

From Farms and Falls to Fun



Did you know that three nearby major recreation sites were once major parts of Essex Junction's economy? The 38 acres of land we now know and enjoy as Maple Street Park once had a farmhouse, barn, cows and chickens. The purchase of the land by the Village of Essex Junction in 1950

was driven by the vision and tireless hard work of the Essex Junction Lion's Club to raise money for the construction of a community swimming pool. The Maple Street property was purchased because of its central location and that it was large enough to support a swimming pool, baseball fields, tennis

courts, and a picnic area. Once the site of major industrial activity, Hubbel's Falls on the Winooski River, today offers exceptional recreation opportunities. Head south on Route 2-A to access hiking trails on both sides of the river, a canoe portage and a public parking lot on the Williston side.



Tree Farm Recreational Facility

The 130 acres of land on the east side of Old Colchester Road, known as the "Tree Farm Recreational Facility," was once the home of the Vermont State Forest Tree Nursery, which operated from 1957 through 1995.

Annual production at the Tree Farm peaked in 1961 with 10 million trees. Red pine, white pine and white spruce were raised by the State for reforestation of both private and State lands. The nursery implemented a tree improvement program in the establishment of seed orchards for superior stock through grafting, as shown in this photo.

Courtesy of William P. Hall



Hubbel's Falls

The massive power of the Winooski River attracted early settlers who built dams and mills around Hubbel's Falls. Over the years, saw-mills, a carding mill, a gristmill, and a hemp mill all operated at the falls. In May 1917, a 10,000 horsepower hydroelectric plant opened, at that time the largest in the state. It furnished electricity for Burlington, Winooski, Essex Junction, and the surrounding communities. Today, Green Mountain Power continues to use the falls to generate electricity.

Courtesy of the Essex Community Historical Society

Original photo by Jary, courtesy of Bill Kalanges.