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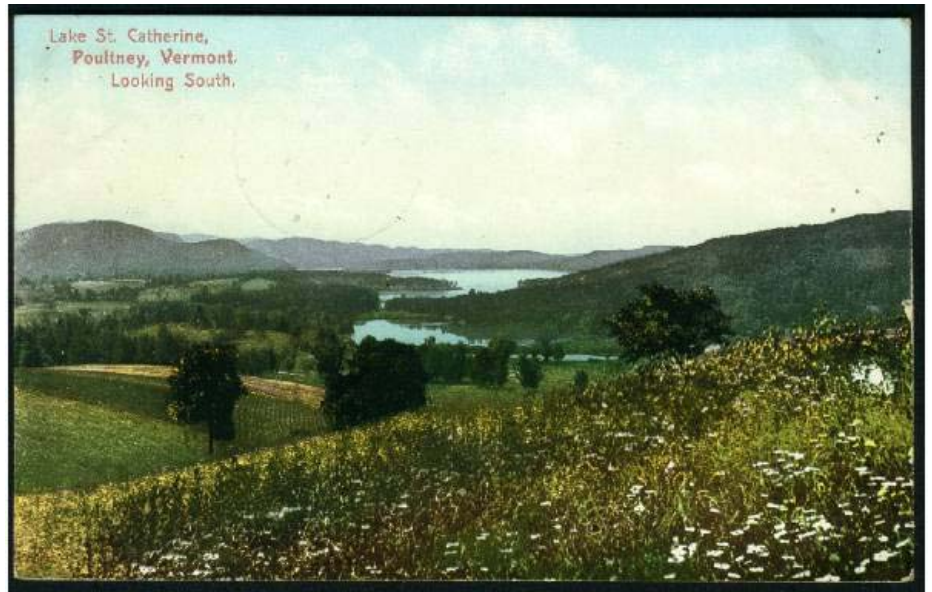
## Section 5.

# Natural Resources

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### Lakes and Rivers

**Lake St. Catherine** is situated in the southern section of the town. Formed by glaciers, it is fed by both springs and small streams, retaining beautifully clear water. The northern section of the lake offers a State owned park providing public access for camping, swimming, boating and all forms of recreation. A favorite spot all seasons of the year, it hosts an annual ice-fishing derby in the "Big Lake" off the State Park beach. In recent years, it has been reported that a growing number of retired persons have moved to the Lake St. Catherine neighborhood. This recent trend merely follows a pattern established just after the turn of the last century when a popular resort drew many outsiders to the area.



Esther Swift (1977: 414) notes that place names are “footprints of history” and gives St. Catherine as a prime example. For many colonists coming to the New World from England, the last sight of home was St. Catherine’s Point at the tip of the Isle of Wight. Thus, Swift suggests, “St. Catherine” is a common name throughout the former British Empire, and, in short, a memory of home. In fact, in 1771 New York patented a town for the Wells-Poultney area and named it St. Catherine’s. New York issued patents were ignored by Poultney’s New Hampshire grantees, but when the Green Mountain Boys chased the Yorkers completely out of the area, “Poultneyites” and their neighbors kept the name and applied it to this lake. Lake St. Catherine extends over the Poultney line and into Wells Town to the south. A companion to the lake, a 1,227-foot high mountain was also blessed with the British name (Swift, p. 415), and now this “St. Catherine Mountain” sits astride the Poultney-Wells line. It clearly enhances the lake vista (see left hand side of the picture above).

**Poultney River** also runs through the town, fed by its tributary, Lewis Brook.

### Mountains and Hills

**Spruce Knob** is the town’s highest peak, followed by Town Hill, Old Knob and Spaulding hill. Table 5. 1 concisely presents critical natural resource information for Poultney. As noted earlier, this town is among the larger Vermont towns in land area. Twenty-year trend data show a shift toward development of lands in this town.

**Table 5.1– Poultney Town Selected Natural and Geographical Information**

<b>Land Area (square miles)</b>	43.9
<b>Water Area (square miles)</b>	0.9
<b>Percent Conserved Lands, 1999</b>	2.0%
<b>Change in Forest Land to Developed Land, 1970-90 (acres)</b>	14.0
<b>Change in Forest Land to Non-Forested Land, 1970-90 (acres)</b>	32.9
<b>Change in Non-Forested Land to Developed Land, 1970-90 (acres)</b>	13.3

Sources: Center for Rural Studies / VCGI. 2002. *Vermont Indicators Online*. <http://crs.uvm.edu/indicators>