



**Smyth County
Planning Commission**
121 Bagley Circle, Suite 120
Marion, Virginia 24354

**Clerk's Direct Phone: (276) 706-8316
Fax: (276) 783-9314**

*Atkins District
Chilhowie District
North Fork District
Park District
Royal Oak District
Rye Valley District
Saltville District
Zoning Administrator, Clerk*

*Hazel L. Wagoner
Graham S. Davidson Jr.
Robert Campbell
Lea Meadows
Anthony "Tony" Ray Dean
Paul D. Shepherd
David L. Spence
Becca Creasy*

AGENDA

Thursday, December 19, 2024

6:00 p.m.

1. Call Meeting to Order
2. Adoption of Agenda
3. Adopt Minutes of October 24, 2024, meeting
4. Citizens Time
5. Other Business, if any
6. Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map:
 - a. *Royal Oak District Supervisor Courtney Widener made a motion to send the Planning Commission's recommendation back for reconsideration to ensure it aligns with the Comprehensive Plan regarding the Virginia Outdoor Foundation's request, on behalf of Greg and Kyli Waddle, for an amendment to the Future Land Use Map. Saltville District Supervisor Roscoe Call seconded the motion.*

After consideration, the motion PASSED by the following vote:

<i>AYES:</i>	<i>Chair, Atkins District Supervisor Charles Atkins, Vice Chair, Chilhowie District Supervisor Michael Sturgill, North Fork District Supervisor Rick Billings, Royal Oak District Supervisor Courtney Widener, Park District Supervisor Kristopher Ratliff, Saltville District Supervisor Roscoe Call, and Rye Valley District Supervisor Jason Parris.</i>
<i>NAYS:</i>	<i>None.</i>
<i>ABSTAINERS:</i>	<i>None.</i>
<i>ABSENT:</i>	<i>None.</i>
7. Questions/Comments from Commissioners
8. Adjournment.



Note from the Clerk: These minutes are written as the agenda was presented. Some votes may appear out of order.

SMYTH COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

Thursday, October 24, 2024

The Smyth County Planning Commission met in their regular meeting on Thursday, October 24, 2024, at 6:30 P.M. in the Smyth County Office Building.

Commissioners Present: Hazel Wagoner, Chairperson, Atkins District; Graham Davidson Jr, Vice-Chairman, Chilhowie District; Robert Campbell, North Fork District; Tony Dean, Royal Oak District; Lea Meadows, Park District; Paul Shepherd, Rye Valley District; and David Spence, Saltville District.

Staff Present: Clegg Williams and Kelsey Marchant

6:32 PM Adoption of Agenda: Hazel Wagoner called the meeting to order. David Spence made a motion to approve the agenda which was seconded by Graham Davidson and unanimously passed with a 7-0 vote.

Minutes: Mr. Spence made a motion to approve the minutes of the Thursday, September 26, 2024, meeting which was seconded by Lea Meadows and unanimously passed with a 7-0 vote.

Other Business: A handout regarding an update about the Laurel Creek Storage Energy Facility was given to the commissioners.

Citizens Time: No citizens were present.

Zoning Administrator Updates: Clegg Williams informed the commissioners of the Board's approval of their recommendations to amend the Zoning Ordinance pertaining to zoning fees and the exemption for county owned solid waste facilities from the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance.

Commissioners' Questions/Comments: No questions or comments.

6:37 PM With no further discussion, Mr. Spence made a motion to recess until their joint public hearing with the Board of Supervisors which was seconded by Mr. Dean, and unanimously passed with a 7-0 vote.

JOINT PUBLIC HEARING WITH BOARD OF SUPERVIORS

Board Members Present: Charles Atkins, Chairman, Atkins District; Mike Sturgill, Vice-Chairman, Chilhowie District; Rick Billings, North Fork District; Roscoe Call, Saltville District; Courtney Widener, Royal Oak District; Kris Ratliff, Park District; and Jason Parris, Rye Valley District.

Commissioners Present: Hazel Wagoner, Chairperson, Atkins District; Graham Davidson Jr, Vice-Chairman, Chilhowie District; Robert Campbell, North Fork District; Tony Dean, Royal Oak District; Lea Meadows, Park District; Paul Shepherd, Rye Valley District; and David Spence, Saltville District.

Staff Present: Shawn Utt, County Administrator; Clegg Williams, Assistant County Administrator – Development; Lisa Richardson, Assistant County Administrator – Operations; Becca Creasy, Zoning Administrator; and Kelsey Marchant, Administrative Assistant for Building and Zoning.

10/24/2024 7:04 PM Charlie Atkins, Chairman of the Board of Supervisors, and Hazel Wagoner, Chairperson of the Planning Commission, called the joint public meeting to order.

10/24/2024 7:04 PM Clegg Williams read the legal ad into the record.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Pursuant to Sections 15.2-2204, 15.2-2225 and 15.2-2229 of the Code of Virginia, 1950 as amended, the Smyth County Board of Supervisors and the Smyth County Planning Commission will conduct a joint public hearing on Thursday, October 24, 2024, at 7:00 P.M., or soon thereafter, to receive public input on an amendment to the Smyth County Future Land Use Map – Pages 186-187 of the Comprehensive Plan.

The amendment is sought by the Virginia Outdoor Foundation on behalf of Greg and Kyli Waddle, to re-classify multiple properties on River Road, Colecrest Drive, and Flatwood Acres Road in Chilhowie (Tax Map Nos. 64-A-5A, 64-A-6, 64-A-7, 64-A-20) as *Agriculture* rather than *Village Residential* and *Commercial/Industrial* in the comprehensive plan and future land use map. The Waddle's have applied with the Virginia Outdoor Foundation to preserve these properties through a Conservation Easement and requests the Future Land Use Map support their application.

The public hearing will be held at the Board of Supervisors Meeting Room in the Smyth County Office Building located at 121 Bagley Circle, Marion, Virginia 24354. The draft amendment to the map is available for inspection in the Smyth County Administrator's Office at the address given above during normal business hours and online at Smyth County's website: www.smythcounty.org. All are encouraged to view the proposed amendment to the land use map and attend the public hearing. At the hearing, persons may make comments regarding the proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment, subject to the rules of procedures of the Smyth County Board of Supervisors and the Planning Commission of Smyth County. If you have any questions, please contact Becca Creasy, Zoning Administrator, by telephone at (276) 706-8316 or by e-mail at bcreasy@smythcounty.org.

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, persons requiring special assistance to attend and participate in this hearing should contact the Smyth County Administrator's office at (276) 783-3298 at least forty-eight (48) hours prior to the hearing.

Smyth County fully complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related statutes and regulations in all programs and activities. For more information or to obtain a Title VI Discrimination Complaint Form, contact (276) 783-3298 or at <https://www.smythcounty.org>.

BY ORDER OF THE
SMYTH COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AND THE
PLANNING COMMISSION
Shawn M. Utt, County Administrator
Hazel Wagoner, Chairperson of the Planning Commission

10/24/2024 7:07 PM Mr. Williams opened the meeting, explaining that the Waddles' property is designated for *Commercial/Industrial* and *Village Residential* use in the comprehensive plan's Future Land Use map, but they wish to amend it to *Agriculture*. He then introduced Tommy Oravetz of the Virginia Outdoor Foundation (VOF), who represents the property owners, Greg and Kyli Waddle

10/24/2024 7:09 PM Mr. Oravetz described the property as 800+ acres with karst features across both Smyth and Washington counties and the Waddles' intended to preserve it through a conservation easement.

10/24/2024 7:11 PM Rick Billings and Kris Ratliff confirmed the property's current use as agriculture and that it can only be used for agricultural purposes. Mr. Oravetz added that, while agricultural use is preferred, future generations aren't obligated to farm it. Mike Sturgill asked Mr. Williams if there were any public utilities on the property. Mr. Williams presented a map of the area showing where the public utilities are in relation to the properties.

10/24/2024 7:17 PM In response to Roscoe Call, Mr. Williams confirmed there would be no impact on the County land use tax. Mr. Oravetz said that most counties will keep it permanently in land use, because of the restrictions. He also clarified that the Waddles' two parcels adjoining Colecrest Subdivision are not included in the easement.

10/24/2024 7:19 PM Questions were raised by Tony Dean and Mr. Atkins about financial incentives and benefits to the owners. Mr. Oravetz explained that the Waddles would receive a federal income tax deduction and a state tax credit based on the devaluation of the property from the easement, but future owners would not, and that VOF's goal is to preserve large tracts of land.

10/24/2024 7:21 PM Mr. Ratliff inquired about the permanence of the conservation easement with Mr. Oravetz confirming the easement cannot be removed without an application, however it was rare that they ever get approval.

10/24/2024 7:30 PM There was much discussion as Mr. Williams reviewed the county's future land use map, indicating current designations for Village/Residential and Commercial/Industrial uses, as well as a map reflecting all the tracts of land in Smyth County currently in conservation easements. Comments were made that it would be hard to develop a cliff side, and that the easement made sense; however, there was concern that future development would be limited.

10/24/2024 7:40 PM Graham Davidson Jr. left the meeting to attend a prior commitment.

10/24/2024 7:44 PM With no further discussion and no citizens present, Mr. Atkins adjourned the public hearing with the Board of Supervisors. Mrs. Wagoner reconvened the Planning Commission's regular meeting.

10/24/2024 7:45 PM Virginia Outdoor Foundation, on behalf of Greg and Kyli Waddle, Comprehensive Plan Amendment to Future Land Use Map Lea Meadows made a motion to recommend the Board of Supervisors approve amending the Future Land Use Map in the Comprehensive Plan to identify the following parcels as Agriculture instead of Commercial/Industrial and Village Residential: 64-A-20, 64-A-5A, 64-A-6, and 64-A-7. The motion was seconded by David Spence and unanimously passed with the following vote:

Vote:	6 yeas	Campbell, Dean, Meadows, Shepherd, Spence, and Wagoner
	1 absent	Davidson

10/24/2024 7:46 PM Mr. Spence made a motion to adjourn the meeting which was seconded by Mr. Shepherd and unanimously passed with a 6-0-1 vote.

Tony Dean, Secretary



12/10/2024

Becca Creasy
121 Bagley Circle, Ste. 120
Marion, VA 24354

RE: Waddle Map Amendment Application for Planning Commission on December 19, 2024

Dear Ms. Creasy:

The Virginia Outdoors Foundation (VOF) has been working with Greg and Kyli Waddle to place an open-space easement on their 850 +/- acre property in Smyth and Washington County. The Waddles have requested a Map Amendment to the current Smyth County Comp Plan (PlanSmth 2044). The application is looking for a new recommendation for approval from the Planning Commission. The application was previously recommended for approval from the Planning Commission on October 24, 2024 but was sent back to the Planning Commission for re-review by the Board of Supervisors on November 14, 2024.

Since the original materials for the amendment application was submitted in early October 2024, we wanted to provide some updates the project. The Waddles were awarded a grant through the Virginia Land Conservation Fund (VLCF) this November by the VLCF board appointed by the governor. The Governor was quoted in a November 27, 2024 press release announcing the grant awards:

“We take pride in sharing the rich beauty of Virginia’s natural resources and historical places and remain committed to increasing public access so more Virginians can enjoy them. Our parks, open spaces and other vital outdoor recreation assets drive tourism and economic growth, and they provide residents a place to connect with nature. Supporting Virginians so they can continue to work their farmlands and forests helps our key agriculture and forestry sectors continue to thrive.”

The Waddles application ranked 3rd out of 10 projects from all around the state in the Farmland Category of the grant program. This is also the furthest west a Farmland Category application has been funded in the grant program's 25-year history. The funding is planned to be used to pay down the mortgage used to purchase the property back in 2022.

The Waddle’s property is high-ranking in the VLCF grant program and a priority for VOF because of its conservation values listed below.

- Property is adjacent to other land owned by the landowner, which will total approximately 1,816 acres under easement.
- 67% of the properties soils are productive ag soils
- The geology of the property is a karst bedrock and nearly 200 sinkholes have been mapped on the property.

vof.org

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- The farm operation has a newly completed conservation plan developed by a Certified Nutrient Management Planner with Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS).
 - According to the 2022 Census of Agriculture, there are 1,926 active farms in the Washington and Smyth Counties, and the Waddle property is one of the 50 farms larger than 1,000 acres. This makes the farm property one of the more significant farm operations in the two counties.
 - Quality habitat for Loggerhead Shrike and the species has been documented on the property. The loggerhead shrike is a state-threatened species.

Some concerns have been mentioned in the previous meetings about not wanting to restrict future growth of the Chilhowie community, and conservation easements may restrict some of that growth. In looking into this concern we believe the existing conservation easements in the Chilhowie region along with the addition of the Waddle property will not adversely affect future growth. There are 36,213 acres within a 3-mile radius of Chilhowie and only 2,350 acres are under conservation easement (this includes the proposed Waddle project acres). With land under conservation only being 6.4% of this radius area there is still a large number of acres available for future development growth. A map displaying the land under easement in the 3-radius is enclosed with this letter.

Let me know if you have any questions or comments before the next planning commission meeting. I can be reached by phone at (540) 750-6370 or by email at toravetz@vof.org.

Respectfully,

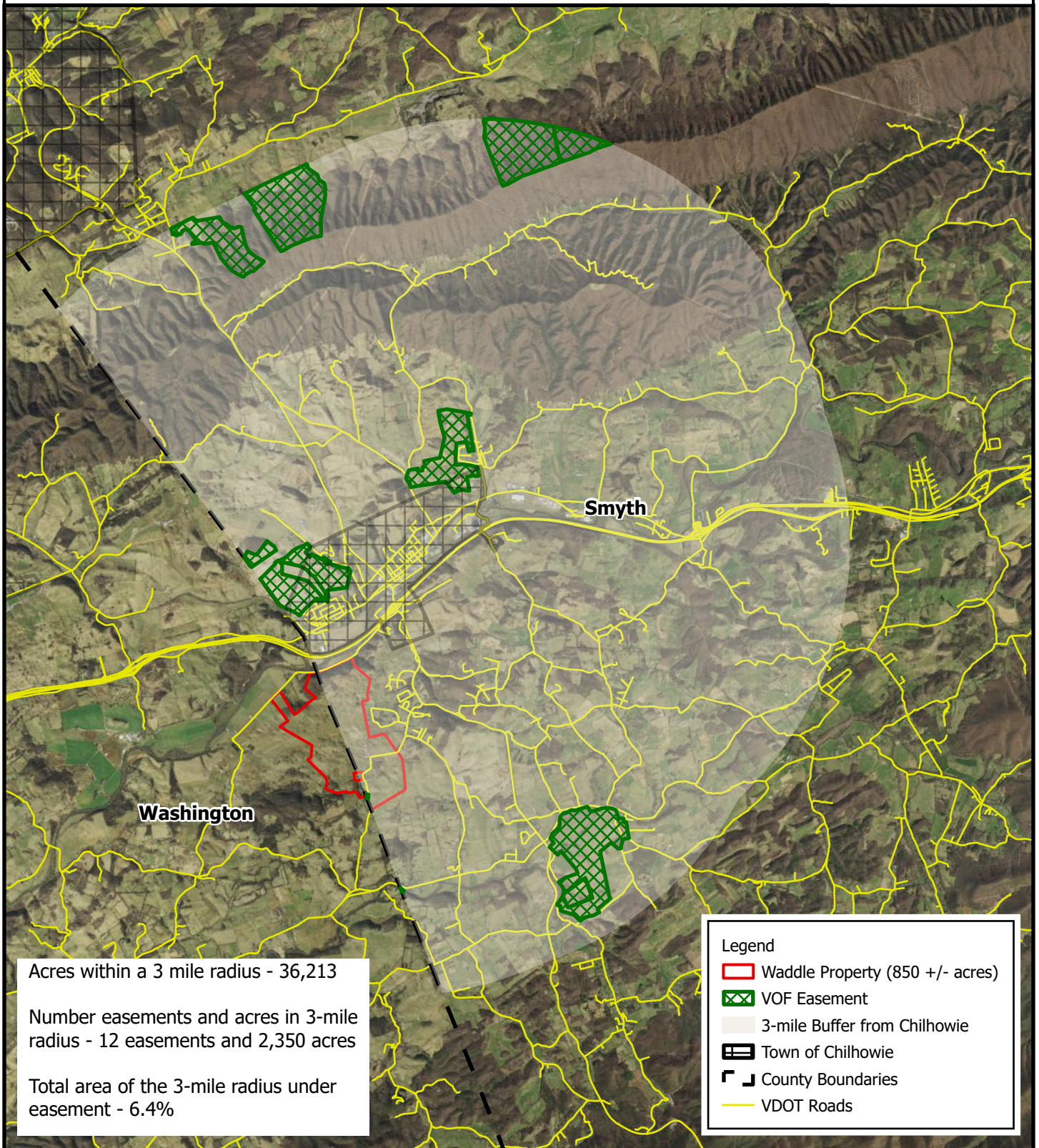


Tommy Oravetz
Conservation Specialist

Enclosures: Easements within a 3-mile Radius from Chilhowie
Topography Map

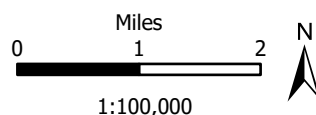
Easements within a 3-mile Radius from Chilhowie

Greg and Kyli Waddle



Smyth County

206.938 ± Acres



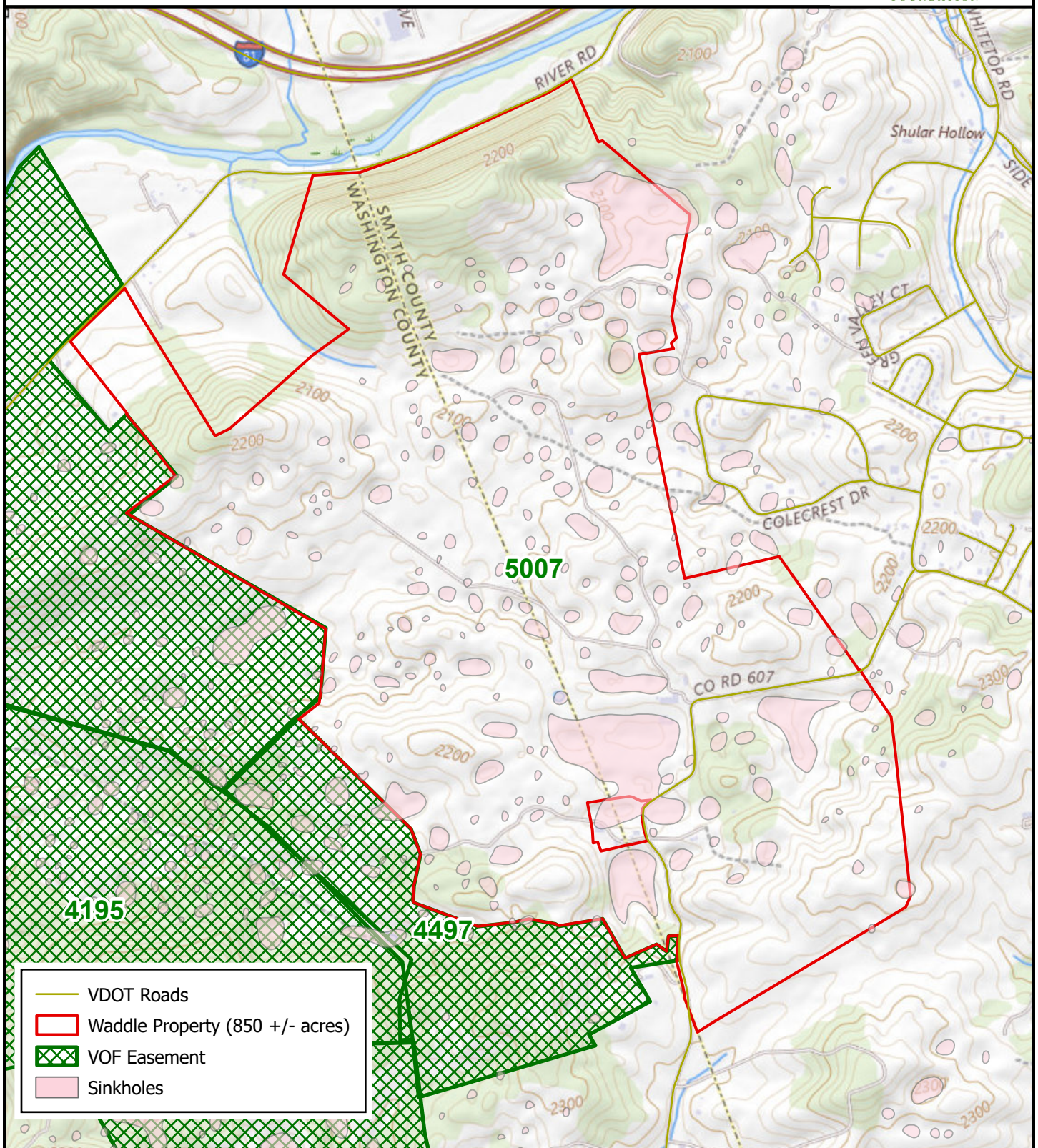
Map created: 12/10/2024 by Tommy Oravetz
Projection: NAD 1983 Virginia Lambert

Source data: Aerial Imagery - VGIN/VBMP acquired 0/0/0000; Rivers/Streams - USGS-NHD/VGIN-VBMP; County Boundaries - US Census Bureau/VOF; Roads - VDOT; all else - VOF.

This map is for general reference and display purposes only. Any determination of topography or contours, or any depiction of physical improvements, property lines or boundaries, are solely for general information and should not be used or relied upon in the design, modification, or construction of improvements to real property or for resource protection area or flood plain determination.

Topography

Greg and Kyli Waddle



- VDOT Roads
- Waddle Property (850 +/- acres)
- VOF Easement
- Sinkholes

Smyth County

206.938 ± Acres

Feet
0 300 600
1:16,000



Map created: 12/4/2024 by Tommy Oravetz
Projection: NAD 1983 Virginia Lambert

Source data: USGS Topo Quad Name: QUAD NAME; County Boundaries - US Census Bureau/VOF; Roads - VDOT; all else - VOF.

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