises on the best-suited soils is likely to be the most profitable, sustainable and environmentally-sound land use, versus development. Most locations of prime agricultural soils lie in the Baker River Valley, as shown on the NRI Farm and Forest Resources map. Important forest soils are similarly described in the Grafton County Soil Survey manual and are also shown on the NRI maps. There are nearly 9,000 acres of productive forest soils in Rumney. Note that prime agricultural soils are all included as important forest soils; indeed, much of the town's historic farmland has reverted to forest over the last 100+ years, as with the rest of New England. Descriptions of forest soils indicate successional trends, tree species suitability and productivity/yield data. As with crops on prime soils, trees (crops) grow best on fertile soils with few limitations for management (i.e. slope, wetness, drought, etc.) and are most likely to be profitable and sustainable. A notable exception is sandy, very well-drained soils – outwash deposits found in the Baker Valley, for instance. These somewhat sterile soils are ideal for growing and regenerating Eastern white pine, New Hampshire's most valuable and productive timber tree. Most existing stands of pine today are on former farmland, including important and prime agricultural soils.

The outwash soils, along with deep kames and eskers also yield important materials – sand and gravel – for construction and building materials, road maintenance and winter sanding. There

are presently two commercial gravel operations in Rumney, and many old pits and small, personal-use excavations. The State has regulatory oversight of sand and gravel pit operations, including reclamation of the land, and the town Planning Board monitors gravel operations annually to ensure compliance.

Concerns and Recommendations: Soils information is not often considered in development projects and land use decisions. While steep slopes (>25%) and surface wetness are obvious, other limitations – drainage, stability, inherent fertility, and suitability for certain uses/management - are too easily overlooked. This can lead to expensive modifications and after-the-fact remedial measures. As prime agricultural land and forestry soils are often found on level ground (valley floors) and gentle slopes, and adjacent to public roads, they are prone to intensive development, effectively removing them from the productive resource base. As these areas are developed – mostly for single-family residences in Rumney – access to “back-land” agricultural and forestry areas becomes difficult and/or compromised, and this impacts economic profitability of those desirable land uses.

Science-based information regarding soils is readily available and at no cost. NRCS and GCCD have expertise in soils – suitability, productivity, erosion control – and are available for consultation and advice in the local area. The Town, and landowners, developers, and surveyors should take more advantage of soils data and incorporate same into planning, subdivision review, and land use practices. The Planning Board and Conservation Commission should lead efforts to encourage and incorporate soil-based land use reviews to improve decision making.

Farms and Agriculture

Though the heyday of sheep, dairy and chicken farms passed Rumney long ago, agriculture on a smaller, more diverse scale remains an important and highly-valued land use in town. About 2,000 acres, over 5% of the land base, supports active farm enterprises, including hay/forage production, pasturage for beef and sheep/goats, corn silage, small fruit production, vegetable/row crop farms, maple products, and Christmas tree plantations. The NRI Farm & Forest Resources map shows existing agricultural land use in Rumney.

There is an increase in backyard gardens, orchards, chicken flocks and other small-scale/hobby farming over the past decade, many of them organic, mirroring an emerging trend across the state and New England. Many of these small, home-based business products are sold roadside or through local farmers markets (Local Foods Plymouth, D Acres in Dorchester, and others). These “Grow Local, Buy Local” efforts address consumer concerns about costly foods from far away, factory farming, food safety problems and global imports – and the growing awareness of affordable, safe and nutritious options that support local farms, communities and environmentally friendly practices, and maintain open space and our rural character.

As most farm operations are marginally profitable at best, the most important incentive to maintaining and increasing agricultural lands is the Current Use Law (RSA 79-A). Enacted in 1973, Current Use prevents property taxes incompatible with open space uses; farms, forests,

wetlands and unproductive lands enrolled are assessed according to their income-producing capacity in their current use, vs. potential development value. About 920 acres of farmland in Rumney – most in parcels exceeding 10 acres – are in Current Use. There are other areas of abandoned agricultural land, much of it along the Baker River, on productive soils and in Current Use, which could be reclaimed via brush cutting/tilling to expand forage/food/horticultural use in town.

Concerns and Recommendations: Production agriculture on a large scale is unlikely to be a dominant land use in the foreseeable future, but small-scale farm operations can be viable and contribute much to the rural character of Rumney and a measure of self-subsistence and supplemental income for our residents.

Further intensive residential development on existing agricultural lands and prime/important ag soils should be discouraged, perhaps via soils-based land use regulations and long-term protection efforts in the Baker River corridor and low uplands. Citizen awareness of local production and increased patronage of local farm goods is necessary and is proving to be successful. The Rumney Conservation Commission should increase citizen awareness and outreach to encourage continued and expanded agricultural enterprises.

Forest Resources

Forests cover over 80% of all land in Rumney. About 12,000 acres are owned by US Forest Service – White Mountain National forest (WMNF). The forest is very diverse in species composition. Prominent forest types include Northern Hardwoods – beech, birches and maples, Spruce-Fir, White Pine - Red Oak, Aspen-Birch, and Hemlock-Hardwood. Land use history, topography, climate, soils, forest management practices, and natural succession have determined the distribution, age and size classes, productivity and health of our most abundant natural resource. The NRI Aerial Photography and Farm & Forest Resource maps show how forests dominate our local landscape.

The most recent WMNF plan (2003) describes the forest resources, management goals and planned activity. In Rumney, most of the federal land is categorized as a General Forest Management Area, featuring timber management with emphasis on visual quality, wildlife habitat, and developed recreation. Most of WMNF west of Stinson Lake Road is designated as “Semi-Primitive Recreation,” emphasizing non-motorized recreation opportunities, and motorized trail use in winter only. This area includes the Rumney Rocks climbing area with two parking lots and Rattlesnake Mountain area trails. Much of the WMNF land is steep with spectacular rocky outcrops visible on the Rattlesnake Mountains (elevations 2160’ and 1894’) and Stinson Mountain (2890’). Willoughby Mountain (2340’), Eagle Cliff (1960’), and Bald Ledge (1740’) are prominent as well. Despite the steep and rocky terrain, good forest soils produce high quality hardwood timber. The most recent commercial logging was off East Rumney Road in the northeast corner of town, about three-to-five years ago. There are a couple of sugarbush leases in place where local producers pay tap fees. With timber products, recreational use, large unfragmented habitat – most of it roadless – scenic views, brilliant fall foliage and permanently protected open space, the WMNF is a most valuable asset to Rumney. It also

provides annual payment-in-lieu-of-taxes (PILT) funds to the town, averaging over \$28,000 the last few years. A town forest, the Avery lot, was sold to the US Forest Service a few years ago and other private tracts (within the proclamation boundary) may be added to WMNF in the future (willing seller only).

Other than the 25+/- acre Jim Darling lot along the Baker River, acquired by the town (with proceeds from the Avery lot sale), all other forest land in Rumney is privately owned. Parcels range from small woodlots of 10+/- acres to some large tracts of >500 acres, with an average of about 40 acres. As private owners are a diverse group with different objectives, the conditions and uses of these forests are highly variable. Common uses are timber/cordwood production, active recreation, wildlife habitat viewing and hunting, quiet and privacy, investment, scenic beauty and aesthetic appreciation. Nearly 9,500 acres are enrolled in Current Use – Forestland categories: 3,650 acres in Hardwood, 1,700+ acres in White Pine, and over 3,000 acres in other forest types. About one third of this Current Use land is categorized as Forestland with Documented Stewardship with comprehensive management plans. About 1500 acres are certified NH Tree Farms with written plans and evidence of sound sustainable management, including commercial timber harvesting. Over 70% of private forestland in Current Use is open to the public for recreation - hunting, fishing, skiing/snowshoeing, hiking, and nature observation. Snowmobile corridors/trails are common through private lands as well.

The timber industry is still a big economic engine and source of employment in New Hampshire, and both federal and private lands in Rumney contribute to the regional, working forest-based economy. Wood products – veneer, sawlogs, tie and pallet logs, pulpwood, cordwood and woodchips – are harvested from Rumney forests annually, as they have been for over 200 years; forests are truly renewable. There are today two large sawmills in town, Cersosimo Lumber and King Forest Industries, and many within trucking distance, including nearby wood-fired biomass plants. These firms provide good, competitive markets for local timber products, are major employers, and are an important part of the tax base of small rural communities, including Rumney. The larger mills are primarily wholesalers, but there are still a few smaller mills providing retail lumber locally. Besides direct employment, lumber mills have notable ancillary benefits; loggers, wood product truckers and foresters, many that reside in Rumney, have hard but steady work.

Forestland provides habitat for all our native wildlife, big and small. Large blocks of contiguous forest are necessary for wide-ranging wildlife such as bear, moose and bobcat. A mixture of forest types and tree size/age-classes is necessary to sustain deer and many species of songbirds, resident and migratory. Rumney is fortunate to have this forest land base, intermingled with open fields and wetlands that supports healthy and diverse wildlife throughout town.

The town benefits directly from timber harvesting on private lands, as a tax is assessed on the value of wood cut. The Forest Conservation Act (RSA 79, 1949) removed the burdensome annual property tax on standing timber and replaced it with a yield tax levy of 10% of the assessed value of wood commercially harvested and sold. This discouraged the practice of liquidating timber on woodlots to avoid the increasing annual taxes as wood grew and markets

improved. This state law is administered by towns, and all revenues go directly to the town where the timber is grown and harvested, much like the Current Use Law. There are exemptions for amounts of wood cut for owner/personal use. Rumney realizes variable yield tax revenues annually, but averages a couple of thousand dollars per year.

Forests are also the most important natural resource in keeping Rumney's water and air clean. They serve as giant filters, sponges, scrubbers and carbon sinks. Forests hold soil in place, shade and cool the ground and surface waters, mitigate flooding and make New England special in many other ways. They are truly renewable – the recovery of the cutover landscape of 100 – 150 years past proves it.

Concerns and Recommendations: The sheer size of this forest land base in Rumney and its inherent resilience will continue to play a positive role in Rumney's future. Natural forces – insects and disease, major storms, and climate change – will present challenges to owners and managers, forest health and vitality. The forestry industry has a long history of cyclical booms and busts, closely tied to the regional housing and paper industries; the current national recession has led to some area mill closings and further consolidation is likely. The disconnect between the public-at-large, all consumers of wood products, and the necessary land base, management and manufacturing facilities to provide those products is exerting huge economic pressures on local and regional markets, mills and landowners. Management practices – particularly logging – are often viewed negatively, despite voluminous research on the positive benefits and effects on forest health, wildlife habitat, long-term sustainability, outdoor recreation and local economic stability.

The Current Use program is critically important to maintain the forest land base and thus the rural character of Rumney. Current Use is not a tax break, but rather fair assessment of land based on its capacity to produce revenue in its current, open space use. The town must continue to support and fairly administer this law, and landowners enrolled must continue to fulfill their commitment to comply with the intent and rules of Current Use.

Applied forestry can increase and enhance forest values, including economic growth and timber yields, forest health, wildlife habitat, regeneration and aesthetics. There are many examples of well-managed woodlots in town; many are Tree Farms. There are also many woodlots that have been poorly logged or neglected, often leading to low financial value/returns and public disapproval of timber harvesting.

Wildlife

Rumney is fortunate to have all of the natural resource features, on a large scale, that support a diversity and relative abundance of nearly all wildlife native to New Hampshire. Large unbroken blocks of forestland - boreal spruce-fir, northern hardwoods, oak-pine-hemlock and early successional aspen-birch - provide space, cover, feeding and breeding areas. Oak and beech trees provide nutritious hard mast. Surface waters and wetland complexes provide key habitat for water-dependent wildlife. Clean, cold waters support wild and stocked fish and the insects and vertebrate foods they require to survive and thrive. Agricultural lands and old fields are a

critical component for many species known to be in regional decline. Exposed ledges and talus slopes provide refuge and nesting/denning sites for elusive wildlife such as bobcats, ravens, and peregrine falcons. Transition areas between these key habitats provide edge habitat for both predators and prey. South-facing slopes provide winter warmth for many creatures, notably deer. Dense stands of hemlock and mixed softwoods provide critically important winter cover. Riparian zones and floodplains support a rich array of native trees, shrubs and plants with persistent berries and fruits – soft mast. In sum, all the components of good wildlife habitat – space, cover, food and water – occur in abundance and are well-integrated within the town.

Many of our woodlands, including areas in the WMNF, integrate wildlife habitat improvement/enhancement with timber production, often as a primary objective. Habitat assessment and management continues to be a primary topic of educational outreach and professional improvement efforts for licensed foresters and certified timber harvesters in New Hampshire. Many landowner education programs likewise emphasize habitat management. Federal and state programs encourage habitat management on private woodlands via incentive programs (NRCS, NH F&G), as do some non-profit NGOs (Wildlife Management Institute). These efforts do have a positive impact on habitat on (select) wildlife species in the region, and more landowners should take advantage of the many opportunities and local/state expertise available. UNH Cooperative Extension and NH F&G are valuable contacts for wildlife information and related programs.

Rumney NRI maps and data include significant wildlife habitat features, and a co-occurrence rating where these features overlap, i.e. wetlands/riparian zones, southern slopes, large blocks, protected and unfragmented lands, etc. While any land provides some habitat components, this ranking focuses on the richest, most complex areas. The NH Wildlife Action Plan (WAP) utilizes such information in its planning, outreach, management and protection initiatives. WAP also provides good, practical guidance for towns to review and modify development projects to better protect wildlife habitats.

Wildlife is a highly valued asset of any community, whether one is a hunter, fisherman, trapper, or a bird watcher, tracker, photographer. It can be assumed that diverse and abundant wildlife indicates a healthy environment.

Concerns and Recommendations: Some elements of good habitat are in a long steady decline across the region, including Rumney. With a landscape dominated by forests, agricultural lands – particularly pasture and hayland – are relatively scarce and are concentrated in the valleys and around the few remaining dairy farms. Documented declines in wildlife such as New England cottontail rabbits, Northern harriers and a number of species of songbirds that rely on grasslands and brushy areas is tied to the dwindling of such habitats. Farming is a tough way to make a living in New England – always has been – and unless it is profitable will not continue to provide open land and the important habitat thereon. Current Use, farm diversification and efficiency and expanded markets are necessary components to maintain such land use. Willingness of landowners to lease their open lands (at affordable prices, based on yields) is also important locally. The growth of small agricultural enterprises in Rumney and a

willingness/commitment to support such business by “buying local” has some potential to maintain and perhaps increase open farm lands.

Another critical habitat showing a long, steady decline is early successional forests. Nearly all woodland wildlife heavily utilize young forests, 1-10 +/- years of age, and some ruffed grouse, woodcock, many resident and migratory songbirds are dependent on these dense thickets for cover, breeding and feeding areas. There is a common misconception by the general public and many forest landowners that openings in the forest canopy should be avoided. This “selective cutting” does not create ideal or nearly enough early successional forests across the region, and the species mentioned and others continue to decline.

Sound, science-based forest management can apply silviculture that incorporates habitat management to benefit nearly all wildlife and some species that may disappear from the landscape without it. NH F&G, Cooperative Extension, NH Audubon and many other agencies and groups, including NH licensed foresters, have expertise and programs to help forest and farm owners to help wildlife, most often at low or no direct cost.

Another important parameter of habitat is connectivity, or secure travel corridors from one habitat to another. Many wildlife species, particularly large mammals and predators, need large home ranges to encompass their habitat needs and utilization. Cutting off connections and known travel corridors - whether by a road, development, change in land use, dam or poor culvert - limits their ability to roam as needed and often puts them at high risk.

The Rumney Planning Board should utilize the available data such as NRI and WAP in their review of subdivision/development proposals, and encourage projects to incorporate practical methods to minimize wildlife impacts, particularly near water, resource-rich areas, and existing travel corridors.

Natural Resource-Based Recreation

Rich and diverse natural resources support a host of outdoor recreational use on both public and private lands in Rumney, by residents and visitors. Summer pursuits center on surface waters – Stinson Lake, Loon Lake, the Baker River and its main tributaries. Swimming, canoeing, kayaking, power and sailboating (primarily on Stinson Lake), river rafting and fishing are common uses. Public access is somewhat limited; there is a public boat launch at Stinson Lake with limited parking. Many waterfront property owners allow crossing private land, particularly to the Baker River. All main water bodies are rated as “Class B” waters by NH Water Resources agencies, clean and safe for water-based recreation and fish consumption. The waters are clear and cool barring storm events and associated runoff; prolonged heat spells and drought leads to increases in bacteria levels (as documented annually by NH DES and BRWA).

Another popular warm-weather activity is hiking. There are many hiking trails in town, some used heavily and well-maintained. Stinson Mountain Trail (off Lower Doetown Road), Carr Mountain Trail (off Stinson Lake Road), and Rattlesnake Mountain Trail (off Buffalo Road) are on WMNF land and provide sweeping vistas from the mountain summits. Quincy Bog Natural Area and Quincy Pastures Forest (conserved land owned by Rumney Ecological Systems aka Pemi-Baker Land Trust) have well-marked interpretive trails highlighting natural feature and vegetation, some of it uncommon and unique. Both are open to the public year-round. In addition, the town's Jim Darling Natural Area off Route 25 has some trails through the floodplain forest and limited access to the Baker River in West Rumney.



Many other trails on WMNF and private lands are less distinct and less traveled; some are based on roads to old mine sites and logging roads. The old B&M railroad bed is largely open to foot traffic, along the Baker Valley. There are limited public trails for ATVs and bikes. Most public trails have been mapped via GPS and are shown on the NRI Historic and Cultural Resources Map.

Rumney Rocks Climbing Area, off Buffalo Road, is well known throughout the region by cliff and ice climbers, and WMNF maintained parking lots (with sanitary facilities) are overflowing on weekends, with many out-of-state license plates evident. This is the most obvious "designation" site for Rumney visitors. Rock-climbing appears to be an increasingly popular sport. Season passes or day-use fees are collected by WMNF and defray some maintenance costs of the parking lots and elaborate access trails completed in 2011. The adjacent cliff areas used as peregrine falcon aeries are off-limit to climbers and hikers. Another area of steep outcrops, ledges and large boulders (glacial erratics) along Quincy Road by the historic Town Pound is less used but popular.

Winter recreation, depending on snowfall, includes hiking, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, ice fishing on the two lakes, and snowmobiling. Snowmobiling is very popular on designated trails on WMNF and many private lands. Major use is on the state-wide trail corridor system along the Baker Valley and including the old railbed parallel to Rte. 25. Many of the trails are well-maintained, include stream crossings, and are groomed by area clubs, including a couple in Rumney. Unfortunately, illegal trespassing by OHV's is all too common on pastures and fields and trails, especially in the winter months. Educating the public to minimize such activity may help to avoid the loss of access to private land in the future.

There are several seasonal campgrounds along the Baker in Rumney, some with tent sites/platforms, some with RV hook-ups/pumping stations. Most are accessed by Route 25 or Quincy Road. Clientele use the river for wading, swimming and fishing.

Hunting in the fall is popular with residents and some visitors. Many of the camps/cabins common in remote areas of town are dedicated to this seasonal use. Deer, black bear, moose,

ducks and geese, partridge and woodcock are commonly sought, and Rumney does have the habitat needed to support these game and bird species. Many residents, young and old, embrace and enjoy hunting – a strong family tradition in Northern New England. Hunting (and fishing) is regulated by NH F&G; licenses are required, and license fees are a major funding mechanism for the agency, including their habitat and conservation programs. NH F&G also has the responsibility to enforce laws pertaining to snowmobile and off-road vehicle use (ATVs, dirt bikes) and search and rescue missions for lost/missing hikers and climbers.

Another popular resource-based outdoor recreation in Rumney is bird watching, both casual and organized. Endangered peregrine falcons nesting on Rattlesnake ledges are a big draw for birders. Quincy Bog is a rich site frequented regularly by both local and visiting birders. The annual Christmas Bird Count (sponsored by the Audubon Society) has a “count circle” which includes Rumney, and intrepid bird watchers have been afield for over thirty cold winters to gather bird data here. If backyard bird feeding is considered to be recreation, there are hundreds of residents who enjoy this, particularly through the long winters.

Concerns and Recommendations: Other than the WMNF, 42% of the town's land base, most of the resource-based recreation in town depends on the willingness of private landowners to allow it. Though Stinson Lake, Loon Lake and the Baker River are public water bodies owned by the state of NH, public access is limited (the boat ramp at Stinson Lake); all other access depends on private landowners adjacent to these waters. This has not proved a major constraint to recreational use historically, but there is some evidence that the long tradition of open/accessible private land is undergoing some stress and change. An increase in the posting of property is evident state-wide. New residents, many from urban/suburban areas in-state and out, often do not embrace public use. Many are non-hunters, annoyed by noisy recreational vehicles on their land, the dumping of trash, and afraid of potential liability claims by users/visitors on their property, despite effective state laws protecting landowners who allow recreation. These fears – real or perceived – will likely limit access and some public recreational opportunities in the future.

The environmental impacts of recreational development need to be considered and managed. For example, campgrounds/RV parks are required to have water supplies and septic systems permitted by the state, and along the Baker River in Rumney require a Shoreland Water Quality permit; however, neither the state nor the town have regulations for floodplains or hazard erosion areas. Inevitable flooding, most recently in the fall of 2011, inundated campgrounds and a local RV park, including septic/pumpout stations and semi-permanent campers/RVs. Future floodplain development should be discouraged and/or more closely regulated to protect these sensitive areas and water quality in Rumney.

Submission by Northam Parr, Rumney Conservation Commission

5. FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Introduction

Rumney residents have generally accepted receiving basic services for minimal costs, taking care of their own needs as much as possible. Increasing state and federal requirements, along with changing public expectations, especially related to the school, waste disposal and the safety related departments, are forcing an increase in services and tax dollars to fund these changes. This can be a challenge to many Rumney residents, especially the large percentage of residents with low or moderate incomes. At the direction of the voters, the Selectmen conscientiously strive to meet needs of the town for the lowest cost/best value to the taxpayer. This includes benefitting from the efficiencies of regional cooperation when possible, partnerships with nonprofits, grants, and from volunteer efforts when appropriate.

The town's existing facilities and services, and the needs relative to the future growth of the town are summarized below.

Transportation

Highways

In New Hampshire public highways are divided into both “functional classes and “legislative classes.” These classes determine funding and responsibility for maintenance. According to NHDOT, there are currently 7.531 miles of Class I highway, or primary state highway) in Rumney. This is NH Route 25, which can also be described as “a minor arterial.” NH Route 25 is also part of the River Heritage Trail state scenic byway, making some types of related improvements and facilities eligible for federal scenic byway funds. In 2010 the average annual daily traffic on NH Route 25 was 6,268 vehicles west of Polar Caves and 4,700 near the rest area (NHDOT and NCC). In Rumney there are also 11.623 miles of Class II highway, or secondary state highway. These are NH Route 118, also described as a “major collector,” and Main Street, Quincy Road, Stinson Lake Road, and Hall's Brook Road, which are also considered “minor collectors.” In 2010 the average annual daily traffic on NH Route 118 was 1,600 at the Groton town line, 1,500 on Main Street over the Baker River, 800 on Quincy Road over Stinson Brook, 680 on Stinson Lake Road south of Stone Hill Road and 300 on Stinson Lake Road east of Cross Road (NHDOT and NCC). Rumney also has 22.72 miles of locally maintained Class V roads, 0.351 miles of road maintained by the White Mountain National Forest, and 10.547 miles of private roads.



Ditch reshaping, building up sunken edges, cleaning out culverts, mowing the sides of the roads, grading, snowplowing, and sanding are annual projects done with diligence and expertise by the town's highway department. Other scheduled work includes repaving, replacing or adding

new guard rails, and repairing or adding new access roads to town properties like the Jim Darling Natural Area. The Road Committee continues to work with the Highway Department to plan and budget for bridge and road projects. The town recently began budgeting for design and engineering services to assist with planning and permitting projects, and increased the annual allocation to the Bridge Repair & Maintenance Capital Reserve Fund.

Class V town roads were evaluated for their suitability for handling additional traffic associated with growth. The following roads were identified as areas where growth should be kept to a minimum to the condition of the road:

East Rumney Road
Doe Town Road
Prospect Hill Road
Chaisson Road
Winsor Lane



In addition to highways maintained by the state, town or private owners, Rumney also has 0.835 miles of Class VI highway. Class VI highways are public ways which have been discontinued or have not been maintained by the town for year-round travel for five or more years. (RSA 229:5 VI and VII). State law (RSA 674:41) provides that no permit can be issued for building on a Class VI road or private road not approved by the Planning Board unless the Selectboard votes to issue permits on that section of road and the applicant has filed a waiver of the town's responsibility for maintenance and liability for damages with the Registry of Deeds. The law also provides for the Selectboard to provide the Planning Board with an opportunity for review and comment. To ensure that relevant issues are discussed and considered by the two boards ahead of time, and that all applications are evaluated against the same criteria, the Rumney Selectboard adopted a Class VI Highway Ordinance in 2003.

- Town officials should stay abreast of federal and state transportation program and funding sources, and advocate for Rumney's needs to NHDOT and the North Country Transportation Advisory Committee.
- The Selectboard, Highway Department and Road Committee should continue to regularly evaluate the maintenance needs of town roads, and budget to perform needed maintenance in a timely manner to ensure that deferred maintenance does not increase these costs.

- Significant growth should not be allowed on or accessed by town roads that have been identified as unsuitable for additional traffic until such time as the town is able to upgrade the roads.
- The Planning Board should ensure that private roads built for subdivisions are built to appropriate standards and have an entity and funding mechanism in place to perform ongoing maintenance.
- The Selectboard and Planning Board should work together on documenting the town's policy regarding building on a Class VI road.

Other Modes of Transportation

The closest airport to Rumney is the Plymouth Municipal Airport which has only a turf landing strip and no lighting or navigational aids. Airports commonly used by Rumney residents for long-distance travel are Manchester (1 1/4 hours) and Logan Airport in Boston (2 hours). Both are easily accessed via Interstate 93 in Plymouth.

Inter-city bus service is available in Plymouth via Concord Coachlines and Greyhound/Trailways. There is no local fixed route public transportation in Rumney. Two private taxi companies are the only public transportation currently available to the general population in Rumney. A network of human service, health care and volunteers meet some of the transportation needs of the nondriving population in the area. These include the Grafton County Senior Center and several state-wide groups serving specific client groups. In addition, North Country Rideshare helps residents get access to the state's free on-line carpool matching service.

North Country Council recently partnered with Transport Central to obtain a federal grant to perform a public transportation needs assessment for the towns in the Plymouth area. Nelson Nygaard, a consulting firm with expertise in public transportation, was hired to perform the needs assessment and lead a stakeholder steering committee in developing recommendations. The NH Route 25 corridor through Rumney was identified as being in the second highest category of need based on resident incomes, age and disabilities. One of the recommendations was to expand and better coordinate the rides provided by the various social service entities and volunteer drivers (Dial-A-Ride and mobility management). This is being pursued through the recently formed Grafton-Coos Regional Coordination Council, part of a statewide initiative. A regional bus service with a route from Plymouth through Rumney to Hanover is a longer term recommendation.

- Rumney leaders should advocate for residents' needs in regional transportation planning initiatives through such means as representation on the North Country Transportation Advisory Committee and input to the Grafton-Coos Regional Coordination Council.

Schools

Russell Elementary School

The Rumney School District is within the geographic boundaries of the town of Rumney, but it is a separate political subdivision of the State of New Hampshire. Funds for the School District are raised and appropriated by Rumney voters via the SB2 process. The Rumney School District maintains one school, Russell Elementary School, which serves students in grades K-8. The School is situated on 8.4 acres of land south of the Baker River on School Street. The site contains parking, a playground and athletic fields. The original school building was built in 1957. An addition consisting of a multi-purpose room and a classroom was completed in 1972. In 1993, construction was completed that included a gymnasium/auditorium which also serves as the location of town-wide meetings. A building/renovation project which added 5,000 square feet of new space and renovated 7,000 square feet in the existing structure was completed in 1999. This included a media center/computer lab, primary wing classrooms, a staff workroom, a cafeteria and kitchen, nurse's office, guidance office, Title I space and an administrative office. Beginning in 2007, space was found within Russell School to house a public kindergarten and the previous practice of contracting with the local private kindergarten was discontinued. This change took place in 2007 to meet state requirements. Miscellaneous renovations were made to accommodate this change.



Rumney's elementary school population peaked at 170 students in 1977-78 (grades 1 -8) and has since varied between 124 and 160 students (124 in 2009-2010) (grades K-8). Movement of families in and out of the district makes projections difficult; however, the building can accommodate 185 students and so is likely to continue to meet the District's needs for the near future.

Plymouth Regional High School

Rumney students in grades 9-12 attend the Plymouth Regional High School (PRHS). In 1989 the Pemi-Baker Regional School District cooperative was formed as part of School Administration Unit #48 and includes all seven communities of SAU #48. The Plymouth Regional High School enrolls students in grades 9-12 from the seven communities. Each

community budgets for their students to attend PRHS. PRHS is a comprehensive public high school offering students college preparatory and career and technical courses. The Regional Career and Technical Education (CTE) Center located at PRHS serves students from PRHS and Newfound Regional High Schools.

Bussing for elementary and high school student transportation is contracted out.

Town Buildings

Town Office/Police Station

The town office building, built in 1991, houses the offices of the Selectmen, Town Clerk/Tax Collector and Planning Board, as well as the police department. There is also a meeting room that is used by many town committees and boards. There is a serious lack of storage space in the building available for town records, and a lack of adequate office space needed for privacy when dealing with welfare clients and other confidential matters.



The Rumney Police Department is presently comprised of a full-time chief and one full-time officer along with five part-time special officers. Although the population of Rumney has remained relatively stable, services demanded of the police department have broadened and Rumney citizens have continued to express their expectations of local police service, protection and patrolling. At present, the police have a small office in the town office building. The department is currently faced with a severe space shortage. Equipment, supplies, evidence, vehicles and staff all compete for the limited space allocated to the police department. Recent discussions about the future needs of the town have led to consideration of developing a (Public) Safety Complex which would house the Police Department and provide much needed expanded facilities for personnel, secure storage and temporary holding cell(s). It would also be designed so as to incorporate the Fire Department, Emergency Response (EMS) and Emergency Management Services with sufficient space for current equipment, such as the vehicles and firefighting and safety "gear," and the potential for expansion. The ultimate goal would be to separate a Safety Complex from town offices housing the Selectmen's Office, Town Clerk, Planning Board and meeting room(s). The town has a facilities capital reserve fund.

Highway Department

The present town shed was built in 1984 after fire destroyed the original one in the early 1980's. The building is in need of upgrades including running water, a bathroom, a new roof, insulation and lighting; the Facilities Committee has recommended replacement. Equipment is replaced on a rotating basis using a Highway Capital Reserve Fund.



Fire Department

Since the late 1930's, the town of Rumney has been served by an all-volunteer fire department. They operate out of the primary station, built in 1974, centrally located at 59 Depot Street. The station currently houses three trucks and the Rumney EMS ambulance, a meeting room,



a kitchen and bathroom facilities. The Facilities Committee has identified several needed improvements and upgrades, with repair of the side doors considered the highest priority. An auxiliary station in West Rumney village houses one truck. This station has been repainted, has new garage doors, and got a new roof in 2008-2009. In 2011 minor upgrades and repairs were done, including improvements to the electrical and plumbing systems. The Facilities Committee has identified a need for painting and additional storage.

Rumney is also a member of Lakes Region Mutual Fire Aid Association that enhances member-towns' fire fighting capabilities by supplying backup and support when needed. The Association serves 36 towns and provides dispatch services for fire and medical emergencies. In addition, Rumney serves as the first responder for Groton, Dorchester and Ellsworth on a contract basis.

During the last five years, the number of responses has averaged about 100 calls per year and continues to rise. The Town of Rumney funds the Fire Department's budget and has

established a capital reserve fund to make sure there is a long-term savings plan to meet large expenses, usually for trucks and equipment. When available, major building and equipment procurement expenses are subsidized by revenue sharing funds such as grants. A new tank truck, protective gear and air packs have been purchased with grant money. There is also some private fundraising. There is constant need for upgrading and replacing equipment such as hoses and pumps that deteriorate with age and use.

There are substantial current and future needs: more volunteers, a truck for fighting brush fires, a new \$235-250,000 engine in 2012-2014, another fire station bay, offices for both the Fire Chief & EMS to meet state privacy requirements, insulation and new siding on the Depot Street building, and new paving in front of the building and in the parking lot.

Byron G. Merrill Library

Located beside the Historical Society, the Byron G. Merrill Library, given to the town in 1904 by Miss Adelaide Merrill in memory of her father, continues to be a focal point of Rumney Village. The library's 13,000 volumes are located on the main floor, which includes a room of books for adults, a room for young adults with internet access on two computers, a room for children, and a room of DVDs/videos and audio books. Byron G. Merrill Library also provides a collection of historical and literary materials pertaining to Rumney and New Hampshire in its downstairs "New Hampshire Room." Circulation in 2010 was 8,119 books, 6,195 to adults and 1,924 to children.

The library serves the community in numerous ways, including hosting book discussion groups, an on-line language learning system, and other activities. The library has a full schedule of programs throughout the year and special open hours for school groups.



The three-member Board of Trustees and the library staff are constantly striving to improve services. Planned improvements on the horizon include renovations for handicapped accessibility and for increased use of the lower level as demand continues to increase. In addition, the Board of Trustees has identified increased energy efficiency as a high priority.

Historical Society

In 1993 the non-profit Rumney Historical Society leased what used to be the Town Hall on Buffalo Road next to the library in Rumney Village. The building has heat, electricity and is handicap accessible but is not insulated and has no plumbing or running water. With the exception of the exterior of the building being maintained with town funds, the Historical Society is funded through donations and membership dues. The Facilities Committee has identified several needed improvements and extending the eaves on the back porch and painting being the highest priorities.



Waste Disposal

Solid Waste

In the early 1980's, to meet state requirements, Rumney discontinued its one-man dump and burn system. Though repeated tests have shown no seepage of any hazardous substances into the ground water, to avoid a formal closure of what was once our dump and burn site, the Town of Rumney complies with the state's requirement for quarterly monitoring of test wells at what is now our transfer station site. It is hoped that by 2013 this expense will no longer be necessary.

In 1988, on the current site, the same site where the dump and burn facility was located, a transfer station/recycling center was established. The solid waste is hauled to a landfill in Bethlehem and the recyclables, collected separately, are sold. Rumney, along with 15 other towns in the region, has a ten-year contract with the Pemi-Baker Solid Waste District. Solid waste districts are required by legislation passed by the State Legislature in the early 1980's. The purpose of these districts is to use a regional approach to solving the many problems municipalities face with the disposal of solid waste. The towns in the Pemi-Baker District work collectively for the best joint contracts for hauling services, tipping fees and for the collection of hazardous materials.

In 2009, the town of Rumney had a recycling rate of 32% which is good for a little town but with room for improvement. Recycling is mandatory in Rumney yet many do not recycle nearly as much as they can. The solid waste hauler charges by weight and the receiver charges a tipping fee for each load. Keeping recyclables out of the trash lowers the weight of the solid waste being hauled. When a person does not recycle, the unfair situation is created where even those who recycle conscientiously pay tax dollars for hauling the extra weight of the recyclables dumped in the trash. The supervisor of the transfer station is recommending that the town continue evaluating a pay-to-throw system for trash disposal. Recyclables would continue to be collected separately at no cost. Meanwhile the supervisor of the transfer station is working daily to encourage residents to bring in their recyclables and improve the efficiency of their collection at the transfer station for the environmental benefit and to increase this source of income.

The Facilities Committee has identified several needed improvements with the installation of a roof over the hopper and relocating the loading dock being the highest priorities.

Hazardous Waste

One day each year is set aside at the Plymouth transfer station for collection of household hazardous wastes such as pesticides, oil based paint and cleaning products. The collection is arranged through the Pemi-Baker Solid Waste District and is open to residents from towns who choose to participate. More can be done to help make certain that the residents save these materials and transport them, or have them transported by a friend or neighbor, to Plymouth on collection day.

Businesses producing toxic or hazardous wastes must bear full responsibility for their own hazardous waste disposal and should be required to provide plans for the proper handling and disposal before being allowed to establish their business.

Septage

The State of New Hampshire requires each municipality to have a long-term solution for septage treatment. If treatment is not done within the municipality, a signed agreement of at least ten years in duration is necessary for a town to meet state requirements. As Rumney residents have their own septic systems and no central wastewater treatment facility, Rumney has a contract with the Plymouth Water and Sewer District which allows private septage haulers to dispose of septage collected in Rumney.

Cemeteries

The founders of Rumney gave practical consideration to the number and locations of cemeteries in town; for transportation reasons each section of town historically had its own cemetery, in addition to a school, post office, and general store. There are two large cemeteries in town, Pleasant View in West Rumney, and Highland North in Rumney Village, and four smaller cemeteries, Highland South in the Rumney Village, Depot Cemetery in the Rumney Depot area, Sand Hill Cemetery off of Buffalo Road in West Rumney, and East Rumney Cemetery in East Rumney.





There are also two private cemeteries in town: Emmanuel Cemetery on the Baker River maintained by the New England Fellowship, and another northeast of Stinson Lake.

Town cemeteries are overseen by the Trustees of Cemeteries. The Trustees feel there is adequate space available in Pleasant View and Highland North to meet the town's needs for about twenty more years. The town should begin identifying possible expansion areas to ensure that land is available when needed.

Town Recreation Facilities

The *Town Common* is the focal point of Rumney Village. It is a triangular parcel of land located at the junction of Quincy Road, Buffalo Road and Main Street. Surrounded by a fence of granite posts and white rails, the grass-covered common, shaded by maples and spruces, has an antique 1876 fountain owned and maintained by the non-profit Rumney Fountain Restoration Committee, a veterans' memorial monument, and a watering trough – now a planter. The grass on the Common is maintained by a hired service but the other needs are cared for by volunteers including the daily raising and lowering of the flag next to the monument.

The Common is the site of the annual Old Home Day, held each August, reinforcing Rumney's strong sense of community and history. Dedicated volunteers make the arrangements so that residents and visitors can get together to visit, sell products they have made, recognize noteworthy accomplishments, and enjoy performances. Shortly before Christmas the common is the site of a tree lighting organized by volunteers, often with a carol sing and sleigh or horse-drawn wagon ride with Santa.

Russell Elementary School has playing fields and a playground outside, and a gymnasium/auditorium which made indoor community recreation possible when it was added in 1993.

The land for *Baker Athletic Field* on Quincy Road was given by the Baker family for the town's use as long as it is used for an athletic field. In 2008-9 a paved multipurpose area for skateboarding, ice hockey, tennis and basketball was created through a volunteer effort. Landscaping was done as well. A portable toilet is now on the site seasonally. In 2010 a new sign was installed at the entrance and a group of local ball players upgraded the ball field to include bleachers and a new back stop.



In 2007 a 21.8 acre riverfront property near Sand Hill Road offering conservation, recreational and educational opportunities was purchased by the town from the Jim Darling family. It was named the *Jim Darling Natural Area*. In 2009 a trail system providing access to two nice waterfront locations was constructed and signed, the entrance road was improved, and a small parking area established. In 2010 several benches were built and located in several strategic locations along the trail overlooking the river. Future improvements might include a picnic area with fire pit.

Utilities/Communications

Rumney's electricity needs are supplied by the New Hampshire Electric Cooperative and landline telephone service by Fairpoint. Much of the town receives cell phone service from Verizon Wireless and AT&T, but some areas are precluded from service due to topography. A cell tower construction project at the base of Pound Hill is currently awaiting completion. Cable TV and high speed internet are also available, primarily in the more densely developed areas of town. North Country Council is working on mapping areas that are unserved by broadband internet to support state and national efforts to identify needs and assist states with infrastructure improvements.

Emergency Management

Federal funds for disaster relief continue to be available, including those for road and bridge washouts. Rumney has benefited from these in the past. However, the federal requirements are now more stringent and eligibility for some programs depends upon the town taking preventative steps to prepare for and mitigate the impacts of a disaster. In 2010 the town's Emergency Management Director led the town through the process of developing a hazard mitigation plan and an updated emergency operations plan to ensure continued eligibility for assistance with hazard mitigation projects and, if needed, disaster relief. In addition, the Town recently received Incident Command System certification.

It should be noted that some funding programs now also require that the town be a member of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). Rumney does not currently participate in the NFIP. There has been some concern in town that participation may lead to an increase in the amount of development in the floodplain. In addition, a number of residents are reluctant to follow any course which might lead to new rules and regulations, regardless of the benefits which would result. If the town decided to join the NFIP in the future, a no-build flood ordinance could be adopted rather than the minimum flood-proofing requirements needed to join the program. This way existing owners of property in the 100 year floodplain would be eligible for federally-subsidized insurance and the town would be eligible for all assistance programs, while new development would not be able to take place in the flood hazard area. This would have the added benefit of reducing the future risks to Rumney's emergency personnel in the event of a flood.

Medical

Emergency Medical

Rumney EMS is a volunteer squad with trained personnel on call to serve as the first responder for emergency services 24/7/365 with its own well equipped ambulance. Like the Fire Department, Rumney EMS is also a member of Lakes Region Mutual Fire Aid Association, which provides dispatch services. Patient transport is contracted out, currently to Warren-Wentworth Ambulance Service.

Hospitals

Speare Memorial Hospital in Plymouth is a 100,000 square foot Critical Access Hospital. The Hospital has a 24 hour emergency department and provides the area with a wide range of inpatient and outpatient services.

Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center in Hanover is used by many residents requiring specialized services not available locally.

Other Services Available to Rumney Residents

Ammonoosuc Community Health Services Inc. (ACHS), with a site in nearby Warren, provides comprehensive preventive and primary health care to anyone, regardless of their insurance status or ability to pay. ACHS serves a 26 town region.

Genesis Behavioral Health provides a wide range of mental health services including emergency needs and long term community based support.

Pemi-Baker Home Health & Hospice provides hospice, home care, community outreach programs, outpatient therapy and wellness programs to 11 area towns. Towns pay an annual appropriation based on a per-capita rate established by the board of directors.

Rumney Firemen's Auxiliary maintains a supply of hospital and sickroom equipment available for loan.

There are also several medical professionals of various types with offices in Plymouth.

Social Services

Several area nonprofits provide assistance to Rumney residents facing a wide variety of challenges. Some of these are:

Communities for Alcohol and Drug-free Youth (CADY) works with youth, their parents and the community and schools to help youth make healthy and safe choices to prevent and reduce alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use.

Grafton County Senior Citizens Council Inc. provides programs and services to support the health and well-being of older citizens and enable elderly individuals to remain independent in their own homes and communities for as long as possible. These programs and services include the Plymouth senior center, delivered meals, community dining programs, transportation, counseling, elder care, chore/home repair services, recreational and educational programs, and volunteer opportunities.

Tri-County Community Action Program (CAP) helps elderly, handicapped and low income individuals and families.

Voices Against Violence in Plymouth works with adult and child victims/survivors who have been affected by domestic or sexual violence, or stalking. They operate a 24/7 hotline and also provide education and support around these issues to other individuals and organizations.

Whole Village Family Resource Center in Plymouth is a collaborative of health and human service agencies, a partnership of people and programs aimed at enhancing the lives of families and children. Some of the related services and agencies are:

- Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) recruits, trains and supervises volunteers who advocate for the best interests of abused and neglected children in New Hampshire courts.
- Plymouth Regional Clinic provides general medical care for those with limited incomes and no insurance.
- Bridge House provides transition and emergency shelter to the area's homeless.
- NH Works helps people find work and helps employers find candidates that meet their job specifications.

Specialized Housing Facilities

There is not yet any rent assisted senior housing in Rumney, however there are several complexes in neighboring towns:

- Plymouth Terrace in Plymouth provides 29 rent assisted units, none handicapped accessible.
- Prince Haven in Plymouth provides 50 rent assisted units, 5 handicapped accessible.
- The Woods in Campton provides 20 rent assisted units, none handicapped accessible.

There are also 66 rent assisted apartments (none handicapped accessible) for families of any age at Plymouth Apartments in Plymouth.

- The town should support efforts of nonprofit and private developers to provide alternative housing arrangements to meet the needs of Rumney's seniors and disabled residents.

General Recommendations for Rumney's Facilities and Services

Continue to benefit from the efficiencies of regional cooperation, partnerships with nonprofits, and the service, knowledge and skills of volunteers.

Continue to plan ahead for needed building repairs and improvements, and, when absolutely necessary, expansion, and regular replacement of large equipment through the use of capital reserve funds.

Keep abreast of grant opportunities and eligibility requirements.

Carefully evaluate any associated increases in the town's operating budget before adding or expanding facilities.

Ensure that future growth does not lead to increased demand for services without adding an amount to the tax base necessary for the long term support of those services. Factors affecting the impact of development on the demand for services include:

- Size
- Distance from services
- Type
- Traffic generation
- Water needs
- Waste generation
- Needs for emergency services
- School impacts

To ensure that there are no unnecessary costs to the town associated with future private development, developers should continue to be required to:

- pay for the town to obtain engineering review of proposals;
- pay for the cost of any improvements required to roads or drainage as a result of their development; and
- provide performance guarantees and inspection fees for any infrastructure needed on the site.

APPENDIX A

2008 MASTER PLAN SURVEY RESULTS

General							
Rank the top 5 issues that should be addressed in Rumney over the next 5 year.							
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th		
Tax burden	81	5	5	10	4		
Road improvement	3	8	3	10	8		
Affordable housing	0	3	6	2	8		
Location of new development	2	7	6	6	12		
Upgrade of town facilities	1	5	5	6	5		
Increase in subdivision regulations	2	5	9	5	7		
Reduction of subdivision regulations	4	8	6	3	1		
Adjusting regulations for type of area	1	2	2	4	6		
Traffic control	2	7	1	4	3		
Protection of lakes/rivers/streams/groun dwater	23	24	23	12	4		
Protection of open space	6	12	17	10	13		
Protection of rural character	2	16	20	22	8		
Development of more recreation trails/area	2	12	12	10	10		
Improvement of parking/congestion at Rumney Rocks	2	4	5	4	6		
Other – zoning	1	1					

Economics							
Rank what type of economic development you would like to see Rumney encourage.							
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th		
New modest retail stores	33	14	9	5	3		
New large retail stores	4	1	4	2	0		
New light manufacturing	20	20	13	7	4		
New office development	3	11	11	7	4		
New home office businesses	10	12	8	8	9		
New commercial park	4	2	6	1	3		
New agricultural development	29	17	10	10	7		
New for-profit recreational areas	5	5	9	4	4		
New Non-profit organizations	4	6	5	3	3		
New lumber mills	3	9	7	4	5		
New industrial park	4	3	1	2	2		
Other	0	2	0	0	0		
Would you support an in-depth study of economic gain/loss of each of the options listed in this section?							
Yes	44						
No	41						
Taxes/Funding							
Volunteer service saves money & builds community. Will you volunteer?							
Yes	33						
No	34						

Land Use							
Indicate if you support the following methods for guiding growth in town:							
	Yes	No					
Provide clear, consistent guidelines re: impact allowed for all land & building	93	16					
Increase the minimum lot size for residential development	65	49					
Allow decreased lot size for cluster, affordable housing development or homes in a village	62	53					
Establish different development guidelines for different areas of town	70	40					
Encourage development which pays more taxes than costs they generate for the town	84	14					
Purchase open space with town funds if taxes raised.	50	47					
Encourage development of seasonal residences.	52	40					
Require state, county, local rules/regulations be asked for at Town Office by all planning to build or expand	65	32					
Form a committee to look further into the National Flood Insurance Program and make a recommendation to the Selectmen and Planning Board	42	53					
Should the use of conservation easements be encouraged as a way of assuring that Agriculture and forest lands are conserved?	101	10					
Rank what type of housing you would like to see Rumney encourage:							
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th		
Single-family per lot	87	4	10	0	0		
Cluster/Conservation subdivisions	10	23	7	7	1		
Townhouses/Condos	1	10	7	3	4		
Multi-family	1	4	5	6	2		
Campgrounds	1	8	4	2	4		
Manufactured (Mobile) Homes	0	0	3	4	0		
Elderly Housing	8	19	20	3	5		
Affordable Housing	10	18	18	11	9		
Modular (pre-fab) Homes	1	6		8	4		
Other – Green	1						

Transportation & Safety							
Rank which transportation and safety issues you would support:							
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th		
Making changes at the intersection of ___&___, where our safety is most threatened	9	3	4				
One or more section(s) of road modified for safer pedestrian/bicycle use	35	9	2				
Further police protection	11	8	3	5			
A daily van run to Plymouth	15	10	5	2	1		
Other - Improve East Rumney Road	4						
Other - Speed Control Stinson Lake Road	3	1					
Other - Manage Class VI Roads		1					
Communication							
Regarding communication with elected and appointed town officials, indicate which you would support:							
	Yes		No				
All minutes of town meetings posted on the town website within 3 days.	87		10				
All minutes of town meetings posted at locations in town.	57		23				
All minutes videotaped and broadcast on the local cable network.	31		41				
Rumney Register released monthly.	55		14				
Communication adequate as it now is.	35		21				

Energy Consumption							
Indicate if you support:							
						Yes	No
An in-depth study of town's use of energy, systematic reduction of wasted energy & a shift to sustainable resources?						66	42
The town gradually investing in energy efficient equipment and practices, even if it means increasing taxes to do so?						56	50
Rumney encouraging and providing support for those choosing to invest in these personally?						70	24
Providing public gardening space?						54	41
Regulation							
Indicate if you support:							
						Yes	No
Nuisance ordinances (examples: visual/sound/odor/number of residents per house/activity causing erosion and/or other environmental damages)						81	34
Development guidelines						75	35
Stronger than state regulations when necessary for protecting water						69	39
Youth							
Indicate if you support:							
						Yes	No
Town service and apprenticeship projects which motivate, train and raise consciousness of our youth?						75	30
Helping pay associated costs?						39	46

APPENDIX B

OTHER SOURCES OF INFORMATION ON NATURAL RESOURCES - PROVIDED BY RUMNEY CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Natural Resource Inventory

Rumney now has up-to-date and detailed information on the status of its resources. The Natural Resources Inventory (NRI), prepared by the Society of New Hampshire Forests, the Rumney Conservation Commission, and local volunteers is at last completed (2012). This document contains data and maps (scale 1:18,000 or 1" = 1,500') on soils, water, agricultural and forest resources, cultural, recreational and wildlife habitat in Rumney. It also addresses developed and developable lands with potential constraints to future development. This is valuable information and should be well-utilized in Rumney's land use planning. The Conservation Commission is working on computer software and Geographic Information System (GIS) applications to enable user-friendly access to NRI in 2012 by town departments.

Baker River Watershed Association Plan

The Baker River Watershed Association (BRWA) plan (2003) provides detailed descriptions and maps, with guidelines and recommendations to protect and maintain the river and the resource-rich lands adjacent to it. This document should be better incorporated into town planning. The Plan, along with the results of BRWA's water quality testing, can be found at www.bakerriverwatershed.org.

Other Documents

Other useful sources of resource information and conservation include: NH Wildlife Action Plan (NH Fish & Game Dept., 2007); Grafton County Flood Insurance Study (FEMA, 2008); Guidebook for Environmental Permits in NH (NH DES, 2002 and updates); the WMNF Plan (US Forest Service, 2005); USDA Soil Survey of Grafton County, NH (1992). These documents are found in the town offices and/or are accessible on-line.

USDA National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

The National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is the primary federal agency with expertise in soil and erosion control. Part of USDA, and formed as the Soil Conservation Service (SCS) in the Dust Bowl Era, NRCS partners with countywide and regional conservation districts; Rumney is served by the Grafton County Conservation District (GCCD), recently relocated to Orford, N.H. NRCS and GCCD provide a wide range of technical and practical services to local citizens: erosion control, drainage strategies, agricultural and forestry practices such as planning access roads and water crossings, and community development. NRCS also administers an array of cost-share practices, financial incentives to apply BMPs and soil erosion practices for commodity producers and landowners.

NRCS updated the 1939 SCS Soil Survey of Grafton County, N.H. in the late 1980s. The manual features detailed maps and descriptions of all soil series/types located in Grafton County – there are more than 100. An array of tables details use and management capabilities/constraints for every soil type, and practical suggestions to minimize or avoid risks. For example: Rumney Series – Map Symbol 105 (many soils are attributed to the town or area where they were first described)... very deep, poorly drained, formed in loamy alluvial sediments underlain by sandy sediments on flood plains; *Woodland management and productivity*: equipment limitations, seedling mortality and windthrow hazard are all severe; *Recreational Development*: for camp areas, picnic areas, playgrounds, paths and trails, limitations are severe, due to flooding and wetness; *Building Site Development*: for shallow excavations, dwellings with or without basements, small commercial developments, local roads and streets, lawns and landscaping, limitations are all severe due to wetness, flooding, cutbank caving and frost action; limitations are severe for on-site waste disposal systems; *Farming*: the soil is moderately well suited for row crops and well suited for hayland or pasture, wetness delays tilling and planting and is a concern during harvest; areas of this soil improve and maintain water quality by acting as natural filters to remove harmful chemicals, nutrients, and sediment; they also recharge groundwater aquifers and storm runoff, which lessens flood damage.

Assistance for Farmers

There are several excellent resources available to assist and support existing and beginning farmers: NRCS has incentive programs (cost-share funds) to reclaim and/or improve farmland; UNH/Grafton County Cooperative Extension provides practical, research-based advice and recommendations, along with site visits and hands-on workshops; NH Department of Agriculture can provide marketing and regulatory compliance assistance.

Assistance for Woodland Owners

There are many sources of information, objective advice and economic incentives to help woodland owners improve and better husband their forests: UNH Cooperative Extension, NRCS, NH Tree Farm Program, professional licensed foresters and skilled contractors. The best-managed woodlots in Town have all utilized at least some of these services and all woodland owners should consider doing so; much of the information is provided at no cost. A valuable reference for forest landowners and managers is the new edition of “Good Forestry in the Granite State” (2010), a comprehensive guide with practical recommendations on sustainable forest stewardship in NH. It is available via UNH Cooperative Extension (extension.unh.edu).