

*Town of Roseboom  
Natural Resources  
Inventory*



*OTSEGO COUNTY, NEW YORK  
2019*

# *Preface*

## *The Natural Resources Inventory of the Town of Roseboom*

was derived from the Roseboom Comprehensive Plan of 2010. At the February 12, 2010 Roseboom Town Board meeting there was a general discussion that took place about the Town Planning Board's duties and responsibilities. Several areas were identified: Comprehensive Plan, by-law review, high speed internet service, gas drilling, town parking law, cell towers grants, and grant writing.

On February 15, 2010, the Planning Board met and was given the information. It was decided that the Planning Board would begin the process of creating the Comprehensive Plan at that meeting.

A survey was designed and mailed to the residents of the town and from that input the Plan was eventually written. It took years of work, but it was all encompassing. It is from that original Comprehensive Plan, and the 2015 revised Comprehensive Plan, along with some 2019 updates, that the Natural Resources Inventory was derived.

## *Town of Roseboom Vision Statement*

This vision statement is a reflection of the views of the townspeople through their input at workshops, focus groups, and the survey of 2010. This statement will serve as a benchmark for decision-making and actions for the Town in its future. It is meant to set the stage for the Town's future direction; it gives the citizens' views as to, what they desire now and what they envision for the Town, in the years to follow.

The Town of Roseboom is located on the eastern side of Otsego County within the State of New York. The Town cherishes and desires to protect and preserve the rural character, natural resources and landscapes, scenic vistas and clean and safe land, air and water, with the full enforcement of all Local, State and Federal laws and mandates.

Priorities of the highest order include preservation of and accessibility to open spaces, maintenance of safety and security for residents and future generations, viability of agriculture and the farming community, and safeguarding of the Town's rural character.

The people want to assure continued accessibility to all of the Town's plentiful open spaces for their families' recreation and health. It is also important to the economy of Roseboom that we preserve our active agricultural and farming community. We desire safe environmental conditions for future generations to live and grow, while maintaining the town's important national historic character. Our Town is rich with the history of America's earliest colonial beginnings and we want to keep that in mind while we enter the 21<sup>st</sup> century infrastructure.

In the coming years, we will responsibly manage and improve new growth while respecting property rights in order to protect the integrity of our town. We do need well built and maintained roadways, but we also need traffic volume and speed controlled, to be in harmony with the gentle nature of our Township.

We wish to set quality design standards to insure that new growth and development will enrich our community aesthetics. We wish to hold together the existing fabric of our Town and its hamlets, while still connecting the people of Roseboom to the rest of the world. As such, this Vision Statement and Comprehensive Plan must be an ever changing and on-going document.

Separating out the Natural Resources Inventory from the Comprehensive Plan, creates a quick guide to assist in sound decision making that balances future growth with the protection of its rich natural resources.

By having information about features such as aquifers, floodplains, shoreline habitat, and farmland, the community can incorporate protection of important resources into land-use planning to ensure they remain available to future generations.



# Table of Contents

Cover (Honey Hill seen from St. Hwy. 165)	Page 1
Preface	Page 2
Town of Roseboom Vision Statement	Page 2
Town of Roseboom Environmental Resources	Page 5
Water Resources	Page 6
Floodplains	Page 7
Roseboom Flood Zones Map	Page 8
Terrain & Slopes	Page 9
Vegetative Cover	Page 10
R. Milton Hicks Memorial State Forest Map	Page 11
Roseboom State Forest Map	Page 12
Honey Hill State Forest Map	Page 13
Bear Swamp State Forest Map	Page 14
Wind Resources	Page 15
Soils	Page 15
Visual Resources	Page 15
Natural Gas	Page 16
Agriculture	Page 17
Town of Roseboom Agriculture Map	Page 18
Recreational Resources	Page 19
In Summary	Page 20
Natural Resources Maps Appendix	Page 21

## *Town of Roseboom Environmental Resources*

The Town of Roseboom is blessed. Every curve of the road opens up a new breath-taking forested landscape. There is not one “view-shed”, literally there are hundreds. Besides its natural geography of steep slopes, fresh water creeks, rolling hills and valleys, the Town is significantly enhanced by four environmentally protected New York State Department of Conservation State Forests. They include: **Bear Swamp State Forest** (1729 acres) off of Buttermilk Hill Road in South Valley, the **R. Milton Hicks Memorial State Forest** (1293 acres) Perry Hill Road, the **Honey Hill State Forest** (1017 acres) Wes Brown Road, and the **Roseboom State Forest** (620 acres) Roseboom Hill Road.

These, and other heavily forested areas in the Town, host a variety of wildlife. Many species are on the endangered and threatened list put out by the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (see appendix). Bald Eagles, Golden Eagles, Red-Tailed Hawks, and other birds of prey, are often seen soaring over the tree tops.



There is also the **Lordsland Conservancy**, a nature preserve in Roseboom, now owned by the Otsego Land Trust. It has 1.4 miles of walking trails through forests, wetlands, meadows and steep slopes. According to the New York Natural Heritage Program, Lordsland is one of the best locations to find Jacob's Ladder (*Polemonium van-bruntiae*), a globally rare plant that blooms in early Spring and Summer with a ladder-like arrangement of leaves and numerous nodding flowers on top.

## *Water Resources*

The Town lies within the Susquehanna River Basin and watershed. A watershed is a geographic area that is drained by, or contributing to, a stream, lake, or other primary body of water.

The Town of Roseboom is located at the headwaters of the Cherry Valley Creek, which flows into the Susquehanna River, which is part of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Program, traveling through five states all the way to Chesapeake Bay. The Town's eastern streams flow to the Mohawk and Hudson Rivers. As part of the source waters for these major rivers, it is very important that we accept the responsibility to do what we can to preserve the purity of these streams as they flow through our Town.

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation classifies all fresh waters as either "AA, "A", "B", "C", or "D." Classes AA through B are regulated by the state. The highest classifications, AA or A, are assigned to protect waters for uses that include swimming and other recreational uses, but not for drinking. Class C and D waters are not regulated and include uses such as fishing. Waters classified as A, B or C can each have an added standard of (T) or (TS). The (T) indicates the waters support or have the potential to support a trout population and (TS) means it supports or has the potential to support trout spawning. All waters that have a (T) or (TS) designation are regulated including those with a classification of C.

Approximately 26.25 miles of protected trout stream runs through the Town of Roseboom. These waters are classified by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation as A, B, or C, each with an added (T) designation.



## *Floodplains*

Floodplains are the lands adjacent to a waterway where floodwaters spill out of the banks of a creek or stream. Floodplains are characterized as either 100-year floodplains or 500-year floodplains. A 100-year floodplain has a one in one hundred (1%) chance of flooding in any one year while a 500-year floodplain has a one in five hundred (0.5%) chance of flooding in any one year.

The Otsego County Flood Map shows those portions of Roseboom that are not located on steep slopes are typically situated in 100 and 500 year flood plain areas. Because of this, the Town faces challenges to development. Where it is not steep, it floods.

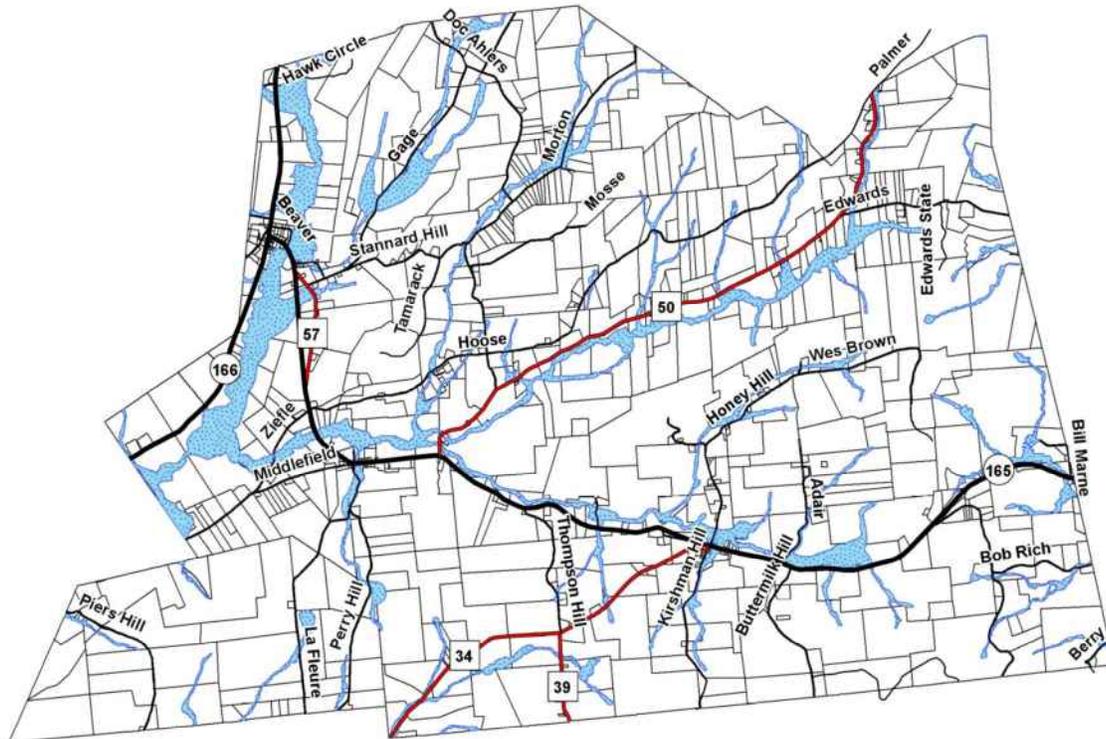
Floodplains, provide many beneficial functions including reducing the severity of a flood, handling severe storm water runoff, filtering nutrients and impurities, controlling sedimentation and creating rich alluvial soils. They offer diverse habitat areas for fish and wildlife by serving as feeding and breeding grounds and many wetlands are found in floodplains. Floodplain areas provide ideal opportunities for agriculture, parks, trails, bikeways, and areas for wildlife conservation. Development should avoid encroaching upon floodplains due to the loss of beneficial functions and resulting adverse impacts.

In August of 2011, the Town of Roseboom was catastrophically impacted by Hurricane Irene & Tropical Storm Lee. They were designated as 100 and 500 year floods, though they were only two weeks apart. These rare flooding events have become more prevalent in the last 10 years. It should be noted that in 2013, Governor Andrew Cuomo stated that *"There is a 100 year flood every 2 years now."*



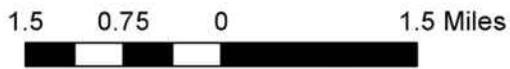
# Roseboom, NY Floodzones

7.9.2019



## Legend

-  US Highway
-  US Interstate
-  NYS Highway
-  County Highway
-  Local Roads
-  Floodzone



## *Terrains & Slopes*

Based on review of the Otsego County Flood Map, those portions of Roseboom that are not within the steep slopes (75% approximated above), are typically associated 100 and 500 year flood plain areas. Resultant from this is a Town largely compromised in its development potential....where it's not steep, it floods.

Topography describes the vertical configuration of the land surface and its relation to the features in the landscape, both natural and man-made. Slope is a measure of topography that describes elevation change over a given horizontal distance. Slopes are typically described in percentages, i.e. a 15 percent slope indicates that the ground rises 15 feet in elevation for every 100 feet in horizontal distance.

The Town of Roseboom consists of hills and valleys with streams flowing through the area and large fields that are dedicated to agriculture. Approximately 75% of the soils within the Town have slopes in excess of 9%. Approximately 50% of the soils within the Town have slopes in excess of 12%.

The lowest point in Roseboom is 1235 feet, South of the Village of Roseboom, where the Cherry Valley Creek crosses into Middlefield.



The highest point in Roseboom is 2285 feet, South of the Village of South Valley, next to the Westford Town Line between Buttermilk Hill Road and Kirshman Hill Road.

(Town of Roseboom Soil Map, Town of Roseboom Slope and Topography Map, Appendix)

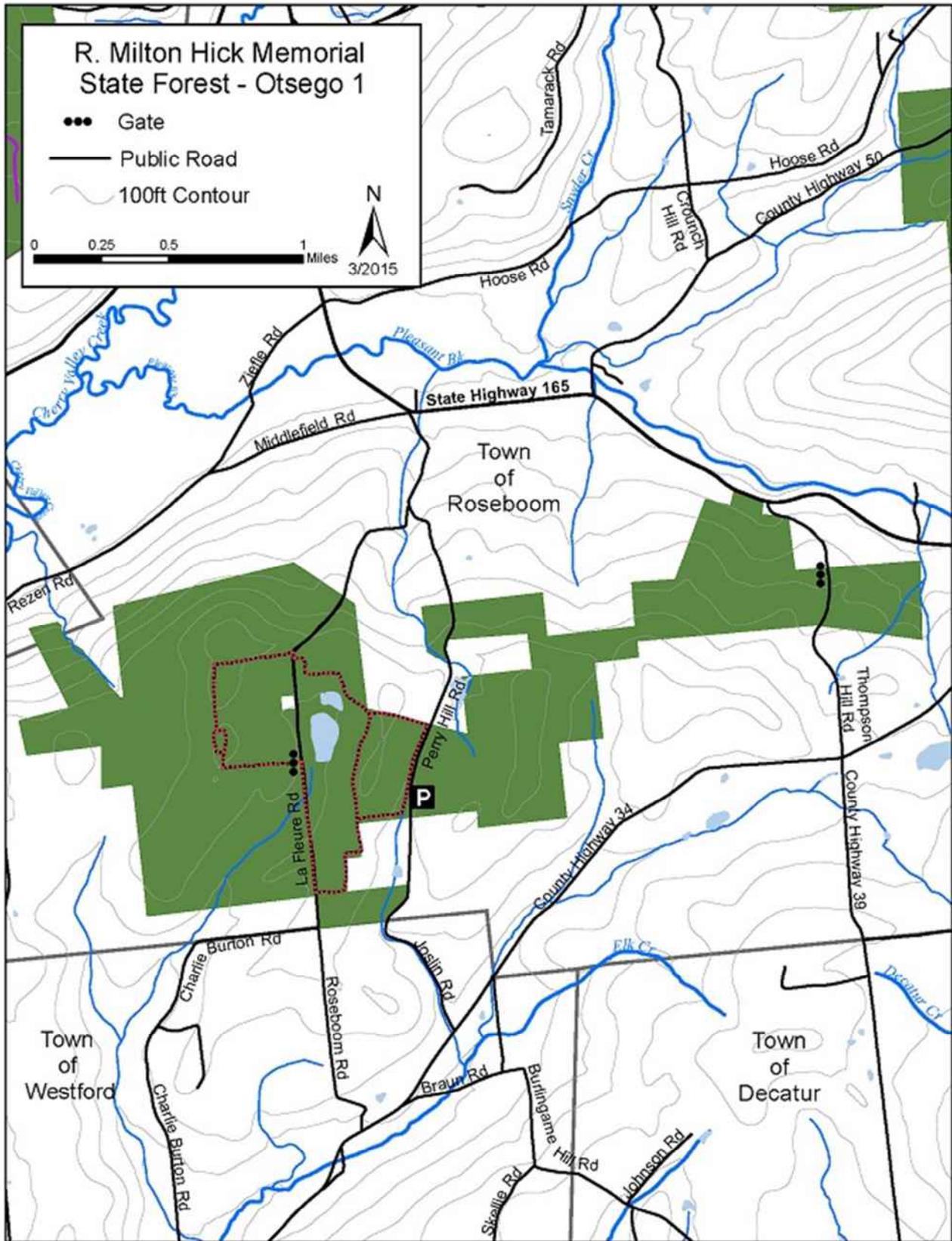
## *Vegetative Cover*

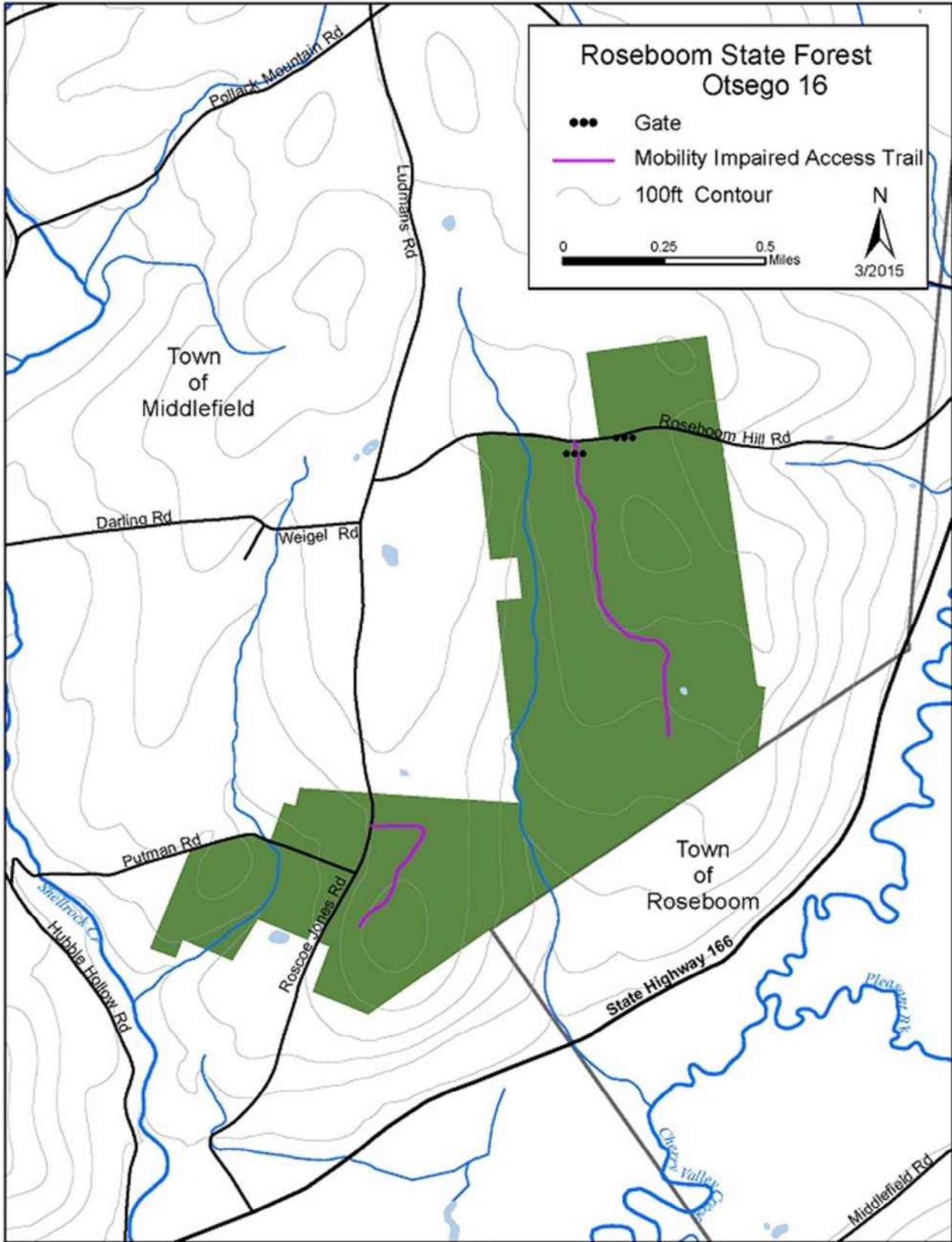
The predominate vegetative cover types are agricultural, deciduous forest, evergreen forest, and wetlands.

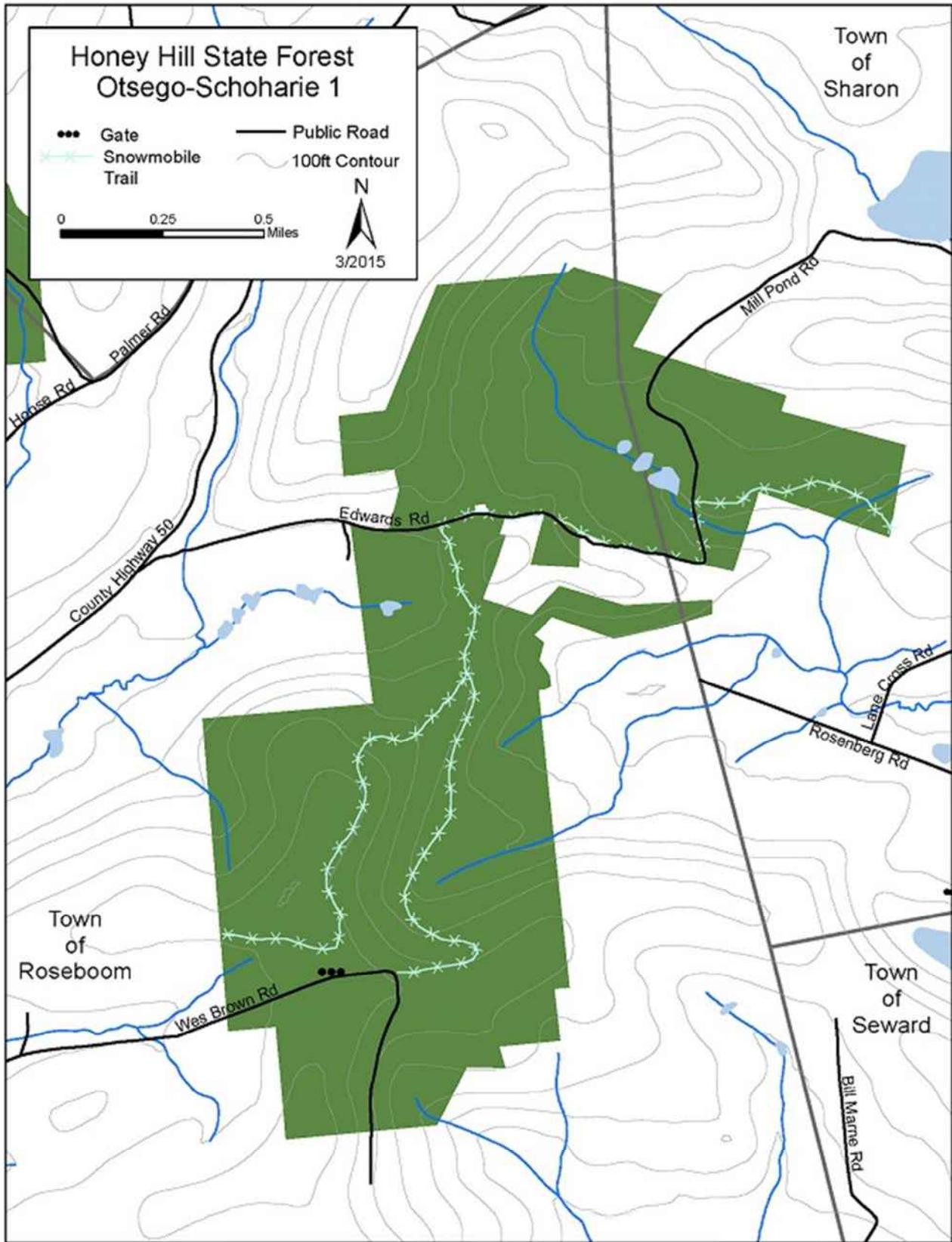
Timber stands are prominent in the:

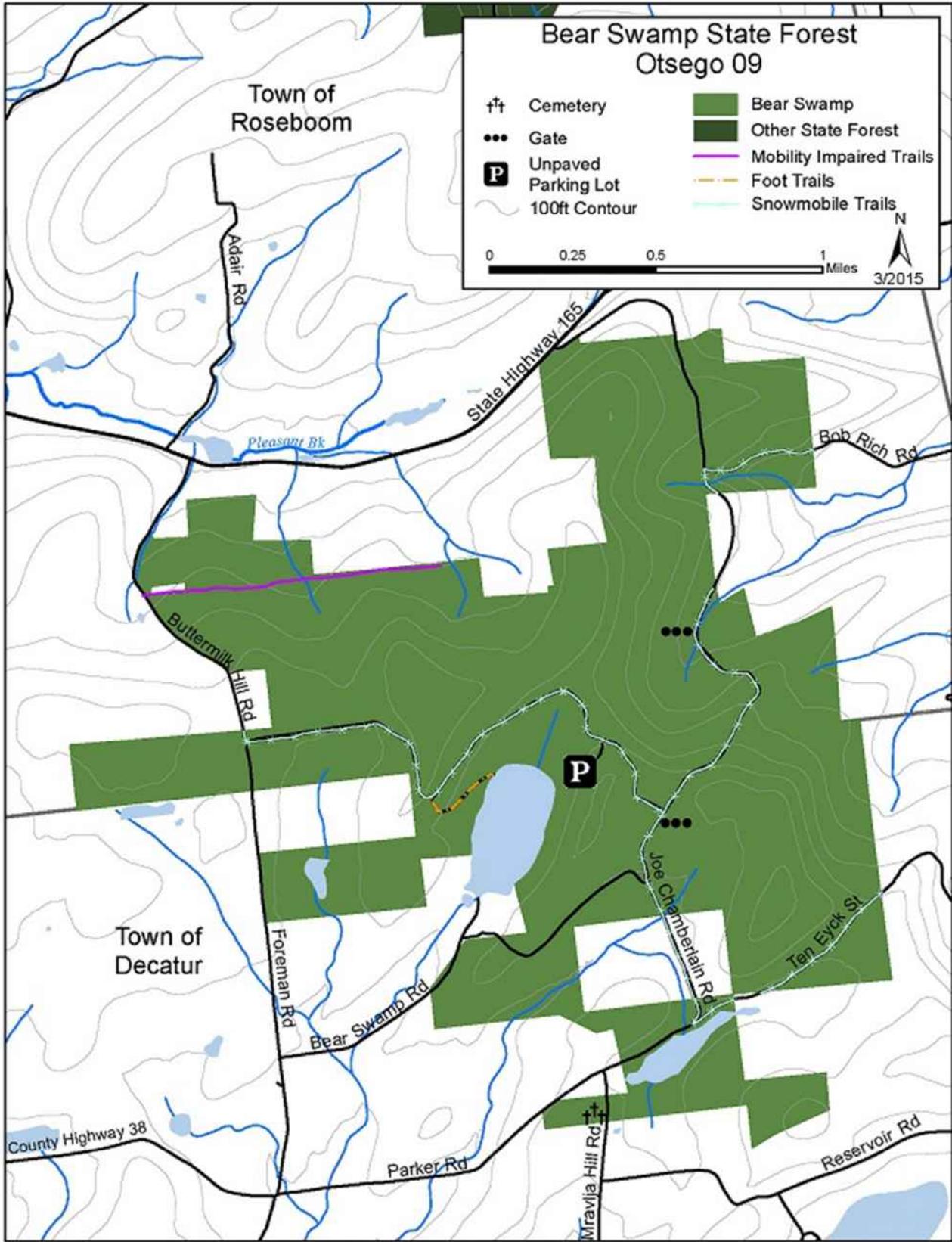
- Roseboom State Forest, Roseboom Hill Road (620 acres)
- Honey Hill State Forest, Wes Brown/ Edwards Road (1017 acres)
- R. Milton Hick Memorial State Forest, Perry Hill Road (1293 acres)
- Bear Swamp State Forest, Buttermilk Hill Road (1759 acres)











## *Wind Resources*

According to the US Department of energy New York State Wind Map and Resource Potential website, portions of the town have wind speed up to 80 meters per second.

## *Soils*

The soils in the Town of Roseboom are clay, rock, slate, shale, and prime farmland soil. (Town of Roseboom Soil Map, Appendix)

- Approximately 75% of the soils within the Town are “partially hydric” or “all hydric” soils: typically indicative of wetlands.
- Approximately 75% of the soils within the Town have slopes in excess of 9%.
- Approximately 60% of the soils within the Town have slopes in excess of 12%.

## *Visual Resources*

On top of County Route 39, known as Tower Hill Road, or the “*Top o’ the World*” is a panoramic view of mountains extending for miles.



Honey Hill Road’s view-shed is full of hilltops, rolling fields, and lush woodlands, as well as from the top of Adair Road. Another well-known scenic vista is at the top of Jocelyn Hill Tower Road showing rolling hills, woodlands, fields, and valley views in the Winter, when the leaves are off the trees.

As you travel State Highways 165 and 166, you will see many more spectacular views throughout the Township.

## *Natural Gas*

The Marcellus Shale and the Utica Shale underlie the Town of Roseboom. Both formations contain natural gas.

Leases in Town: 32 (as of 7/2011)  
Number of Acres leased: 1,964.47  
Number of Parcels (Town) 828  
Percentage of Leased Parcels 3.91  
Percentage of Leased Acres 9.25

In 2011, the residents and property owners in the Town of Roseboom made their voices heard through a petition bearing 333 signatures calling for a ban on drilling for natural gas in the Town of Roseboom. As part of a grassroots movement to ban fracking, ROAR (*Roseboom Owners Awareness Response Against Fracking*) was instrumental in getting a law banning heavy industry in the Town.

In 2012, the Town Board passed a *Protection of the Rural Environment Law* that affirms and supports the preservation and enhancement of the rural character of Roseboom; a safe, quiet, and scenic environment; a non-industrial, agricultural and tourist based economy. This was two years before the New York State Department of Health and Governor Cuomo decided to ban hydraulic fracking in the State of New York on December 16, 2014, after concluding that the method posed inestimable public health risks.

The purpose of this local law which prohibits heavy industry in the Town of Roseboom, is to protect its citizens from the human health hazards presented by natural gas exploration, extraction or processing, as evidenced by public statements issued by the medical community. It is the goal of this local law to uphold and support the Town of Roseboom Comprehensive Plan.

(Roseboom Natural Gas Leases 2013 Map, Appendix)

## *Agriculture*

In 2017, Otsego County updated their Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan (AFPP). It identifies seven recommended actions that will help achieve the vision of sustained agricultural development and farmland conservation. The specific plan can be found at:

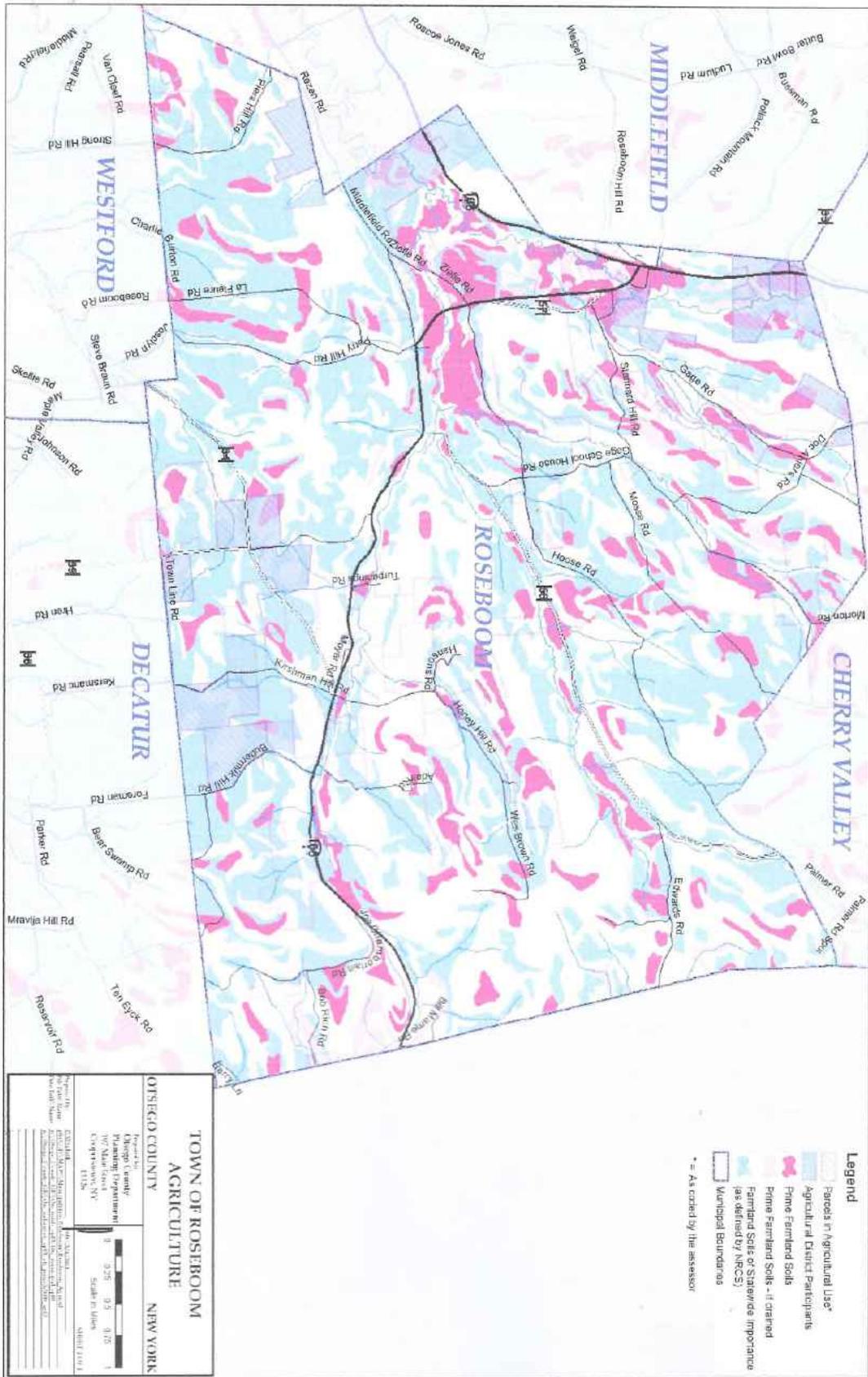
<http://occainfo.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/FINAL-Ag-Plan-Draft.pdf>

In 2018 the County consolidated all the agricultural districts into one district, District #1.

The Town of Roseboom has approximately 65 parcels, nearly 1,300 acres are used for some type of agricultural activity.

The following types of agricultural operations take place within the Town of Roseboom: Dairy, beef livestock, horse, elk, buffalo, fallow deer and hobby farms, apiaries and maple syrup producers. Hay and feed corn are the primary crops.





## *Recreational Resources*

Roseboom residents can enjoy a variety of recreational resources within the township. There is cross country skiing on Roseboom Nordic Ski trail – 4 miles of designated trail on Jocelyn Hill. State-funded snow mobile trails, hunting, fishing, hiking and horseback riding is all available. A bicycle rally is held on the country roads once a year. Glimmerglass State Park is nearby in Cooperstown, with Lake Otsego available for swimming, boating, fishing and camping.



## *In Summary*

One of the main goals of the Town, as described in the Roseboom Comprehensive Plan, is to protect our Natural Resources:

**“GOAL 6 - Protection of water resources, flood plains and wetlands in an effort to assure their sustainability by preventing irreplaceable loss, misuse, and/or degradation.**

- **Objective 6.1** - *Need to adequately protect prime and productive agricultural soils from indiscriminate or inappropriate development*
- **Objective 6.2** - *Need to provide local standards in order to protect sensitive, environmental resources as well as the scenic landscape and historical resources*
- **Objective 6.3** - *Need to establish a procedure to review land use so that incompatible or conflicting uses will be identified and land values and quality of life considerations will be secured*
- **Objective 6.4** - *Need to maintain local control of potentially high impact industrial/commercial facilities*
- **Objective 6.5** - *Encourage the use of renewable energy such as wind, solar, and hydroelectric that is consistent and appropriate to the protection of public health, safety and the well-being of the community and is on a scale consistent with the goals and objectives in this plan.”*

*It is our hope that this Natural Resources Inventory will assist the Town of Roseboom in attaining its Goal.*

# *Town of Roseboom Natural Resources Map Appendix*

## **Roseboom, New York Flood Zones**

Prepared by Otsego County Planning Department

## **Roseboom State Forest**

NYS Department of Environmental Conservation

## **Bear Swamp State Forest**

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation

## **Honey Hill State Forest**

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation

## **R. Milton Hicks Memorial State Forest**

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation

## **Roseboom Agricultural Map**

Prepared by Otsego County Planning Department

## **Roseboom Bedrock Geology Maps 1&2**

Prepared by Otsego County Planning Department

## **Roseboom Natural Gas Leases 2013**

Prepared by Otsego County Conservation Association

## **Roseboom Slope and Topography Maps 1&2**

Prepared by P. Wyckoff, Otsego County Planning

## **Roseboom Soils Quadrants**

Prepared by Otsego County Soil and Water Conservation District

## **Roseboom Soils Unit Legend**

Prepared by USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

## **Roseboom Surficial Geology**

Prepared by Otsego County Planning Department

## **Roseboom Topo Quadrants**

Prepared by Otsego County Soil and Water Conservation District

## **Roseboom Topographical Map 2**

Prepared by Otsego County Soil and Water Conservation District

## **Roseboom Water Resources 1, 2 &3**

Prepared by Otsego County Soil & Water Conservation District

## **Roseboom Wetlands**

Prepared by Otsego County Soil & Water Conservation District

*This Natural Resources Inventory was compiled by  
Allegra Schecter, Town Board Member and Climate Smart  
Community Coordinator, October 20, 2019*