

Great South Woods Complex Planning

Recommendations

May 2016

GREAT SOUTH WOODS COMPLEX PLANNING

RECOMMENDATIONS



State University of New York
College of Environmental Science and Forestry

Prepared by the State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry, with input and guidance provided by Core Team representatives, including NYS DEC Lands & Forests, Adirondack Park Agency and Hamilton County Board of Supervisors.

May 2016

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PROJECT FUNDING PROVIDED BY:

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, Environmental Protection Fund

COVER PHOTOGRAPHY PROVIDED BY:

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NOTE TO READERS:

This document is a heavily abridged version of the full **GSW Strategy** report, which provides a comprehensive description of the goals, methods and outputs of the **GSW Complex Planning** effort.

The full report can be found here:
www.esf.edu/greatsouthwoods

This briefing document contains the **GSW Recommendations**, with brief descriptions of the project objectives, working assumptions and future implementation steps.

The **GSW Recommendations** may also be viewed using our interactive online map:

greatsouthwoods.adirondackatlas.org

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The State of New York’s most important, long-term land acquisition goals in the Adirondack Park have largely been achieved, yet the development of outdoor recreational opportunities within the Park that connect State lands with local communities still requires much attention. A new approach was undertaken to conduct recreation planning at a landscape scale, beyond the boundaries of individual management units, and to engage communities and stakeholders in the design of a destination-based system of trails and infrastructure that could stimulate economic activity while protecting the Adirondack Park’s ecosystems and wild character.

The Great South Woods project is the first of a series of planning exercises to be conducted on a much larger scale than that of individual State land management units. The Great South Woods (GSW) planning area (or Complex) is roughly one-third of the Adirondack Park, covering two million acres and 20 Forest Preserve management units. The process used to develop the GSW Strategy and Recommendations emphasized **public participation** and prioritized **local knowledge and community-generated ideas** to inform recreation planning at multiple scales. The GSW process was designed and led by SUNY ESF in collaboration with representatives from DEC Lands & Forests, the Adirondack Park Agency and the Hamilton County Board of Supervisors.

Development of the GSW Strategy was based on an 18-month participatory process that included over 300 individuals that attended public workshops and meetings held across the GSW planning area. By engaging local residents, town leaders, recreation experts, DEC Forest Rangers, agency planners, and representatives from several NGOs, the GSW process generated a **comprehensive GIS (digital map) inventory** of existing and proposed land and water trails, recreation assets such as campgrounds and boat launches, and points of natural, cultural and historical interest. The GSW Recommendations include a detailed **Maps & Narratives section** (pages R-1 to R-59) that describe Local and Regional Networks of trails with more than 50 conceptual designs for recreation “features” that seek to meet the multiple objectives of the GSW effort. Ecosystem Stewardship recommendations in the GSW Strategy address long-standing issues such as protection of ‘remote core’ wilderness, as well as emerging issues, such as invasive species.

All components of the GSW Recommendations and Strategy are conceptual and are based on a landscape-scale approach to the region, meaning that routes and locations depicted on maps are approximate. The GSW Strategy is intended for planning purposes only, is subject to revision, and does not necessarily represent current or future planning priorities for DEC or APA.

Next steps will require further engagement with communities to identify priority projects and engage in further design work as well as internal consideration of the GSW Recommendations by DEC and APA. The GSW Recommendations described in the Maps and Narratives section (R-1 to R-59) may also be interactively explored at the GSW web map online here:

<http://greatsouthwoods.adirondackatlas.org>

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PRINCIPLES OF COMPLEX PLANNING

The Great South Woods represents a new model and opportunity for recreation planning that:

- **Facilitates a high degree of public engagement to gather local knowledge and community ideas to inform planning, design, and implementation steps.**
- **Expands the geographic scope of planning efforts from small units to larger landscapes, allowing for a more holistic perspective and the design of high-quality recreation infrastructure that meets multiple objectives.**

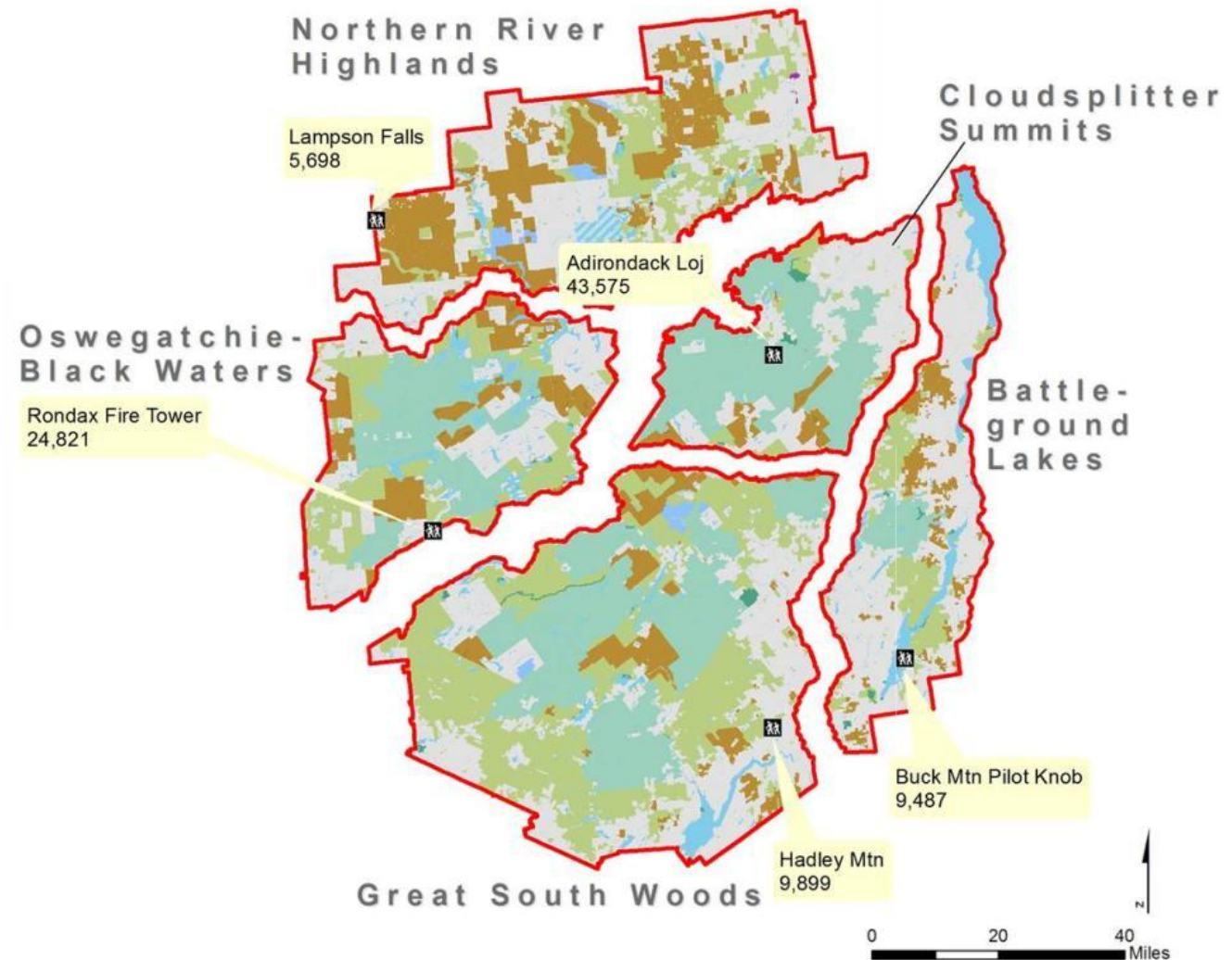
PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The GSW project's main objectives were to identify opportunities and feasible means to:

- **Optimize the potential of the Great South Woods to provide a wide spectrum of outdoor recreational activities available on Forest Preserve, DEC easement, municipal and private lands across the region;**
- **Establish a new community-based land-and-water trail and lodging system that would strengthen community linkages to each other and to nearby Forest Preserve and conservation easement lands;**
- **Better develop front-country areas of State lands for improved access and greater enjoyment of diverse – including motorized – recreational activities;**
- **Improve protection of back-country areas of State lands in their primitive, wild condition while improving their trail systems for heightened enjoyment of self-powered recreation.**

PROPOSED COMPLEXES OF THE ADIRONDACK PARK

Figure 1: DEC proposed boundaries for Adirondack Park complexes, for large-scale planning efforts. The map identifies the most visited trailhead in each complex, providing the total count of visitors per trailhead from 2012. Trail use estimates are provided by the Adirondack Trail Registry Database (ADK-TReD), developed by ESF and NYS DEC.



WORKING ASSUMPTIONS OF THE GSW EFFORT

All efforts to achieve the GSW objectives will necessarily satisfy and support the long-standing environmental protection mandates of the Adirondack Park. Constitutional protections of the Forest Preserve as ‘forever wild’ forest land, as well as the mandate of the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan (SLMP) to guide the preservation, management and use of all Forest Preserve lands according to their classification, remain fully in effect. To this end, the GSW Strategy follows principles of ecosystem stewardship – which recognizes the fundamental dependence of human well-being on functioning ecosystems – to address the balance between increased recreational access and maintenance of ecological integrity.

All components of the GSW Recommendations and Strategy are conceptual, and derived from a landscape-scale approach to the surrounding region as a whole. As such, all aspects of this Strategy are presented and intended for planning purposes only, are subject to revision, and do not necessarily represent current or future planning priorities of the DEC, APA or local communities. The recommended and proposed features depicted as products of the GSW effort are based on feedback received at public workshops and expert input, and are best viewed in the interactive web map included as a deliverable of this project.

This Strategy and its Recommendations serve as a guide, or a point of departure based on our process thus far. Any further development efforts and implementation decisions will be made by the appropriate authorities, including DEC and APA, in partnership with local governments, community leaders and various stakeholder organizations. Although efforts have been made to verify existing features, the routes and other recreational features portrayed in the GSW Recommendations are spatially approximate and have not been thoroughly field-validated. As such, careful consideration of on-the-ground conditions through field-validation will be critical in future planning, design and implementation. Such validation will typically occur through the DEC Unit Management Planning (UMP) process. In addition, the DEC will assess all GSW Recommendations for universal access opportunities, and will make it a top agency priority to address landowner concerns regarding recreation opportunities on private land. Lastly, the GSW effort has been an experimental model that will be more fully evaluated by ESF and its partners before implementation elsewhere.

Any steps to improve outdoor recreation opportunities by constructing new infrastructure or improving existing assets should include careful monitoring and management of recreation usage and its impacts on adjacent natural and built environments. Providing destination-caliber recreational experiences while protecting environmental quality and fostering economic growth in local communities will require additional investments and mechanisms for implementation from State, local, and private organizations, as well as close cooperation among these entities.

CORE THEMES OF GSW STRATEGY

The GSW Strategy is organized around five Core Themes that encompass the multiple objectives, desired outcomes and legal mandates involved in this complex planning effort (Figure 2). All five themes are related and may be thought of as a hierarchy of objectives, in which *Access* and *Connectivity* are improved via *Public-Private Partnerships* that design, create and promote *High Quality Recreation Destinations*. All of these goals rely upon *Ecosystem Stewardship* as the fundamental criteria for all recreation management and State land planning in the Adirondack Park (Figure 2). The Core Themes of the GSW Strategy are described below.

ACCESS

Increase and diversify recreation access in one of the least accessible landscapes of the Adirondack Park (and the US Northeast).

CONNECTIVITY

Improve trail-based connections among Adirondack communities and with points of natural and cultural interest in the Forest Preserve.

PUBLIC – PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

Establish relationships needed to mobilizing the funds, expertise, labor, planning processes and stakeholder engagement needed to make projects a reality through implementation.

HIGH QUALITY RECREATION DESTINATIONS

Design trails and other infrastructure that create high-quality and unique recreation experiences that draw visitors to the Great South Woods.

ECOSYSTEM STEWARDSHIP

Protect healthy and functioning ecosystems as the fundamental basis of human well-being and the foundation of recreation activities. Careful stewardship of Adirondack ecosystems is both a legal and ethical responsibility.

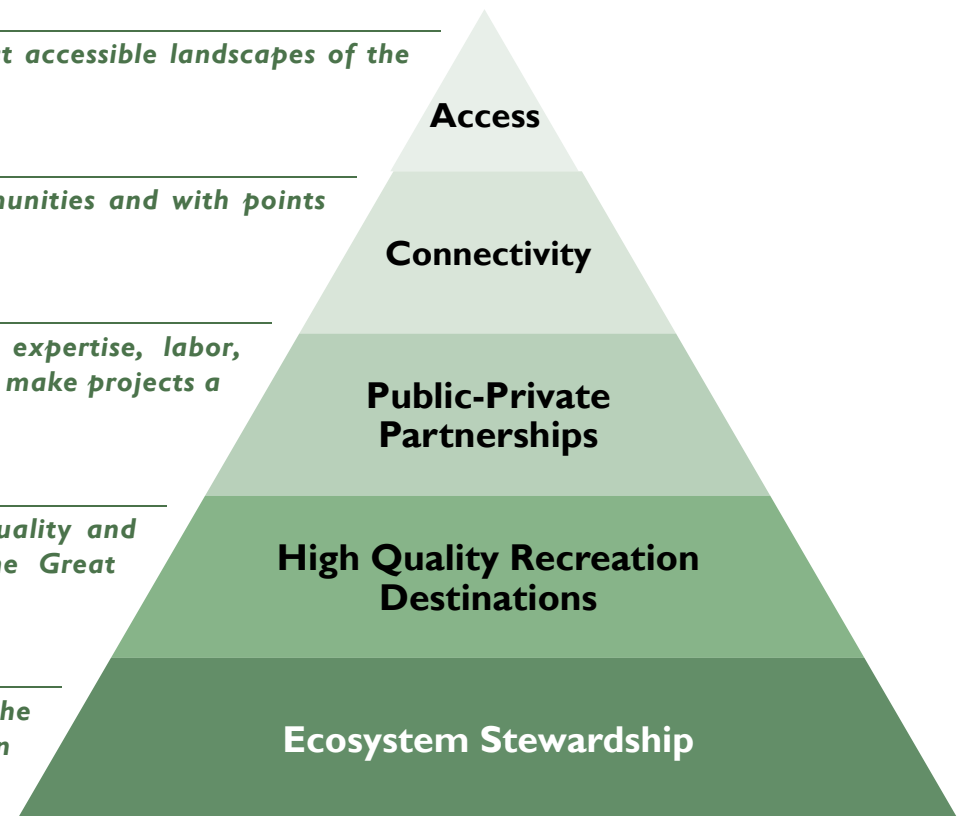


Figure 2: Core Themes of the GSW Strategy

RECOMMENDATIONS

The GSW Strategy recommends the design and implementation of a network of recreation infrastructure across the GSW Complex that meets the multiple objectives of the planning effort. The GSW Recommendations are based directly on the information collected in community workshops, which was then evaluated by ESF staff and members of the Core Team. Portions of these GSW Recommendations were presented at three public meetings, and feedback from these sessions was incorporated into the Strategy.

GSW RECOMMENDATIONS: REGIONAL NETWORK

The GSW Regional Network represents an attempt to link together communities and destinations on and across the Forest Preserve, using existing and proposed routes that provide circuits (loops) and long-distance traverses (or thru-hikes) across the region (see [GSW Regional Network maps and descriptions R-1 through R-13](#)). The Regional Network intersects with key long-distance travel routes, including the unique Hudson River Corridor, existing Northville-Placid Trail, and officially proposed North Country National Scenic Trail ([R-1](#)). Each Regional Network feature shares a trail segment with as many as seven additional features, while connecting up to seven communities in the GSW planning area (i.e., Infinite North). Features vary in length from 12.4 to 116.9 miles, average 71 miles per feature. Two-thirds of the features require some degree of construction, but overall the Regional Network is 83% complete and existing. Regional Network features provide a framework of trails and linkages, creating recreation opportunities that span the GSW planning area, and allowing for the creation of Local Network features focused on communities and opportunities at a smaller scale.

GSW RECOMMENDATIONS: LOCAL NETWORK

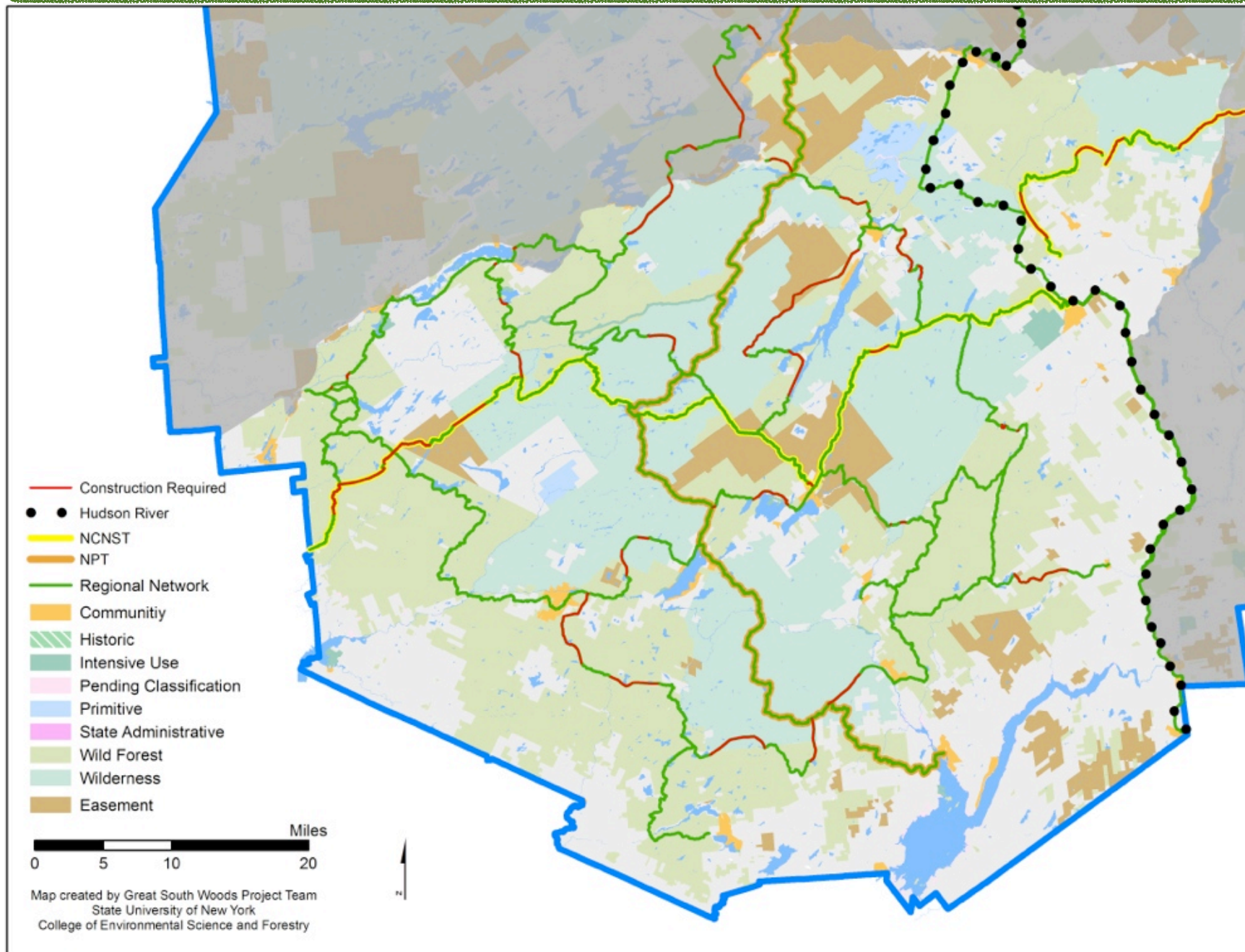
The GSW Local Network is nested within the GSW Regional Network ([R-14](#)), and provides recreation-based connections among communities and local points of interest on the Forest Preserve, based on existing and proposed routes. The GSW Recommendations and Strategy highlights 32 features, varying in length from 7.7 miles (Potter Bike Trail) to 64.4 miles (West Indian Lake Network), averaging 25.5 miles per feature. Seven features are complete and existing, while the remaining features are 74% composed of existing trail infrastructure. The Local Network features are described in individual narratives according to the Core Themes of the GSW Strategy: [Access](#), [Connectivity](#), [Ecosystem Stewardship](#), [High Quality Recreation Destinations](#), and [Public-Private Partnerships](#). Use the Map Extent guide provided on [R-15](#) to locate individual features or specific areas within the Map Narrative text.

MAPS AND NARRATIVES (PAGES R-1 TO R-59)

SEE NEXT PAGE

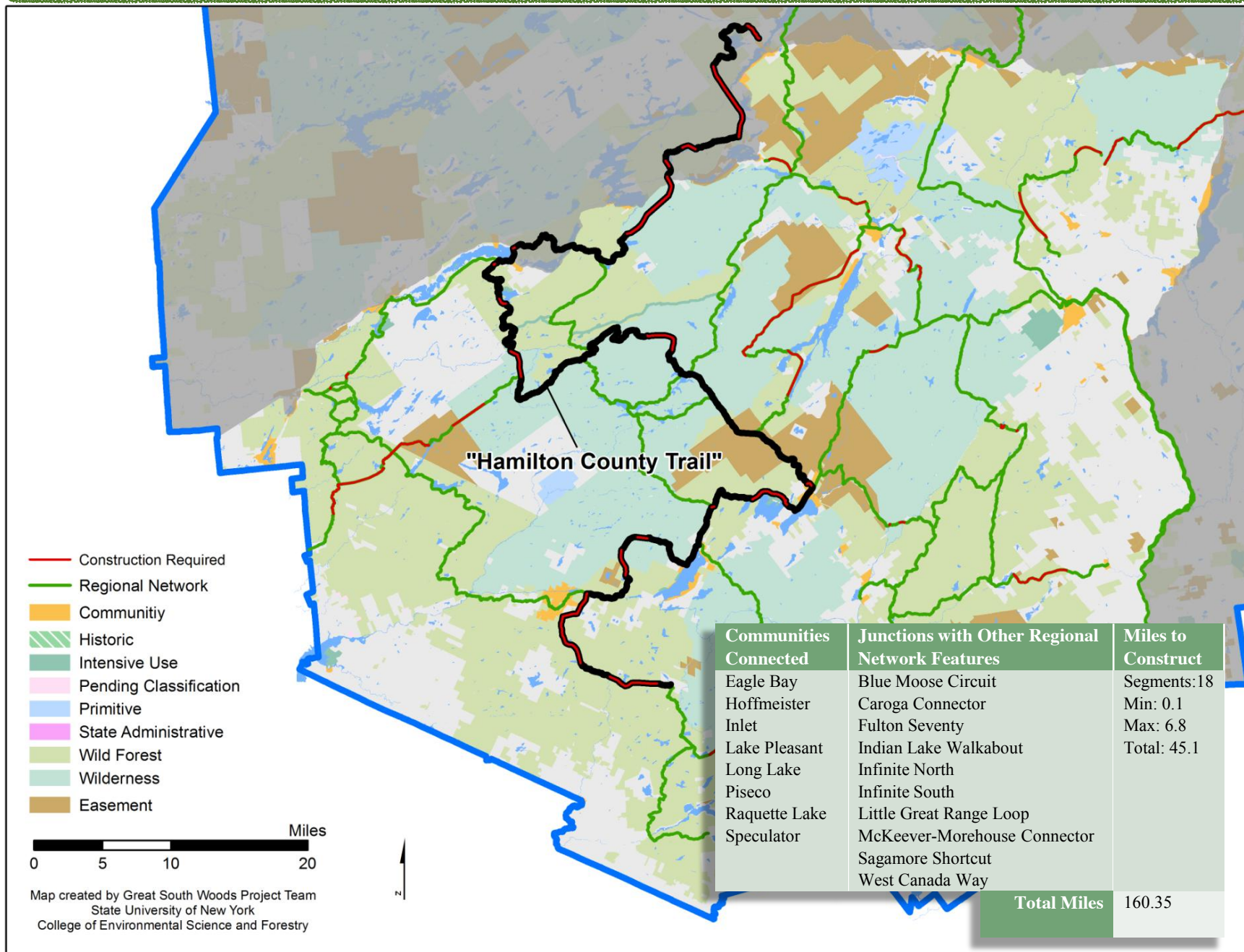
GSW Regional Network

featuring Northville-Placid Trail (NPT), North Country National Scenic Trail (NCNST) and Hudson River corridor



GSW Regional Network

Hamilton County Trail (proposed)

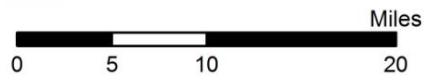


GSW Regional Network

Bluestone Trail (proposed)

Communities Connected	Junctions with Other Regional Network Features	Miles to Construct	Total Miles
Blue Mtn Lake Indian Lake Stony Creek	Infinite North Blue Moose Circuit Little Great Range Loop Indian Lake Walkabout Wells-Wilcox Circuit	Segments: 7 Min: 0.1 Max: 4.6 Total: 14.3	66

- Construction Required
- Regional Network
- Community
- Historic
- Intensive Use
- Pending Classification
- Primitive
- State Administrative
- Wild Forest
- Wilderness
- Easement



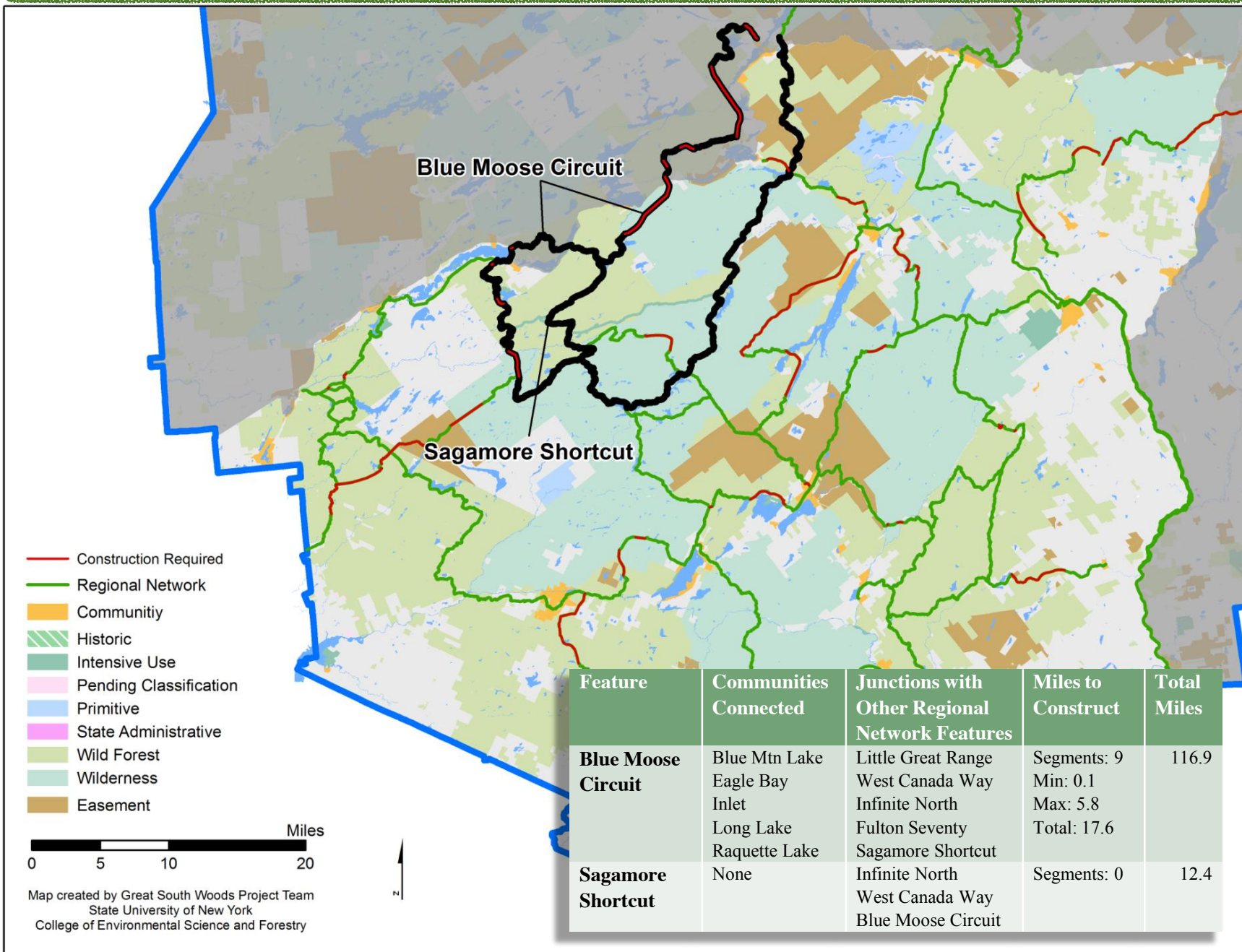
Map created by Great South Woods Project Team
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"Bluestone Trail"

GSW Regional Network

Blue Moose Circuit & Sagamore Shortcut



GSW Regional Network

Fulton Seventy

Communities Connected	Junctions with Other Regional Network Features	Miles to Construct	Total Miles
McKeever Old Forge Inlet Thendara	Infinite North McKeever-Morehouse Connector Blue Moose Circuit	Segments: 8 Min: 0.1 Max: 4.6 Total: 14.5	70.6

Fulton Seventy

- Construction Required
- Regional Network
- Community
- Historic
- Intensive Use
- Pending Classification
- Primitive
- State Administrative
- Wild Forest
- Wilderness
- Easement

0 5 10 20 Miles

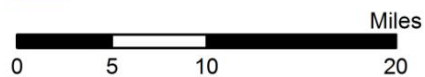
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College of Environmental Science and Forestry

GSW Regional Network

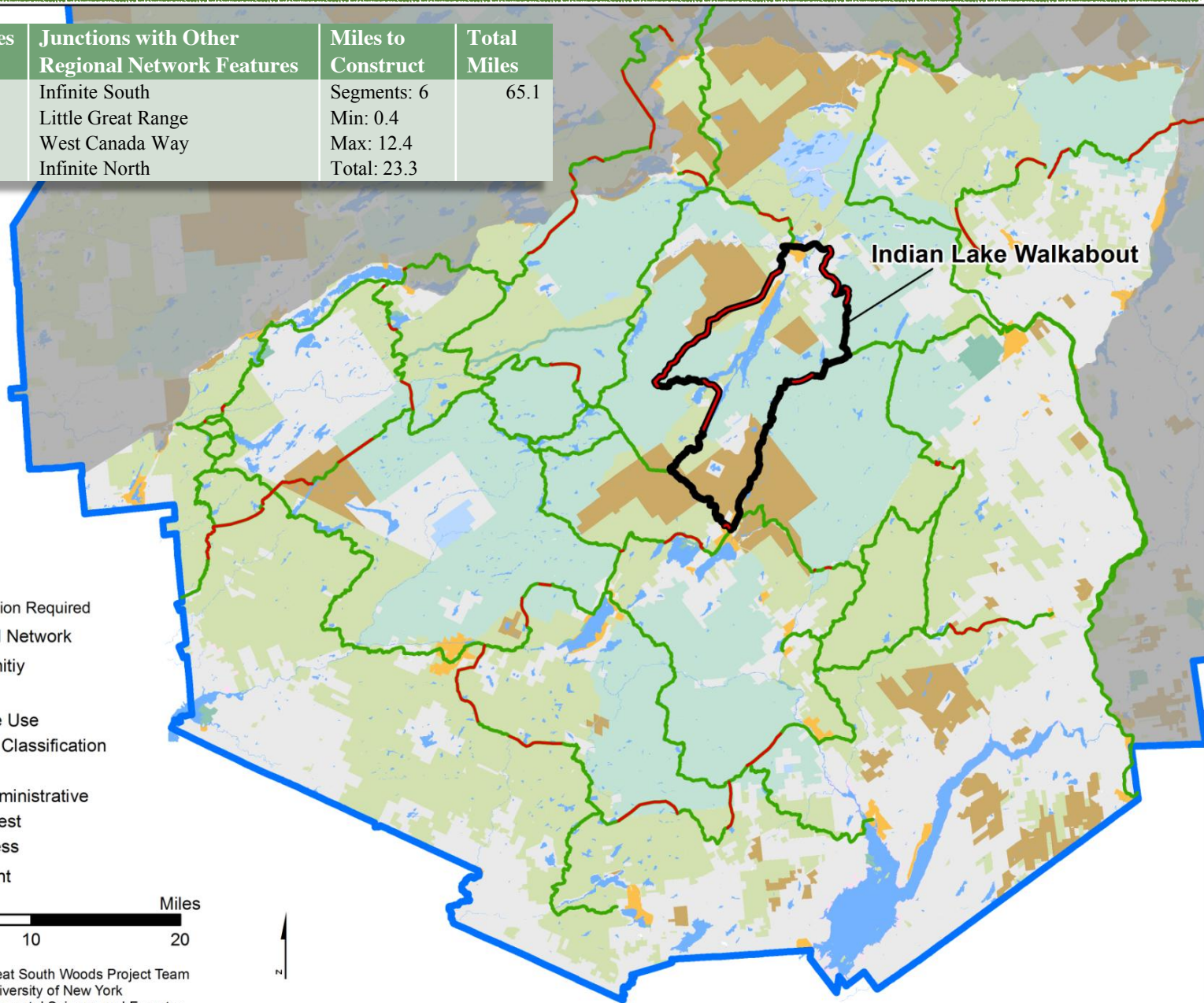
Indian Lake Walkabout

Communities Connected	Junctions with Other Regional Network Features	Miles to Construct	Total Miles
Indian Lake Sabael Speculator	Infinite South Little Great Range West Canada Way Infinite North	Segments: 6 Min: 0.4 Max: 12.4 Total: 23.3	65.1

- Construction Required
- Regional Network
- Community
- Historic
- Intensive Use
- Pending Classification
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- Wild Forest
- Wilderness
- Easement

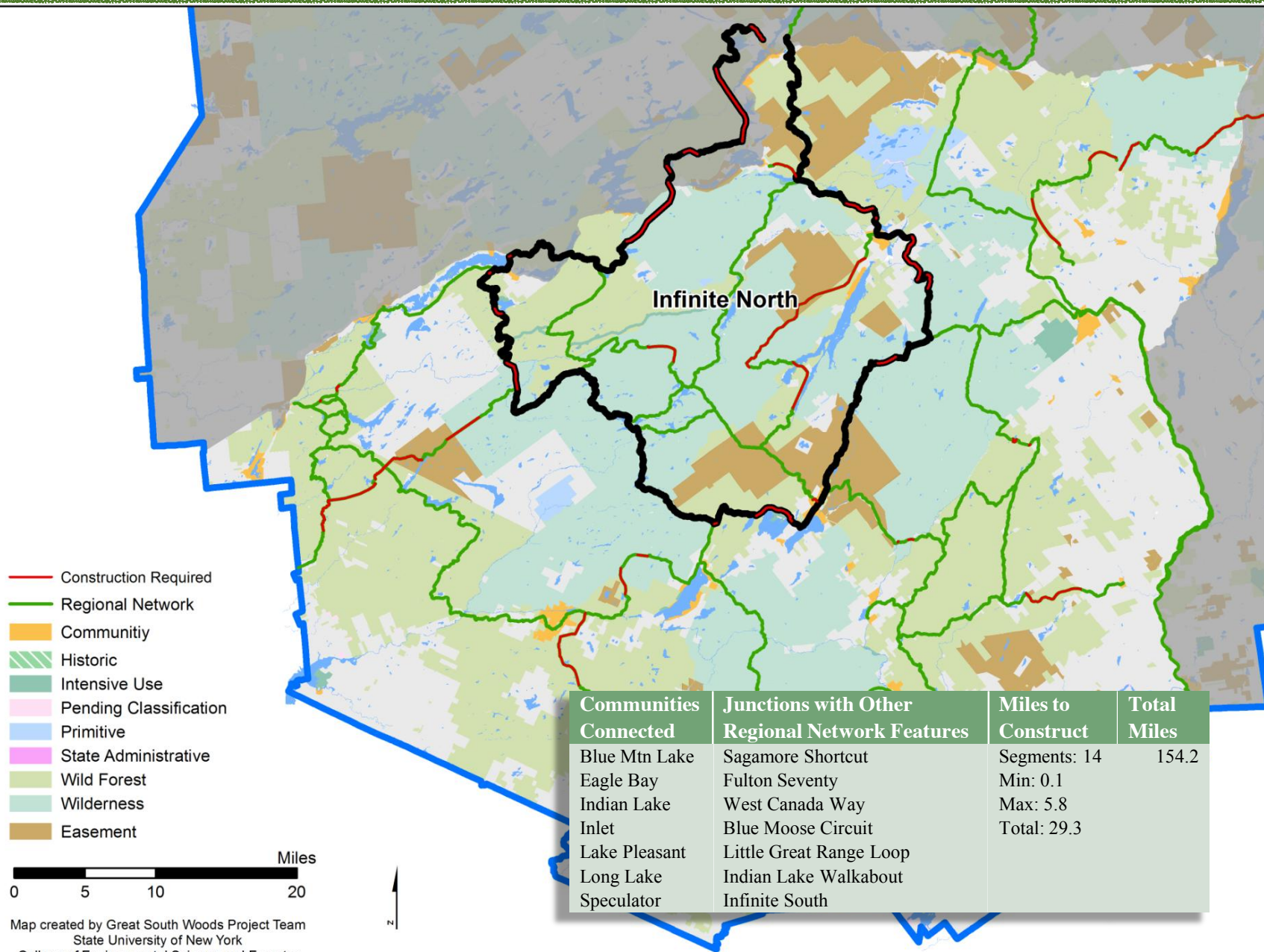


Map created by Great South Woods Project Team
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GSW Regional Network

Infinite Loop North



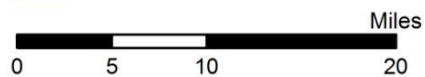
Map created by Great South Woods Project Team
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GSW Regional Network

Infinite Loop South & Caroga Connector

Feature	Communities Connected	Junctions with Other Regional Network Features	Miles to Construct	Total Miles
Caroga Connector	Caroga Lake	Infinite South	Segments: 0	15.3
Infinite South	Hoffmeister Hope Lake Pleasant Piseco Speculator Wells	Indian Lake Walkabout Blue Moose Circuit West Canada Way Infinite North	Segments: 12 Min: <0.1 Max: 6.8 Total: 28.6	106.5

- Construction Required
- Regional Network
- Community
- Historic
- Intensive Use
- Pending Classification
- Primitive
- State Administrative
- Wild Forest
- Wilderness
- Easement



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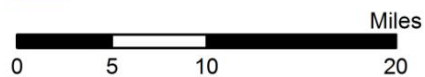
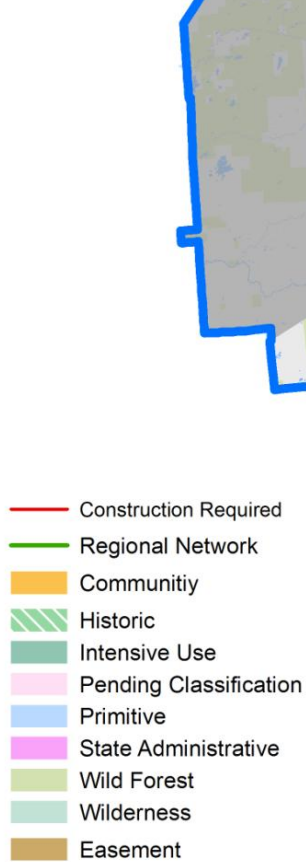
Caroga Connector

Infinite South

GSW Regional Network

Little Great Range Loop

Communities Connected	Junctions with Other Regional Network Features	Miles to Construct	Total Miles
Indian Lake Sabael	Infinite North West Canada Way Blue Moose Circuit Indian Lake Walkabout	Segments: 4 Min: <0.1 Max: 12.4 Total: 18.5	69.3



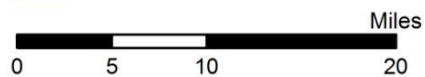
Map created by Great South Woods Project Team
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GSW Regional Network

McKeever-Morehouse Connector

Communities Connected	Junctions with Other Regional Network Features	Miles to Construct	Total Miles
Hoffmeister McKeever	Fulton Seventy Infinite South	Segments: 0	49.0

- Construction Required
- Regional Network
- Community
- Historic
- Intensive Use
- Pending Classification
- Primitive
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- Wilderness
- Easement



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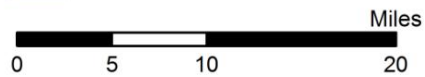
McKeever - Morehouse
Connector

GSW Regional Network

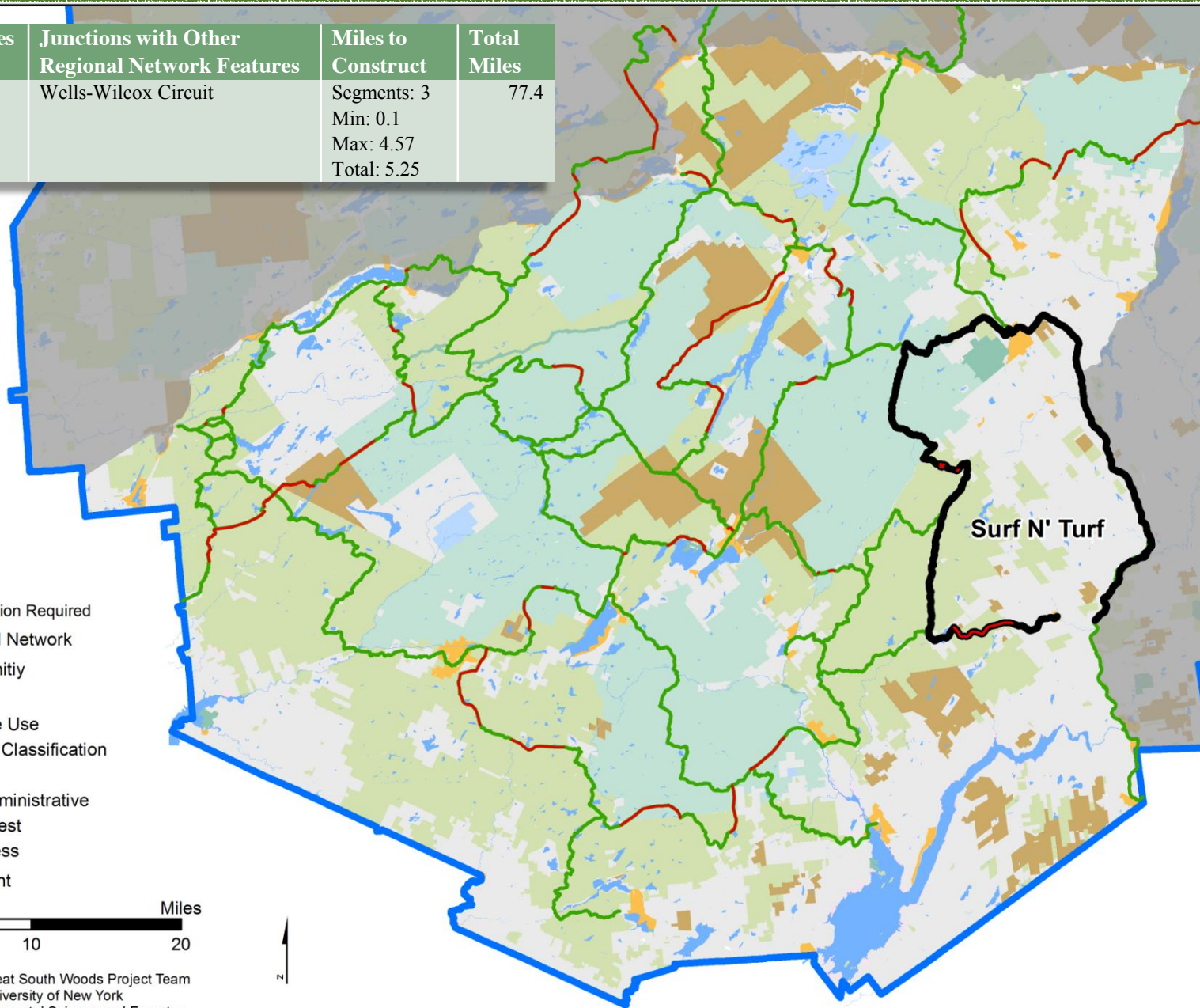
Surf N' Turf

Communities Connected	Junctions with Other Regional Network Features	Miles to Construct	Total Miles
North Creek Riparius Stony Creek	Wells-Wilcox Circuit	Segments: 3 Min: 0.1 Max: 4.57 Total: 5.25	77.4

- Construction Required
- Regional Network
- Community
- Historic
- Intensive Use
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- Easement



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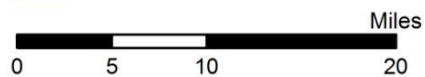


GSW Regional Network

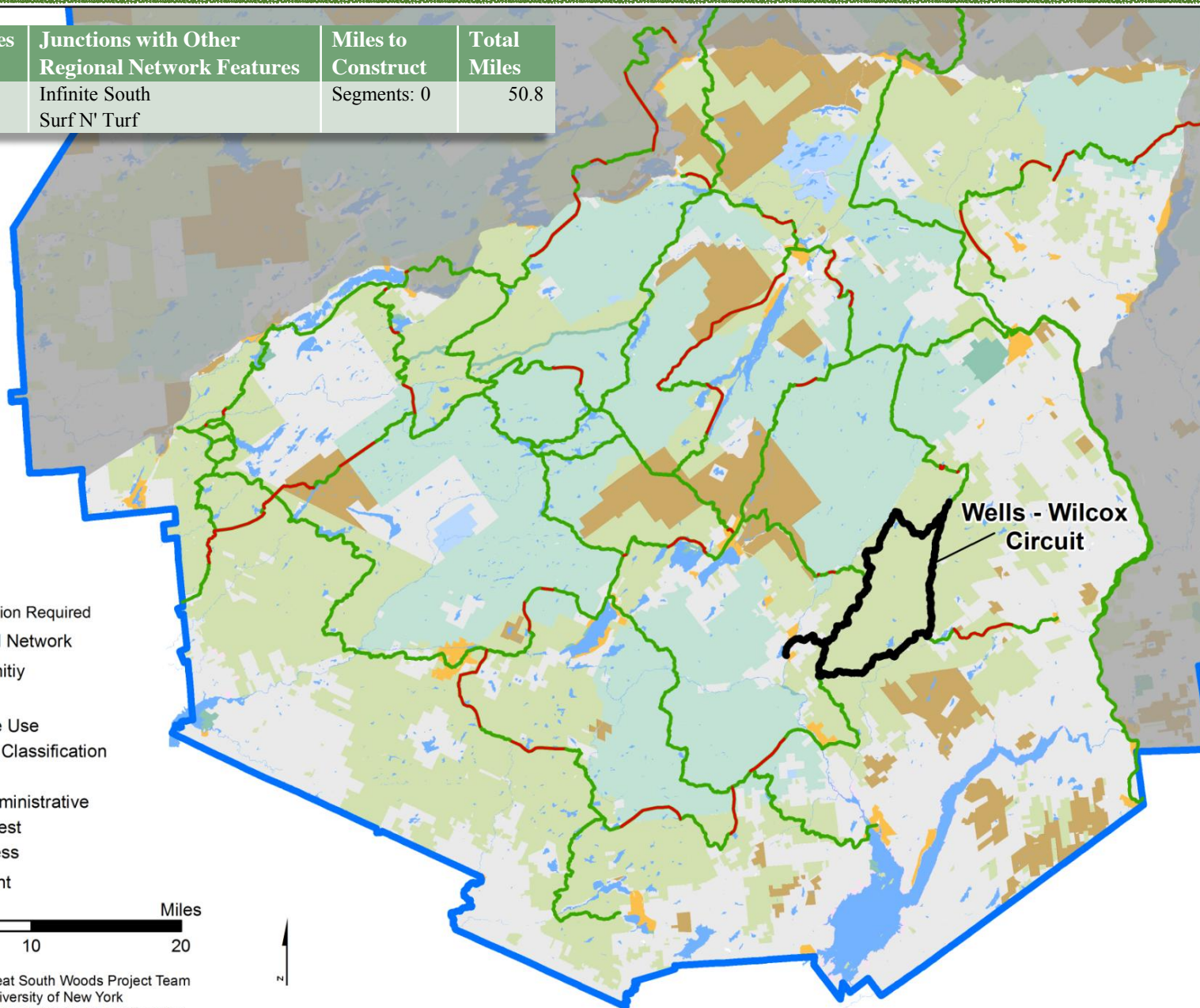
Wells-Wilcox Circuit

Communities Connected	Junctions with Other Regional Network Features	Miles to Construct	Total Miles
Wells	Infinite South Surf N' Turf	Segments: 0	50.8

- Construction Required
- Regional Network
- Community
- Historic
- Intensive Use
- Pending Classification
- Primitive
- State Administrative
- Wild Forest
- Wilderness
- Easement



Map created by Great South Woods Project Team
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GSW Regional Network

West Canada Way

Communities Connected	Junctions with Other Regional Network Features	Miles to Construct	Total Miles
Speculator	Infinite North Blue Moose Circuit Little Great Range Loop Indian Lake Walkabout Infinite South Sagamore Shortcut	Segments: 4 Min: 0.2 Max: 3.2 Total: 6.7	64.3

- Construction Required
- Regional Network
- Community
- Historic
- Intensive Use
- Pending Classification
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- Wilderness
- Easement

0 5 10 20 Miles

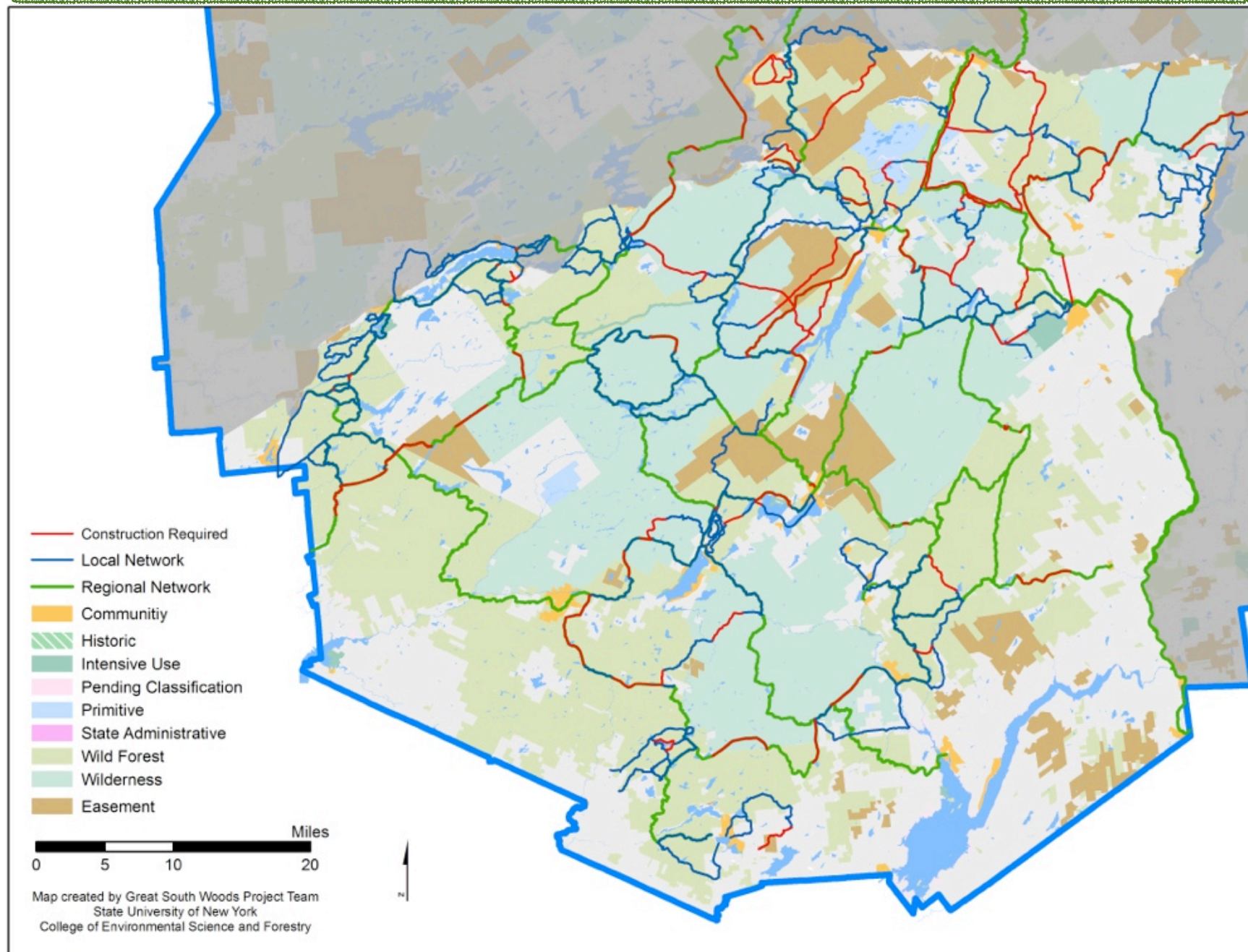
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West Canada Way

GSW Regional Network

Local Networks



GSW Recommendations

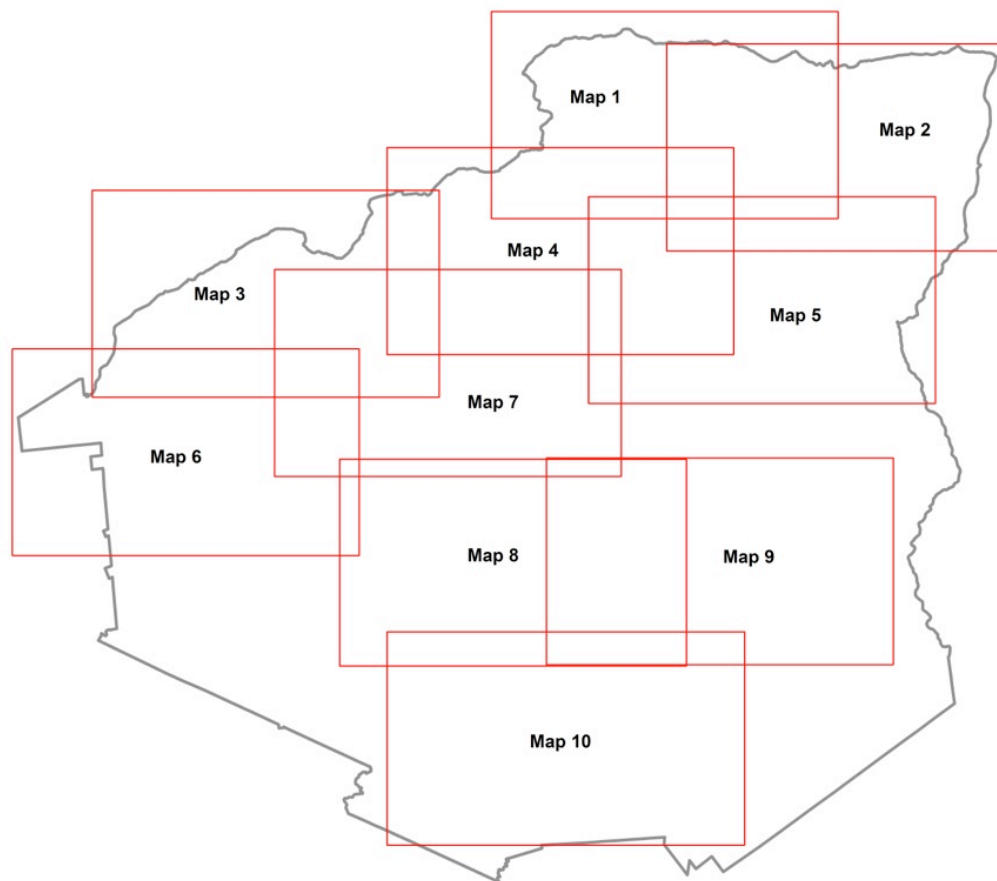
Local area maps

Map Extent & Locator Guide

The following section contains a series of smaller-scale maps that describe our **preliminary recommendations for recreation planning in the Great South Woods Strategy**. Maps were organized by dividing the GSW into ten (10) overlapping areas, as shown in red boxes to the right. ➡

Each of the ten maps is followed by detailed descriptions of **local features**. All local features are based on information and ideas developed through the **GSW process**, which included **community members, town leaders, interest groups, recreation experts and State agency officials**.

Maps are intended to inform future planning, will be subject to revision, and do not necessarily represent current or future priorities. The ideas presented here are **conceptual** and locations of points and routes are **approximate**.























Map	Locations	Pages
1	Five Towns Area	R17-R24
2	Minerva, North Hudson, Schroon Lake	R25-R29
3	Fulton Chain Area	R30-R36
4	Indian Lake & Cedar River Flow	R37-R40
5	North Creek, North River, Indian Lake	R41-R43

Map	Locations	Pages
6	Black River (Woodgate & Otter Creek)	R44-R46
7	West Canada Lake Wilderness	R47-R49
8	Lake Pleasant, Piseco, Speculator	R50-R53
9	Wells, Hope, Gilmantown, Stony Creek	R54-R55
10	Northville & Caroga Lake	R56-R59

GSW Recommendations

Symbol legends & glossary

	Hiking		Fishing		Town Beach
	Mtn. Biking		Downhill ski		Lean-to
	Road Biking		X-Country ski		Camping
	Paddling		Snowshoe		Fire Tower
	Kayaking		Snowmobile		Hand Launch
	Rafting		Winter Sports		Scenic View
	Climbing		Horse Trail		Boat Launch

	ADA Accessible		Fire Tower		Day Use Area
	Lodging		Historic Site		Rock Climbing
	Boat Launch		Lean-to		Scenic Area
	Natural Feature		Paddling Access		Great Camp
	State Campground		Parking		Fishing Access
	Primitive Campsite		Scenic Area		
	Downhill Ski Center		Proposed Feature		Cross-Country Ski Center

Regional Network: a system of routes designed to interconnect communities across the GSW

Local Network: trail systems that connect one or more communities with destinations on the Forest Preserve or DEC easement lands

Loop or Circuit: a trail that brings travelers back directly to (or near) their starting point

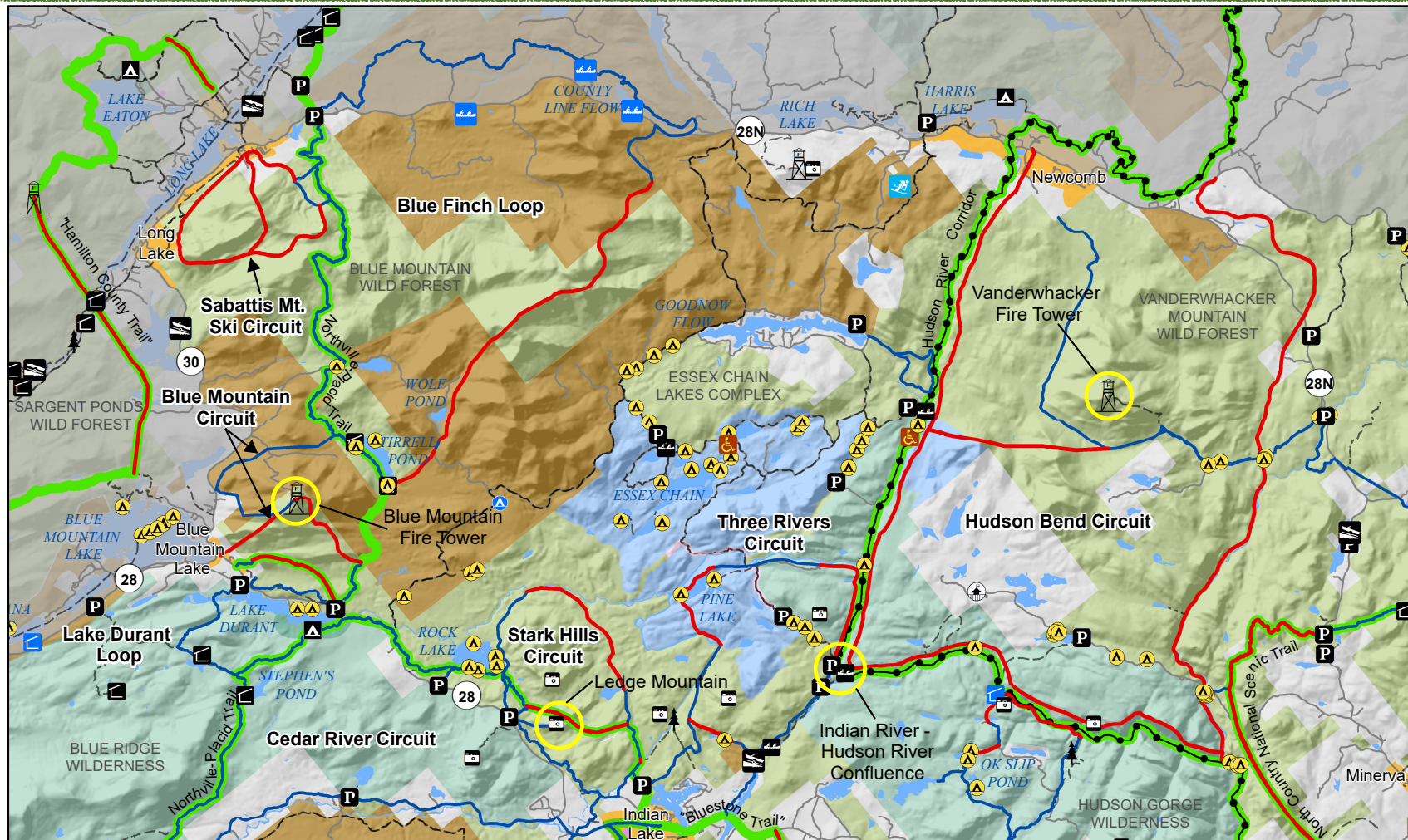
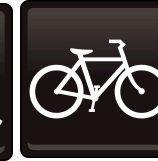
Nested Loop: trail feature in which two or more connected loop routes can be traveled

Connector: a route designed to directly link communities to the regional or local networks in the area

Multi-Modal: a route designed to incorporate different modes of recreation along different sections

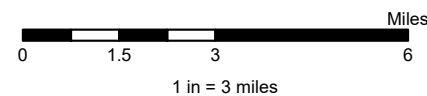
Spur - simple out-and-back trail, usually to a specific point of interest

Map 1 ► Five Towns Area (portions of Newcomb, Long Lake, Indian Lake, Blue Mountain Lake and Minerva)

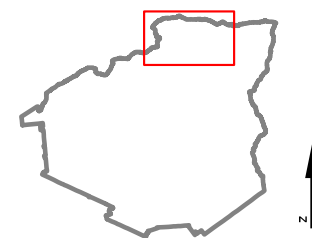


	ADA Accessible		Fire Tower		Local Network		Community
	Lodging		Historic Site		Regional Network		Historic
	Boat Launch		Lean-to		Construction Required		Intensive Use
	Natural Feature		Paddling Access		DEC Trail		Pending Classification
	State Campground		Parking		Road		Primitive
	Primitive Campsite		Scenic Area				State Administrative
	Downhill Ski Center		Proposed Feature				Wild Forest
							Wilderness
							Easement

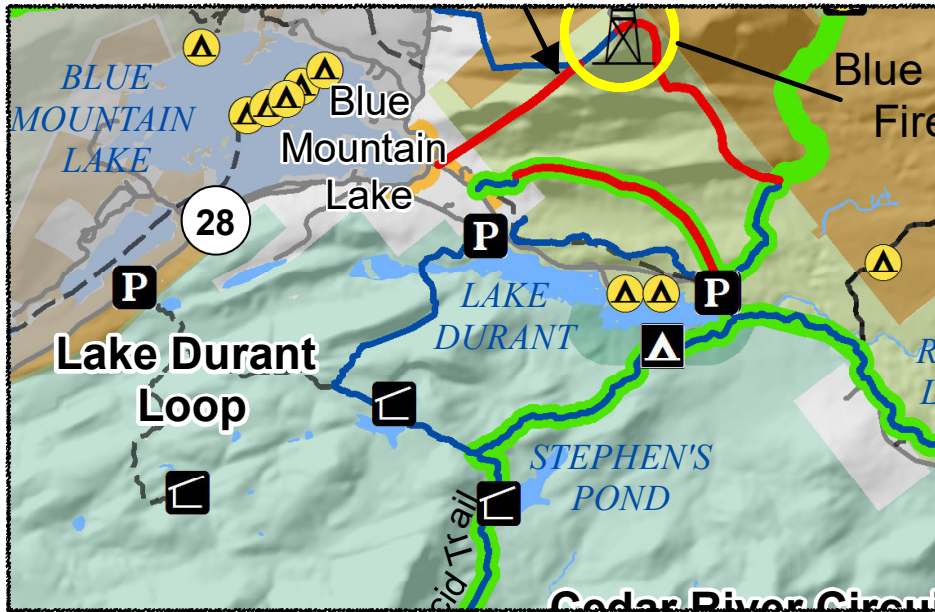
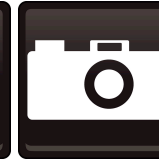
Long Lake, Newcomb



Map produced by the Great South Woods Project Team
at the State University of New York College of Environmental
Science and Forestry



Map 1 ► Five Towns Area Lake Durant Loop



Lake Durant Loop is an 8.2-mile circuit, comprised entirely of existing trails and infrastructure, that connects hikers from the DEC Lake Durant Campground and the NPT with the Blue Ridge Wilderness backcountry and the western end of Lake Durant. Guided hiking-paddling trips may be developed with a local outfitter, lodges, ADK Museum and Arts Center in hamlet of BML. Access from highways and via Blue Mountain Circuit (proposed) provide opportunities for weekend excursions to multiple points of interest.

Access: All existing infrastructure -- now linked into regional network. Hybrid hiking-paddling opportunities could be developed or expanded on Lake Durant, linking with DEC campground. Joins with Blue Mountain Circuit (proposed) from shared parking area on Rt 30.

Connectivity: An existing local circuit for Blue Mountain Lake that uses sections of the NPT and Bluestone Trail (proposed) in the GSW regional network, which connects multiple communities. Good location for vehicle traffic at intersection of NYS 28 and 30.

Stewardship: Mostly located in Blue Ridge Wilderness and could require additional infrastructure and maintenance efforts with potential increased use. Backcountry trail areas along ponds may become degraded through erosion. If 'pack and paddle' trips are implemented, boat washing stations could be installed at DEC campground. Otherwise nominal concern for invasives, but campground visitors should be mindful of firewood regulations to reduce spread of insect pests. Could be a good place to educate public about invasive species.

Destination: Day-hike into the Blue Ridge Wilderness from Lake Durant Campground or parking areas on NYS 28, passing by backcountry Stephen's and Cascade Ponds, with overnight opportunities at lean-tos. Hike or paddle back to DEC campground on Lake Durant, head south into the heart of Blue Ridge Wilderness on the NPT, into Blue Mountain Lake for a day at the ADK Museum, or hike up to scenic views on the summit of Blue Mountain. In winter, backcountry skiing and snowshoeing.

Partnerships: Highlight and build upon existing local circuit for guided trips / local outfitters. May be good opportunities for multi-modal 'pack and paddle' trips based out of Blue Mountain Lake village. Snowshoeing and nordic skiing trips in winter. Also opportunities for local residents and visitors to support stewardship for back-country lean-tos and trail sections.

Map 1 ► Five Towns Area Sabattis Mtn. Ski Circuit



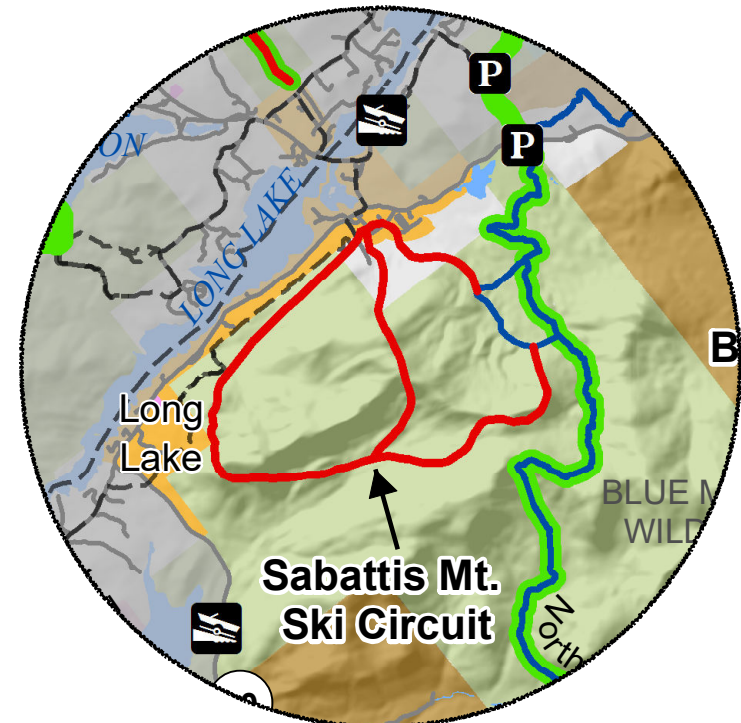
Access: New winter and summer recreation opportunities in currently trail-less Blue Mountain Wild Forest directly adjacent to hamlet of Long Lake. Connects NPT directly to popular year-round community pavilion in center of town.

Connectivity: Easily accessible in and out of Long Lake. Access off the NPT via a quarter-mile existing connector trail. Connects the NPT directly to hamlet of Long Lake instead of 1.5 miles east on NYS 28N.

Stewardship: 93% of loop requires route planning and construction. Western loop may be preferable for grooming, while eastern loop - which connects with NPT - should be designed as a backcountry ski trail. Increased exposure to invasive plants based on proximity to town and junction of NYS 28N and 30.

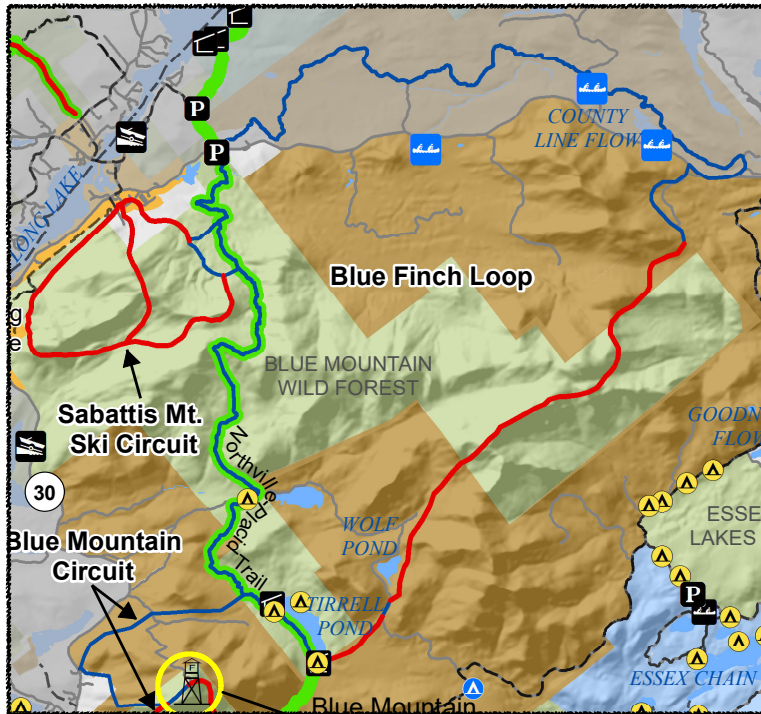
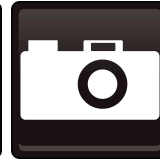
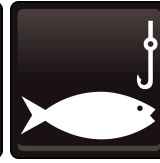
Destination: One and only skiing opportunity in scenic village of Long Lake, multiple grades of skiing and route-options along the loop, including groomed and backcountry trails. Day-hiking and mountain biking in summer.

Partnerships: Circuit was proposed at public meeting in Long Lake. Will require coordination with town government, private landowners and state agencies to draft plans. Races and community events at Sabattis Pavilion could be developed around using the circuit. Engage local expertise and the Town of Long Lake Parks & Rec Office in all implementation phases.



The **Sabattis Mountain Ski Circuit** is a 10 mile ‘double-loop’ trail system designed primarily for cross-country skiing on both groomed and backcountry paths, which connects directly with both the Sabattis Pavilion in the heart of Long Lake village and the Northville-Placid Trail as it runs south through Blue Mountain Wild Forest. One loop may be designed for groomed trails, the other for nordic skiing, but with a shared access point near town amenities, including outfitters. It provides new access to a large area of Forest Preserve directly adjacent to the destination community of Long Lake, and could bring more NPT hikers into town (without requiring a road walk). The circuit could also support day-hiking and mountain biking in summer. Nearly all (93%) of the circuit, based on approximate routes, will require design and construction. Local capacity for recreation planning and community engagement is strong and should be leveraged.

Map 1 ► Five Towns Area Blue Finch Loop



The **Blue Finch Loop** is a 32.2-mile foot trail circuit that incorporates a long segment of the Northville-Placid Trail for a 4-6 day backpacking trip, with several angling opportunities in ponds and streams, through Blue Mountain Wild Forest and working forest parcels with DEC conservation easements, including the former Finch-Pruyn lands. Proposed new trail provides access to Wolf Pond, scenic views of the Essex Chain Lakes Complex along a ridge traverse, and connection to existing snowmobile trails along Fishing Brook and NYS 28, where DEC has proposed several parking areas and boat launches for fishing access. Winter access for nordic skiers and snowshoers into Tirrell and Wolf Ponds from parking areas on NYS 28 near Lake Durant.

Access: The proposed new 6.9-mile trail segment along the loop accesses Wolf Pond from NPT, into currently trail-less areas of Blue Mountain Wild Forest and former Finch-Pruyn DEC easement lands. Proposed hand launches for boats along Fishing Brook.

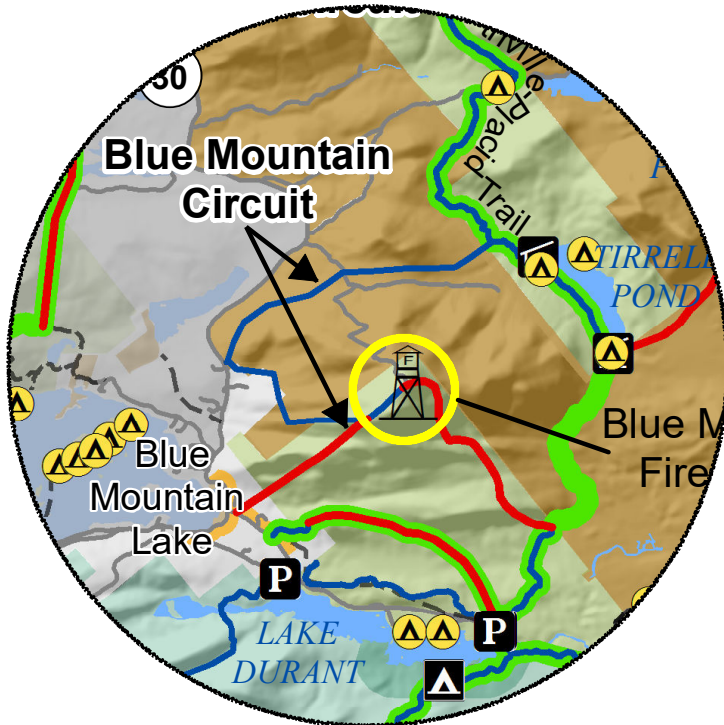
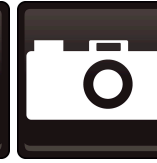
Connectivity: Builds on existing connection via NPT from Blue Mountain Lake to Long Lake. Also connected to proposed Sabbatis Mountain Ski Circuit, which originates directly in the hamlet of Long Lake.

Stewardship: Additional parking and signage required near County Line Flow/28N. Likely will need additional lean-tos or campsites along the new trail section in Blue Mtn WF. Trailhead parking and registers needed at intersection with 28N. Boat wash stations and invasive species prevention signage needed at proposed hand launch sites. Increased Ranger monitoring of use along some portions that are long and isolated. New trail along ridgeline should be designed with care and attention to ecological impacts as well as safety.

Destination: A multi-day backpacking trip that brings hikers and anglers to several ponds exploring recently acquired Finch easements.

Partnerships: Will require establishment of recreation rights on easement lands, including negotiation of fishing rights on Wolf Pond and hiking access on northern end of trail in easement; opportunities for community participation as trail and lean-to stewards.

Map 1 ► Five Towns Area Blue Mountain Circuit



Access: Brings a trailhead for Blue Mountain summit into the BML hamlet area, also provides quick access to summit from NPT. Parking areas in the village and at Lake Durant provide different options for day-hike routes.

Connectivity: Uses sections of NPT and Bluestone Trail (proposed) to connect hamlet of BML with summit and NPT. Links to Lake Durant Loop via shared parking area just west of Lake Durant Campground on NYS 30.

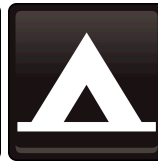
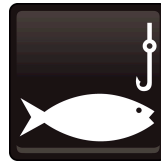
Stewardship: Trail construction should follow best management practices, several steep and rocky sections along route. Continue 'Summit Guide/Steward' program in the cabin/tower during summer and could coordinate more with local communities (i.e., recruit a local community member as, or in addition to, the guide/steward).

Destination: The destination is the journey - two new approaches to the iconic Blue Mountain Fire Tower with a direct start from the Hamlet, and a loop hike accessed from either NPT or the NYS Lake Durant Campground.

Partnerships: Public parking in hamlet would be required, as well as construction of roughly 75% of the loop. All Fire Towers should have accurate, readable observation maps which could be produced in partnership with local government, historical societies or interested citizens.

The **Blue Mountain Circuit** is a 11.8-mile foot trail system that connects the lakefront to the iconic summit. New proposed trails provide local access to NPT from the hamlet of Blue Mountain Lake, via new and challenging routes to the Blue Mtn summit and fire tower. The circuit originates along the lakefront in the village of Blue Mountain Lake and creates an alternate route from the Northville-Placid Trail to Blue Mtn summit that eliminates the need for thru-hikers to retrace their footsteps. NPT hikers can take the existing Tirrell Pond Trail to the Blue Mountain Trail (which share a trailhead and parking area adjacent to NYS 30), ascend to the summit and fire tower, and return to the NPT using the proposed trail heading southeast from the summit.

Map 1 ► Five Towns Area Three Rivers Circuit



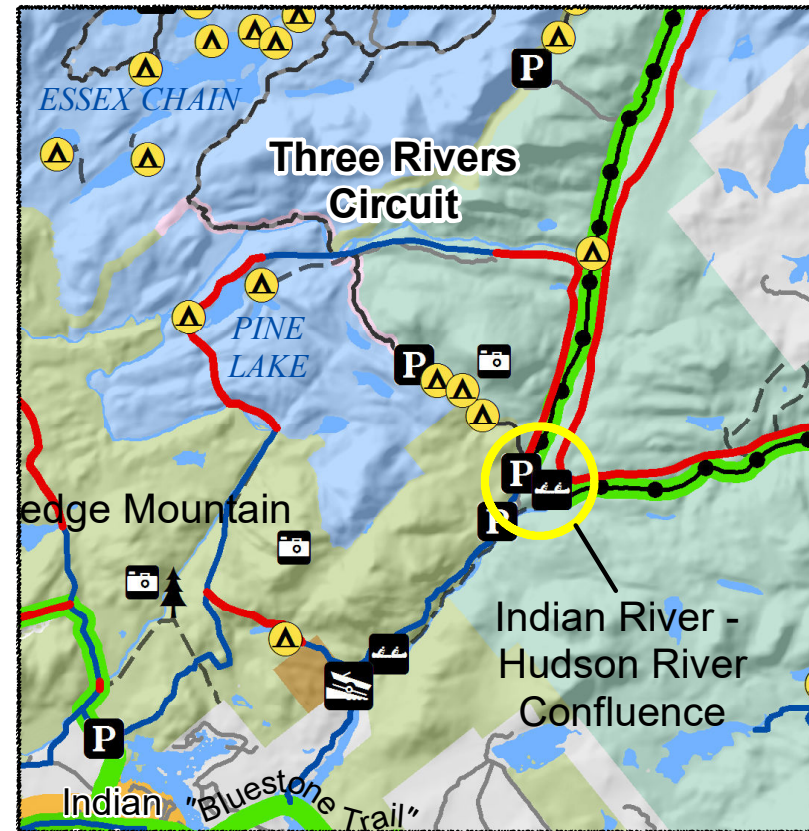
Access: New access to west bank of Hudson and western shore of Pine Lake and southernmost Essex Chain complex, approximate route allows short bushwhacks to McGinn Mtn and Big Pisgah Mtn.

Connectivity: Connects Indian Lake with Essex Chain Complex via foot trail; links Indian-Hudson and Cedar-Hudson confluence via trail along west bank of Hudson River.

Stewardship: Three segments totaling 6.7 miles need construction. Trail construction and management must safeguard *Wild and Scenic* character of Hudson River and be designed to minimize risk of erosion or damage to riparian areas. Same environmental protections should be implemented for confluence of Hudson and Indian Rivers. Live bait should be prohibited; if live bait is allowed, discourage dumping of bait worms, which are invasive and can damage nearby forests.

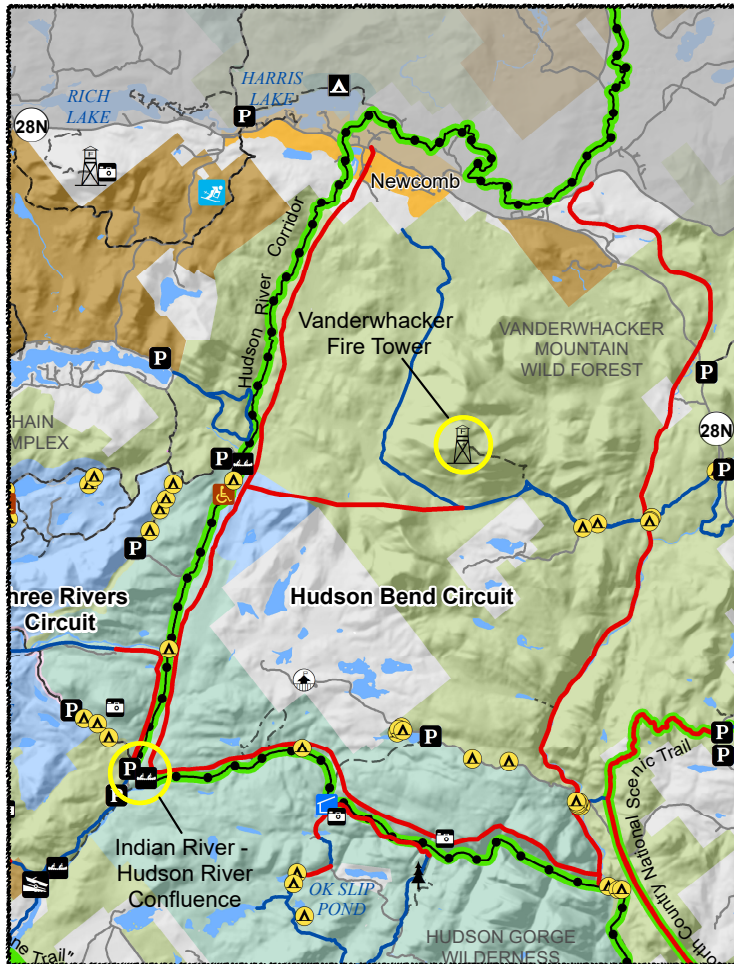
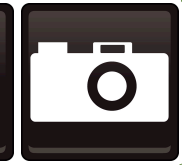
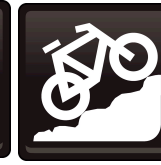
Destination: A backcountry weekend for hikers, anglers and river enthusiasts, leaving from Indian Lake, with primitive camping on Pine Lake and whitewater rafting through the scenic Hudson Gorge.

Partnerships: Increased use of short trail segment through easement may require negotiation with landowner. Trail and campsite stewards could come from Indian Lake or Newcomb. River guides / outfitters using Indian River access may design guided hiking-boating trips with return shuttles from North River back to Indian Lake.



The **Three Rivers Circuit** is a 15.7-mile loop designed for backcountry and river enthusiasts, providing a weekend trip with opportunities for camping, fishing, kayaking and whitewater rafting on the Indian and Hudson Rivers. Using a section of unpaved road from parking area to the Hudson-Indian River confluence, the circuit can be accessed from Indian Lake via two popular parking areas with raft/kayak launches, and provides access into southernmost portions of the Essex Chain Complex, including campsites on Pine Lake. It is also accessible from Newcomb via the existing road in Essex Chain Complex and a proposed trail on the west bank of the Hudson River.

Map 1 ► Five Towns Area Hudson Bend Circuit



Access: New hiking along 20 miles of the Wild and Scenic Hudson River, 6+ miles along the Scenic Boreas River; access to Borough's Cave; alternate access to Vanderwhacker Mtn. Trail. May need to develop more campsites along Hudson and Boreas, and boat take-outs at several points on Hudson.

Connectivity: Access from Newcomb to Minerva and North Creek along the Hudson River Corridor, junctions with Vanderwhacker Circuit, North Country National Scenic Trail.

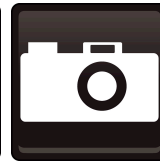
Stewardship: Significant trail construction along river corridors poses environmental and logistical challenges. Trail design, construction and maintenance must safeguard *Wild and Scenic* status of these reaches and the protection of rare and sensitive ecosystems, including calcareous cliffs at Blue Ledges and ice meadows along the Hudson River. Hiking trail along Gorge rim will likely require hand rails and signage. Will need registers and signage in Newcomb, NYS 28N, and along Northwoods Club Road.

Destination: Multi-modal circuit potential, starting from Newcomb with the option of hiking to-be-constructed trail, or floating down the Hudson River, exiting the water at a take-out and heading east at the Indian River. Hike through the Hudson Gorge past Blue Ledges to Boreas River, hiking or biking north back toward Newcomb. Alternatively, Hudson/Boreas junction can be reached from North Creek and taken up to Newcomb.

Partnerships: Negotiate access with Northwoods Club. Ample opportunities for local engagement with trail construction and stewardship. East leg could be constructed for biking on old railroad bed, supporting bike rentals/ outfitters in North Creek, Newcomb and/or Minerva. Numerous workshop participants highlighted needs and opportunities for hiking along Hudson.

The **Hudson Bend Circuit** is a 39-mile loop of almost entirely new construction along the Hudson and Boreas rivers, providing access to the east banks of the Hudson River and the north rim of the Hudson Gorge. Circuit also connects with existing Vanderwhacker Mtn summit trail and fire tower. With potential opportunities for multi-modal hiking-paddling or paddling-biking trips, the circuit can be accessed from the trailhead on NYS 28N, via Northwoods Club Road, or from Newcomb via existing and proposed trails.

Map 1 ► Five Towns Area Stark Hills Circuit



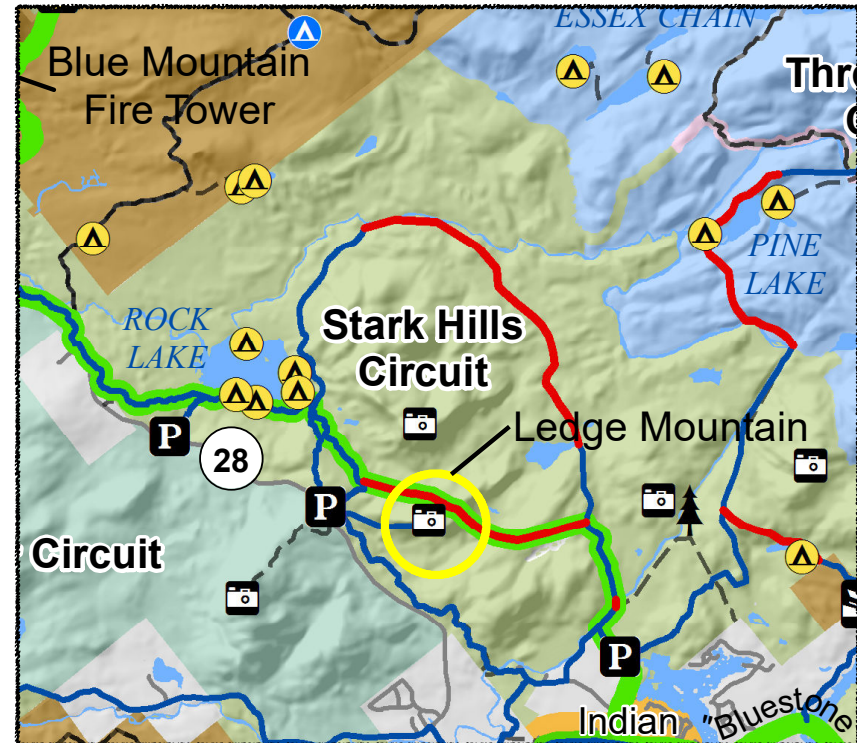
Access: New segments of trail connects together existing, dead-end segments to create alternate (loop) hiking routes to Rock Lake, Ledge Mtn scenic views, and short bushwhacks to Stark Hills and Rock River. Southernmost leg is snowmobile trail along NYS 28.

Connectivity: Loop in and out of hamlet of Indian Lake; circuit is bisected by Bluestone Trail (proposed) regional route, which connects with Blue Mountain Lake to the northwest, and several communities to the southeast, including Stony Creek.

Stewardship: Maintenance on snowmobile sections to provide for hikers. Lakefront campsites (Rock Lake) need regular monitoring and maintenance. Footbridge across Cedar River should be designed and constructed to minimize impacts on riparian habitats.

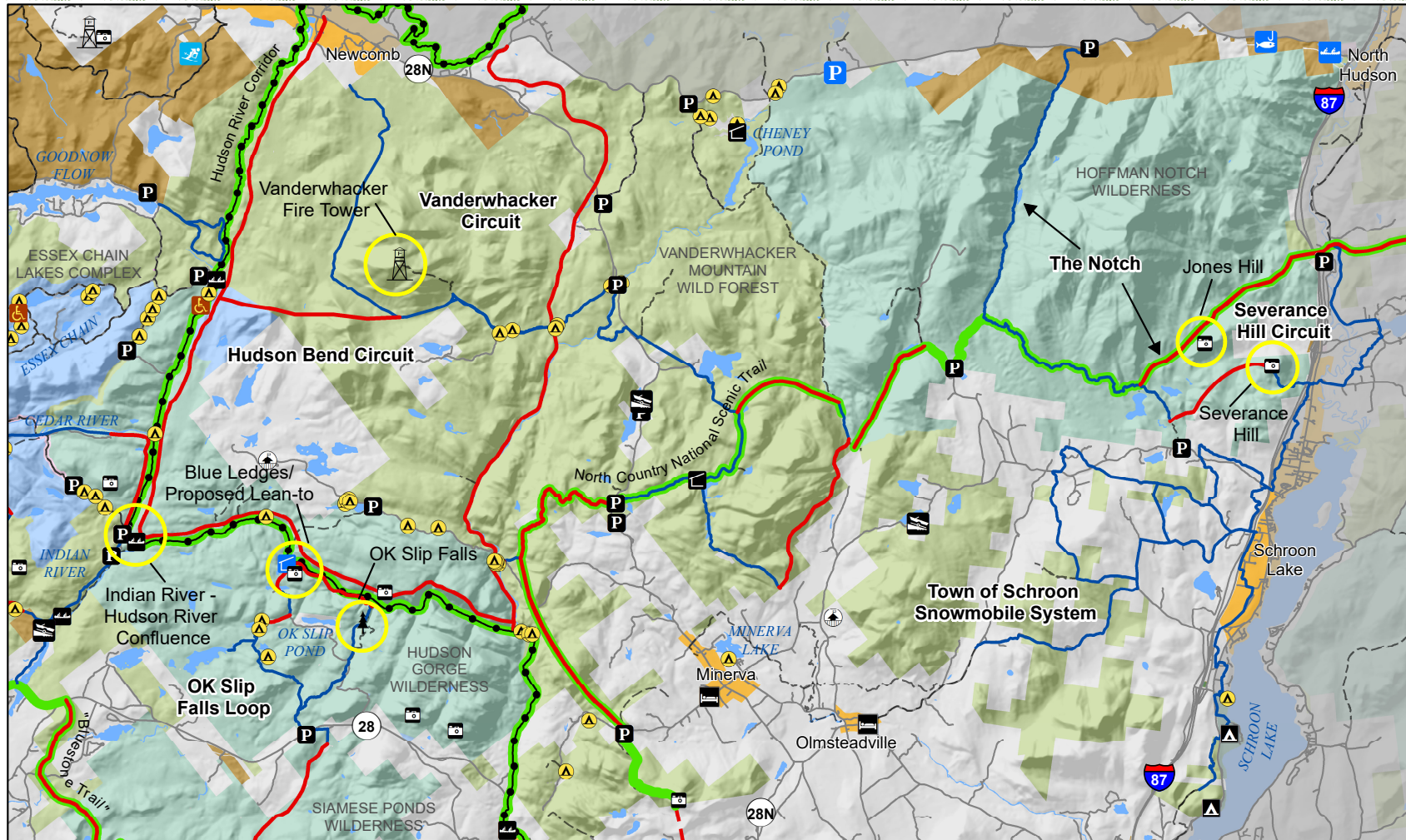
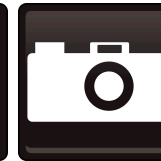
Destination: A weekend backcountry hiking or skiing trip, along Rock River and to Rock Lake with ample camping opportunities and scenic views from multiple mountain tops. For a more challenging day hike, tackle the full outer loop in the wild forest.

Partnerships: Indian Lake outfitters and restaurants; community assistance with trail and foot bridge construction over Cedar River.



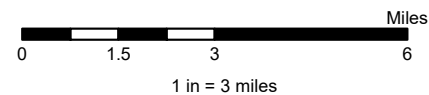
The **Stark Hills Circuit** is a 11.7-mile network of loop trails that explores the backcountry of Blue Mountain Wild Forest, with waterfront camping opportunities on Rock Lake, and scenic views from the summit of Ledge Mountain. Hikers can head off-trail to explore the Stark Hills and Rock River. Southern portions of the circuit are currently used for snowmobiling in winter, but other portions of loop are suitable for nordic skiing. Boats may be portaged from adjacent parking area on NYS 28 into Rock Lake, providing paddling opportunities with lakefront campsites that are located along hiking circuit. Addition of a foot bridge across Cedar River provides more convenient access to the Stark Hills Circuit from the hamlet of Indian Lake.

Map 2 ► Minerva, North Hudson, Schroon Lake

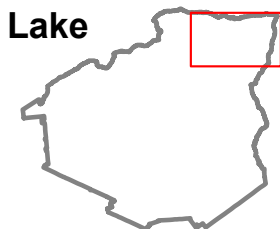


- | | | | |
|---------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------------|
| ADA Accessible | Fire Tower | Local Network | Community |
| Lodging | Historic Site | Regional Network | Intensive Use |
| Boat Launch | Lean-to | DEC Trail | Pending Classification |
| Natural Feature | Paddling Access | Road | Primitive |
| State Campground | Parking | | State Administrative |
| Primitive Campsite | Scenic Area | | Wild Forest |
| Downhill Ski Center | Proposed Feature | | Wilderness |
| | | | Easement |

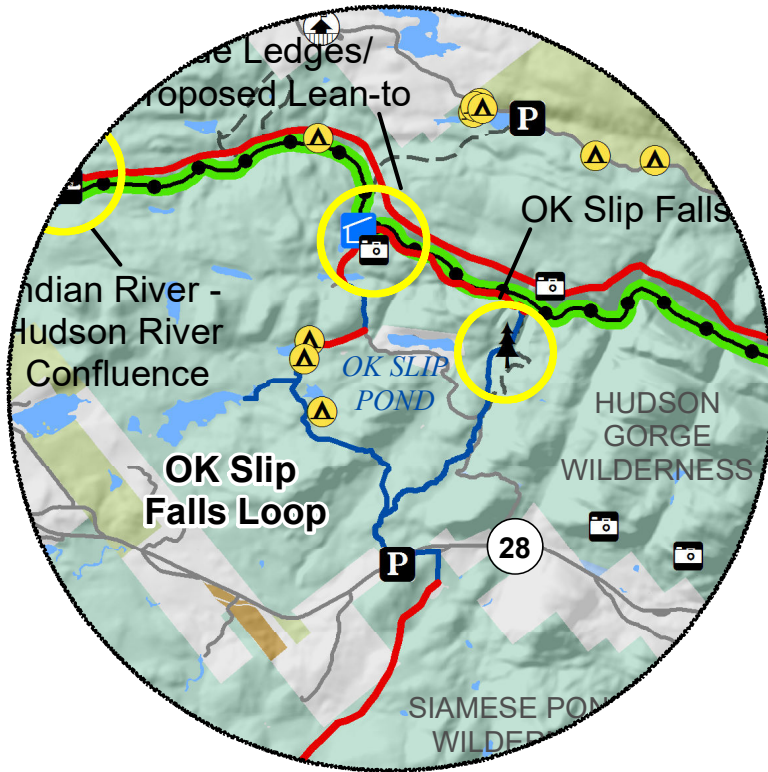
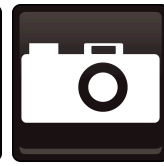
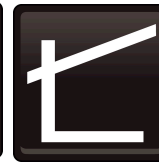
Minerva, North Hudson, Schroon Lake



Map produced by the Great South Woods Project Team
at the State University of New York College of Environmental
Science and Forestry



Map 2 ► Minerva-North Hudson OK Slip Falls Loop



Access: Connects two dead-end trails into a circuit with a proposed lean-to near Blue Ledges on south rim of Hudson Gorge.

Connectivity: No direct connections with communities.

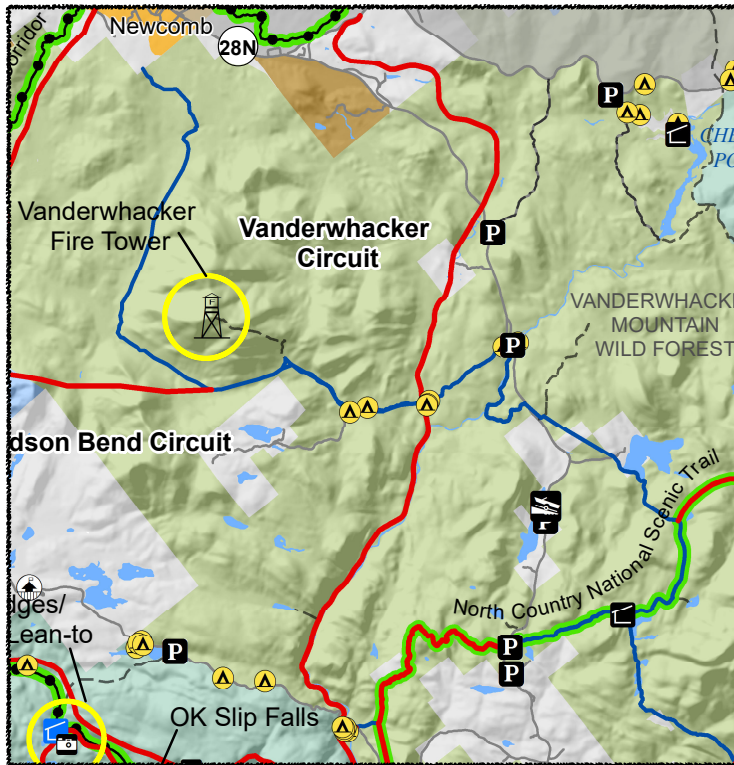
Stewardship: Design, construction and management of new trails and other infrastructure, such as proposed lean-to near Blue Ledges, must safeguard *Wild and Scenic* character of Hudson River. Protection of rare, unique and exemplary natural communities along Hudson River corridor, including several calcareous ecosystems (which support many rare species), including cliffs at Blue Ledges and talus slope woodlands. If lean-to at Blue Ledges is developed, a full-time River Steward should be 'installed' to ensure proper use and protection of area.

Destination: Pack in the best sights the Hudson Gorge has to offer for a day-long or overnight hike / snowshoe to OK Slip Falls, Blue Ledges, Whortleberry Pond, Ross Pond, Carter Pond, and the Hudson River.

Partnerships: River Steward and related education opportunities could involve local communities, leveraging cooperation across the Five Towns. Could engage local guide services for interpretation of natural features along the way, and even photography or nature-writing sessions, based on the abundance of unique natural features accessible along this loop.

The **OK Slip Falls Loop** enhances access to one of the best-loved backcountry destinations in the Adirondacks, by closing a circuit from existing trails, and potentially building a lean-to at the unique Blue Ledges. As one of the most ecologically unique and sensitive locations in the Great South Woods, our strategy **recommends a careful and adaptively-managed balance between access and stewardship**, especially at Blue Ledges and along the south rim of the Hudson Gorge. Location and construction of proposed lean-to will require consideration of Wild and Scenic River designation guidelines and/or modification of SLMP Wilderness regulations.

Map 2 ► Minerva-North Hudson Vanderwhacker Circuit



The **Vanderwhacker Circuit** is a 35.4-mile 'double loop' trail system - shaped like a slanted figure 8 - that creates alternative hiking approaches to the trail for the summit and fire tower at Vanderwhacker Mtn, provides access to multiple ponds and campsites, and connects Newcomb with the North Country National Scenic Trail (including proposed routes) and the Hudson Bend Circuit (proposed), which follows the Hudson corridor. Mountain biking courses could be developed at points along the circuit, and the central segment of new trail could be developed on old rail bed for multi-purpose uses. Not including the missing sections of NCNST, 12.7 miles of this circuit needs construction, but this proposed new trail will also support the creation of the Hudson Bend Circuit, bringing hikers to the north rim of Hudson Gorge.

Access: New loop in-and-out of Newcomb through Vanderwhacker Wild Forest; or a thru-hike to Minerva via to-be-constructed segments of NCNST. Circuit's southern loop passes by Hewitt Pond, Stony Pond and 29th Pond.

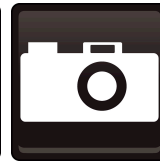
Connectivity: Newcomb to Minerva using planned segment of NCNST; shares east stretch of Hudson Bend Circuit along Boreas River.

Stewardship: Camping opportunities to be developed along Boreas. Keep in mind the designated and protected status of this stretch of river. Junction signs at middle of circuit, and where circuit joins with NCNST from existing trail and at the Boreas River area. Requires bridge or careful crossing of Boreas River. Signage needed at trail junctions.

Destination: Opportunities to overnight in the middle of the circuit and at the NCNST junction. Multiple parking options along the circuit. Great hiking all along the circuit, and potential for mountain biking (requires further design and development).

Partnerships: Almost 13 miles need to be constructed, same stretch as the Hudson River Circuit along the Boreas River. East leg could be constructed for biking on old railroad bed, supporting bike rentals/pick-up/drop-off out of North Creek, Newcomb, or Minerva.

Map 2 ► Minerva-North Hudson Severance Hill Circuit



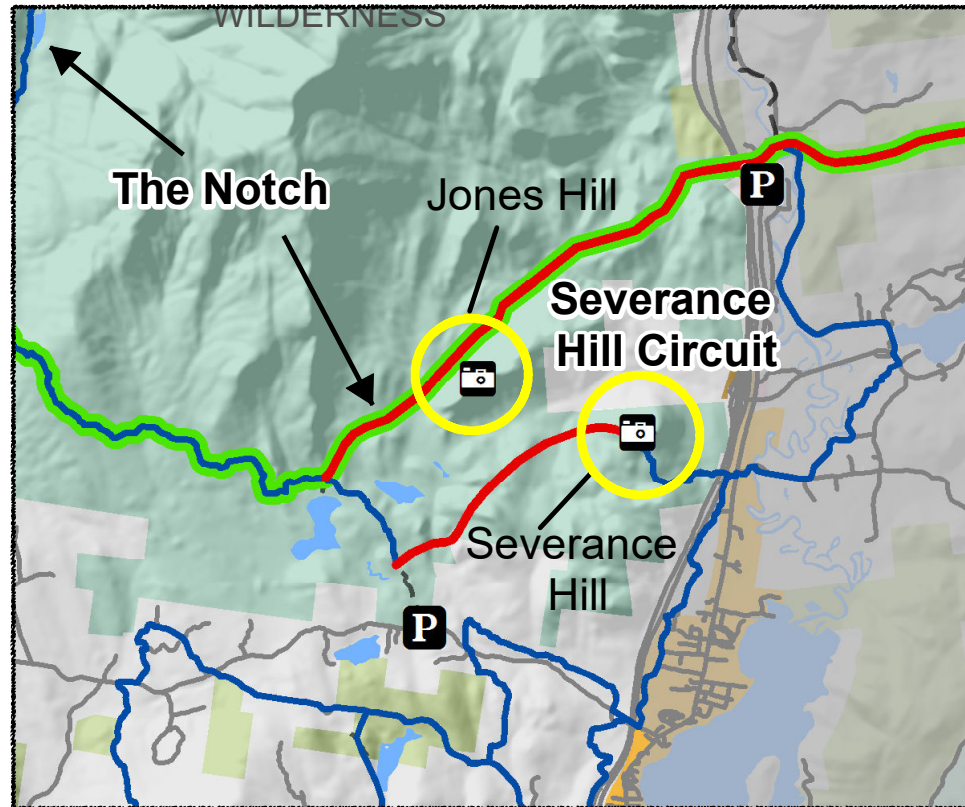
Access: Loop hike over Severance Hill, between North and Big Ponds, and back past the shoulder of Jones Hill. Circuit runs through Hammond Notch Wilderness, an area with few trails particularly on its east half, using the proposed route for the North Country National Scenic Trail. Potential to develop bushwhack up Jones Hill. Accessible from Dirgy lot.

Connectivity: Circuit based in Schroon Lake; connects via The Notch (proposed) to Blue Ridge Rd (near Elk Lake turnoff and Buffalo farm) between North Hudson and Newcomb.

Stewardship: Monitor impacts if trail(s) are developed to ascend Jones Hill; carefully design and construct new trails through Wilderness; need junction signs where circuit intersects with NCNST and The Notch.

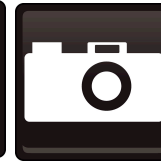
Destination: A wilderness day hike in and out of Schroon Lake that packs in scenic views and backcountry ponds.

Partnerships: Requires significant design and construction which may be done in conjunction with local partners in Schroon Lake and Paradox.

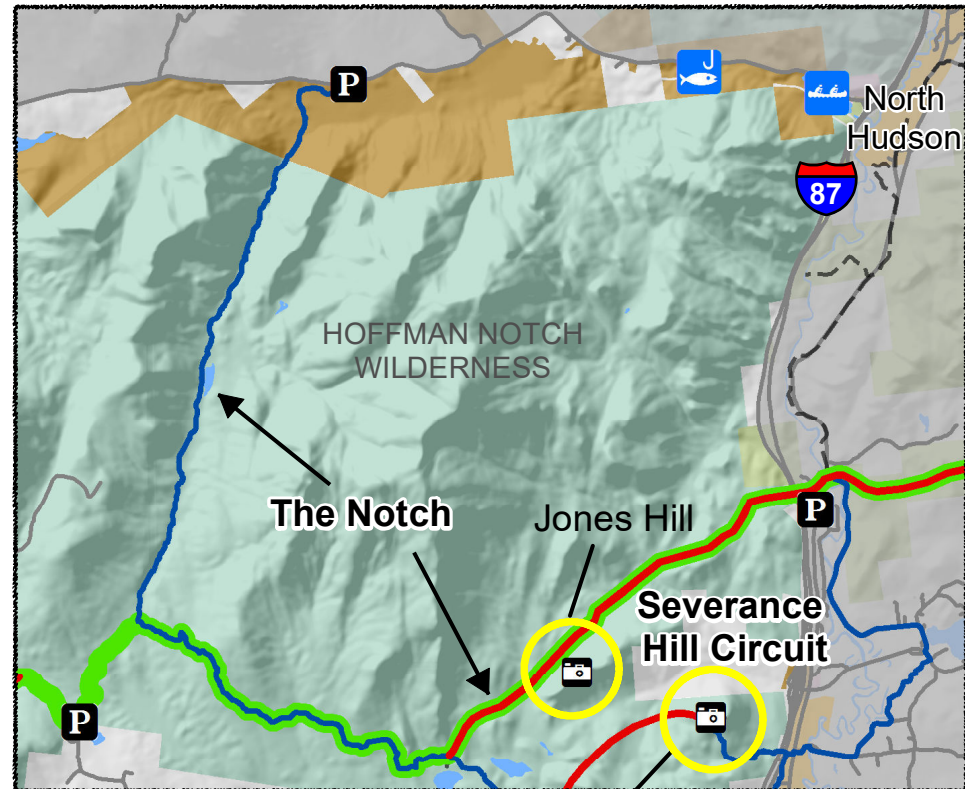


Severance Hill Circuit is a 13.8 mile loop in and out of the north end of Schroon Lake through Hoffman Notch Wilderness. Starting at the Dirgy Lot parking and traveling outside of GSW, this loop crosses the Schroon River in the northeast. Using a snowmobile trail to turn south, this loop meets up with the western shore of Paradox Lake before arriving at the Severance Hill trailhead. The trail then heads into Wilderness and ascends to a scenic viewpoint on Severance Hill, then requires new trail to join Big Pond trail, and turns east on the NCNST back to Dirgy Lot parking. Side attractions along the Severance Hill Circuit include fishing in Schroon River, Paradox Lake, North and Big Ponds, and a bushwack up Jones Hill. Multi-modal option to paddle down the Schroon River and avoid most of the snowmobile trail, then hike the remainder of the loop.

Map 2 ► Minerva-North Hudson The Notch



The Notch is a 14.5-mile backcountry traverse through the actual 'Notch' in the Hoffman Notch Wilderness area, using mostly existing trails and a planned 6.6-mile section of the NCNST that has not been constructed, but could provide access to scenic views on Jones Hill. The Notch traverse can be accessed via Hoffman Notch Brook parking or the Dirgy Lot parking, a short drive from North Hudson or Newcomb. The Notch connects to the Severance Hill Circuit, allowing the traverse to detour into Schroon Lake and Paradox Lake. This is a rather long day hike with options for overnight camping that follows 'leave-no-trace' regulations in Wilderness.



Access: Extends existing trail through Hoffman Notch Wilderness that passes Big Marsh Pond, past Jones Hill, and out near Schroon Lake, via proposed route for North Country National Scenic Trail. Additional spur trails could be built to Hoffman Mtn and Wyman Pond.

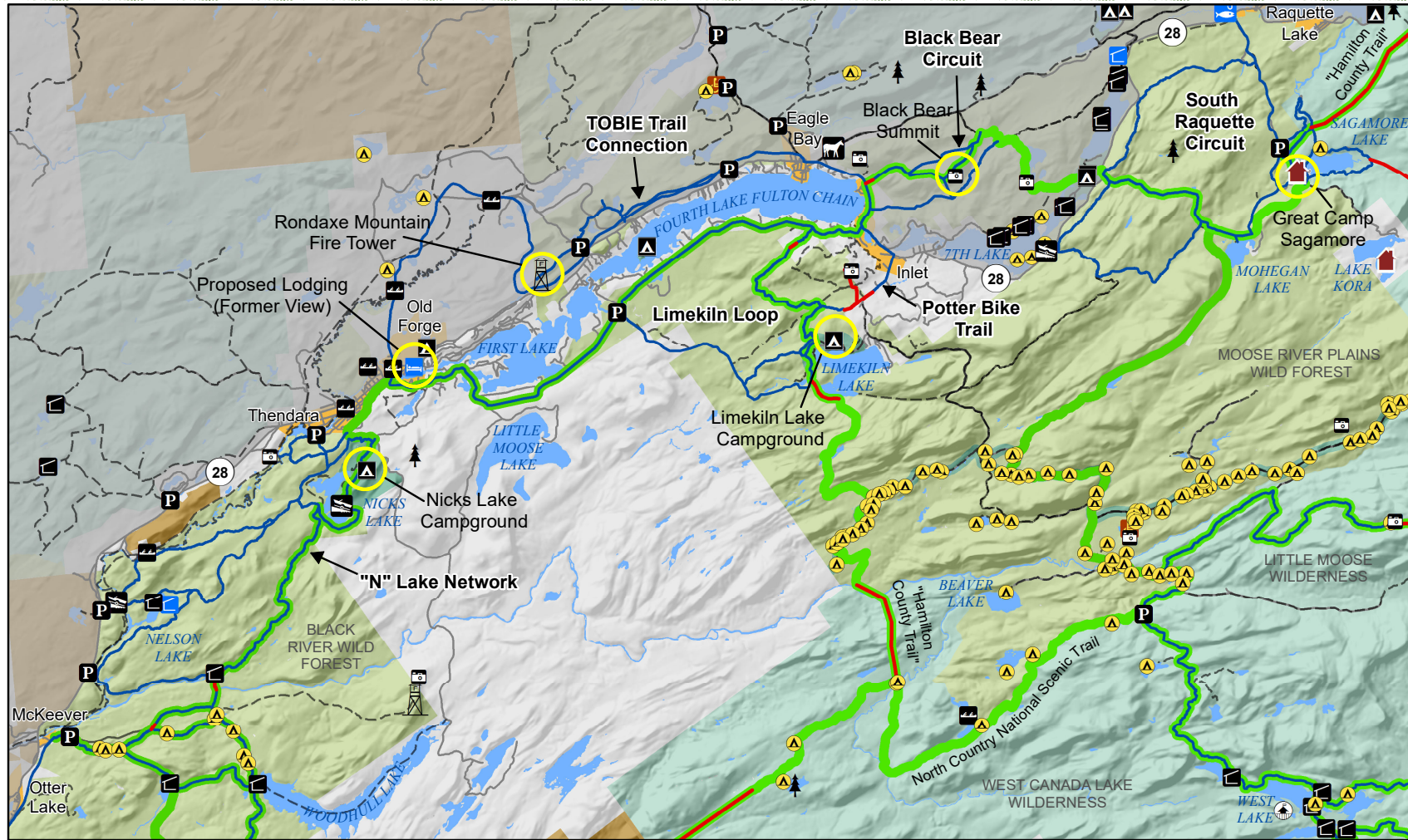
Connectivity: Circuit connects to Blue Ridge Rd (near Elk Lake turnoff and Buffalo farm) between North Hudson and Newcomb; with secondary connections to Schroon Lake and Paradox (via proposed Severance Hill Circuit).

Stewardship: Carefully locate new trails through Wilderness and potentially an overnight location; construct junction signs where feature intersects with NCNST and Severance Hill Circuit.

Destination: Bisect Hoffman Notch Wilderness, join NCNST, and exit near Schroon Lake. Parking is available at either terminus.

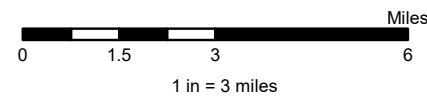
Partnerships: Just over 4 miles to construct, but those miles are part of the NCNST anyways; existing start from 28N passes through Boreas Ponds easement. Might benefit from a shuttle service, and a developed overnight location along the trail (none currently exist).

Map 3 ► Fulton Chain & Raquette Lake

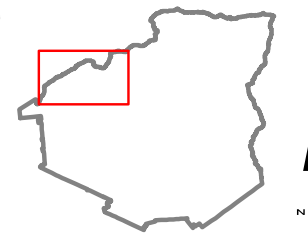


	ADA Accessible		Great Camp		Proposed Feature		Community
	Boat Launch		Historic Site		Local Network		Intensive Use
	Natural Feature		Horse Facility		Regional Network		State Administrative
	State Campground		Lean-to		Construction Required		Wild Forest
	Primitive Campsite		Paddling Access		DEC Trail		Wilderness
	Fire Tower		Parking		Road		Easement
			Campground				
			Scenic Area				

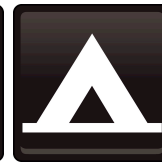
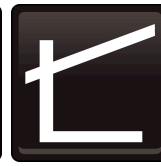
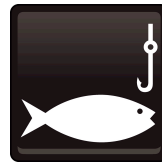
Fulton Chain, Raquette Lake



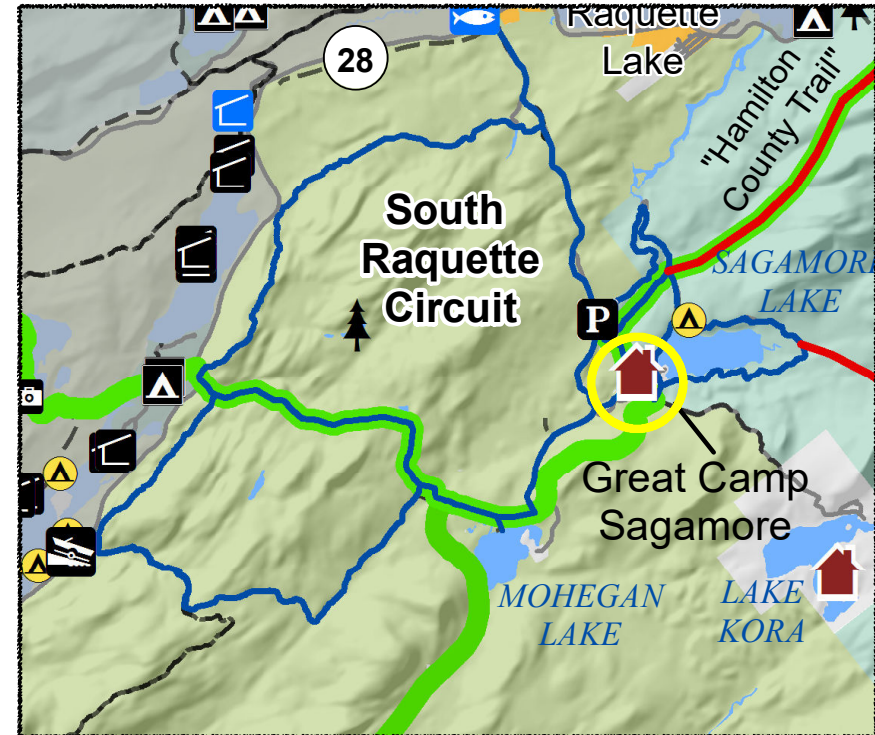
Map produced by the Great South Woods Project Team
at the State University of New York College of Environmental
Science and Forestry



Map 3 ► Fulton Chain South Raquette Circuit



The **South Raquette Circuit** highlights existing access to a historically and culturally rich region of the Great South Woods. The circuit is a 'triangle of opportunity,' including Raquette Lake, Great Camp Sagamore, and the Eighth Lake Public Campground. Consisting of 28.4 miles of multiple loop trail options, this circuit supports multiple uses, including biking on the unpaved road from the hamlet of Raquette Lake to Great Camp Sagamore, and Mohegan Lake, and continuing to the Eighth Lake Campground via the Old Uncas Road. Bikers may complete a loop by continuing north along Rt. 28 returning to Raquette Lake. This offers campers at the Eighth Lake Campground the opportunity to experience one of the Adirondack's legendary Great Camps with a relatively easy biking daytrip similar to the Lake Harris Campground - Great Camp Santanoni bike trip. Hikers can use the Great Camp Sagamore trail system which includes a scenic loop trail around Sagamore Lake.



Access: Existing circuit is now connected with regional network, including to-be-built sections of Hamilton Co Trail (proposed). At least one campsite on Eighth Lake is ADA accessible. Southwestern loop might be developed further for mountain biking or groomed ski trails.

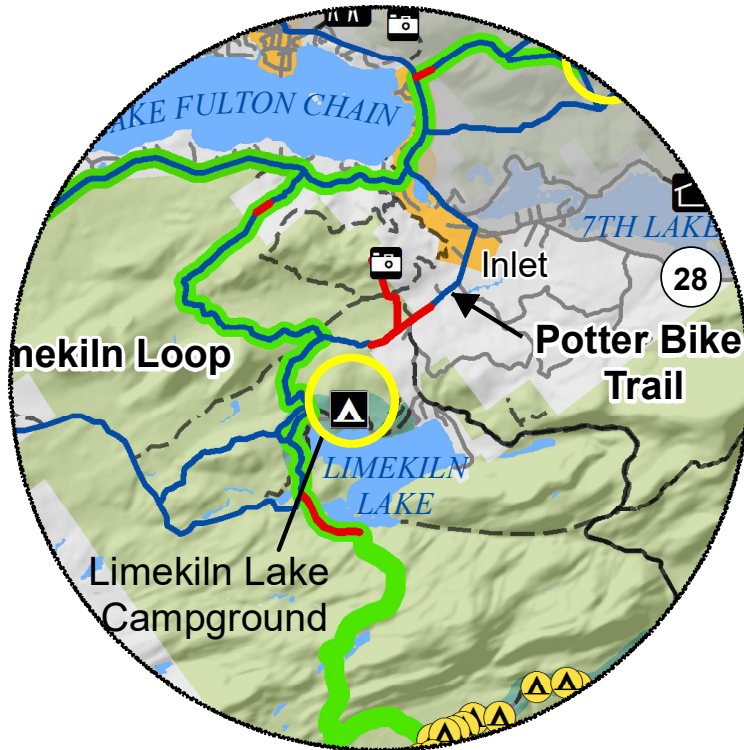
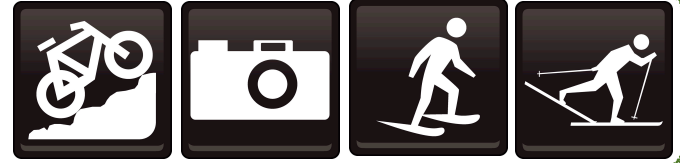
Connectivity: Multiple loops linking Eighth Lake camping opportunities to Great Camp Sagamore and the village of Raquette Lake. Circuit is bisected by Hamilton County Trail (proposed) which connects Long Lake with Fulton Chain area. This circuit also helps to link Hamilton Co Trail with village of Raquette Lake and DEC-proposed fishing area near the hamlet.

Stewardship: Special management considerations across the network, part on Wild Forest and part Wilderness, and passes through balsam flats exemplary natural community near Great Camp Sagamore. Junction signs needed with Hamilton County Trail (proposed).

Destination: From camp on Eighth Lake, trek through Wild Forest to Mohegan Lake, visit Great Camp Sagamore on Sagamore Lake, and return along a new path through wild forests. Overnights at 8th Lake (campsites, campground), also at Sagamore Lake (one is ADA).

Partnerships: Raquette Lake and Great Camp Sagamore can promote this existing circuit, which has flexibility of potential uses. Potential opportunity to travel loop on NYS 28 and a portion of this network between 8th Lake and Raquette Lake, half-marathon distance.

Map 3 ► Fulton Chain Potter Bike Trail



Access: New trail segments close circuit and provide access to scenic view on hilltop, via spur trail up to 4th Lake Lookout.

Connectivity: Uses part of South Shore Rd, snowmobile trails (also Hamilton County Trail), and the start of the Black Fly Challenge trail out of Inlet. Junction with Limekiln Loop Trail (proposed).

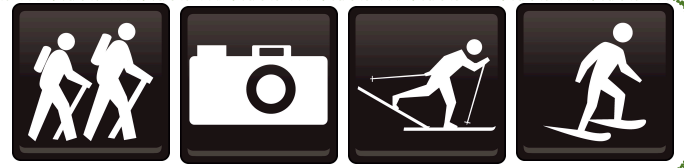
Stewardship: Field-validate suitability of snowmobile trails for biking, assess potential impacts on wetland areas. Bike tracks may need to be established to connect main loop with portion of Hamilton Co Trail (proposed) that runs south to Limekiln Lake Campground. Install bike-washing stations for invasives and junction signage at trail crossings. Foot traffic on shared portions of route may require alternative tracks for hikers.

Destination: Bike from camp on Limekiln Lake along wooded trails to Fulton Chain scenic views and good eats in Inlet, then follow the circuit back to camp. Suitable for beginner/intermediate bikers (and families). Needs to be designed to ensure high-quality mountain biking experience.

Partnerships: Just over a mile of construction to close the circuit, some of which is located on private land, requiring negotiation with landowners; potential to organize mountain bike trail stewardship organization, and coordinate with bike rental businesses in Inlet (likely already using this area) and Old Forge. Design specialized trails for advanced bikers.

The **Potter Bike Trail** is a 7.73 mile mountain bike loop that originates in the hamlet of Inlet and encircles Fern Park, a popular community recreation area. The Trail takes advantage of existing roads and trails, only requiring 1.78 miles of newly constructed trail. Spur trail affords a view at 4th Lake Overlook. Potter Bike Trail links to the TOBIE, which is also bike-able around the Fulton Chain of Lakes. Bikes can be rented from the local outfitter in Inlet.

Map 3 ► Fulton Chain Black Bear Circuit



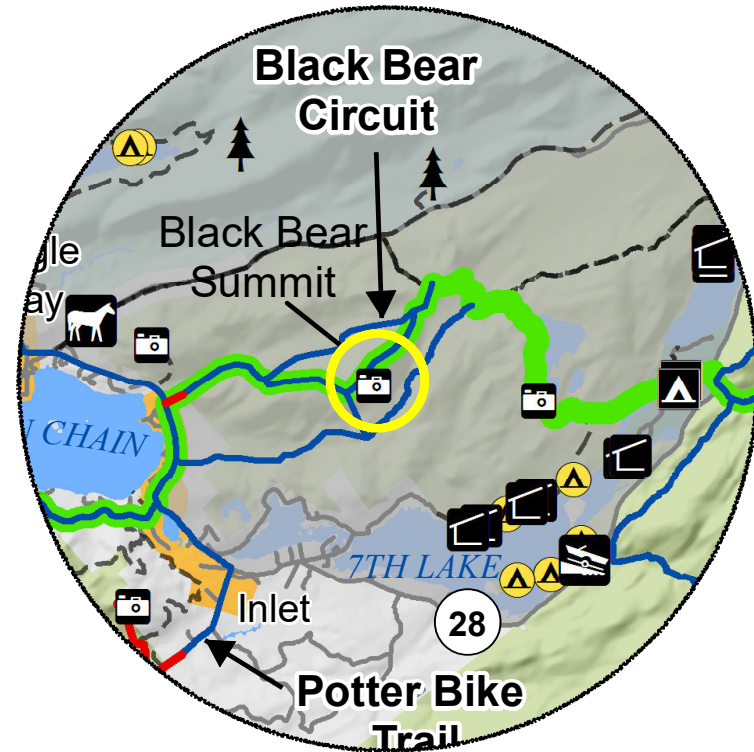
Access: Small trail network offers hikers / skiers multiple alternative routes up a summit that is a traditional family favorite in the Fulton Chain area.

Connectivity: Hamilton County Trail (proposed) runs up and over Black Bear's summit. To the east, HamCo provides a route from the Black Bear Circuit into 7th Lake Campground (overnight option) and onto the South Raquette Circuit. To the west, HamCo grounds this circuit in Inlet, with the TOBIE Connection, Potter Bike Trail, and Limekiln Lake Loops.

Stewardship: Needs assessment to identify suitable segments for skiing (portions already marked/designated). Clear signage would be important to understand the circuit and hiking options.

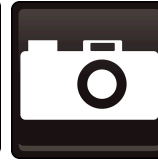
Destination: 'Choose your own adventure to the top' with multiple routes up and down Black Bear Summit, leaving directly from Inlet village. For more of a challenge, tack on the short hike up Rocky Point Mtn.

Partnerships: Education opportunity on summit; could encourage hikers to start from the Rocky Pt/Black Bear parking lot, head up the mountain, and back landing in the town center. Then they must walk Inlet's main street back to their vehicle, and have the opportunity to enjoy tourism amenities along the way (including public restrooms, department store, grocery, bakery, coffee, etc.).



Jump on the **Black Bear Circuit** (completely constructed) from the main streets of Inlet. Choose between 2 access points in town (approach of 1.9 or 2.3 mi), or start the trail from the Uncas Rd (approach is 1.4 mi), or even Eighth Lake Campgrounds (approach is 3.6 mi)-- all trails lead to the summit with views of Seventh Lake. On a clear day and a high rock, you might catch a glimpse of the High Peaks. Some trail segments are designated for skiing.

Map 3 ► Fulton Chain TOBIE Trail Connection



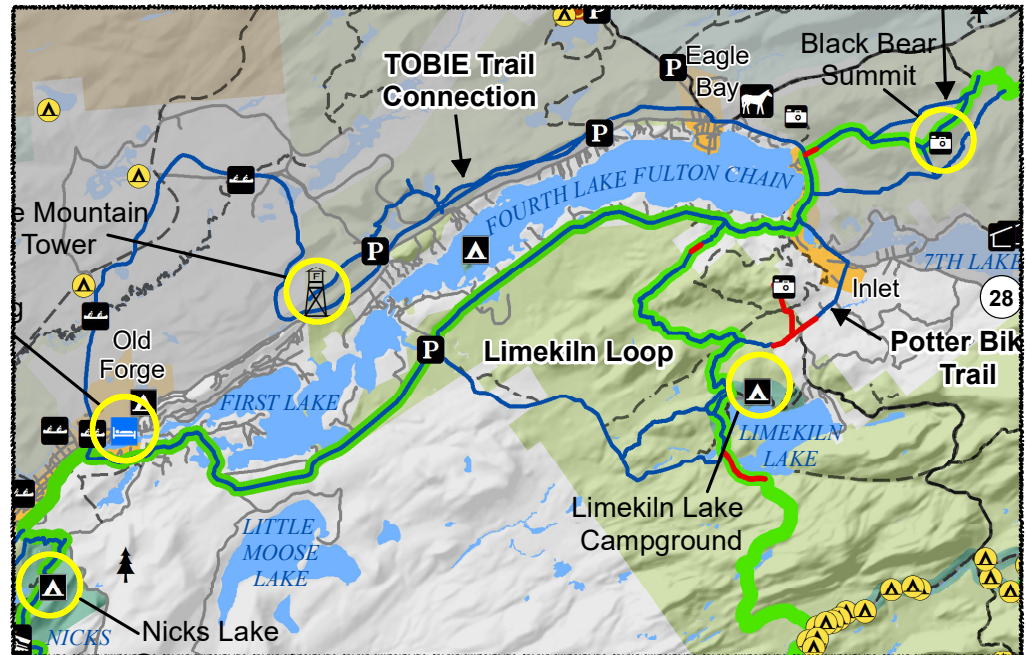
Access: Sections of TOBIE trail are well-known and widely used by locals and visitors - we highlight its potential as a circuit that connects front-country features and hamlets in the Fulton Chain area: e.g., the Scenic Mountain Trail, access to Mountain and Fly Ponds, Moose River, Siss and Bubb Lakes, Rondaxe/Bald Mtn, South Shore scenic views of Fulton Chain, Quiver and Twin Ponds.

Connectivity: Existing connection of Thendara, Old Forge, Big Moose, Inlet, and Eagle Bay. Overlaps with a section of the Hamilton County Trail (proposed) through Inlet, where it also links with the Potter Bike Trail, Limekiln Loop, and Black Bear Circuit.

Stewardship: Scenic Mountain Trail is often challenging to find and follow, better signage and interpretation could be helpful. Signage at Rondaxe could encourage users to head east instead up the Scenic Mountain Trail to reduce congestion on the popular Fire Tower trail. Requires management across 3 units and between 2 complexes.

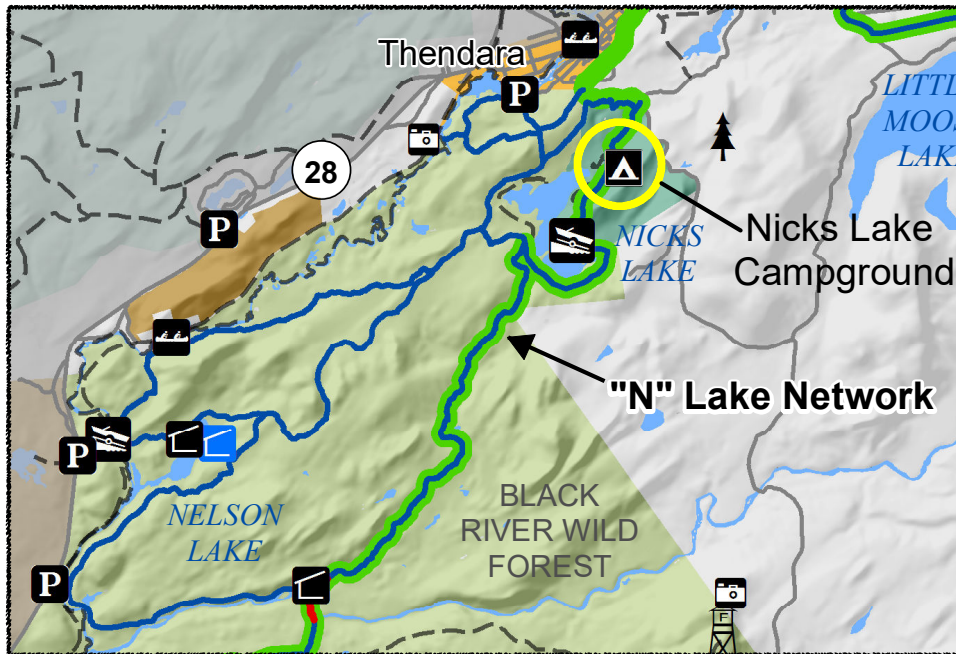
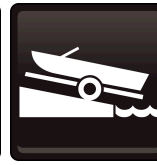
Destination: This trail is heavily used by locals for short walks, bike rides, runs, and snowmobiling. Can be divided into sections: road bike 28 and South Shore, hike from Bubb & Siss Parking up the Scenic Mountain Trail and to the Rondaxe Mtn. Parking, then back to your start along the TOBIE.

Partnerships: Opportunities to sponsor/maintain sections for specific uses; represents unity among 5 local communities that can be leveraged for events. Could offer scenic photography opportunities off South Shore at Quiver or Twin Pond -- easy access. Opportunity for "hike and beat your float" challenge, put-in to put-in on a stretch of the Moose River.



The **TOBIE Trail Connection** is a classic route north of the Lower Fulton Chain, but becomes a circuit by adding the South Shore Rd. It becomes even more appealing by connecting to the Scenic Mountain Trail/Vista Trail, which follows a ridge from Bubb & Siss Lake trailhead to the Rondaxe/Bald parking area -- making it easy to add this iconic fire tower summit onto the day's itinerary as well. All aspects of this 32.2 mile circuit are constructed, and support hiking, biking, dog walking, snowmobiling, scenic photography, and paddling where it crosses the North Branch of the Moose River. Take advantage of town amenities along the way, including bakeries, public restrooms, public beaches, and visitor centers.

Map 3 ► Fulton Chain “N” Lake Network



The **“N” Lake Network** envisions a 27.6 mile hiking experience from Nicks Lake to Nelson Lake and along the South and North Branch of the Moose River. Combine hiking and paddling along multiple loops, with many overnight options in the Black River Wild Forest including Nick’s Lake Campground.

Access: Existing foot and snowmobile trails featured as a network for hikers and bikers to access Nelson Lake, Nicks Lake and the Nicks Lake Campground via multiple pathways through Black River Wild Forest and along the Moose River. Proposed second lean-to on Nelson Lake.

Connectivity: Links Thendara and Old Forge with McKeever and Otter Lake via its connection with the Black River Loop trails (proposed, see Map 6), which require a proposed bridge over the Moose River.

Stewardship: Several segments are snowmobile trail that will need field validation and special management efforts to become suitable for hiking or biking. Additional paths / tracks may be desirable along certain segments. Invasive species education and boat washing stations at Nick’s Lake and Nelson Lake boat launches, at Nick’s Lake Campground, and at hand launch on Moose River. Primitive campsite or lean-to might be needed for overnight stay along Nick’s Lake Outlet Trail (via eastern leg from Nicks Lake down to Moose River). Signage required at internal junctions, directing to the Black River Loop, and through the Fulton Seventy to TOBIE.

Destination: 3-5 days exploring lakes and remote reaches of the Moose River in Black River Wild Forest.

Partnerships: Potential to combine hiking and paddling stretches, with shuttles/outfitters provided by community.

Map 3 ► Fulton Chain Limekiln Loop Trail



The **Limekiln Loop Trail** runs along the South Shore Rd before heading southeast through the Fulton Chain Wild Forest to access Limekiln Lake and Public Campground, before heading north and east into Inlet, totaling 17 miles. A key trail connection of 0.6 miles needs to be constructed as the loop heads north into Inlet (same section as Potter Bike Trail). This loop offers a smaller day-loop option from the Campground around ponds to the west of Limekiln Lake. Biking and hiking multi-modal opportunity takes advantage of town roads and the Potter Bike Trail, and the potential to provide and shuttle bikes from the Campground.



Access: Fern Park, Inlet, Scenic South Shore Rd, Limekiln Lake and Campground. The 'new' element is hiking access out of Inlet (alternatively one can drive to the campground)

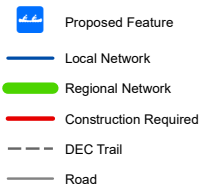
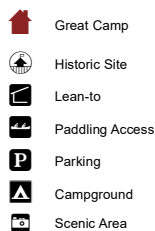
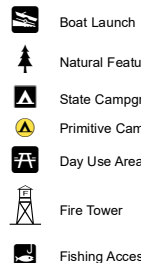
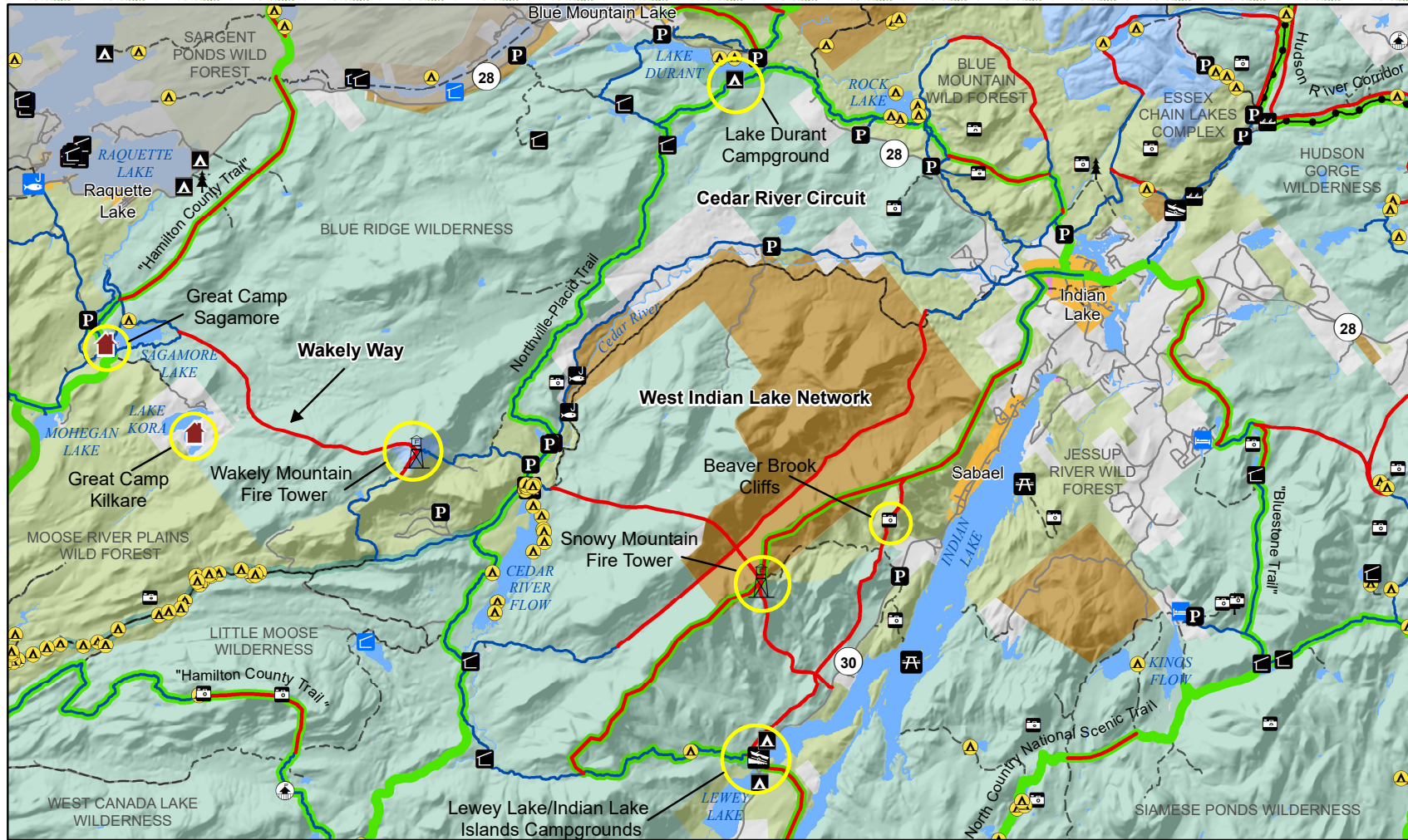
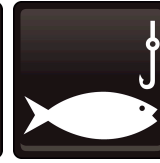
Connectivity: Uses part of HamCo, Potter Bike Trail, TOBIE trail system.

Stewardship: Construction of new trail, signage off of TOBIE and HamCo, marking internal loop options.

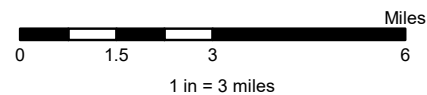
Destination: Can combine activities: road biking on South Shore, Mtn. Biking Potter Bike Trail, hike the rest through the Campground (or rest for the night) and back to South Shore.

Partnerships: Small section (0.64) to construct connecting the loop between the campground and Inlet (might involve private land). Campground could take more ownership of the loop, that's where hikers would likely stay or pass through. Shuttles or bike rentals could be provided to finish the TOBIE/South Shore section. Improved parking may be required out of Inlet.

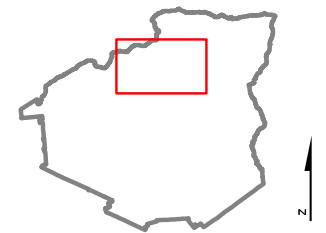
Map 4 ► Indian Lake and Cedar River Flow



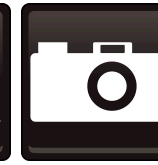
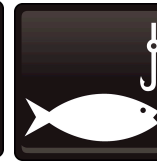
Indian Lake, Sabael



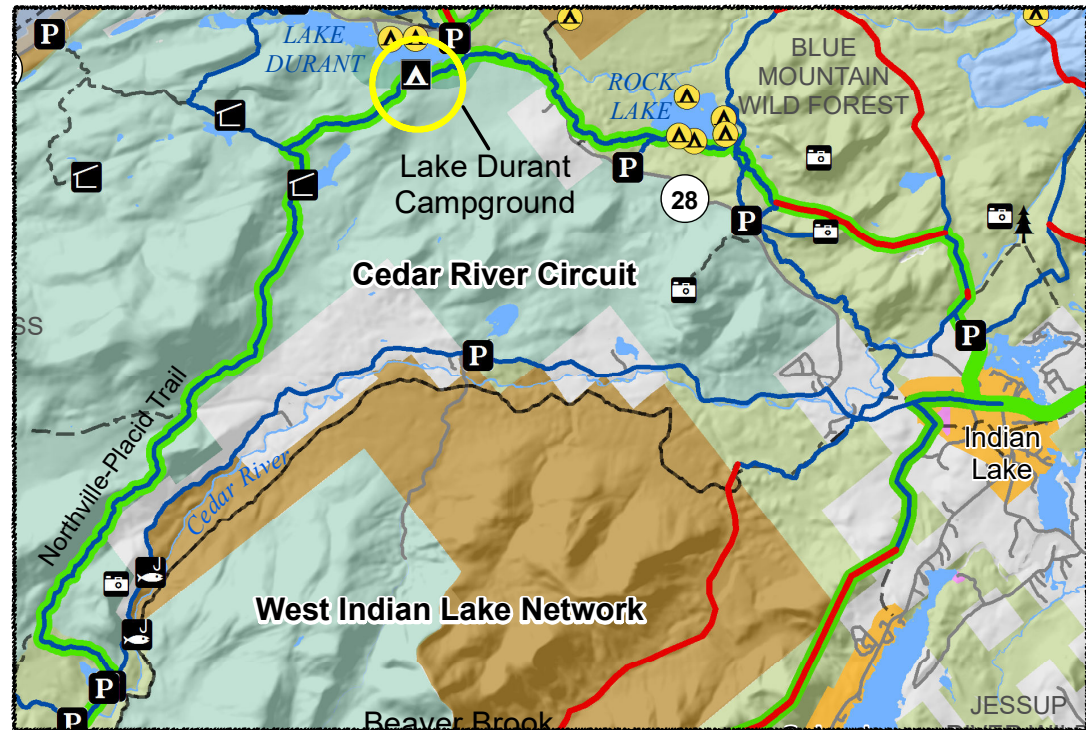
Map produced by the Great South Woods Project Team
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Science and Forestry



Map 4 ► Indian Lake Cedar River Circuit



The **Cedar River Circuit** is a prime example of a multi-modal trail, leveraging 35 miles of existing trail from Lake Durant Campground to Indian Lake, along the Cedar River Road to Wakley Dam and back through Blue Ridge Wilderness along the Northville-Placid Trail. The unique appeal of this circuit is the opportunity to combine hiking and biking, with rental and shuttle support from Lake Durant Campground or Indian Lake. Side day trip options include Sawyer Mountain and Wakely Mountain (prominent fire tower mountain).



Access: Biking and hiking access in and out of Wakely Pond parking areas. Multiple parking/access opportunities along the circuit. Spur option bushwhack off circuit to Sugarloaf Mtn. scenic vista.

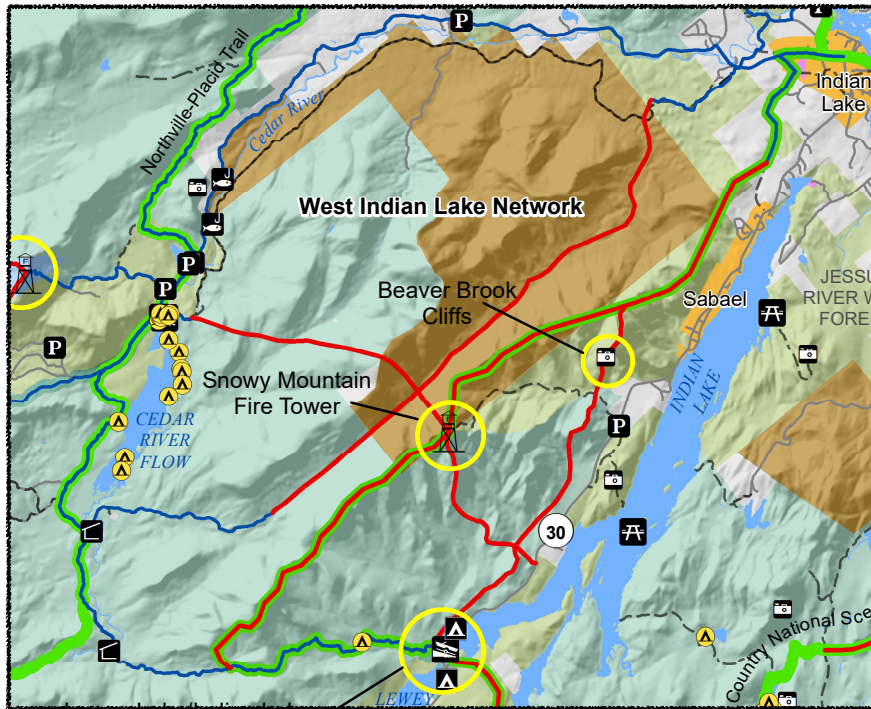
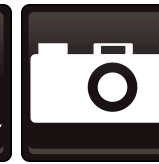
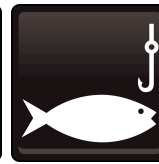
Connectivity: Blue Mtn Lake via Lake Durant Campground to Indian Lake, potential to end up in Inlet via Black Fly Challenge route. Uses stretch of NPT and Bluestone Trail (proposed).

Stewardship: Requires monitoring of bike impacts and potential 2-way bike/road traffic along Cedar River Rd. Bike security at drop points. Improve snowmobile trail from Lake Durant to Indian Lake to accommodate biking.

Destination: Multi-modal circuit potential starting from Lake Durant Campground: bike to Rock Lake and into Indian Lake, continue to Wakely Pond along Cedar River on Cedar River Rd, hike back through Blue Ridge Wilderness to Lake Durant Campground. Could be adventurous one-day opportunity, or multi-day staying overnight at Cedar River Flow campsites or pitch your own tent.

Partnerships: Portion of Black Fly Challenge (along Cedar River Rd). Great opportunity to store/rent bikes out of Lake Durant Campground or town of Indian Lake, offering pick up at Wakely Pond or Cedar River Flow and transport back to origin.

Map 4 ► Indian Lake West Indian Lake Network



The **West Indian Lake Network** totals 65 miles around and through the West Canada Lake Wilderness and DEC easement (Indian Lake Block, Township 33). This network is one of the more conceptual of the GSW Recommended features, requiring 9 miles constructed through the valley west of the Little Great Range, plus 7.3 miles constructed perpendicular to the valley stretching from Wakely Dam, over the Little Great Range, down to the Snowy Mountain parking area. 9.6 miles of new trail are required to avoid walking a stretch of Route 30 to complete the outer loop.

Access: Multiple loop options out of Indian Lake/Sabael and through West Canada Lake Wilderness and Jessup River Wild Forest, including Township 33 easement. Existing outer backcountry loop follows the Cedar River, passing Wakely Pond and Cedar River Flow, with a potential bushwhack up Sugarloaf Mtn. Multiple camping options along Cedar River and Flow, and at Lewey and Indian Lake campgrounds.

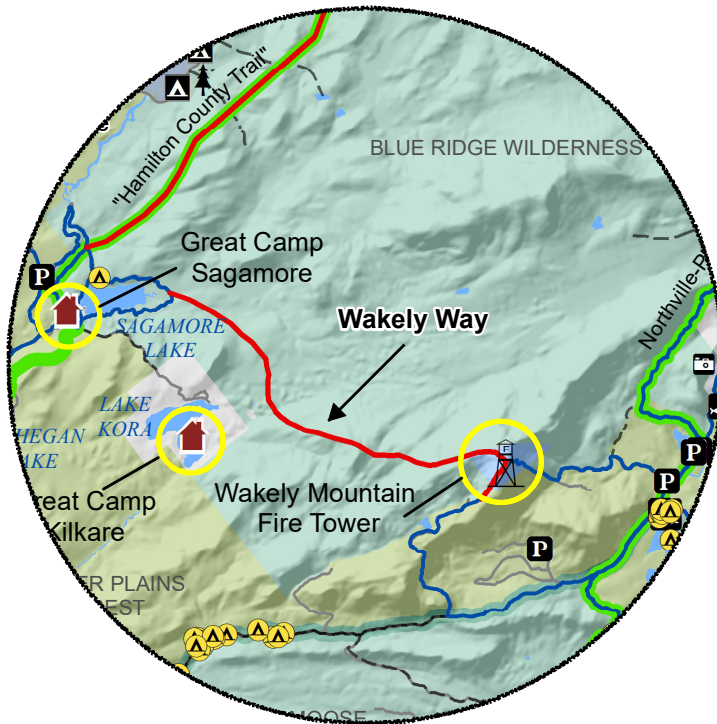
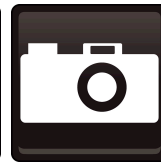
Connectivity: Provides several routes for connecting Indian Lake to NPT and Cedar River Flow area. Location of the proposed trail network creates connections to several local and regional routes.

Stewardship: Careful design and construction of trails on Wilderness and DEC Easement lands, particularly over the Little Great Range, with attention to sensitive plant communities and riparian habitats. Signage required at internal junction points, with the two Regional Networks, NPT, and to direct hikers off the network to Wakely Way (not shown). Overnight stay locations (campsites, lean-tos) may be required in easement.

Destination: Many different opportunities, including long-distance hiking of interior loops, bisecting the network over Snowy Mtn., rock climbing near Snowy Mtn., scenic Beaver Brook Cliffs, boat launches at Cedar River Flow and Indian Lake and an ADA hand launch at Wakely Pond.

Partnerships: Could become a significant attraction for hikers in the area, with Indian Lake as a home base. Approximately 40% needs to be constructed, mostly interior routes and on easement lands.

Map 4 ► Indian Lake Wakely Way



Wakely Way is a backcountry hiking experience through the Blue Ridge Wilderness. 5.6 miles of trail constructed through the Blue Ridge Wilderness links Wakely Mountain and the Sagamore area, providing access from the west to the fire tower and connecting two historic points of interest: Great Camp Sagamore and Wakely Mountain Fire Tower. By adding only 0.6 more miles of trail, and leveraging the existing Moose River Road Spur, hikers can enjoy a loop hike to Wakely Mountain's fire tower, taking in part of the Northville-Placid Trail along the way.

Access: 6 miles to-be-constructed connects the Wakely Mtn. Trail (made into a loop using old or to-be-closed roads) out of the Cedar River Flow area and into Sagamore Lake and Great Camp Sagamore trail system. Provides access to Wakely Mtn from new direction (out of Raquette Lake), and creates a loop hike up the mountain from the existing parking area.

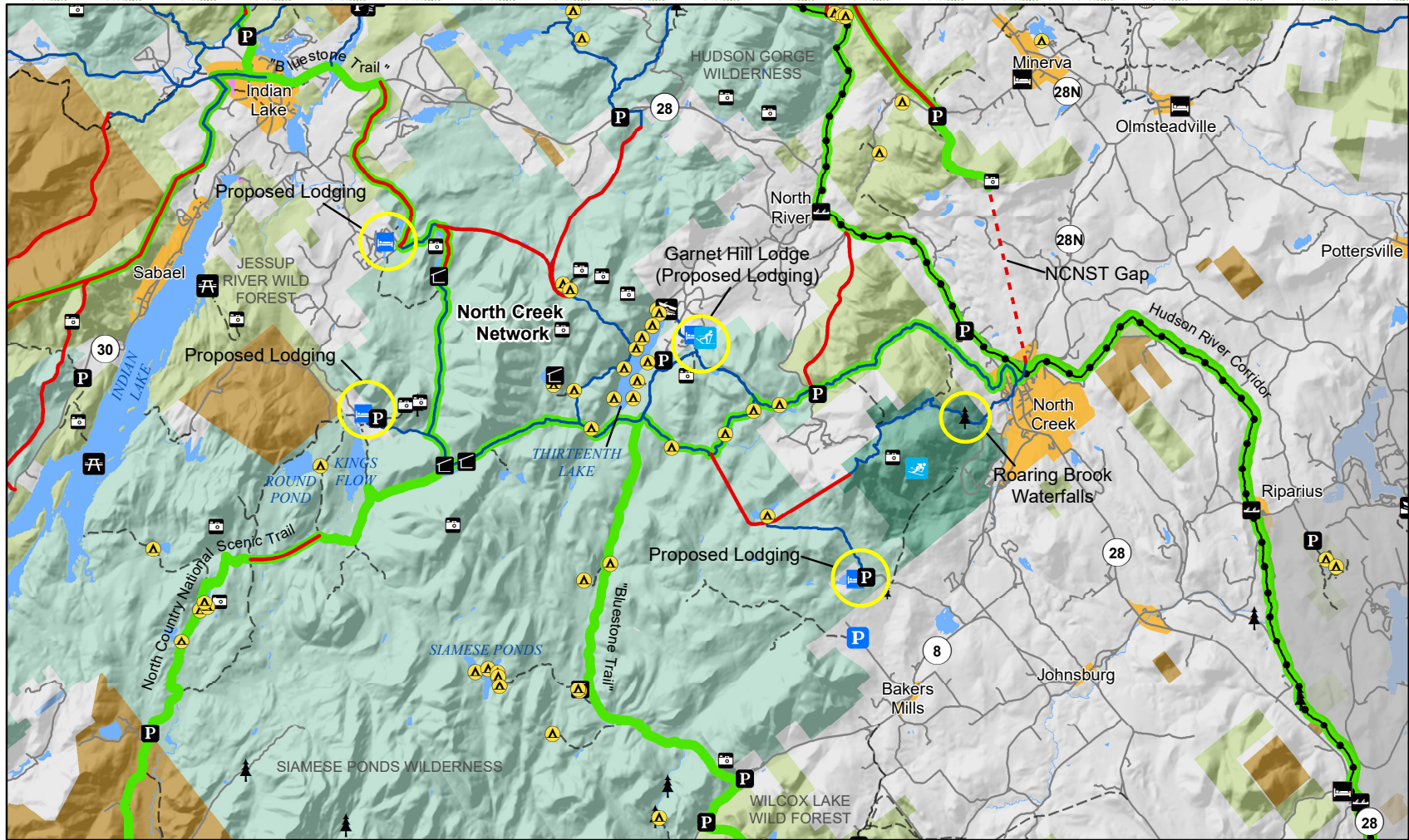
Connectivity: Serves as connector trail linking Sagamore / Raquette Lake area to NPT and Cedar River Flow campsites and fishing areas along Cedar River, which are connected via West Indian Lake Network (proposed) to the village of Indian Lake.

Stewardship: Trail design and construction should minimize disturbance to exemplary natural communities, including forested wetlands (balsam flats) located along proposed approximate route. Signage required at junction with West Indian Lake Network, South Raquette Circuit, Great Camp Sagamore and NPT. Directions required to follow the loop, to or thru-hike to Sagamore Lake and trail connections to the north and west. Wakely Mtn. summit has a fire tower and cabin and is a great location for natural and cultural interpretation.

Destination: Wakely has one of the tallest fire towers in the state, and is currently only accessed via many miles down Cedar River Rd with an out-and-back hike. A new access point and loop-option greatly increase the draw and potential challenge of this hiking destination.

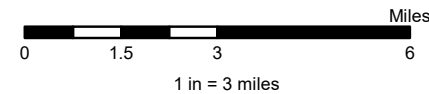
Partnerships: Several workshop participants suggested this type of connection. Partner with Great Camp Sagamore and NPT stewards.

Map 5 ► North Creek, North River, Indian Lake

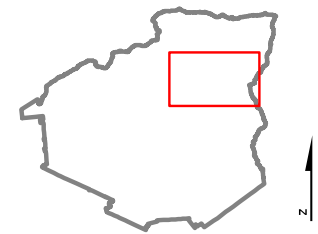


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|--------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| Lodging | Downhill Ski Center | Local Network | Community |
| Boat Launch | Historic Site | Regional Network | Intensive Use |
| Natural Feature | Lean-to | Construction Required | Pending Classification |
| Primitive Campsite | Paddling Access | DEC Trail | Primitive |
| Cross-Country Ski Center | Parking | Road | State Administrative |
| Day Use Area | Scenic Area | | Wild Forest |
| | Proposed Feature | | Wilderness |
| | | | Easement |

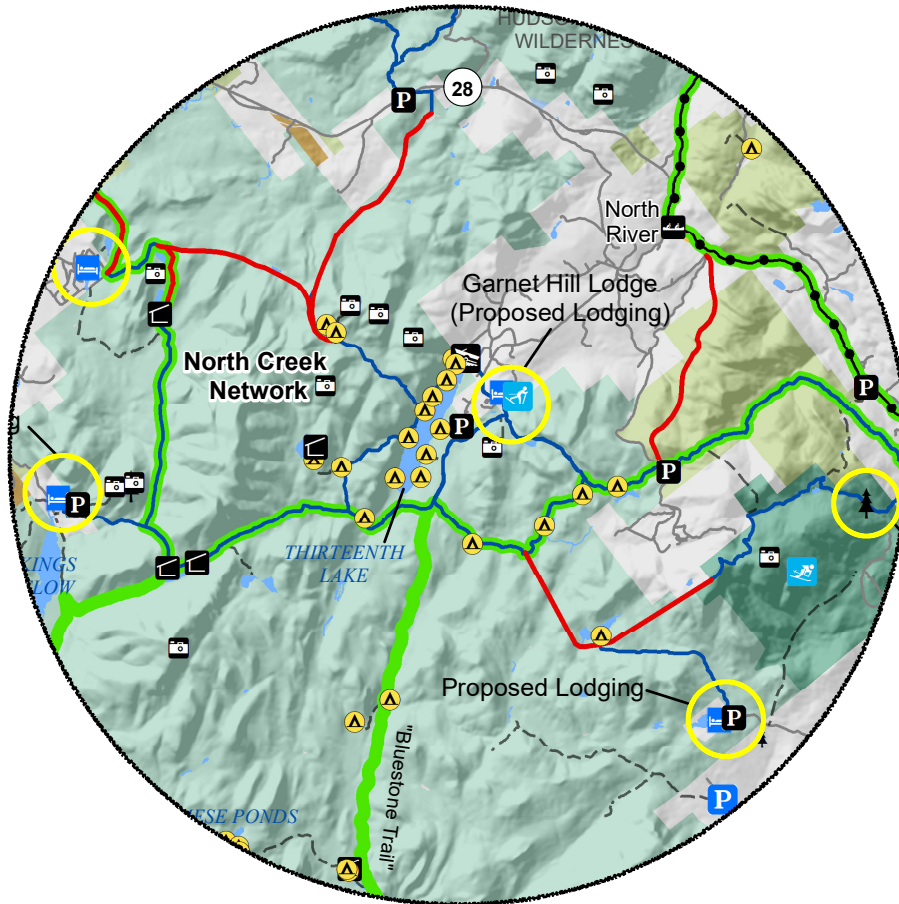
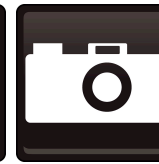
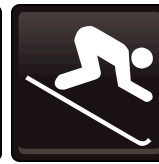
North Creek, North River



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Science and Forestry



Map 5 ► North Creek North Creek Network



Access: Extends Schaefer Trail offering additional western loop; 13th Lake at its core; Out of Indian Lake: Kings Flow/Chimney Mtn, John Pond ridge; Out of North Creek: 13th Lake, Balm of Gilead Mtn, Peaked Pond/Mtn, Gore Mtn, Waterfalls along Roaring Brook; 23 camping opportunities across the network.

Connectivity: 3.24 miles of construction required to connect to North River, provides connecting route through Wilderness from North Creek/River to Indian Lake; Uses sections of NCNST, Bluestone Trail (proposed), meets the Hudson River Corridor; proposed hike/ski connector trail, starting at Peaked Mtn. Pond through Siamese Ponds to OK Slip Falls (red line).

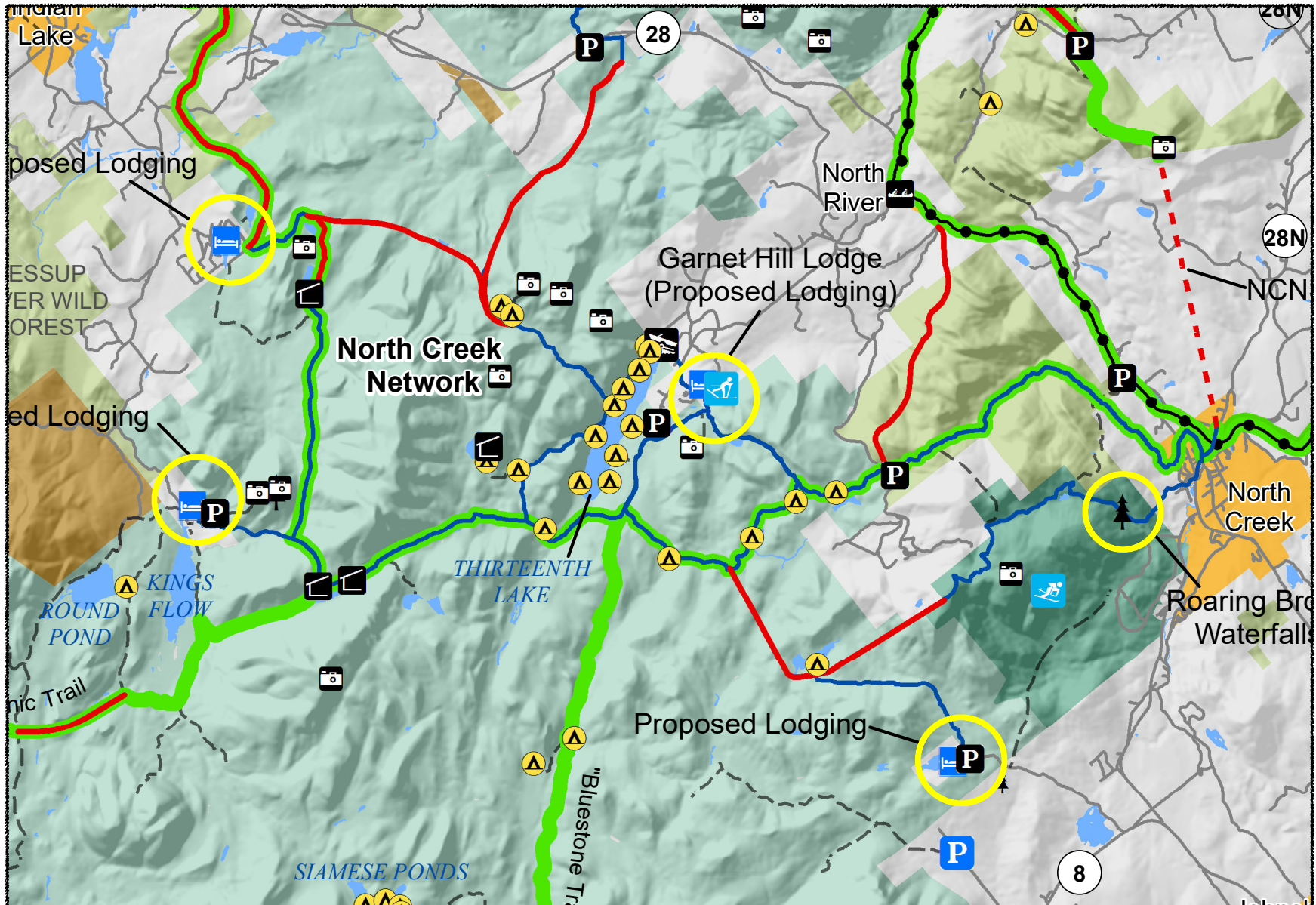
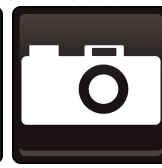
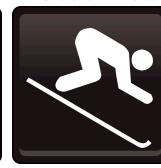
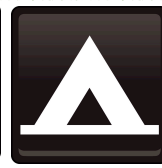
Stewardship: Caretakers at lodges/huts/backcountry lean-tos; monitor impact of common bushwhack trips; monitor usage and potential site deterioration at 13th Lake campsites.

Destination: A backcountry hub for winter and summer fun; multiple loops for hiking, some sections appropriate for XC ski; Potential hut-to-hut connecting North Creek to Indian Lake.

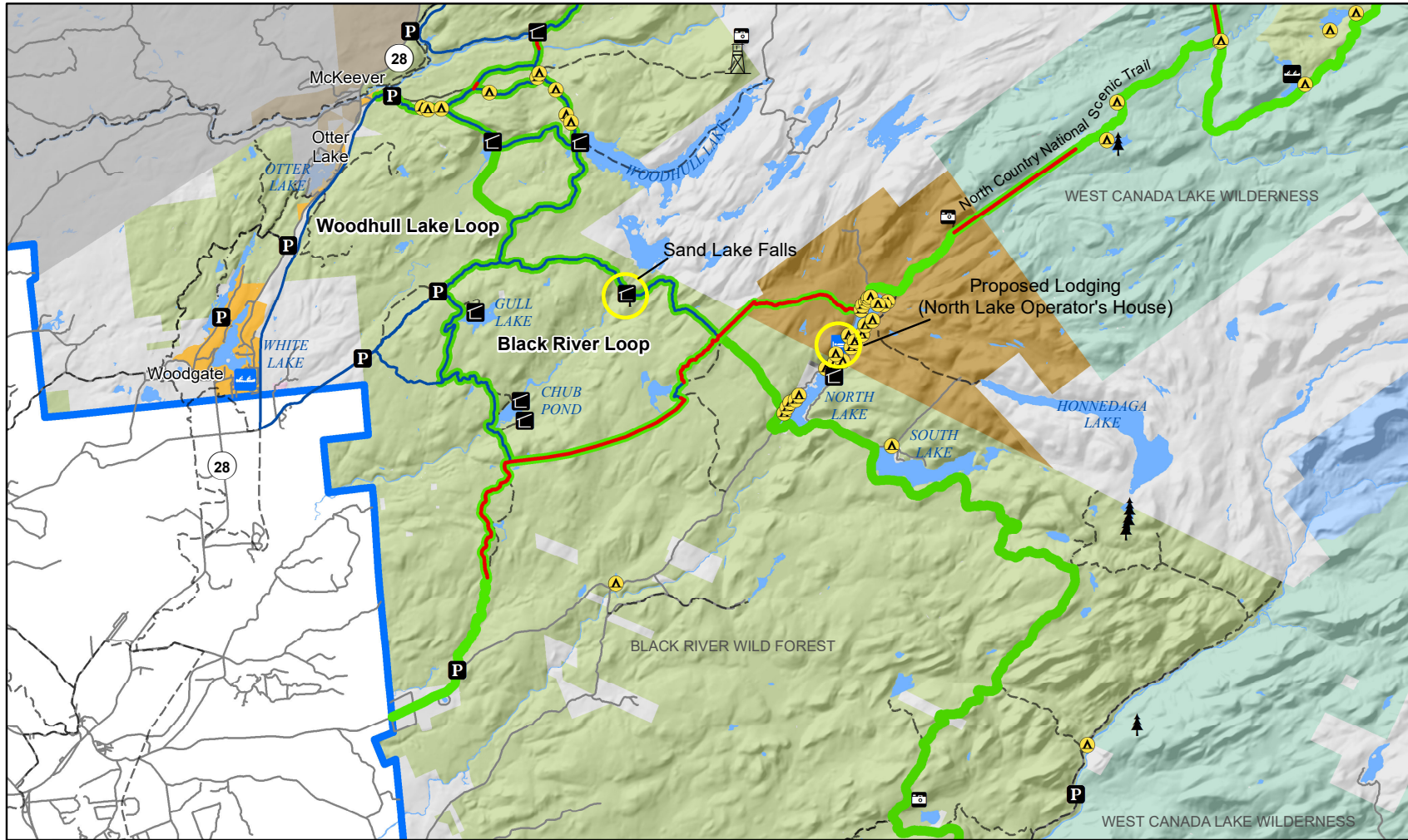
Partnerships: 24% needs construction to connect dead-ends and extend to new access points. Possible "hut-to-hut" opportunity leveraging Kings Flow and Garnet Hill and others for backcountry lodging, might involve a guide service; organize/guide hike and float adventures out of North Creek into various points of the network making use of lodging opportunities, then return to North Creek by floating down the Hudson (putting in at Indian River confluence).

North Creek Network access points include North River (3.5 miles of new trail needed to access the network), North Creek, and Indian Lake (with 4 miles of new trail needed to access the network and proposed lodging). This network features a hut-to-hut route using Garnet Hill Lodge and lodging at King's Flow (commercial structures exist, but arrangements need to be made), with shorter loop hikes around Thirteenth Lake with plenty of options to overnight at campsites. The North Country National Scenic Trail runs through the North Creek Network.

Map 5 ► North Creek Network (detailed zoom)

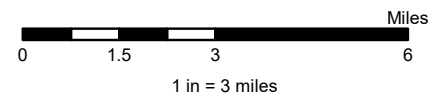


Map 6 ► Black River Wild Forest

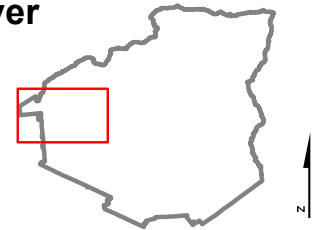


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|--------------------|------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| Natural Feature | Lean-to | Local Network | Community |
| Primitive Campsite | Paddling Access | Regional Network | Pending Classification |
| Fire Tower | Parking | Construction Required | Primitive |
| | Scenic Area | DEC Trail | Wild Forest |
| | Proposed Feature | Road | Wilderness |
| | | | Easement |

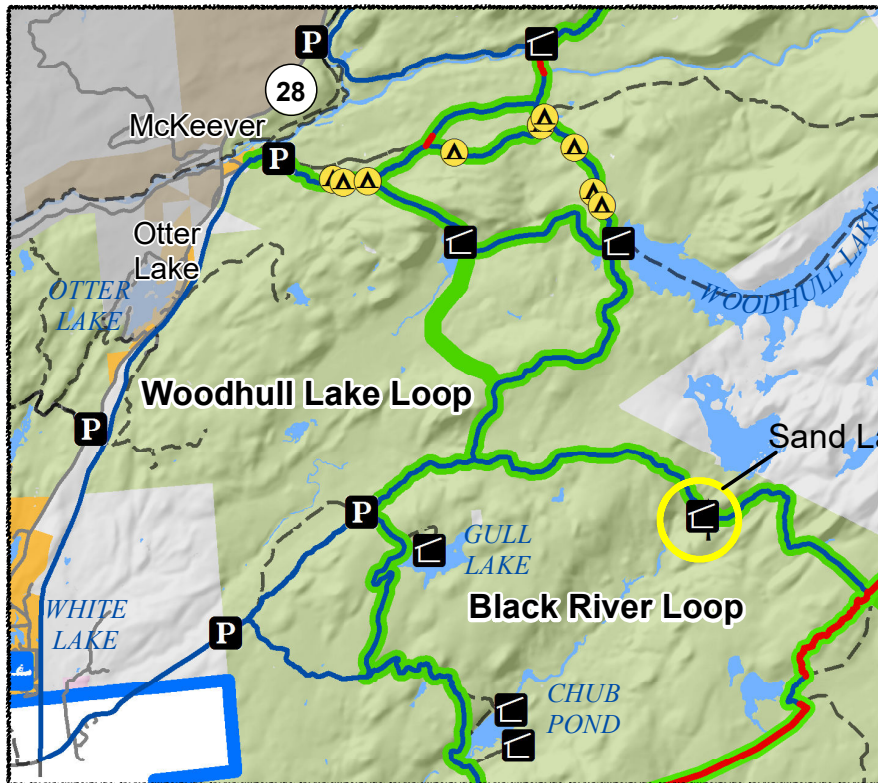
Woodgate, Otter Lake, McKeever



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Science and Forestry



Map 6 ► Black River Woodhull Lake Loop



Access: Tour along McKeever, Otter Lake, Woodgate, and Woodhull Lake.

Connectivity: This feature provides connections with the proposed Black River Loop, Fulton Seventy, McKeever-Morehouse Connector, “N” Lake Network, and includes a portion just outside the Blue Line.

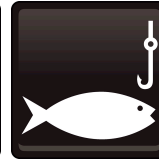
Stewardship: To use snowmobile trails for other purposes requires field-validation, else this is a one-way snowmobile loop. Junction signs required at intersections with Black River Loop, and directing users over to “N” Lake Network.

Destination: A 21-mile snowmobile loop along three communities and several waterbodies, including Woodhull Lake, which can provide a summer destination for biking, lakeside camping and hiking.

Partnerships: all completed/existing. Likely is or could be managed by local snowmobile chapters. Possible to collaborate between user groups for maintenance and management of use. Existing proposal to purchase portions of BSA Camp Russell to improve access to White Lake and Otter Lakes.

The **Woodhull Lake Loop** is primarily a 21-mile snowmobile circuit. However, this circuit could be a suitable loop for biking opportunities that directly connects Woodgate, Otter Lake, and McKeever with accessible and scenic lean-tos and primitive campsites. This loop also connects with a spur trail to Woodhull Lake fire tower, one of the more remote fire tower mountains in the Adirondack Park, at roughly 15 miles round-trip.

Map 6 ► Black River Black River Loop



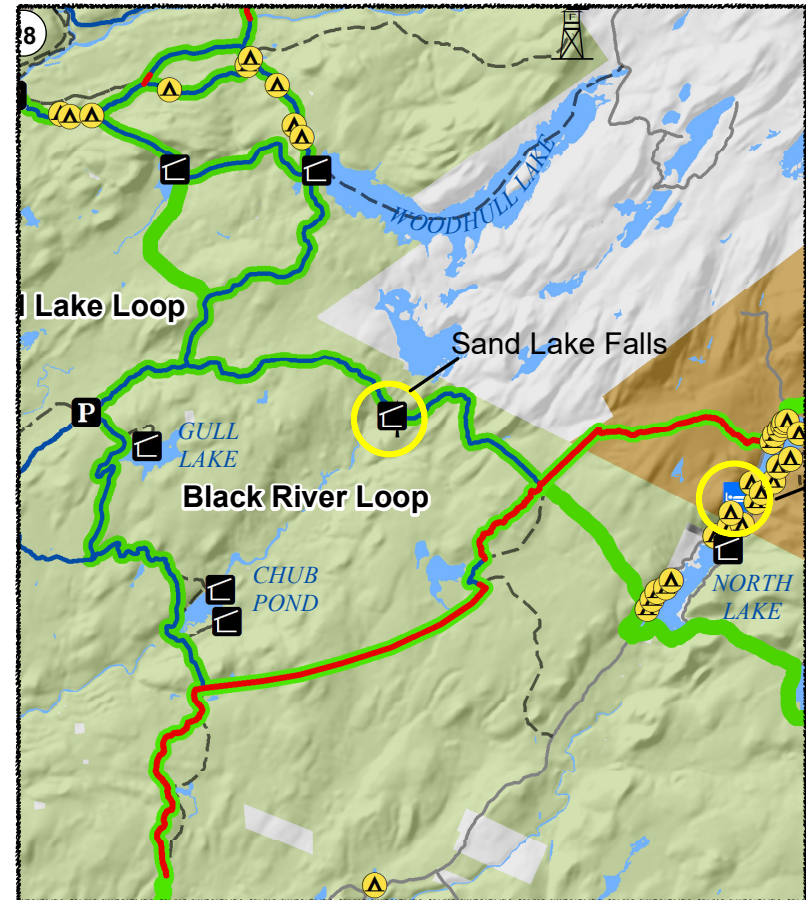
Access: New trail completes these loops, including Chub pond, Lily Lake, and Little Woodhull Lake as destinations along a series of unpaved roads and snowmobile trails that currently tour Bear Lake, Woodhull Lake, and Bloodsucker Pond. Many hiking trails in this area are in-and-outs, but this loop system connects many points of interests with overnight locations and other features.

Connectivity: Uses sections of NCNST and connects to Woodgate-Otter Lake, Fulton Seventy (Reg. Network), and “N” Lake Network via section to-be-constructed bridge over South Branch of the Moose River.

Stewardship: Bridge or crossing over South Moose River may be challenging to place. All contributing snowmobile trails need to be investigated for suitability as hiking trails. Signage required at NCNST overlap, at internal junctions, and directing users across the South Moose and onto the “N” Lake Networks.

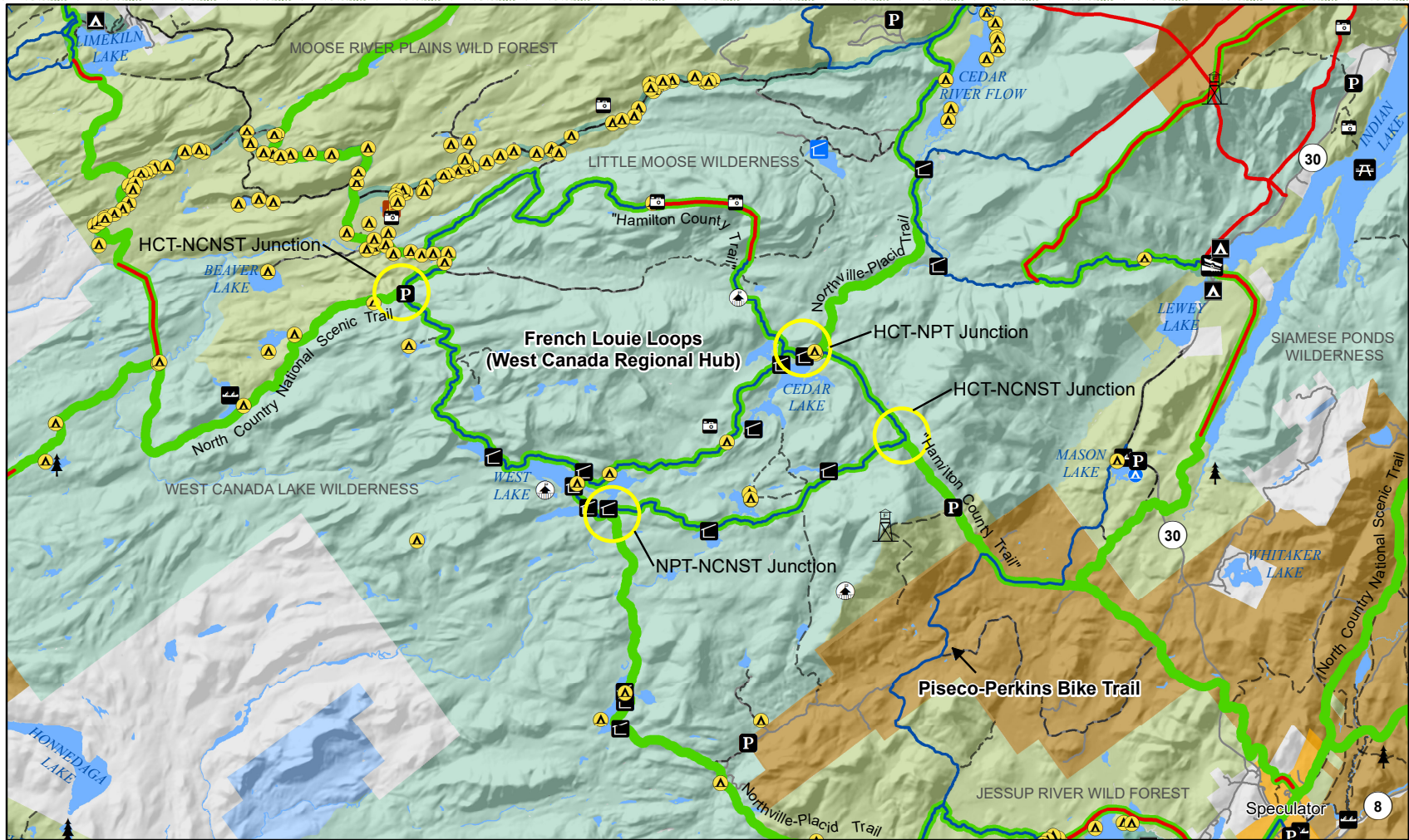
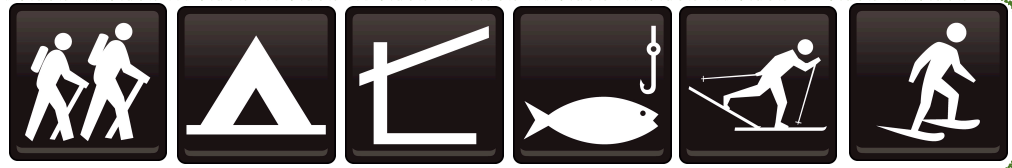
Destination: For solitude seekers, a backcountry tour of waterbodies; numerous loops and opportunities to 'get lost' in the Black River Wild Forest with lots of camping, especially on North Lake, as well as quiet lean-tos on remote ponds.

Partnerships: 16% (5.61 miles) needs to be constructed, most of which overlaps with construction required for NCNST. North end of the loop system takes users to Woodhull Mtn (has fire tower) -- can be uniquely reached by biking over old roads and flat trail, opportunity to provide bikes and transport out of local communities.



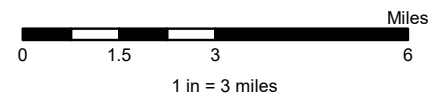
The **Black River Loop** links together a number of lakes and ponds, with access from the north out of McKeever and from the south out of Woodgate. This area generally attracts low visitor volumes and is an ideal location for hikers seeking solitude, with overnight opportunities at picturesque lake-side lean-tos on Gull Lake and Chub Pond. Many of these trail segments follow old forest roads or current snowmobile trails, and may be suitable for backcountry biking, such as the route from McKeever to Woodhull Lake and out to Woodgate via Bear Creek Road parking, or towards the spur trail to Woodhull Mountain fire tower.

Map 7 ► West Canada Lake Wilderness

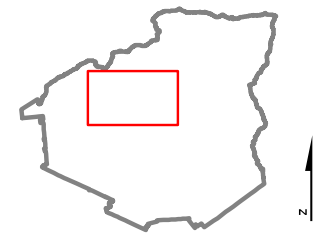


	ADA Accessible		Fire Tower		Local Network		Community
	Boat Launch		Historic Site		Regional Network		Intensive Use
	Natural Feature		Lean-to		Construction Required		Primitive
	State Campground		Paddling Access		DEC Trail		Wild Forest
	Primitive Campsite		Parking		Road		Wilderness
	Day Use Area		Scenic Area				Easement
			Proposed Feature				

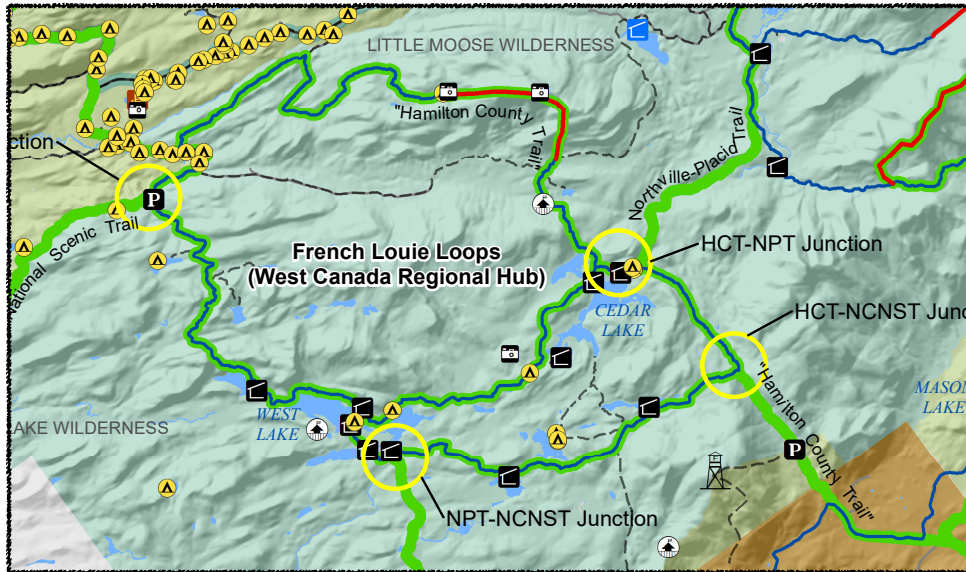
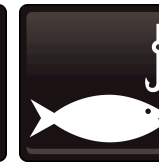
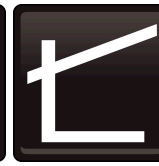
West Canada Regional Hub



Map produced by the Great South Woods Project Team
at the State University of New York College of Environmental
Science and Forestry



Map 7 ► West Canada French Louie Loops



French Louie Loops is the ‘hub’ of the backcountry network where intersecting segments of the North Country National Scenic Trail, the Hamilton County Trail (proposed) and the Northville-Placid Trail form a pair of circuits. Nearly all (93%) of the French Louie trails exist -- and the gap to be filled in the Little Moose Wilderness could include scenic overlooks on Little Moose Mountain, mapped and suggested by Bill Ingersoll.

Access: Primarily hiking and backcountry skiing, multiple access points are possible via long-distance thru-hikes. Also accessible from the unpaved Cedar River Rd via <1 mile on the Sly Pond Loop Trail, offering an entry point for hikers uninterested in long-distance trips. The 40.4 trail-miles provide access to a dozen backcountry ponds and lakes, including Sly Pond, Cedar Lake and Brook-Trout Lake, as well as the scenic Little Moose Mtn, Cobble Hill, Old Skidder Historic Site and Cedar Lake Dam. Parking is available at the NCNST and HCT junction.

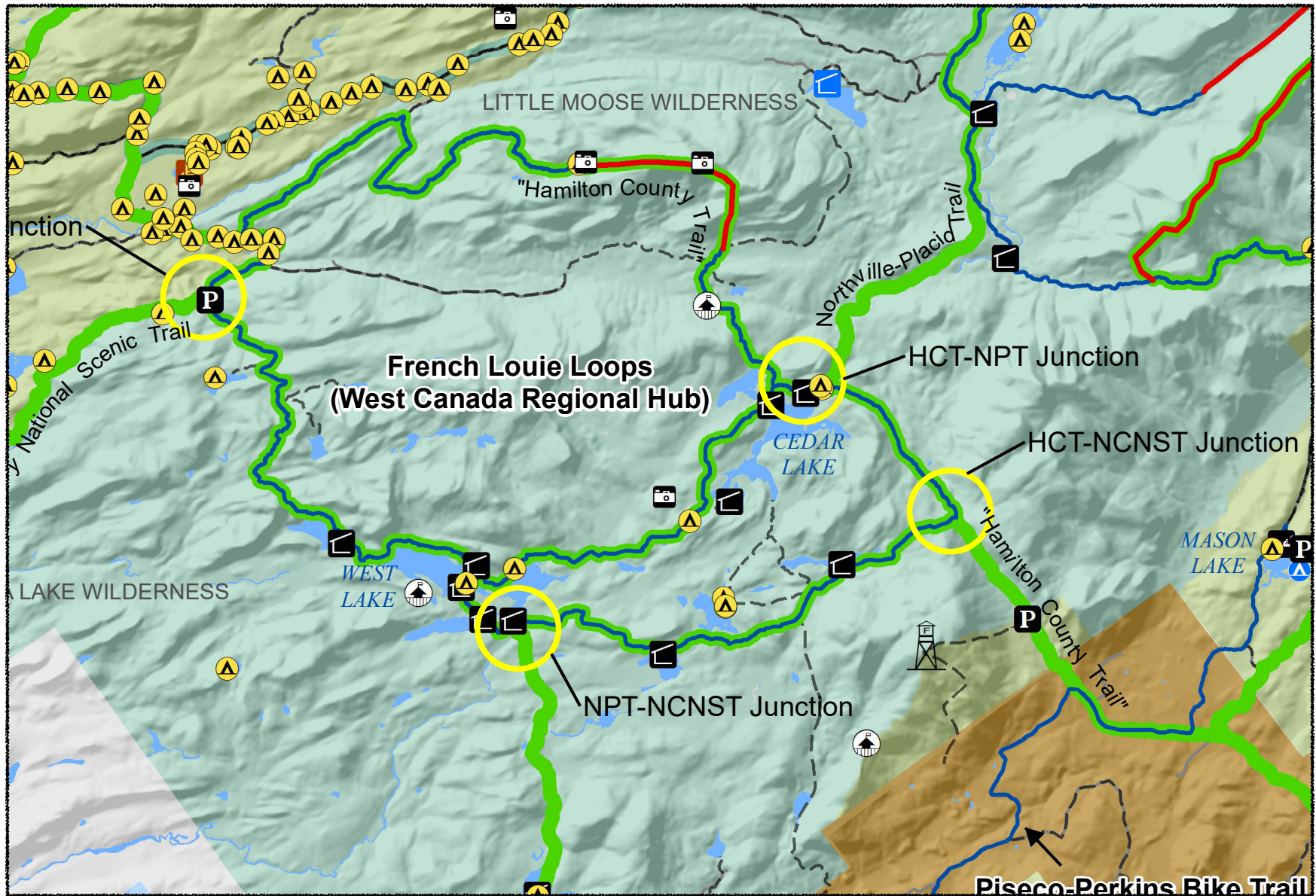
Connectivity: No direct connections to communities, but serves as the central hub of a network of long-distance routes and shorter connections that link the Fulton Chain area, the Piseco-Speculator area, and Indian Lake.

Stewardship: Additional signage and trail registers will be required, especially at the four junctions of the regional routes. The French Louie Loops pass through mature beech-maple forests and hemlock-hardwood swamps, but avoid sensitive wetlands in the West Canada Lakes, Moose River Plains, and Little Moose management units. New section of trail along ridgeline should be designed carefully to protect sensitive plant communities and for hiker safety. Trail junctions and nearby areas should be managed for greater foot traffic, erosion during mud season, and increased exposure to invasive species. Increased recreational traffic may have negative impacts on local wildlife.

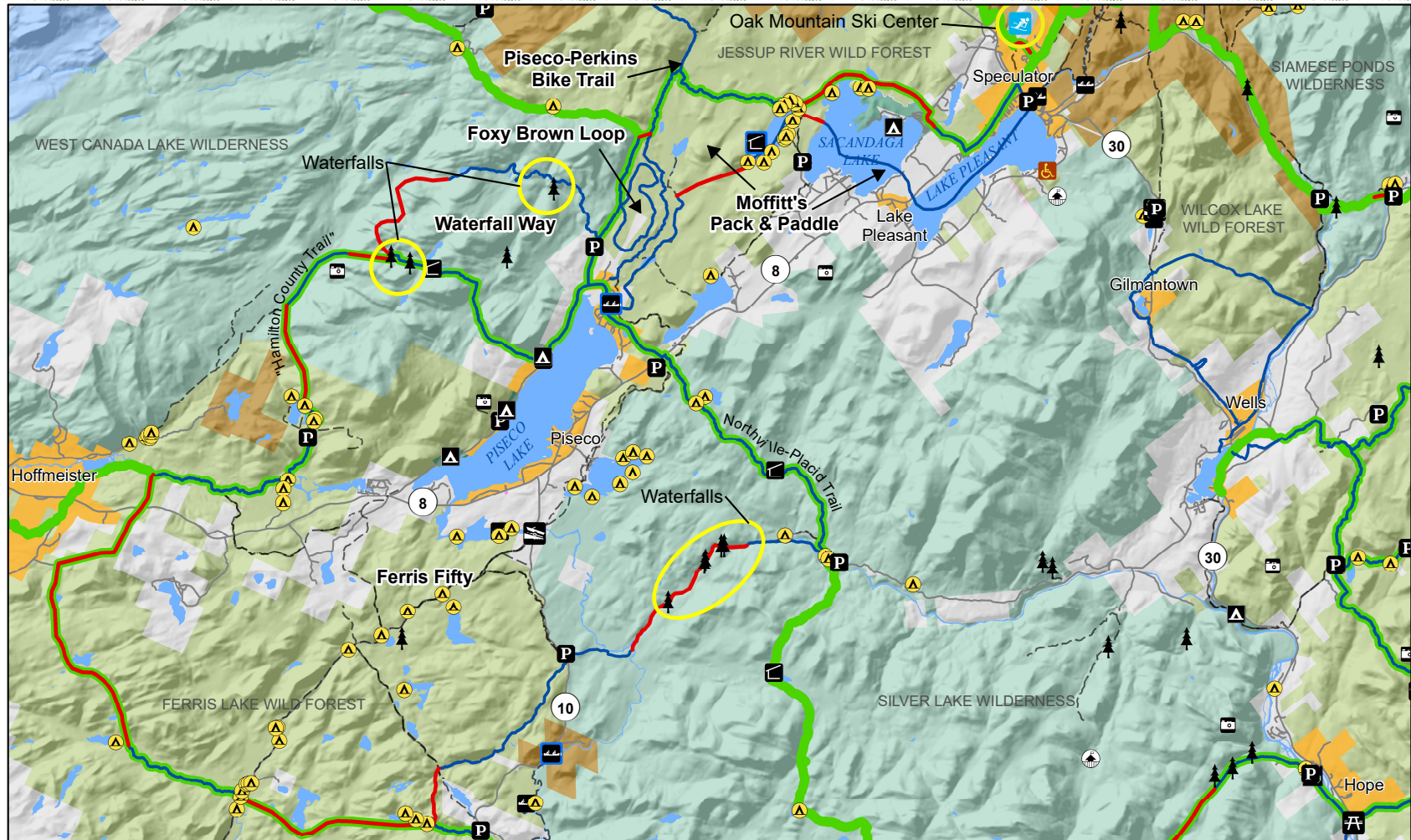
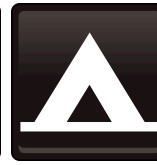
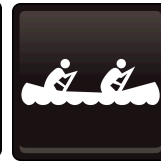
Destination: A multi-day, multi-option series of loops that provide unrivaled backcountry hiking, fishing and rustic camping opportunities, right at the doorstep of the Moose River Plains road system with over two dozen campsites available. Could become a popular pitstop with thru-hikers and a destination for day-trippers, weekend warriors, and outdoor education groups based out of camps and schools nearby.

Partnerships: Needs significant local and regional engagement for trail maintenance, backcountry stewardship and invasive species monitoring. Junctions could benefit from additional maps of points of interest.

Map 7 ► French Louie Loops (detailed zoom)

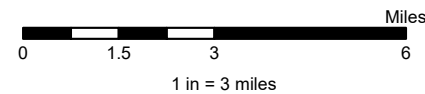


Map 8 ► Lake Pleasant, Piseco and Speculator

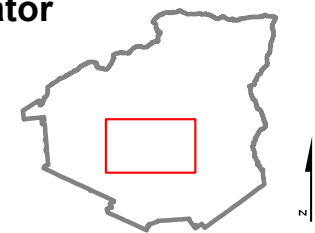


ADA Accessible	Day Use Area	Proposed Feature	Community
Lodging	Downhill Ski Center	Local Network	Intensive Use
Boat Launch	Historic Site	Regional Network	Pending Classification
Natural Feature	Lean-to	Construction Required	Primitive
State Campground	Paddling Access	DEC Trail	State Administrative
Primitive Campsite	Parking	Road	Wild Forest
	Scenic Area		Wilderness
			Easement

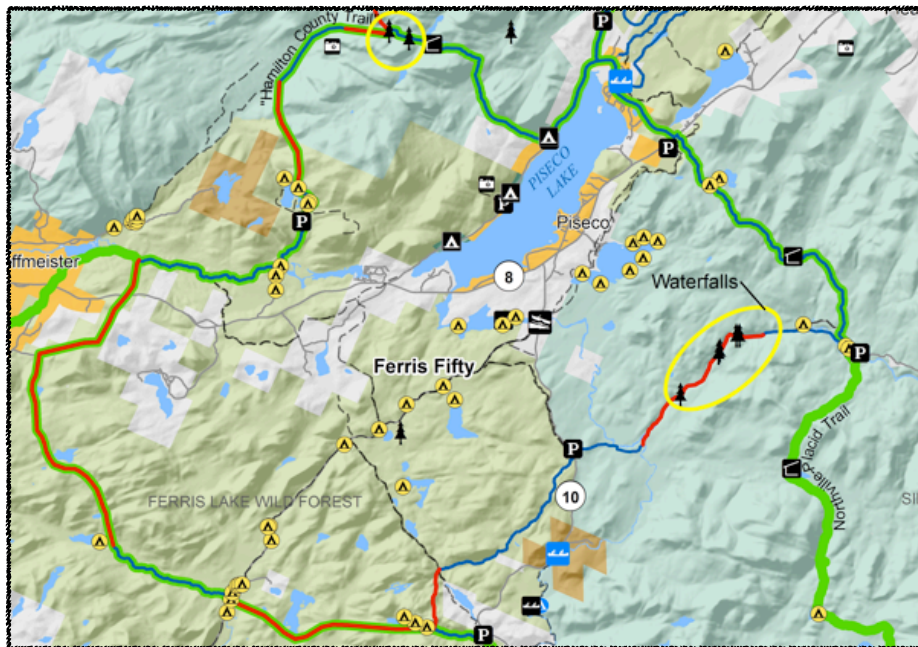
Lake Pleasant, Piseco, Speculator



Map produced by the Great South Woods Project Team
at the State University of New York College of Environmental
Science and Forestry



Map 8 ► Piseco-Speculator Ferris Fifty Circuit



Access: Links together several isolated trail segments, long-distance trails and backcountry points of interest in four DEC units.

Connectivity: Links Piseco and Hoffmeister by foot trail via HCT regional route (proposed). Connects at NPT-HCT junction with nearby features such as Moffitt's P&P, Foxy Brown Loop, Waterfall Way, etc.

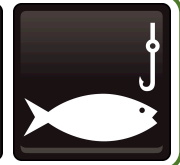
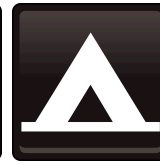
Stewardship: Approximate routes intersect with mapped wetlands, requiring careful planning to minimize impacts. Trail segment in Silver Lake Wilderness along cascades will pose challenges. Additional signage and trail registers needed at access points and parking areas.

Destination: A backcountry hiking trip with unique natural and historic points of interest, with potential for mountain biking in Ferris Lake WF.

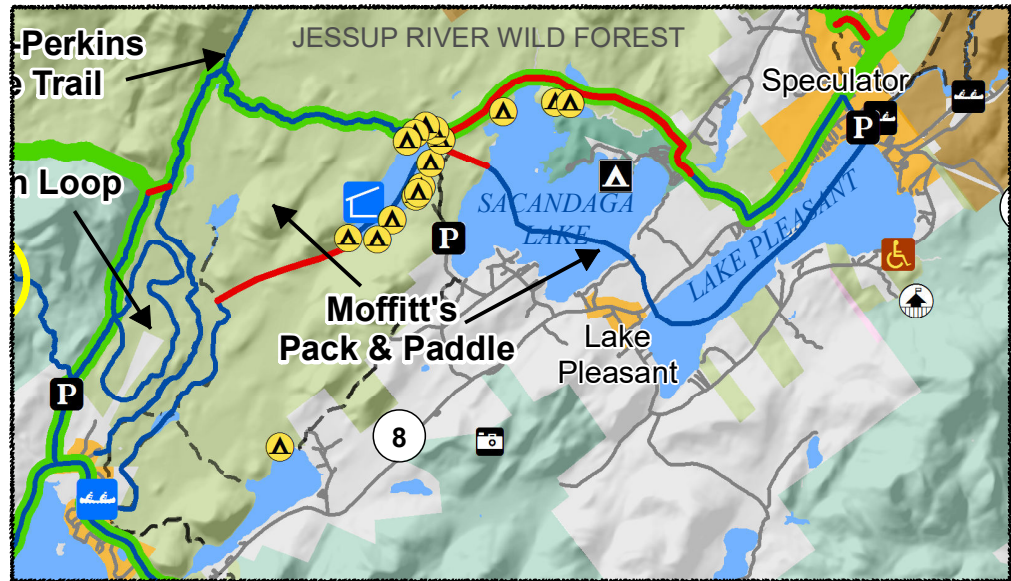
Partnerships: Could be developed as a trail run / ultra marathon to complement Piseco triathlon. Design and develop opportunities for specialized trails and infrastructure, especially for skiing and biking.

The **Ferris Fifty Circuit** is a 48.5-mile loop trail that incorporates sections of the Northville-Placid Trail, the Hamilton County Trail (proposed) and existing and proposed trail segments in Ferris Lake WF and Silver Lake Wilderness. Based in Piseco, the 6-8 day hiking trip features two sets of waterfalls (including T Lake Falls and a series of cascades currently inaccessible by trail), 26 primitive campsites (many situated on ponds and lakes), scenic views at Eagle Bluffs, the White House historical site (on NPT), and the DEC Poplar Point campground on Piseco Lake. Trail biking may be done on snowmobile trail sections during summer, and backcountry skiing on foot trail sections during winter. There is significant potential to develop more specialized infrastructure, especially for mountain biking, adjacent to sections of trail in Ferris Lake WF near Hoffmeister. Ferris Fifty can be accessed via trailheads on NYS Rt 8 and 10, as well as via regional trail routes (NPT, HCT). 17.5 miles of trail construction is needed to complete the circuit, based on approximate routes.

Map 8 ► Piseco-Speculator Moffitt's Pack-and-Paddle



Moffitt's Pack & Paddle is a 29-mile land-and-water circuit that combines hiking, flatwater boating and waterfront camping at both primitive sites and the Moffitt Campground on Sacandaga Lake. Paddlers begin at a proposed DEC hand launch in Piseco, up the navigable waterway through Fall Lake, then a 1.4-mile portage to primitive camping (and a proposed lean-to) along the shore of Fawn Lake. After a 0.5-mile portage to Sacandaga Lake, paddlers cross over the outlet flow into Lake Pleasant and head to Speculator. From town, heading west along the lake shore, hikers can either rest at Moffitt Campground or return to a primitive campsite at Fawn Lake. The rest of the trip follows the existing trail west through Jessup River WF, where it meets the Northville-Placid trail on the way to the starting point in Piseco. The Moffitt's P&P Circuit has several potential access points with parking areas in Piseco, near Fawn Lake and in the village of Speculator.



Access: Hiking access to Fawn Lake campsites from Speculator; foot trail linkage with Moffitt Campground; uses NPT segment near junction with Hamilton Co Trail (proposed).

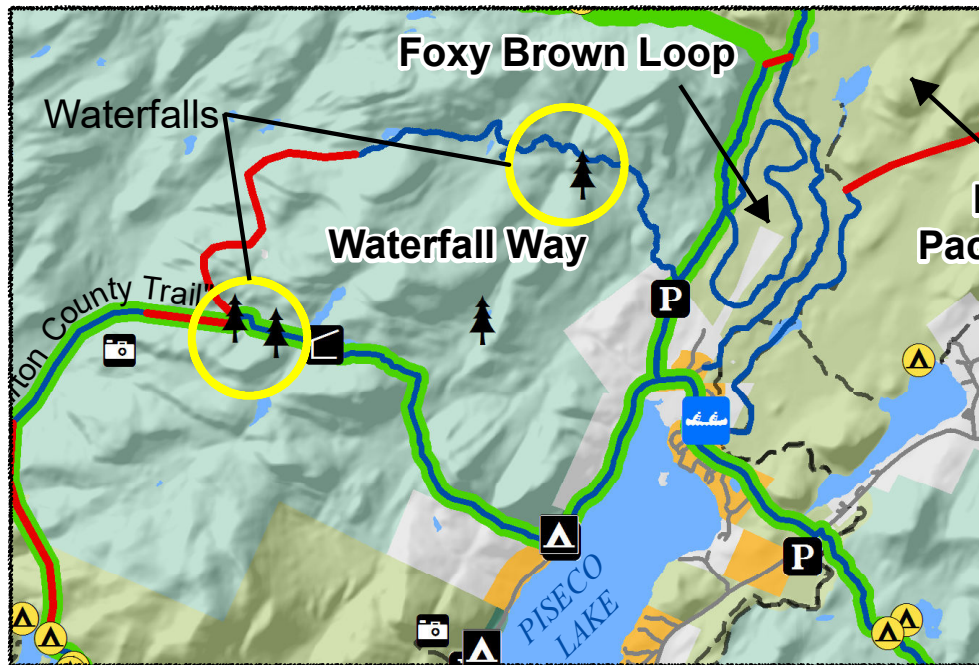
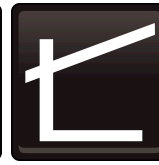
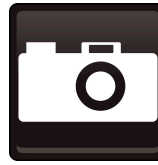
Connectivity: Links Piseco, Lake Pleasant and Speculator directly with adjacent Jessup River WF campsites and DEC campgrounds. Circuit located at junction of NPT and HCT regional routes.

Stewardship: Boat washing stations and aquatic invasive species education / mitigation at multiple access points; hand launches, campsites and trail segments on lake shores may require special management zones

Destination: 3-5 days of paddling, hiking and camping on the lakefront, with meals and lodging at halfway point in the historic village of Speculator.

Partnerships: Almost 6 miles of trail construction, including 1.5-mile portage. A local outfitter could help with boat rental, transport and storage. If portage is needed between Sacandaga Lake and Lake Pleasant, landowner permission(s) will need to be negotiated.

Map 8 ► Piseco-Speculator Waterfall Way



Waterfall Way is a 14-mile circuit that features a series of backcountry waterfalls, with a lean-to available near the popular T-Lake Falls. Can be a weekend trip leaving from Piseco -- or a scenic detour on a thru-hike (via NPT or HCT). By adding a 2.7-mile segment to connect the existing spur trail with the Hamilton County Trail route (proposed), the circuit brings hikers from the backcountry of West Canada Lakes Wilderness to the DEC Poplar Point Campground on the shore of Piseco Lake. In winter, the loop could be a challenging but rewarding excursion for nordic skiing and snowshoeing.

Access: Increases ease of access to waterfalls and scenic points of interest in southeastern West Canada Lakes Wilderness; provides day or overnight trip into the backcountry from DEC Poplar Point campground on Piseco Lake.

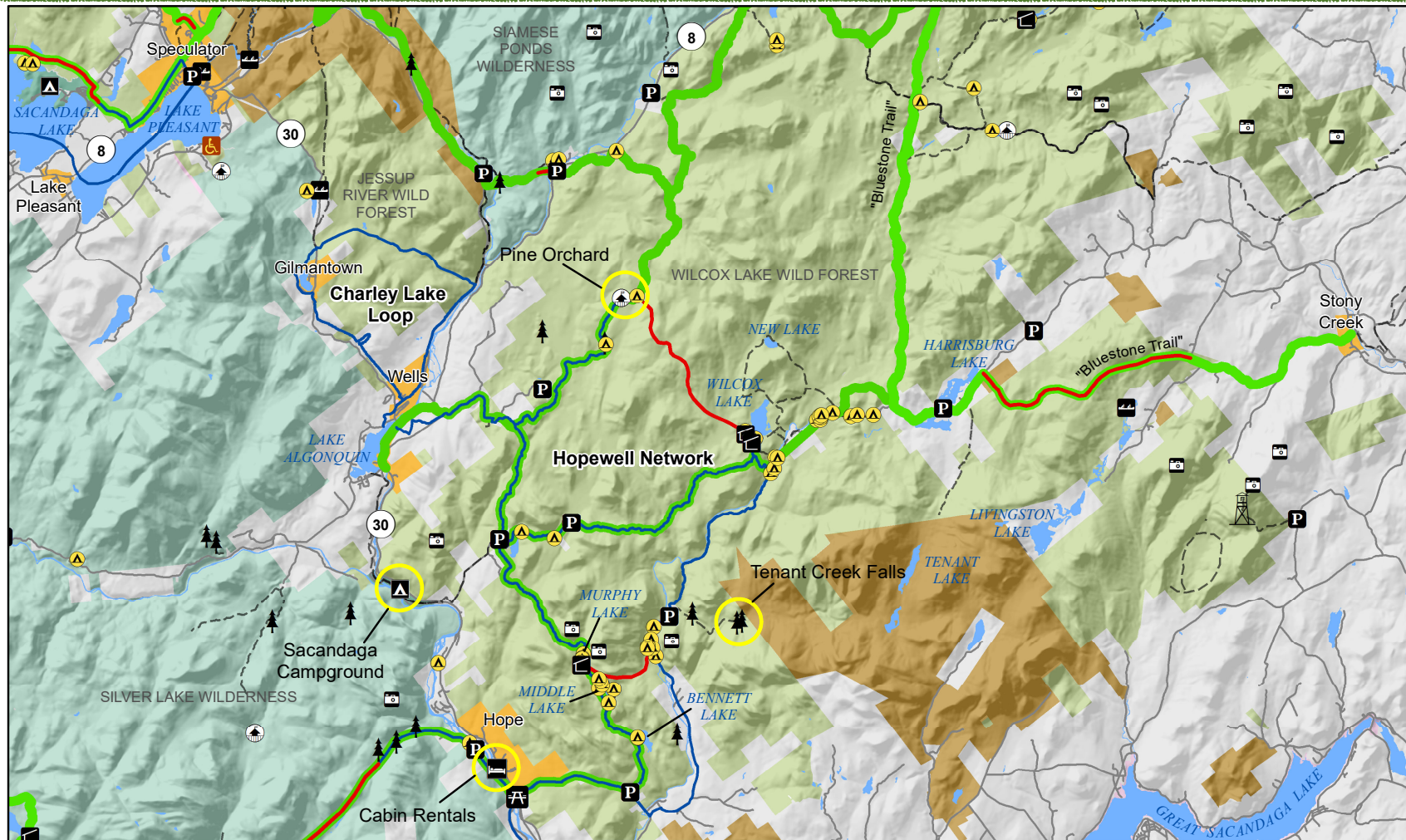
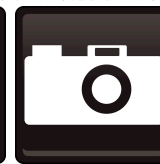
Connectivity: The circuit connects directly to the Village of Piseco and the town road along northwest shore of Piseco Lake. It is adjacent to the junction between the Northville-Placid Trail and the Hamilton County Trail (proposed), which provide connections to multiple other communities in the GSW complex.

Stewardship: Waterfalls and cascades involve sensitive riparian and headwater wetland habitats, and can also pose safety issues for hikers. Signage and other infrastructure, such as bridges and handrails, may be necessary. Trail passes through beech-maple mesic woods, and the proposed (approximate) routes may cross mapped wetlands, requiring careful trail design and construction. Depending on use intensity, an additional lean-to or primitive campsites may be needed. Signage and possibly trail registers needed at junction with NPT and Hamilton Co. Trail (proposed).

Destination: A challenging day-long or more relaxed weekend excursion from Piseco or the DEC Poplar Point Campground that takes hikers, snowshoers and nordic skiers along a series of backcountry waterfalls and cascades in the West Canada Lakes Wilderness.

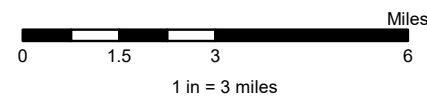
Partnerships: Trail design, construction and maintenance; potential guide opportunities; outdoor education / group excursions.

Map 9 ► Wells, Gilmantown, Hope, Stony Creek

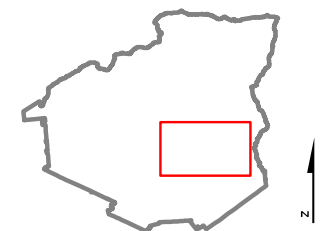


	ADA Accessible		Fire Tower		Local Network		Community
	Lodging		Historic Site		Regional Network		Intensive Use
	Natural Feature		Lean-to		Construction Required		Pending Classification
	State Campground		Paddling Access		DEC Trail		Primitive
	Primitive Campsite		Parking		Road		Wild Forest
	Day Use Area		Scenic Area				Wilderness
			Proposed Feature				Easement

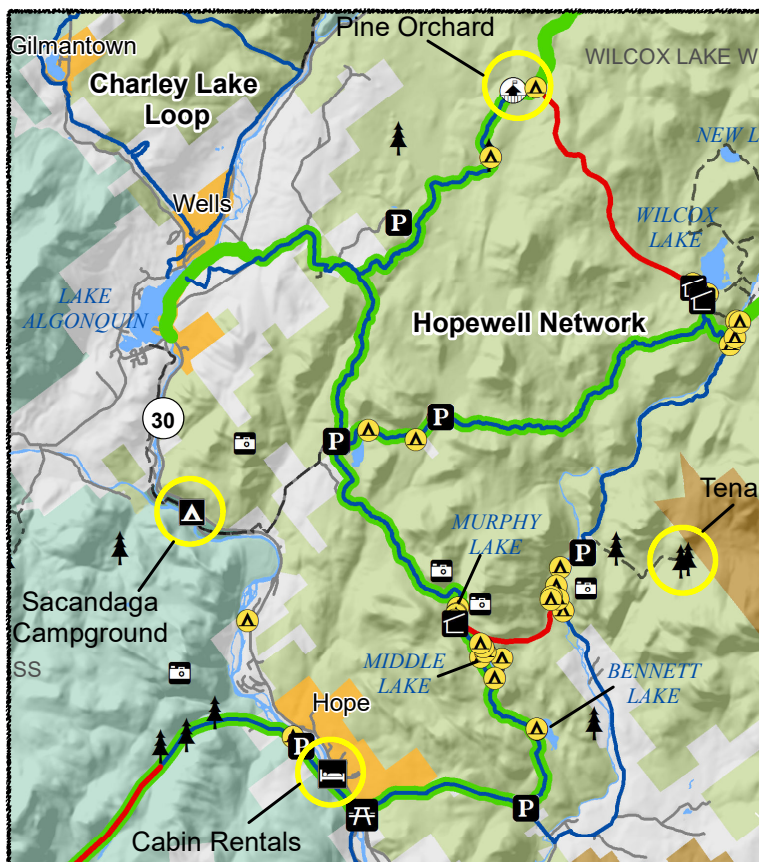
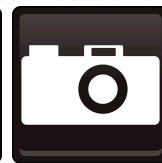
Hope, Wells



Map produced by the Great South Woods Project Team
at the State University of New York College of Environmental
Science and Forestry



Map 9 ► Wells & Hope Area Hopewell Network



Access: New trail segments create a loop from Pine Orchard to Wilcox Lake, and a shortcut from camping areas at East Stony Creek and Murphy Lake. These connections provide a shorter loop direct from Hope, and less out-and-back trails overall.

Connectivity: Links the communities of Wells and Hope directly, and Stony Creek indirectly by linking over to the Bluestone Trail (proposed) via Wells-Wilcox Circuit (regional network). West leg shared with Infinite South (regional network). Hope terminus links with Kallen Trek to the west.

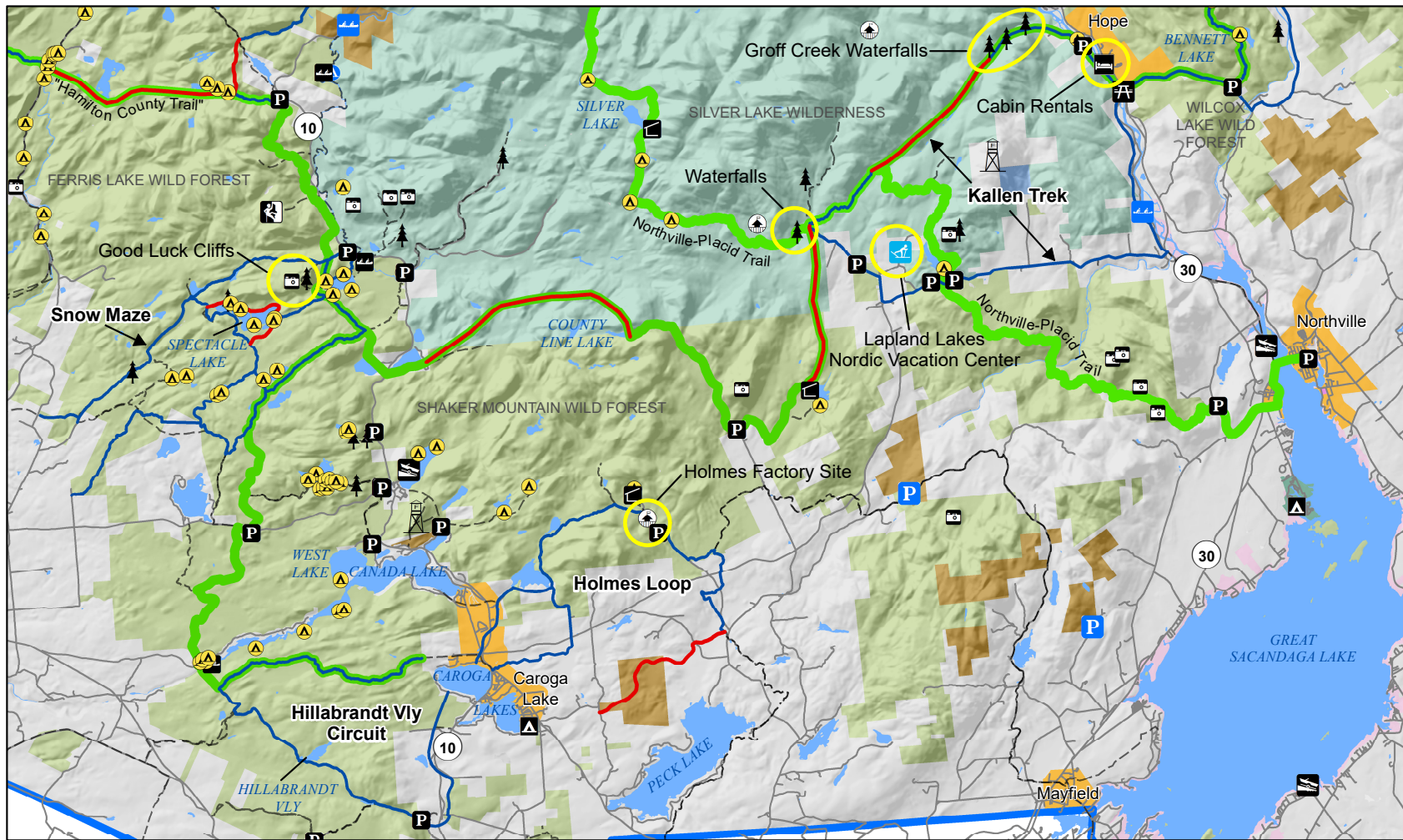
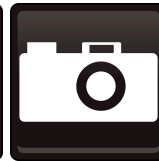
Stewardship: Signage at junctions with Wells-Wilcox Circuit and Kallen Trek; field-validate suitability of snowmobile sections for hiking (particularly access in from Wells, built for snowmobiles). Registers required in Hope (near picnic area) and Wells.

Destination: Network passes Lake Algonquin, visits Pine Orchard (old growth) then Wilcox Lake, follows East Stony Creek, with a side trip available toward easement to scenic waterfalls and Rand Mountain, then passes Bennet, Middle, and Murphy Lakes before Willis Lake where there is a spur trail to Moose Mtn. Lots of camping available near Wilcox, Murphy, Middle, Bennett Lakes and East Stony Creek.

Partnerships: Parking could be secured by each town (Hope and Wells). Two sections to be constructed are key to closing the loop (3.69 mi) and providing a shortcut in the loop (1.72 miles).

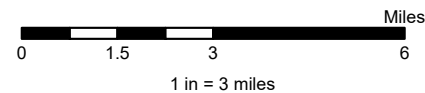
The 44-mile **Hopewell Network** offers a tour of lakes and natural features such as Pine Orchard and Tenant Creek Falls in the Wilcox Lake Wild Forest east of Hope and Wells. Instead of driving Route 30, travelers could opt to get out in the woods where few visitors venture and hike from Hope to Wells. This is not a day hike, but scenic lean-tos at Wilcox and Murphy Lakes welcome the overnight visitor. Constructing roughly 3 miles of trail through the Wild Forest provides a shortcut from Wilcox Lake to Pine Orchard. Visitors staying in Wells could also complete the Charley Lake Loop that runs around Gilmanstown and Wells, following a stretch of the Sacandaga River, and connecting to the Hopewell Network near Lake Algonquin in Wells.

Map 10 ► Northville & Caroga Lake

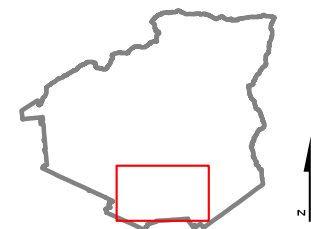


	Lodging		Fire Tower		Proposed Feature		Community
	Boat Launch		Historic Site		Local Network		Intensive Use
	Natural Feature		Lean-to		Regional Network		Pending Classification
	State Campground		Paddling Access		Construction Required		Primitive
	Primitive Campsite		Parking		DEC Trail		State Administrative
	Cross-Country Ski Center		Rock Climbing		Road		Wild Forest
	Day Use Area		Scenic Area				Wilderness
							Easement

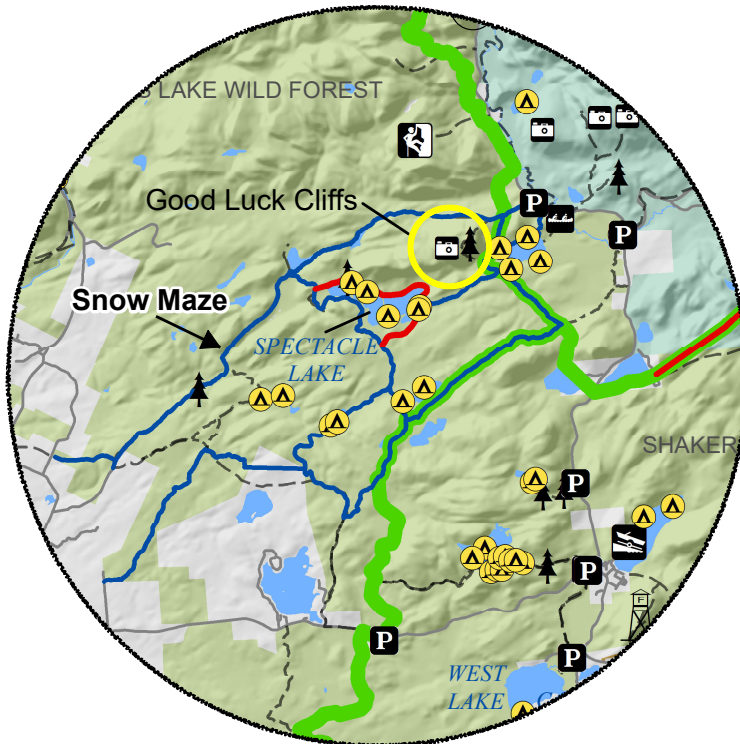
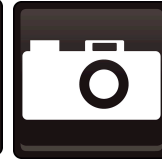
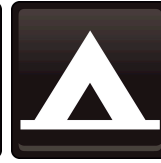
Northville, Caroga Lake



Map produced by the Great South Woods Project Team
at the State University of New York College of Environmental
Science and Forestry



Map 10 ► Northville & Caroga Lake Snow Maze



Access: New trail section (2.54 mi) along Spectacle Lake completes a loop around the waterbody, adding to the overall network of existing snowmobile trails that might be suitable for hiking.

Connectivity: Links with Caroga Connector and Hamilton County Trail.

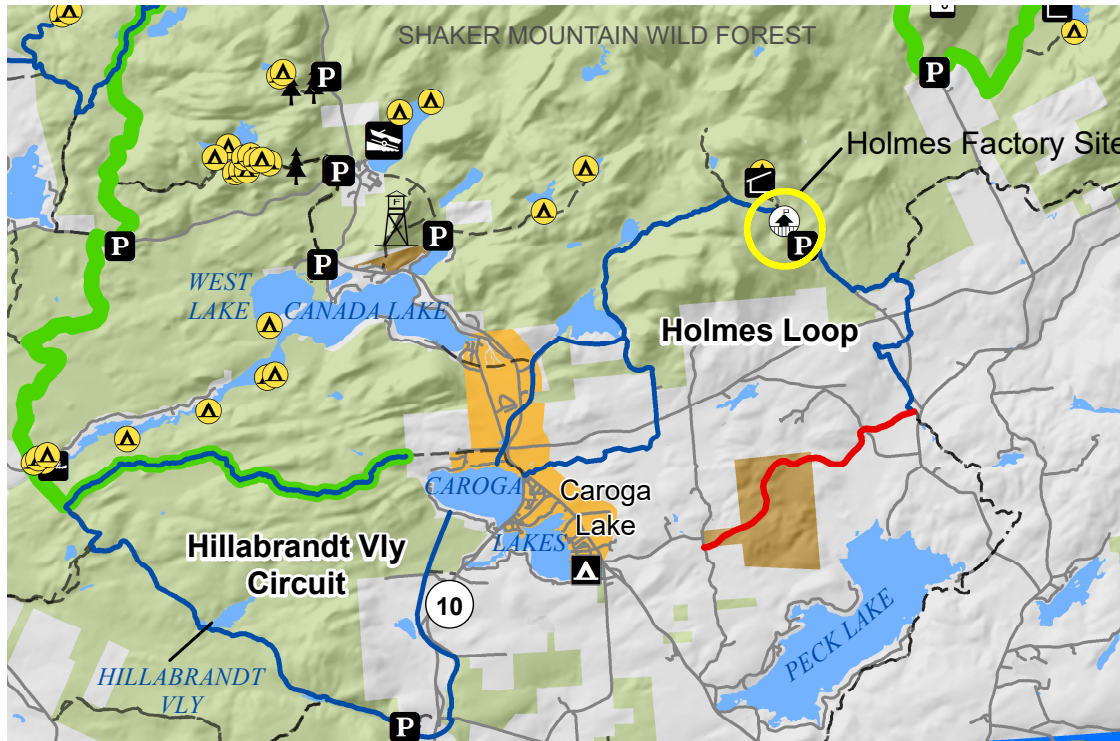
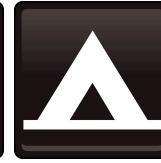
Stewardship: Junction signs at intersections with Caroga Connector/ Hamilton County Trail, internal junction signs, sign designating trail around Spectacle Lake. Many wetlands throughout the area, important to keep in mind when field-validating suitability of snowmobile trails for off-season hiking. Increased use of campsites on Spectacle Lake may pose issues.

Destination: Many attractive waterfalls and waterbodies along the Maze, including Dry, Dexter, Speculator, Long, Goose Egg, Fourth, Third, and Good Luck Lakes. Overnight locations available at Waters Mill Pond, Long Lake, Third Lake, Spectacle Lake, and Good Luck Lake. Short side hike available to Good Luck Cliffs.

Partnerships: Field-validation and trail maintenance in/near wetland areas could be conducted by a local trails chapter.

The **Snow Maze** primarily serves snowmobilers, but sections can be designated for and used by snowshoers and skiers, and potentially by summer hikers and bikers -- but the trail conditions and suitability should be investigated and monitored accordingly. All-season users interested in scenic views of Ferris Lake Wild Forest can take a short hike to the top of Good Luck Cliffs from the Snow Maze in summer and fall. Spectacle Lake and Good Luck Lake provide multiple sites for primitive camping. Recommendations to expand this trail network create a loop around Spectacle Lake, improving access to primitive lakefront campsites. The area may also be suitable for single-track mountain biking trails, to be designed to minimize impact on wetlands, ponds and vernal pools. Paddling, rock climbing, hiking, camping and scenic opportunities nearby could make this area of Ferris Lake Wild Forest an outdoor recreation destination.

Map 10 ► Northville & Caroga Lake Holmes Loop & Hillabrandt-Vly Circuit



Access: Currently-existing loop trail out of Caroga Lake through Ferris Lake Wild Forest, passing West Caroga Lake, Hillabrandt Vly, and Unnamed ponds.

Connectivity: North stretch overlaps with Caroga Connector (regional network).

Stewardship: Field-validate trail suitability for hiking, considering multiple wetlands on or near existing trails. Create register at Caroga Lake.

Destination: Current snowmobile trails, might be suitable for hiking. Decent day-hike, or overnight using campsites just off the circuit on the Caroga Connector.

Partnerships: Outfitters for summer biking trips. Parking may be needed in town.

Holmes Loop and the **Hillabrandt-Vly Circuit** are twin snowmobile loops to the east and west of the Hamlet of Caroga Lake, which have potential as summer walking and biking trails that could accommodate those seeking a less challenging but scenic day trip, leaving from and returning to Caroga Lake. The Holmes Loop provides access to a number of lakes and a historic site along its route, with new trail suggested through an easement and private lands, in order to connect back to the roads into Caroga Lake. Permission for summer walking/biking use must be negotiated for sections of both loops not in the Shaker Mountain WF, as well as DEC easement.

Map 10 ► Northville & Caroga Lake Kallen Trek



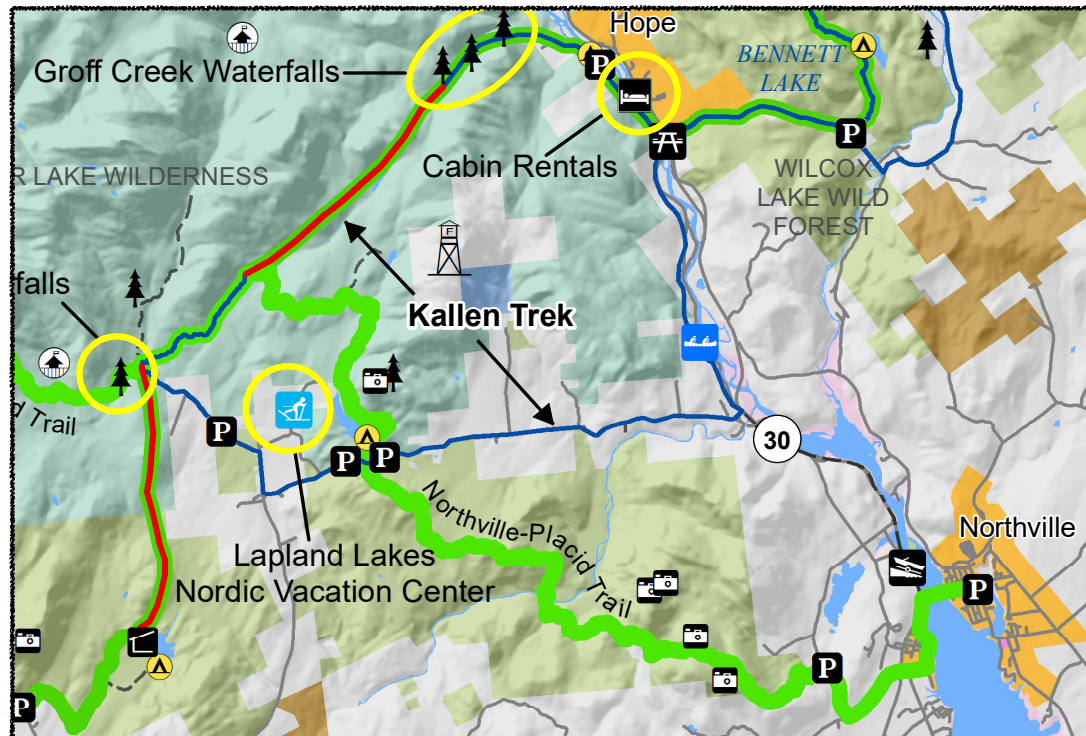
Access: Loop route passes through Silver Lake, Shaker Mountain, and Wilcox Lake units. New section (just over 3 miles) would complete the loop, extending access along Abner Brook, past waterfalls, and joining existing trail near the Sacandaga River.

Connectivity: Follows Sacandaga River on the opposite bank from Hope, accessed from Northville and Benson. Follows a section of the NPT and connects to Hopewell Network, over the Sacandaga River near Hope.

Stewardship: Junction signs required at NPT, and directing over the river toward Hope and the Hopewell Network feature. New trail constructed through Wilderness requires careful attention.

Destination: Hike, bike and paddle the weekend away on scenic but less traveled paths in southern Adirondacks. Points of interest include: Lapland Lake Ski Center, Groff Creek Falls, Sacandaga River, Abner Brook, and Woods Lake. Hike largely in or near Wilderness, the almost 20 mile loop offers an ideal overnight along Sacandaga River, at a campsite or commercial lodging. Taking an interior cutoff (NPT), spur trails access Grant Lake and Little Cathead Mtn. with its cliff views.

Partnerships: Cathead Mtn Fire Tower is located in the center of this loop on private land. Public Access and stewardship maintenance could be negotiated (maybe with the town of Hope) as part of this process.

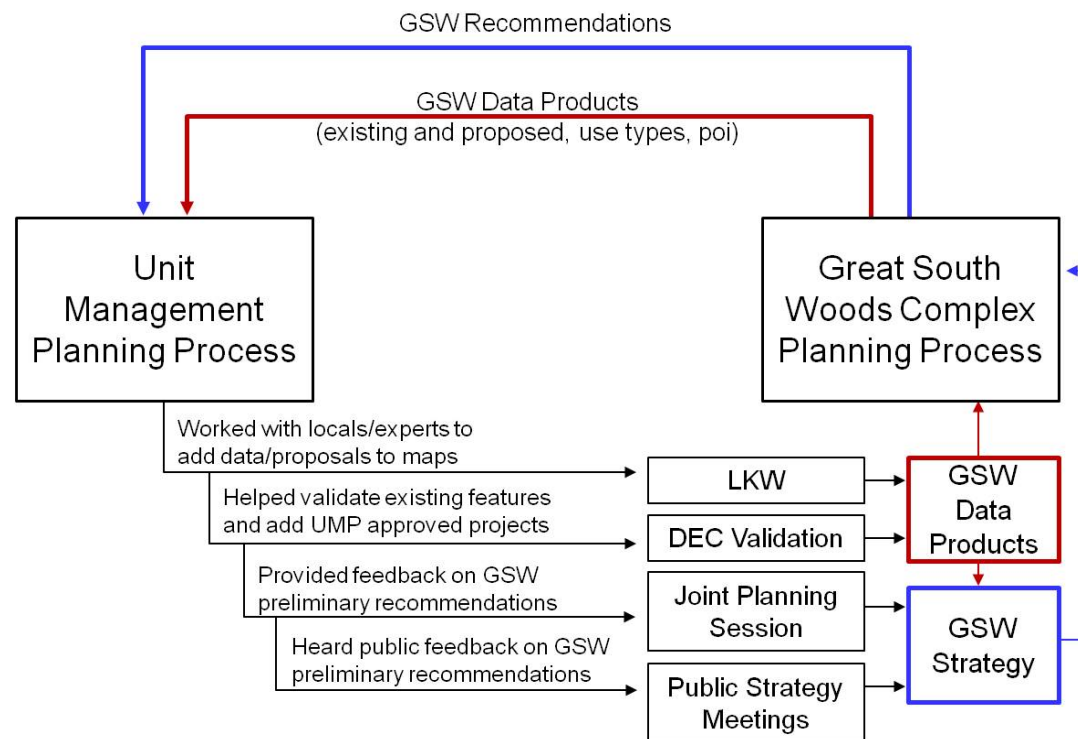


Kallen Trek is an exciting multi-modal loop, with biking out of the parking area in Hope heading south on Route 30 along the Sacandaga River, then turning west on Benson Road (the old Northville-Placid Trail route) to the old NPT trailhead in Benson. Trading the bike for boots, hikers can trek through the Abner Brook-Groff Creek valley (3 miles of new trail required) in the Silver Lake Wilderness and visit a series of waterfalls before returning to Hope. Take an optional shortcut through the Trek on the newly-routed NPT that passes Woods Lake, Little Cathead Mountain, and Grant Lake.

LINKING GSW PLANNING TO ONGOING UMP EFFORTS

The GSW Planning Process was designed to be fundamentally different than the current UMP Process, while remaining complementary and supportive of ongoing planning across the Forest Preserve. Key differences were 1) the degree of public engagement and community-driven ideas generated through the GSW process, and 2) the expanded geographic scope that included the full GSW landscape (See Figure 3 in full GSW Strategy report, Appendix II: Methodology, for a description of the steps in each planning process). Despite these key differences, GSW Planning process is *not* intended to *replace* the UMP process, or to exist as an *isolated* exercise in planning. In fact, the GSW Planning process often engaged the DEC planners and rangers alongside the public during meetings and workshops, and offered preliminary data results that were considered in active UMP drafts (Figure 3). Throughout the GSW planning process, a pattern of reciprocity developed with DEC-UMP personnel by engaging them in both public and private work sessions, incorporating their contributions to the resulting GSW Data Product, Recommendations and Strategy, and applying the overall GSW Planning Process and results to support ongoing UMPs (Figure 3). A case study of how this process developed for the draft Wilcox Lake UMP is provided in the full GSW Strategy report (pp. 32 – 33).

Figure 3: Links between the Unit Management Planning and the GSW Complex Planning processes, involving the engagement of DEC personnel at multiple steps in GSW, and the application of GSW products and outcomes in an ongoing UMP.



GSW STRATEGY: IMPLEMENTATION STEPS

Beyond ESF's current scope of work for the Great South Woods Strategy described in its contract with DEC, there are numerous interlocking steps needed to ensure its successful implementation over coming years. To date, ESF has facilitated the GSW project by managing the logistics of community meetings, data collection and synthesis, compilation and revision of maps, curation of the website database, coordination with the DEC team and core group, responses to communities' and organizations' requests for information, etc. With the end of the contract, the GSW project enters the implementation phase and will still need a considerable amount of organizational management and funding if it is to successfully advance.

Beyond the consultative approval process between the DEC and APA which is mandated by the APSLMP and APA Act, local communities will need to play an increasing role in identifying priority projects and forming partnerships with neighboring communities, interested organizations and individuals, and the state agencies to accomplish the concepts described by the strategy. These implementation steps include, but are not necessarily limited to, the following:

ESTABLISH ONGOING MECHANISMS FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND PROJECT SUPPORT

Perhaps the greatest challenge in implementing the GSW strategy will be how to maintain the engagement of local communities across the region over the years needed for actual design and construction of the trail network and related community infrastructure. We suggest an organizational configuration that involves multiple communities, comprised of interested organizations and individuals that meet on a regular basis, and maintain a widely collaborative approach. This model would rely upon local leadership. The [Adirondack Association of Towns and Villages \(AATV\)](#) might be a starting point to consider how best to advance the strategy in consultation and collaboration with the DEC regional planners and other personnel.

Throughout the GSW process it was apparent that communities want to promote their assets and are willing to adopt trails or build new trails. There are several trail and recreational groups already extant in the region which may be able to expand their connections to adjacent communities and other groups if proper incentives can be created, such as funding for joint projects. Several groups have been identified (see [Potential Partners under Public-Private Partnerships in the Recommendations section](#)) that have well-organized volunteers who can assist in building trails. Many of these groups also understand how to partner with DEC partnerships through Temporary Revocable Permits (TRPs) to build and maintain local trail networks.

The trail network database created by ESF during the GSW project with input from local residents, DEC, APA and others is an important tool for future planning efforts if it is easily accessible and understandable by potential users. There will need to be a mechanism and protocols established to maintain and update the database, as well as to ensure that it is available to the general public. In addition, DEC planners may need training or orientation to the database as tool to assist them in their work. Transferring this technology to the DEC and APA is still an unresolved issue. Past experience with the ARGIS database indicates that further consideration is needed to establish a home agency for the database and sources of financial support to maintain these important planning tools.

IDENTIFY RESOURCES AND SECURE FUNDING TO SUPPORT PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION BY LOCAL COMMUNITIES

Another key ingredient for the strategy's successful implementation will be the availability of needed human and financial resources. The [Environmental Protection Fund](#) (EPF) may be the most readily accessible funding source, and when matched with in-kind labor or other community contributions, is a good mechanism for local project development.

Another potential source of support to build trail networks and related infrastructure may be Governor Cuomo's recently established [Excelsior Conservation Corps](#). If a contingent of the conservation corps could be assigned to priority projects in the GSW, there could be immediate and tangible results in the region.

The [Regional Economic Development Councils](#) (REDCs) [Consolidated Funding Application](#) (CFA) is another potential source of funding but has a highly competitive process, with less likelihood of success in the more sparsely settled rural communities across the GSW.

IDENTIFY APPROVED UMP PROJECTS NEAR TRAIL NETWORK FEATURES

Portions of the trail network and related infrastructure (e.g., parking areas, trail heads, etc.) are already included within approved UMPs and can be the initial implementation phase for the GSW strategy, if local communities agree. As these first projects are undertaken, projects that require amended UMPs can be prioritized and advanced for approval (see [Appendix II, Table 6](#)).

FIELD-VALIDATE NETWORK FEATURES TO ASSESS POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS AND RECREATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS

There is a significant amount of effort needed to actually locate proposed trail networks on the ground. This work may be accomplished with volunteers from the various communities and trail clubs, but will need to be closely coordinated with DEC planners, rangers and other professionals to both maximize the attractiveness of the trail type and protect any fragile ecosystems and species in the area. Due to the size of the GSW, local communities will need to identify priority projects in their vicinity as well as their human resources available to work with the DEC on trail verification and environmental assessments.

Throughout the development of the GSW Strategy, it has been apparent that certain trade-offs may be necessary to accommodate a trail network which may be in conflict with an existing classification or regulatory guideline. During the field-validation work, it will be useful to identify conflicts and trade-offs and open a dialogue to assess potential options. There may be a need to triage certain trails as: “shovel-ready” or easy to proceed; moderately difficult to build due to environmental or other constraints, but still within the regulatory framework (UMP update or amendment may be needed); and difficult, due to the need to amend the APSLMP or some other constraint (e.g., permission to cross private property).

DESIGN DETAILED PLANS FOR TRAIL NETWORKS AND RELATED INFRASTRUCTURE

The GSW strategic goal of creating a world-class tourism destination will require a new level of planning and design to attract savvy global travelers who have particular recreational interests and criteria (e.g., thru-hikers, mountain bikers, canoeists, elder hostel hut-to-hut users, snowmobiler, horse-back riders, ‘glampers’, bird watchers, history buffs, etc.) Services of experienced professional outdoor recreation designers, landscape architects, architects and engineers will be needed to meet the criteria desired by destination tourism. These professionals can also teach and orient local craftspeople and artisans about the market competition and demands for future services. Special design attention will need to be applied within the communities to create an aesthetic appearance and tourist-friendly atmosphere which also makes easy and visible connections to the adjacent state lands, local amenities (e.g., attractions, food, lodging, gas, etc.), as well as other communities along the trail networks. Consideration of vehicular and pedestrian traffic patterns, sidewalks and street furniture, international symbols, signs and easily accessible information and maps (in several languages) are all part of a tourist and resident friendly community streetscape.

SECURE NECESSARY AGENCY AND LOCAL COMMUNITY APPROVALS

As detailed designs and construction plans are finalized, there are a series of agency (i.e., DEC, APA and DOT) and community (town planning and zoning boards) reviews and approvals that will probably be required as the trail networks move toward implementation across public and private lands. Early consultation with agency representatives should save time and identify any potential problems, especially environmental impacts.

DEVELOP MARKETING AND COMMUNICATION PLANS WITH JOINT PARTICIPATION OF LOCAL COMMUNITIES AND STATE AUTHORITIES

The GSW region is almost an unknown portion of the Adirondack Park in terms of tourists who visit from outside the region and see much more advertisement about Lake Placid, the High Peaks or Lake George. The ‘*Adirondack Advantage*’ report and the concept of ‘*Trail Towns*’ are closely aligned with the possibilities described in the GSW strategy. The challenge will be to deploy a marketing effort that differentiates the GSW from other better known areas of the Park, while also attracting new visitors to its recreation offerings.

During the GSW workshops, numerous marketing ideas surfaced from the community participants. Although beyond ESF’s scope of work, it is useful to list these ideas as potential components of the implementation process (see [Marketing is KEY and Packaging Experiences under Public-Private Partnerships in the Recommendations section](#))

The ‘I Love NY’ campaign and the Regional Office for Sustainable Tourism (ROOST) can be important sources of support. A well-designed internet presence will be critical in attracting international tourists and other visitors from outside New York.

ONLINE INTERACTIVE MAP ACCESS

To facilitate future public engagement with the GSW Strategy, and to promote the critical next steps of design and implementation, ESF has partnered with AdirondackAtlas.org to share the GSW Recommendations and related map data online here:

<http://greatsouthwoods.adirondackatlas.org>

By opening the above link in a web browser – *we strongly recommend using Chrome, Safari or Firefox, instead of Internet Explorer* – users can explore the GSW Recommendations and related map data.

In the collapsible sidebar on the left, users can find and access the content in the map. The GSW Recommendations are found in the **Features** tab to the left, by scrolling through the list or performing a search. Hovering the mouse cursor over the name of the feature will highlight (in yellow) that route in the map. Clicking anywhere on the name of the feature will automatically zoom the map to the feature and bring up its narrative description (and map) from this GSW Recommendations document.

Additional map layers, such as hotels, restaurants and points of interest, may be accessed via the **Catalog**. We have provided ‘GSW Proposed Networks’ as a map layer, which shows the complete regional (green) and local (blue) networks, with red lines indicating where new trail must be constructed. All other map layers in the **Catalog** are provided by AdirondackAtlas.org, which maintains an extensive regional database. These are not GSW data products and therefore neither ESF nor DEC is responsible for their accuracy.

The GSW project has provided the map layers found in the **Features** tab, and the Proposed Networks folder in the **Catalog**. Together these layers include all of the features described in the Maps and Narratives section ([pages R-1 through R-59](#)) of this document.

The **Active** tab shows the layers currently visible in the map and provides map controls for reordering (or ‘re-stacking’) the layers, adjusting their opacity, etc. Use the ‘trash can’ icon to remove the layer from the map.

We note that the online interactive map does not include all of the data collected during the GSW participatory process. The GIS inventory of recreation assets developed by the GSW project is not found here, but may be available upon request from NYS DEC.

Maps are intended to inform future planning, will be subject to revision, and do not necessarily represent current or future priorities. The ideas presented online are conceptual and locations of points and routes are approximate.

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This report was prepared by the State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry (ESF), with input and guidance from the NYS DEC Division of Lands and Forests, the Adirondack Park Agency, and local government representatives.

