

# **Highlands Initial Assessment Report**

*Borough of Bloomsbury  
Hunterdon County, New Jersey*

**DRAFT**

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*Prepared by the Bloomsbury Borough Planning Board*

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## **Introduction**

Bloomsbury Borough is located in the northern most portion of Hunterdon County along the Musconetcong River and is situated entirely in the Highlands Preservation Area. The Borough is comprised of a historic center that is developed with residential and small commercial services. The western portion of the Borough is extremely constrained with wooded areas, steep slopes and poor soils, and little access which has resulted in this portion of the Borough as never being developed. The eastern portion of the Borough also contains larger underdeveloped sites which also face constraint issues. The only remaining large vacant parcel is located northeast of I-78, which has remained undeveloped and isolated by the Highway.

Bloomsbury has changed little over the last few decades. In 1960 the population in the Borough was 838 and in 2000 the population was 886, an increase of 48 persons over 40 years, or a 6%. Residential land area in the Borough in 1979 comprised 11% (71 acres) of the total land area and in 2007 that number rose slightly to 16% (101 acres). The result of the slow and modest long term growth is a historic rural village character that is prized by local residents.

The Borough's planning documents have been developed over the last 35 years, beginning with the 1979 Master Plan and followed by three Reexamination Reports. Local Land Development Ordinance changes have been moderate and have addressed specific development issues locally and taken into account State Regulations. The Borough has identified the need to become environmental stewards and protect sensitive features from future land use and allowing for modest commercial and residential growth where appropriate. Modest growth over the years has helped to maintain levels of environmental protection.

The Borough's planning documents were prepared prior to the passing of the Highlands Water Protection and Planning Act and the subsequent Highlands Regional Master Plan (RMP). The purpose of preparing an Initial Assessment for the Borough is to identify what will be required of the Borough to achieve full plan conformance. In reviewing the RMP and comparing the policies with the Borough's planning documents several major concerns related to plan conformance surfaced. In general major issues relate to development and redevelopment and associated infrastructure and how these items will impact the Borough. Also, more general items such as time constraints, financial resources and technical assistance in preparing all the necessary documents to reach full plan conformance is of particular concern. The goals and objectives outlined in the RMP will, for the most part, require the completely new planning documents and ordinances to replace many of the existing Borough regulations, all of which will require financial and technical assistance (See [Table 1](#)). Examples of the type and extent of documentation required for Highlands Conformance include:

- Land Use Capability Analysis
- Limiting Factor Analysis
- Build Out analysis

- Water Use Conservation and Management Plan
- Ground Water Recharge and Mitigation Plan
- Wellhead Protection Plan
- Wastewater Management Plan
- Septic System Management Plan
- Stormwater Management Plan
- Any applicable resource protection regulations
  - Open water and riparian areas
  - Ground water recharge
  - Wellhead protection (amended)
  - Stormwater
  - Steep Slopes
  - Forest Areas
  - Open Space monitoring
  - Critical habitat
  - Lake Management
  - Low impact development
  - Historic and cultural protection

The Highlands has begun the process of outlining the steps necessary to receive basic plan conformance by the December 8, 2009 deadline. While these steps will not achieve full plan conformance, they will ensure municipalities will meet their required deadline and be consistent with the major Goals of the Highlands RMP. The Highlands Council has released a series of 7 modules, all of which are being prepared by the Council for municipal adoption. These include:

1. Current Municipal Conditions and Build-Out Analysis Module
2. Land Use and Resource Capacity Analysis Module
3. Housing Element & Fair Share Plan Module
4. Highlands Environmental Resource Inventory Module
5. Highlands Master Plan Element Module
6. Highlands Regulations Module
7. Municipal Self Assessment, Implementation Plan & Petition Module

The Council's goal is to prepare each module, release each one to the municipalities, complete a municipal level review and revisions process and then have each municipality adopt each module. At this time only Module 1 has been released and is currently in the process of review. If correctly implemented, the Council's ability to write and distribute each module will take the financial and time constraint burden off of the participating Municipalities. However, until each module is reviewed, it will not be clear the type and extent of revisions necessary for local adoption. The Council is providing an initial \$50,000 grant to complete this years seven modules with the ability to offer up to \$100,000 per municipality if deemed necessary.

Finally, other issues that may be of concern through Plan Conformance is the goals and policies for the Existing Community Zones. The goals and policies in these areas appear to promote voluntary development and redevelopment opportunities. Of the course the scale of potential development is based on environmental constraints, these should be carefully weighted and analyzed by the Borough since the Existing Community Zones in the Borough encompasses almost the entire developed portion of the Borough. These are items that will need to be addressed more fully as Plan Conformance continues.

## **Bloomsbury Borough Existing Planning Program**

The Borough of Bloomsbury's original Master Plan was prepared in 1979 and was followed by reexamination reports in 1990, 1997 and 2003. The original Master Plan included chapters on land use, housing, traffic, utilities, community facilities, recreation and open space and a conservation plan. These separate plan elements were incorporated throughout the reexamination processes and have been reviewed and updated where appropriate. The following section is a review of each document and an analysis of consistency with the Highlands RMP.

### **1979 Master Plan**

The 1979 Bloomsbury Borough Master Plan identified goals and objectives which emphasized the importance of maintaining the rural village character while promoting appropriate growth that takes into consideration the environment, public facilities and traffic patterns. The following are the goals identified in the Master Plan:

1. Maintain the village/rural ambience of the Borough of Bloomsbury.
  - a. Concentrate new development in proximity to existing development
  - b. Promote the establishment of community-oriented commercial activity
  - c. Promote the establishment of quality highway-oriented commercial activity.
2. Encourage residential development that respects the ecological balance, existing housing, and historic quality.
3. Improve and promote efficient traffic circulation throughout the Borough.
4. Maintain utility service at the proper level to provide for the existing population and anticipated growth.
5. Provide community facilities that adequately serve the Borough's needs for efficient public service.
6. Promote the development of passive and active recreation areas within the Borough.
7. Establish conservation areas which would help to preserve ecologically sensitive and valuable locations and preserve the Borough's historic quality.

The Master Plan identified several areas that were not appropriate for future development including flood hazard areas along the Musconetcong River and the areas west of Milford Road where soil conditions made conditions extremely difficult for any type of development. The plan also identified the need to implement an Agricultural Residential

Zone which would place a minimum lot size of 5 acres in areas with environmental constraints which are not appropriate for development.

Infrastructure improvements were identified as addressing maintenance issues with no new extensions identified. The roads and bridges in the Borough were identified as adequately serving the existing population and only required repair and physical improvements. Public water supply was noted as being in need of repair and improvements in order to improve overall water quality. No other infrastructure improvements or extensions were identified.

The Recreation and Open Space Plan in the 1979 Master Plan stated that the Borough had sufficient open space and recreation areas to serve the current population. Developing Borough owned properties to active recreation was seen as an important process to provide active recreation spaces to Borough Residents.

The Conservation Plan highlighted a variety of environmental attributes in the Borough including soil conditions, flood hazard areas and sensitive environmental areas. The Conservation Plan identified the need to provide development options, such as clustering, that would protect environmentally sensitive areas and retain open space areas for future preservation. The Plan also cited the protect stream buffer areas from new development.

Finally, the Master Plan included a section on historic resources. The Plan identified several historic sites in the Borough and recommended the designation of a Historic District for the future preservation of these areas.

### **1990 Reexamination Report**

The 1990 Reexamination Report set out new recommendations to address land use, traffic, public utilities, community facilities, recreation and open space and conservation. The 1990 Reexamination Report recommended that the Borough encourage cluster development in order to preserve environmentally sensitive areas and create greenways, provide provisions for affordable housing, and retain Borough character and historic resources by requiring new development to be architecturally similar to existing historic homes. Recreation recommendation included providing for recreation that would meet the needs of all age groups, provide a mix of passive and active recreation, ensure homeowner associations maintain preservation and maintenance of open space areas, and to coordinate open space planning with the County. Finally, recommendations in the 1990 reexamination report cited the importance of using native vegetation and limiting “lawn space” which would reduce the need for sprinkler or watering systems and promote recharge, require stream setbacks in all zones in accordance to state regulations, require conservation easements for wetlands, streams and associated buffers as well as other environmentally sensitive features. In addition the Reexamination report called for the designation of a historic district in the Borough and to encourage the maintenance and rehabilitation of historic buildings.

### **1997 Reexamination Report**

The 1997 reexamination report cited that many of the recommendation in the 1990 reexamination report had been corrected or implemented. The report cited the need for technical amendments to ordinances for consistency with state regulations. In addition, the historic designation and implementation of rehabilitation of historic buildings had not yet occurred. This remained a recommendation in the Conservation portion of the reexamination report.

### **2003 Reexamination Report**

The 2003 Reexamination Report cited many of the same outstanding issues witnessed in the 1997 reexamination report, but also highlighted new areas of concern that were affecting the overall quality of life for local residents. These included increased traffic issues resulting from an increase of traffic flowing from the Route 173/I-78 area as well as an increase on local roads. Noise, light glare, deferred maintenance of specific properties, and the increased truck traffic from the truck service station was leading to an overall lowered quality of life for many residents. Finally, the 2003 Reexamination Report cited that the economic and fiscal health of the Borough had long depended on the balance the Borough had maintained in terms of residential and non residential uses and the population of school children that remained stable. The loss of this balance could lead to future economic pressures on the Borough. The 2003 report also cited the need to increase environmental protection and stewardship.

One of the major discussion in this reexamination report was that of potential development on the Planned Unit Development (PUD) district and the Research Office Manufacturing (ROM) District. Both of these sites, totaling more than 155 acres, could result in a large amount of residential and non-residential development. At the time, the Borough was in discussions with applicants interested in developing the sites, with different concepts than what the Borough had envisioned for the sites. It was identified in the 2003 Reexamination Report that the Borough should reevaluate the zoning standards set in place to determine if the current standard were appropriate and matched the long term vision of the Borough.

The 2003 Reexamination Report recommended that the Borough update the Master Plan, including the Land Use Plan, Circulation Plan, Conservation Plan, Open Space and Recreation Plan, and the Housing Plan. In addition, the Plan recommended that the Borough may wish to evaluate if limitations on truck stops and gasoline stations be implemented in order to reduce impervious coverage, runoff, and provide more buffer areas.

### **Comparison of Highlands RMP and Bloomsbury Borough Planning Program**

The following sections reflect the overall goals of the Highlands Regional Master Plan and how they relate to the existing planning program in Bloomsbury Borough. Appendix

A depicts, in checklist format, all the major conformance items required for full plan conformance and the status of the Borough's planning and regulatory items. Appendix B outlines the major policy statements related to each section of the Highlands RMP.

## **Natural Resources**

The natural resources analysis in the Highlands RMP is exhaustive and covers a wide variety of environmental constraints and ecological systems. The RMP highlighted:

- Forest Resources
- Open Waters and Riparian Areas
- Steep Slopes
- Critical Habitat
- Land Preservation and Stewardship
- Carbonate Rock (Karst) Topography
- Lake Management

These fundamental resources provide an overall ecological system that protects land and water resources vital to the overall health of the Highlands Region. The goals and policies outlined in the RMP for Natural resources are broken down into the discrete pieces as outlined above, however the sum of all the pieces results in a blanket of protection for overall environmental health.

### *Forest Resources*

The Highlands RMP goals for forest resources are to protect and enhance current forest areas and align forest regulations throughout the Region. As seen in the [Forest Resource Area Map](#), the western most portion of the Borough is covered in the Forest Resource Area, which coincides with property owned by Green Acres. The southeasterly area of the Borough also contains a fragmented series of Forest Resource Area. In addition, the entire Borough is located in a High and Moderate Value Forest Resource Area.

The Borough's Land Development Ordinance includes provisions for the planting of shade trees as well as language to protect tree removal during any development where feasible. However, language to address the protection of forested areas that would conform to the policies outlined in the RMP does not exist.

The issue the Borough may encounter during Plan Conformance is technical and financial in nature. The policies and objectives outlined in the Forest Resource section require the preparation and adoption of ordinances which conform to the Highlands standards as well as prepare inventories of forested areas and implementation of resource management programs. In addition, policies require the implementation of resource management programs, such as Forest Management Plans, Forest Stewardship Plans or Community Forestry Plan. The areas of forest resource values in the Borough, outside of lands already preserved by the State, leaves an area too small to truly necessitate a forest management plan. The Borough may seek some sort of forest preservation plan that will preserve these small fragmented areas to the south of the Railroad line, without the need

to develop full management plans that may unfairly apply to other areas of the Borough. The Borough will look to the Highlands Council for technical support in preparing any inventories and maps of the forested areas, as well as, assistance in the preparation of any regulatory measures the Council will seek for Plan Conformance. In addition, funds will need to be made available for the assistance in preparing and adoption of any required regulatory measures.

#### Open Waters and Riparian Areas

The goals and policies for open water and riparian areas in the RMP relate to the protection, restoration and enhancement of water resource areas. Water quantity and quality protection is further detailed in section 2 of the RMP goals and objectives, rather this section seeks to develop regulatory measures for the protection of riparian areas and areas surrounding open water.

There is one major riparian area in the Borough and it runs along the Musconetcong River and its tributaries, as seen on the [Riparian Areas Map](#). The Borough has adopted section 14, for the management of Surface Water Runoff. This ordinance is intended to “manage the increased rate and velocity of the surface water runoff created by alterations in the around cover and natural runoff patterns”. The ordinance would have to be amended to comply with Highlands regulations. In addition, the Borough is able to prepare inventories of riparian areas and open water using GIS capabilities, through the use of consultants, however, the Borough will need technical assistance from the Highlands to ensure that data sets are provided and updated by the Council and that the mapping provided is in the context that the Highlands seeks. There are Riparian areas that encompass existing residential developments. One major hurdle to conformance on this section is the preparation of a Stream Corridor Protection/Restoration Plan. It is not clear how this Plan would impact the identified Riparian areas in the Borough. The identified Riparian Areas include all of the historic homes north of Brunswick Ave and across Church Street to Willow Ave. There are also Riparian Areas in the Fawn Run Subdivision. It is unclear the type of regulatory procedures will be required for Plan Conformance, but these regulations will have to be carefully weighed not to overburden existing land uses in this region. The Borough will seek guidance from the Council on how any proposed regulatory measures will impact local residents in these areas.

#### Steep Slopes

Bloomsbury contains some steeply sloping areas along the Musconetcong River and in isolated areas south of the railroad tracks and in the western, undeveloped portion of the Borough as witnessed in the [Steep Slope Protection Areas](#). The goals and policies in the RMP for Steep Slope include inventories of slopes in and out of riparian areas as well as the creation of regulatory measures that target specific classifications of sloped areas.

The Borough currently requires steep slopes to be identified as part of an Environmental Impact Statement (Section 308) for site plans on lots 3 acres or less. There are no specific regulations for steep slope disturbance in the current land development ordinance. The Borough will need to prepare a steep slope ordinance which conforms to

the Highlands RMP. The Borough will look to the Highlands Council for technical assistance and guidance in the preparation of a steep slope ordinance.

#### Critical Habitat

Critical habitat is located in a similar pattern as the forest resource areas seen previously. These areas include the western portion of the Borough, the area southeast of the railroad line and on the identified PUD zone northeast of I-78 ([Critical Wildlife Habitat Map](#)). The goals and policies in the critical habitat section of the RMP relate to the protection and enhancement of habitat areas and regulatory measures to protect such resources.

The Borough currently has no provisions for the protection of critical habitat. The RMP calls for the creation of a Critical Habitat Conservation and Management Plan which will guide regulatory action where critical habitat is found. Critical habitat is found on two underdeveloped and undeveloped sites in the Borough. The Borough may seek to address this item through a best management practice regulations that would apply to those specific sites rather than a Borough wide overlay. The development of such regulations will require technical and financial assistance to achieve the policies outlined in the RMP regarding critical habitat. In order to meet these requirements, the Borough will need assistance in the form of technical and financial to prepare the items needed for conformance.

#### Land Preservation and Stewardship

Bloomsbury Borough contains state and municipally owned open space and recreation areas. The western most portion of the Borough, where much of the critical environmental features are found, is owned by Green Acres and contributes to the Borough's open space areas. The Borough owns a large active recreation site south of the Railroad line along Bloomsbury Road. In addition, the Borough has preserved some parcels along the Musconetcong River and in Common open Space areas as part of subdivision approvals ([Preserved Lands Map](#)).

The Borough included an Open Space and Recreation chapter in the Master Plan and continues to update the information at the time of the Reexamination Reports.

The Borough will need assistance from the Highlands Council to create or amend any needed areas of the OSRP as well as implement any regulatory measures regarding land stewardship. Given the developed nature of the Borough, and the existing preserved open lands, there are little areas in the Borough that can be targeted for Open Space and preservation efforts. The RMP identifies a policy to create a dedicated source of revenue for land preservation through a surcharge on public water supply system rates. While Bloomsbury supports revenue streams that generate funds from water users outside of the Highlands to offset the cost of highlands regulations, it is unclear the nature and extent of this tax. The Borough will seek assistance from the Council on this subject.

#### Carbonate Rock (Karst) Topography

The Borough's bedrock is primarily Carbonate Rock ([Carbonate Rock Map](#)). The RMP details how the nature of limestone geology affects groundwater resources and can

impact health and safety. Limestone geology can develop sinkholes, bedrock fractures, caves and underground streams. All of which can impact any development on top of limestone formations, but can also rapidly increase the movement of contaminants into groundwater supplies.

The RMP calls for the development of a Carbonate Rock Program to address potential problems. This program is intended to examine public health and safety issues, development potential and protection on Limestone formations. The Borough will need to carefully identify all of the regulations they are being asked to conform to when reviewing the Carbonate Rock Program.. Much of the Carbonate Rock formation in the Borough runs under the existing developed portion of the Township. It is unclear how this program would be implemented, the regulatory procedures involved and how it may impact residents, who are all on private septic.

#### Lake Management

There are no Lake Management areas located in Bloomsbury Borough.

### **Water Resources and Water Utilities**

The primary goal of the Highlands Act is to protect essential water supplies for human use. The goals, policies and objectives outlined in the RMP relate to determining the amount of growth capacity in the Highlands Region versus the availability of water supplies. These water supplies, not only need to be monitored for quantity but also for quality. Quality and quantity of water rely heavily on the natural ecosystems ability to filter and promote recharge. The protection of aquatic ecosystems, such as streams and water bodies, are integral to achieve these goals.

#### Water Resource Availability

The first set of goals and policies in relating to water resources is intended to protect water supplies for human use and ensure enough quality water for current and potential users. The primary policies relate to protecting, restoring and enhancing water resources through monitoring water availability.

The Borough is in a water deficient area (as seen on the [Net Water Availability by HUC 14](#) map). The Borough's central developed area is serviced by public water. This water supply system has been upgraded for water quality, but no extensions in water supply areas are being proposed. The commercial uses on Route 173 are not serviced by public water, nor is water supply currently available to the portion of the municipality north of I-78.

In order to satisfy the provision of these goals, the Borough will need technical assistance to determine net availability within the Borough and HUC 14 as well as methods to assess and monitor water availability. Another major hurdle to Plan Conformance will be the development of the Water Use and Conservation Management Plan. The RMP states that this plan will be required for all conforming municipalities. This plan will require

coordination with a variety of stakeholder, NJDEP and utilities. The RMP states that the Plan is to include:

- Identification of water sources and use
- Analysis of Net Water Availability
- Mitigation Approach
- Funding Opportunities
- Operation and Monitoring
- Deficit Reduction and Elimination Strategy

While it is not entirely clear how exhaustive this Plan will be, the Borough will need assistance from the Council, technical and financial, to achieve this provision.

#### *Protection of Water Resources Quantity*

The RMP promotes the monitoring and assessment of ground water recharge and net water availability in the Borough and by HUC 14 watershed. The Borough has some fragmented areas of prime groundwater recharge areas (as identified on the [Prime Groundwater Recharge Area Map](#)). The major area of prime recharge is located on the preserved Green Acres site in the western portion of the Township. The remaining areas of prime recharge are fragmented, located on some developed and undeveloped areas. Prime recharge areas are particularly important if their location is outside of existing developed areas. These areas that remain undeveloped increase their likelihood of maintaining their recharge levels. Any loss to these areas would reduce the overall recharge ability in the watershed.

The policies and objectives outlined in this section relate primarily to monitoring and assessing water availability and groundwater recharge. The major issues in this section echo those previously regarding the preparation of a Water Use and Conservation Management Plan. The Borough will seek highlands technical assistance to achieve plan conformance on these items, as well as seek any input on regulatory measures related to groundwater recharge and water availability.

#### *Water Quality*

Water quality in the Highlands Region is important in providing safe drinking water to millions of New Jersey residents. The goals and policies in this section relate to providing protection to surface and groundwater sources, provide restoration and enhancement of water supply areas and provide for enhanced protection of wellhead protection areas. The Borough has two Wellhead Protection Areas (see the [Wellhead Protection Areas Map](#)), which encompass the developed portion of the Borough. The Borough will need Highlands technical assistance in formulating consistent regulatory provisions for the protection of water quality.

#### *Sustainable Development and Water Resources*

The goals and policies in this section attempt to ensure that future development and growth does not occur in inappropriate areas that will create a detriment to any water resources. The policies outline the efforts to stop any expansion of infrastructure into areas not suited for additional growth and rather channel new growth into areas that can

support such increases. The Borough has stated that new infrastructure, given the constraints, natural systems and modest growth is an undesirable goal.

Many of the polices in this section require development review standards and land development ordinance provisions, as well as, creating inventories of existing systems and capacity levels. In order to comply with this section the Borough will need to review any associated mapping and make RMP updates where necessary. In addition, the Borough will seek Highlands technical assistance for Plan Conformance.

### **Agricultural Resources**

The Highlands RMP seeks to preserve and protect agriculture in the Highlands Region in areas that are appropriate and suited for such activities. The RMP states that agriculture in the Highlands Region, and throughout the State, is a viable economic activity. The goals outline the need to protect and enhance agricultural resources, minimize non-agricultural development in agricultural areas to preserve water supplies, and to protect and enhance surface water and ground water quality in agricultural areas. The policies identify a need to require Best Management Practice for agricultural activities and to implement an Agriculture Retention/Farmland Preservation Plan element.

Bloomsbury Borough does have some areas devoted to agriculture, mainly found in the area north of I-78, the area southeast of the railroad tracks, and a smaller pocket along Milford Road. All total, these areas make up approximately 36% (200 acres) of the Borough and mainly produce field crops. However, the entire Borough is located in an Agricultural Resource Area (ARA) ([Agricultural Resource Area Map](#)) and these remaining agricultural areas are located in moderate to high Agricultural Priority Areas ([Agricultural Priority Area Map](#)). The areas outside of the existing agricultural land, which mainly leaves the developed portions of the Borough have been classified as low priority Agricultural Areas.

The RMP discusses two main goals for agricultural areas, protection of agricultural practices and resources and future land use provisions for clustering of new development to leave a remainder of 80% of any given site or development as preserved farmland or open space. The first goal will require the Borough to prepare some form of Agriculture Retention/Farmland Preservation Plan Element to address the remaining agricultural areas in the Borough and to comply with the requirements of the ARA designation Borough wide. Given the size of the Borough, the developed nature, and the amount of remaining agricultural areas, the Borough will need to work with the Highlands in preparing a plan that is appropriate to the size and nature of agricultural activities.

The second provision, requiring some sort of clustering or lot averaging for new development, may be more problematic for the Borough. The only remaining large lot available for development in the Conservation Zone with the ARA designation is the site located north of I-78. This lot is currently zoned Planned Unit Development (PUD). Currently, the density requirements and minimum lot size would need to be reviewed and amended to meet new regulations. The agricultural area in the southeast portion of the

Borough, has some cleared land, is zoned for non-residential use and is overlaid by the Protection Zone. The smaller agricultural area located along Milford Road is bounded by existing development to the east, preserved land to the west and is overlaid by the Conservation Zone. This area is zoned A-R, which does allow for cluster provisions that must retain at least 30% of the site for open space or farmland. Given environmental constraints and smaller size of these two areas, it is unclear how cluster provisions will be addressed onsite. It is also unclear how ARA designation across the entire Borough will affect future development and redevelopment opportunities in the largely developed portion of the Borough. The Borough will require guidance and technical assistance to achieve the goals of the RMP.

### **Historic Cultural, Archaeological and Scenic Resources**

The Highlands RMP identifies the value of historic sites, cultural resources and scenic vistas. The RMP encourages the preservation and conservation of such resources. Bloomsbury Borough agrees that these resources are valuable to the quality of life for residents and the region. The Borough has identified the need to designate a historic district in the Borough to retain historic structures and the overall character of the area. Historic designation was identified as a key goal in all three reexamination reports and continues to be a viable goal for the Borough.

The Borough will need to prepare a full inventory of historic and cultural sites and formulate strategies to protect and preserve these sites into the future.

### **Transportation**

The goals and objectives for transportation networks in the Highlands region encourage multi-modal systems that provide for safe and adequate travel that will not result in a detriment to the Highlands region, its environment or the communities within.

The Borough's goals and objectives regarding transportation relate more to overall maintenance and safety issues and not expansion of existing networks. The major roads in the Borough are under State and County jurisdiction. The Local roads service residents and do not require any expansion. The Borough's central commercial area, with small retail and commercial sites that primarily service local needs, allow for a walkable community for some items. The compact center allows for the ability to park and walk to a variety of services if need be. The Borough has no plans to expand on any roads, only to provide proper maintenance. The Borough will need to work with local, County and State transportation partners to review and implement any needed regulations regarding transportation networks.

### **Future Land Use**

The goals and objectives of the Highlands RMP for future land use center on maintaining and updating the Land Use Capability Map series, providing smart growth initiatives and discouraging inappropriate growth. In addition, the Future Land Use section discusses providing regional development opportunities where possible and without detriment to natural resources. Future Land Use in the Highlands Region should not expand or create new infrastructure unless it can be demonstrated a need for such infrastructure, which

includes water and sewer lines. New development or redevelopment not on public water or sewer must meet a density that can support nitrate dilution levels in the region. Finally, as discussed above, clustering is mandatory in the Agricultural Resource Areas, which includes all of Bloomsbury Borough.

The Borough, while primarily developed, has some development and redevelopment opportunities. These include new development potential in currently agricultural areas, as well as redevelopment potential in areas within the developed center of the Borough. The Borough has identified, through the most recent Reexamination Report, the need to maintain the rural historic character and provide for appropriate growth options. The Borough will need to review and identify appropriate long-term development and redevelopment opportunities, potentially create a redevelopment area for future economic activity, and create new cluster provisions to meet the Highlands RMP regulations. The Borough will need to work with the Highlands Council to determine appropriate areas of redevelopment and areas where any new development is no appropriate.

### **Landowner Equity**

The Highlands RMP highlights several goals and policies to address land owner equity issues to areas where land development potential has been reduced. The RMP seeks to offset these effects through Transfer of Development Rights, Highlands Development Credit opportunities and introducing innovative design guidelines to allow for development with minimal impacts to the environment. Offsetting the cost of the Highlands RMP is key to the economic viability of the region for the short and long term. Many of the items in this section will require set up by the Highlands Council through State appropriate agencies. The Borough encourages any offsetting measures and will work with the Council to achieve the long term goals. As identified in this section, TDR receiving opportunities are voluntary and not necessarily appropriate for the Borough.

### **Sustainable Economic Development**

The RMP encourages economic development activities that increase the local tax base and provides employment opportunities. The RMP offers a Sustainable Economic Development Program that describes a variety of tools, strategies and incentives to support long-term economic viability. The RMP requires the preparation and adoption of an Economic Plan Element that will provide strategies for achieving sustainable economic development consistent with the Highlands Plan. The Borough will require financial and technical support to achieve this requirement.

### **Air Quality**

Air quality is becoming an ever increasing concern locally and globally. The Highlands RMP encourages the reduction of air pollution through alternative modes of transportation, promotion of renewable energy sources, encouraging smart growth design guidelines for development and redevelopment, and encourage tree and landscaping to help offset pollutant loading.

The Borough concurs with this overall goal. The Borough will require technical assistance for any required monitoring and reporting necessary to achieve air quality standards. In addition, the Borough will coordinate with the Highlands Council on any regulatory practices involved in land development to encourage air quality mitigation and alternative energy implantation.

### **Local Participation**

The Highlands RMP relies on local participation and continual updates for the overall long term viability of the Plan. The Borough encourages an open and transparent process and will coordinate with the Highlands Council to ensure proper public participation and the participation of local government.

### **Major issues/Problems in Achieving Plan Conformance**

Bloomsbury Borough is a small, historic Borough with a densely developed core and less dense outer boundaries. The Borough has maintained a steady level of population and development over the last 40 years and has seen little major shifts in development trends. Planning in the Borough has reflected this steady pace and has strived to maintain the rural historic character of the Borough will promoting a quality of life valued by residents. Thus, the major issues or problems related to plan conformance at this time are financial resources, technical assistance, and grappling with major issues that may not be relevant to the Borough's character.

The goals and objectives outlined in the RMP will result in the creation and amendments to existing regulations adopted by the Borough. Major hurdles include mandatory clustering throughout the Borough, the preparation of a variety of master plan element and development regulations, and coordination with larger entities to achieve Plan Conformance. The Borough will require financial assistance to evaluate, create and implement the required documentation to achieve plan conformance.

Other major obstacles to plan conformance are the required technical documents and plans to be prepared and adopted by municipalities. These include:

- Land Use Capability Analysis
- Limiting Factor Analysis
- Build Out analysis
- Water Use Conservation and Management Plan
- Ground Water Recharge and Mitigation Plan
- Wellhead Protection Plan
- Wastewater Management Plan
- Septic System Management Plan
- Stormwater Management Plan
- Any applicable resource protection regulations
  - Open water and riparian areas
  - Ground water recharge
  - Wellhead protection (amended)

- Stormwater
- Steep Slopes
- Forest Areas
- Open Space monitoring
- Critical habitat
- Lake Management
- Low impact development
- Historic and cultural protection

Many of these items will be completely new documents for the Borough and will require time and resources to prepare. It is assumed that the Highlands Council will provide a variety of model ordinances, documents and planning chapters that will reduce the time and expense of preparing these documents. Until these documents are available for review and comments, a timeframe or budget for the preparation, review and adoption of any given planning or regulatory document is unknown. Given the 9 to 15 month compliance timeline, the Borough will seek to communicate and partner with the Highlands in achieving conditional and full Plan conformance.

Table1: Bloomsbury Borough Conformance Checklist

Submission Item	Agrees with Highlands RMP	Comments
1. Environmental Resource Inventory	No	
2. Municipal Master Plan		
a. Statement of Policies, Goals & Objectives	Partial	Will need to be revised to include Highlands RMP
b. Land Use Plan Element	Partial	Will need to be revised to include Highlands RMP
i. Up-to-Date Developed Land Inventory	Partial	
c. Housing Plan Element	No	Will be preparing Housing Element this year
d. Conservation Plan Element	No	Existing Plan part of 1979 Master Plan, policy updates through reexamination process
e. Utility Service Plan Element	No	Existing Plan part of 1979 Master Plan, policy updates through reexamination process
f. Circulation Plan Element	No	Existing Plan part of 1979 Master Plan, policy updates through reexamination process
g. Recreation and Open Space Plan Element	No	Existing Plan part of 1979 Master Plan, policy updates through reexamination process
i. Up-to-Date Open Space Inventory	No	
h. Agriculture Retention/Farmland Preservation Plan Element (if applicable)	No	
i. Up-to-Date Preserved Farmland Inventory	No	
i. Community Facilities Plan Element	No	Existing Plan part of 1979 Master Plan, policy updates through reexamination process
j. Sustainable Economic Development Plan Element	No	
k. Historic and Cultural Preservation Plan Element (if applicable)	No	
l. Development Transfer Plan (if applicable)	No	
m. Statement of Relationship to other plans, Highlands RMP and SDRP	Partial	
3. Master Plan Reexamination Reports	Yes	Last reexamination report in 2003
4. Zoning/Land Use Ordinances & Development Regulations		
a. Water Use & Wastewater Treatment Provisions Included	No	
b. Development Application Checklist Ordinance Included	No	
5. Zoning Map and Schedule of Requirements	Yes	
6. Official Map	Yes	
7. Redevelopment and/or Rehabilitation Plans (Adopted or Proposed)	No	
8. Environmental/Infrastructure Capacity Analysis		
a. Land Use Capability Analysis	No	
b. Limiting Factor Analysis	No	
c. Build-Out Analysis	No	
9. Management Plans		
a. Water Use Conservation & Management Plan	No	
b. Ground Water Recharge Protection and Mitigation Plan	No	
c. Wellhead Protection Plan	No	
d. Wastewater Management Plan (County WMP may be used)	Yes	
e. Septic System Management/Maintenance Plan	No	
f. Stormwater Management Plan	No	

Table 1: Bloomsbury Borough Conformance Checklist

Submission Item	Agrees with Highlands RMP	Land Use Plan (2003 Reexamination Report)	Conservation Plan (2003 Reexamination Report)	NRI/ERI (1979 MP Existing Conditions)	Ordinance Regulations
10. Resource Protection & Supporting Regulations/Plans					
a. Open Water and Riparian Areas	No		Recommendations to provide better stream protection and setback requirements		§1400. Bloomsbury Borough Surface Water Management Ordinance is intended to manage the increased rate and velocity of the surface water runoff created by alterations in the around cover and natural runoff patterns. §506.2 Stream setback requirements of 100'
b. Ground Water Recharge	No				§1406.3-3 requires a submission of groundwater recharge areas and wet soils as part of the Surface Water Management Plan
c. Well Head Protection	No				
d. Storm water	No		Recommend storm water drainage requirements for nonresidential development		
e. Steep Slopes	No			Discussion of topography in 1979 Existing Conditions portion of Master Plan	§1408.1-4 requires a submission of steep slopes as part of the Surface Water Management Plan
f. Carbonate Rock	No	Recommends development regulations in Limestone areas to insure safety of life and property			
g. Forest Areas	No				
h. Agricultural/Right to Farm	Partial				§1200. A-R Agricultural District, is intended to provide farm and farm related activities.
i. Open Space Monitoring/Stewardship	No				
j. Critical Habitat	No				
k. Lake Management	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
l. Low Impact Development	Partial	Recommends providing a mechanism for determining number of allowable lots under the cluster subdivision option			
m. Historic, Cultural, & Scenic	Partial	Recommends zoning ordinance to protect scenic views		Discussion of historic areas in 1979 Existing Conditions portion of Master Plan	If EIS required for development must identify any historic features
11. Discretionary Items, List					



# Highlands Regional Master Plan

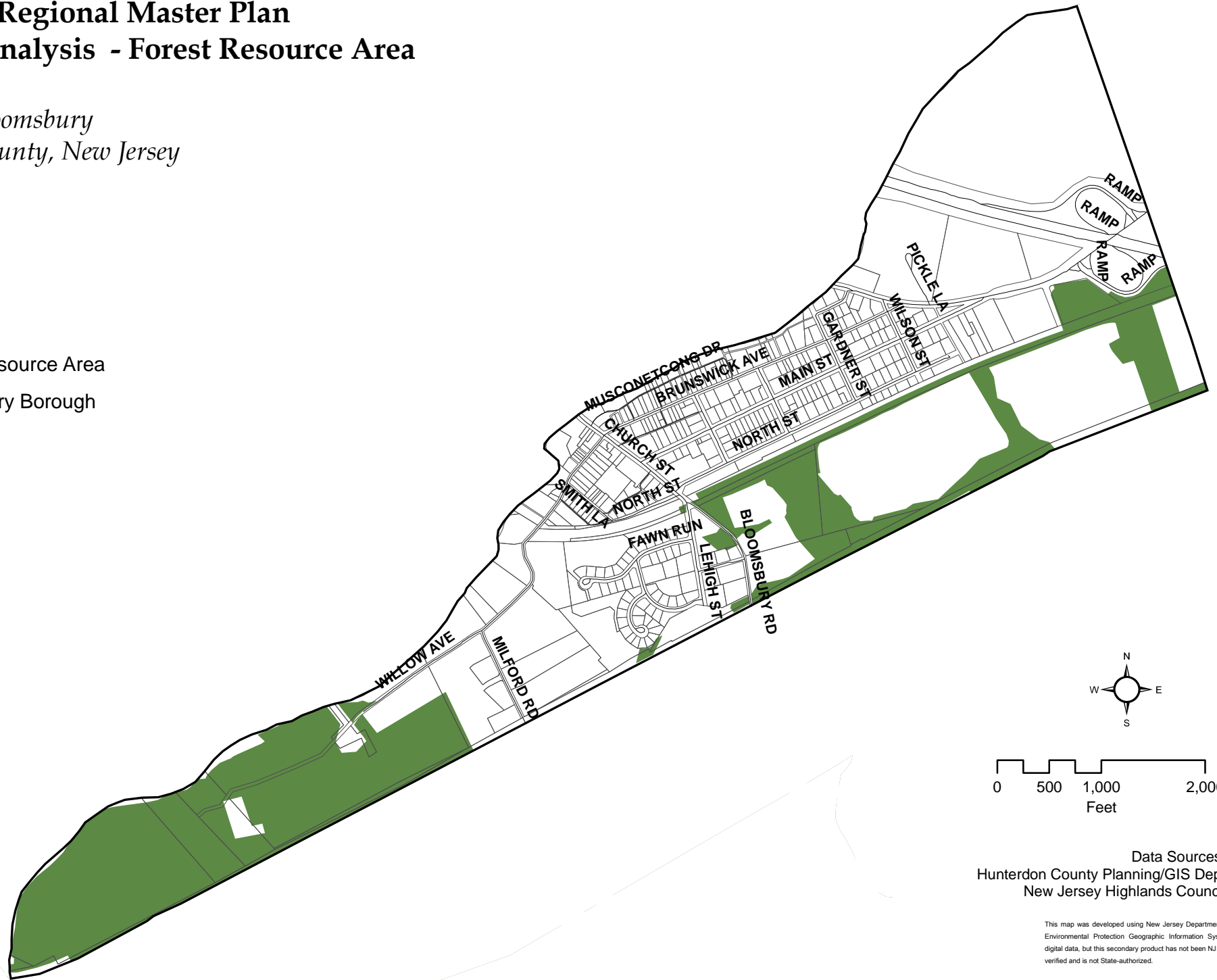
## Resource Analysis - Forest Resource Area

*Borough of Bloomsbury*  
*Hunterdon County, New Jersey*

*March 2009*

### Legend

-  Forest Resource Area
-  Bloomsbury Borough



Data Sources:  
Hunterdon County Planning/GIS Dept  
New Jersey Highlands Council

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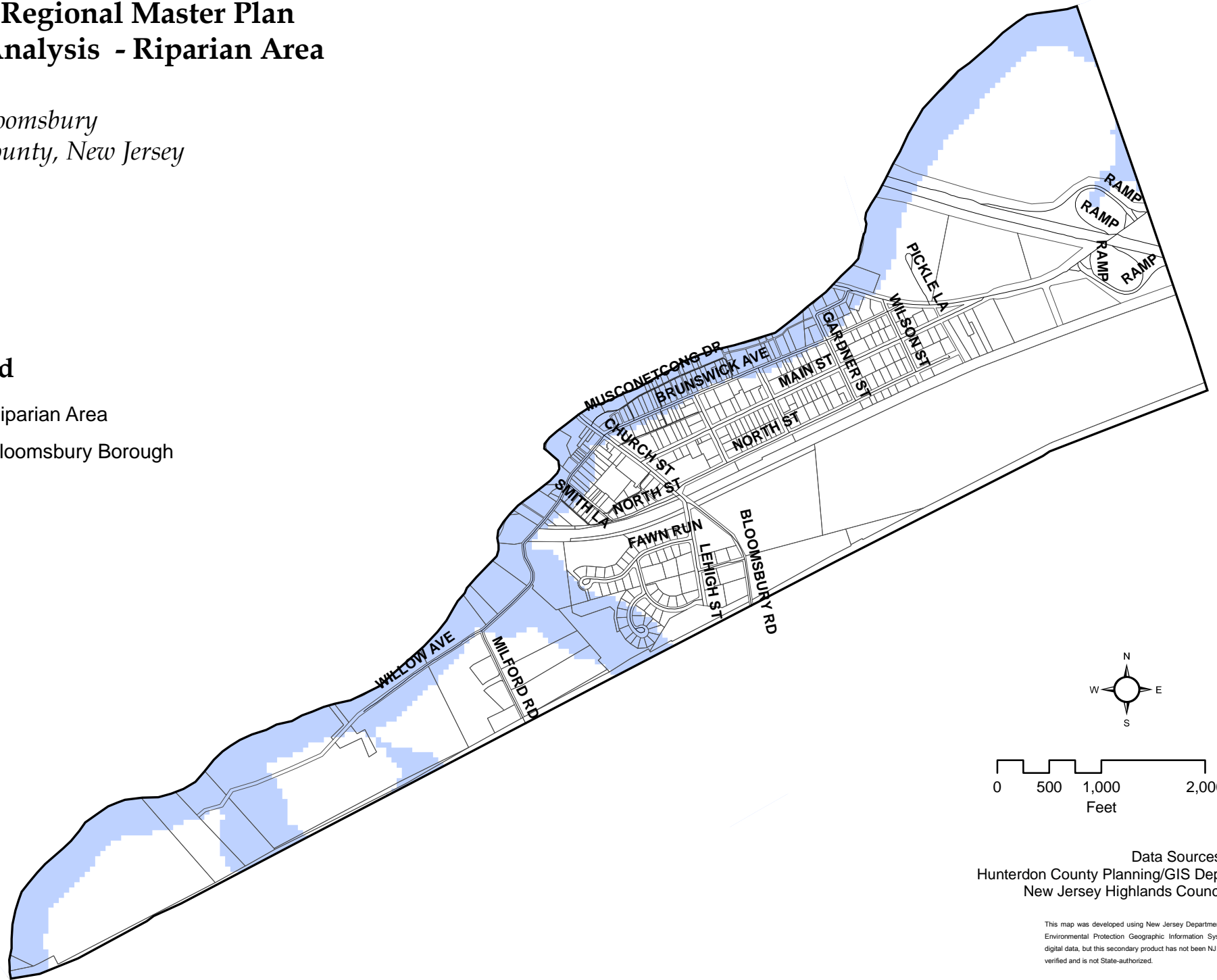
# Highlands Regional Master Plan Resource Analysis - Riparian Area

*Borough of Bloomsbury  
Hunterdon County, New Jersey*

*March 2009*

## Legend

-  Riparian Area
-  Bloomsbury Borough



Data Sources:  
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New Jersey Highlands Council

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# Highlands Regional Master Plan

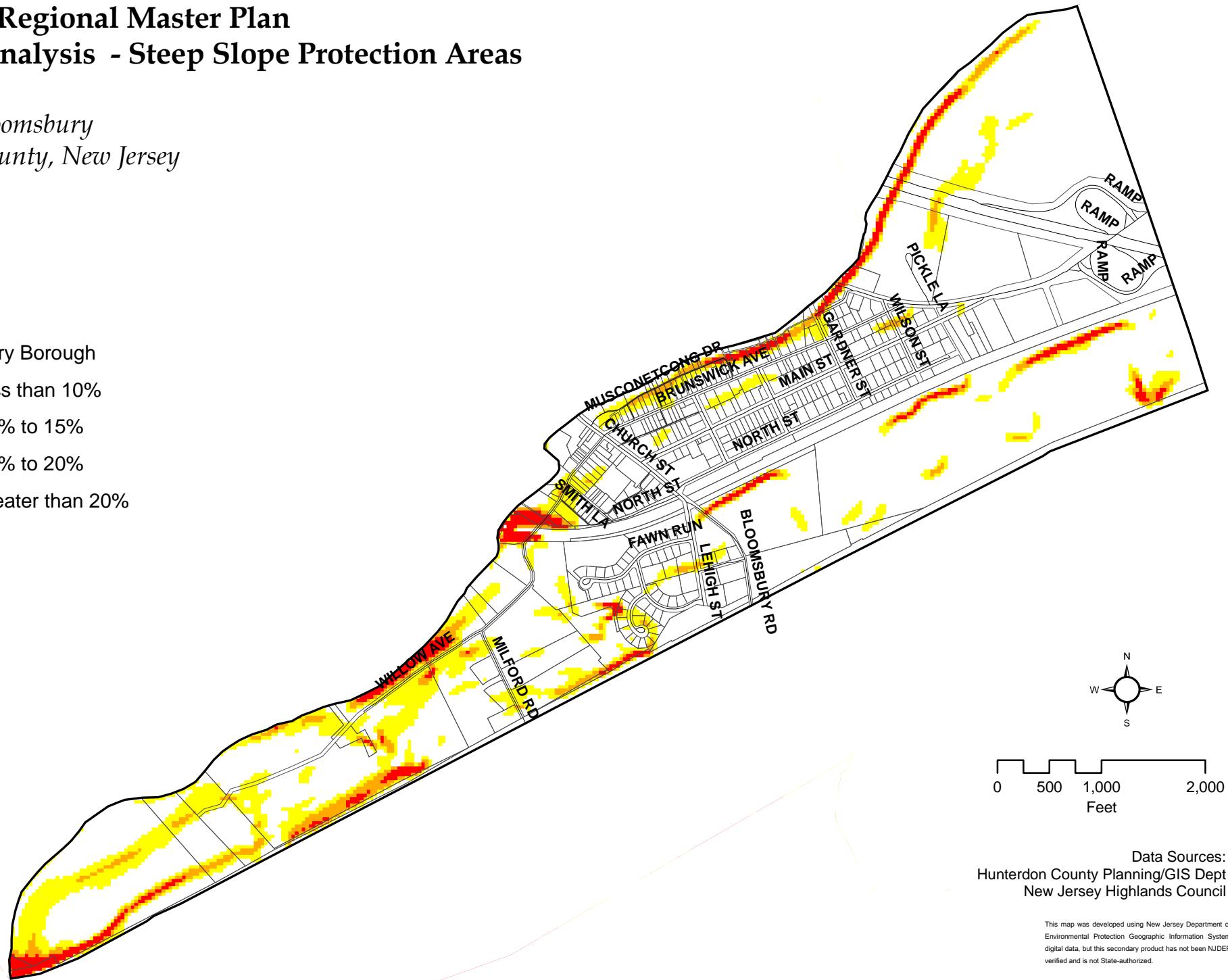
## Resource Analysis - Steep Slope Protection Areas

Borough of Bloomsbury  
Hunterdon County, New Jersey

March 2009

### Legend

-  Bloomsbury Borough
-  Slopes less than 10%
-  Slopes 10% to 15%
-  Slopes 15% to 20%
-  Slopes greater than 20%



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New Jersey Highlands Council

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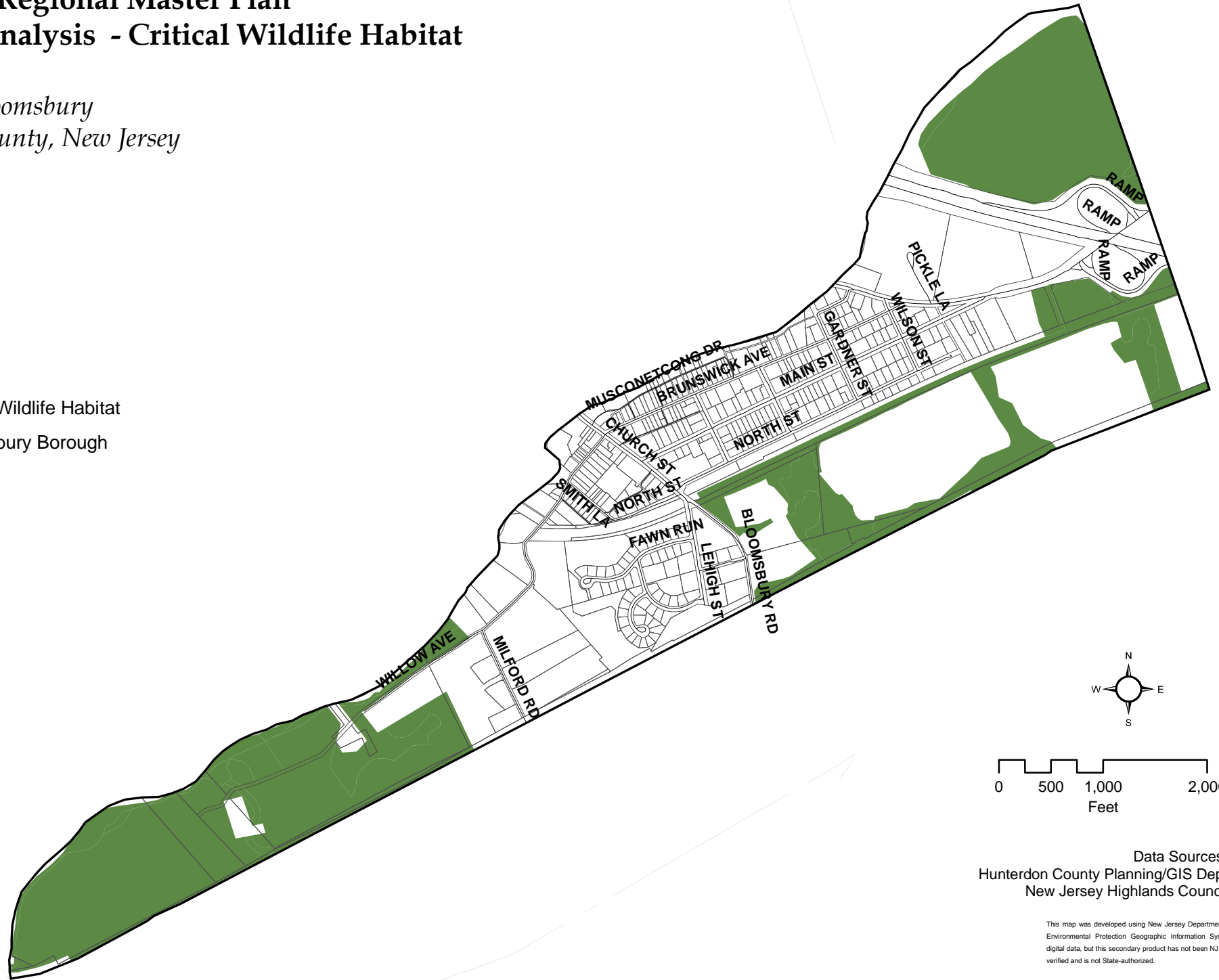
# Highlands Regional Master Plan Resource Analysis - Critical Wildlife Habitat

*Borough of Bloomsbury  
Hunterdon County, New Jersey*

*March 2009*

## Legend

-  Critical Wildlife Habitat
-  Bloomsbury Borough



Data Sources:  
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New Jersey Highlands Council

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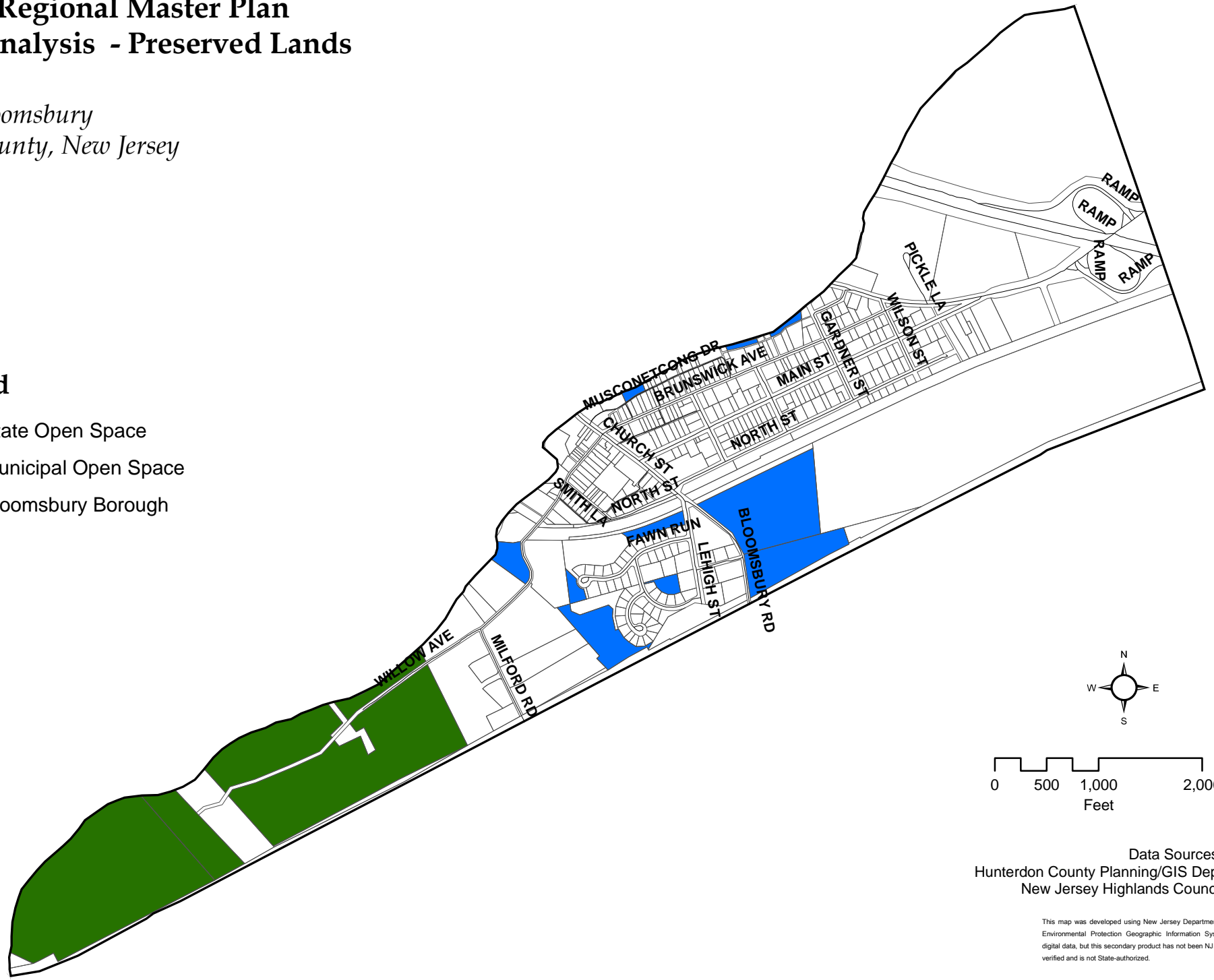
# Highlands Regional Master Plan Resource Analysis - Preserved Lands

*Borough of Bloomsbury  
Hunterdon County, New Jersey*

*March 2009*

## Legend

-  State Open Space
-  Municipal Open Space
-  Bloomsbury Borough



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New Jersey Highlands Council

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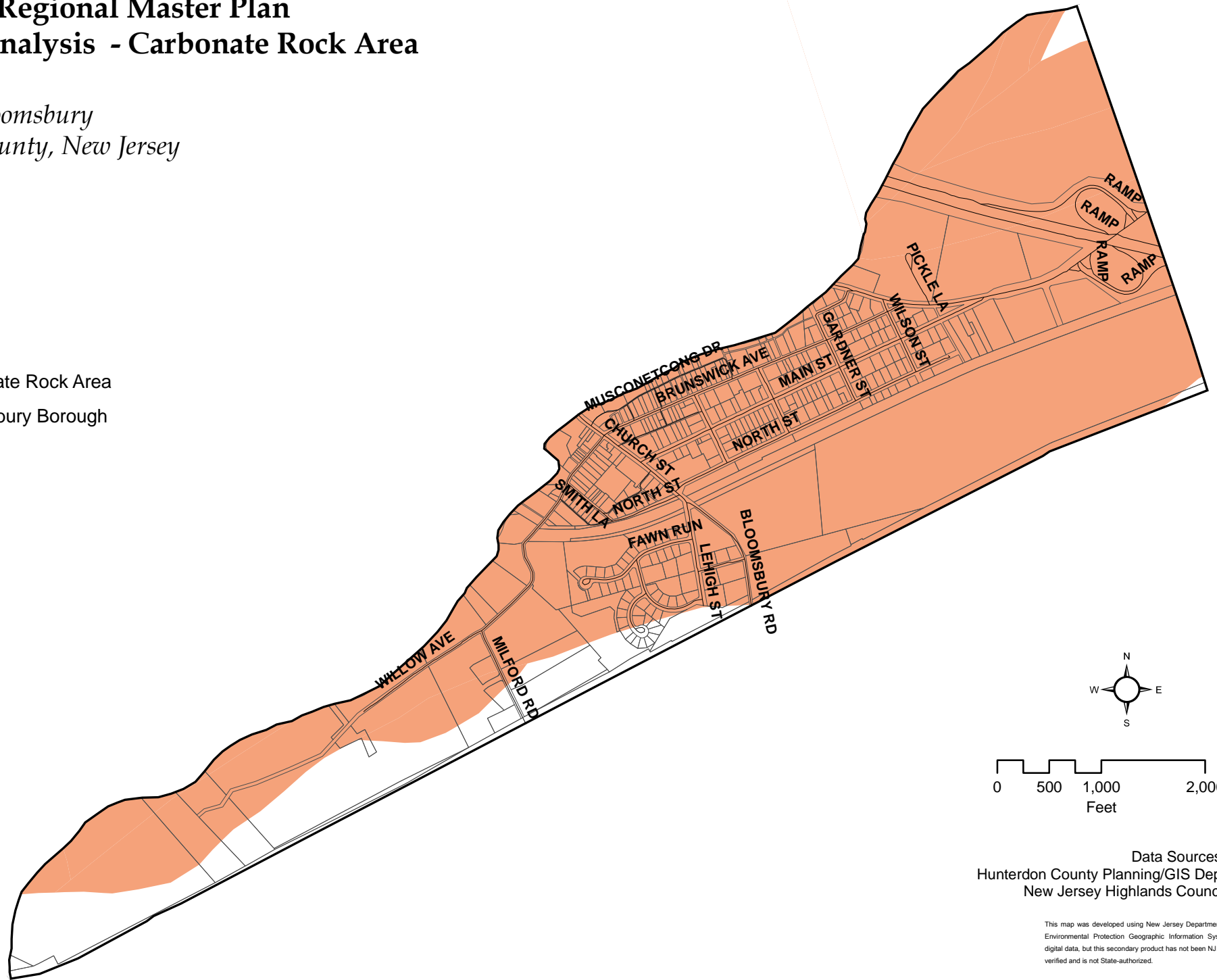
# Highlands Regional Master Plan Resource Analysis - Carbonate Rock Area

*Borough of Bloomsbury  
Hunterdon County, New Jersey*

*March 2009*

## Legend

-  Carbonate Rock Area
-  Bloomsbury Borough
-  Parcel



Data Sources:  
Hunterdon County Planning/GIS Dept  
New Jersey Highlands Council


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# Highlands Regional Master Plan Resource Analysis - Net Water Availability


*Borough of Bloomsbury  
Hunterdon County, New Jersey*

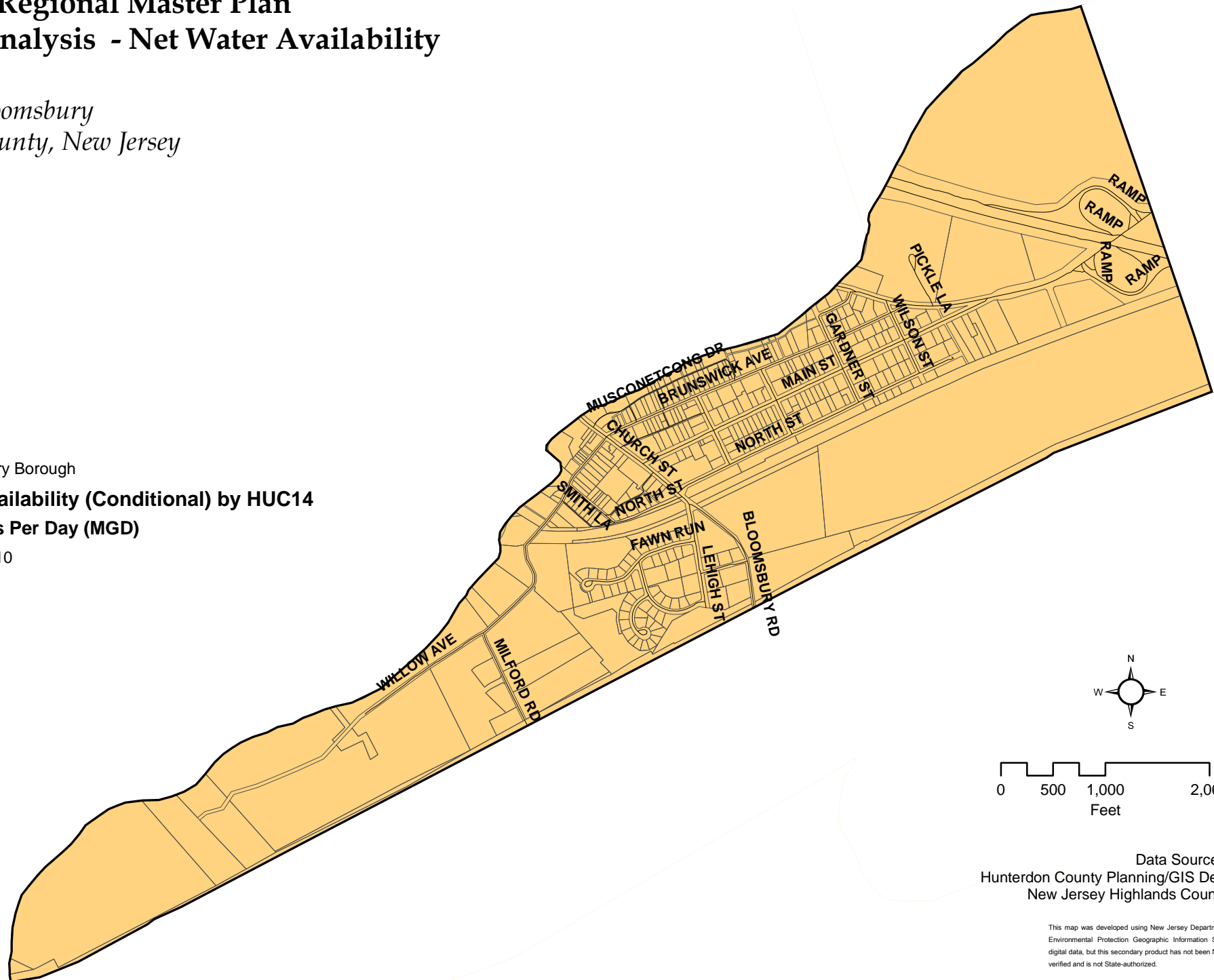
*March 2009*

## Legend

 Bloomsbury Borough

**Net Water Availability (Conditional) by HUC14  
Million Gallons Per Day (MGD)**

 -.99 to -0.10



Data Sources:  
Hunterdon County Planning/GIS Dept  
New Jersey Highlands Council

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# Highlands Regional Master Plan

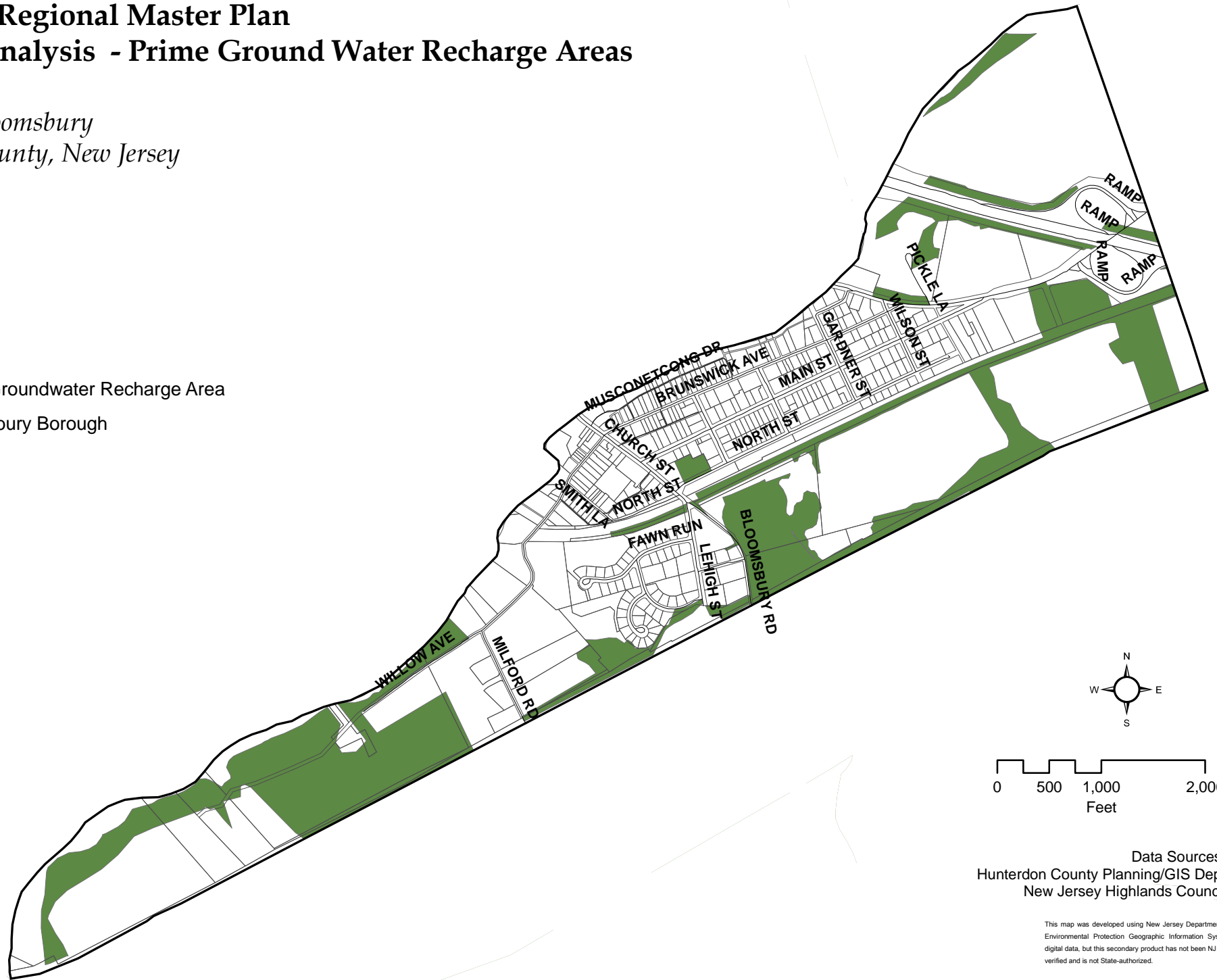
## Resource Analysis - Prime Ground Water Recharge Areas

*Borough of Bloomsbury  
Hunterdon County, New Jersey*

*March 2009*

### Legend

-  Prime Groundwater Recharge Area
-  Bloomsbury Borough
-  Parcel



Data Sources:  
Hunterdon County Planning/GIS Dept  
New Jersey Highlands Council

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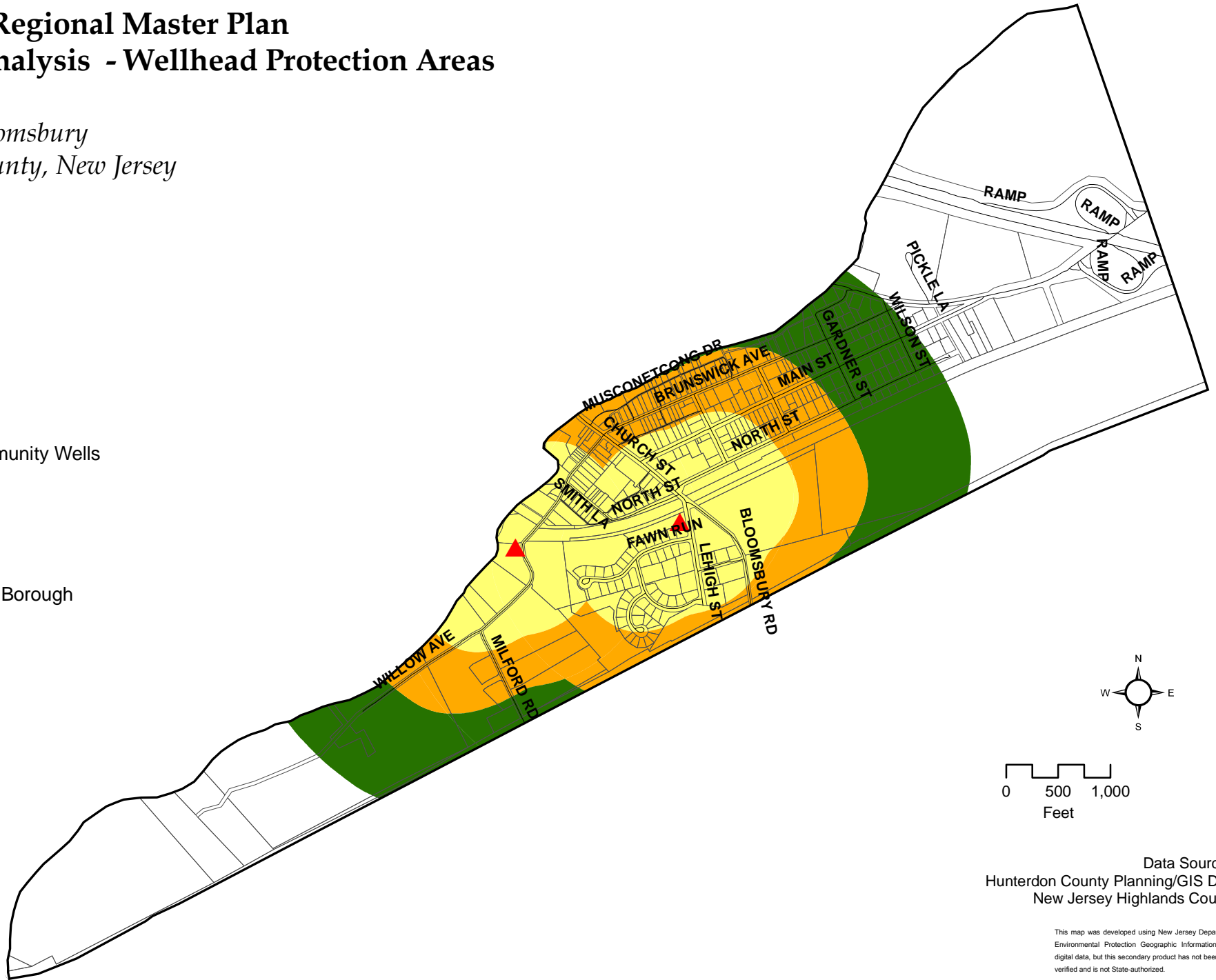
# Highlands Regional Master Plan Resource Analysis - Wellhead Protection Areas

*Borough of Bloomsbury  
Hunterdon County, New Jersey*

*March 2009*

## Legend

-  Public Community Wells
-  2 Year Tier
-  5 Year Tier
-  12 Year Tier
-  Bloomsbury Borough



Data Sources:  
Hunterdon County Planning/GIS Dept  
New Jersey Highlands Council

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# Highlands Regional Master Plan

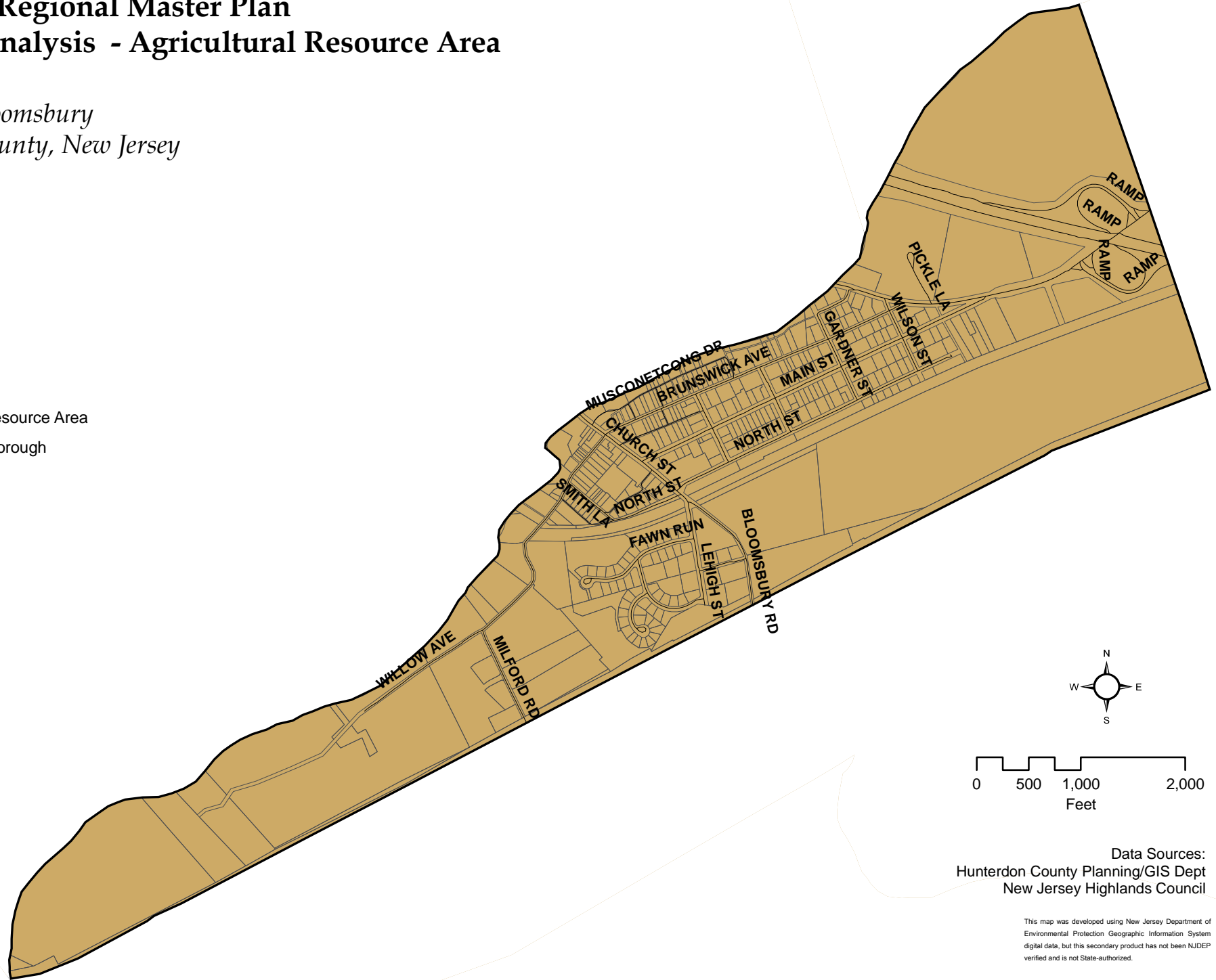
## Resource Analysis - Agricultural Resource Area

*Borough of Bloomsbury*  
*Hunterdon County, New Jersey*

*March 2009*

### Legend

-  Agricultural Resource Area
-  Bloomsbury Borough
-  Parcel



Data Sources:  
Hunterdon County Planning/GIS Dept  
New Jersey Highlands Council

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# Highlands Regional Master Plan

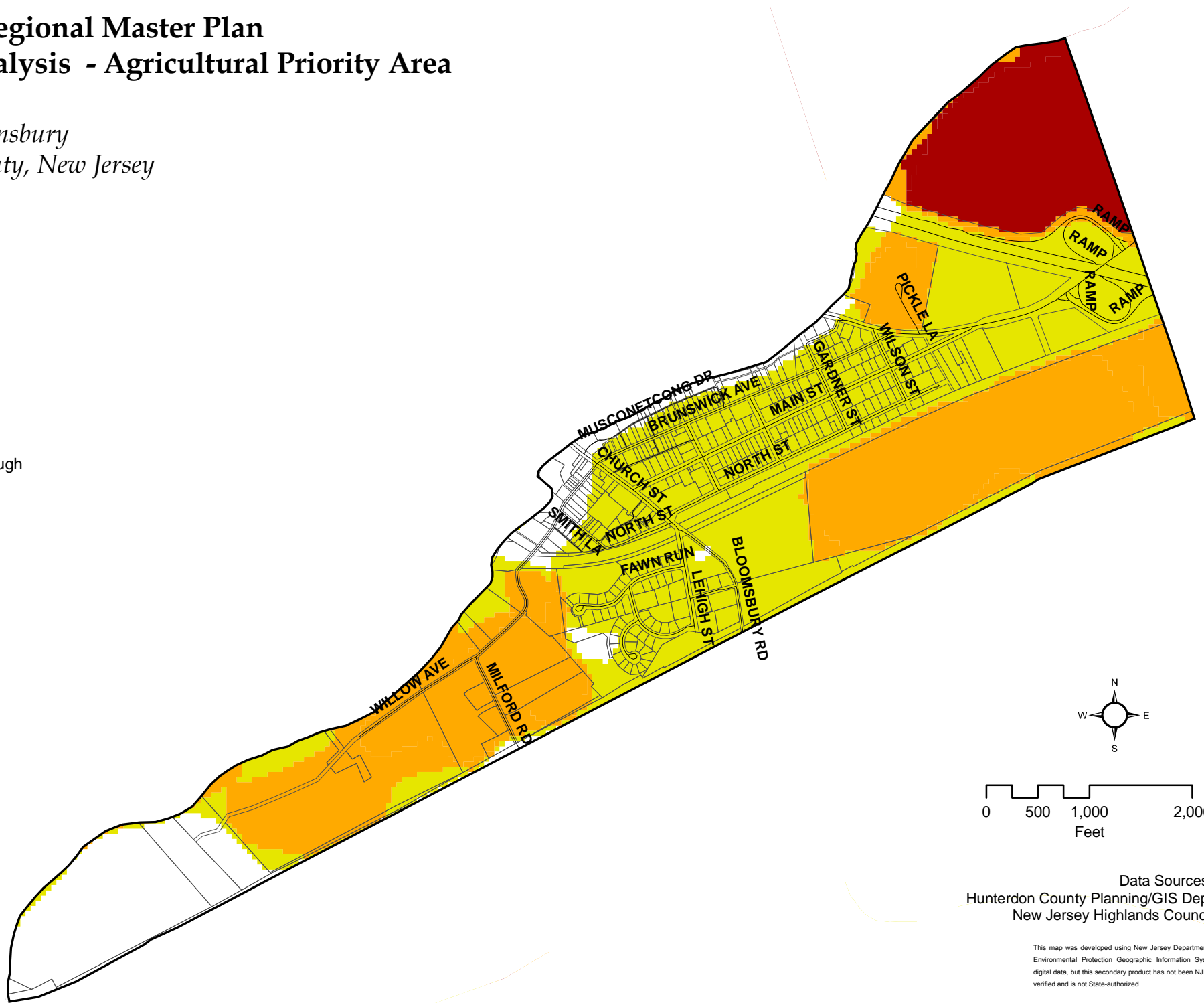
## Resource Analysis - Agricultural Priority Area

*Borough of Bloomsbury*  
*Hunterdon County, New Jersey*

*March 2009*

### Legend

-  Low
-  Moderate
-  High
-  Bloomsbury Borough
-  Parcel



Data Sources:  
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New Jersey Highlands Council

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