

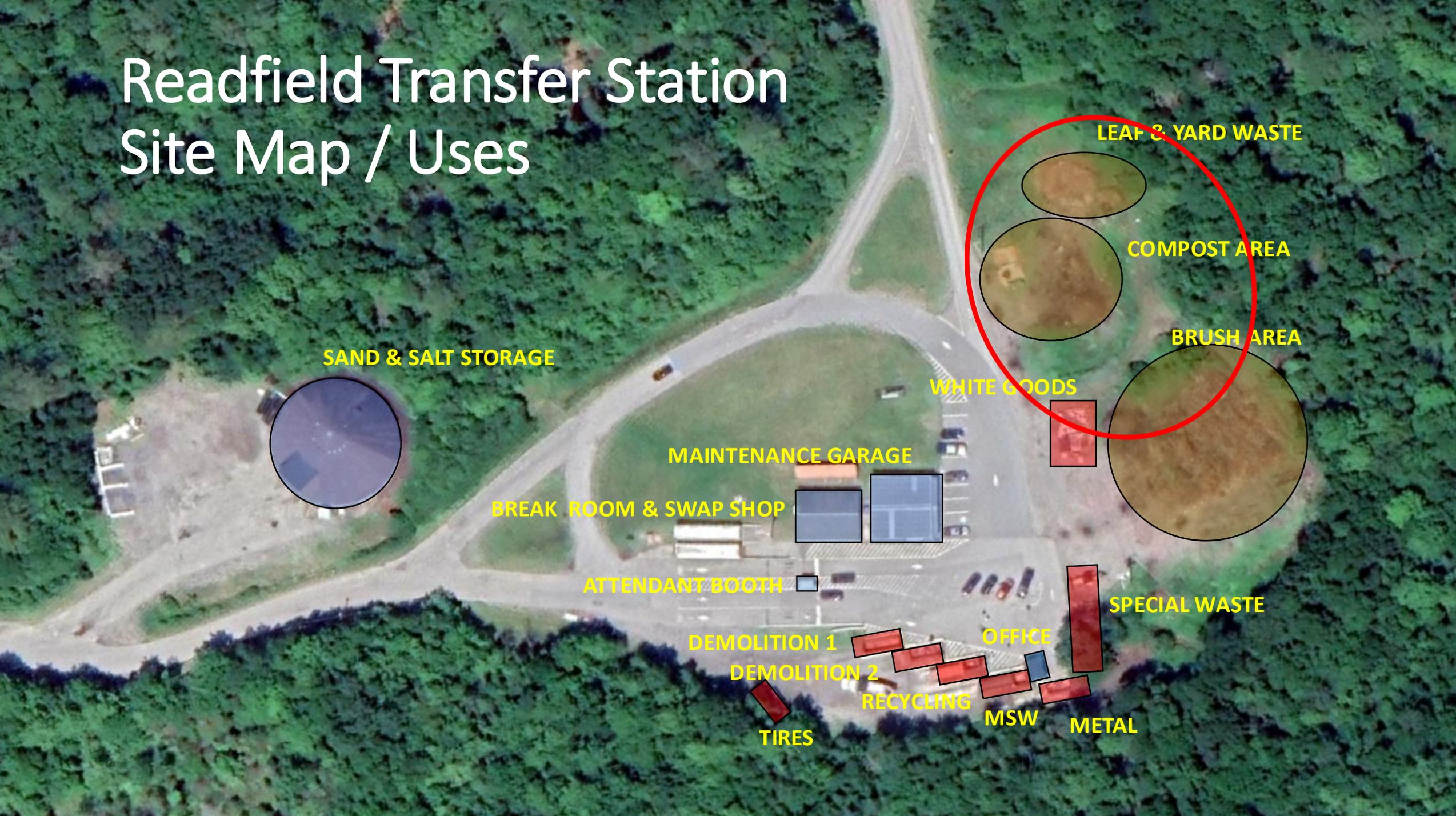
Town of Readfield
Transfer Station
Food Composting Program

April 18, 2025

About Readfield and the Transfer Station

- Eric Dyer, Readfield Town Manager
 - Provide administrative support and contribute to policy direction for Transfer Station
 - Appreciate collaboration around food rescue and want to see economic and environmental benefits for my community
- Readfield has a population of about 2,500 but the Transfer Station serves over 5,000 with Fayette and Wayne as partner communities
- Transfer Station provides robust waste management services to residents and member towns with an eye toward efficiency and value

Readfield Transfer Station Site Map / Uses



SAND & SALT STORAGE



LEAF & YARD WASTE



COMPOST AREA



BRUSH AREA



WHITE GOODS



MAINTENANCE GARAGE



BREAK ROOM & SWAP SHOP



ATTENDANT BOOTH



SPECIAL WASTE



DEMOLITION 1



DEMOLITION 2



OFFICE



RECYCLING



MSW



METAL



TIRES



Our Partners

- Maine DEP
 - Initial grant funding
 - Technical assistance
- Mitchell Center
 - Assistance with community outreach and engagement
 - Connections with other compost programs
 - Event coordination support
 - Different perspectives on food composting
- Maine Resource Recovery Association
 - Sourcing of compost bins & equipment
 - General program support

About the Composting Program

- Started through a \$20,000 Maine DEP Waste Diversion Grant we received in January of 2021
 - \$4,000 for 500 home compost pails
 - \$7,500 for 100 “trap wire” home compost bins
 - \$1,300 for 35 gallon totes (this was replaced with a single ½ yard metal container)
 - \$1,000 for a wash station
 - \$600 for carts and hand tools
 - \$3,900 for educational material printing and distribution
 - \$2,000 for compost additives

About the Food Composting Program

- Our goal from the very beginning was to reduce the cost and environmental impact of food in our solid waste stream
- Strong focus on a two-part approach
 - Education and material support for composting at home
 - Education and material support for composting at the Transfer Station
- Advertising and program language treated the two paths equally and gave a choice of how to compost with the hope of maximizing results
- Environmental benefits were promoted alongside economic ones to offer value to different constituencies
- Community launch events in the summer of 2021

Compost Area and Signage



Food Scrap & Adjunct Piles



Animal Control (with rat hole)



Waste Bin (dealing with human nature)



“Green” Compost Pile



Finished Compost Pile and Screening Area



Compost Program Lessons Learned

- On-site efforts to containerize and measure material did not fit well with our program, but they are important
- Wash station was appreciated but not manageable, may come back
- Pile gets hot, but not hot enough for pinecones and weed seeds
- “Compostable plastics” and other contaminants need attention
- We are always looking for more food, maintaining education and outreach
- We don’t know what’s happening with off-site composting and the expensive trap wire bins were probably not the best value

Compost Program Achievements

- The investment has paid off:
 - It's not in the trash and we are meeting our primary goals!
 - Lower tipping and hauling costs
 - High quality free compost for residents and some businesses
 - Building community relationships
 - Local economic benefits
 - Staff and community buy-in – education and participation
 - Program sustainability
- Better utilization of other organic materials at the Transfer Station
- Less odor from solid waste compactor
- Something is happening off-site, we're certain...
- We found success and are committed to helping others find success

Compost Program Expansion & Support

- In the schools...
 - A local elementary school teacher received a compost grant two years ago but wasn't able to get traction
 - Hit a wall with maintenance and food service staff and a knowledge gap with administration
 - Town facilitated a meeting with the Superintendent and partner organizations to address the knowledge gap first
 - Superintendent was satisfied but the process is still slow
 - Next steps involve meeting with key RSU staff (food service and maintenance)
 - Ongoing Town support and involvement, important for program

Questions?

Thank You!