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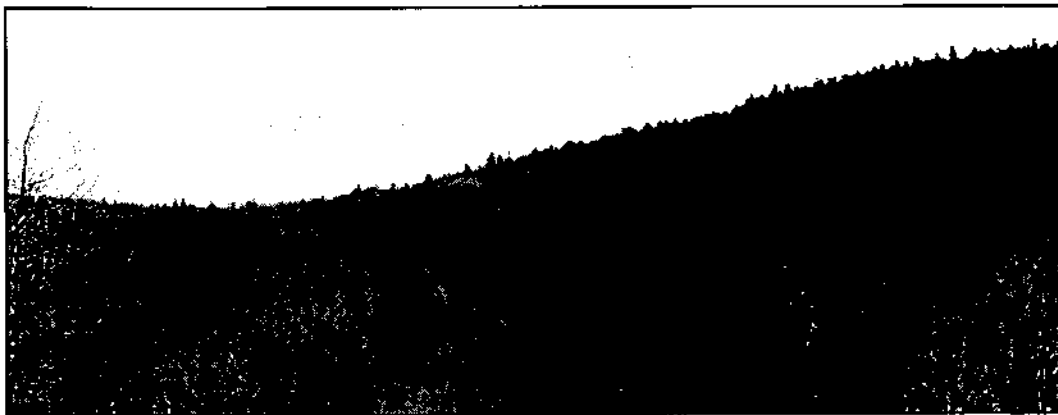
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**PHASE IA HISTORICAL AND  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND STUDY**

**GREEN MOUNTAIN POWER CORPORATION'S  
WIND TURBINE PROJECT  
Town of Searsburg, Bennington County, Vermont**

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## V. RESULTS OF BACKGROUND RESEARCH: ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCE POTENTIAL

The goals of the Phase IA background research with regard to cultural resources are to: (1) determine local chronological sequences; (2) characterize the distribution and type of known sites; (3) summarize environmental characteristics; (4) outline the history of the project area; and, (5) delineate pertinent research issues with which yet-to-be-identified cultural resources may be associated.

Overall, the Phase IA background research involved: examination of archaeological site files, maps, and cultural resource management reports held by the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation (DHP); examination of National Register files, historic architectural documentation, and related materials available at the DHP; examination of appropriate Soil Conservation Service (SCS) maps, and surface geology maps; consultation with DHP staff archaeologists; and, interviews with informants, including professional archaeologists, local residents, and others familiar with the project area. During the background research the following institutions and/or individuals were consulted: DHP; Vermont Historical Society; Bailey-Howe Library Special Collections at the University of Vermont; Bennington Museum; Bennington Free Library; Bennington College Library; Searsburg Town Clerk's office; David Lacy, Archaeologist with the Green Mountain and Finger Lakes National Forest; and, Frank Pulaski, Caretaker of the Crosier Cemetery and Crosier family descendant.

In addition, prehistoric background research proceeded along two fronts: previous archaeological work conducted in the area, and paleogeography. In order to provide a preliminary assessment of the potential for prehistoric archaeological resources the basic predictive modeling used included completion of DHP's *Environmental Predictive Model for Locating Archaeological Sites*. This form provides a differential ranking of topographical features and soil associations. Project locations ranked at a value of 20 or greater will be considered archaeologically sensitive. LBA also conducted a project area inspection to assess the conditions and noting areas of potential concern.

### A. PREHISTORIC SENSITIVITY

According to Casjens (1978:114) the factors to consider when assessing the potential for prehistoric resources in the Green Mountains include: water; fuel; transportation routes; shelter, natural features such as caves or other protection from wind; comfort, particularly flat well-drained, non-rocky areas; view for hunting, protection, or esthetic; food availability, such as agricultural areas, rivers, plant food-collecting areas, and animal food-hunting areas; and, special resources, such as quarries or salt licks. Furthermore, it is expected that larger, more permanent sites will be present in areas with an extensive resource base is available, such as farming and/or fishing areas, and that smaller sites will be present in the hunting locations on uplands (Casjens 1978:114).

Proximity to water within the project area varies when consideration is given to different portions of the proposed project. The project area is located within a few miles of the headwaters of the Deerfield River, which provided a travel route through the mountains to the Champlain Basin. In addition, a wetland area is located south of the cemetery and feeder streams of the Medbury Branch of the Deerfield River lie in close proximity to the project area. Lastly, a watercourse is located west and parallel to Sleepy Hollow Road.

Extant trails, footpaths and the peaks represent potential areas for prehistoric resources. Vistas and protected saddles within the proposed project area are examples of areas with higher probability of encountering prehistoric resources (David Lacy, personal communication).

A cultural resource reconnaissance report for the Lamb Brook area was completed in 1991 by personnel with the Green Mountain and Finger Lakes National Forest. The Lamb Brook project area exhibits topography similar to the current project area, thus permitting sensitivity comparisons. The conclusions that can be gleaned from the Lamb Brook project amplifies the cultural resource sensitivity of this region of Vermont. For the Lamb Brook project prehistoric sensitivity was judged to be variable and predicated on localized variations in topography, the presence of water, and the resource base exploitability. Historic resource potential for the Lamb Brook area was evaluated as high, and with the additional potential for the presence of relatively undisturbed nineteenth-century farmsteads due to the remoteness of the region.

Based on LBA's background research, literature review, the DHP predictive model ranking, and site inspection, LBA concludes that the project area is variably sensitive for prehistoric archaeological sites. Areas with a low sensitivity ranking include those portions of the project area with severe slope (e.g., portions of the proposed service/access road). However, the potential for unknown prehistoric sites remains a serious consideration, due to the project area's location and attributes.

## B. HISTORIC SENSITIVITY

The general predictive model for historic resources developed by Casjens (1978) is supported by the known sites recorded in the Vermont Archaeological Inventory (VAI) at DHP, which are discussed below. The expectation is that dendritic, transportation route-associated settlement extends across the mountains, with interior settlement depending primarily on forest-based industries. Small settlement clusters will occur at the edge, and larger clusters closer to major transportation routes and in closer proximity to valleys (Casjens 1978:117). Furthermore, settlement in the more mountainous towns will be limited to dendritic patterns along river valleys with occasional logging camps and farmsteads (Casjens 1978:118).

LBA's examination of the archaeological site files at DHP revealed that the only recorded sites within a four-mile radius of the project area are 22 historic archaeological sites. For ease of recording these known sites, four quadrants were created using the Searsburg/Readsboro town boundary and an imaginary north-south axis through the intersection of Route 8 and Sleepy Hollow Road.

Two historic sites (VT-BE-82 and VT-BE-83, also known as the J. Leroy/Hunt & Co. site) are recorded in the northwest quadrant. Both sites represent mid nineteenth-century homestead/farmsteads located at approximately 777 meters (2,550 feet) in elevation and are relatively undisturbed.

In the northeast quadrant, a total of 7 historic sites are recorded. The "Washboard/Clothespin Factory" or VT-BE-59, and the "Tannery Site" or VT-BE-60, are located within a two-mile radius of the project area. Five additional sites are within a four-mile radius, and include: the "Sawmill Site" or VT-WD-39; a mid nineteenth-century homestead/farmstead known as VT-BE-77; an early to mid nineteenth-century homestead/farmstead known as VT-BE-78; a mid nineteenth-century homestead/farmstead known as VT-BE-79; and another mid nineteenth-century homestead/farmstead known as VT-BE-80. All these sites lie between 594 meters (1950 feet) and 628 meters (2060 feet) in elevation.

The southeast quadrant has one recorded historic site—a 20-meter (66-foot) long stone retaining wall that is suspected to have served as a boundary marker. The southwest quadrant attests to the industrial activity in this portion of Vermont, specifically as it relates to the production of charcoal. Five of the sites are charcoal production locations, which serve as examples of the extensive work of Rolando (1992) to document the extant remains, and socio-cultural and historical context of charcoal and lime production in Vermont. Rolando (1992:187) states that Bennington County has the highest number of charcoal production remains/ruins in Vermont, which fulfilled both local and external market demands. The number of sites recorded within a modest radius of the project area lends support to his assertion. The "Heartwellville Stone Kiln" or VT-BE-50, is an early nineteenth-century charcoal kiln. The "Heartwellville Brick Kiln" or VT-BE-51, consists of two charcoal kilns approximately 0.16 kilometers (0.1 miles) apart. The "Heartwellville Conical Kiln" or VT-BE-52, is a conical charcoal kiln located east of Route 8 against a low embankment. Another mid nineteenth-century charcoal kiln district or VT-BE-84 is within the southwest quadrant. The last charcoal production site in the quadrant is the "Mad Tom Five Kilns" or VT-BE-41, which consists of five charcoal kiln ruins located within a three-mile radius of the project area. A nineteenth-century barn foundation or sugar house (VT-BE-70) also is located within this quadrant, along with a mid nineteenth-century farmstead/homestead and cemetery (VT-BE-81), two additional mid nineteenth-century homestead/farmstead (VT-BE-85 and VT-BE-71), and two stone walls running east to west (VT-BE-65 and VT-BE-67).

To assess the sensitivity for historic archaeological sites, LBA examined historical map data (Beers 1869; Child 1880; Rice and Harwood 1856). These data indicate that by the mid-nineteenth century, the project area was settled in a dispersed fashion (Figures 6, 7 and 8). Comparison of Figures 6 and 7 with Figure 8 suggests that Sleepy Hollow Road became a recorded road sometime between 1869 and 1880. Land use at that time was primarily agricultural although schools, and industrial manufactories were also located in the town of Searsburg. The site inspection indicated that structural remnants and ruins from the nineteenth-century Crosier farmstead are along both sides of Route 8 (see Plate 4, Plates 5 and 6). In addition, a stone wall was observed (Plates 7 and 8) along Sleepy Hollow Road.