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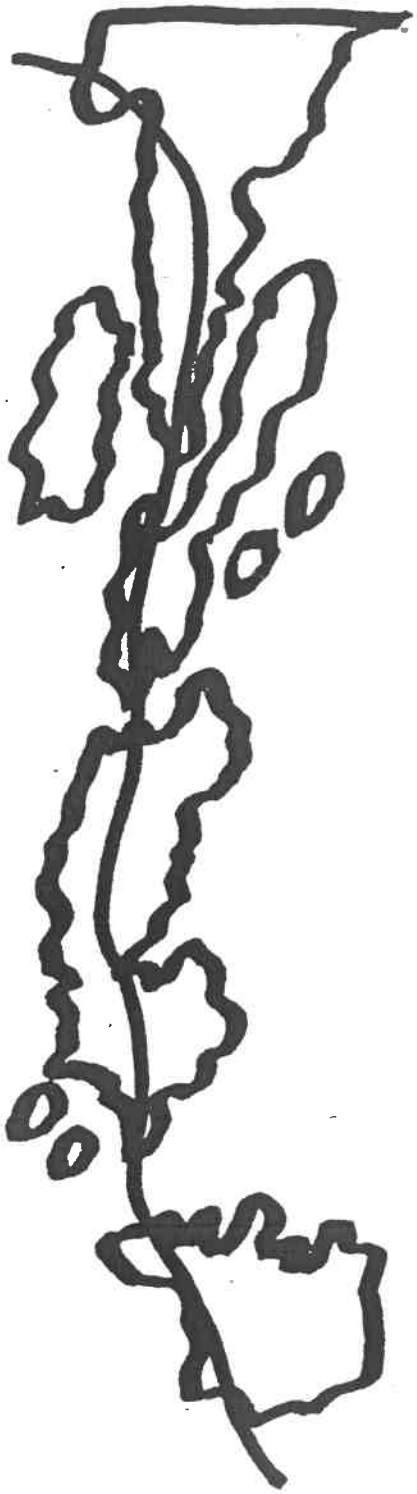

A Champlain Pathway

VERMONT RESOURCES RESEARCH CENTER

A CHAMPLAIN PATHWAY

A special report to Governor Philip H. Hoff on the recreation development potential of the former Rutland Railroad right of way in Grand Isle County.

by

Howard Jeffrey
Vermont Director of Recreation

John J. Lindsay
Vermont Extension Service

Frederic O. Sargent
and
James G. Sykes
Vermont Experiment Station

VERMONT RESOURCES RESEARCH CENTER

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FOREWORD

When the State of Vermont purchased the Rutland Railroad right of way north of Burlington in February 1965, there immediately arose many pressures, points of view, and proposals concerning what the state should do with the purchased land. A number of conflicting proposals and demands developed. Some individual landowners saw it as an opportunity to purchase a parcel from the state to extend their private holdings or give them access to Lake Champlain. Other individuals saw it as a hope for increasing public access to Lake Champlain. Officials of state agencies also differed. Some saw the costs involved in administering the holding, while others saw vast opportunities in developing the right of way as a major key in a comprehensive recreation development program.

University and federal agency people who looked at the purchase also had differing views. Some saw it as a pathway, others as a connecting link between a long string of intensively developed recreation areas, and others as one part of a superpark development of Grand Isle County. In response to these conflicting and competing proposals, Governor Hoff asked the members of the Interagency Committee on Natural Resources to study the newly acquired land and make recommendations concerning the best use to which it could be put. The Interagency Committee agreed unanimously to this proposal and set January 1, 1966 as the deadline for these reports to be completed. However, as a result of the recommendation of the Board of Forest and Parks, the deadline was moved up to September 1, 1965.

This study is based on an intensive study of aerial photographs and ground inventory of the right of way. All points of potential development have been inspected by the authors. Nearly all of the 37.5 miles of the right of way have been inspected on foot. Several points of possible development have been surveyed and discussed with recreation specialists of the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation and the National Park Service.

This report was originally intended to cover the former Rutland Railroad right of way north of Burlington. It is limited to Grand Isle County, in deference to a request by the Department of Forests and Parks.

This manuscript is a progress report of work done to date on the State Research Project 114, "Recreation Development Potential of Grand Isle County." It is not complete and comprehensive but designed to be suggestive of the opportunities and the scope of development which

could take place. It should be read as a complement to other reports by state agencies. While time has been limited in preparing this report, the authors make no excuses on this basis. Although more detailed analysis is left to be done before specific development projects may be outlined, we believe that this report will sketch, in general terms, the unique situation, the unparalleled opportunities, and the significant development potential of this new piece of state property.

The cover and maps are by the VRRC cartographic unit. Thanks are due to the State Soil Conservation office for making aerial photos available, to Dwight K. Eddy for contributing to the section on economics, to Malcolm I. Bevins for assistance in analyses, and to M. Yvonne Gratton for publication design and layout.

H. Jeffrey
J. Lindsay
F. Sargent
J. Sykes

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I. INTRODUCTION

Conclusion of State Studies

The resource inventory and analysis, conducted under the aegis of the Central Planning Office by the Hoff Administration, has led to definite conclusions concerning the state's potential for economic development. One of these conclusions is that the state has a relatively great economic development potential, through development of recreation facilities and attracting light industry on the basis of recreation offerings and other amenities. This conclusion concerning the key role of recreation development leads, logically, to a more intensive study of the recreation potential of various areas in the state.

Studies of Grand Isle County

Grand Isle County, because of its unique scenery and location, is receiving its share of this intensified interest (Appendix I). The Bureau of Outdoor Recreation of the U.S. Department of Interior made a survey of the recreation potential of Grand Isle County during the summer of 1964. The National Park Service is presently conducting a reconnaissance survey of the potential of Grand Isle County with reference to the National Park Service program. The Grand Isle County Development Association, in its studies, has recognized the importance of recreation in the future development of the county. The National Association of Soil Conservation Districts is sponsoring a survey of private and quasi-public recreation facilities in Grand Isle County during the summer of 1965. The Vermont Recreation Department is studying the recreation facilities in a number of towns in Grand Isle County. The Department of Forests and Parks is working on a state recreation plan for purposes of qualifying for federal assistance in purchase of land. The purchase of the Rutland Railroad right of way north of Burlington by the State of Vermont has greatly intensified interest in recreation development of the area.

In view of this intensified activity, plus the nonrecreation land use planning and interests in Grand Isle County (such as road relocation and interests of private property owners to purchase parcels of the right of way), it appears necessary to try to develop a plan of action which will be acceptable to all major interest groups and will be in accord with the desires of the people of the area and of the state.

The Physical Setting

Lake Champlain is the sixth largest natural water body in the United States and the largest in the northeast region. It is 107 miles long and from one-half to 14 miles wide. Its water surface covers some 600 square miles—475 of these are in Vermont. This means Vermont owns almost 80 percent of Lake Champlain—the largest fresh water lake in the East.

The weather of the Champlain Basin is conducive to outdoor activity. The record high and low temperatures for the area are 104 degrees maximum and a minus 44 degrees minimum. The average annual temperature is 45 degrees. Average January temperature is 19 degrees in the lake area. In July temperatures average about 70 degrees in the lake area. The lake keeps the regional winters reasonably mild and the summers cool which makes this an ideal vacationland for Northeast America.

The area abounds with fossils and has an interesting geological history. For the naturalist it has botanical specimens which include Hudsonia. This is an area which can start a climax forest in one generation. The railroad right of way offers a path which nature has already begun to heal and plant with its many varieties of trees and ferns. It also includes marble causeways which take you far out into Lake Champlain.

Lake Champlain and its islands constitute a unique natural resource complex. This region has long been known as an important link in the Atlantic flyway used by several species of migratory waterfowl as a resting, breeding, and feeding ground. Canadian geese, black duck, and other waterfowl nest and find refuge in the area. The names of some of the bays and points in the lake, such as Goose Point and Gander Bay, are reminders of this fact. More than 60 different species of fish are found in the lake. Its bays, coves, and estuaries provide thousands of acres of open water for fishing, boating, sailing, hunting, swimming, and sight-seeing.

The Green Mountains of Vermont and the Adirondacks of New York rise to the east and west of this large water body creating incomparable scenic vistas in all directions.

II. THE GRAND ISLE COUNTY ECONOMY, DEMAND FOR RECREATION, AND PRESENT LAND USE

The Economy

To appraise the significance of proposals to increase economic activity in Grand Isle County and how it might be influenced by the Champlain Pathway, it is necessary to review economic trends in that area. Grand Isle County is not only the smallest county in the state, it also has an economic base that needs to be broadened and strengthened.

Population

The population of the county is only 2,927.[1] By modern standards this is an inadequate basis for support of all necessary public services and facilities. The population of Grand Isle County decreased by the largest percentage of all counties in the state from 1950 to 1960. The loss was 14.1 percent. By comparison, the next biggest population decrease during that decade was Orange County with a drop of only 5.9 percent. The county has a high percentage of native born Vermonters—84.2 percent—while only 7.1 percent of the population is foreign born. The number of households in the county is 846, which is a decrease of 8.4 percent from 1950. The number of persons per household is 3.45, compared with the state average of 3.39. Eighty percent of the population have been in their present homes since 1958 (Table 1).

Table 1. Projected Population of Grand Isle County

Year	Total population
1960	2,927
1970	2,894
1980	2,884
1990	2,943

Source: Squire, Horace H., and Scheele, Karl A. "A Projection of the Vermont Population," Central Planning Office, September 21, 1964.

[1] Nonresident ownership will be covered in a more detailed study being conducted by the VRRC.

Income

The county has the lowest median income in dollars per family of any county in the state—$3,638. Thirty-nine percent of the families earn less than $3,000, while 6.5 percent earn over $10,000. The median income for the state is $4,890. This is still the most agricultural county in the state despite a drop of 50 percent in employment in farming from 1950 to 1960.

Labor Force

The total labor force declined 16.6 percent in 10 years. Males declined from 902 to 664, a drop of 26 percent, while the females in the labor force increased from 163 to 224, a rise of 37 percent. The county has the lowest participation rate in the labor force of all the counties in the state, especially by females. The rate of participation by females in the 14-to-17 age class is 7.9 percent and is among the lowest rate of any area in the entire Northeast. The participation rate in the county of 14.6 percent of the 35-to-44 age group of females is also extremely low. Of the employed persons, 8.7 percent are in manufacturing industries, while 24.4 percent have white collar occupations.[2]

Grand Isle County has 16.7 percent of the employed workers working outside the county. For every person who is employed there are 1.86 people who are not. The county's population consisted of 1,478 males and 1,449 females. The median of all county residents was 32.18 years in 1960, while in 1950 the median age was 30.4 years. This shows that the younger people are moving from the county due to the fact that the county is unable to provide adequate employment opportunity and post high school educational facilities for its youth.

Manufacturing

There is one significant manufacturer in the county. Thermal Wire of America, Inc., recently completed an expansion program which added 10,000 square feet of factory space. The company is presently engaged in the production of high temperature wire and cables. The company coats the wire with teflon. This effort is expected to increase steadily and provide the county with steady industrial employment. Due to the recent expansion program, the employment of

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[2]This section is based on "Manpower Resources of Grand Isle County," Report of the Small Communities Program of the Department of Employment Security, May 1965.

the factory has doubled over the past year and the plan of the company is to employ about 90 to 100 individuals by the end of the year. Thermal Wire of America is an example of the type of industry which can be attracted to Grand Isle County provided there is careful planning development of recreation, housing, and educational facilities.

Unemployment

There is often discussion and disagreement concerning the extent and nature of unemployment in Grand Isle County. The best source of information on this subject now is the manpower resources study by the Department of Employment Security. This study was performed during the period from December 10, 1964 to March 30, 1965, and consisted of interviews with 734 individuals. This is 78.8 percent of the estimated labor force of Grand Isle County for the month of January 1965. This survey turned up the following facts. Of the persons interviewed, 52 percent were females. Of all those interviewed, 22.6 percent were available for work. There were 16.5 percent who stated they wanted full-time work, and 12 percent stated they would move permanently if necessary to find employment. Another 20.6 percent said they would commute up to 31 miles or more, one way, each day, for work. Of the total interviewed, 70.3 percent had earned less than $3,000 during the past 12 months, 47.3 percent had worked from 36 to 52 weeks during the past year, and 16.3 percent stated that they had collected unemployment insurance during the past year. The unemployment rates in Grand Isle County are the highest in the state for both males and females. The percent of dual worker families is also quite low.

The Dairy Industry

In looking at the trends in the dairy industry in Grand Isle County over the last 10 years we find the following trends. Total cow numbers have declined about 7 percent as compared to a drop of 9 percent for the rest of the state. Total output of milk has increased 35 percent which is at about the same rate as the rest of the state (Tables 2 and 3).

In the future, milk will be produced from fewer and larger farms.[3] Total milk production will hold it's own and may increase some. It is estimated that about 25 percent of the total hay grown is sold outside of the county. This is certainly an indication that there are land resources available to easily support the present dairy industry.

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[3]Discussions with Robert White, County Agricultural Agent; Arthur Pickard, Soil Conservation Service; and Dwight Eddy, Department of Agricultural Economics.

Table 2. Cow Numbers in Grand Isle County, 1953-65

Town	Year					
	1953	1957	1961	1963	1964	1965
	Number of cows					
Alburg	2,128	2,199	1,941	1,803	1,819	1,905
Grand Isle	1,209	1,494	1,339	1,388	1,448	1,423
Isle La Motte	507	550	438	466	449	452
North Hero	699	578	428	499	440	390
South Hero	1,208	1,039	1,209	1,171	1,156	832
Total	5,751	5,860	5,355	5,327	5,312	5,002
Number of herds in Grand Isle County	230	213	180	165	156	132

Table 3. Total Pounds of Milk Produced in Grand Isle County, 1953-65*

Town	Year					
	1953	1957	1961	1963	1964	1965
	Pounds					
Alburg	11,704,000	12,754,200	13,880,091	13,973,250	14,515,620	15,716,250
Grand Isle	6,649,500	8,665,200	9,575,189	10,757,000	11,555,040	11,739,750
Isle La Motte	2,788,500	3,190,000	3,132,138	3,611,500	3,583,020	3,729,000
North Hero	3,844,500	3,352,400	3,060,628	3,867,250	3,511,200	3,217,500
South Hero	6,644,000	6,026,200	8,645,559	9,075,250	9,224,880	6,864,000
Total	31,630,500	33,988,000	38,293,605	41,284,250	42,389,760	41,266,500

* Production per cow times the number of cows.

There will be pressures from recreation for the use of land. But in general this will not seriously affect most of the good agricultural land. There is no indication of any widespread pressure for land for building purposes coming from increases in year-round residences.

Over the years, milk production has increased from 31.6 million pounds of milk in 1953, to 42.4 million pounds of milk in 1964—an increase amounting to 35 percent (Table 4). Since 1961, three towns have shown increases in milk production—Alburg, Grand Isle, and Isle La Motte. During this same time period, the towns of North Hero and South Hero have decreased in total milk production. The greatest decrease has come in the town of South Hero.

To summarize, recent studies indicate that Grand Isle County is not enjoying a boom in economic activity and needs to seek to develop new sources of income. The sale of lakeshore frontage for summer homes is a type of land use which raises the tax base somewhat. It cannot be called an industry. The potential for development of tourism and light industry, based on recreation development, is an entirely different story.

Table 4. Pounds of Milk per Cow

Year	Grand Isle County	Vermont
1953	5,500	5,900
1957	5,800	6,250
1961	7,151	7,550
1963	7,750*	7,750
1964	7,980*	7,980
1965	8,250*	8,250*

* Assumed to equal Vermont average.
Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture, "Agricultural Statistics, 1964," and Sykes, James G., "Dairy Bench Mark Survey in Vermont," Vermont Agricultural Experiment Station Misc. Pub. 21, December 1962.

Economic Location of Grand Isle County

One of the most important factors in any analysis of resource development potential is the economic location of an area. In discussing the tourist industry, recreation, or light industry, this means the location of the area with reference to population concentrations. In this regard, Grand Isle County is well located. In fact, it is better located than most points in Maine and most areas in New Hampshire.

Map 1 shows that Grand Isle County is very close to one of the largest cities in North America and within a day's driving time on interstate highways of many of the largest cities in the Northeast. A 50-mile radius drawn from North Hero cuts through the center of the city of Montreal, Canada (1.2 million people). A 150-mile radius circle includes Ottawa, Canada. A 200-mile radius cuts into Boston, Massachusetts, and includes all of the city of Quebec, Canada. A 250-mile radius includes such population centers as Rochester, New York, most all of Connecticut, and Providence, Rhode Island. A 300-mile radius, which is still a convenient distance for a family to travel in one day, hits the largest city in the New World, New York City, with its 8 million inhabitants. Just beyond 300 miles includes such population centers as Toronto and Ontario, Canada, and Buffalo, New York; in fact, most of the people of New York State and New England and a vast majority of the people of Quebec and Ontario, Canada (Table 5).

Table 5. 1960 Population Concentrations in the Grand Isle County Tourist Shed by States and Provinces

States or provinces	Total population
Quebec	5,259,211
Ontario	6,236,092
New York	16,782,304
Pennsylvania	11,319,366
New Jersey	6,066,782
New England (omitting Vermont)	10,119,486
Total	55,783,241

Source: Department of Agricultural Economics.

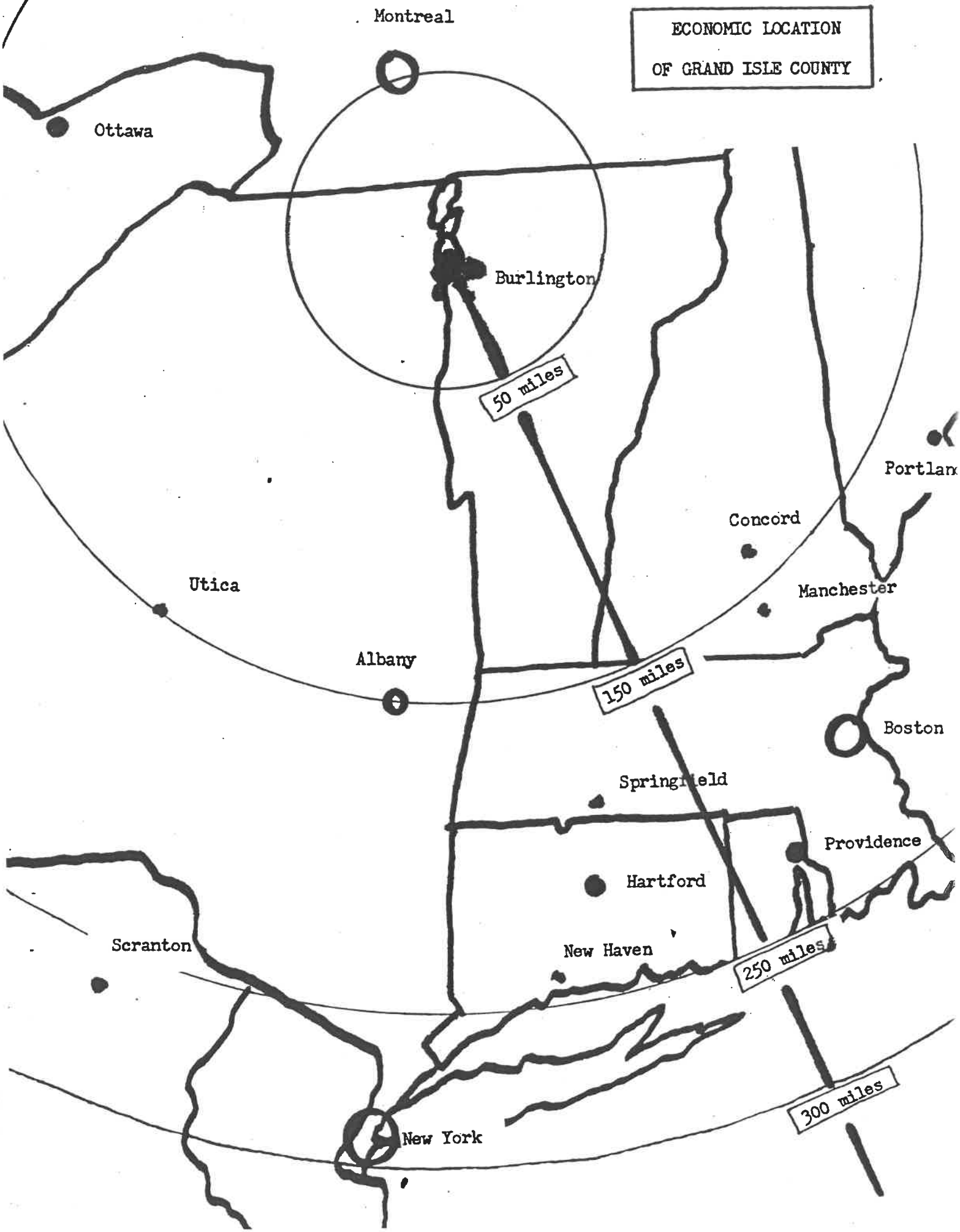
This location is ideal for purposes of developing the tourist industry. The number of people within a convenient driving distance of the county is so great that it is safe to say that the economic development of tourism will be limited primarily by the facilities supplied. There is no possibility in the next few years of overconstructing facilities provided that they are based on natural attractions and balanced with both public and private investment.

Demand for Recreation Facilities

To talk about the potential of the railroad right of way for recreation development it is necessary to review the demand for outdoor recreation facilities as reported in numerous studies. Fortunately, a great deal of attention has been given to this subject

Map 1

ECONOMIC LOCATION OF GRAND ISLE COUNTY



during the past three years and so we are able to draw on a number of studies for an evaluation of the opportunities for recreation development in Vermont in general, and in Grand Isle County in particular. Some of the principal sources for these appraisals of demand, supply, and opportunity come from the ORRRC study, Senator George D. Aiken's office in Washington, VRRC Reports 3 and 12, a recent report by the Department of Agricultural Economics on the recreation development potential of Vermont, and the Interim State Recreation Plan.

The ORRRC studies were a comprehensive and intensive survey of outdoor recreation in the United States. They arrived at the conclusion that there is a deficiency in the supply of outdoor recreation facilities in the Northeast and in Vermont in particular.

Senator Aiken, our senior representative in Washington, continuously studies the economic opportunities of Vermont with special comparison to other states in national trends. He recently stated: "Vermont's recreational development has not been able to keep up with the demand put upon it. We are still woefully short of campsites."[4] Senator Aiken was a co-sponsor of the Land and Water Conservation Act which was passed last year and which will now provide $1.5 million for the Green Mountain State for purposes of rectifying the deficiencies which he cited. Senator Aiken stated further that it is necessary to assure that the public has access to the state's desirable winter and summer recreation areas, and especially to its bodies of water.

Vermont Resources Research Center Report 3 (by M. I. Bevins), "The Outdoor Recreation Industry in Vermont," makes it clear that while Vermont is a leader in developing the ski industry, it falls behind neighboring states in meeting the multiple demands for camping and other recreational facilities.

Vermont Resources Research Center Report 12, "Vermont Resources—Extent, Management, and Development Potential," summarized the conclusions of many studies which have been made on the Vermont economy since the early twenties. All of the early studies, as well as the many recent ones, are summed up in the statement "that the greatest potential (for developing the Vermont economy) lies in the development of recreation and tourism and light industry which may be attracted on the basis of recreation development and other amenities." (VRRC Report 12, page 73.)

The Interim State Recreation Plan (July 1965) states: "Shorelines and access paths must be acquired in strategic locations, beginning with those most likely to vanish soon and those nearest to the centers

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[4] The Burlington Free Press, Wednesday, August 4, 1965, p. 3.

of demand. Portions of Lake Champlain and the Connecticut River deserve the highest priority in parts of Vermont where water surface is in short supply . . ."

One of the most recent studies specifically dealing with the economy of Grand Isle County has been published by the Vermont Department of Employment Security, "Manpower Resources of Grand Isle County," May 1965. This report states that the tremendous shorelines of approximately 135 miles in length gives the county a big potential for a great recreation industry. This industry offers the greatest possibilities for immediate development.

A recent planning report by the Department of Agricultural Economics (Ag. Econ. 65-6) cites Grand Isle County as an area ideally suited for comprehensive development of recreation facilities and a park atmosphere on a scale to challenge the national parks for the tourists attention and dollars.

The Bureau of Outdoor Recreation has recommended water access be given a high priority in planning the development of the Grand Isle County area.

Present Land Use

Consideration of the potential for recreation development of the railroad right of way or of the whole county should be based on a detailed inventory of present land use. Unfortunately, no such inventory has been made. The next best approach is to bring together available facts and observations on land use and to draw from them a general picture of the types of use, the trends, the pressures, and the needs which exist in the area.

Here are some facts concerning present land use. There are seven state parks on all of Lake Champlain with a total frontage of 38,400 feet. Grand Isle County has two state parks with 13,300-foot frontage. There are 23 fishing access areas on the Vermont side of Lake Champlain—eight are in Grand Isle County. Both state parks and fishing access areas are restricted in use to a few of the many recreational uses of shorefront (Tables 6 and 7).

Many property owners in Grand Isle County have forbidden the use of their lands by towns in the area for swimming and water access. Many areas which were traditional swimming places are no longer available. No town in this area owns public access to Lake Champlain. This includes all the towns from Colchester to Alburg. One town has permission from a private owner which provides access, but this type of permission will disappear quickly with a change in ownership. There are very few picnic facilities in the whole county. In 1965

Table 6. Vermont State Parks on Lake Champlain and Their Water Frontages in Feet

State park	Approximate water frontage
	Feet
Burton Island	13,000
Button Bay	4,500
D.A.R.	2,000
Grand Isle	4,500
North Hero	8,800
Sand Bar	3,000
St. Albans Bay	2,600
Total	38,400

Source: Calculated from Vermont Department of Highways and U.S. Geological Survey maps.

Table 7. Vermont Fishing Access Areas on Lake Champlain, 1965

Town	Number of access points
Addison	1
Alburg	3
Benson	1
Charlotte	1
Colchester	2
Ferrisburg	3
Grand Isle	1
Highgate	1
Isle La Motte	1
Milton	1
North Hero	2
Shelburne	1
Shoreham	1
South Hero	1
St. Albans Town	1
Swanton	2
Total	23

Source: Vermont Fish and Game Department's booklet, "Vermont Fishing Access Areas and Impoundments."

there was no picnic use of Grand Isle State Park and nearby Sand Bar was filled up and turned away day-use visitors on weekends.

Would-be campers are being turned away from the park areas which are full during the weekends of the summer vacation season. (Those from Montreal are only 45 minutes away from Grand Isle County.)

When the ties were removed from the Alburg section of the right of way on Lake Champlain, residents of the town of Alburg, as well as Canadians, immediately began to use this beach.

At Tromp Point and Bow Arrow Point, individuals are trying to use the land and reach the lake for fishing.

Private development of the lakeshore has gone on at an ever-increasing rate in the form of private camps, vacation homes, youth camps, motels, lodges, etc., to the point that undeveloped lakeshore frontage is at a premium and land back from the water's edge has considerably lower value because of the lack of access.

Lake Champlain is serving a small percentage of people relative to its size because, for all practical purposes, it is landlocked in private ownership. People wishing to use the lake without trespassing are forced to use the state highway causeways. Evidence of people trying to use the lake in this manner may be seen on any summer weekend from the Sand Bar Bridge to the Richelieu River—wherever the state highway borders the waters of the lake.

The recreation business has been confined to a few low investment tourist facilities, plus cottage development on shore property. The nature of the cottage summer home developments has been to cut off development in depth and most of it has been on the basis of minimum levels of investments, i.e., housing, valued under $20,000 with no new motels, resorts, or tourist attractions. Recreation facilities on the island are amazingly scarce in contrast to the potential. Some of the island towns even lack a public beach! South Hero has a public beach opposite the public dump.

Lakeshore string development can only serve a limited number of people that can afford the $50 a foot frontage rates. A much larger number of people that would be willing to stay in public campgrounds are prevented from staying in Grand Isle County and are passing through, keeping in their pockets the money that could have been left in the pockets of Grand Isle County merchants providing them with goods and services.

The dangers of losing access are crucial. To illustrate this, during the field survey, two researchers were threatened by an irate

landowner as they stood on the railroad right of way. They were told that as soon as the state sold him the right of way lot adjoining his property he would prohibit all public access across his land to a piece of potential recreation land the state now owns on the lakeshore. This incident emphasizes the need to keep the entire railroad right of way ownership in the hands of the State of Vermont until technical surveys show where access is needed to areas the state owns or will acquire. Any sale of land that is allegedly "not needed" for recreation development may destroy indispensable access to other valuable land.

THE FOLLOWING CONCLUSIONS MUST BE DRAWN FROM A STUDY OF THE PRESENT LAND USE IN GRAND ISLE COUNTY.

1. Town public access to Lake Champlain is inadequate.

2. State public access to Lake Champlain is inadequate.

3. Present land uses are (a) of a low investment type and (b) follow a pattern that freezes out further investments.

4. The number of people who are trying to find access to the lake indicates that the supply of access is far short of need.

5. No state land should be sold until a recreation plan is agreed upon.

III. ALTERNATIVE LEVELS OF RECREATION DEVELOPMENT

Recreation development is not an all or nothing proposition. There are numerous levels of public investment, private investment, and combinations of the two which may be combined for recreation development. In order to make knowledgeable decisions concerning which is the best level of development for the people in each town, the people of the county, the people of the Champlain Basin, citizens of the state, and tourists of the Northeast, it is necessary to consider separately at least three different levels of development. The three possible levels of development of the right of way may be called: (1) conventional, (2) cluster or "string of pearls," and (3) comprehensive or superpark. Let us discuss each.

Conventional Recreation Development

Conventional recreation development is the lowest level of development in terms of public investment and private investment. It is also lowest in terms of public returns in increased tax base, and private returns in increased jobs and income. It may be defined as a continuation of the rate of recreation development which Vermont has followed in the past few years. This would consist of developing, for recreation purposes, those areas where the railroad right of way actually touches the shoreline.

Conventional development of recreation along the right of way would consist of developments at the following points where the railroad runs close to the lake: (1) Colchester Point, (2) Allen Point, (3) Bow Arrow Point in Grand Isle (a fishing access), (4) South Alburg, and (5) East Alburg to Rouses Point crossing.

Conventional level of development has the advantage of being the level of development which can be engaged in easily without any significant expansion in present rates of financing, personnel, planning, management, or recreation development concepts. It has the disadvantage in that it would not lead to significant economic development of the region, it would not stimulate significant private development investments, and it would fall far short of meeting the present and potential demand of recreation facilities of which the resources under study are capable. (For further details concerning possible conventional level of recreation development the reader is referred to the planning program of the Department of Forests and Parks and policy statements by the Board of Forest and Parks. The purpose of this report is not to duplicate analyses of that department, but to suggest alternative levels of development.)

Some of the limitations of the conventional development would be inadequate provision of day-use facilities, camping grounds of a size that is inadequate for most efficient operation and inadequate with reference to present and future demands, and a complete absence of a host of recreation facilities, such as scenic overlooks, multiple-purpose water access, picnic areas with sanitary facilities, scenic drives, bikeways, hiking trails, equestrian trails, etc.

The "String of Pearls" Concept of Recreation Development

The railroad right of way provides an ideal setup for a so-called "string of pearls" development. This is a higher level of development than conventional development and would consist of greater public investments. It would induce larger private investments, and would lead to higher tax returns, as well as more jobs and higher income in the region.

A short definition of this concept is that it would consist of a string of multiple-use recreation areas tied together by a green belt pathway. This would provide many recreationists (hikers, bikers, horseback riders, nature lovers, photographic hobbists, and people exercising or relaxing) with a throughway connecting the recreation areas.

The cost of developing a string of recreation areas tied together by a pathway would be low because of the federal subsidies available. It would be easily within the scope of recently expanded state appropriations for recreation development coupled with the new federal assistance. The advantages of the string of pearls plan are:

(1) It could be carried out with minimal cost, because of the facts of the present ownership of the railroad right of way by the state and the federal subsidies available for purchase planning and development.

(2) It would lead to further and much more intensive private investment for recreation facilities—motels, restaurants, resorts, marinas, etc.

(3) It would begin to become regionally known and start to attract tourists to the pathway as well as to the region and the state.

The disadvantages of developing a string of pearls are that it would require new concepts in recreation development, the introduction of new management principles and policies, and, most difficult of all, coordination among the several state agencies concerned in various ways with resource development and management.

Chapter IV provides details of the authors' suggestions for this level of development.

Comprehensive Recreation Development

The third and highest potential level of recreation development would be to make the whole of the county, plus Colchester and some of the Franklin County and New York shores, into one huge park area. This does not mean actual public purchase. To achieve development of a superpark would not require public purchases of any more than 7 percent of the total land area. Second, it must be pointed out immediately that the superpark development does not mean exclusive federal development, nor exclusive state development. If we take the Cape Cod National Seashore or Acadia National Park as examples we will see that superparks may be developed on the basis of a relatively small proportion of publicly-owned land with a relatively large proportion of private investment for tourists and profit-oriented recreation facilities.

A short definition of a comprehensive development may be provided by stating that it would consist of the string of pearls development, plus full development of all the land, water, and scenic resources of the area to provide recreation and tourist attractions. This would include large-scale parks with interpretative programs, scenic roads and overlooks, a marine museum, aquarium, self-guided nature trails along the right of way, day-use areas, picnic areas, and multiple-purpose public access to both scenery and water. It would also involve a park commission authority which would zone land and water use; control signs; promote, foster, and safeguard scenery and natural attributes; and develop an attractive park-like atmosphere for the county.

The principle difference between comprehensive development and the string of pearls development is a difference in scale and also the fact that the comprehensive development would require a special authority or commission to develop and manage the park attributes and facilities in the region. It would also require area zoning, area planning, and an effective coordination of all programs of state resource departments as well as federal departments (Table 8).

The advantages of comprehensive recreation development of the area are that it would stimulate the highest amount of private investment in tourist and recreation facilities and would lead to the greatest increase in the tax base in jobs, income, and regional economic development.

Table 8. Alternative Levels of Public Recreation Development of the Railroad Right of Way and Surrounding Area

Item	Conventional development	"String of pearls"	Comprehensive "superpark"
Lake frontage necessary (feet)	4,610	49,019	71,280
Percentage of total shoreline	Less than 1 percent	Less than 7 percent	10 percent
Estimated necessary public investment	Same level as recent years	Accelerated rate provided by new federal programs	Long range program
Probable induced private investment	Insignificant	Significant	Large scale
Development agency	Present state agencies	Regional park commission	Regional park commission
Effect on regional economy	Slight	Significant	Will raise level of whole area
Number of major recreation sites	5	12	15
Types of facilities	Campgrounds	Champlain pathway, campgrounds, water access, day-use areas	Champlain pathway, campgrounds, water access, day-use areas, scenic roads and lookouts, interpretative program, museums, aquarium, nature trails

A superpark would also receive national attention and start to draw several times the present number of tourists to the region and to the state. All cities and recreation businesses in the state would profit significantly by the existence of a nationally recognized park in this area. The basis for these statements consist of a study of the economic developments which have resulted recently from the creation of the Cape Cod National Seashore.

The disadvantages or obstacles in developing a superpark are that many people in the area and in the state are unacquainted with this concept and so a considerable education campaign would have to take place before it could be implemented. Second, a superpark would require a greater public investment than is now planned even in the stepped-up plans to participate in the BOR development program. It would also require new legislation to set up the planning and development of a park commission to provide for regional and scenic zoning, and to provide for close, effective cooperation among the state natural resource agencies.

IV. AREAS OF RECREATION DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

The 80-foot right of way of the railroad line is adjacent to and, in some cases, passes through the areas in Grand Isle County that have a high potential for recreation development or conservation use. A large portion of the land in these areas is still in its natural state. Most of these conservation and recreation potential areas were inventoried and annotated on 1962 aerial photographs. Their location is indicated on Map 2.

The remainder of this chapter is a description of the value and characteristics of selected areas which the authors recommend to the state for purchase to provide recreation areas which will supplement the pathway to constitute a "string of pearls development."

Area 1. Allen Point

This area is located on the southern tip of South Hero (Map 2). Actual frontage of state ownership in the area is about 2,150 feet located on the west side of the South Hero mainland facing Stave Island. It consists of a shale beach fully exposed to north, west, and south winds. The higher banks adjacent to the railroad bed are covered with a mixture of woody growth of white cedar and various hardwoods.

Perhaps the highest recreation development potential of the Allen Point area lies in the protected cove formed by the railroad causeway as it projects south into the water and the south shoreline of Allen Point. This cove has a gently sloping shoreline and open field area supporting a number of shade trees. Acquisition in the area would provide a valuable day-use or campground area with ample room for automobile parking, boat slips, picnicking, and tenting.

In this area the water depth is less than 3 feet for about 400 feet from shore. At that point the depth increases to 8 to 10 feet for about 1,600 feet from shore. A navigation buoy marks a small reef which has a depth of about 1 foot. This is just east of the railroad bridge on the causeway by about 1,500 feet.[5]

The 3,500-foot causeway south of Allen Point forms an excellent harbor as the high east bank of the causeway affords protection from the strong northwest winds which blow frequently. In this water area east of the causeway a boat mooring and swimming area could be

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[5] U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Department of Defense, Lake Champlain Survey Charts Nos. 171 and 172, July and August 1962 editions.

developed. The Sand Bar Bridge to the north, the railroad causeway to the west, and the mouth of Malletts Bay to the east form an impoundment measuring roughly 16 square miles. Fishermen and duck hunters would find the causeway a good place from which to carry on their sport.

West of the causeway toward the broad lake, a depth of less than 12 feet extends about 2,500 feet. There the full forces of the storms are felt as exposure is at a maximum.

Area 2. Keeler Bay Swamp and Marshland

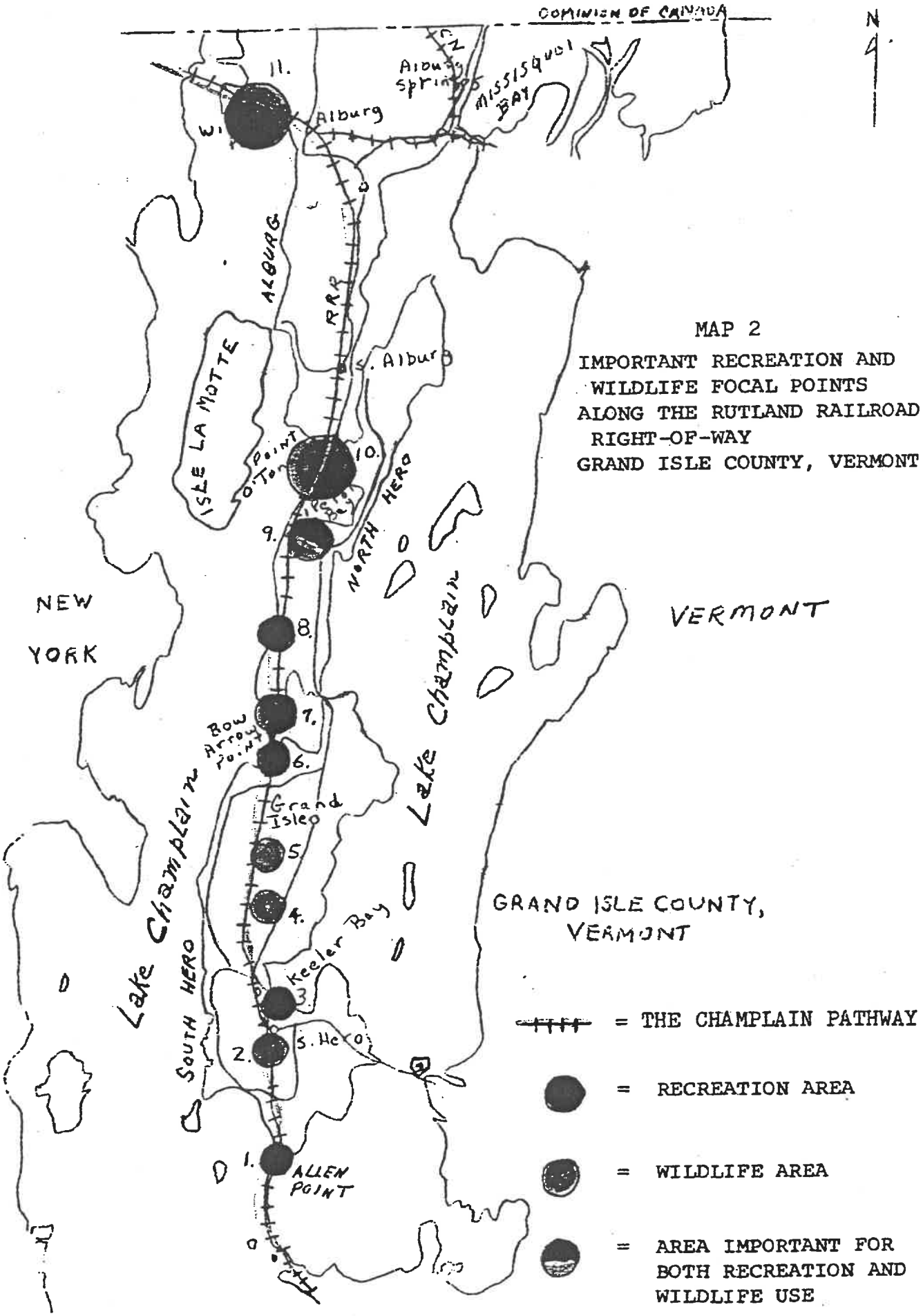
One of the multiple use aspects of the Champlain Pathway is the wildlife potential that many areas along the right of way offer. Such an area is the 285-acre woodland swamp located about a mile and a half north of Allen Point. This swamp terminates in a 30-acre marsh that drains into the open lake waters of Keeler Bay. The combination of open water, marshland, and tree-covered swamp with surrounding acreages in agricultural production creates ideal conditions for various species of wildlife. The habitat offers food and cover for waterfowl. Constructed duck boxes could improve the area as a nesting ground. Wetland mammals, grouse, and rabbits offer the opportunity for many enjoyable hours spent in the field with dog and gun. In relocating route 2 at Dead Man's Curve in South Hero it is suggested that the new highway be culverted so that the water levels in the Keeler Bay Marsh are not adversely affected. Abrupt fluctuation of marsh water levels can destroy valuable wildlife habitat.

Area 3. Keeler Bay

The railroad right of way includes 170 feet of actual lake frontage as it parallels the west short of Keeler Bay. By acquiring only a few feet between the railroad and the water's edge (at some points less than 15 feet), the State of Vermont could increase its frontage ownership to well over 2,000 feet in this area. The State Highway Department is planning to relocate route 2 at this point.

Keeler Bay is a good example of what Lake Champlain has to offer in weather-protected bays for swimming, fishing, and boating enthusiasts. A boat slip and public access area could easily be constructed, using the Champlain Pathway as access to this valuable piece of shore frontage and beautiful bay area.

At Keeler Bay, a depth of from 2 to 12 feet extends about 3,200 feet from shore. This bay encloses an area of about 1.5 square miles and offers excellent protection from storms. A marina and boat mooring



MAP 2

IMPORTANT RECREATION AND WILDLIFE FOCAL POINTS ALONG THE RUTLAND RAILROAD RIGHT-OF-WAY

GRAND ISLE COUNTY, VERMONT

could be developed here as supplementary services are available in the immediate area—gasoline, groceries, restaurants, etc. The outlet opens to the east lake where good fishing is found.

Area 4. Pearl Swamp

The Champlain Pathway forms the west border of Pearl Swamp just south of Grand Isle Station. This 410-acre swamp with surrounding farmland would make a worthy addition to Vermont's wildlife reserves. Such areas are also important to the people who enjoy observing wildlife in its natural habitat and to hunters.

Area 5. South Hero Swamp

This 500-acre wetland swale is somewhat different from Pearl Swamp in that there are fairly large pieces of open land in its interior made up of abandoned fields, agricultural land, and shrubby meadows. Such a diversification of cover types with good edge characteristics provide a good wildlife environment giving birds the habitat they need for feeding, roosting, dusting, loafing, and breeding. Some of the wetter areas of the swamp could be opened up to provide open marsh nesting, resting, and feeding areas for waterfowl coming in off Lake Champlain on stormy days.

Area 6. Tromp Point

Tromp Point marks the northern terminus of the Champlain Pathway on the island of South Hero. From this point the railroad stretches across the so-called "Gut" off Bow Arrow Point which is the southern tip of North Hero. This gut or water passageway is an important link between Lake Champlain's west and east passages because it is the only place that deep drafted boats can cross through the islands from the lake's east and west waters.

The Tromp Point area offers many kinds of recreation opportunities. The shore from Long Point to Tromp Point just west of the causeway is ideal for day-use, boating, swimming, picnicking, and tenting. A small amount of farmland acquisition (about 50 acres) to the east of Tromp Point that would include Tromp Point Cove would give access to this shallow warm water inlet. Fishing off the causeway is now a popular pastime with many people.

Area 7. Bow Arrow Point

The outstanding feature of this scenic area is the fact that the State of Vermont now owns about 1,070 feet of frontage on Hazen Point Cove which has direct road access from route U.S. 2. This excellent sheltered cove has great possibilities for public outdoor recreation development. The Champlain Pathway right of way also includes 570 feet of frontage on the east side of Bow Arrow Point across from Camp Abnaki Point Cove. If the railroad bed could be leveled here, boats could be slipped into the sheltered Hibbard Bay area. A small amount of acquisition on the point itself would set the stage for a unique day-use area or for campgrounds. Immediately north of Bow Arrow Point, wetland swamps drain directly into the lake far enough from the possible public recreation area so that this wildlife habitat would not be disturbed.

In the area east of the railroad causeway known as "The Gut," comprising less than 2 square miles, a 12-foot depth is not exceeded. Route U.S. 2 has a drawbridge at this location. This small body of water offers protection from storms. A boating facility could be established in this area.

West of the causeway the 0- to 12-foot depth is encountered very close to shore. From the causeway west to Middle Reef the depth does not exceed 27 feet.

Area 8. West Ridge Overlook

The road running along the west shore of North Hero follows a bank that in many places rises 100 feet above Lake Champlain. As one looks down over this sheer cliff, he can see the water of Lake Champlain pounding across rock ledges of the North Hero west shore. At every break in the white cedar trees a magnificant view of the west waters of Lake Champlain unfolds with a backdrop of New York State. It is not uncommon to see flights of black ducks and Canadian geese winging their way over this expanse of the lake. Sunsets, as viewed from this west ridge, illuminate the clouds over the Adirondacks and turn the water of Lake Champlain into a kaleidoscope of crimson hues.

Area 9. Pelot Bay

Although the railroad right of way would have given access to this point of high public outdoor recreation potential, private development in the form of vacation homes has nearly eliminated this possibility. Pelot Bay, Cary Bay, and the Alburg Passage—all part of the same water complex—are probably the most protected waters in all of Lake Champlain. These bays are surrounded by the peninsulas,

natural jetties, and mainland of Alburg and North Hero, as well as the causeway of the railroad. Area 9 is one of the safest on the lake for water-based recreation activity. There still remains some undeveloped areas where public access and boat slips could be provided. The railroad causeway from Pelot Point to Point of the Tongue in South Alburg is presently used by fishermen and duck hunters and should be maintained for this use. A possible boat mooring area east of the causeway is protected from open lake winds and wash.

On either side of the causeway at Pelot Point the 0- to 12-foot depth extends about 200 feet from shore. To the east of the causeway in Pelot Bay, 17-foot depths are encountered, while a 14-foot depth is found in Cary Bay. These two bays measure about 1.25 square miles. In this vicinity, two privately-operated marinas are found. One is located on the east side of Cary Bay (Birdland Boat Basin and Marina) and the other (Tudhope Marine Company) in the village of North Hero.

Area 10. South Alburg Shore

The South Alburg Shore from "Coon Point" to "Point of the Tongue" is possibly the area of greatest development potential along the entire Champlain Pathway right of way. This area has a low investment-type of development—small summer cottages. The potential lies in a 200-foot wide stretch of sand beach that extends 3,300 feet from the tip of "Coon Point" to the base of the "Point of the Tongue" peninsula. This sand beach and sandy-bottom water area is well suited in every way for a public bathing area. The beach now supports an undeveloped and marginally-maintained private campground. Immediately south of this beach a small amount of acquisition would make available to the public a beautifully undeveloped wooded bluff extending from the railroad bed west to the lakeshore. This could be an unusually attractive public camping area with over a mile of uninterrupted scenic overlook opportunities. These natural resources, coupled with a 1,330-acre wooded swamp, stretching from "Coon Point" to Dillenbeck Bay at the Alburg Passage, make this South Alburg area one of the potentially most valuable public development and conservation areas along the 40-mile Lake Champlain Pathway.

Area 11. Windmill Point

The railroad right of way runs parallel to the lakeshore in this section and not more than 100 to 200 feet away from the water's edge at any given point. By acquiring this narrow shore frontage between the old railroad bed and the lake, the State of Vermont could provide its people with the longest public sand beach in the entire Lake Champlain Basin. The sand beach and shallow water bay runs for

a mile and a half along the right of way. Such an opportunity to provide an outstanding public swimming beach for the people of Vermont may never occur again.

Here the railroad bed skirts the shore with a due south exposure. The 0- to 12-foot depth extends a great distance from shore—about 4,000 feet. In this lake area south to Reynolds Point on Isle La Motte many reefs occur. While they are all marked with navigation aids, many boat owners fail to read the aids correctly, causing frequent groundings.

Area 12. The Champlain Pathway

The twelfth and last "area" is the string that holds the above described pearls of recreation sites together. Making the right of way into a transportation artery for everything but internal combustion, engines will add a new dimension to a long list of recreation sites. It will add six specific, outdoor activities—bicycling, hiking, horseback riding, nature study, hosteling, and scenic access for looking or for photography.

A continuous 37.5-mile pathway to tie the recreation areas together and provide the beginning of a recreation complex is necessary. Cut the pathway at one point and you eliminate six outdoor recreation activities and reduce the nascent complex to an unrelated series of partial facilities.

Table 9 lists by area the acreage suggested for acquisition using two categories of use—public recreation land and land suitable for wildlife. Table 10 lists by area the frontage feet now actually owned by the State of Vermont along the right of way and that recommended for acquisition.

Scenic Potential of Selected Areas

Many travelers have acclaimed the scenic attributes of Lake Champlain as comparable to those found anywhere in the world. Specific comparisons have been made between the grandeur of the Rocky Mountains in Colorado and the Champlain Basin. William D. Howells, the famous novelist, looking at the Bay of Naples, called it "the most beautiful view in the world except one—a Lake Champlain sunset." However, in discussing the scenic qualities, it is necessary to depart from individual and subjective evaluations and refer to systematic methods of evaluating and comparing scenery. This has been done on the railroad right of way by use of the scenic classification system developed by the Vermont Resources Research Center. This system reduces scenery to objective and measurable phenomenon.

Table 9. Suggested State Acquisition for Recreation and Wildlife Use

Area	Use: Public recreation	Use: Wildlife
	Acres	
1. Allen Point	70	-
2. Keeler Bay Swamp and Marshland	-	285
3. Keeler Bay	70	20
4. Pearl Swamp	-	410
5. South Hero Swamp	-	500
6. Tromp Point	70	-
7. Bow Arrow Point	30	255
8. West Ridge Overlook	65	-
9. Pelot Bay	320	300
10. South Alburg Shore	350	1,330
11. Windmill Point	120	400
Total	1,095	3,500

Source: Aerial-photo analysis and ground observations, VRRC.

Table 10. Lake Frontage Now Owned by the State and Proposals for Acquisition

Area	Frontage	Approximate existing state ownership	Suggested lake frontage acquisition
		Feet	
1. Allen Point	4,368	2,150	2,218
2. Keeler Bay Swamp and Marshland	-	-	-
3. Keeler Bay	2,500	170	2,330
4. Pearl Swamp	-	-	-
5. South Hero Swamp	-	-	-
6. Tromp Point	5,001	-	5,001
7. Bow Arrow Point	10,836	1,640	9,196
8. West Ridge Overlook	2,084	-	2,084
9. Pelot Bay	10,002	-	10,002
10. South Alburg Shore	14,170	650	13,520
11. Windmill Point	6,668	-	6,668
Total	55,629	4,610	51,019

To oversimplify, the system defines scenery as being a function of variety of interesting things and space and distance in which these things are viewed. Other things being equal, the further one can see, the more scenic is the view; the greater variety of interesting phenomenon observable, the greater is the view. Scenes are rated from 0

to 10. Zero is the scene when one is looking at a wall of dirt or trees. The other extreme of "10" is a spectacular view in which one can see a broad lake, distant high mountain peaks, plus interesting phenomenon in the foreground. Ratings of "7" to "10" indicate unusually attractive views. Five and "6" are average (Table 11).

Table 11. Scenery Values of Proposed Recreation Areas

Area	Length of view	Rating		
		Distance	Variety	Scenic*
	Feet			
1. Allen Point	2,500	5	5	10
3. Keeler Bay	4,000	4	4	8
6. Tromp Point	3,000	4	4.5	8.5
7. Bow Arrow Point	3,600	4	4	8
8. West Ridge Overlook	1,500	4	4.5	8.5
9. Pelot Bay	3,300	4	4	8
10. South Alburg Shore				
Present view	0	0	1	1
Potential view (see text)	8,600	4	5	9
Northern section	3,300	3	3	6
10.5 between 10 and 11	5,300	3	2	5
11. Windmill Point	7,000	4	4	8

* Ten is spectacular, 7 to 9 is a grand view, 5 and 6 are average, and 1 to 4 is undistinguished.

Source: Inspection of aerial photos, topographical maps, and ground checks.

Following is a rating of the selected recreation development areas (Map 2) with reference to scenic qualities.

Area 1. Allen Point—The view is panoramic, covering about 200 degrees, and running for 2,500 feet including the lake, the high Adirondack Mountains, and the Green Mountains. This view is rated at 10 (spectacular).

Area 3. Keeler Bay—The viewing area is about 4,000 feet. The items observable are Georgia and Milton shorelines, the East Pass, Keeler Bay, the Green Mountains, and an island. The view is far less panoramic than that of area 1. Its rating is: distance, 4; variety, 4; for a total of 8.

Area 6. Tromp Point—This area has a prime view for about 3,000 feet. One can see the lake, the Sister Islands, and the shore and hills of New York. The rating is: distance, 4; variety, 4.5; total rating, 8.5.

Area 7. Bow Arrow Point—Here one can see the edge of the lake, the bay, and the shoreline for 3,600 feet. The rating is: distance, 4; variety, 4; for a total of 8.

Area 8. West Ridge Overlook—In this area, for 1,500 feet one can see the waves wash on the rocky ledge of the west shore. The observer is looking down over a precipice and can see the lake and the New York shore. The rating is: distance, 4; variety, 4.5; for a total of 8.5. Actually, the view is good from area 7 all the way to area 10, along the ledge running along the shore.

Area 9. Pelot Bay—This view runs for 3,300 feet. The view is to the west only until a point in the northern part of the area where you get some view to the east. The rating for the best view in this area is: distance, 4; variety, 4; for a total of 8. The causeway is not included in this analysis as the point of view is defined as areas to which it would be convenient to drive to by car and to park to enjoy the view.

Area 10. South Alburg Shore—Here the railroad right of way runs through a cut and the view rating is 0 to 1. The potential view from the shoreline, which is now in private ownership, would rate very high—probably: distance, 4; variety, 5; for a total of 9. This view exists for about 8,600 feet. In the northern section of area 10, there is a view to the east for 3,300 feet. One can see the Alburg Passage and North Hero mainland. The rating is: distance, 3; variety, 3; for a total of 6.

Area 10.5—There is an area of about 5,300 feet north of area 10 and south of area 11 in which there is a view to the east. This view of the lake and the opposite shore in Swanton and Highgate would be considered a great view in any place but Grand Isle County. Here, making a comparative rating, it must be categorized about 5, with distance, 3; variety, 2.

Area 11. Windmill Point—The distance of the viewing area is about 7,000 feet. The view is to the south and west. One can see the Spit, the lake, and the New York shore. The rating is: distance, 4; variety, 4; for a total of 8.

Additional "Spectacular" Views

There are several points where spectacular views exist outside the immediate railroad right of way and areas close to it. In any comprehensive effort to develop the recreation potential of Grand Isle County, these areas should be carefully identified, studied, and evaluated with reference to the possibility of providing access to the views. A few of the better ones are the following.

In South Hero, east of Folsom's School and east of the South Hero Cemetery, is a hill of 240 feet elevation. The view from this would rate about 10. One would see a world of sky, land, and water, stretching to the horizon in all directions, including distant high mountain peaks down to the green hedge-marked fields of the South Hero farmland.

Another potential spectacular view is found on the hill east of Jackson Point in Beech Bay. This hill is about 250 feet high and would also provide a panoramic view of sky, land, and water. There is another 260-foot hill south of Sawyer Bay road. This would have a similar view. In the town of Grand Isle there is a point of 275 feet elevation northeast of Pearl Bay. This location would provide a spectacular 360-degree view that would rate 10 by this scenery rating system. In Isle La Motte Village there is a 200-foot rise with a 220-foot peak which would provide an equally spectacular view, rating about 10.

It should be emphasized that this scenery classification system does not count for all types of views which are attractive to the eye of all people along the Champlain Pathway. Marshes and bogs which might be extremely interesting to bird watchers and naturalists, nature lovers, etc., rate very low by this system.

This analysis of the scenic potential is a reconnaissance or preliminary analysis. While all the areas were ground checked, most of the scenic analysis was done from aerial photos and details are not provided concerning the exact range of views from various points.

The Role of History in Recreation Development

Regional park developments usually relate the area to its history. Grand Isle County is fortunate in having an unusually significant and colorful history which can easily be woven into a recreation development program. Ever since Samuel de Champlain discovered the lake that bears his name in 1609 while traveling with a party of Algonquin and Huron Indians, the lake has been a major interstate and international battle ground and channel of communications, trade, naval activity, and commercial intercourse. It would be appropriate to name the Pathway after Samuel de Champlain—an outstanding and intrepid explorer of a century when European frontiers of knowledge were being expanded to the New World.

The exploits of the Allen brothers lend several additional colorful chapters to the area's history. Ownership of the town of Alburg, for instance, was disputed between Ira Allen and the British government. Another interesting story in this region's history is Ira Allen's attempt to raise money in England to build a canal connecting Lake Champlain with the St. Lawrence River. At the 1779 session of the Vermont legislature, "Two Heroes" (two islands in

Lake Champlain) were granted to Ethan Allen, Jonas Fay, and others for 10,000 pounds sterling. Tradition has it that they were named after Ethan and Ira Allen. A singular provision in this grant was that "each grantee to enter or provide settlers . . . within three years after the conclusion of present war with Great Britian, or the now Province of Quebec, shall be united with the other independent states of America."[6]

An historical marker in the town of South Hero recounts one of the footnotes to history which took place in this locale—the death of Ethan Allen.

The area also abounds with history of the War of 1812 and the French and Indian War. Those who stand at Allen's Point are standing on the ground where the Wisconsin Indians, hired by General Howe, held their powwow. The General had asked that they stop scalping settlers. It was here that the Indians decided if there was to be no scalping they would go on back to Wisconsin—this they did.

Across the water from this point you can see Admiral Carleton's rock where some smart Yankee hung a lantern at night and the Admiral shelled this large rock, thinking it was a vessel.

The area abounds with items which could be restored or recreated. The first steamboat used on any lake was the "Vermont" which sailed on Lake Champlain in 1808. The first sawmill in North America was built by the French at Swanton, Vermont. St. Anne's Shrine and many other points of interest could be mentioned. The first refrigerator car left Alburg with dairy products for Boston. This incident recalls the past agricultural history of the area. The right of way itself, with bridges and causeways, should be retained for their interest to railroad enthusiasts.

History of an area provides an added dimension to any regional park and should be included in comprehensive recreation and tourist development. Development of the recreation potential of the islands would consist of a translation of the dramatic, interesting, sometimes heroic history of the area into a form which could be appreciated by the tourists; museums; roadside historical signs; guided tours by historians; brochures; and perhaps pageants to reenact some of the highlights from the chronicals of the past.

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[6]Wilbur, James Benjamin. Ira Allen, Founder of Vermont. Houghton Mifflin Company, 1928, page 145, Vol. 1.

V. SUGGESTIONS FOR IMMEDIATE USE OF THE RAILROAD RIGHT OF WAY FOR RECREATION

Governor Hoff asked for specific recommendations for use of the State of Vermont's railroad right of way north of Burlington. In addition to proposing development of a Champlain Pathway with a string of recreation areas, the authors recommend the following steps which could be taken immediately.

It is recommended that the feasibility of the sheltered harbor potential of the railroad right of way be immediately studied, site plans drawn up, and development moved forward. The pathway should be authorized at once. By 1966 every suitable building now in existence along the right of way should be equipped with toilet facilities. Those which are of sufficient size, such as the one at Alburg, should be used as historical museums or hostels. It is also recommended that citizens interested in the history of the area be asked to assist in developing material for presentation of historic interpretations to tourists.

In 1965 there was no picnic use of Grand Isle State Park, and Sand Bar turned away large numbers of would be day-use visitors. There were no tables left. Picnic facilities should be provided along the pathway for the summer of 1966.

Staff must be hired to develop, maintain, and properly administer the pathway. We recommend that a parkway superintendent be hired who has a degree in recreation management. This person would supervise a crew which would be responsible for creating, improving, and maintaining the attractions in the area. Self-guiding nature trails could be established by July 1966.

In the Mud Creek area in Alburg a start could be made toward developing a multiple-purpose recreation area. Buildings used for the railroad might house the beginning of a museum depicting early settlers way of life and early history of the area. Good parking space is available. A trail could be developed to connect various points of interest. The roadbed leads to and through a marsh which is the home of a number of interesting birds—the hooded mergansers, young wood ducks, rails, gallinules, mallards, blue-winged teals, and black ducks. There would be good wildlife viewing here for the nature lovers behind a curtain of trees.

Another significant nature area with the rerouting of highway 8 in South Hero would be the development of a roadside park area; again, with self-guiding pictures of the birds and other wildlife of this prime marsh area.

In the planning of the road in South Hero we recommend that a sheltered harbor marina development be considered. Plans for highway project F028-1 (4) should accommodate this planned marina. This planning should be undertaken immediately.

We recommend that by June 1966 the Champlain Pathway be cleared of trees where necessary and suitable signs erected so the vacation traveler can reach it, park, get out of his car, and visit the area without trespassing. Such improvements would cost only a small amount.

It has been suggested that parcels of land included in the state's railroad right of way purchase could be sold to private individuals without affecting the development of the right of way as a Champlain Pathway. This is not so. It is the finding of this team that if any state owned land in Grand Isle County is sold, it will adversely affect the development of a Champlain Pathway. A pathway for bicycles, hiking, or horses will require a number of acres in addition to the railroad bed. Some acreage lies beside the roadbed. These lots will be required for picnic areas, sanitary facilities, parking lots, Adirondack shelters, tenting areas for hikers and bikers, plantings for nature study and wildlife cover, open space to preserve views, and a few other possible uses. The sale of any state acreage in Grand Isle County before a Champlain Pathway recreation plan is drawn up will jeopardize development of many significant and even critical facilities required in a comprehensive recreation development plan.

VI. THE CHALLENGE AND THE CHOICE

The state's purchase of the Rutland Railroad right of way north of Burlington presents the people of Vermont with a unique opportunity. To grasp the opportunity, a choice must be made. What level of development is desired?

Do we want to sell the railroad right of way in bits and pieces and continue recreation development on the basis of past programs?

Do we want to maintain the railroad right of way intact so it will provide the green string on which we can thread a series of recreation areas and so develop an attraction which will have a significant economic impact to the area?

Do we want to go all the way and plan the development of Grand Isle County as well as neighboring shores as a large scale regional park with appropriate controls and facilities?

The state has the right of way and it has funds to purchase additional land; the decision must be made. Do we wish to plan for past needs and levels of development? Do we wish to plan for future demand and future higher levels of recreation activity? Do we wish to plan an attraction which will compete with national parks and seashores and large scale developments in the United States and Canada to draw tourist and new residents to this corner of the country? On this decision hangs the future economic development of Grand Isle County as well as the future facilities for the citizens of Grand Isle County and Vermont to enjoy the water, land, scenery, sky, and natural phenomena of the unique Champlain Islands.

While the authors are unanimous in recommending that the state proceed to further investigate and organize in the direction of developing a string of recreation areas tied together by a Champlain Pathway, it should be remembered that this is only one of many levels of development and combinations of development. As interest develops, alternative levels and combinations should be considered.

APPENDIX I

Recent Publications Which Would Have Bearing or Reference to Recreation Development of Grand Isle County

"Estimating the Tourist and Recreation Business in Vermont," Vermont Development Department, April 1961.

"Habits and Expenditures of Summer Vacationists in Vermont, 1958," Vermont Development Commission, Economic Research Series No. 3, 1959.

"The Tourist and Recreation Industry in Vermont," Vermont Development Department for the Small Business Administration, October 1963.

"Champlain Basin--Past, Present, Future," New York-Vermont Interstate Commission on the Lake Champlain Basin, 1960.

"Report of the New York-Vermont Interstate Commission on the Lake Champlain Basin," September 1962.

"Report of the New York-Vermont Interstate Commission on the Lake Champlain Basin," April 1962-March 1963.

"1963 Highlights, New York-Vermont Interstate Commission on the Lake Champlain Basin," 1963.

"The Future of the Lake Champlain Basin," New York-Vermont Interstate Commission on the Lake Champlain Basin, 1961.

"Recreation Site Potential in Vermont," Dorothy L. Moore, Technical Planning Associates for Central Planning Office, State of Vermont, 1964.

"Tourist and Recreation Potential—Lake Champlain-Adirondack Area," by J. N. Lowe, D. Brown, H. W. Dill, R. Floyd, and A. W. Buck, Bureau of Outdoor Recreation and Area Redevelopment Administration, 1964.

"Recreation Development Potential of Vermont and New Hampshire," F. O. Sargent, Department of Agricultural Economics, May 1965.

"The Outdoor Recreation Business in Vermont," M. I. Bevins, Vermont Resources Research Center Report 3, 1964.

"Vermont Resources—Extent, Management, and Development Potential," F. O. Sargent, Vermont Resources Research Center Report 12, 1964.

"Overall Economic Development Plan, Grand Isle County, 1963," by Grand Isle County Development Association, pp. 28-36.

"The Recreation Development Potential of Vermont," manuscript by F. O. Sargent, July 1965.

"Manpower Resources of Grand Isle County," Report of Vermont Department of Employment Security, May 1965.

"Grand Isle County Basic Facts and Figures," by Verle R. Houghaboom Department of Agricultural Economics, Vermont Agricultural Extension Service Brieflet 800, 1962.

"Grand Isle County Population Facts and Figures," by Enoch H. Tompkins, Department of Agricultural Economics, Vermont Agricultural Extension Service M5362.