



MEMO

DATE: February 2, 2024
TO: Andy McMillan, Senior Environmental Specialist, VELCO
FROM: Austin White, WSP
SUBJECT: **VELCO 2023 Franklin County Line Upgrade Project, Franklin County, Vermont: Updated Viewshed, K42 Line**

This memorandum constitutes an update to the Architectural Reconnaissance Survey Report completed by WSP USA Inc. (WSP) on behalf of the Vermont Electric Power Company (VELCO) for the proposed K42 Line portion of the 2023 Franklin County Line Upgrade Project. The proposed Project will replace aging transmission line infrastructure along the existing transmission line in the Towns of Highgate, Georgia, St. Albans, and Swanton in Franklin County, Vermont.

This memo serves as an addendum to WSP's Architectural Reconnaissance Survey Report dated December 23, 2023. All previous recommendations in that report regarding State/National Register of Historic Places (SR/NRHP) eligibility and potential effects from the proposed Franklin County Line Upgrade Project remain unchanged, taking into account minor viewshed changes associated with updated Project specifications.

Background

The purpose of the architectural survey was to identify historic architectural resources (defined as those eligible for or listed in the SR/NRHP in the architectural area of potential effect (APE). The APE was defined as the GIS-based viewshed within 1 mile of the Project transmission line, i.e., the areas from which there is potentially a view of the proposed replacement transmission structures within the 1-mile buffer.

Background research identified previously surveyed resources in the APE, and during the windshield survey WSP characterized the landscape and surveyed other properties within the 50-year threshold whose characteristics appear similar to those previously determined eligible for or listed in the SR/NRHP. Any potential historic properties were evaluated according to the National Register Criteria to assess eligibility for listing in the SRHP for the Public Utilities Commission and for listing in the NRHP under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act pursuant to the involvement of the Army Corps of Engineers.

The architectural survey included a windshield reconnaissance of the APE, which was conducted November 30-December 1, 2022. Following several draft reports, the final Architectural Reconnaissance Survey Report was issued on December 22, 2023. The report was sent to VDHP on December 28, 2023.

Updated Viewshed

On January 4, 2024, VELCO provided WSP with updated Project information. The designs and/or locations of some of the proposed replacement transmission structures were altered based on data from recent geotechnical analyses and environmental impact minimization measures.

To verify the conclusions reached in the previous Architectural Reconnaissance Survey Report, WSP ran an updated viewshed model incorporating the proposed structure shifts to compare with the previous model.

The updated viewshed model demonstrates almost identical potential visibility compared to the previous model (Figure 1). The original viewshed encompassed an APE of 1,253.07 hectares (3,096.41 acres). The updated viewshed encompasses an APE of 1272.78 hectares (3,145.12 acres).

Summary

An additional six architectural resources over 50 years old were identified in the updated APE (Table 1). WSP staff reviewed these properties for their previous NRHP status. Properties not previously eligible for or listed in the SR/NRHP were examined via online imagery to assess their SR/NRHP eligibility.

In WSP’s opinion four of the six properties in the updated APE lack the integrity necessary for listing considerations in the SR/NRHP.

Two of the six properties were previously listed in the SRHP: Meigs Farm (St. Albans-50), 1505 Brigham Road, St. Albans; and Brigham-Lussier Farm (St. Albans-40), 271 Brigham Road, St. Albans.

TABLE 1: ELIGIBILITY SUMMARY FOR HISTORIC ARCHITECTURAL RESOURCES IN UPDATED APE

SR/NRHP MAP NO.	PREVIOUS ELIGIBILITY	NAME	ADDRESS	INTEGRITY EVALUATION
St. Albans-50	Listed SRHP	Meigs Farm	1505 Brigham Road, St. Albans	Retains historic integrity
N/A	Not evaluated	House	1271 Lower Newton Road, St. Albans	Diminished historic integrity
N/A	Not evaluated	House	424 Lake Road, St. Albans	Diminished historic integrity
N/A	Not evaluated	Lake Road Storage	375 Lake Road, St. Albans	Diminished historic integrity
N/A	Not evaluated	Old Mill Inc.	79 Walnut Street, St. Albans	Diminished historic integrity
St. Albans-40	Listed SRHP	Brigham-Lussier Farm	271 Brigham Road, St. Albans	Retains historic integrity

Meigs Farm, 1505 Brigham Road, St. Albans (Figures 2-6)

The Meigs Farm (see Figure 1, Sheet 9) is anchored by a ca. 1900 farmhouse with two rear additions. This massed side-gable residence stands one and one-half stories tall on a stone foundation. The roof has cornice returns and is covered in modern standing-seam metal. The dwelling is clad in narrow clapboards with cornerboards. The symmetrical three-bay façade

contains one-over-two double-hung sash windows. The central entrance is covered with a small portico with square post supports. A three-bay side porch shelters the side entrance to the rear ell.

The farmstead also contains several outbuildings, including a ca. 1860 side-gable barn, a ca. 1870 side-gable barn with attached chicken coop, and a ca. 1840 side-gable barn. A ca. 1965 round gable-front barn with attached milking parlor and a ca. 1965 large hay/machine shed are also present.

Since the farm was first surveyed (VDHP 1986), several outbuildings have been demolished, including a ca. 1840 machine shed, a ca. 1930 wood silo, and a ca. 1960 cement silo. A mobile home has been added on the east side of the farmstead. As the overall historic integrity of Meigs Farm remains intact, it is WSP's opinion that an updated Determination of Eligibility for the NRHP may be warranted if the property is involved in future projects.

House, 1271 Lower Newton Road, St. Albans (Figure 7)

The property at 1271 Lower Newton Road (see Figure 1, Sheets 8 and 9) is a ca. 1870 one-and-one-half-story front-gable vernacular residence. The house has a standing-seam metal roof with a chimney, an aluminum siding exterior, one-over-one aluminum windows, a hipped-roof enclosed front porch, and a smaller similar secondary porch on the rear addition. The sole outbuilding is a four-bay shed-roof garage; its form indicates previous use as a hog or poultry shed.

The house's historic integrity has been compromised by replacement fenestration, siding, and roofing. It is not representative of an outstanding architectural style, form, or building method. It is therefore WSP's opinion that further evaluation of the property is not necessary if it is involved in future projects.

House, 424 Lake Road, St. Albans (Figures 8 and 9)

The property at 424 Lake Road (see Figure 1, Sheet 11) is a ca. 1900 two-and-one-half-story two-bay front-gable vernacular residence (Zillow 2024). The house has a standing-seam metal roof with a ridgeline chimney, an aluminum siding exterior, one-over-one aluminum windows, a hipped-roof enclosed front porch, and a secondary west elevation entrance covered by a gabled hood on posts. The two outbuildings consist of a front-gable barn sheathed in board-and-batten siding and a small well/pump house clad in shingles located south of the residence.

The house's historic integrity has been compromised by replacement fenestration, siding, and roofing. It is not a significant example of an architectural style, form, or building method. It is therefore WSP's opinion that further evaluation of the property is not necessary if it is involved in future projects.

Lake Road Storage, 375 Lake Road, St. Albans (Figure 10)

Lake Road Storage (see Figure 1, Sheets 10 and 11) is a ca. 1962 a one-and-one-half story, multi-bay, utilitarian commercial industrial building (Nationwide Environmental Title Research, LLC [NETR] 2024). The property has a low-pitch standing-seam metal gable roof, a vinyl-siding exterior, a wraparound mansard roof porch surmounted on columns with gables above the entrances, and replacement multi-light doors and windows. Located on the rear elevation is a large gabled two-and-one-half-story cinderblock storage unit capped by a standing-seam metal roof. The west gable end features a central entrance bay. A smaller similarly designed appendage (likely a vehicle service garage) extends from the unit's northwest corner.

Lake Road Storage has been extensively modified by modern replacement material such as siding, windows, and doors. It is therefore WSP's opinion that further evaluation of the property is not necessary if it is involved in future projects.

Old Mill Inc., 79 Walnut Street, St. Albans (Figure 11)

Old Mill Inc. is a ca. 1964 feed mill (see Figure 1, Sheet 10) (USGS 1964). The property contains three metal grain silos, which feed into a bin conveyor topped with spouts, hoppers, and dust collectors, and two elevators. The bin conveyor is connected to a series of tall storage silos, which stand perpendicularly to the conveyor. The mill stands on the south side of railroad tracks, which enter an east elevation reception area. Additional buildings include a large flat-roof warehouse on the parcel's western edge, and small office and power structures near the bin conveyor south entrance.

The Old Mill Inc. was determined not eligible for the SR/NRHP by the VDHP during an unrelated project review.

Brigham-Lussier Farm, 271 Brigham Road, St. Albans (Figure 12)

The Brigham-Lussier Farm (see Figure 1, Sheets 9 and 10) is anchored by a ca. 1870 Classic Cottage farmhouse. This one-and-one-half-story residence rests on a stone foundation and has a side-gable roof covered in standing-seam metal punctured by an internal corbeled chimney. The exterior is sheathed in clapboards and has a symmetrical three-bay façade featuring six-over-six double-hung sash windows. The house has two rear additions (including ell) and a short appendage on the south gable end.

The farmstead also contains several outbuildings, including a ca. 1930 front-gable barn, a ca. 1935 banked side-gable barn with two crown ventilators, a ca. 1930 banked barn with an attached shed, a ca. 1940 front-gable granary, and a ca. 1930 front-gable barn chase/mating gable barn.

One building, a ground-level stable barn with a Jerkinhead roof constructed in 1927, has been demolished since the farmstead's first recordation (VDHP 1986). An unknown rectilinear structure was added south of the farmstead just beyond a cluster of large mature trees. The Brigham-Lussier Farm retains good overall integrity, and it is therefore WSP's opinion that future projects may warrant its reevaluation.

Recommendations

In WSP's opinion the Meigs Farm and Brigham-Lussier Farm retain their overall historic integrity, and updated Determinations of Eligibility for the NRHP may be considered for any future projects that may affect the historic resources. Furthermore, in WSP's opinion the four remaining previously unsurveyed properties lack historic integrity and should be precluded from further evaluation.

The updated viewshed model shows that the transmission line will be visible from the open field north of the Meigs Farm's cluster of structures, and west of the structures behind the Brigham-Lussier farmhouse. Although the field is associated with the Meigs Farm, the transmission line would not be visible from the structures of the farmstead and would not diminish the farmstead's setting. The Project will constitute no adverse effect on the historic property.

The transmission line will be visible from the cluster of structures on the Brigham-Lussier Farm, which could result in an indirect effect from the Project. However, the farmstead's historic use

and characteristics will not be altered as the dimensions and type of the replacement structures will be only negligibly different from the existing structures. Although the farmstead's integrity of setting has the potential to be minimally diminished, the Project will constitute no adverse effect on the historic property.

All recommendations in WSP's previous architectural survey (Courselle and White 2023) regarding SR/NRHP eligibility and potential effects from the proposed Franklin County Line Upgrade Project remain unchanged, taking into account the minor viewshed changes associated with updated Project specifications.

References

Courselle, Amber, and Austin White

2023 Architectural Reconnaissance Survey, Franklin County Line Upgrade Project, Franklin County, Vermont. Prepared for Vermont Electric Power Company, Rutland, by WSP USA Inc., Troy, New York.

Nationwide Environmental Title Research, LLC [NETR]

2024 Historic Aerials. NETR Online. <https://www.historicaerials.com/viewer>.

United States Geological Survey [USGS]

1964 *St. Albans, VT*. 7.5-Minute Series, scale 1:24,000. TopoView. <https://ngmdb.usgs.gov/topoview/viewer/#>.

Vermont Division for Historic Preservation [VDHP]

1986 *Town of Saint Albans Historic Sites and Structures Survey*. Vermont Division for Historic Preservation, Montpelier. http://accdservices.vermont.gov/ORCDocs/SaintAlbansTown_StateRegister_NominationForm_00000002.pdf.

Zillow

2024 Listing, 424 Lake Rd, Saint Albans, VT 05478. Zillow, Seattle, Washington. https://www.zillow.com/homedetails/424-Lake-Rd-Saint-Albans-VT-05478/75432178_zpid/.

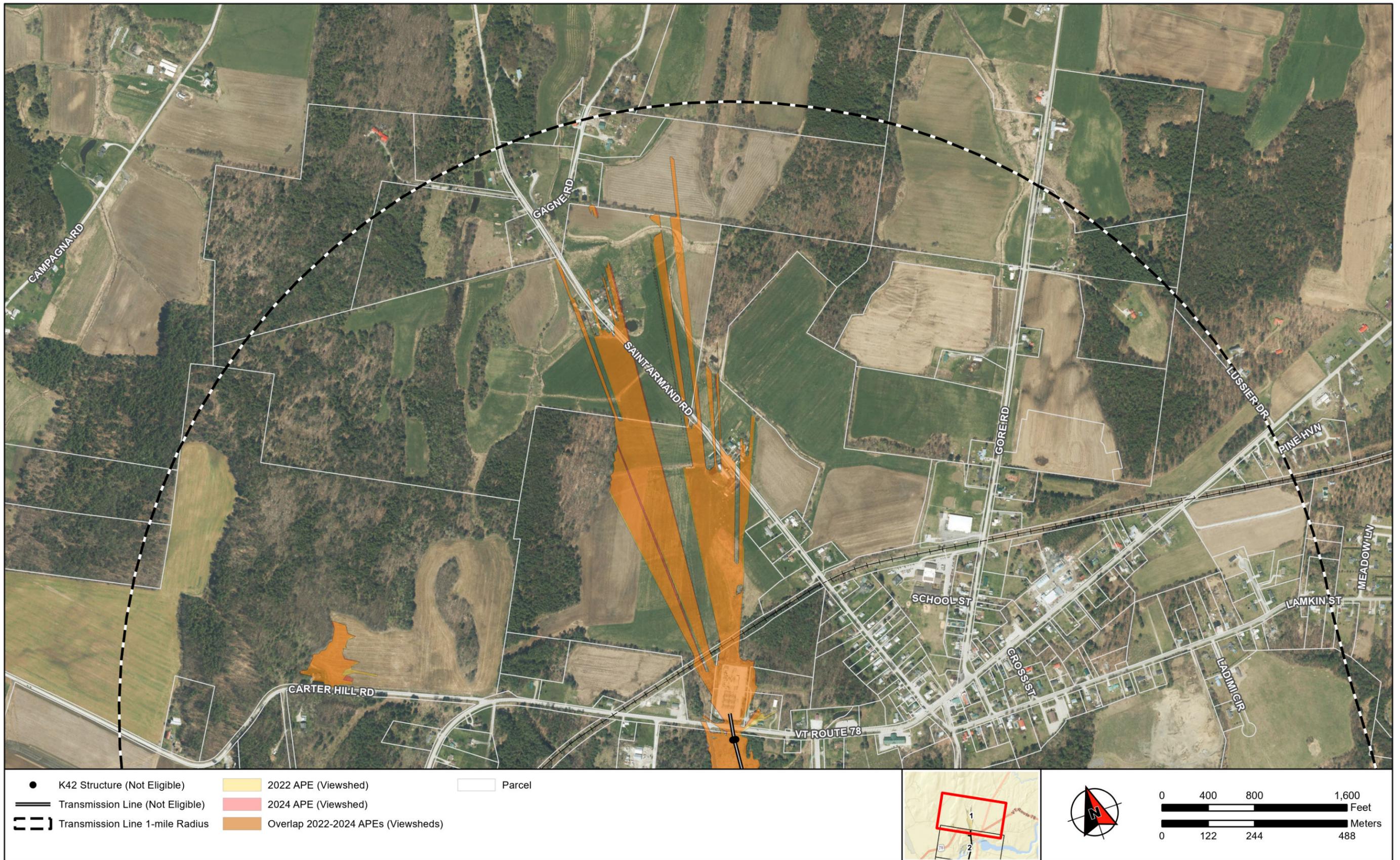


FIGURE 1 (Sheet 1 of 17): Original and Updated Viewshed for K42 Line (ESRI World Imagery 2022)

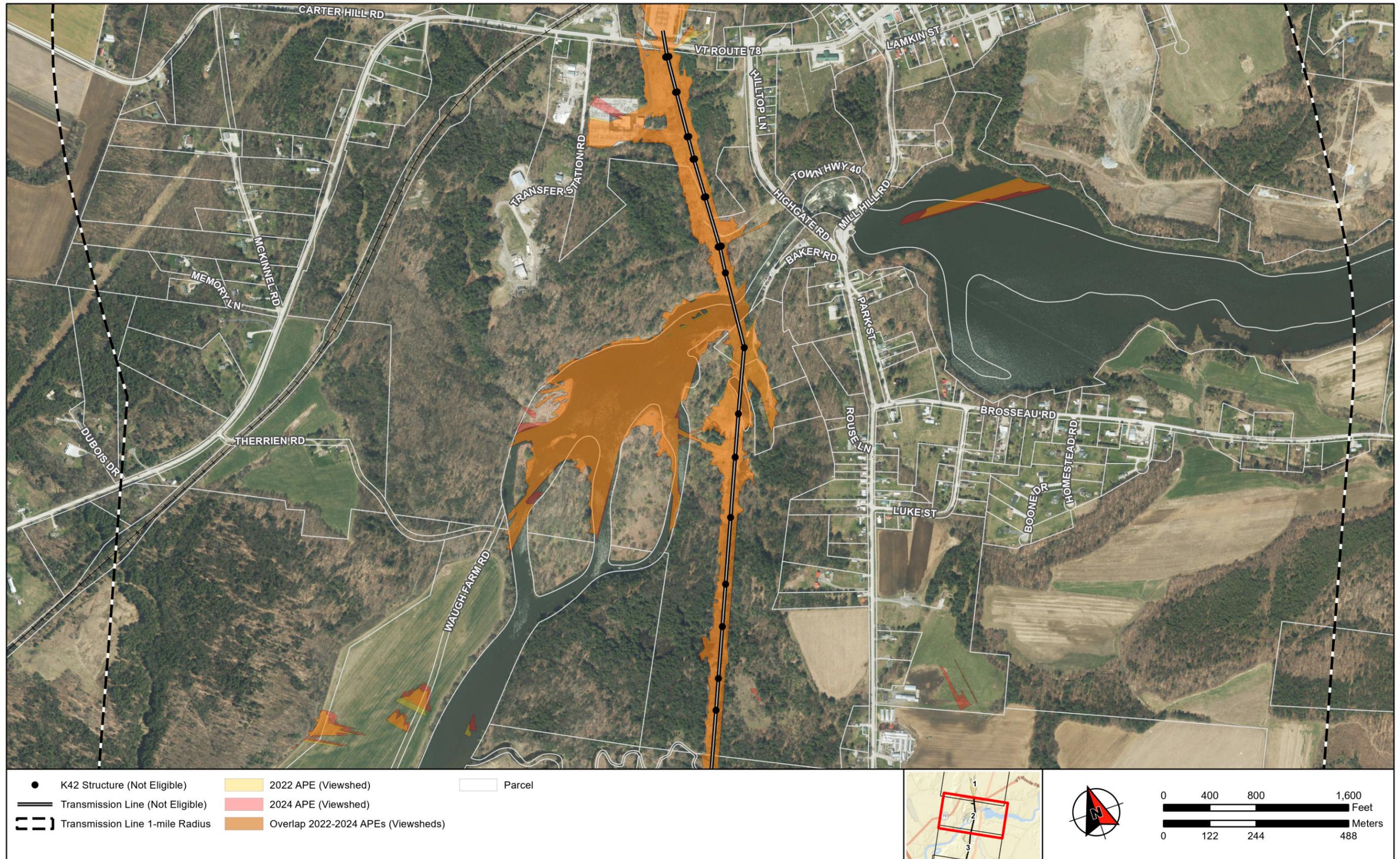


FIGURE 1 (Sheet 2 of 17): Original and Updated Viewshed for K42 Line (ESRI World Imagery 2022)

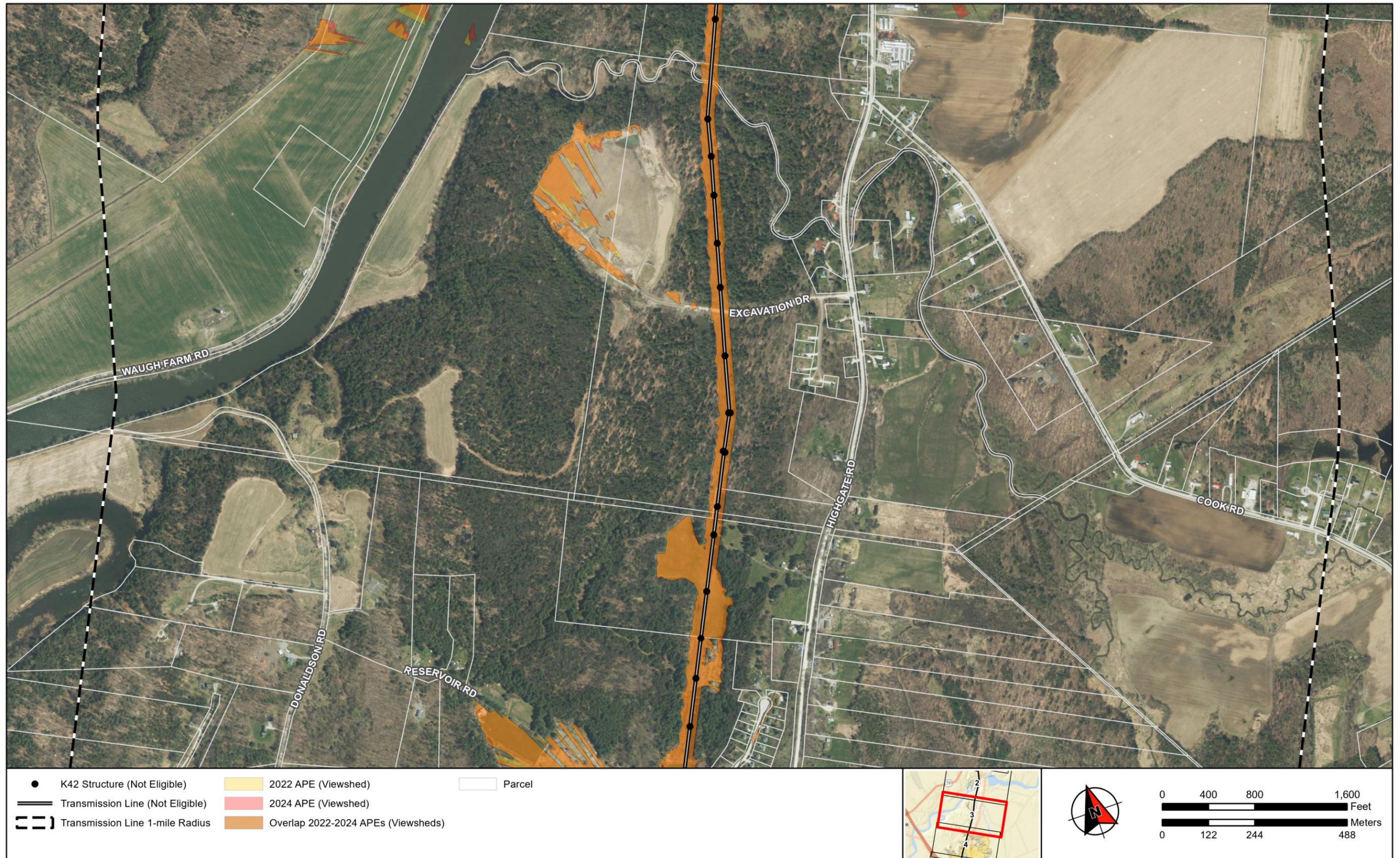


FIGURE 1 (Sheet 3 of 17): Original and Updated Viewshed for K42 Line (ESRI World Imagery 2022)

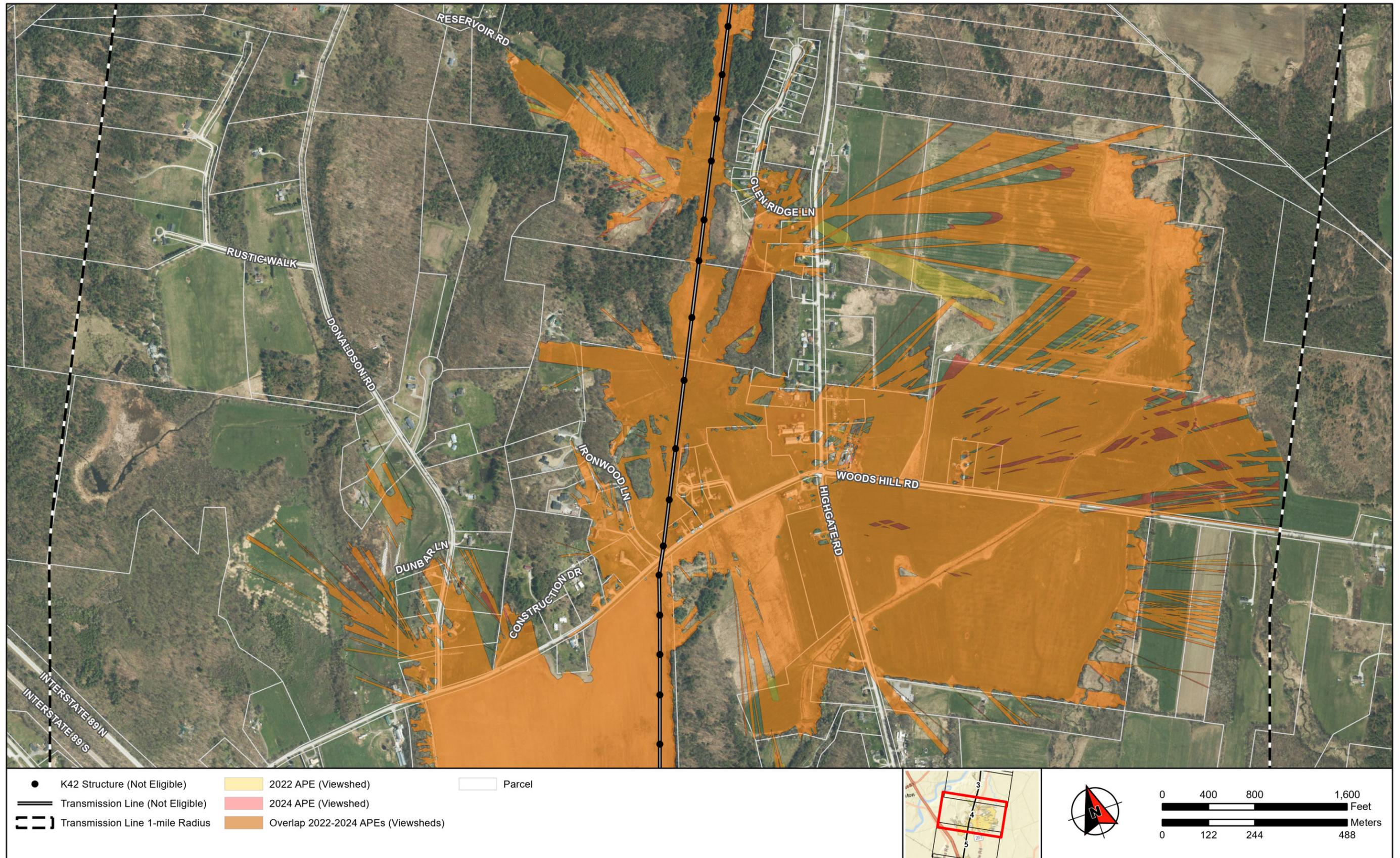


FIGURE 1 (Sheet 4 of 17): Original and Updated Viewshed for K42 Line (ESRI World Imagery 2022)

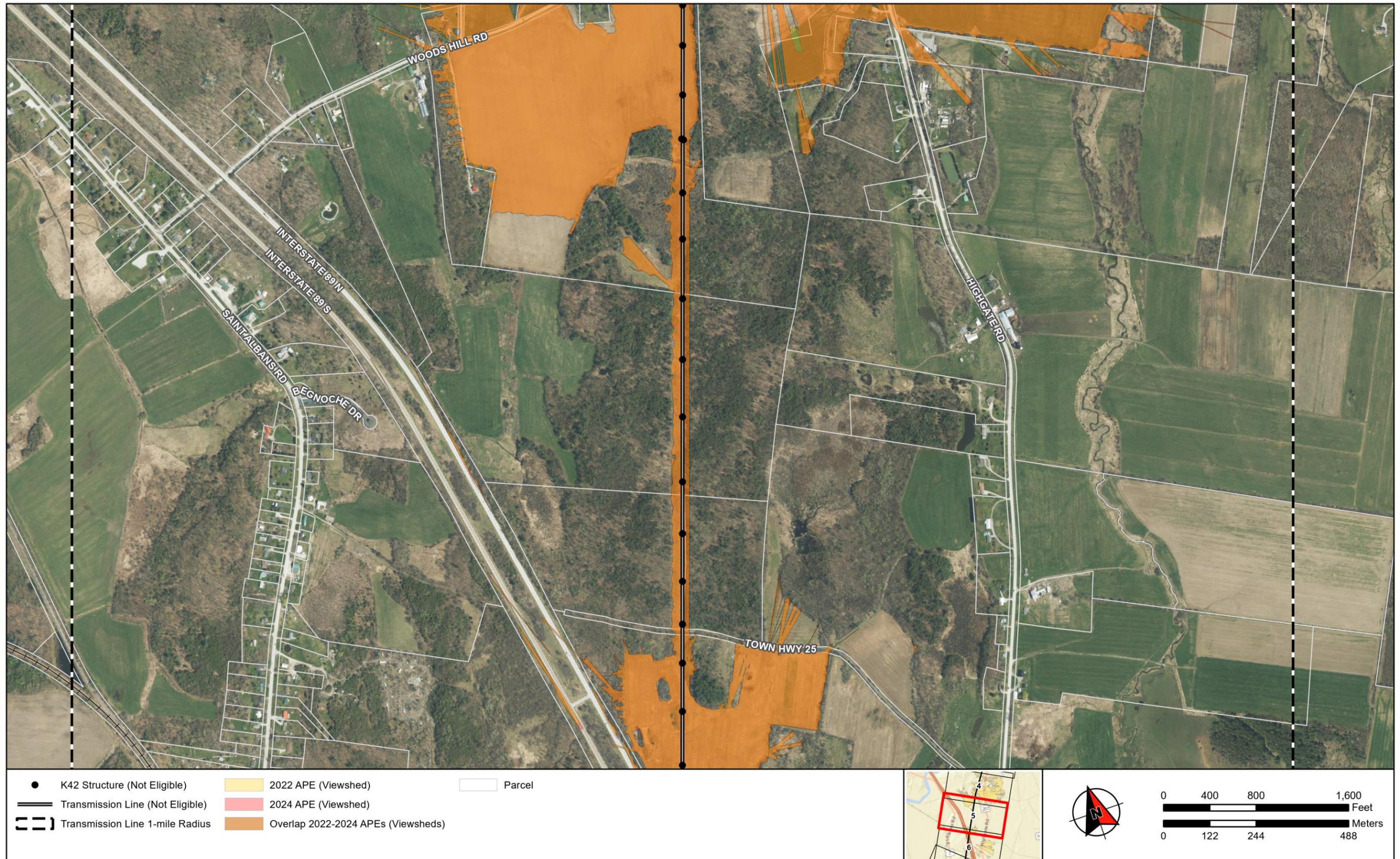


FIGURE 1 (Sheet 5 of 17): Original and Updated Viewshed for K42 Line (ESRI World Imagery 2022)

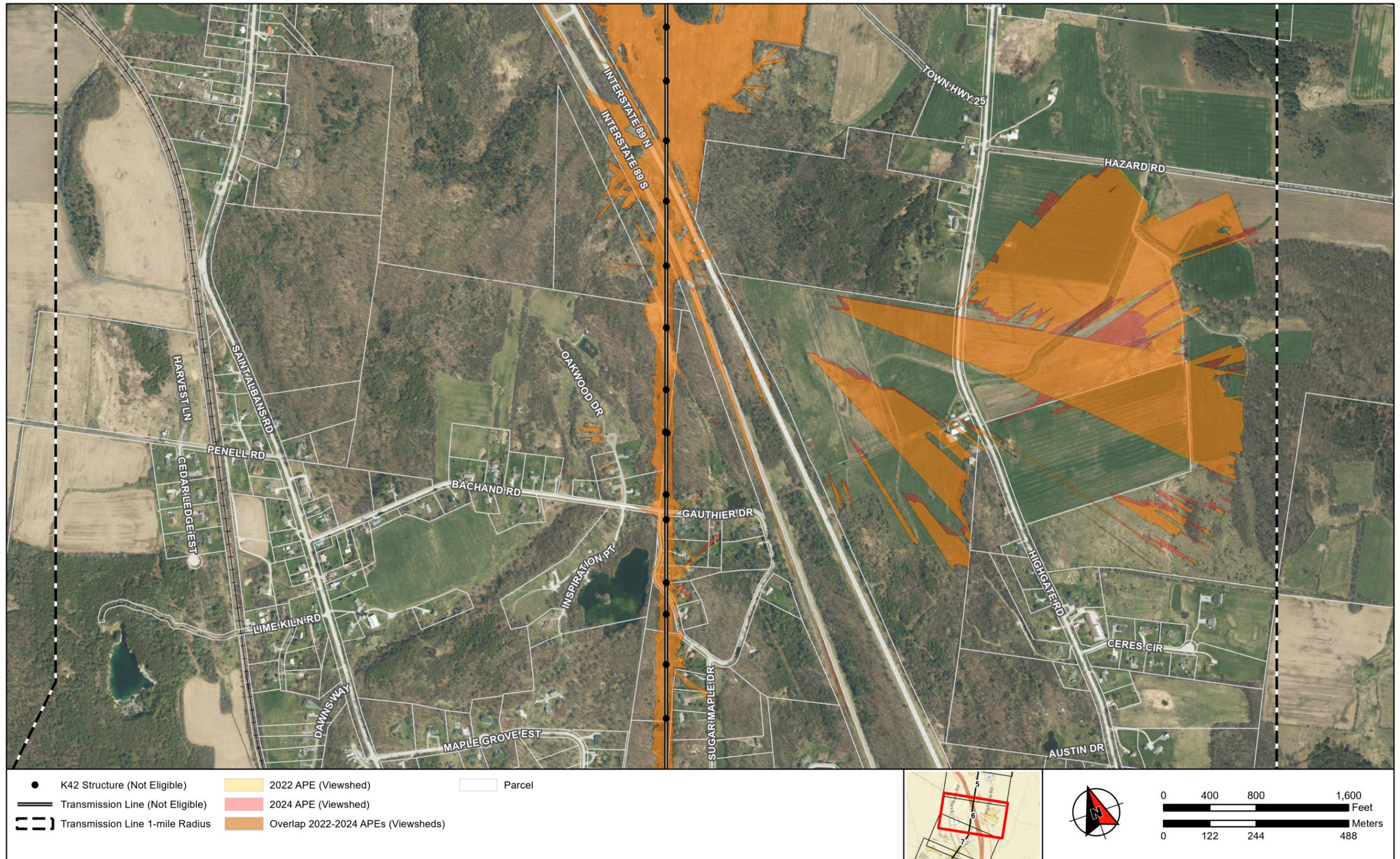


FIGURE 1 (Sheet 6 of 17): Original and Updated Viewshed for K42 Line (ESRI World Imagery 2022)

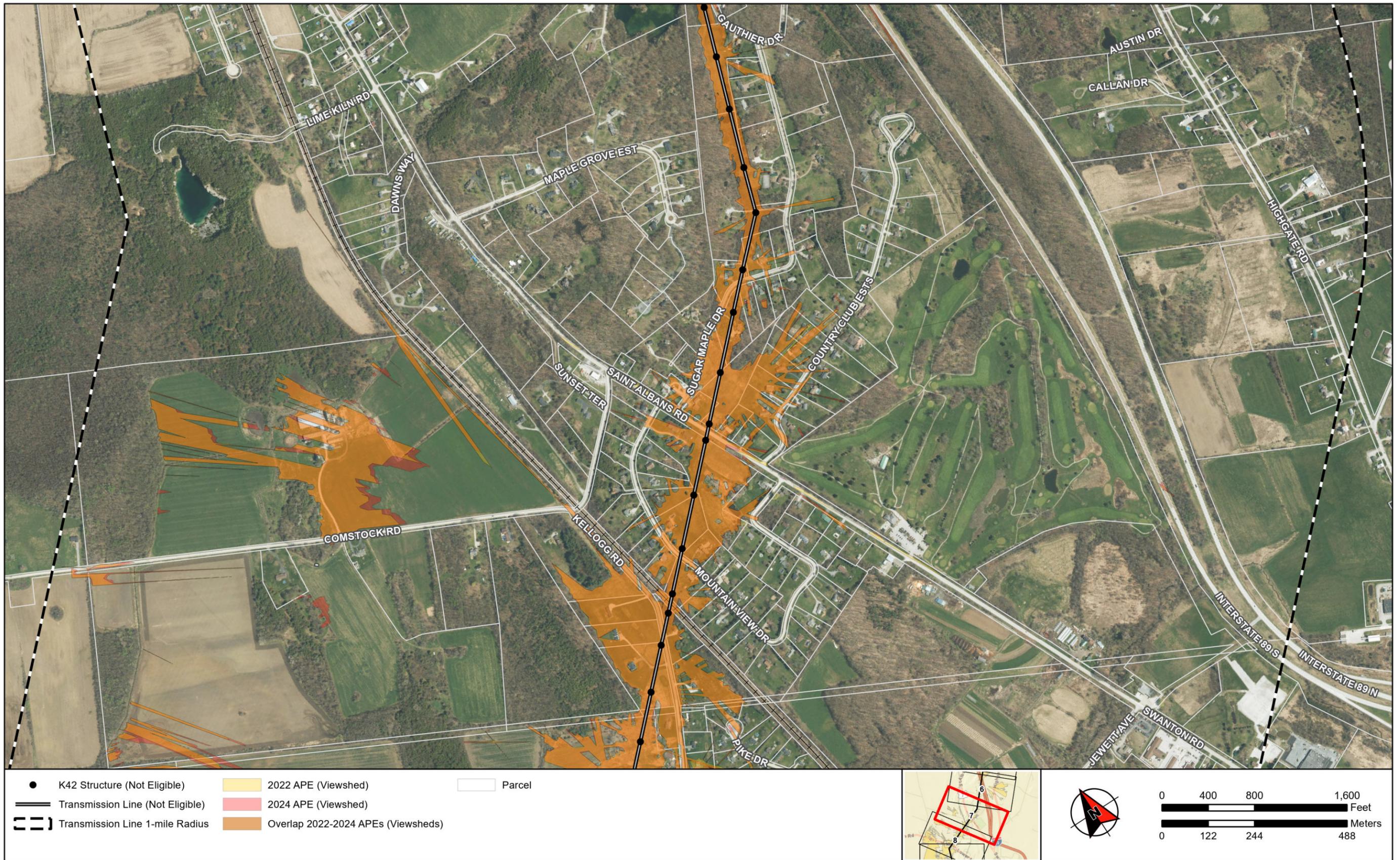


FIGURE 1 (Sheet 7 of 17): Original and Updated Viewshed for K42 Line (ESRI World Imagery 2022)

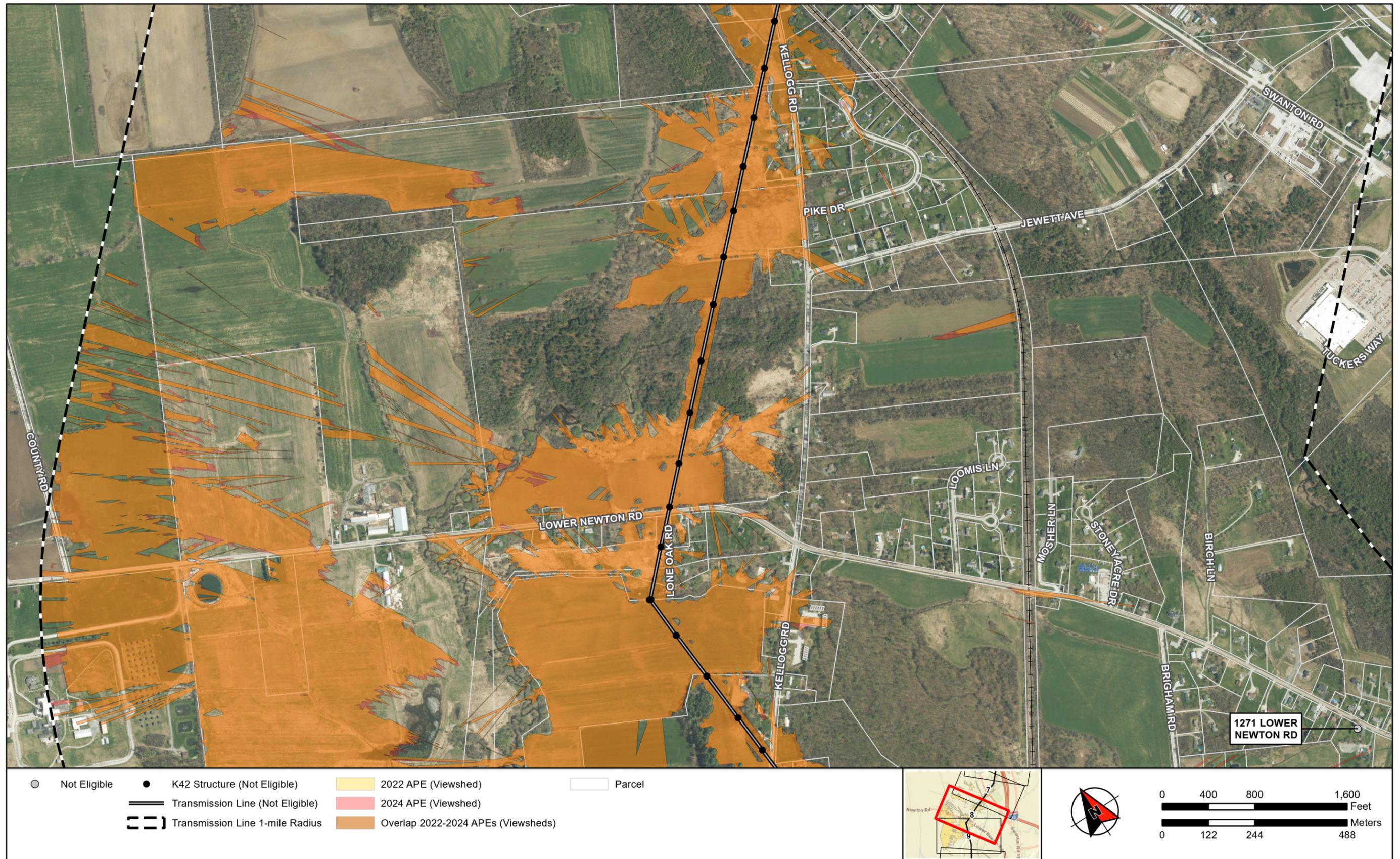


FIGURE 1 (Sheet 8 of 17): Original and Updated Viewshed for K42 Line (ESRI World Imagery 2022)

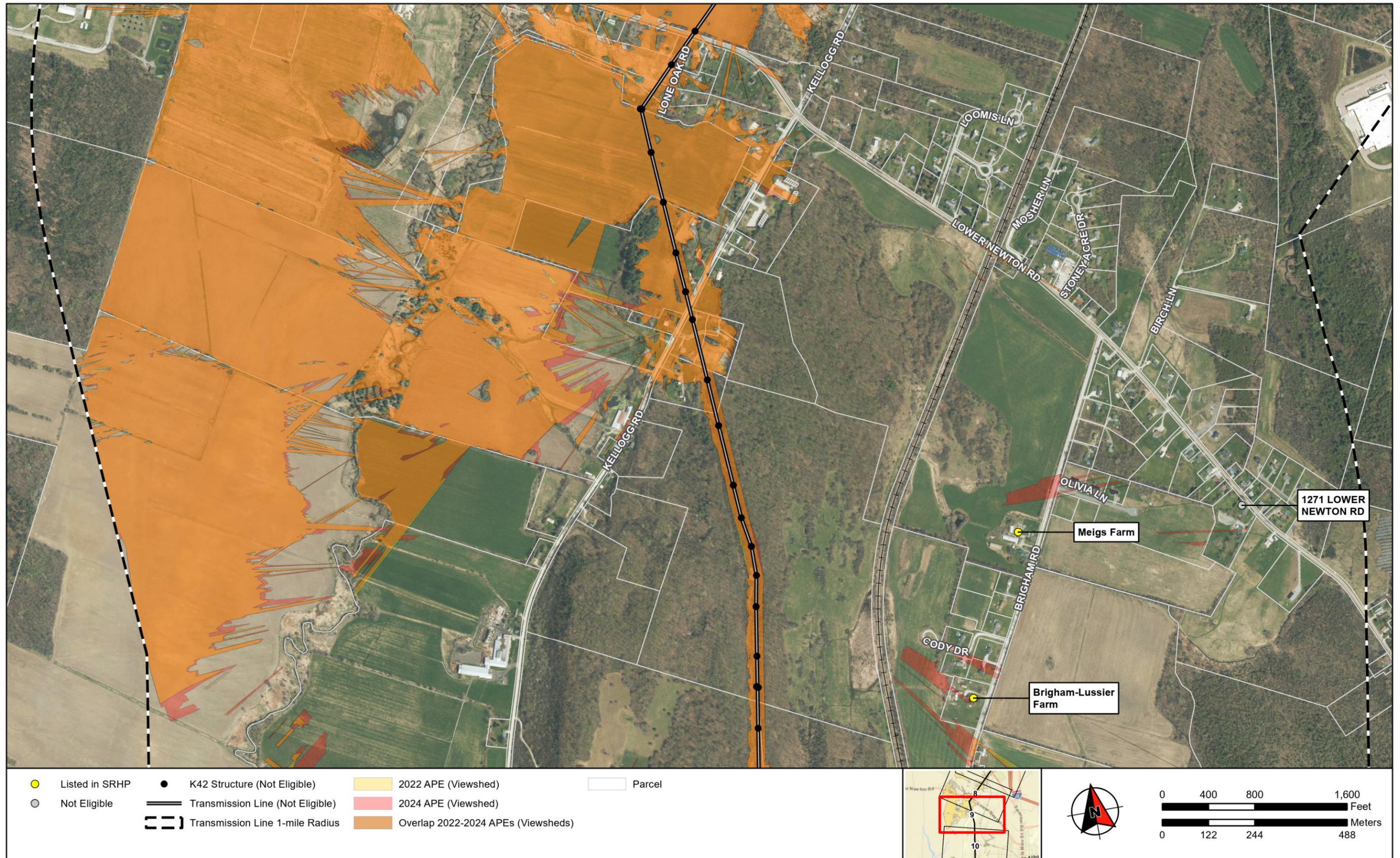


FIGURE 1 (Sheet 9 of 17): Original and Updated Viewshed for K42 Line (ESRI World Imagery 2022)

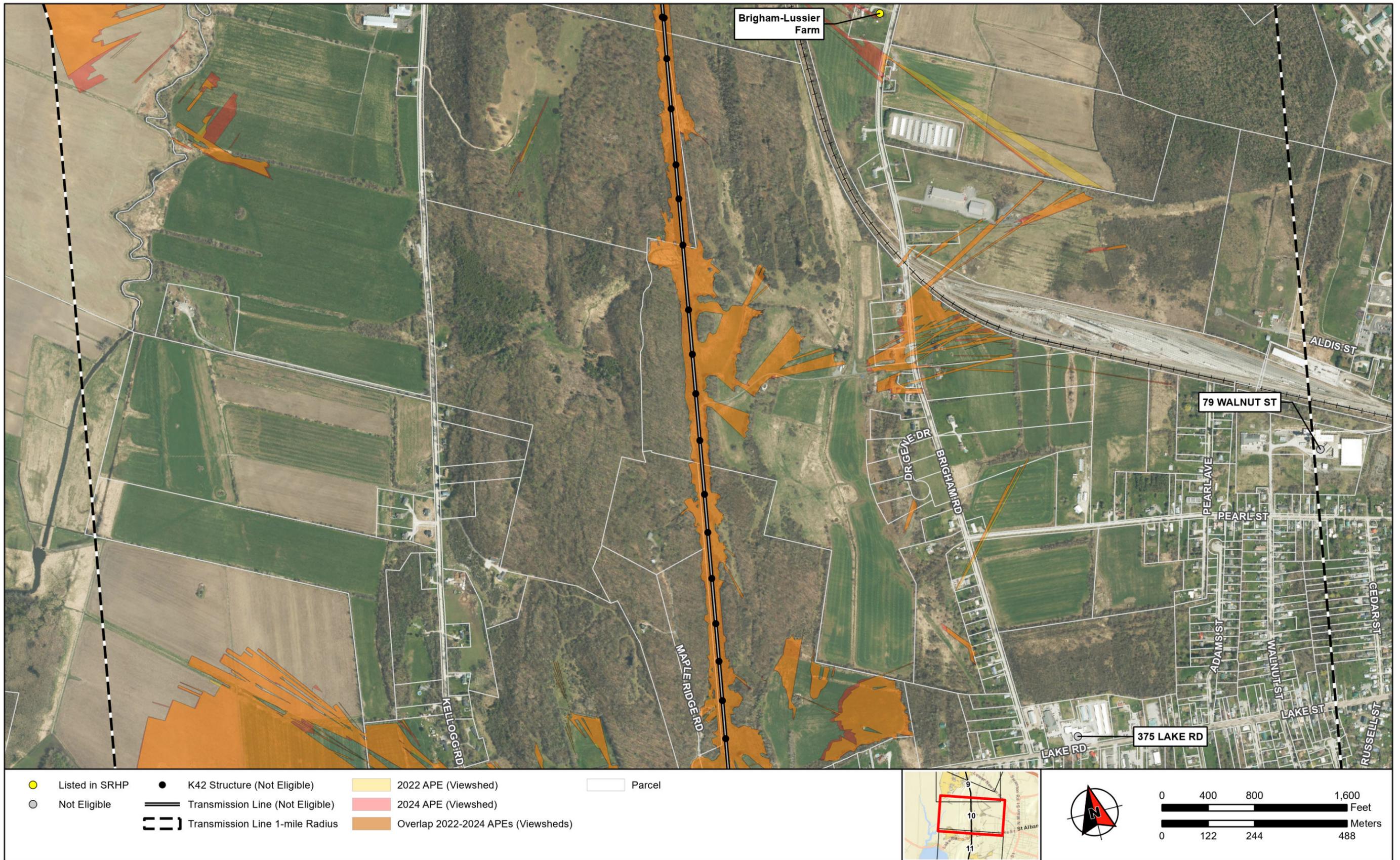


FIGURE 1 (Sheet 10 of 17): Original and Updated Viewshed for K42 Line (ESRI World Imagery 2022)

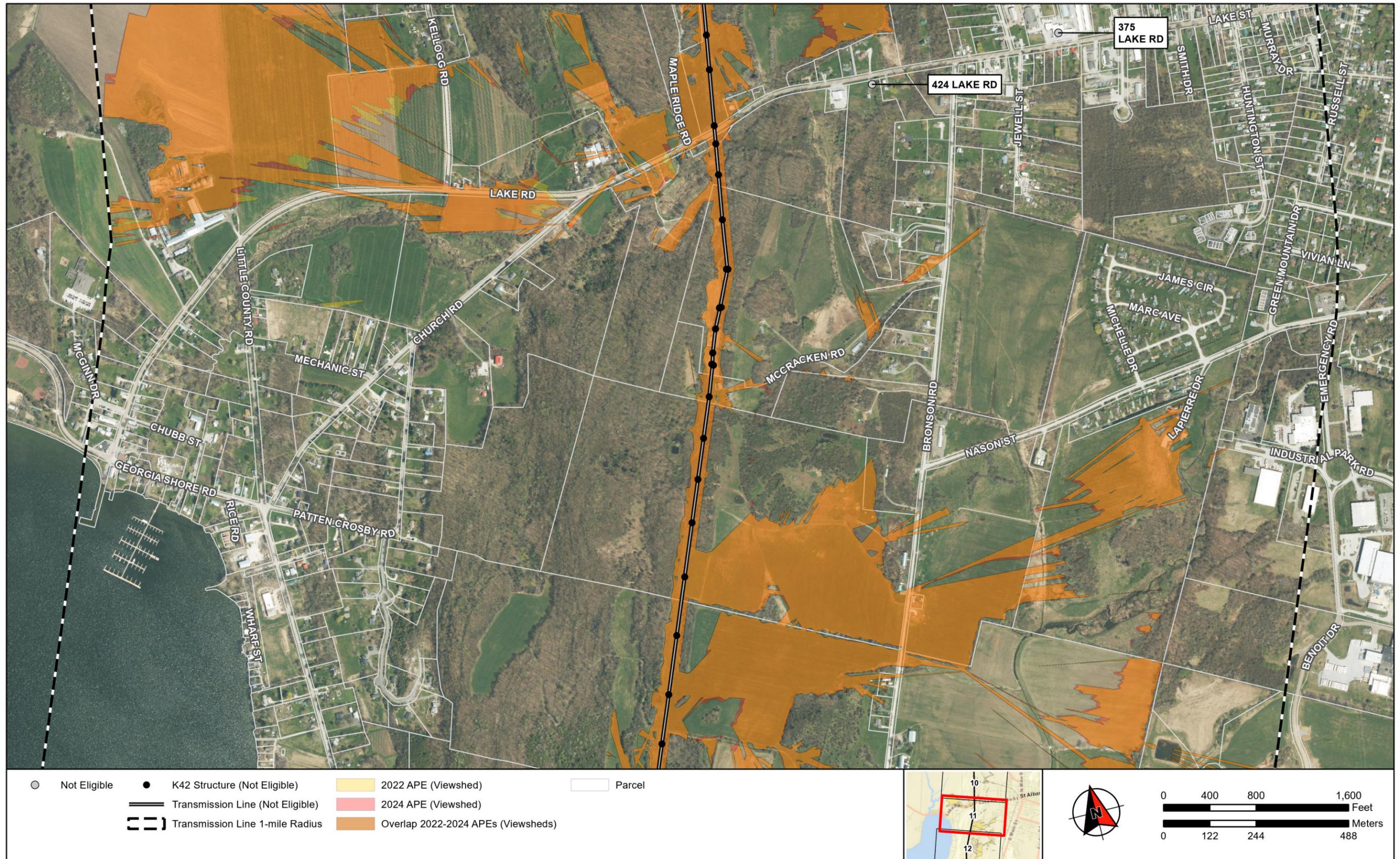


FIGURE 1 (Sheet 11 of 17): Original and Updated Viewshed for K42 Line (ESRI World Imagery 2022)

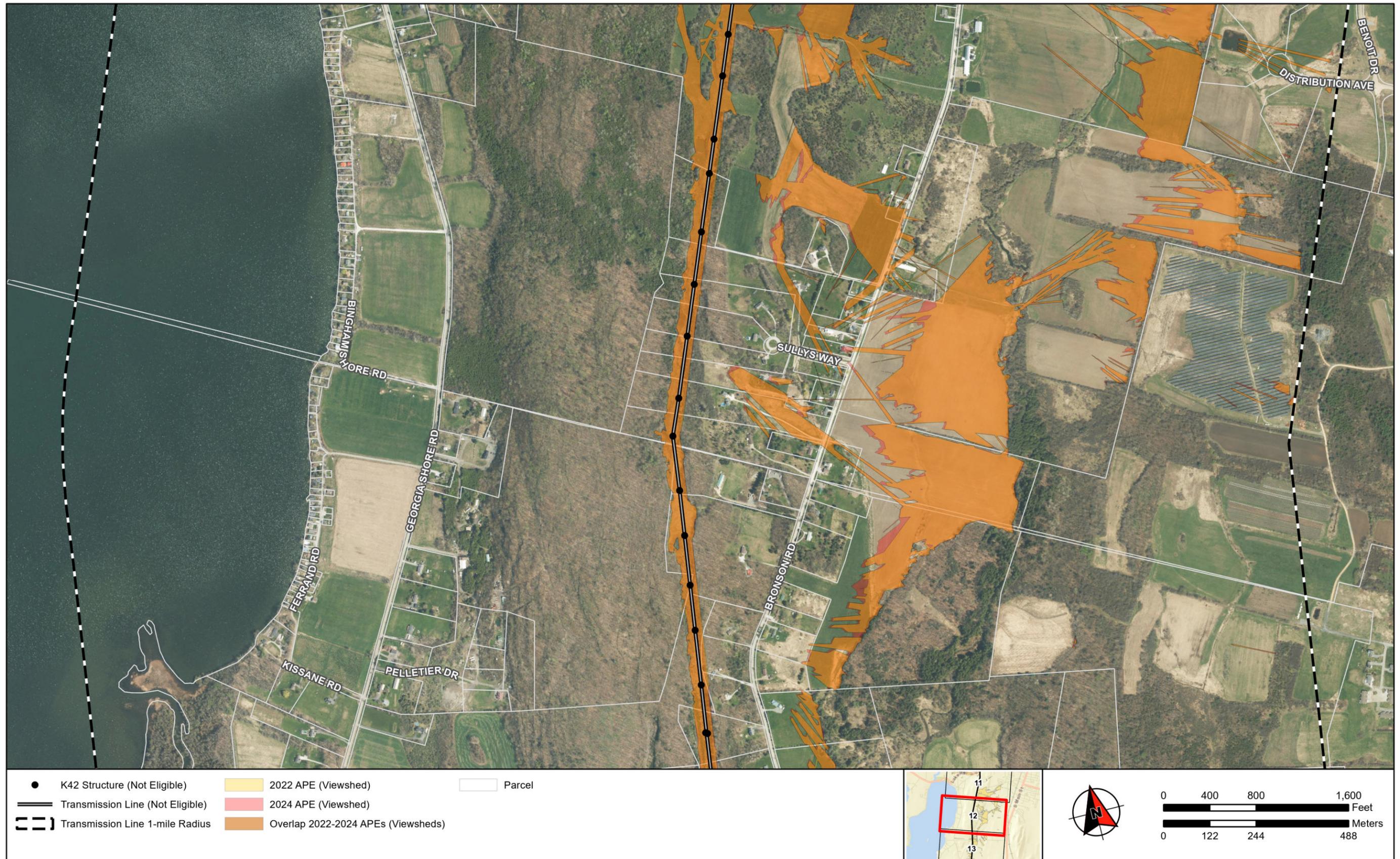


FIGURE 1 (Sheet 12 of 17): Original and Updated Viewshed for K42 Line (ESRI World Imagery 2022)

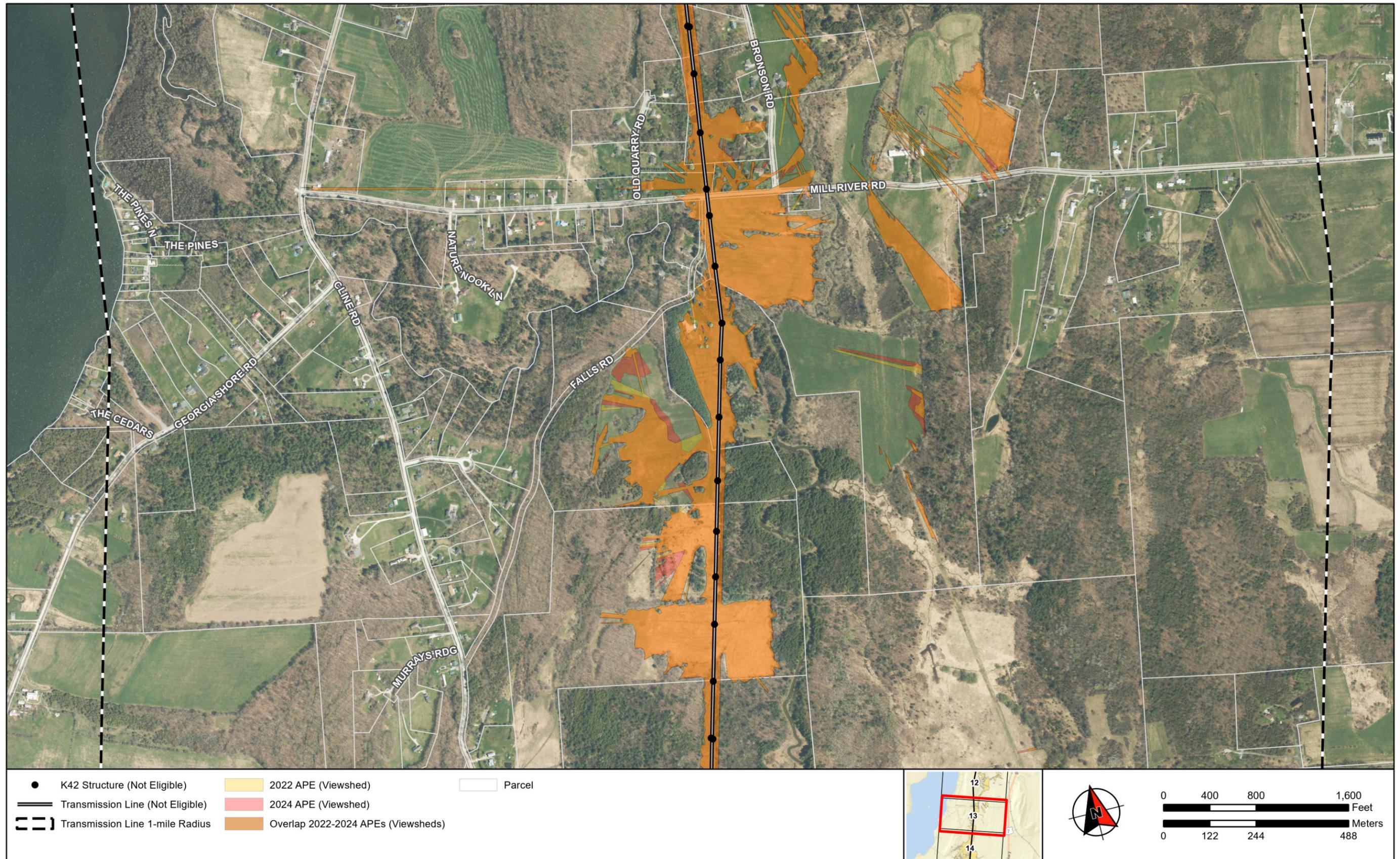


FIGURE 1 (Sheet 13 of 17): Original and Updated Viewshed for K42 Line (ESRI World Imagery 2022)

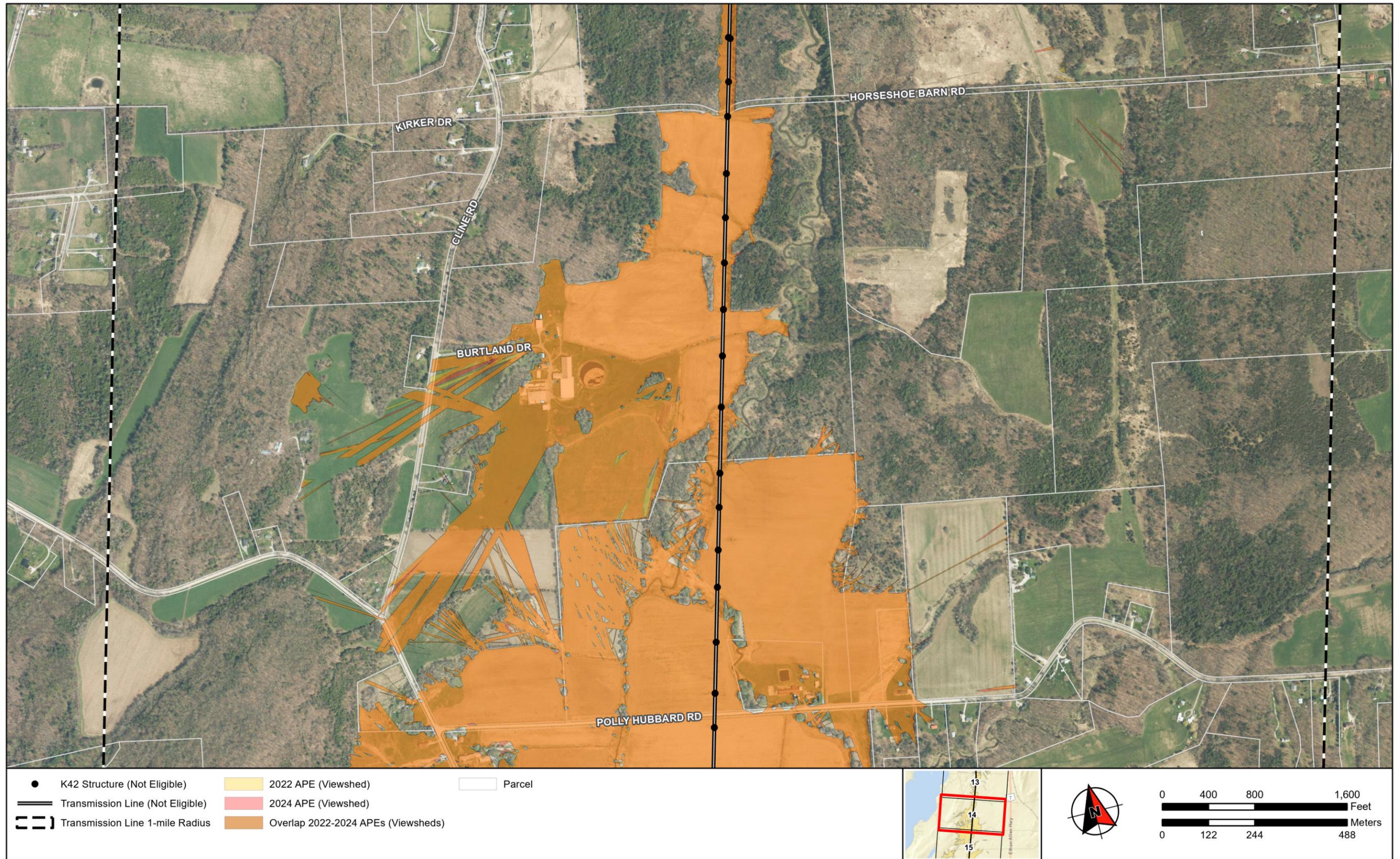


FIGURE 1 (Sheet 14 of 17): Original and Updated Viewshed for K42 Line (ESRI World Imagery 2022)

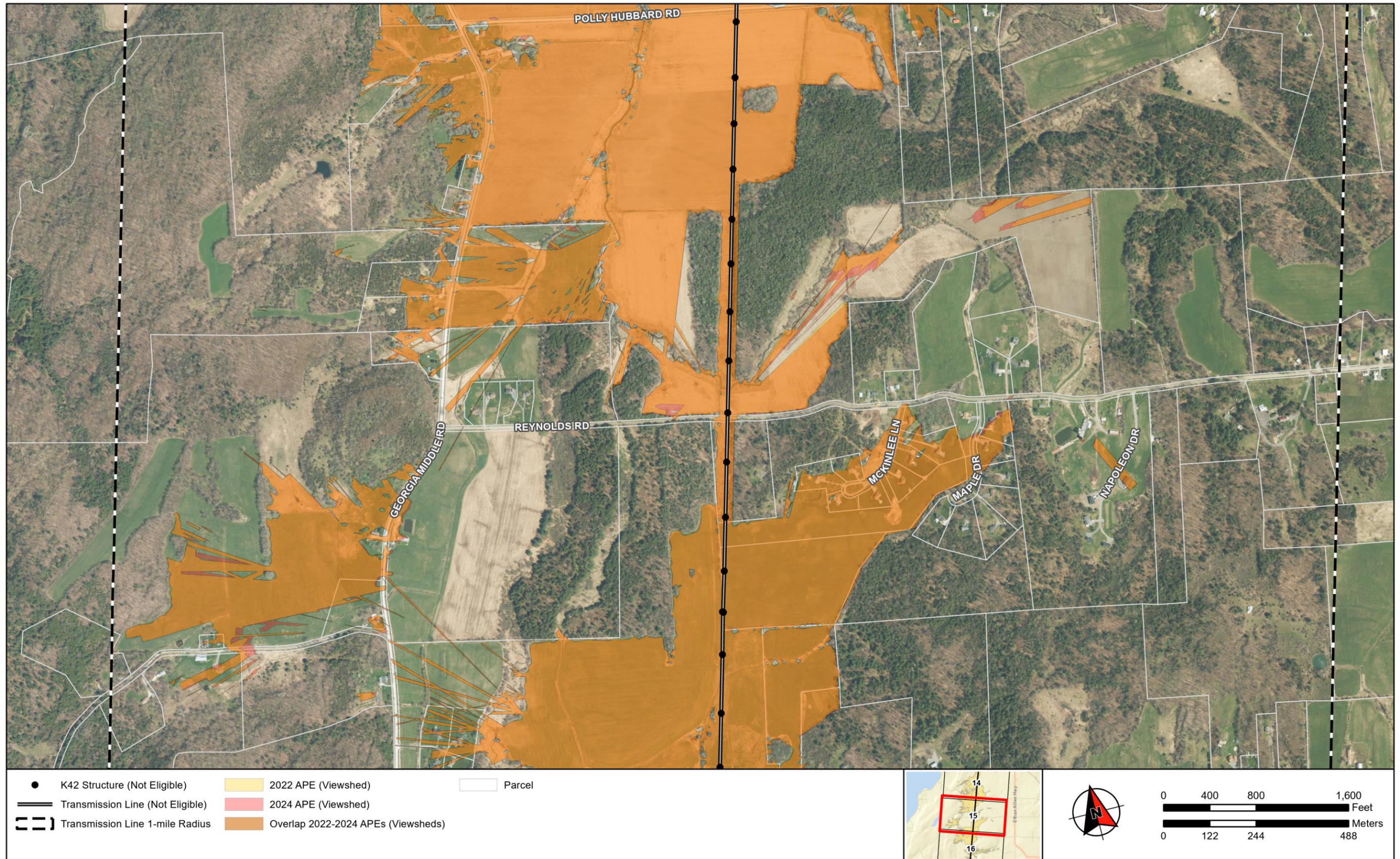


FIGURE 1 (Sheet 15 of 17): Original and Updated Viewshed for K42 Line (ESRI World Imagery 2022)

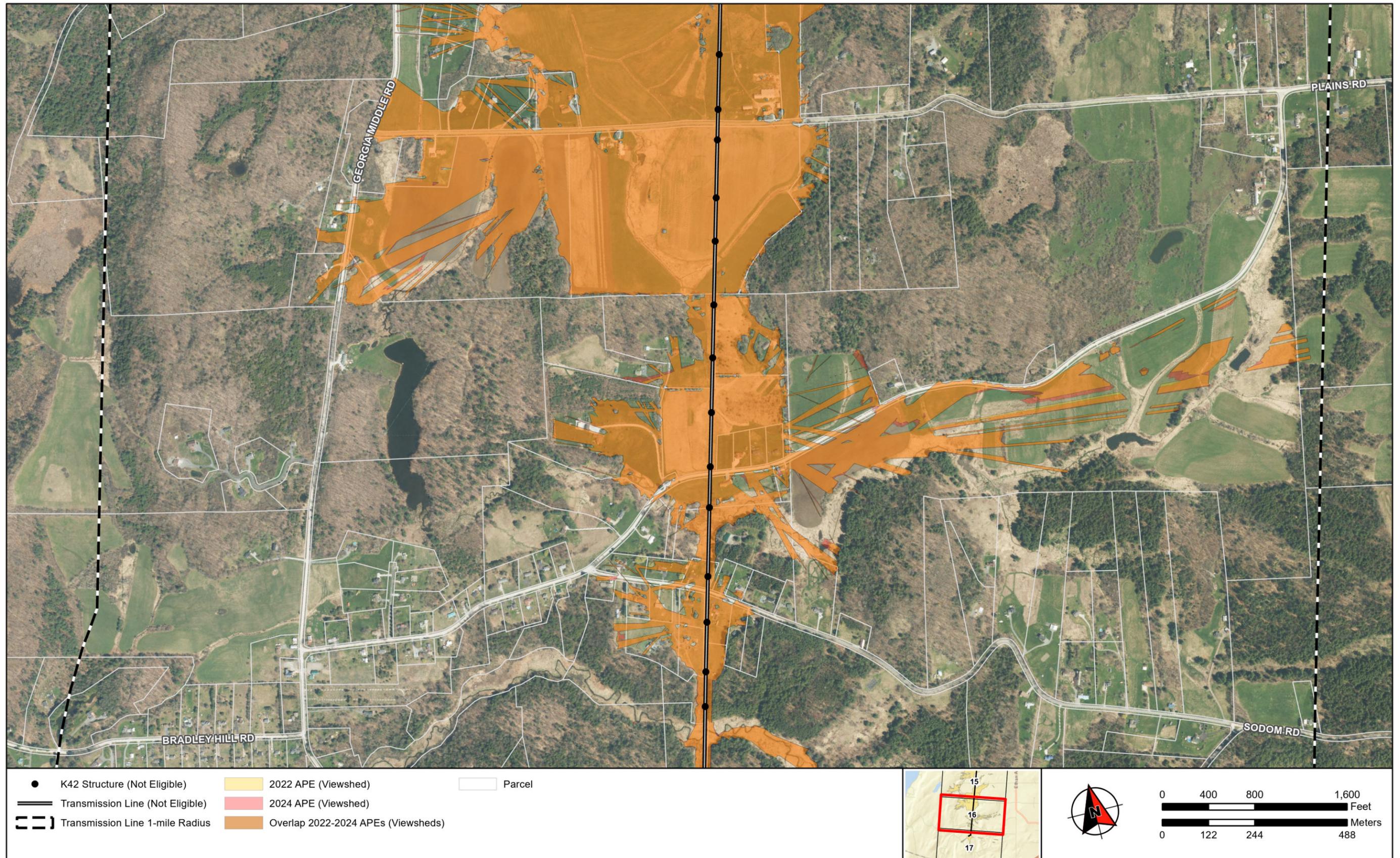


FIGURE 1 (Sheet 16 of 17): Original and Updated Viewshed for K42 Line (ESRI World Imagery 2022)

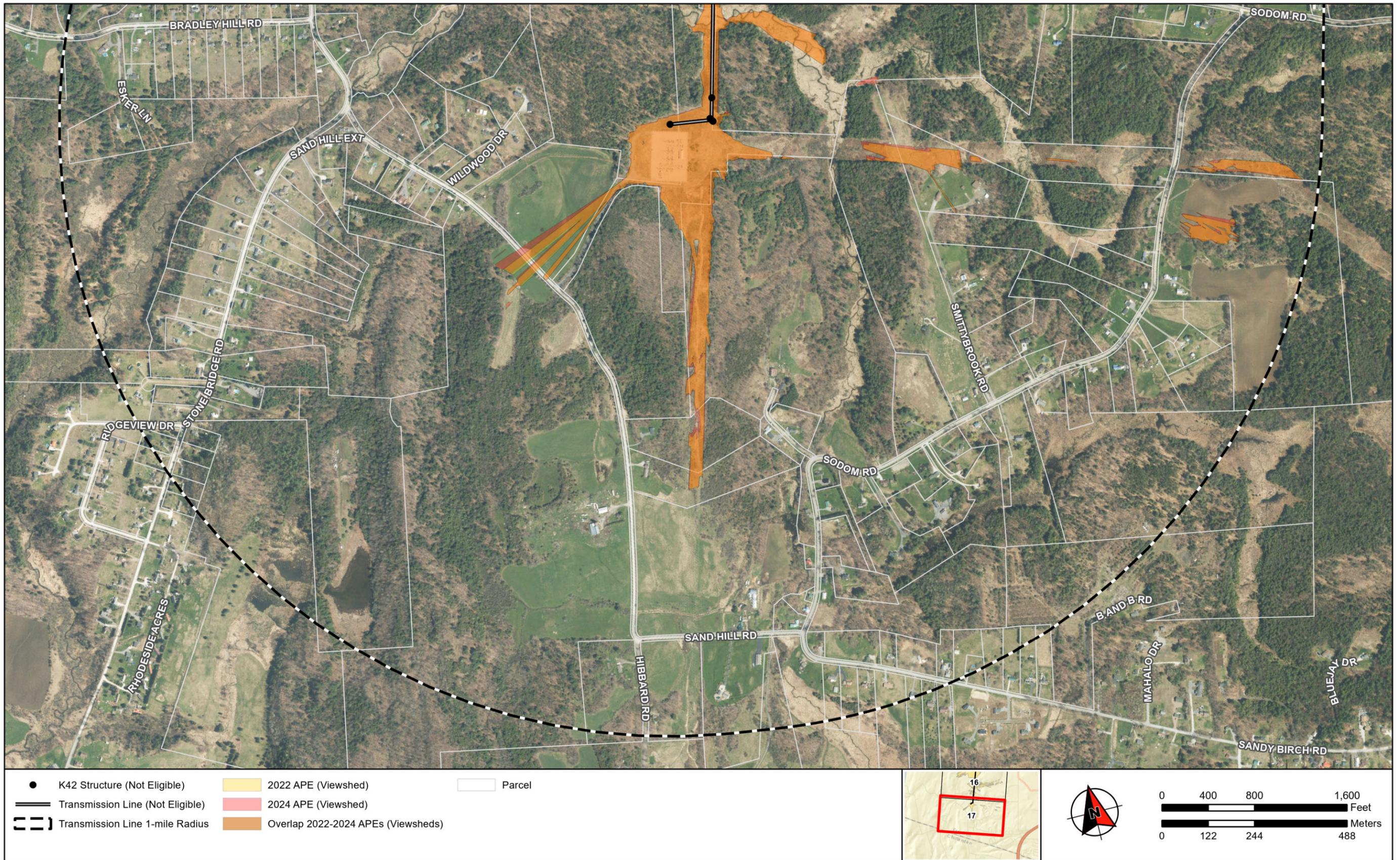


FIGURE 1 (Sheet 17 of 17): Original and Updated Viewshed for K42 Line (ESRI World Imagery 2022)



FIGURE 2: Facing Southwest to Dwelling at Meigs Farm (Google Streetview)

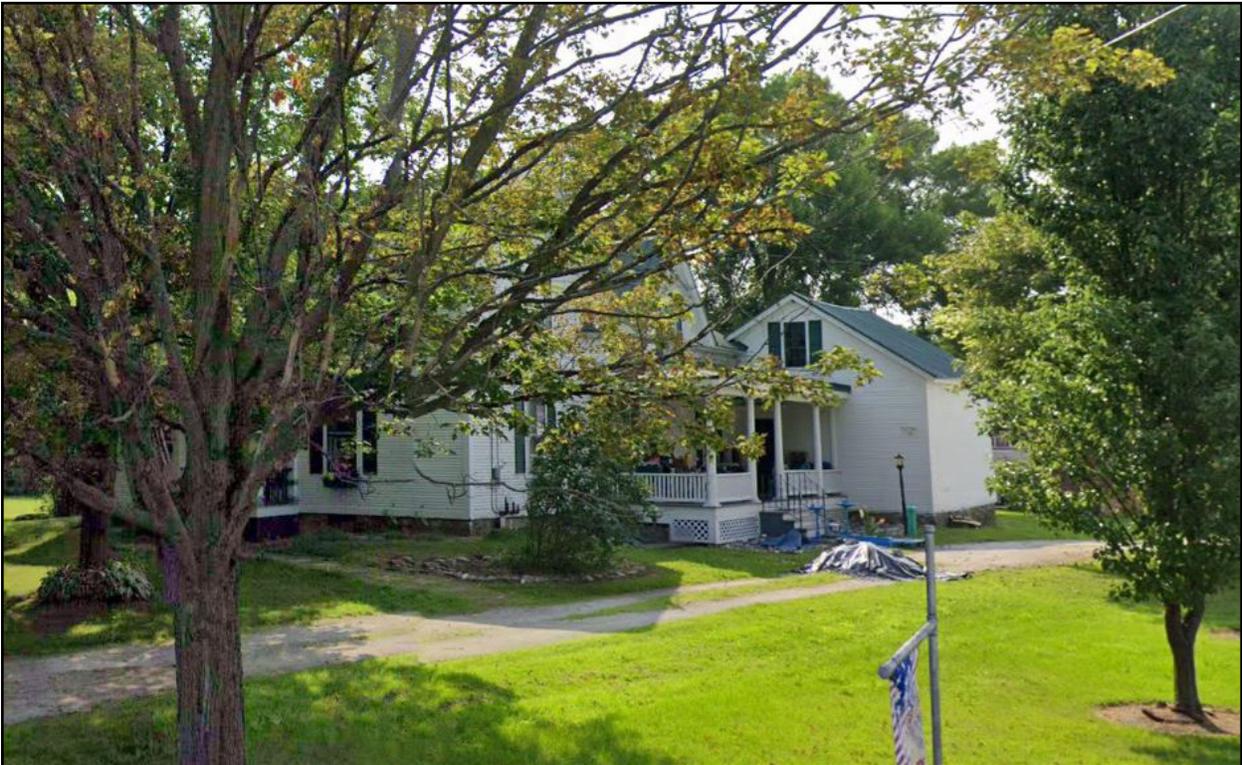


FIGURE 3: Facing Southwest to Dwelling at Meigs Farm (Google Streetview)



FIGURE 4: Facing Southwest to Dwelling at Meigs Farm (Google Streetview)



FIGURE 5: Facing West to Meigs Farm (Google Streetview)



FIGURE 6: Facing Northwest to Meigs Farm Outbuildings (Google Streetview)



FIGURE 7: Facing Southwest to Dwelling and Garage at 1271 Lower Newton Road, St Albans (Google Streetview)



FIGURE 8: Facing South to Dwelling at 424 Lake Road, St Albans (Google Streetview)



FIGURE 9: Facing South to Barn and Well/Pump House at 424 Lake Road, St Albans (Google Streetview)



FIGURE 10: Facing Northeast to Property at 375 Lake Road, St Albans (Google Streetview)



FIGURE 11: Facing Northeast to Old Mill Inc. at 79 Walnut Street, St Albans (Google Streetview)



FIGURE 12: Facing West to Dwelling and Barns at Brigham-Lussier Farm (Google Streetview)



FIGURE 13: Facing Northwest to Barns at Brigham-Lussier Farm (Google Streetview)