

Welcome to the Hinesburg Town Forest

History

The 837-acre Hinesburg Town Forest was acquired by the Town of Hinesburg over a period of about 20 years beginning in 1936 as the farms that had been operating on these hills since the early and mid-1800s were abandoned or taken for back taxes. Over the past three quarters of a century, what were open fields and pastures have regenerated into woods, combining with older farm woodlots and hedgerows to form the diversity of forests you see here today. However, cellar holes, barn footings, stonewalls, and other remnants of the Town Forest's agricultural past are still visible at and around the ten homestead sites on the property.

Since the early years of its existence, the Hinesburg Town Forest has been managed by the State's Chittenden County Foresters and Hinesburg's Town Forest Committee primarily for timber, firewood, wildlife habitat, and recreation through projects such as tree plantings, planned timber harvests, apple tree release, road and trail rehabilitation and erosion control, and the construction of the Eagle's Trail.

Ownership and Management

The Hinesburg Town Forest is owned by the residents of Hinesburg. Its management is overseen by the Town Forest Committee – a group of volunteers appointed by the Select Board. This committee acts in cooperation and consultation with outside groups and organizations such as the Vermont Department of Forest, Parks, and Recreation (particularly with the Chittenden County Forester); the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department; Audubon Vermont; Historic Preservation; and the Fellowship of the Wheel, among others.

The Town Forest is an exceptional natural, cultural, and economic resource for the Town of Hinesburg. It has been and continues to be managed for multiple values including, but not limited to:

- Wildlife habitat
- Timber and forest products
- Water quality protection
- Education
- Recreation

Uses and Recreation

The Town Forest is used and appreciated by a large number of visitors both from and outside Hinesburg. Uses include, but are not limited to: hiking, biking, skiing, snowshoeing, horseback riding, birding and wildlife viewing, riding ATVs, hunting, dog walking, timber and wildlife habitat management, scientific study, and educational walks and tours.

Rules and Guidelines

Enjoy your visit to the Town Forest. So that you, others, and future generations may appreciate and protect the natural values of the Town Forest, please be aware of and observe the following:

- Respect wildlife, the forest, and other visitors.
- Leave no trace; carry in and carry out trash and waste.
- Observe appropriate use of trails:
 - Limit trail use during mud seasons.
 - Limit horse and ATV travel to Old Town Road section of the Eagle's Trail.
 - No cutting or creation of new trails.
 - Observe trail closures and reroutes, as required for logging operations, trail conditions, etc..
- No overnight camping without permission from the Town.
- Dogs must be under control. Please pick up after your dogs.
- Observe safety practices and precautions for traveling in the woods. Appropriate clothing, map, compass, water, etc. are recommended.
- Hunting is permitted in legal seasons.

Sincerely,

The Town Forest Committee

For additional information on the Hinesburg Town Forest, as well as other Town properties and trails in Hinesburg, please visit the Town of Hinesburg's website at www.hinesburg.org.

Questions or comments? Email townforest@hinesburg.org