

PAWLET

COMMUNITY VALUES MAPPING



Fall 2019



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Introduction

In Fall of 2019, the Pawlet Planning Commission invited the Community Wildlife Program to lead a Community Values Mapping event for the Town of Pawlet, Vermont.

In this activity, participants were asked to think about two simple questions:

What places in Pawlet do you love?

What do you value about these places?

Values were mapped at two separate events, on October 1 and October 16, 2019. Both events took place at the Mettawee Community School.

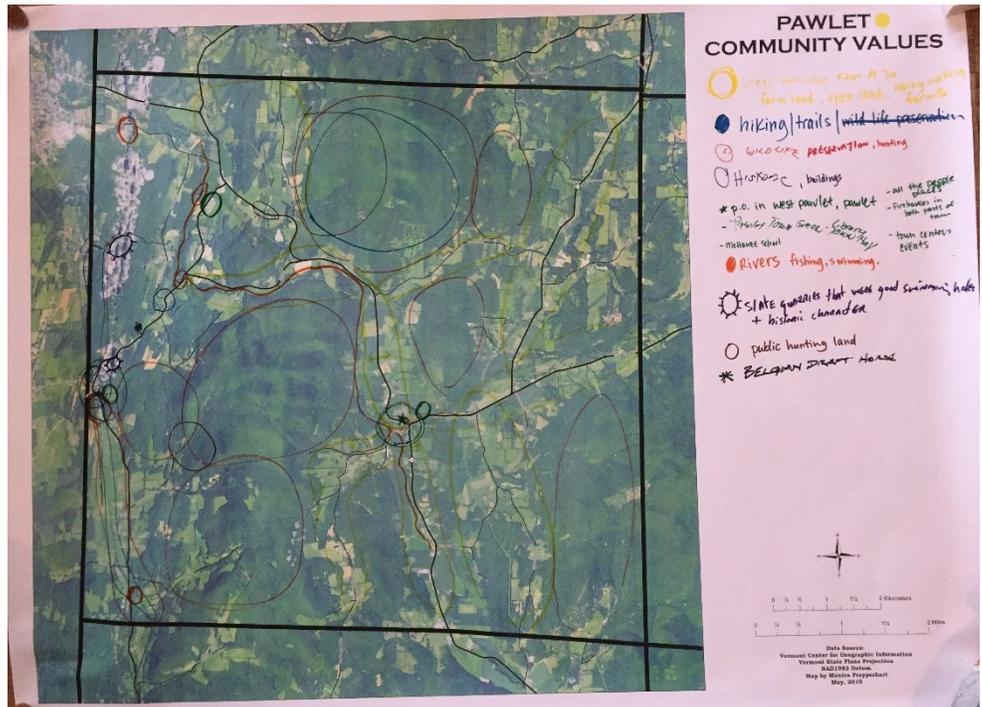
At the events, participants were divided into small groups, and each group was given a map. One at a time, a group member used a marker to outline a location that he/she values. Once an outline was drawn, the participant stated *what* they loved about the place. For example, possibilities could include wildlife, views, working forests, farmland, economic resources, cultural/social resources, historic sites, places for recreation, hunting/fishing, or many other options. The 1-2 word description was documented in the key next to the map. Any subsequent use of that color marker was used to indicate a location valued for the same reason.

The next participant chose either to use the same color to mark a place with a similar value or to choose a new color to outline a place with a different value.

Some places were valued for more than one reason.

In these cases, places were outlined several times, each time with a different color as indicated in the legend.

Groups identified their own categories. For example, one group could have used a single category for “recreation,” including hiking, walking, biking, hunting, fishing, motor sports, etc. Another group could have separated these activities into separate categories, or lumped them into a few smaller groups. Each group made these decisions independently. When digitizing data, I honored these categories whenever possible, but when compiling results, some similar categories were clumped together to facilitate the comparison of one mapped value to another.



Maps and Results

Results from all events—including five individual maps—were compiled to create the maps below. Digital data is also available to the town.

Notes on the Digitizing Process

From the beginning, I noted categories that may have been labeled with different words but were essentially alike. For example, one group may have included the label “hiking.” Another included “hiking & trails.” A third listed “recreation/hiking/biking/skiing/snowmobiling/horseback riding.” In order to map all of these together on a single map, I combined all of these into a single category, entitled “Trails and Related Recreation.” I similarly lumped together any categories that seemed to me to be different labels for the same general activity, and I have included related discussion in the associated section. I tried to be as true as possible to the sentiments of the group.

It is worth noting, however, that categories could have been lumped in a somewhat different way. I will provide all original data to the town so that if another individual thinks data should be combined or separated in a different way, he or she can do so!



Value Categories

The full list of values included is:

- Trails & Related Recreation
- Water-based Recreation
- Views
- Farms and Agriculture
- History
- Economic Potential
- Community Places
- Education
- Unique Locations
- Mountains
- Wildlife & Hunting
- Public Hunting Access

On the following pages, maps of each value category are displayed. Notes and descriptions written down by participants during the mapping events are also included, as are notes on the digitization process.

Trails and Related Recreation

Mapped are all categories related to trails and terrestrial recreation.

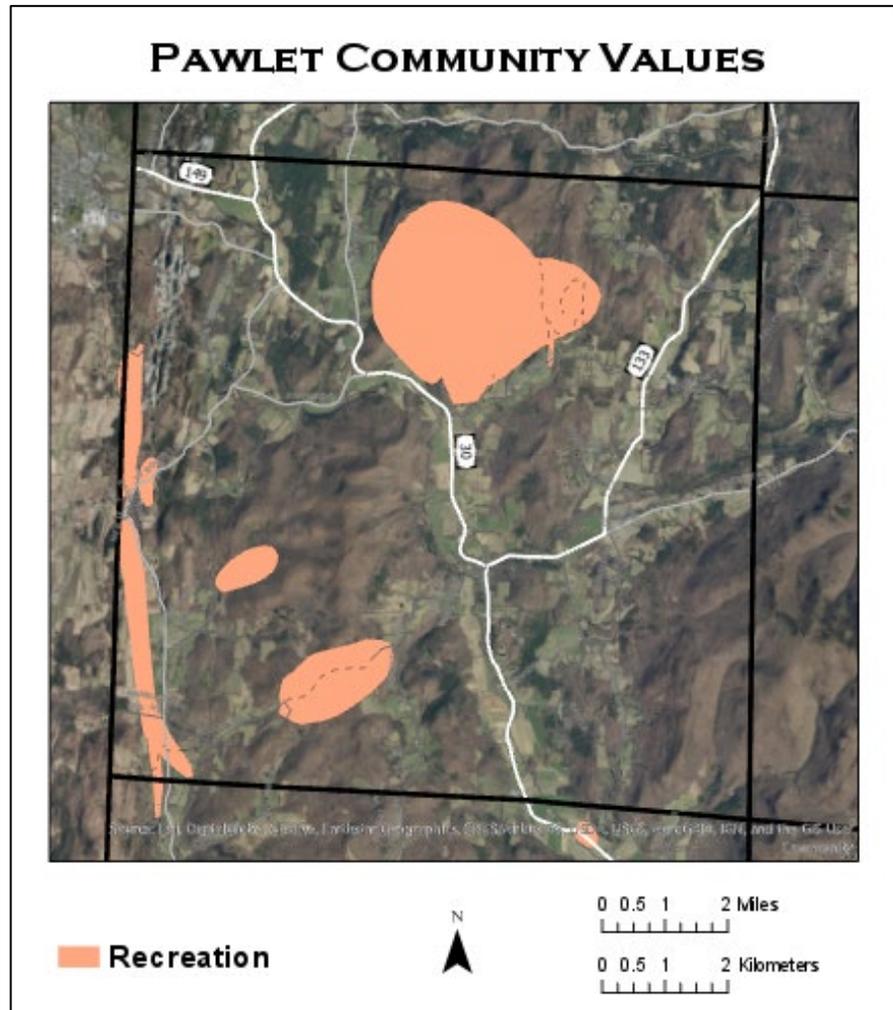
Groups specifically mentioned these activities as being included in this category:

- Hiking
- Biking
- Skiing
- Snowmobiling
- Horseback riding

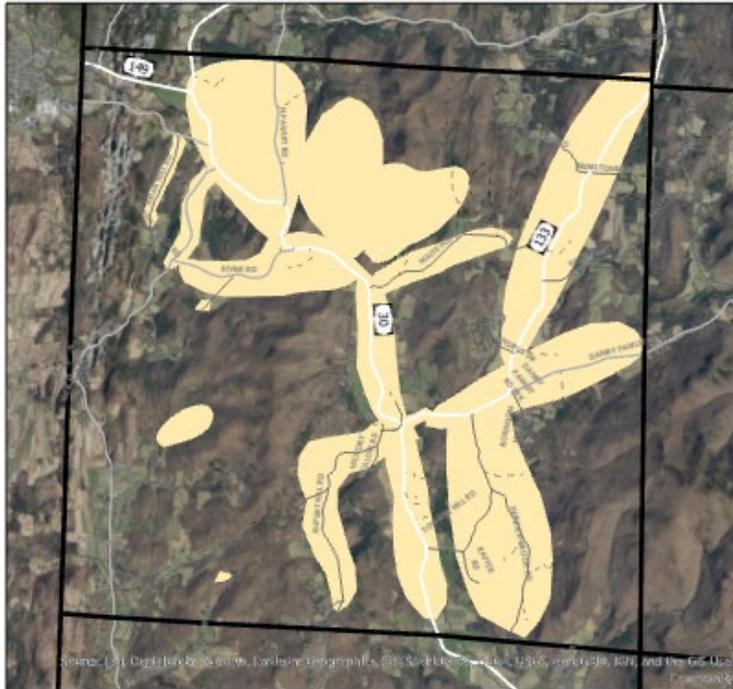
Other Notes:

- Haystack Mountain and the trail to its summit
- Cross Country Trail
- The Rail Trail was called out as being a “different” from other places by several groups. One group mentioned that this trail in itself provides opportunities for biking, cross-country skiing, and walking. Another group

noted the “daily walking on Rail Trail—A place to get together with friends & family.” Conversations during the event focused on the community aspect of the rail trail. While it is included under the “recreation” category, these descriptions led me to also include it under “community places.”



PAWLET COMMUNITY VALUES



Views

Views

Notes:

- View Corridor from Route 30
- Farmland
- Open land
- Mountaintop views & scenery

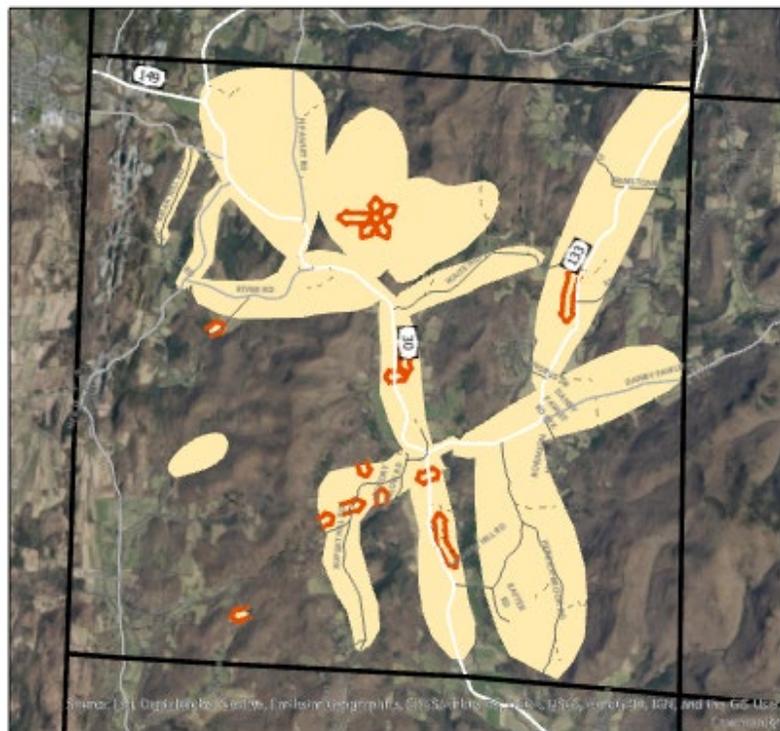
It may be helpful to the town to distinguish between viewpoints (places from where a view can be seen), and viewsheds (the entire land area that can be seen from a viewpoint) or scenic areas (which also include places in which the visually pleasing character is in the immediate foreground, such as a road passing through a tunnel of trees or a pathway along a pretty brook). For this exercise, these categories were

not distinguished by all groups, so I've lumped them together for the analysis, which is shown in yellow.

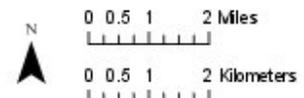
However, several groups used arrows to depict views from different parts of town. Because these arrows represent the viewpoint while also giving some indication of the viewshed, I've preserved them separately.

Keep in mind that the full viewshed is not captured and likely includes distant mountains and valleys. The arrows themselves are not included in the overlay maps.

PAWLET COMMUNITY VALUES



View Arrows
Views



PAWLET COMMUNITY VALUES



History

History

Notes:

- Buildings
- Monuments
- History/Historic Sites & Buildings
- Historic buildings and cemeteries
- The Library—historic site and activity center
- Town Hall—historic site & activity center
- Historical District.

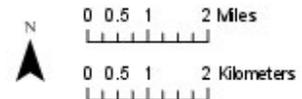
Economic Value & Potential

- Discussion included the slate quarries, wind, agriculture, and the village centers
- “Working farms” were also specified in the notes. While I did not include them in the maps, it could be that this group intended for the working nature of the farms to be considered alongside other economic values.
- Creative Center potential—a large number of artists/makers
- Slate Industry Value: provides jobs
- Industrial—Wind/Solar, Etc.
- Economic Potential of industrial zone & slate industry for next 300 years

PAWLET COMMUNITY VALUES



Economic Potential

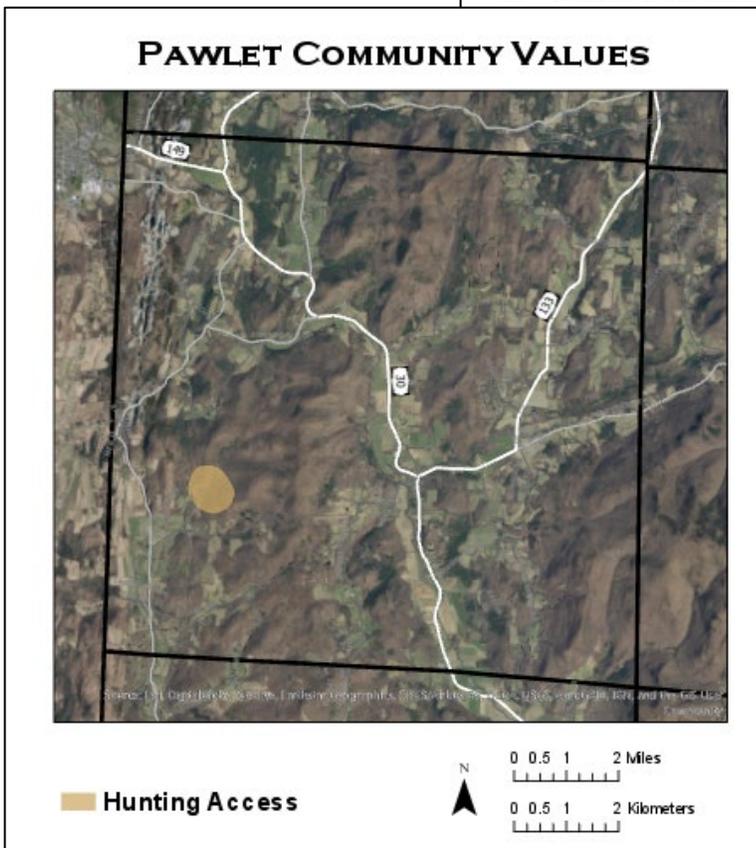
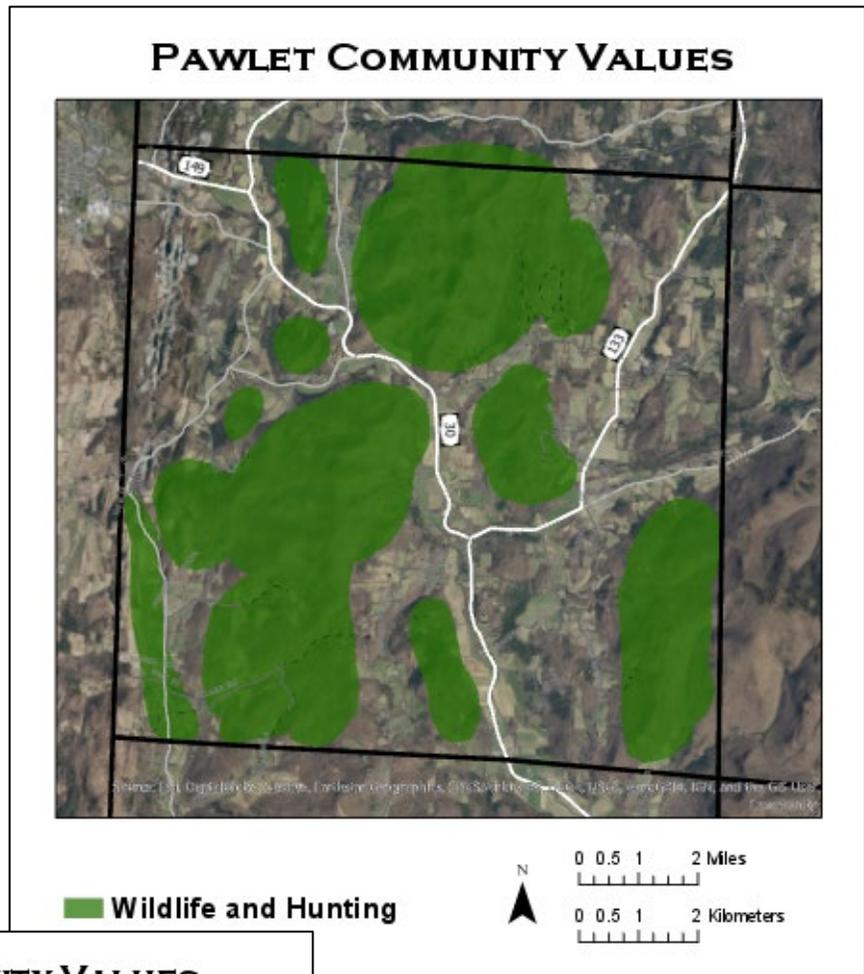


Wildlife and Hunting

Notes:

All groups that labeled either hunting or wildlife combined them into a single category. They labeled them somewhat differently, however. One labeled the category "Wildlife preservation and hunting." Another labeled it "wildlife and sporting." One group calls out Haystack specifically for both wildlife diversity and hunting.

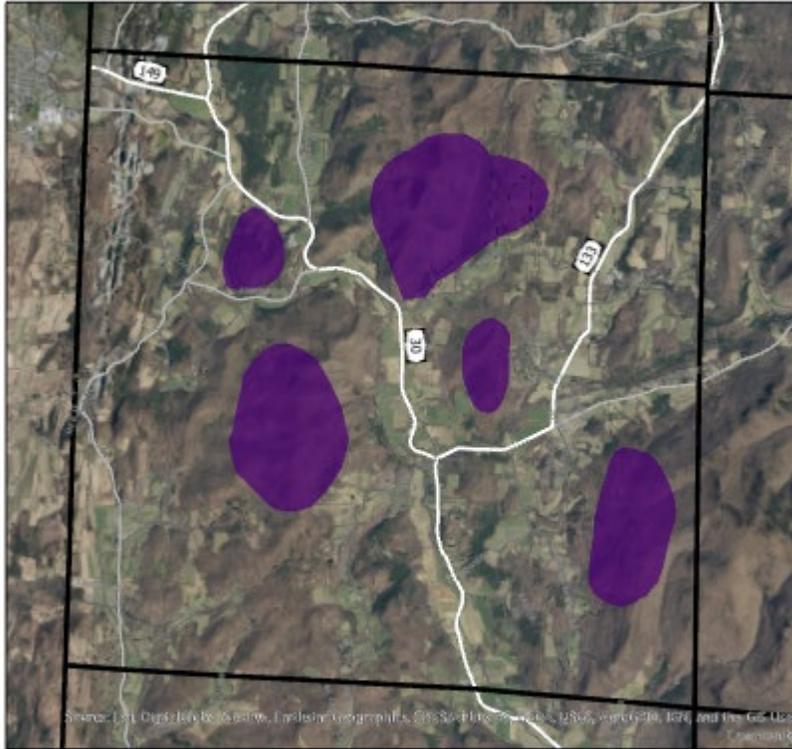
When I pressed the groups during the event about whether wildlife preservation and hunting should be considered a single value or separated into two values, the groups responded that to them, they are a single value and can't be separated.



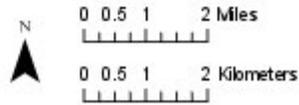
However, one group added a category regarding public access, as seen here.

Public Access for Hunting

PAWLET COMMUNITY VALUES



 Mountains



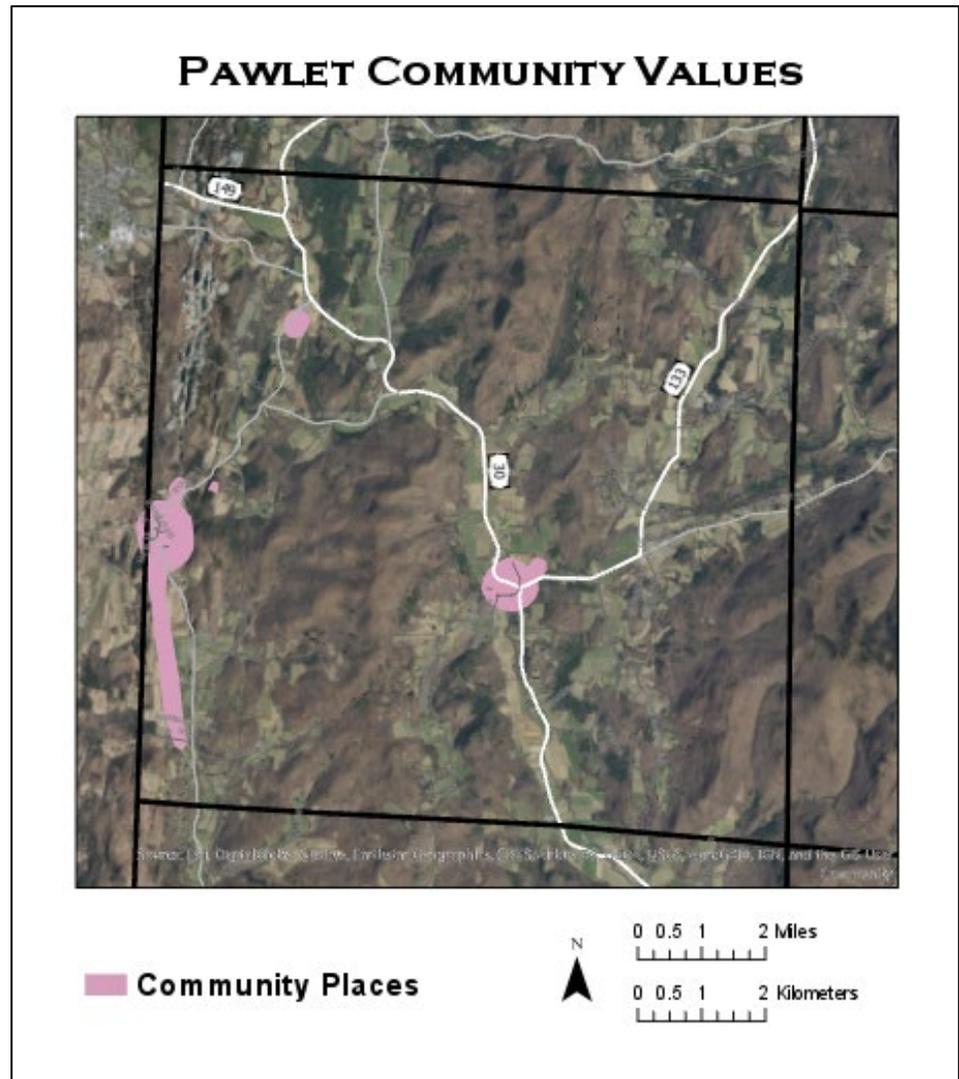
Mountains

Similarly, two different groups labeled a value group as “mountains.” When pressed, they were unable to further clarify what, exactly, they valued about mountains; both agreed that it was its own category that was separate from recreation, views, or other labeled categories.

Community Places

Participants had a lot to say about this category! Notes include:

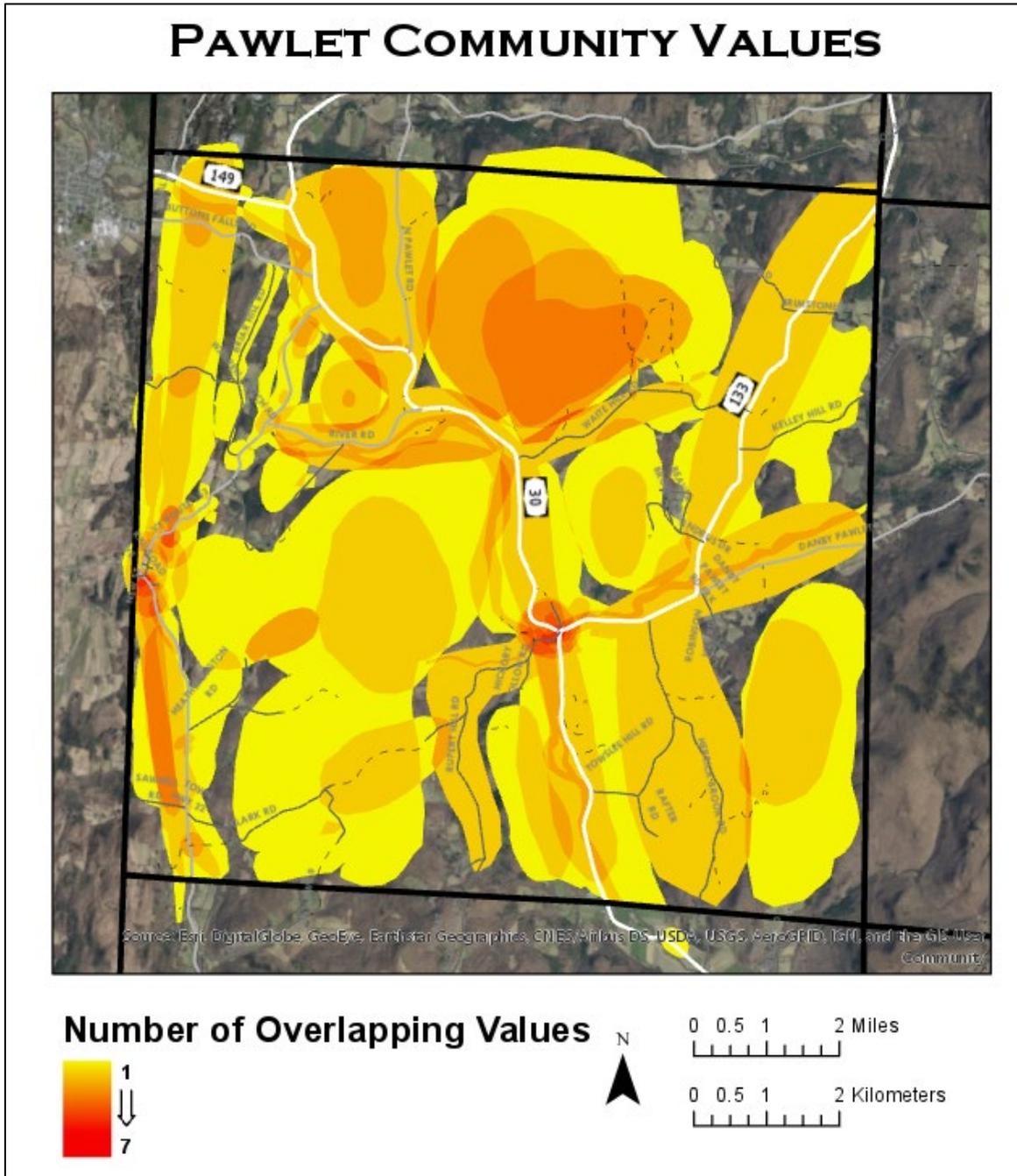
- Pawlet Town Green
- Library
- Town Hall
- Mettawee School
- All the “people” places
- Firehouses in both parts of town
- Town Center: Events
- Churches
- Community Gathering Places
- Barn & Station restaurants
- The Library—historic site and activity center
- Town Hall—historic site & activity center
- Creative Center potential—a large number of artists/makers
- Daily Walking on Rail Trail—A place to get together with friends & family
- Pawlet Village:
 - Community
 - Town Buildings
 - Stories
 - People



Overlapping Values Map

Residents may want to see how these values overlap. How are the values distributed throughout the community, and how many different values are present in any given location? Where are the places with many overlapping values, and where are the places valued for one primary reason?

When all values are counted, the resulting map looks like this:

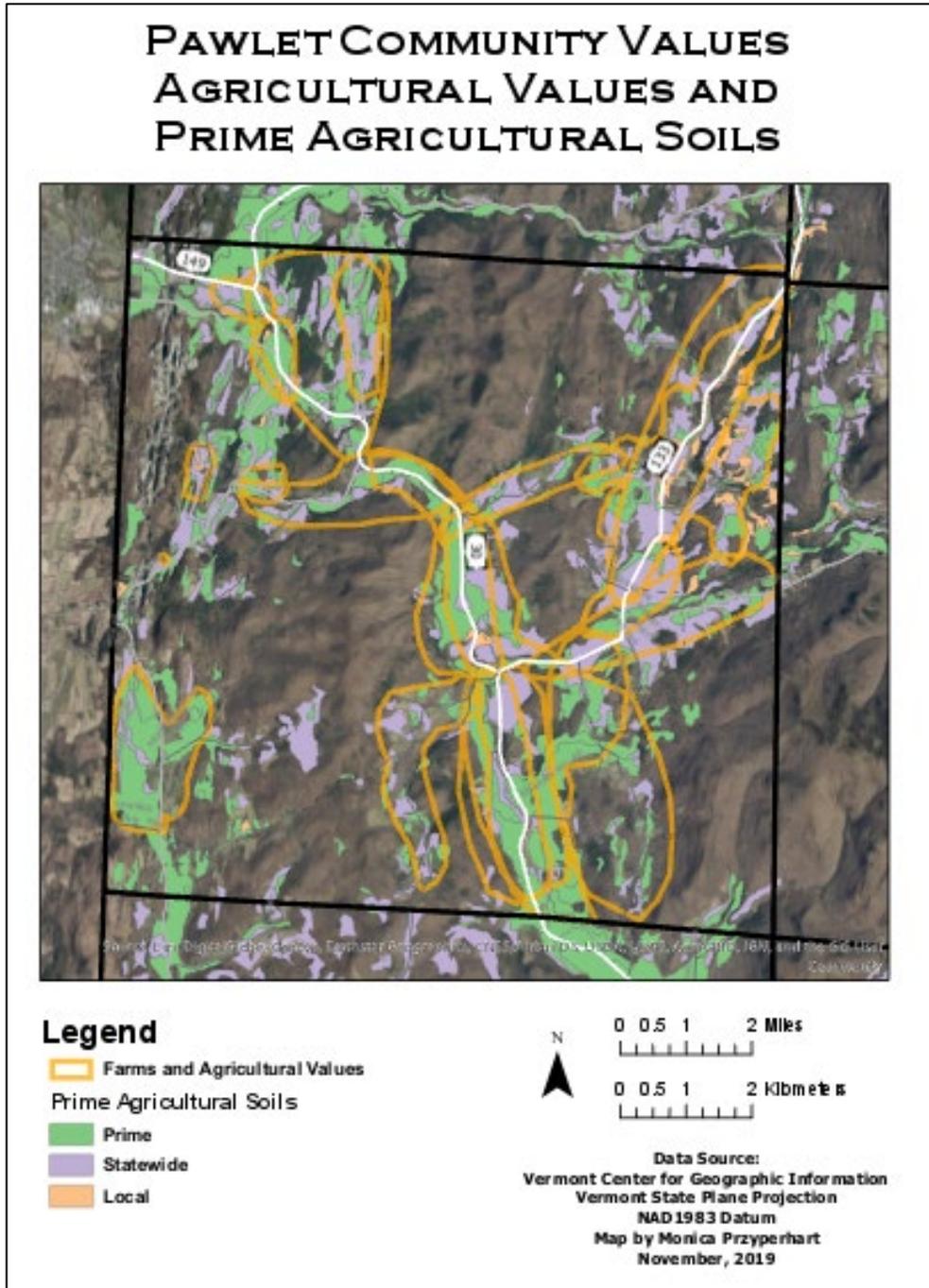


Additional Map Comparisons

The values mapped through this exercise can be helpful to a community in a variety of ways. Sometimes, it is beneficial to see how some values compare to other maps. Below are a few samples of such comparisons. The community may want to pursue others.

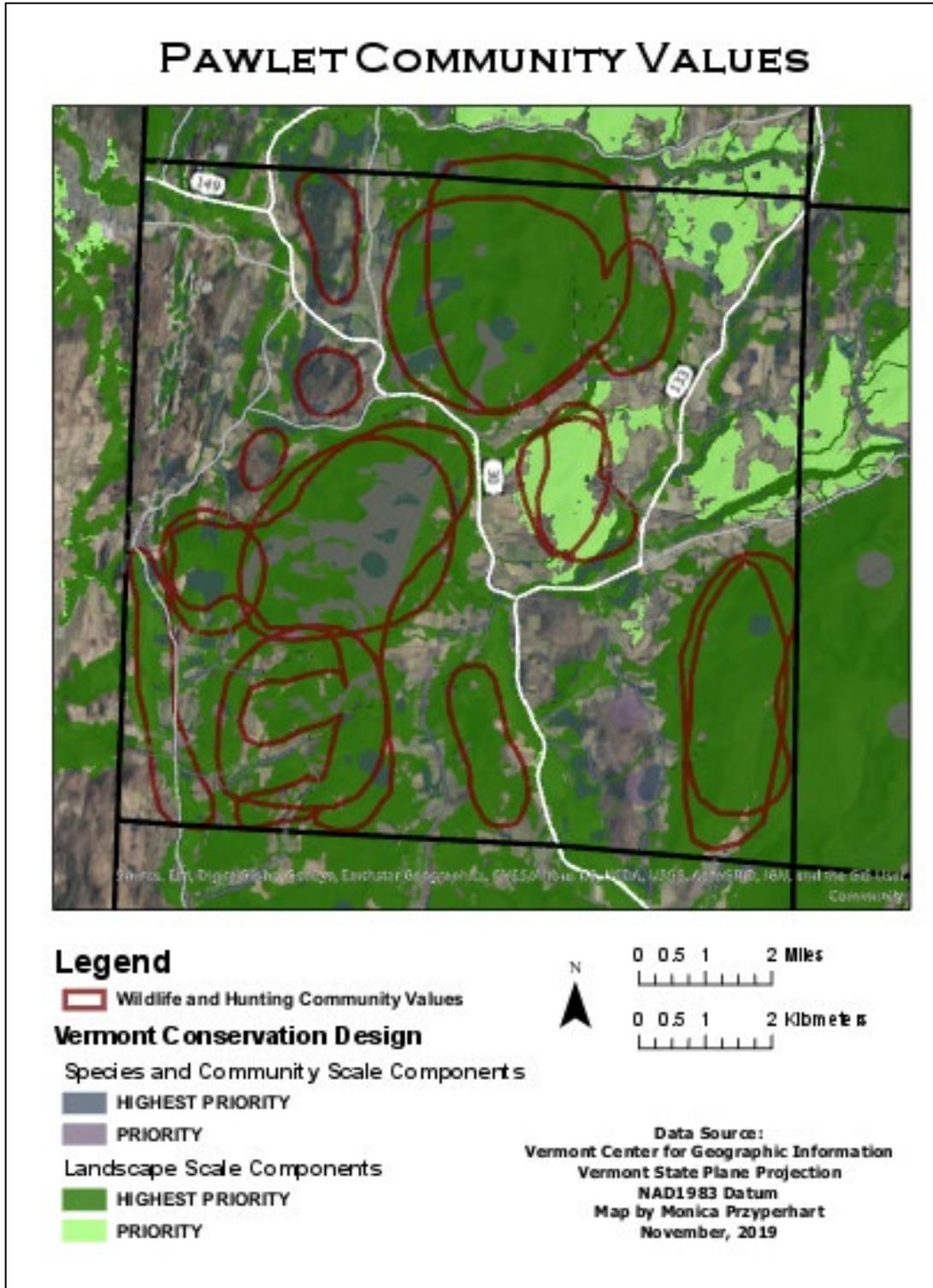
Agricultural Values and Prime Agricultural Soils

How do the agricultural values mapped compare to the agricultural potential of the town? This map displays prime agricultural soils in Pawlet, alongside the agricultural soils mapped.



Vermont Conservation Design and Wildlife Values

At the state level, the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources maintains a map and analysis entitled *Vermont Conservation Design*, which depicts the lands and waters thought to be most important for maintaining the state's ecological function and wildlife habitat networks. Below is how Pawlet's wildlife community values match up with these state-level ecological priorities:



Notes

When participating in this activity, participants were given a page on which to write notes. Most of these notes were included above, alongside the associated map category. However, there are several notes that should be considered alongside the maps to complete the picture of what participants were trying to indicate about values in Pawlet.



Intangibles (and Un-mappables):

Some notes indicated values that are not easily mapped. These include:

- Artists/craftspeople
- Working farms
- “The unmappable nature of the town is in the rural character and laid back manner of the people in town.”
- “A special place of beauty not to be disturbed”
- The People of Pawlet

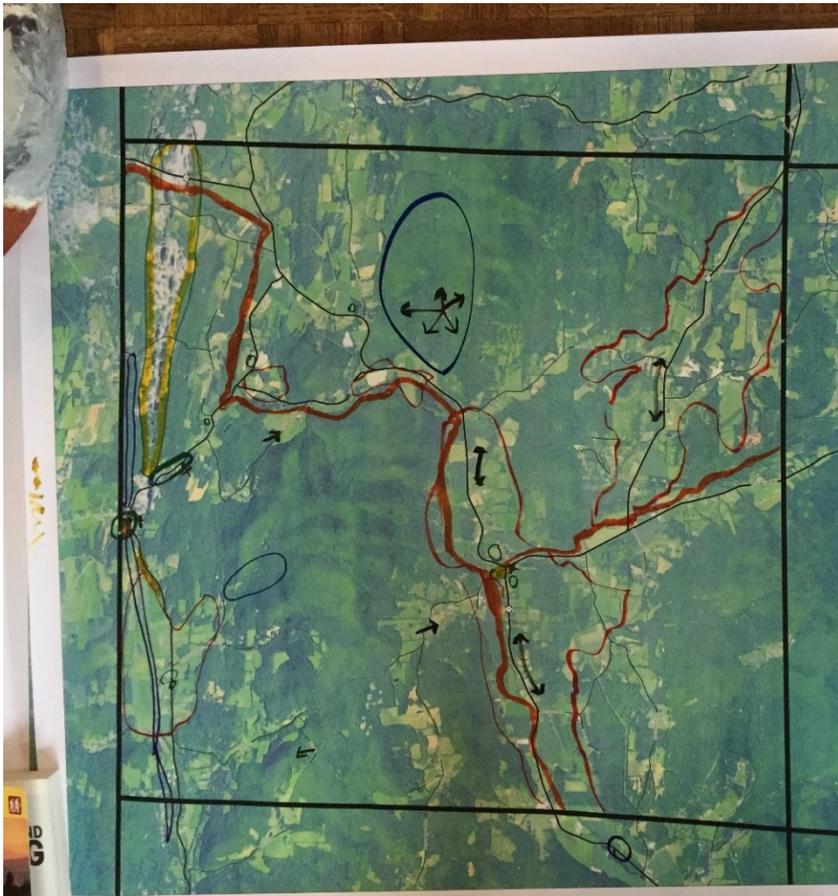
In some cases, mapping of these features was attempted, but the value may extend beyond the features mapped.

Also relevant to the digitizing process:

- It’s very difficult to capture *views* through this type of map. Where participants indicated a valued viewpoint with an arrow or series of arrows, I mapped the originating point of the arrow as a “viewpoint.” However, a much more comprehensive viewshed analysis would be required to truly understand what locations can be seen from the indicated viewpoints. In some cases, these views relate to the foreground in close proximity. In other cases, the views themselves may be of land and water long distances from the viewpoint.

- In analyzing these data, it is important to keep in mind that some polygons may have been placed incorrectly simply because a participant wasn't fully comfortable with maps. These maps should be used as guidance only.
- Digitizing followed lines drawn by participants wherever possible. However, if it was clear that a line was supposed to follow a road or specific feature, I made sure to also include the feature in the polygon, even if parts of it fell outside the casual circle drawn around it by the participant.
- When digitizing data, it can sometimes be difficult to follow the *exact* lines that a participant drew due to scale and the clunkiness of the digitization process. Given these difficulties, I tried to remain true to the lines of the participants!





PAWLET ● COMMUNITY VALUES

- Hiking, Natural view
- monument - historical district
- Rail trail, biking, x-ski, walking
- RIVERS - swimming, fishing
- Economic value & potential
- Churches
- Agricultural Diversification
- VIEWS

NOTES

- historic bldgs & cemeteries
- barn & station restaurants
- Churches + ■
- ★ The Pawlet Scholarships - community support for education
- ★ The Library - historic site, activity center town hall - "
- ★ Creative Center potential - a large number of artists / makers



PAWLET ● COMMUNITY VALUES

- HISTORIC VALUE
- RAIL TRAIL RECREATION & COMMUNITY VALUE (SOCIAL)
- HIKING/SIGHT SEEING "MOUNTAIN"
- MTN TOP VIEWS/SCENERY
- ROAD VIEWS
- WILDLIFE SPORTING
- SWIMMING
- INDUSTRIAL - WIND/SOLAR ETC...

NOTES ●●

Farmland throughout the town
 Daily walking on rail trail & getting to gether with friends & family
 The people of Pawlet
 Economic potential of industrial zone & state industry FOR NEXT 300 YEARS



NOTES.

- unmapable nature of the town is in the rural character and the laid back manner of the people in town, ~~a special place~~
- A special place of beauty not to be disturbed