

2.0 Study Area

The proposed project area is located within the Great Lakes Plain ecozone in northern New York (Andrle and Carroll 1988). Elevation of the ecozone varies from about 100-500 feet. The dominant vegetation type was historically northern hardwood forest: oaks, beech, sugar maple, white ash, and black cherry; but agricultural clearing has left the region approximately 20% wooded (Andrle and Carroll 1988). Some of the overall project area is characterized by Alvar ecosystems: grasslands, shrublands, woodlands, and sparsely vegetated rock barrens that develop on flat limestone where soils are very shallow (Edinger et al. 2002).

The land within the project area is privately owned and the primary land use is agriculture and dairy farming (Figure 2). There are scattered farms and houses throughout the project and adjacent to the roads. Vegetation of the project is a mosaic of open grass/hay fields, cultivated agriculture, and scattered deciduous tree wood lots. The deciduous forest type tends to be variable in size with some small woodlots intermixed with agriculture fields and some larger blocks of forest, particularly in low-lying areas unsuitable for farming. Several inlets, creeks, and wetland forests occur within the project area. Most of the project development will occur in agricultural fields.

Figure 2. Land use/land cover of the St. Lawrence Windpower project area.

