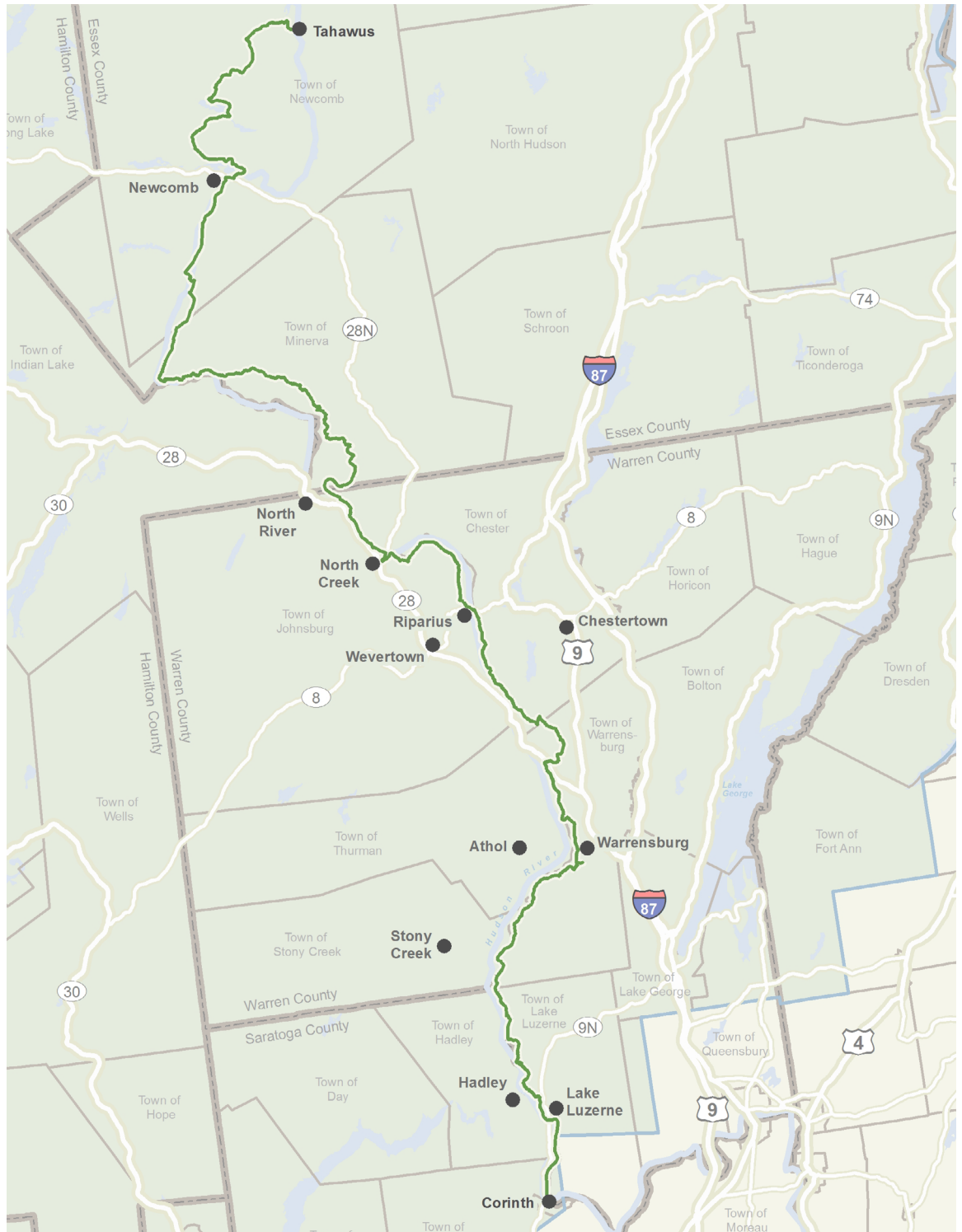


First Wilderness Heritage Corridor Final Layout of the First Wilderness Trail

Town of Chester, Warren County, New York
June 2019



 **Department of State**

 **Wilderness Property Management Inc.**
Outdoor Recreation Developments

 **The LA GROUP**
Landscape Architecture & Engineering P.C.
People. Purpose. Place.

 **FIRST WILDERNESS CORRIDOR**

Final Layout of the First Wilderness Trail
June 2019

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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This project is funded through the New York State Department of State with funds provided under Title 11 of the Environmental Protection Fund.

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Appendix B New York State Recreational Use Statute, Sample Trail Use Agreement & Partnership Options

SECTION 1 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Trail Overview

The First Wilderness Trail (FWT) is a companion project to the First Wilderness Heritage Corridor (FWHC), a regional revitalization initiative for nine communities along the Upper Hudson River. FWT seeks to develop a 99.3-mile long recreational trail from the Village of Corinth to the hamlet of Tahawus in the Town of Newcomb. The proposed trail will traverse a variety of landscapes as it reconnects the rural and urban communities bordering the Hudson River with hiking, biking and water trails. The factors that determine the route for the FWT were land ownership, existing trail infrastructure, connectivity to local communities, public access, land use regulations, natural features, and trail construction requirements.

The objectives for the FWT are to:

- Construct a standardized natural surface single-track trail for hiking and mountain biking which is publicly accessible for a majority of the year.
- Adhere to the principles of sustainable trails and use wilderness type concepts to limit the visual and environmental impact of trail work.
- Utilize and connect to existing trail systems wherever feasible.
- Provide wild river and forest experiences.
- Connect communities adjacent to the Hudson River.
- Provide views and public access to the Hudson River and adjacent mountains.

The First Wilderness Trail is envisioned as a natural surface single-track wilderness type path within a 3- to 6-foot cleared opening with a potential expansion to a hardened 3-foot wide trail where it passes near or through hamlet areas. Many of the roadways and paths adjacent to the river were historically developed for horse and wagon and foot travel and therefore meet sustainable hiking, mountain biking, and backcountry skiing trail standards. Roadways developed for motorized travel generally exceed sustainable trail grades and are not generally appropriate for mountain biking and backcountry ski trails. Since all existing trails have the capacity to enhance the historical experience and contain construction costs, all existing trails in the vicinity of the FWT were identified, evaluated and prioritized for their potential use.

Several completed regional planning initiatives provided the foundation for the FWT. The *First Wilderness Heritage Corridor Master Plan (2000)* proposed the development and coordination of regional resources for “the creation of a fully integrated tourist promotion effort along the Northern Hudson Segment”. The *First Wilderness Heritage Corridor Action Plan Update (2016)* recommends specific local economic development initiatives and projects that are consistent with the mission of the FWHC. The *First Wilderness Heritage Corridor Marketing and Promotion Plan (2016)* guides how the FWT will be integrated into the region and marketed to potential trail users. It provides that recreation experiences be tailored to specific user groups including residents, traveling day recreationists, multi-day (lodging) recreationists, long trail hikers, and campers through customized travel itineraries.

Implementation Considerations

The volume and complexity of land ownership and local regulations associated with the proposed route for the FWT may result in the construction of individual trail segments prior to the development of recommended connections between trail segments. The successful completion of a few trail segments near hamlet areas and on public lands will likely result in heightening interest in expanding the trail onto adjacent sections involving private land. Negotiations for private and public landowners should be developed to reduce inefficiency and increase the probability of the successful implementation of the FWT.

Appendix A, “Construction Requirement Analysis,” identifies the permits and other authorizations that will be required to construct the FWT.

Appendix B, “New York State Recreational Use Statute, Sample Trail Use Agreement & Partnership Options,” includes partnership options for expanding recreational trails, including easements, revocable trail agreements, and the gifting or sale of lands. A copy of the New York State Recreational Use Statute and a sample trail use agreement whose language can be incorporated in an agreement with relevant landowners, is also included. The feasibility of the future construction of the FWT will be determined by the ability to negotiate locations for trailheads, access for trails, gain approvals for amendments to State Land Unit Management Plans (UMPs), create implementation plans, develop funding streams for trail engineering and construction, and hire labor for the trail construction.

Providing education on the potential economic and health benefits of the FWT to local governments, recreation groups and recreation-based businesses and other local stakeholders is essential for ultimately being able to secure needed trail access through private land, make needed amendments to State Land Unit Management Plans, and lead to the successful completion of the FWT.

SECTION 2 REGIONAL CONTEXT

The recreational trail network is continually expanding in Adirondack Park communities on both sides of the Hudson River. Some of the trail initiatives are regional in scope crossing multiple states, others are trail loop systems within state land management areas and recreational facilities, and many are local trail systems sponsored by municipalities. The primary regional trail systems included the North Country National Scenic Trail, the Northville-Placid Trail, the Empire State Trail, the Champlain Canalway Trail, the Warren County Bikeway, and the Glens Falls Feeder Canal Trail. Figure 1, “The Regional Trail Network,” provides an overview of the layout of these trail systems and their relationship to the FWT.

The North Country National Scenic Trail (NCNST) is the longest in the National Trails System, stretching 4,600 miles over 7 states from the middle of North Dakota to the Vermont border of New York. The NCNST traverses through a National Grassland, 10 National Forests, more than 150 federal, state and local public lands and the Adirondack Park. Managed by the North Country Trail Association (NCTA), a 501(c) 3 non-profit organization of volunteers along the seven-state trail and elsewhere, the NCTA partners with the National Park Service in bringing the North Country Trail to local communities. In New York, the NCNST comprises a total of 207 miles (103 off-road/104 on-road) from the western border of the Adirondack Park to the Crown Point Bridge. The east to west running NCNST will intersect the south to north running FWT at a point near the hamlet of North Creek.

The Northville–Lake Placid Trail (NPT) is a 138-mile foot trail through the Adirondack Park. The southern terminus is Waterfront Park in the hamlet of Northville and the northern terminus is Averyville Road in the Village of Lake Placid.

Governor Cuomo’s Empire State Trail initiative is to create a continuous 750-mile route spanning the state from New York City to Canada and Buffalo to Albany, creating the longest multi-use state trail in the nation. In northern New York the new Empire State Trail primarily follows the route of the Champlain Canalway Trail.

The Champlain Canalway Trail, a continuous public multi-use trail from Waterford to Whitehall. The corridor is comprised of 19 individual municipalities in Saratoga and Washington counties along three rivers – the Mohawk, Hudson River and Batten Kill. This water trail network also involves four canal systems - Erie Canal, Champlain Barge Canal, Old Champlain Canal and Glens Falls Feeder Canal. When completed, the Champlain Canalway Trail will extend 77 miles and will include the Glens Falls Feeder Canal Trail. Together, this land and water trail forms a major spine for recreation through the region and the promise of increased commerce in the city, villages and hamlets along the way.

The Glens Falls Feeder Canal Trail is a 9-mile walking and biking trail extends from Glens Falls to Fort Edward along the historic Glens Falls Feeder Canal. Although technically separate from the Champlain Canalway Trail. It is managed by the Feeder Canal Alliance in partnership with the NYS

Canal Corporation. The Feeder Canal Trail provides an important trail linkage to the City of Glens Falls and other major resources and destinations and is treated as a functional part of the Champlain Canalway Trail.

The Warren County Bikeway extends 9.5 miles from Lake George Village to downtown Glens Falls, where it connects to the Glens Falls Feeder Canal Trail. Most of the Warren County Bikeway is a paved, off-road trail for non- motorized use. A few sections of the route share the shoulder of local roads.

Figure 1 The Regional Trail Network

First Wilderness Trail Regional Trail Network Map



SECTION 3 TRAIL AREAS

The Final Layout of the First Wilderness Heritage Trail is divided by township into eight trail areas. Each area includes trail segments which emphasize the connections between communities, trailheads and points of interest within the trail area. Trail segments are individual projects to be implemented within each trail area. A profile of each Trail Area and its segments is accompanied by maps detailing the route and type of trail along with the location of parking, kayak launches, train stations, and other points of interest. Figure 2, "Overview Map," illustrates the trail route from Corinth to Tahawus.

The following list identifies the trail areas and the corresponding trail segments through the seven townships:

TRAIL AREA 1: Town of Corinth to Town of Hadley/Lake Luzerne

- Corinth Park and Beach to Rockwell Falls

TRAIL AREA 2: Town of Hadley/Lake Luzerne to Town of Warrensburg

- Rockwell Falls to Bear Slides Trailhead

TRAIL AREA 3: Town of Warrensburg to Town of Chester

- Segment A: Bear Slides Trailhead to Hickory Hill Ski Area
- Segment B: Hickory Hill Ski Area to Warren County Nature/Cross Country Ski Trails
- Segment C: Warren County Nature/Cross Country Ski Trails to Potter Brook Road

TRAIL AREA 4: Town of Chester

- Potter Brook Road to Riparius Bridge

TRAIL AREA 5: Town of Johnsbury

- Riparius Bridge to Johnsbury Town Hall

TRAIL AREA 6: Town of Chester to Town of Minerva

- Johnsbury Town Hall to Moxham Mountain Trailhead

TRAIL AREA 7: Town of Minerva to Town of Newcomb

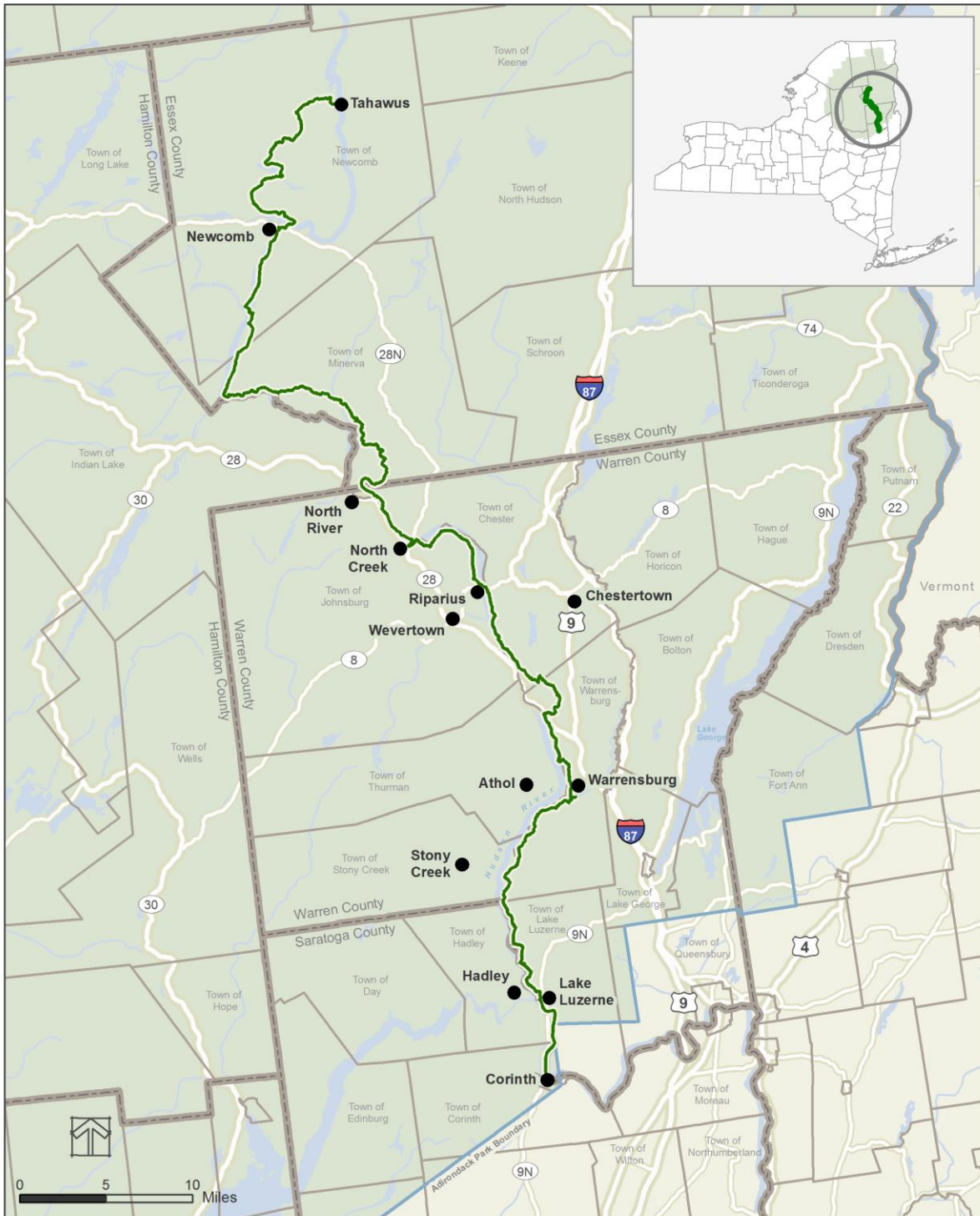
- Segment A: Moxham Mountain Trailhead to North Woods Club Road
- Segment B: North Woods Club Road to Huntley Pond and the Blue Ledges Trailhead
- Segment C: Huntley Pond and the Blue Ledges Trailhead to Polaris Club Bridge

TRAIL AREA 8: Town of Newcomb

- Segment A: Polaris Club Bridge to State Route 28N
- Segment B: State Route 28N to Great Camp Santanoni
- Segment C: Great Camp Santanoni to Santanoni Range Trailhead

Figure 2 Overview Map

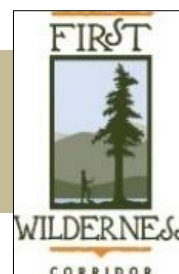
First Wilderness Trail Overview Map



FIRST WILDERNESS TRAIL

Trail Area 1

Town of Corinth to Town of Hadley/Lake Luzerne



Trail Description: Corinth Park and Beach to Rockwell Falls

Trail Area 1 includes a water-based trail route and two potential land-based routes, including an on-road route along the Hudson River and a back-country route on private lands and low use roads. Neither of the land route alternatives are feasible without considerable up-front work on permitting and safety issues.

Alternative A: Blueway Trail

Alternative A, a river based (Blueway Trail) is available immediately for paddlers and will provide an entirely unique experience on the Hudson River from the Corinth Boat Launch to the Upper Hudson River State Boat Launch and eventually to a proposed tube/kayak takeout in Lake Luzerne. There are existing river-based businesses that could benefit from rentals of boats and shuttles. Access points in this trail area are in developed communities where food and lodging services are available. This is the preferred alternative.

Alternative B: Low Use Country Trail

Alternative B is a Low Use Country trail route that originates from the Corinth Reservoir Recreation Area Trailhead. The first portion of the trail begins at the northern-most point of a proposed linkage trail between the Corinth Reservoir, the former Train Station and Corinth Park and Beach. The trail continues through several privately-owned parcels in the Town of Corinth before turning onto Antone Mountain Road, onto Dean Mountain Road, across the Bow Bridge, and ending at the Hadley Train Station trailhead.

Alternative C: On-Road Trail

Alternative C represents an on-road route along East River Road. This alternative will begin at the Corinth Reservoir Recreation Area and end at the Lake Luzerne Public Parking Lot. East River Road is a moderately used road with narrow shoulders, but the majority of the road appears to be able to accommodate an extended and improved shoulder area. A sidewalk exists on the east side of the road from Rose Avenue to the corner of Route 9N which will be the basis of a dedicated trail in the future.

Water Access Points

Corinth Boat Launch; Upper Hudson River State Boat Launch; Proposed Lake Luzerne Tube/Kayak Access Site

Points of Interest

Hudson River; Corinth Park and Beach; River Road Campgrounds; Upper Hudson River Boat Launch; Upper Reservoir Recreation Area in Corinth; Corinth Free Library

Amenities

Restaurants, accommodations, convenient stores, and parks off Main Street in the business districts of Corinth and Lake Luzerne.

Connector Trails

First Wilderness Heritage Trail Corinth Trail Linkage (planned)

Planning Support

- Town of Corinth Comprehensive Plan (2008)
- Village and Town of Corinth Joint Economic Development Committee Strategic Downtown Enhancement Plan (2003)
- Town of Corinth Trail Linkage Plan (2019)
- First Wilderness Heritage Corridor Action Plan Update (2016)
- Town of Lake Luzerne Waterfront Revitalization Strategy and Comprehensive Plan (2010)
- Hadley Hamlet Plan Pedestrian Linkage Study and Main Street Improvement Plan (2006)
- Hadley Hamlet Master Plan (2004)

Implementation Strategy

Alternative A requires the Town of Lake Luzerne to construct an access point for kayaks and tubes on the Hudson River. An initial step is to prepare a site assessment and cost estimate for the site and improvements. Alternative B will require landowner permission and shoulder improvements along Antone Mountain Road. Alternative C will require additional analysis to determine whether road shoulder improvements will be feasible throughout East River Road.

Trail Segments

Corinth Park and Beach to Rockwell Falls	
Alternative A: Blueway Trail	
Length (existing/proposed):	5.4 miles (5.4/0)
APA Land Use Class:	N/A
DEC Lands:	None
Trailheads & Parking:	Corinth Park & Beach; Upper Hudson River Boat Launch; Lake Luzerne Public Parking Lot
Surface & Accessibility:	Navigable water route
Signage:	Wayfinding signage at trailheads and along roads in hamlets
Phase of Development:	Planning
Alternative B: Low Use Country Trail	
Length (existing/proposed):	6.2 miles (0/6.2)
APA Land Use Class:	Hamlet; Moderate Intensity Use; Low Intensity Use; Rural Use
DEC Lands:	None
Trailheads & Parking:	Corinth Reservoir Recreational Area; Hadley Train Station
Surface & Accessibility:	Natural surface, paved and dirt roads.
Signage:	Wayfinding signage at trailheads and along roads in hamlets
Phase of Development:	Conceptual

Alternative C: On-Road Trail	
Length (existing/proposed):	5.5 miles (0/5.5)
APA Land Use Class:	Hamlet; Moderate Intensity Use
DEC Lands:	None
Trailheads & Parking:	Corinth Park & Beach; Upper Hudson River Boat Launch; Lake Luzerne Public Parking Lot
Surface & Accessibility:	Paved with improvements needed.
Signage:	Wayfinding signage at trailheads and along roads in hamlets
Phase of Development:	Conceptual

Trail Area Totals

Trail Area 1: Town of Corinth to Town of Hadley/Lake Luzerne	
Length (existing/proposed):	Alt. A: 5.4 miles (5.4/0); Alt. B: 6.2 miles (0/6.2); Alt. C: 5.5 miles (0/5.5)
Off-Road Length	Alt. A: 5.4 miles
State Lands:	None
State Off-Road Length:	N/A
Private Lands:	Alt. B: 2 (59.-2-81; 46.-1-32)
Private Off-Road Length:	Alt. B: 1.6 miles
County Lands:	None
County Off-Road Length:	N/A
Municipal Lands:	None



Corinth Park and Beach

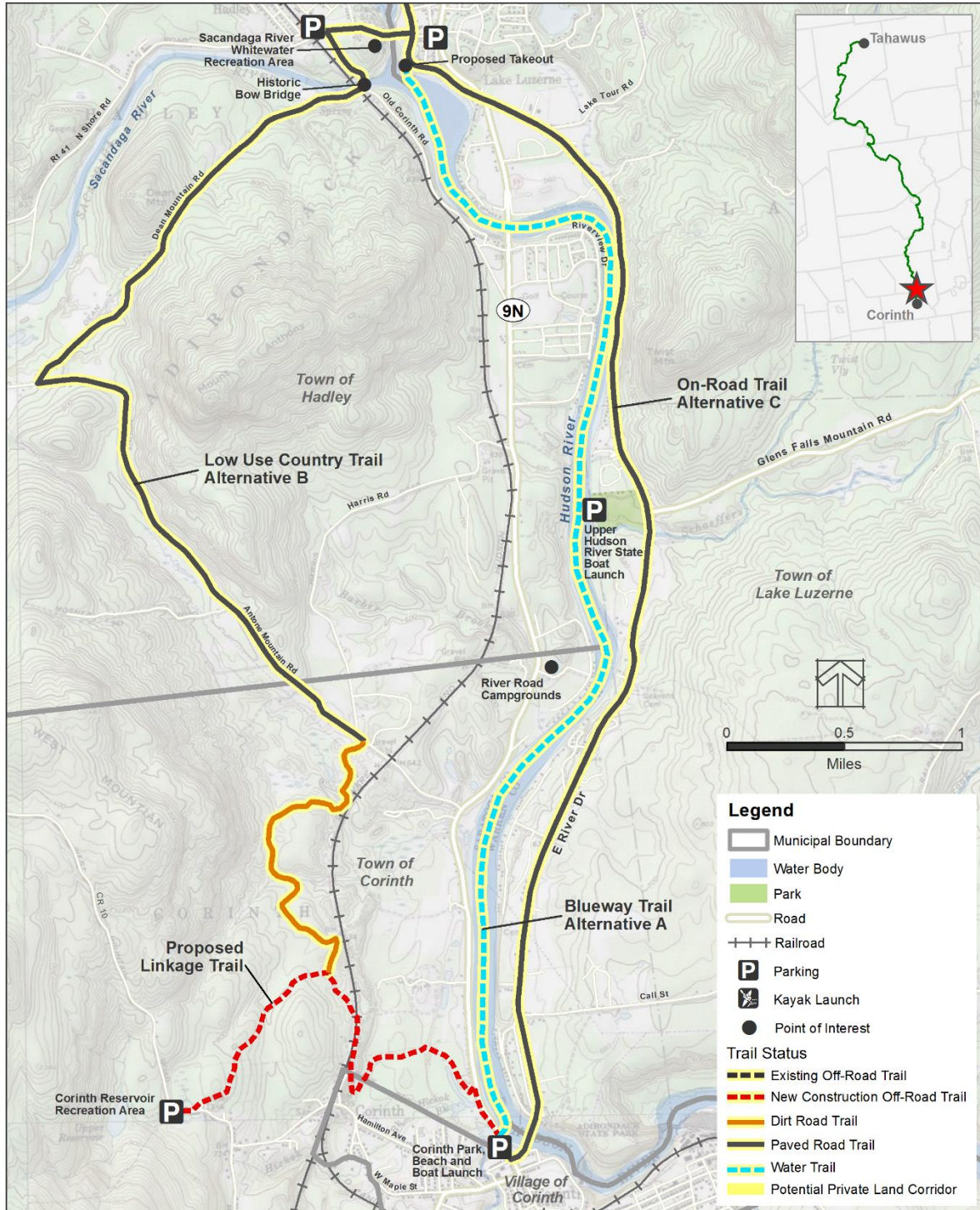


Upper Hudson River State Boat Launch

Figure 3 Trail Area 1: Town of Corinth to Town of Hadley/Lake Luzerne

FIRST WILDERNESS TRAIL

Trail Area 1: Town of Corinth to Town of Hadley/Lake Luzerne
 Segment A: Corinth Park and Beach to Rockwell Falls



Legend

- Municipal Boundary
- Water Body
- Park
- Road
- Railroad
- Parking
- Kayak Launch
- Point of Interest

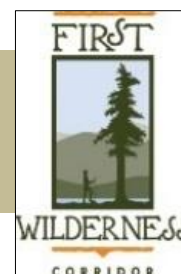
Trail Status

- Existing Off-Road Trail
- New Construction Off-Road Trail
- Dirt Road Trail
- Paved Road Trail
- Water Trail
- Potential Private Land Corridor

FIRST WILDERNESS TRAIL

Trail Area 2

Town of Hadley/Lake Luzerne to Town of Warrensburg



Trail Description: Rockwell Falls to Bear Slides Trailhead

Trail Area 2 consists of a single trail segment that connects the Hadley Train Station and Public Parking Lot in Lake Luzerne to the Bear Slide Trailhead off River Road in the Hudson River Recreation Area. This beautiful section of trail transitions from the “Bridge of Hope” where Rockwell Falls on the Hudson River converges with the Sacandaga River rapids, to the wild and remote public recreation area with primitive camping and hiking experiences north of the hamlet of Lake Luzerne. Winding north out of Hadley and Lake Luzerne, this trail segment shifts from an on-road trail with moderate traffic flows to low use on-road conditions along River Road to the Bear Slides Trailhead. This entire segment provides users an authentic hamlet-to-hike riverside experience.

The southern section will extend from the communities of Hadley/Luzerne along River Road to the intersection with Thomas Road. River Road is a relatively low speed road that is paved on its southern end and a dirt surface on the northern end. North of the intersection of Thomas Road the trail continues north through state lands of the Lake George Wild Forest to the trailhead at Bear Slide, also known as Darling Ford.

Existing UMP designations support the development of a trail that links the towns of Luzerne and Warrensburg. The large tracts of public lands have multiple campsites and infrastructure in place to accommodate trail users, and the soils and vegetative cover in this area are favorable for trail development.

Water Access Points

Hadley - Sacandaga River Whitewater Recreation Area; and Kayak Take Out at Memorial Park.
Lake Luzerne – Wayside Beach; Mill Park Kayak Take Out; and Pikes Beach on the Hudson River.

Points of Interest

Hadley - Hadley Bow Bridge; Hadley Whitewater Park; Bend of the River Golf Club; Sam Smead Memorial Park; Sacandaga Outdoor Center; and Stewart’s Pond Campground.

Lake Luzerne - Wayside Beach; Pierpont Beach; Kinnear Museum of Local History; Adirondack Folk School; Luzerne Music Center; Mill Park; Potash Mountain Trail; and Hudson River Special Management Area.

Amenities

These communities offer a variety of accommodations, restaurants, bars, convenience stores and shops and recreational opportunities including campgrounds, multiple canoe and kayak launches and take-outs, and an array of trails and accessible areas within the Hudson River Special Management Area.

Connector Trails

Bear Slides Trail; Morton Mountain Trail; Scoville Flats Trail; Stones Mountain Trail; Thomas Road Trail; loop trail from intersection of Gay Pond Road to Old Stage Road to Thomas Road; Potash Mountain Trail; and snowmobile trail from Thomas Road to the Village of Lake George.

Planning Support

- Lake George Wild Forest Unit Management Plan (Draft)
- First Wilderness Heritage Corridor Action Plan Update (2016)
- Town of Lake Luzerne Waterfront Revitalization Strategy and Comprehensive Plan (2010)
- Hadley Hamlet Plan Pedestrian Linkage Study and Main Street Improvement Plan (2006)
- Hadley Hamlet Master Plan (2004)

Implementation Strategy

Some of the trail will be on-road. Therefore, signage and road crossing markers (where needed) will be required to formalize trail route. To move the trail off-road along the River Road onto a dedicated path will necessitate a process to amend the Lake George Wild Forest UMP. The trail will need to avoid the agricultural areas in this vicinity and trail easements or use agreements will be required for any involved willing private property owners.

Trail Segment Details

Rockwell Falls to Bear Slides Trailhead	
Length (existing/proposed):	7.8 miles (5.3/2.5)
APA Land Use Class:	Hamlet; Moderate Intensity Use; Resource Management; Wild Forest
DEC Lands:	Lake George Wild Forest; Hudson River Special Management Area
Trailheads & Parking:	Hadley Train Station; Lake Luzerne Public Parking Lot; River Road Trailhead; Bear Slide Trailhead; Scoville Flats Trailhead; Stones Mountain Trailhead; Thomas Road Trailhead
Surface & Accessibility:	Paved & dirt roads; 2-3-foot wide natural surface, single track trail
Signage:	Interpretive kiosks exist at Hadley Train Station & Lake Luzerne Parking Lot; Wayfinding signage is needed at Lake Luzerne Recreation Area
Phase of Development:	Partially complete as an on-road experience

Trail Area Totals

Trail Area 2: Town of Hadley/Lake Luzerne to Town of Warrensburg Boundary	
Length (existing/proposed):	7.8 miles (5.3/2.5)
Off-Road Length	4.5 miles
State Lands:	7 (273.-1-1; 273.-1-2; 292.-1-1; 292.-1-35; 298.10-1-1; 298.-1-1; 298.-1-2)
State Off-Road Length:	4.5 miles
Private Lands:	1 (298.19-1-10)
Private Off-Road Length:	N/A
County Lands:	None
County Off-Road Length:	N/A
Municipal Lands:	None
Municipal Off-Road Length:	N/A



Rockwell Falls on the Hudson River
Source: Greg Klingler - FirstWilderness.com



Eddy Mountain from River Road



Hudson River Special Management Area



Bear Slides Parking Lot



View North on River Road

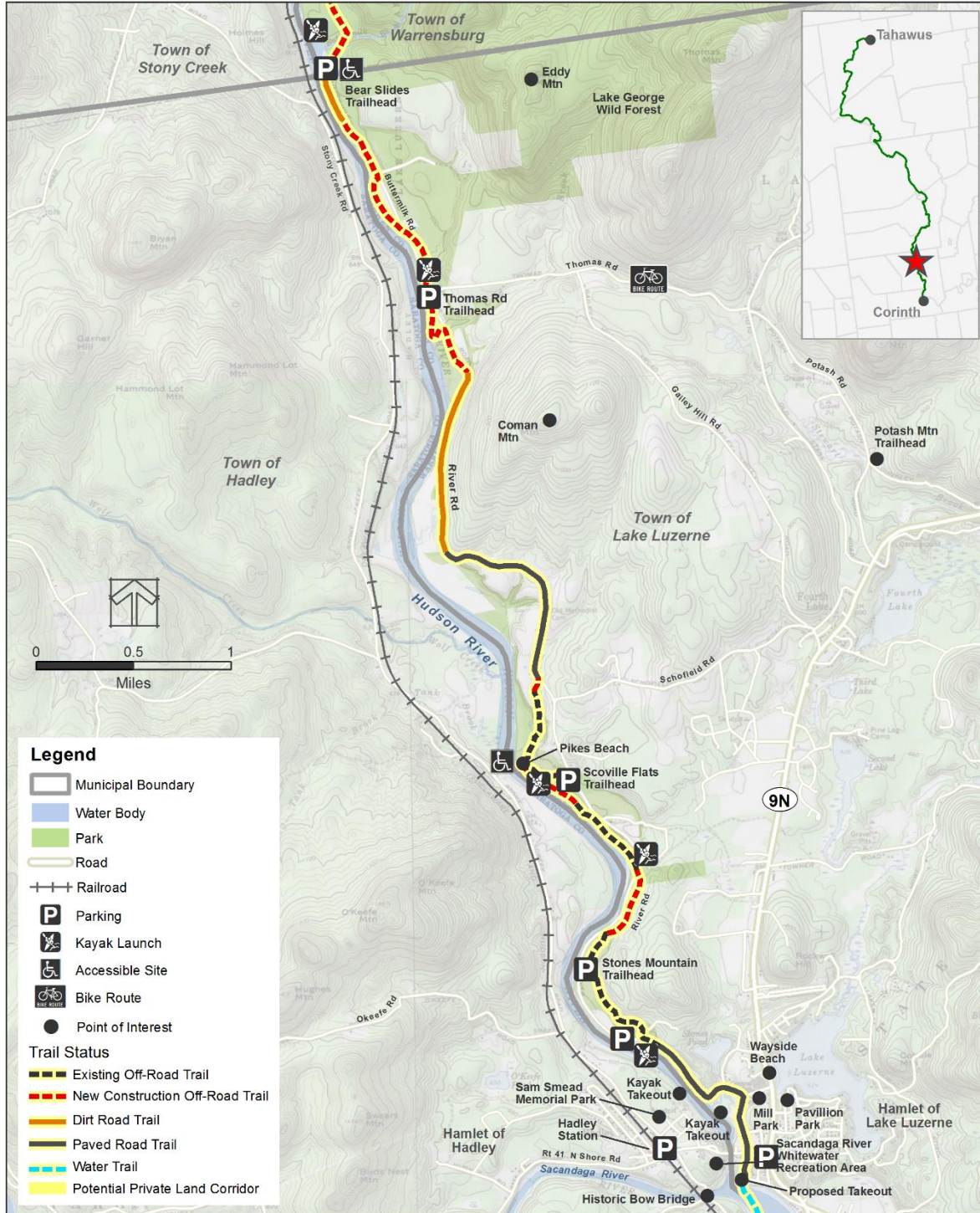


UpRiver Café
Source: UpRiver Café

Figure 4 Trail Area 2: Town of Hadley/Lake Luzerne to Town of Warrensburg

FIRST WILDERNESS TRAIL

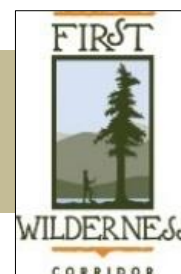
Trail Area 2: Town of Hadley/Lake Luzerne to Town of Warrensburg
 Rockwell Falls to Bear Slides Trailhead



FIRST WILDERNESS TRAIL

Trail Area 3

Town of Warrensburg to Town of Chester



Trail Description:

Trail Area 3 consists of three trail segments offering a diversity of recreational and scenic experiences from the Bear Slide Trailhead in the Town of Warrensburg to Potter Brook Road in the Town of Chester. Three alternatives are presented to connect the Hickory Hill Ski Area to the Warren County Fish Hatchery. From that point on, only one trail route was deemed feasible. The majority of the trail will utilize the existing trail network of the Lake George Wild Forest, Hudson River Special Management Area, Pack Demonstration Forest, and several local parks and open spaces. New trail builds will be necessary in order to connect these many special places.

Segment A: Bear Slides Trailhead to Hickory Hill Ski Area

Segment A will travel from the Bear Slide Trailhead to Hickory Hill Ski Area along the Hudson River on River Road/Buttermilk Road and the internal road network of the Hudson River Recreation Area and Lake George Wild Forest to connect with Katts Corner Road. Sections between state lands and along Katts Corner Road will require negotiations with 1 to 3 landowners to make a safe, unimpeded trail segment. This trail will be best developed as a natural surface single track backcountry biking and hiking trail. The designated trailheads are sufficient.

Segment B: Hickory Hill Ski Area to Warren County Nature/Cross Country Ski Trails

Segment B extends through the Town of Warrensburg primarily along River Road. The successful implementation of this trail segment will provide a means for pedestrians and cyclists to travel between the town center and the existing parklands and access points along the Hudson River. On-road sections of the trail will be contained to the left-side of the road within the right-of-way to minimize road crossings and maximize proximity to the waterfront.

Alternative A: Off-Road State Land Trail

Alternative A is the preferred route for the trail as it will link several existing off-road trails and provide a more wilderness experience along the Hudson River. The trail will run along River Road to a proposed suspension bridge across the Schroon River south of the dam from lands on the south side of the river owned by the Town of Warrensburg and lands on the north side of the river owned by NYS. The Town plans to develop their lands as a public park. The remainder of the segment will utilize existing off-road trails in state lands and the shoulder of Echo Lake Road to get to the Warren County Fish Hatchery.

The land ownership is limited to public entities and a single private landowner who has stated a willingness to allow the project. Having few landowners involved makes the development of this trail segment administratively feasible. The bridge will be significantly challenging to construct since there will be permitting issues related to access and wetlands.

Alternative B: On-Road Hamlet Trail

An alternative is to continue east along River Road on an improved road shoulder area to the Milton Avenue Bridge. Riders and hikers would ride along Milton Avenue, turn right on Library Avenue, left on Elm Street, left on Hudson Street, and left on Echo Lake Road and into the Warren County Fish Hatchery where the FWT continues north.

Alternative C: Off-Road Rail & Right-of-Way Trail

If concerns regarding landownership, site access and trespassing on adjacent private properties can be properly addressed with long term effectiveness, then an alternative for Segment B is to use the existing rights-of-way for the now inactive railroad and active Niagara Mohawk Power Company transmission lines. The trail would enter the railroad right-of-way at the entrance to Hickory Hill Ski Area, continue east to Alden Avenue, go north to cross Schroon River at the Milton Avenue bridge, turn west on Library Avenue, and turn off-road on a new trail through the right-of-way for the transmission lines to Echo Lake Road by the Warren County Fish Hatchery. This alternative is highly conceptual and therefore will require a feasibility study to determine the exact route and its viability.

**Segment C: Warren County Nature/Cross Country Ski Trails to Potter Brook Road
Hudson Street/Golf Course Road to Millington Brook**

This trail segment follows the wide shoulder of Hudson Street and connects to existing trail infrastructure. The county land adjacent to the Hudson River has a large parking lot and trail system that gives access to the river for swimming, hiking, skiing and mountain biking. The Pack Forest land on the north end is a reasonable location for parking and trailhead infrastructure.

This trail segment will be best served by being a highly developed pedestrian and biking trail. It will require extensive administrative development by the Warren County DPW and possibly utilize State and Federal Transportation Grant funding streams. The dimensions of the existing roadway with wide ditch lines and multiple pull-offs lends itself to the creation of adjacent riverside pedestrian and bike trail.

A major benefit of this trail segment is the pedestrian access to one of the most scenic and environmentally unique boreal river experiences in the country. The location, lands and infrastructure lend themselves to intensive trail development. This trail area will be a bucket list destination for people visiting the Adirondacks. It will be reasonable to believe that this destination will increase the use of surrounding recreational infrastructure. The proximity of this trail segment to the community of Warrensburg should result in an increase for the local recreational economy.

Millington Brook to State Route 28 Pack Forest Entrance

The majority of this trail segment is located on existing single-track trail in the uplands adjacent to the Hudson River. It begins at a parking area along Golf Course Road just north of Millington Brook and ends at Rt. 28 at the northern end of the Pack Forest property. The entirety of the trail segment is on Pack Forest property. The trail should be a natural surface single track biking and hiking trail.

The administrative development of this property will rely on a recreational agreement with SUNY ESF. Their property is now open to the public for outdoor recreation and the proposed trail development will fit into their mission. This makes it reasonable to believe that this trail segment has the possibility of development in a relatively short period of time. This trail will be best developed as a single-track trail experience. The soils, topography and vegetative cover will be conducive to trail construction.

The major value of this trail segment is the ability for the recreationist to experience a quiet undeveloped riverside experience on a natural trail from an easily accessible location (Hudson Street). The location of this section allows users to be surrounded by only the noise of the river and the wind in the pines. When combined with the Hudson Street “Ice Meadows” trail it will provide a diverse Hudson River experience.

State Route 28 Pack Forest Entrance to Potter Brook Road

This section of trail is located on existing improved gravel forest roads and old unimproved forest roadways. The trail segment turns away from the edge of the Hudson River and follows the adjacent highlands that are generally open to public recreation. In the area where the trail segment passes through, the private lands of SUNY ESF at Pack Forest are unimproved and primarily used for forest practices and outdoor education. The trail in this section should be a natural surface single track bike, hike and ski trail.

The major attraction of this trail segment is experiencing a demonstration forest, outstanding views of the river from Ben Wood Mountain, access to Pack Forest Lake, and a trail link to the north. The Pack Forest portion of this trail segment will be a suitable as a stand-alone portion option while private land easements are being addressed.

It is likely that a recreational easement could be developed with SUNY ESF for a trail in this area. The private lands are being utilized for forest income and are believed to potentially have active hunting easements. The success of trail projects in this trail area will be dependent on the acquisition of easements on the large private land parcels or on state lands adjacent the Hudson River between the Schroon River and the Warren County Fish Hatchery, the ability to utilize existing trails on county lands north of the golf course, a portion of Golf Course Road and SUNY ESF Lands, and easements on large landholders to complete the route to The Glen.

Water Access Points

Echo Lake; Canoe/Kayak Access at Warren County Nature Trail Site

Points of Interest

Hickory Hill Ski Area; Lake George Wild Forest; Warren County Fish Hatchery; Ben Wood Mountain; Pack Forest; Pack Forest Lake; Ice Meadows; Glen-Hudson Campground; Deadwood Mountain; Hudson River Recreation Area; Cronin’s Golf Course; Echo Lake; The Three Sisters; Hackensack Mountain Park

Amenities

Local parks, accommodations, restaurants, bars, and shops in Warrensburg; Trails and campgrounds at Lake George Wild Forest; Trails at Hackensack Mountain Park & Recreation Area; Trails at Pack Forest; Trails and swimming at the Hudson River Recreation Area

Connector Trails

Hackensack Mountain Loop; Pack Demonstration Forest Loop; Warren County Hiking/Cross Country Ski Trail site

Planning Support

- Lake George Wild Forest Unit Management Plan (Draft)
- First Wilderness Heritage Corridor Action Plan Update (2016)
- Town of Warrensburg Comprehensive Plan and Waterfront Revitalization Strategy (2012)
- Chester Townwide Recreation Plan (2015)

Implementation Strategy

Gaining local support for acquiring recreation easements on private lands will be critical to the success of this segment. This support will be necessary to achieve access to lands in Pack Forest and to the south. Amending the Lake George Wild Forest UMP will possibly need to be undertaken depending on the route chosen north of Pack Forest. Recreation easements on large private land parcels will also have to be acquired on the northern section of this segment. A long span suspension bridge similar to the one across the West Stony Creek in the Silver Lake Wilderness would be ideal for spanning the Schroon River.

Trail Segments

Segment A: Bear Slides Trailhead to Hickory Hill Ski Area	
Length (existing/proposed):	7.5 miles (5.2/2.3)
APA Land Use Class:	Wild Forest; Resource Management; Low Intensity Use
DEC Lands:	Lake George Wild Forest
Trailheads & Parking:	Bear Slide Trailhead
Surface & Accessibility:	2-3-foot wide natural surface, single track hike/bike trail
Signage:	None
Phase of Development:	Partially complete
Segment B: Hickory Hill Ski Area to the Warren County Nature & Cross-Country Ski Trails	
Alternative A: Off-Road State Land Trail	
Length (existing/proposed):	4.4 miles (4.4/0)
APA Land Use:	Low Intensity; Hamlet; Wild Forest; Rural Use
DEC Lands:	Lake George Wild Forest
Trailheads & Parking:	Warren County Fish Hatchery; Hackensack Mountain Trailhead; Warrensburg Recreation Field; Paper Mill Park
Surface & Accessibility:	3-5-foot wide stone dust and hardened surface, hike/bike trails
Signage:	None
Phase of Development:	Conceptual

Alternative B: On-Road Hamlet Trail	
Length (existing/proposed):	6.5 miles (6.5/0)
APA Land Use:	Low Intensity; Hamlet; Wild Forest; Rural Use
DEC Lands:	Lake George Wild Forest
Trailheads & Parking:	Warren County Fish Hatchery; Hackensack Mountain Trailhead; Warrensburg Recreation Field; Paper Mill Park
Surface & Accessibility:	3-5-foot wide hardened surface, hike/bike trails
Signage:	None
Phase of Development:	Conceptual
Alternative C: Off-Road Rail & Right-of-Way Trail	
Length (existing/proposed):	6.4 miles (3.8/2.6)
APA Land Use:	Low Intensity; Hamlet; Wild Forest; Rural Use
DEC Lands:	Lake George Wild Forest
Trailheads & Parking:	Warren County Fish Hatchery; Hackensack Mountain Trailhead; Warrensburg Recreation Field; Paper Mill Park
Surface & Accessibility:	3-5-foot wide stone dust and hardened surface, hike/bike trails
Signage:	None
Phase of Development:	Conceptual
Segment C: Warren County Nature & Cross-Country Ski Trails to Potter Brook Road	
Length (existing/proposed):	7.7 miles (5.8/1.9)
APA Land Use:	Hamlet; Rural Use; Resource Management; Wild Forest
DEC Lands:	Lake George Wild Forest; Hudson River Recreation Area
Trailheads & Parking:	Hackensack Mountain Trailhead; Warrensburg Recreation Field; Hudson River Recreation Area; Millington Brook/Golf Course Road; Pack Demonstration Forest
Surface & Accessibility:	5-6-foot wide hardened, 3-foot wide natural surface and existing gravel roads
Signage:	None
Phase of Development:	Partially complete

Trail Area Totals

Trail Area 3: Town of Warrensburg to Town of Chester	
Length (existing/proposed):	Alt. A: 19.6 miles (15.4/4.2); Alt. B: 21.0 miles (16.8/4.2); Alt. C: 20.9 miles (14.1/6.8)
Off-Road Length:	Alt. A: 14.4 miles; Alt. B: 13.0 miles; Alt. C: 11.3 miles
State Lands:	10 (197.-1-12; 197.-1-3; 210.1-1-16; 222.-1-2; 223.10-1-16; 223.-1-35; 235.-1-12; 248.-1-2; 260.-3-1; 260.-3-3)
State Off-Road Length:	9.4 miles
Private Lands:	31 (210.3-1-1; 152.-2-11; 152.-2-8; 153.-1-30; 167.-2-4; 168.-1-1; 168.-1-23; 168.-1-25; 183.-1-1; 183.-1-15; 183.3-1-30; 210.19-1-32; 210.3-1-2; 210.3-1-4; 222.-1-5; 223.-1-32; 223.-1-33; 223.8-1-2; 248.-1-1.1; 223.-1-33; 223.10-1-15; 223.7-1-10; 223.7-1-25; 223.8-1-42; 223.8-1-39.12; 223.8-1-39.13; 223.8-1-39.22; 223.8-1-15; 223.8-1-43; 223.8-1-26; 223.8-1-2; 210.15-1-30)
Private Off-Road Length:	Alt. A: 8.0 miles; Alt. B: 7.1 miles; Alt. C: 9.3 miles
County Lands:	1 (210.3-1-1)
County Off-Road Length:	0.2 miles
Municipal Lands:	3 (223.7-1-24; 223.10-1-10; 223.10-1-13)
Municipal Off-Road Length:	Alt. A: 200-foot bridge; Alt. C: 0.2 miles



Bear Slides



Hudson River Ice Meadows



Schroon River Dam



Ben Wood Brook Wetland

Figure 5 Segment A: Bear Slides Trailhead to Hickory Hill Ski Area

FIRST WILDERNESS TRAIL

Trail Area 3: Town of Warrensburg to Town of Chester
 Segment A: Bear Slides Trailhead to Hickory Hill Ski Area

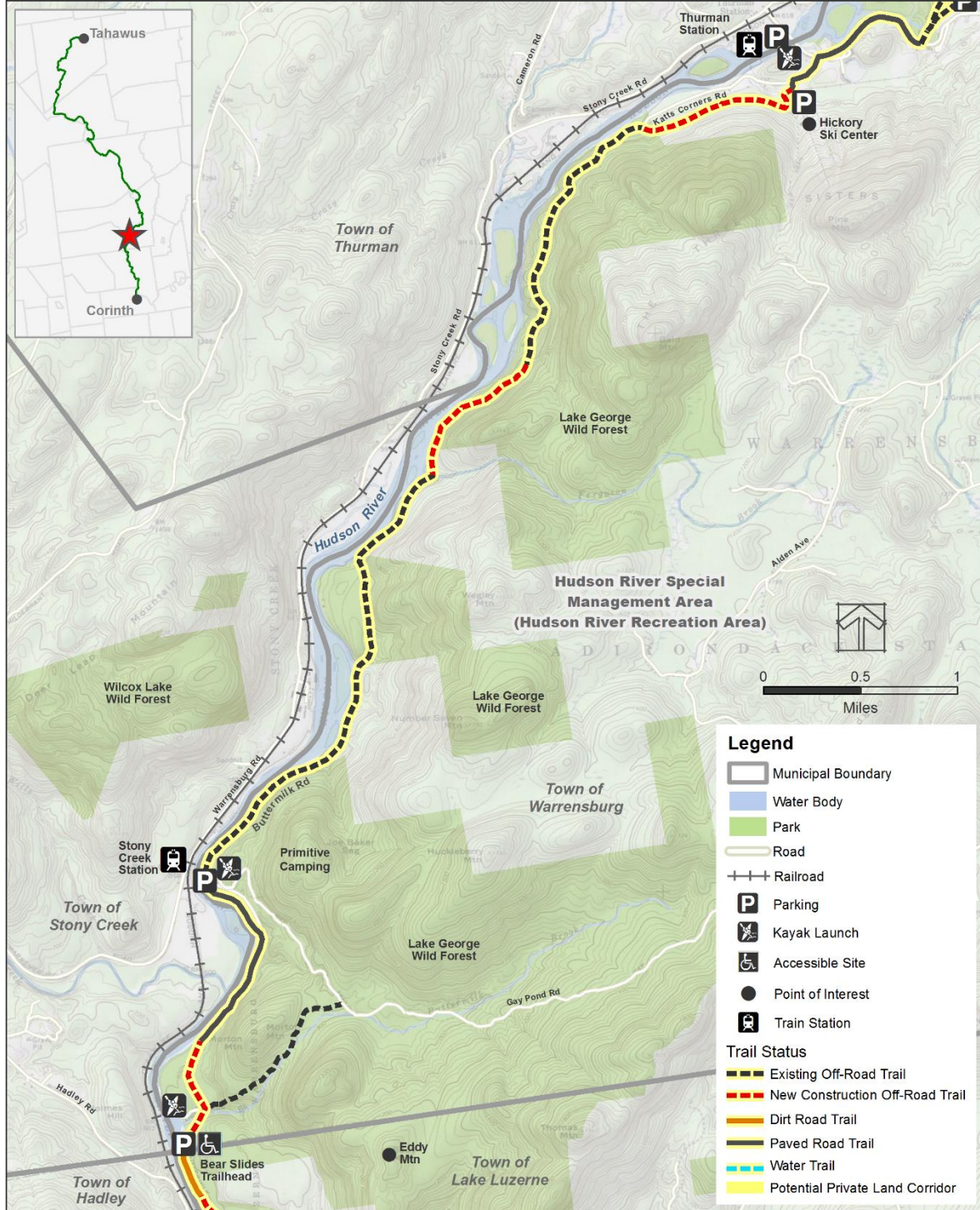


Figure 6 Segment B: Hickory Hill Ski Area to Hudson River Nature Trails

FIRST WILDERNESS TRAIL

Trail Area 3: Town of Warrensburg to Town of Chester
Segment B: Hickory Hill Ski Area to Hudson River Nature Trails

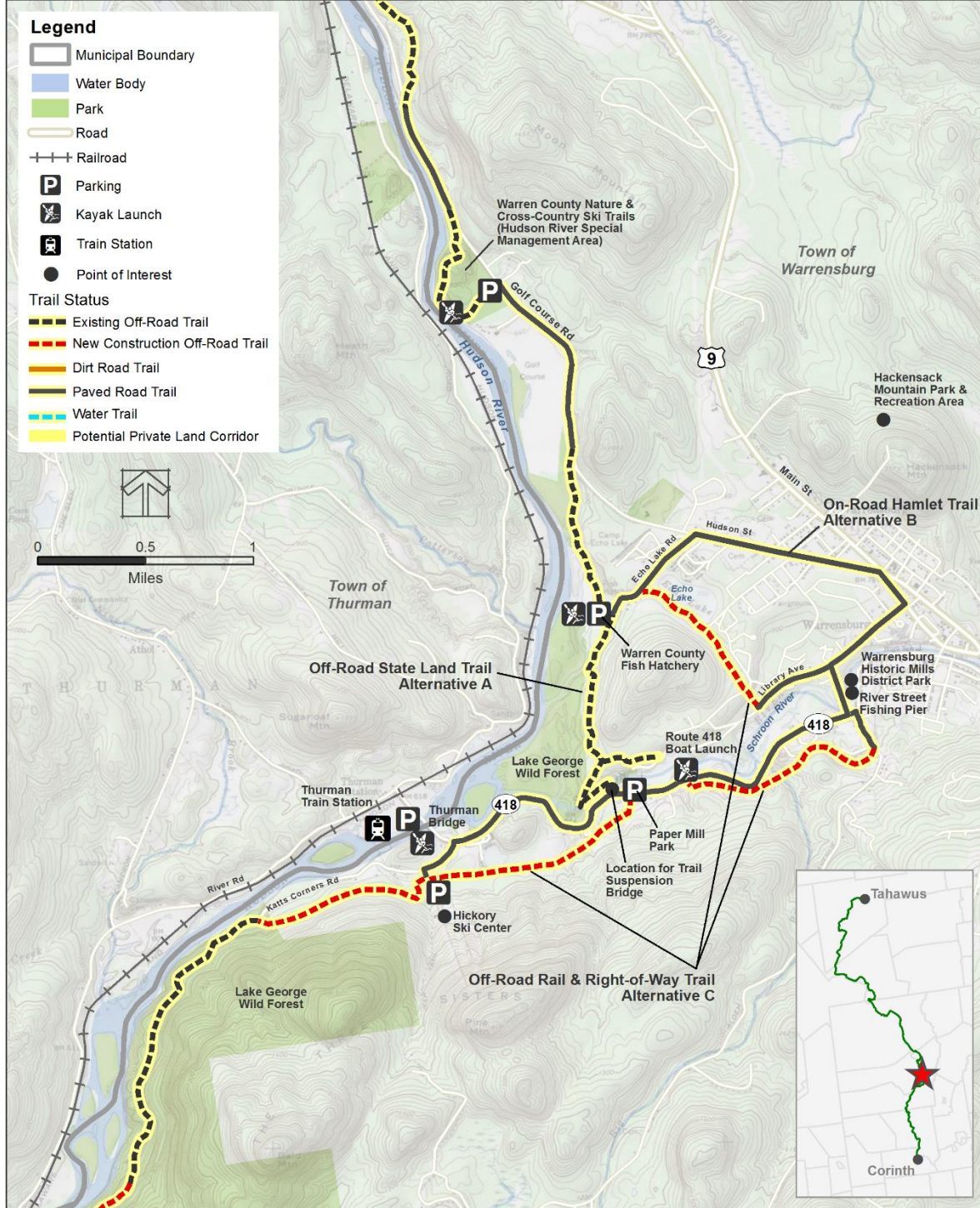
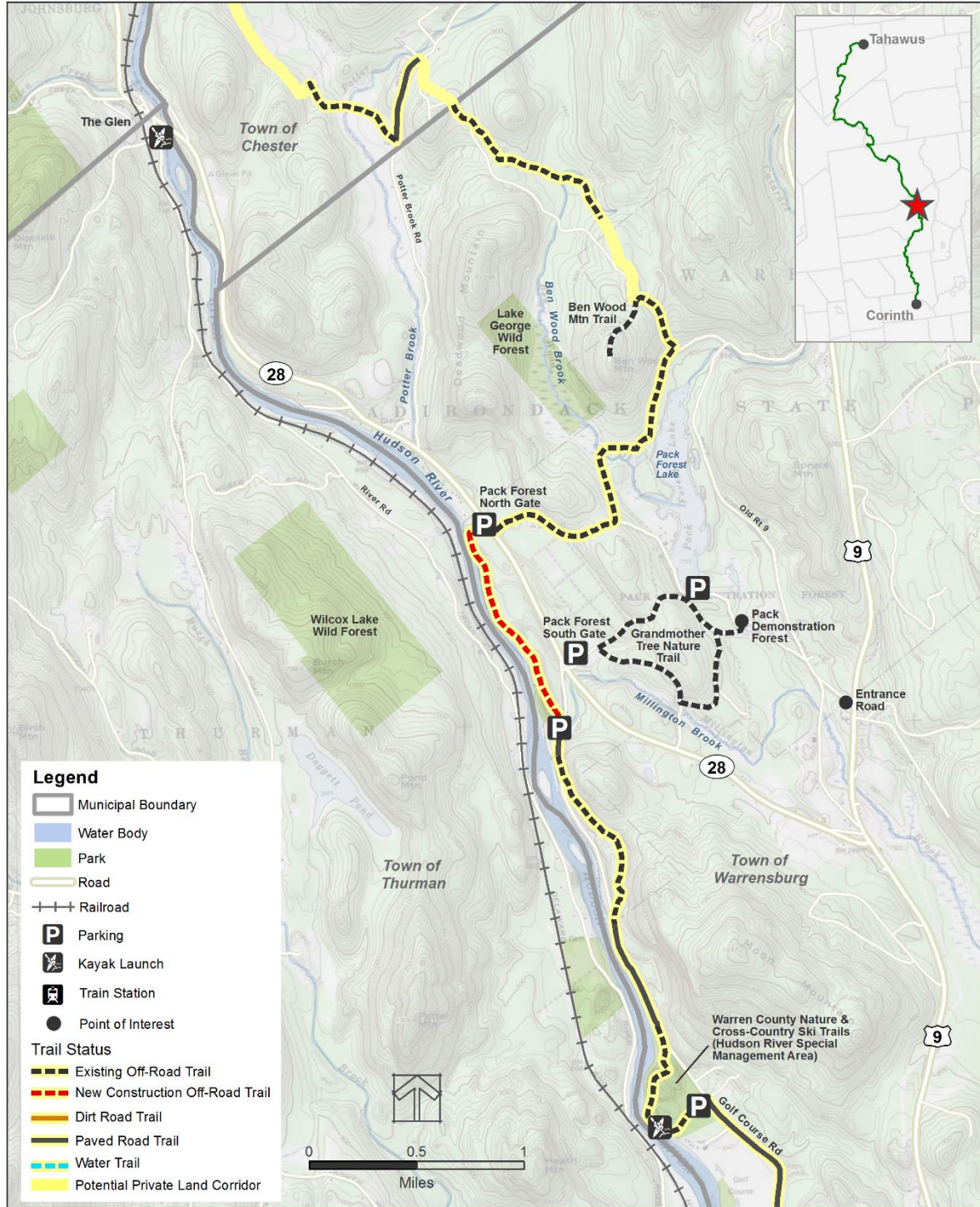


Figure 7 Segment C: Hudson River Nature Trails to Potter Brook Road

FIRST WILDERNESS TRAIL

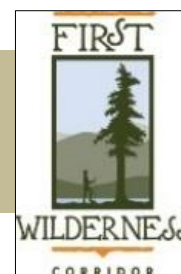
Trail Area 3: Town of Warrensburg to Town of Chester
 Segment C: Hudson River Nature Trails to Potter Brook Road



FIRST WILDERNESS TRAIL

Trail Area 4

Town of Chester



Trail Description: Potter Brook Road to Riparius Bridge

This trail segment is located on low use public roads and existing trails on private and public lands. The off-road portion of the trail will be traverse private lands through forest lands as a natural surface single track bike, hike and ski trail. Success in establishing this section of trail will be dependent on forming recreational easements with the private landowners. One of the landowners has stated a desire to allow the trail on their property.

The major value of this section of trail is providing a connection between large blocks of public recreation lands in the Town of Warrensburg with those in the Town of Chester. The trail will offer visitors a rural forest experience. This is significant in a historical context as these lands have been continually in working forest or agriculture since the first settlement of the Adirondacks.

The southern end of this segment is state land with access to Friends Lake Road, the midpoint contains two parcels of private property that will require easements and the northern end is a large parcel of state land connected to Palmer Pond. This old roadway makes an excellent natural surface single track bike, hike and ski trail with only a limited amount of trail construction needed.

Lake George Wild Forest will allow access to the river's edge and to Palmer Pond. This segment starts at a parking area just north of The Glen Bridge along the Friends Lake Road. The road borders the river closely. The river segment is wild without intrusion or sight of a building from this point to the Riparius. There are two large private land holdings in the middle of the state lands that may limit the potential of this segment, however, it may be possible that easements could be acquired on those lands. It will require the construction of new trail on the southern large parcel of private land by Washburn Eddy.

The central issue associated with creating this section of trail is procuring recreational easements on the two private land parcels near the midpoint of the trail segment. The trail may be located along the western (river) edge of the properties limiting the impact on the use of the property. The trail segment should also include a connection to Palmer Pond. A small public parking area is available at the bridge on Rt. 8 and a trailhead facility is located at the end of the Palmer Pond Road. A public roadway exists through the community of Riverside allowing access to the northern portion of the state land.

This trail segment has a high recreational value. The Hudson River forms the entire length of the western border of the Town of Chester and there isn't a single publicly marked and accessible shoreline for recreation. This trail section will give access to the river and the gentle uplands adjacent. The old roadway that will be utilized for the trail has a gradual grade for a trail that will allow a wide range of ability levels. The nature of a mountain river with rapids and gorge type of environment start at this point and provide a unique visitor experience.

Existing large state land holdings will allow access to the river’s edge and to Palmer Pond. This preferred route will make a quiet and scenic trail easily negotiated by foot or bike along the top of the bank overlooking the river. The soils and nature of this segment will allow the development of an excellent hiking and biking trail.

Water Access Points

Hudson River Canoe/Kayak Access at Riparius

Points of Interest

Pack Forest; Pack Forest Lake; Palmer Pond; McGann Mountain; Campground Mountain; Friends Lake; Ben Wood Mountain; Deadwood Mountain; Wild Waters Outdoor Center; Chestertown Farm; Loon Lake

Amenities

Trails and campgrounds at Palmer Pond; Trails and camp at Pack Forest

Connector Trails

Pack Demonstration Forest Loop; Palmer Pond Trail

Planning Support

- Chester Townwide Recreation Plan (2015)
- First Wilderness Heritage Corridor Action Plan Update (2016)

Implementation Strategy

Acquiring public recreation easements on the two large land parcels surrounded by state lands in the area of Washburn Eddy will be critical to the success of this segment. Amending the Lake George Wild Forest UMP to include a trail on the state lands in this segment will also be required. Existing trails and the potential to receive recreation easements on private lands would allow this route to be completed within a short-term time period.

Trail Segments

Potter Brook Road to Riparius Bridge	
Length (existing/proposed):	7.3 miles (5.8/1.5)
APA Land Use Class:	Rural Use; Hamlet
DEC Lands:	Lake George Wild Forest
Trailheads & Parking:	Hudson River Canoe/Kayak Access at Riparius
Surface & Accessibility:	2-3-foot wide natural surface, single track trail
Signage:	None
Phase of Development:	Partially complete

Trail Area Totals

Trail Area 4: Town of Chester	
Length (existing/proposed):	7.3 miles (5.8/1.5)
Off-Road Length:	5.1 miles
State Lands:	6 (119.-2-1; 119.-2-18; 119.-2-19; 119.-2-20; 135.-2-1; 135.-2-2)
State Off-Road Length:	2.3 miles
Private Lands:	11 (119.-2-15; 119.-2-16; 135.-2-5.2; 152.-1-1.3; 152.-1-23; 152.-1-39.2; 152.-1-40; 152.-1-41; 152.-1-49; 152.-1-57; 152.-1-58)
Private Length:	2.8 miles
County Lands:	None
County Off-Road Length:	N/A
Municipal Lands:	None
Municipal Off-Road Length:	N/A



Trail in Harris Nature Preserve

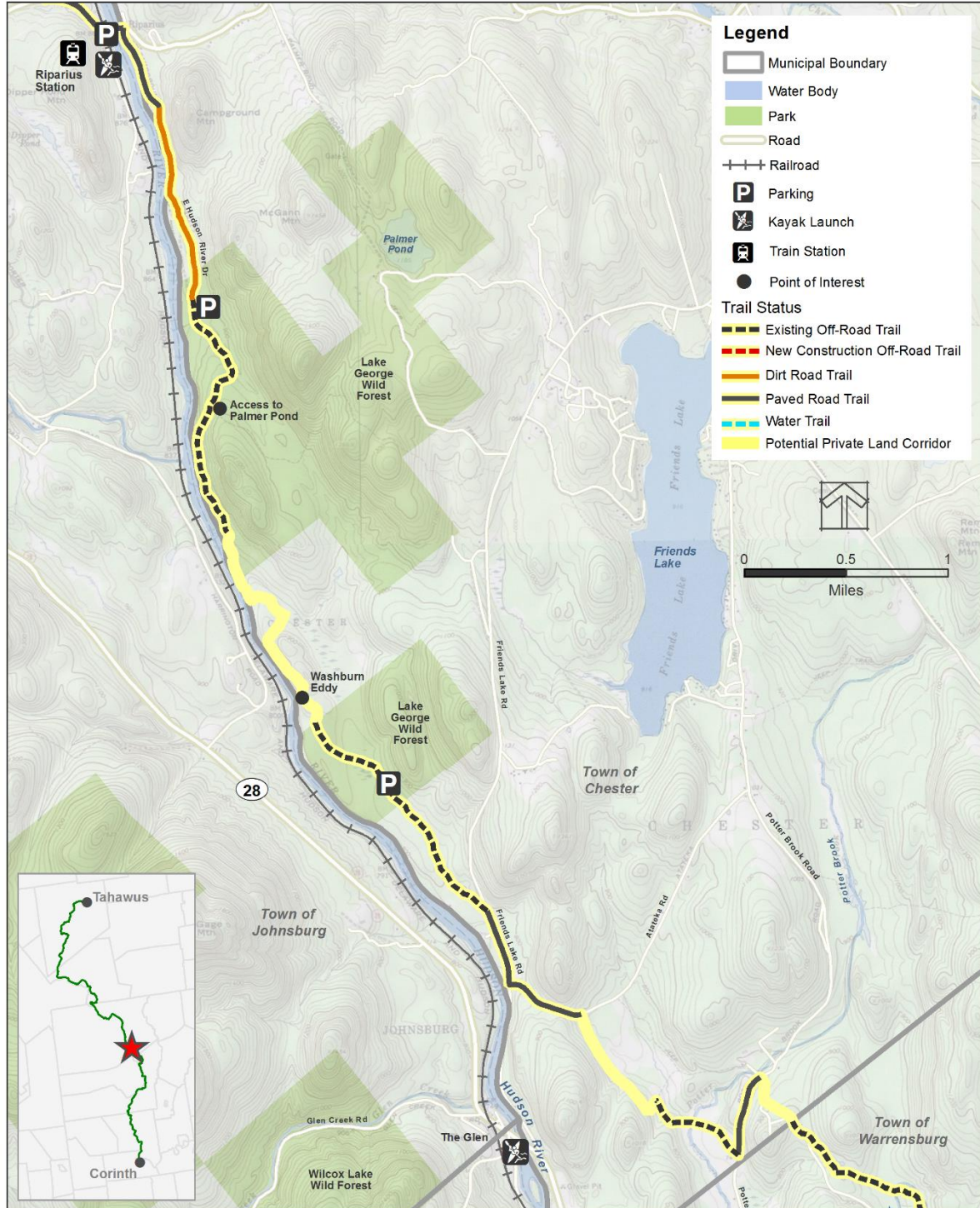


Hudson River by Riparius
 Source: Greg Klingler - FirstWilderness.com

Figure 8 Trail Area 4: Town of Chester

FIRST WILDERNESS TRAIL

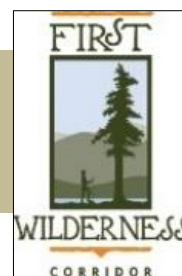
Trail Area 4: Town of Chester
Potter Brook Road to Riparius Bridge



FIRST WILDERNESS TRAIL

Trail Area 5

Town of Johnsburg



Trail Description: Riparius Bridge to Johnsburg Town Hall

Trail Area 5 includes a single segment of the First Wilderness Heritage Trail in the Town of Johnsburg. This segment extends from East River Drive in the hamlet of Riparius to Johnsburg Town Hall on Main Street in the hamlet of North Creek. The entirety of this proposed trail is along existing roads.

Trail Area 5 begins at East River Drive on the east side of the Hudson River in the Town of Chester, moves west across the Riparius Bridge via State Route 8 in the hamlet of Riparius, and continues west along River Road and River Road Cutoff to Main Street in the hamlet of North Creek to its terminus at the Johnsburg Town Hall. East River Drive is an approximately 1.4-mile road. The trail along State Route 8 will be approximately 2,350-foot long. River Road Cutoff is an approximately 2,500-foot long dirt road off of State Route 8 in Riparius which provides access to River Road. River Road has 1-mile of pavement from the end of River Road Cutoff before it transitions to a dirt and seasonal road. River Road becomes a paved road again near the intersection with Airport Road and Combes Road about 1,500 feet from Main Street in North Creek.

This segment of the trail offers high quality views of the mountains and the Hudson River. The road is lightly used by vehicles and is the historical connection between the communities of North Creek and Riparius.

Water Access Points

Hudson River Canoe/Kayak Access at Riparius and North Creek

Points of Interest

Huckleberry Mountain; Crane Mountain; Riparius Bridge; Dipper Pond Mountain; Gore Mountain Ski Resort; North Creek Ski Bowl Town Park; North Creek Historic Train Station and Depot Museum; Historic Riparius Train Station; Tannery Pond Community Center; North Creek Rafting Company; Collins Mountain; North Creek Mosaic project

Amenities

Trails and primitive camp sites at Palmer Pond; Local parks, accommodations, restaurants, bars, shops, and local white-water rafting companies; Dynamite Hill Recreation Area

Connector Trails

North Creek Trail System; North Country National Scenic Trail; Schaefer Trail; Station Trail; Carol Thomas Trail

Planning Support

- Town of Johnsburg Comprehensive Plan (2005)
- First Wilderness Heritage Corridor Action Plan Update (2016)

Implementation Strategy

The trail through the Town of Johnsburg will utilize existing dirt roads and less than one mile of paved low use/low speed town highways. Given the route was previously used for the Race-the-Train foot race, it will require little to no preparation.

Trail Segments

Riparius Bridge to Johnsburg Town Hall	
Length (existing/proposed):	7.8 miles (7.8/0)
APA Land Use Class:	Hamlet; Rural Use
DEC Lands:	None
Trailheads & Parking:	Hudson River Canoe/Kayak Access at Riparius; North Creek Ski Bowl Town Park; Johnsburg Town Hall
Surface & Accessibility:	Two track gravel road
Signage:	None
Phase of Development:	Existing

Trail Area Totals

Trail Area 5 contains the single on-road trail between Riparius Bridge and the Johnsburg Town Hall. There are no further land ownership details.



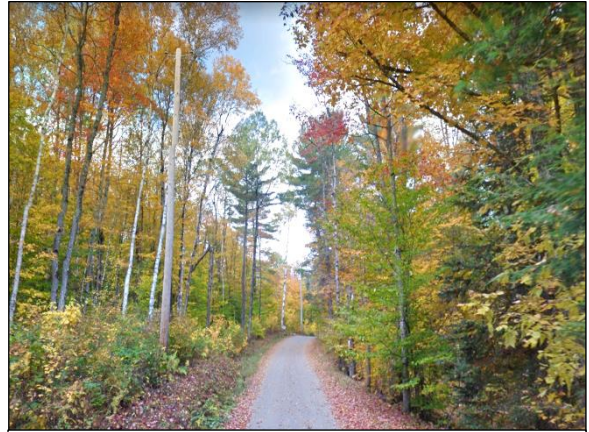
Hudson River in North Creek
 Source: Greg Klingler - FirstWilderness.com



Downtown North Creek
 Source: Town of Johnsburg - FirstWilderness.com



View West of Kayak Access from Riparius Bridge

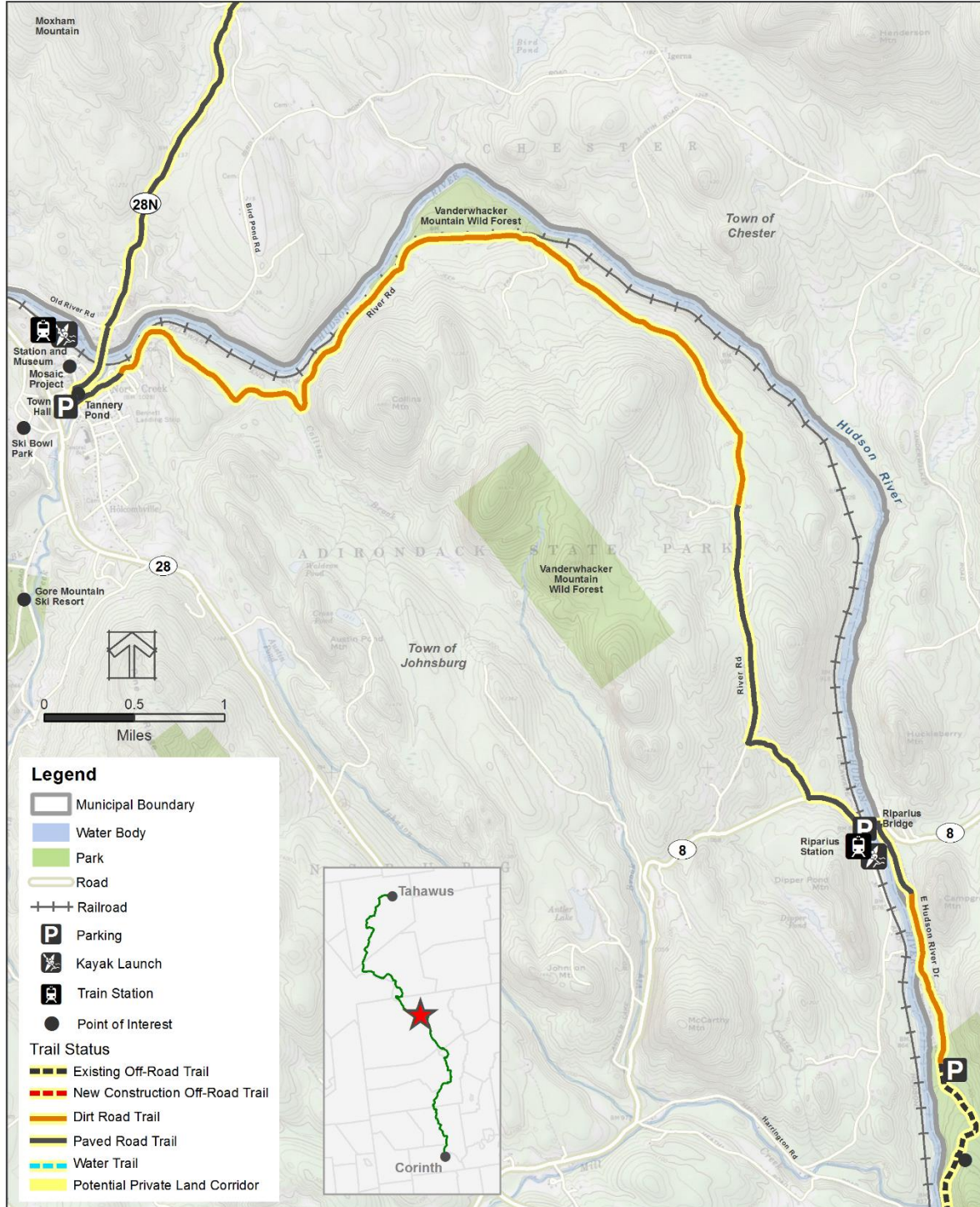


River Road
Source: Google Maps

Figure 9 Trail Area 5: Town of Johnsburg

FIRST WILDERNESS TRAIL

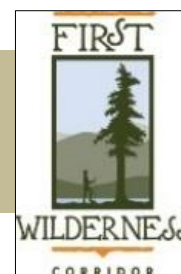
Trail Area 5: Town of Johnsburg
Riparius Bridge to Johnsburg Town Hall



FIRST WILDERNESS TRAIL

Trail Area 6

Town of Chester to Town of Minerva



Trail Description: Johnsbury Town Hall to Moxham Mountain Trailhead

The successful construction of a recreational trail from the hamlet of North Creek to the Town of Minerva will result in a continuous trail segment between Warren and Essex Counties. The opportunity to formalize the North Country National Scenic Trail in this area and connect the community of North Creek to an extensive interior trail system to the north will provide a recreational and economic stimulus to the area. Issues with the topography and land ownership are significant impediments to the development of this connection. The following options for the trail are based on the results of the preliminary analysis.

Alternative A: Old River Road Extension

Alternative A extends the First Wilderness Heritage Trail from Route 28N to Moxham Mountain along the shore of the Hudson River. This is the preferred route for the trail between North Creek and Minerva. Beginning in North Creek at the Johnsbury Town Hall, the trail will travel north on the shoulder of Route 28N, across the Hudson River Bridge to the intersection of Old River Road and Bird Pond Road in the Town of Chester. From there it will continue west within the Old River Road right-of-way to the end of the road. It will then travel north across private property using a historic trail near the river known as the Adirondack Park Preserve. The trail will move off-road as it wraps around Clear Pond through state lands to connect with the existing Moxham Mountain Trail in the Town of Minerva.

A private land easement will be required for the trail from the end of Old River Road to the state lands in Minerva. Landowner considerations may include closure during hunting season, private property posting and gates at a couple of access roads.

Alternative B: Route 28N to the Moxham Mountain Trail

Alternative B utilizes the shoulder of Route 28N to connect Johnsbury Town Hall with a planned trailhead for Moxham Mountain north of Walter Foote Road and opposite of Dell Culver Road in the Town of Chester. The feasibility of this option is dependent on plans by the Adirondack Land Trust, who recently purchased private property around Moxham Mountain with the intention of selling the property to New York State. If this strategy is successful, residents and visitors of the Town of Chester will have access to a southern route to the peak of Moxham Mountain.

Despite the potential for a trail connection without a private land easement, Alternative B is less desirable given its requirement for a trail along the narrow shoulder of Route 28N. Significant sections of the road are steep and windy with speed limits exceeding 40 miles-per-hour. These conditions are not ideal for recommending pedestrian access.

Water Access Points

Minerva Beach; Hudson River Canoe/Kayak Access in Johnsburg

Points of Interest

Gore Mountain Ski Resort; North Creek Ski Bowl Town Park; North Creek Depot Museum; Tannery Pond Community Center; North Creek Rafting Company; Moxham Mountain; West Hill; Minerva Recreation Area; Moxham Point; Siamese Ponds Wilderness; Vanderwhacker Mountain Wild Forest

Amenities

Local parks, accommodations, restaurants, convenience stores, shops, local white-water rafting companies, and cultural amenities of Johnsburg.

Connector Trails

North Creek Trail System; Moxham Mountain Trail; North Country National Scenic Trail; Station Trail

Planning Support

- Chester Townwide Recreation Plan (2015)
- Town of Johnsburg Comprehensive Plan (2005)
- First Wilderness Heritage Corridor Action Plan Update (2016)

Implementation Strategy

On-road sections of the trail will require descriptive signage and the installation of road crossing markers where necessary. A permit will need to be filed with the NYS DOT to use the right-of-way of Route 28N. As for new off-road trails, sections through private property will require a trail easement and sections through state lands will require working with the NYS DEC to amend certain Unit Management Plans.

Trail Segments

Johnsburg Town Hall to Moxham Mountain Trailhead	
Alternative A: Old River Road Extension	
Length (existing/proposed):	7.8 miles (5.1/2.8)
APA Land Use Class:	Hamlet; Moderate Intensity; Rural Use; Wild Forest
DEC Lands:	Vanderwhacker Mountain Wild Forest
Trailheads & Parking:	Johnsburg Town Hall; North Creek Ski Bowl Town Park; Moxham Mountain Trailhead
Surface & Accessibility:	Natural surface, single track trail; Dirt road; Hardened road
Signage:	None
Phase of Development:	Partially complete

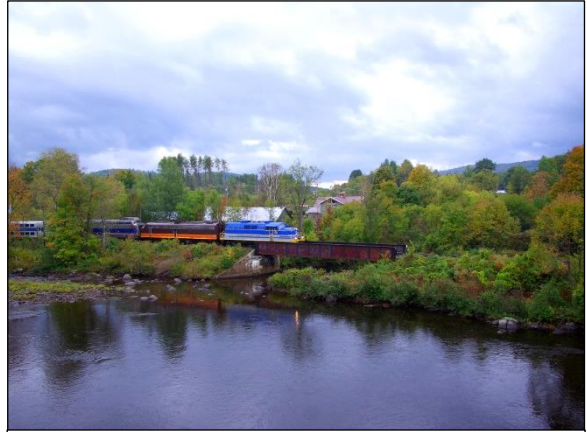
Alternative B: Route 28N Moxham Mountain Trail	
Length (existing/proposed):	7.7 miles (5.4/2.4)
APA Land Use Class:	Hamlet; Moderate Intensity; Rural Use; Wild Forest
DEC Lands:	Vanderwhacker Mountain Wild Forest
Trailheads & Parking:	Johnsburg Town Hall; North Creek Ski Bowl Town Park; Moxham Mountain Trailhead
Surface & Accessibility:	Natural surface, single track trail; Hardened road
Signage:	None
Phase of Development:	Partially complete

Trail Area Totals

Trail Area 6: Town of Chester to Town of Minerva	
Length (existing/proposed):	Alt. A: 7.8 miles (5.1/2.8); Alt. B: 7.7 miles (5.4/2.4)
Off-Road Length:	Alt. A: 3.4 miles; Alt. B: 4.1 miles
State Lands:	9 (31.-2-12; 31.-2-2.1; 31.-2-4; 163.-1-26.000; 163.-1-27.000; 163.-1-9.000; 163.-1-30.000; 163.-1-32.000; 163.-1-33.000)
State Off-Road Length:	Alt. A: 3.4 miles; Alt. B: 2.0 miles
Private Lands:	12 (31.-2-11; 31.-2-9; 32.-1-14; 32.-1-18.1; 32.-1-2; 32.-1-22; 32.-1-23; 48.-2-1.1; 48.-2-12; 48.-2-13; 48.-2-3; 48.-2-5)
Private Off-Road Length:	Alt. A: 1.2 miles; Alt. B: 1.9 miles
County Lands:	None
County Off-Road Length:	N/A
Municipal Lands:	None
Municipal Off-Road Length:	N/A



Moxham Mountain from Cobble Creek



North Creek Bridge from Route 28N Bridge

Source: Town of Johnsburg - FirstWilderness.com



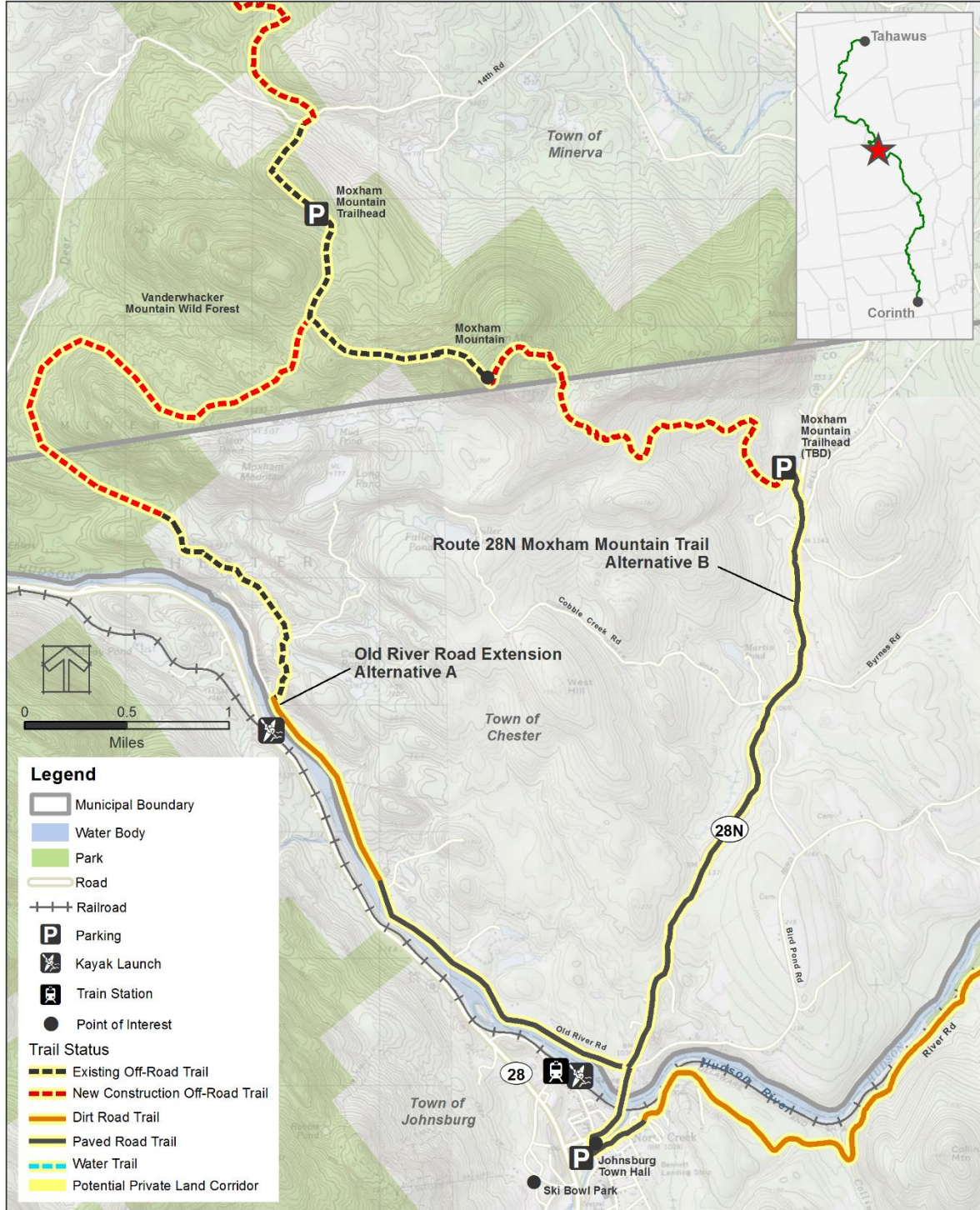
View from Moxham Mountain

Source: Adirondack Explorer

Figure 10 Trail Area 6: Town of Chester to Town of Minerva

FIRST WILDERNESS TRAIL

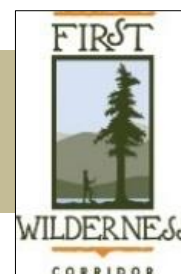
Trail Area 6: Town of Chester to Town of Minerva
Johnsburg Town Hall to Moxham Mountain Trailhead



FIRST WILDERNESS TRAIL

Trail Area 7

Town of Minerva to Town of Newcomb



Trail Description:

Trail Area 7 includes all proposed and existing trails from an existing trailhead for Moxham Mountain on state lands in the Town of Minerva to the Polaris Club Bridge over the Hudson River in the Town of Newcomb. The proposed trail segments will provide new connections to the Hudson River waterfront through state lands while maximizing use of existing low use roads and trails. The successful implementation of these trail segments is vital to link Warren County and Essex County with a continuous recreational trail along the Hudson River.

Segment A: Moxham Mountain Trailhead to North Woods Club Road

This trail segment is in the uplands adjacent to the Hudson River. Starting at the Moxham Mountain Trailhead on 14th Road, the trail segment lies completely on state lands as it crosses over the summit of Dutton Mountain and connects to the Northwoods Club Road 1.1 miles south of the Boreas River Bridge. This trail will be a classic Adirondack natural surface hiking and ski trail, due to the reasonable grades, geology and forest maturity.

The land ownership is entirely state land classified as Wild Forest which should make this hike/ski trail segment a reasonably straight-forward project. The existing Moxham Mountain trailhead makes the development of this trail section logical and seamless. The greatest challenge of this trail section is the two stream crossings with one of them being immediately adjacent to the Northwoods Club Road. The forest in this area is a young mature forest with an open understory which makes this a generally easy trail build with limited maintenance issues.

The outstanding view of the Hudson River as it comes out of the gorge from Dutton Mountain, make this a great trail for a large cross section of outdoor recreationist. The accessible length is 2.2 miles to the viewpoint and the trail gradient is gentle. The trail will create a connection from the previously dead-end access to Deer Creek on the 14th Road to the Boreas River area along the Northwoods Club Road. There are some old foundation ruins on the south side of Dutton Mountain that will add interesting historical note to the trail.

The new trail will start at the Moxham Mountain trailhead and proceed northwest over the west shoulder of Dutton Mountain. It will continue north along the flats beside the Boreas River and connect to a Class 1 snowmobile trail.

Segment B: North Woods Club Road to Huntley Pond and the Blue Ledges Trailhead

This trail segment is in the Hudson/Boreas River uplands and capitalizes on the Northwoods Club Road Bridge crossing the Boreas River. The dead-end town road that serves as the trail segment is a one lane gravel road without a single structure and is bordered by state land along its length.

The trail segment is limited by the need to cross the Boreas River and protect a large portion of the Hudson River Gorge Primitive Area. The nature and atmosphere of the town road with readily accessible designated campsites by the Boreas River Bridge and along its length, makes it reasonable to have a road-based trail in this area. It is likely that a person could hike the entire length of this road-based trail and not pass a vehicle.

The recreational value of this segment is the availability of designated riverside campsites along the Boreas River and designated pond side campsites at Huntley Pond. The Blue Ledge Trailhead at Huntley Pond serves as the major public access point to the north side of the Hudson River.

Segment C: Huntley Pond and the Blue Ledges Trailhead to Polaris Club Bridge

The trail segment is in the uplands and extends to the northern top edge of Hudson River Gorge. The trail starts at the Blue Ledges Trailhead and follows the existing state trail to the edge of the gorge. The hiking trail continues down the bank of the gorge for another half a mile and ends at the Blue Ledge Pool on the Hudson River. This trail segment utilizes an existing trail which should receive trail improvements to address wet areas. This trail section already designated as a trail so there should be little resistance to including it as part of a larger trail system.

The recreational benefit of using this existing trail is in its direct access to the Hudson River. By utilizing existing river access points, the negative environmental impacts of additional trail usage are limited. This trail also allows access around the large private land holding at the end of the Northwoods Club Road.

This trail segment is located along the top of the northern rim of the Hudson River Gorge. The trail segment starts at the Blue Ledges Trail, connects to the Dunk Pond Trail in the proximity of Dunk Pond, continues along the top of the gorge rim above Cedar Ledges and ends at Newcomb town line by the Hudson River. The trail will be a new natural surface single track hiking trail.

The important issue to be addressed with this trail section is limiting its impact on the wilderness of the Primitive Area. The placement of the trail away from the river's edge and utilizing existing river access trails should alleviate most of those concerns. The downstream end of the Primitive Area was purposely avoided in trail development to leave that more remote area undisturbed. The placement of this trail in proximity to the private land inholding and near the edge of the Primitive Area was intended to reduce its impact.

The major recreational benefit of this section of trail is its ability to allow a pedestrian recreationist to enjoy the unique nature of the Hudson River Gorge. This trail will be the first time the public will be able to enjoy the experience of following the Hudson River through its grandest environment. The trail will provide multiple views from natural overlooks along the rim and allow hiking access to Dunk Pond for the first time. Potential for development of a campsite on Dunk Pond. The trail will also provide a connection between the communities of Minerva, Northwoods Club and Newcomb.

Water Access Points

Minerva Beach

Points of Interest

Moxham Mountain; Moxham Point; Dutton Mountain; Minerva Recreation Area; Hudson Gorge Wilderness; Vanderwhacker Mountain Wild Forest; Venison Mountain; Kellogg Mountain; Forks Mountain; Pine Mountain; Dunk Hill; Virgin Falls

Amenities

Trails, campgrounds, special places, and scenic views at Vanderwhacker Mountain Wild Forest; Trails, campgrounds, special places, and scenic views at Hudson Gorge Wilderness

Connector Trails

Moxham Mountain Trail; Blue Ledges Trail; Stony Pond Trail; Central Adirondack Loop Trail; Irishtown Snowmobile Trail; Dunk Pond Trail

Planning Support

- Town of Newcomb Comprehensive Plan (2010)
- Newcomb Smart Growth Hamlet Plan (2012)
- First Wilderness Heritage Corridor Action Plan Update (2016)

Implementation Strategy

Inclusion in the Hudson Gorge Wilderness UMP. Work with DEC to develop amendments and additions for Unit Management Plans that may be under development.

Trail Segments

Segment A: Moxham Mountain Trailhead to North Woods Club Road	
Length (existing/proposed):	5.2 miles (0.6/4.6)
APA Land Use:	Low Intensity; Hamlet; Rural Use; Wild Forest
DEC Lands:	Vanderwhacker Mountain Wild Forest
Trailheads & Parking:	Moxham Mountain Trailhead; North Woods Club Road Pull-Off
Surface & Accessibility:	Natural surface, hike/ski trail
Signage:	None
Phase of Development:	Partially complete
Segment B: North Woods Club Road to Huntley Pond and the Blue Ledges Trailhead	
Length (existing/proposed):	4.3 miles (4.3/0)
APA Land Use:	Wild Forest; Wilderness
DEC Lands:	Vanderwhacker Mountain Wild Forest; Hudson Gorge Wilderness
Trailheads & Parking:	Blue Ledges Trailhead
Surface & Accessibility:	Dirt road (dead-end)
Signage:	None
Phase of Development:	Existing

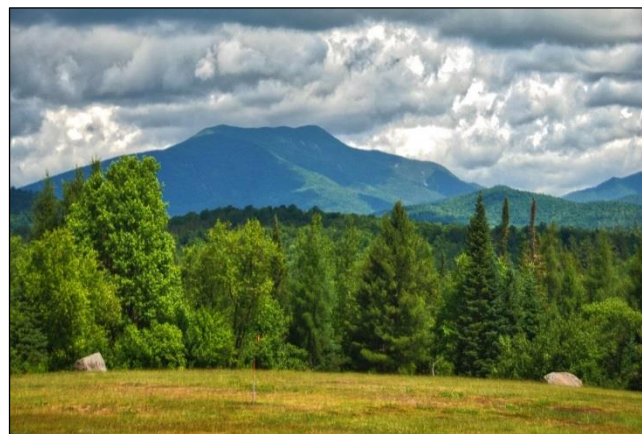
Segment C: Huntley Pond and the Blue Ledges Trailhead to Polaris Club Bridge	
Length (existing/proposed):	11.1 miles (2.6/8.5)
APA Land Use:	Wilderness; Primitive Area
DEC Lands:	Hudson Gorge Wilderness; Polaris Mountain Primitive Area
Trailheads & Parking:	Blue Ledges Trailhead; Duck Pond Trailhead
Surface & Accessibility:	Natural surface, single track hiking trail (to Cheney Pond); Gravel, two track forest road (to Polaris Bridge)
Signage:	None
Phase of Development:	Partially complete

Trail Area Totals

Trail Area 7: Town of Minerva to Town of Newcomb	
Length (existing/proposed):	20.6 miles (7.5/13.1)
Off-Road Length:	16.3 miles
State Lands:	28 (120.-1-1.112; 142.-2-10.000; 142.-2-12.000; 142.-2-6.000; 142.-2-7.000; 142.-2-.000; 142.-2-9.000; 143.-1-38.000; 143.-1-42.100; 143.-1-42.200; 143.-1-7.050; 153.-1-1.000; 153.-1-2.200; 153.-2-10.000; 153.-2-3.000; 153.-2-7.000; 153.-2-9.000; 154.-1-14.000; 154.-1-16.000; 154.-1-31.000; 154.-1-32.000; 154.-1-34.000; 154.-1-54.000; 154.-1-55.000; 154.-1-57.000; 154.-1-68.000; 154.-1-69.000; 163.-1-11.000)
State Off-Road Length:	15.6 miles
Private Lands:	3 (142.-2-14.006; 154.-1-58.000; 154.-1-66.000)
Private Off-Road Length:	0.6 miles
County Lands:	None
County Off-Road Length:	N/A
Municipal Lands:	None
Municipal Off-Road Length:	N/A



Hudson and Indian Rivers Confluence



View of Vanderwhacker Mountain

Source: Discover Newcomb

Figure 11 Segment A: Moxham Mountain Trailhead to Northwoods Club Road

FIRST WILDERNESS TRAIL

Trail Area 7: Town of Minerva to Town of Newcomb
Segment A: Moxham Mountain Trailhead to Northwoods Club Road

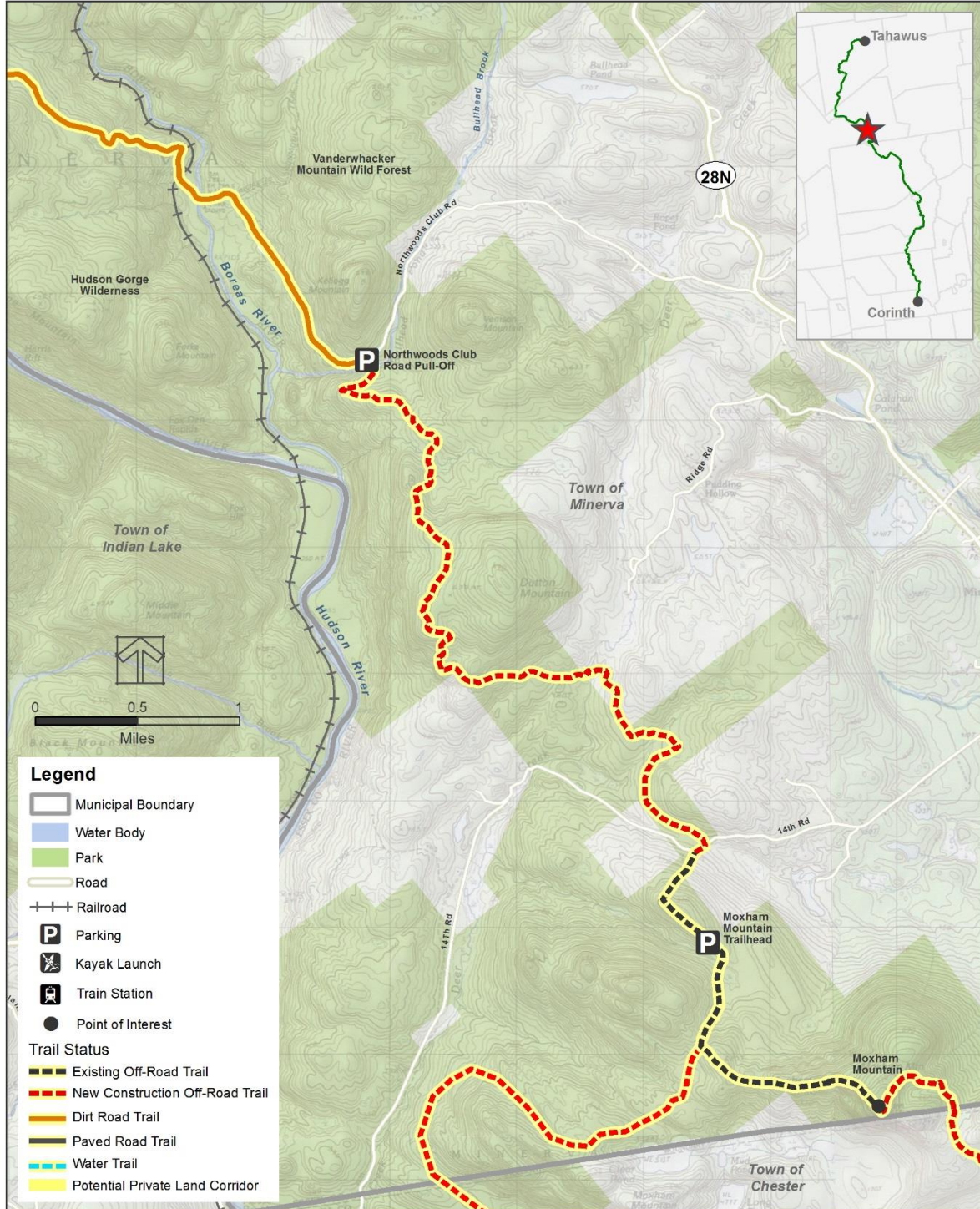


Figure 12 Segment B: Northwoods Club Road to Huntley Pond and Blue Ledges Trailhead

FIRST WILDERNESS TRAIL

Trail Area 7: Town of Minerva to Town of Newcomb

Segment B: Northwoods Club Road to Huntley Pond and the Blue Ledges Trailhead

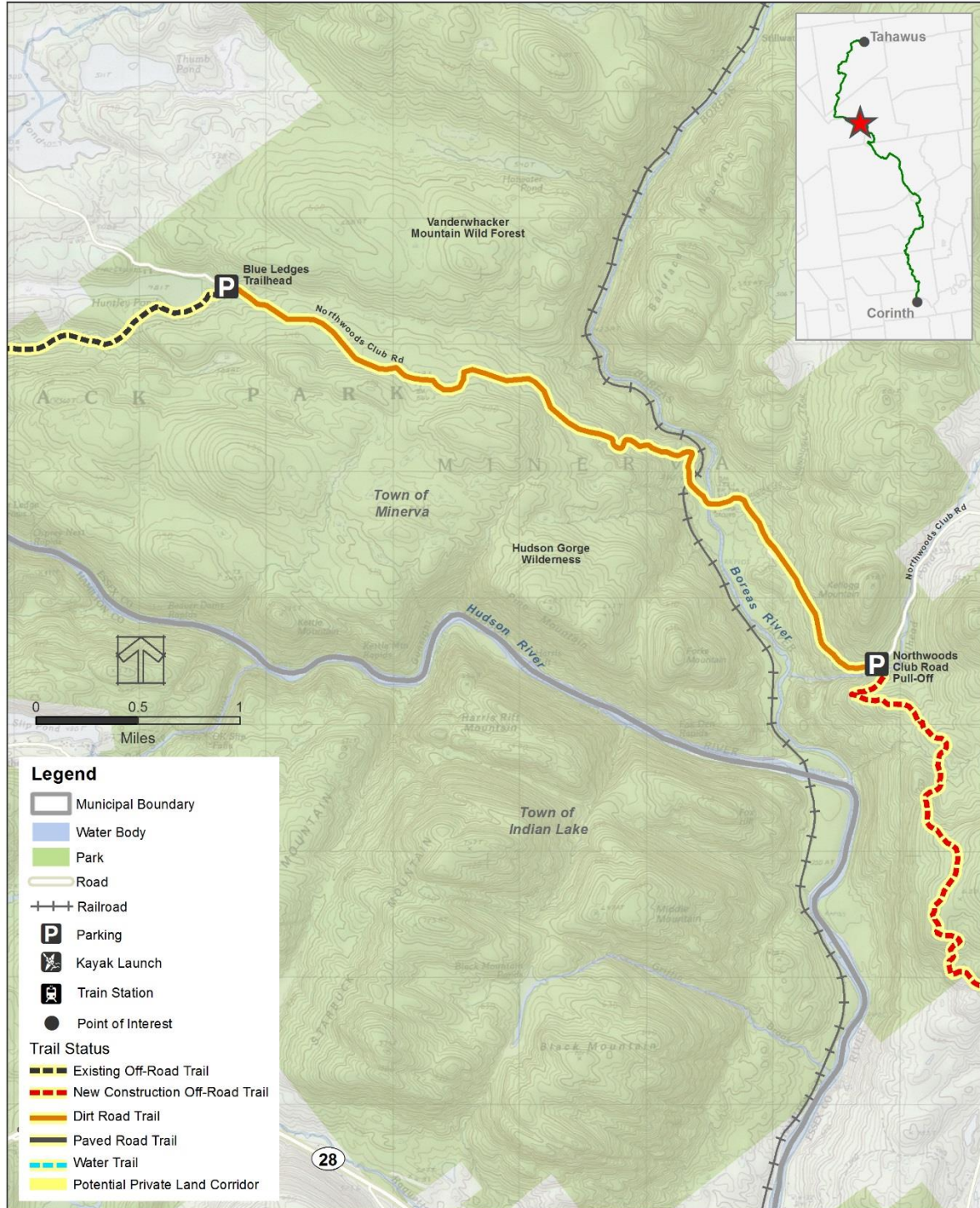
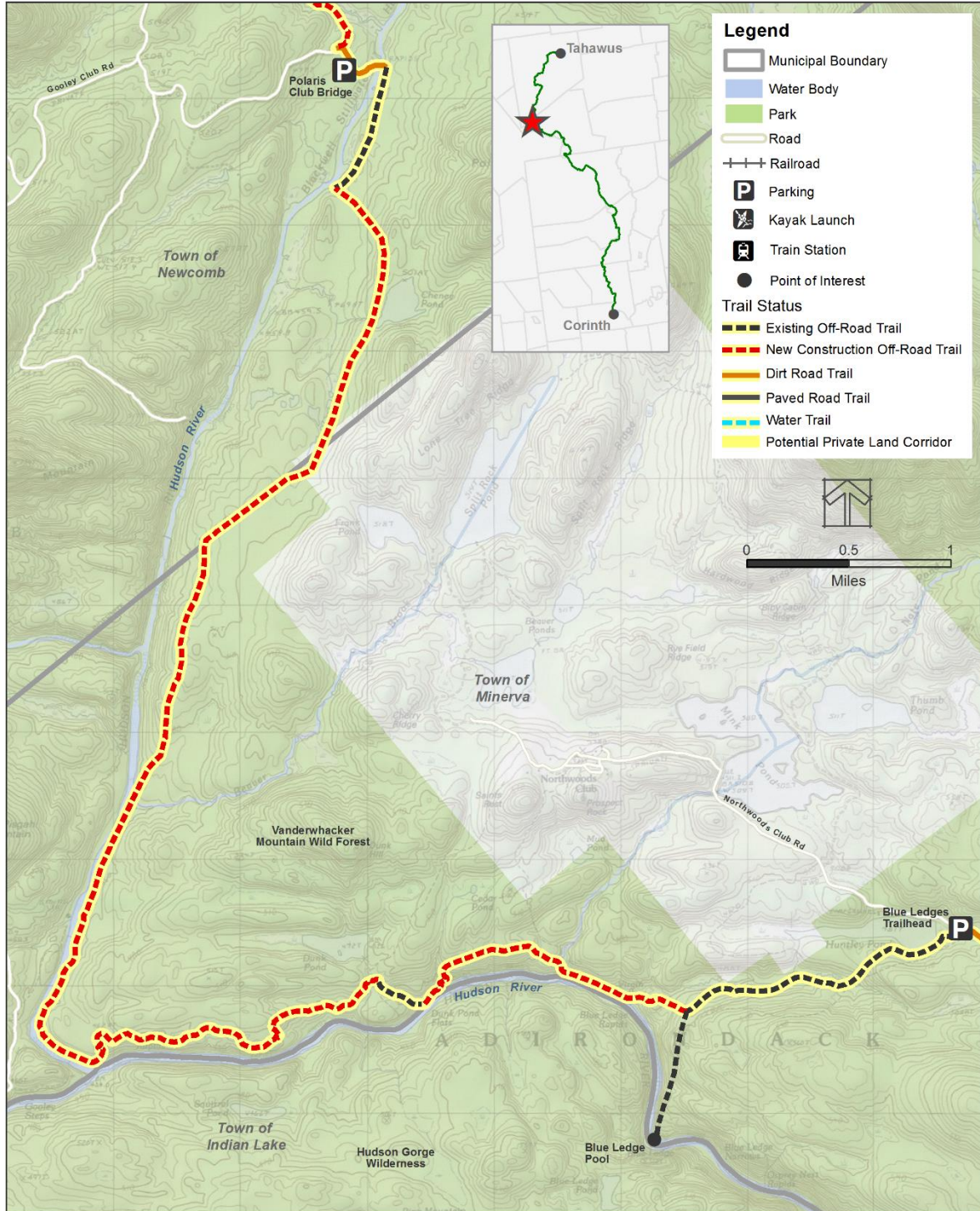


Figure 13 Segment C: Huntley Pond and Blue Ledges Trailhead to Polaris Club Bridge

FIRST WILDERNESS TRAIL

Trail Area 7: Town of Minerva to Town of Newcomb

Segments C: Huntley Pond and the Blue Ledges Trailhead to Polaris Club Bridge



FIRST WILDERNESS TRAIL

Trail Area 8

Town of Newcomb



Trail Description:

Trail Area 8 covers the final segments of the First Wilderness Trail from the Polaris Club Bridge at the Hudson River in Blue Mountain Wild Forest to its endpoint at the Santanoni Range Trailhead in the hamlet of Tahawus. Nearly all existing and proposed off-road trails will travel through existing state lands thereby providing a complete wilderness experience. The successful implementation of the recommended trail segments will result in the first continuous recreational trail between the hamlet of Newcomb and the unique outdoor experiences of the High Peaks Wilderness around the hamlet of Tahawus.

Segment A: Polaris Club Bridge to State Route 28N

This trail segment will follow the uplands adjacent to the east side of the Hudson River. The trail segment will start at the Polaris Club Bridge and continue north on mostly new trail. The trail will be a natural surface single track trail on the southern and central sections and follow a dead-end town road on the northern end. The trail segment is conducive to the development of a single-track hiking and skiing trail.

The major issues associated with this trail segment is the establishment of a new trail, multiple potential trail issues and connections on the northern end of the segment. The major value of this trail segment is the direct trail connection between the community of Newcomb with the Hudson River Gorge Area and the Essex Chain of Lakes Area. This trail segment will also allow a connection to the hamlet of Indian Lake when the bridge is built across the Cedar River.

Segment B: State Route 28N to Great Camp Santanoni

This trail segment diverges from the riverside to follow existing trails in the uplands that lead to the headwaters of the Hudson River in Tahawus. The trail segment starts from State Route 28N, follows Campsite Road around Harris Lake, and then continues on a gravel two-track all the way to the Santanoni Great Camp on Newcomb Lake. This trail will be a two-track hiking, biking and ski trail for its entire length.

The recreational benefit of utilizing this segment is the Newcomb Lake destination and the connection through to the High Peaks access point at the Upper Works. The existing campsites on Newcomb Lake and the presence of the Santanoni Great Camp makes this an attractive area for further hiking and ski access. This trail segment will create a destination by creating a direct hiking and skiing connection between Newcomb and the High Peaks. No issues should arise on this section as the entire trail segment has an established public trail for the listed uses.

Segment C: Great Camp Santanoni to Santanoni Range Trailhead

This trail segment passes over a low mountain pass before descending to the headwaters of the Hudson River. The segment starts at Great Camp Santanoni on Newcomb Lake and follows the north shore of the lake, goes up along the west side of Santanoni Brook, follows the Deerland Road east, goes up the west side of Sucker Brook to Lake Andrew, passes just west of Lake Andrew, and descends north to the club. It then follows the Club Road to Santanoni Road which continues east to its terminus at Upper Works Road by Tahawus and the Hudson River. This trail section will utilize a natural surface single track and gravel two-track forest road to create a quality skiing and hiking trail.

The land ownership/classification is in the process of being converted into NYS lands. This process may assist or hinder the development timeline of this trail section. The land classification for this area will be the High Peaks Wilderness Area which will allow a hiking and skiing trail. Because the trail segment is located on existing trails and roadways for its entire length, the feasibility of acceptance and development is favorable. Access for construction of the trail is excellent. There is an alternate route to Lake Andrew from the east, if necessary.

The recreational value of this trail section is very high. This is largely due to the connections it makes between the community of Newcomb and Tahawus/Upper Works area and the great ski trail it will make due to existing grades and trail width and length. Creating an access to Lake Andrew, which has a spectacular view of Santanoni Mountain, will provide a high impact experience. This trail also connects to the Bradly Pond Trail which creates a connection to the Northville Placid Trail at Duck Hole. There is also the potential for the development of a campsite on Lake Andrew. This trail segment will be very easy to develop since it follows a historic horse and wagon travel route with interconnected road traces.

Development of the Lake Andrew and Santanoni trail segments will allow Newcomb to become a starting point for expeditions into the southern High Peaks area and potentially draw some use out of the central High Peak region. This trail segment is also in alignment with the Lake Jimmy/Sally trail system that will connect with the Boreas Ponds through the pass between Dudley Brook and White Lily Pond. This route will also create a hiking trail connection between the High Peaks Wilderness Area access at the Upper Works Trailhead and the community of Newcomb. This will provide an opportunity for hiking recreationist utilizing the FWT to travel through the community.

Water Access Points

Newcomb Beach and Boat Launch; Tahawus Hudson River Canoe/Kayak Access

Points of Interest

Polaris Mountain Primitive Area; Hudson Gorge Wilderness; Polaris Bridge; Newcomb Beach and Boat Launch; Essex Chain Lakes Primitive Area; Vanderwhacker Mountain Wild Forest; Polaris Mountain; Blue Mountain Wild Forest; Blackwell Stillwater; Santanoni Preserve; Camp Santanoni Historic Area; Santanoni Peak; High Peaks Wilderness; Echo Mountain; Mount Andrew;

MacIntyre Iron Blast Furnace; Lake Andrew; Newcomb Lake; Adirondack Interpretive Center; Lake Harris and Campground

Amenities

Local parks, accommodations, restaurants, bars, shops, and cultural amenities of downtown Newcomb; Trails, campgrounds, special places, and scenic views at Vanderhacker Mountain Wild Forest; Trails, campgrounds, special places, and scenic views at Hudson Gorge Wilderness; Trails, lean-tos, historic places, and scenic views at Camp Santanoni Historic Area; Trails, campgrounds and scenic views at the High Peaks Wilderness

Connector Trails

Upper Hudson Ski Loop; Great Camp Santanoni to Newcomb Lake; Santanoni Range Trails; East River Trail; Moose Pond Horse Trail; Newcomb Lake to Shaw Pond Trail; AIC Connector Trail; Fire Tower Trail; Lake Harris Trail; Bradley Pond Trail

Planning Support

Town of Newcomb Comprehensive Plan (2010)
 Newcomb Smart Growth Hamlet Plan (2012)

Implementation Strategy

Amending and including trail development in the three applicable state land UMPs will be the biggest hurdle for this segment. Work with DEC will be necessary to develop amendments and additions for existing and under development Unit Management Plans.

Trail Segments

Segment A: Polaris Club Bridge to State Route 28N	
Length (existing/proposed):	6.1 miles (4.9/1.2)
APA Land Use:	Wild Forest; Rural Use; Hamlet
DEC Lands:	Blue Mountain Wild Forest
Trailheads & Parking:	Polaris Bridge; Upper Hudson Ski Loop Trailhead; Camp 6 Road
Surface & Accessibility:	Natural surface, single track hike/ski trail
Signage:	None
Phase of Development:	Existing
Segment B: State Route 28N to Great Camp Santanoni	
Length (existing/proposed):	7.3 miles (5.9/1.4)
APA Land Use Class:	Historic; Hamlet
DEC Lands:	Santanoni Gatehouse Complex
Trailheads & Parking:	Lake Harris Trailhead
Surface & Accessibility:	Non-motorized grave, two track hike/ski trail
Signage:	None
Phase of Development:	Existing

Segment C: Great Camp Santanoni to Santanoni Range Trailhead	
Length (existing/proposed):	9.5 miles (8.5/1.0)
APA Land Use Class:	Wild Forest; Historic; Wilderness; Resource Management
DEC Lands:	Camp Santanoni Historic Area; High Peaks Wilderness; Vanderwhacker Mountain Wild Forest
Trailheads & Parking:	Tahawus Hudson River Canoe/Kayak Access; Santanoni Range Trailhead; Fire Tower Trailhead
Surface & Accessibility:	Natural surface, single track hike/ski trail
Signage:	None
Phase of Development:	Partially complete

Trail Area Totals

Trail Area 8: Town of Newcomb	
Length (existing/proposed):	22.9 miles (19.3/3.6)
Off-Road Length:	18.2 miles
State Lands:	15 (100.-1-1.000; 100.-1-5.000; 109.-1-12.000; 109.-1-15.000; 109.-1-16.000; 109.-1-4.000; 109.-1-7.000; 109.-1-8.000; 110.-1-11.000; 110.-1-6.000; 110.-1-7.000; 120.-1-1.112; 120.-1-7.040; 120.-1-9.030; 99.-1-9.000)
State Off-Road Length:	17.6 miles
Private Lands:	3 (109.-3-10.000; 90.-1-2.220; 90.-3-1.000)
Private Off-Road Length:	0.5 miles
County Lands:	None
County Off-Road Length:	N/A
Municipal Lands:	2 (110.13-6-1.000; 110.-1-26.001)
Municipal Off-Road Length:	450 feet



Under the Polaris Bridge

Source: Nancie Battaglia - Adirondack Explorer



State Route 28 West Toward Newcomb Town Center

Source: Town of Newcomb



Lake Andrew



Unnamed Pond Near Santanoni Mountain

Figure 14 Segment A: Polaris Club Bridge to State Route 28N

FIRST WILDERNESS TRAIL

Trail Area 8: Town of Newcomb

Segment A: Polaris Club Bridge to State Route 28N

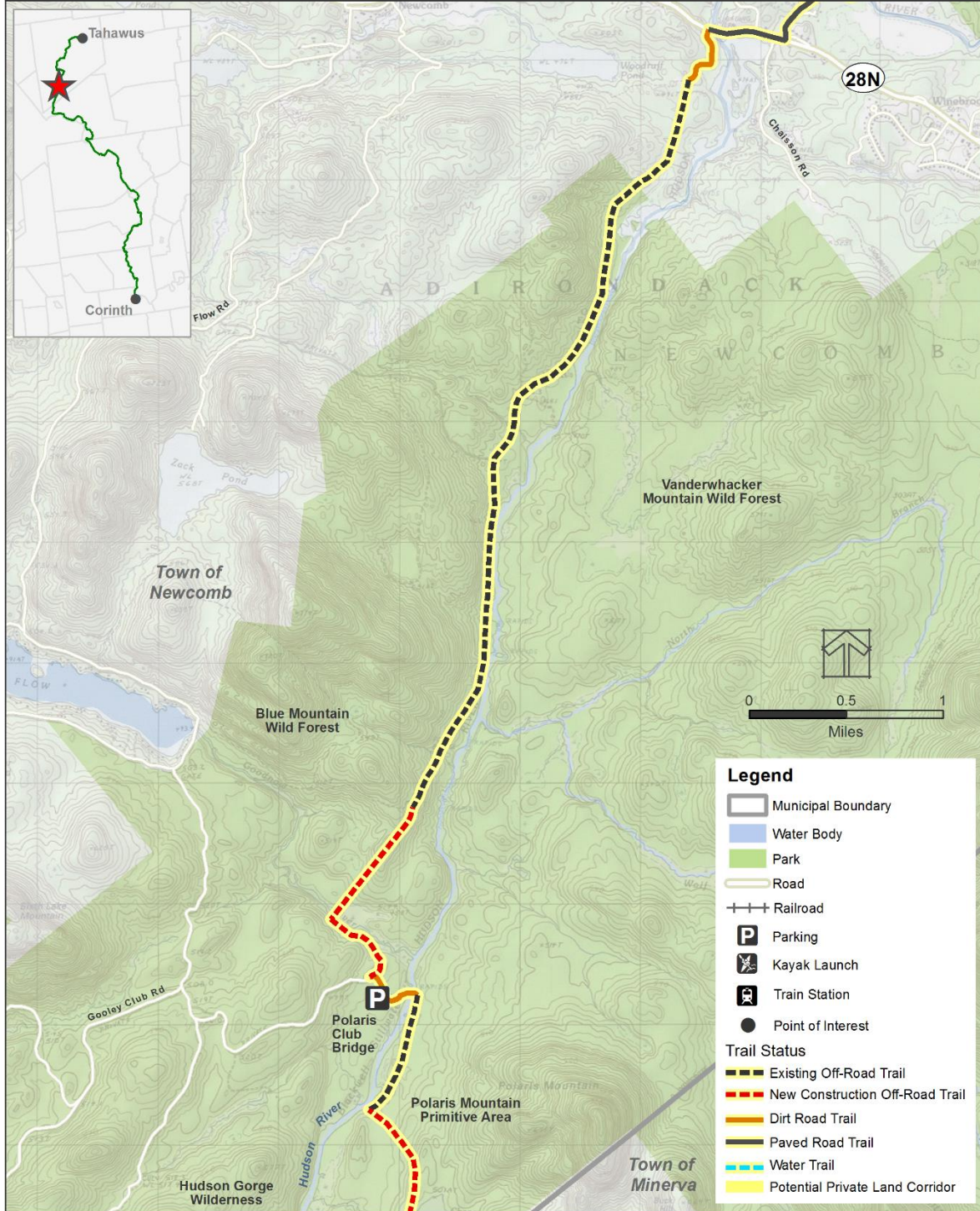


Figure 15 Segment B: State Route 28N to Great Camp Santanoni

FIRST WILDERNESS TRAIL

Trail Area 8: Town of Newcomb

Segment B: State Route 28N to Great Camp Santanoni

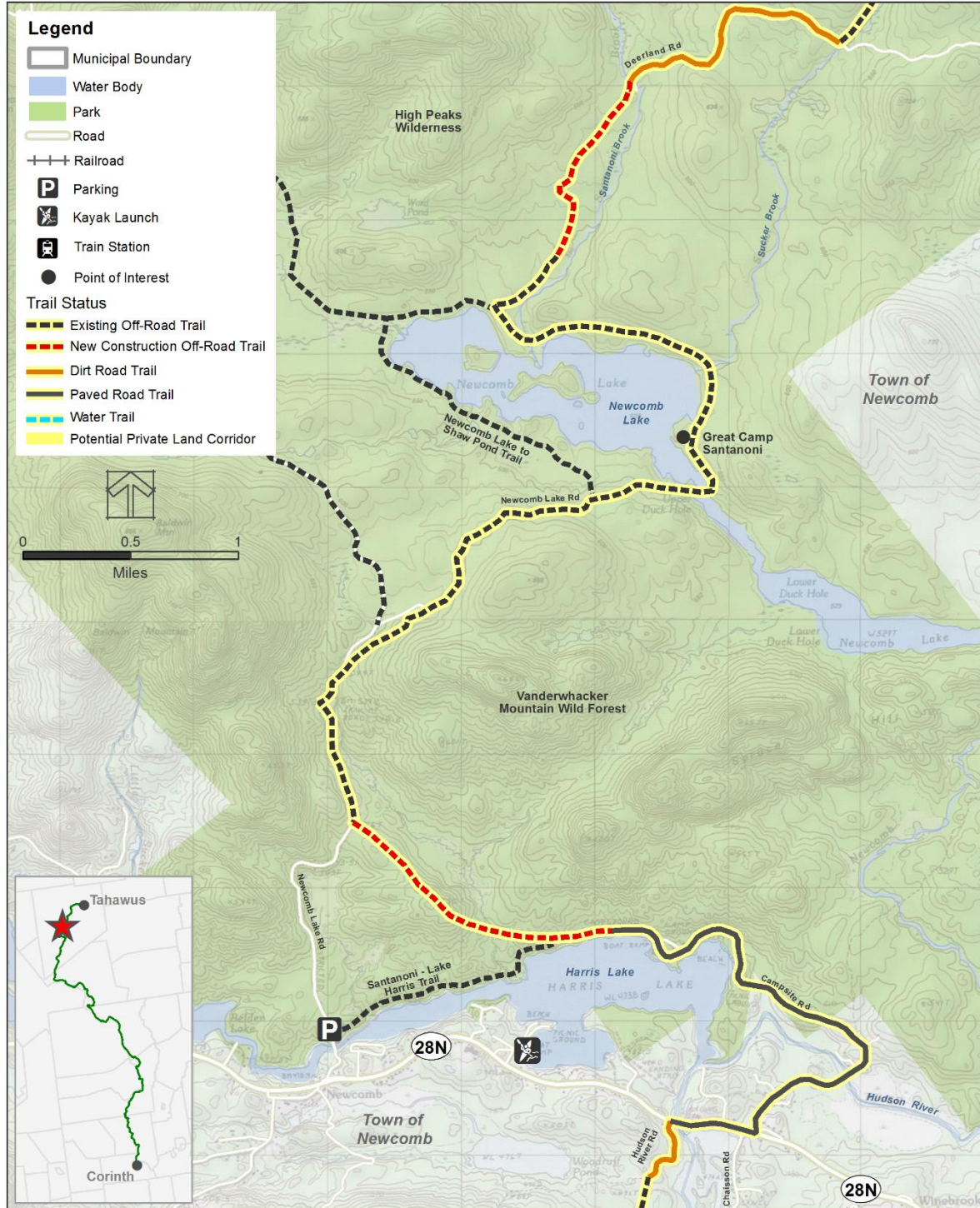


Figure 16 Segment C: Great Camp Santanoni to Santanoni Range Trailhead

FIRST WILDERNESS TRAIL

Trail Area 8: Town of Newcomb

Segment C: Great Camp Santanoni to Santanoni Range Trailhead



SECTION 4 CONCLUSION

This First Wilderness Trail planning project describes the development of a 99.3-mile long hike-bike trail through the towns bordering the Hudson River starting from the Town of Corinth in the south to the hamlet Tahawus in the Town of Newcomb in the north. The intent of creating a First Wilderness Heritage Trail is to reconnect the communities bordering the Hudson River with historic and human-powered forms of travel. This trail system will traverse many different landscapes, including natural forested areas, and rural to both sparsely populated and more densely populated areas. As illustrated in the chart below, 61.4 miles of the 99.3 total trail miles, or about 62-percent, are devoted to either existing or new off-road trail routes.

The lands along the Hudson River were some of the first areas settled in the Adirondack townships that encompass the river. This settlement was during the era prior to motorized travel, so many of the roadways and paths adjacent to the river were developed for horse and wagon and foot travel. This is significant in that roadways developed for horse and wagon travel are generally the same grade as those of sustainable trails. This grade is also a generally appropriate grade for mountain biking, backcountry skiing and hiking. Roadways developed for motorized travel generally exceed sustainable trail grades and are inappropriate for mountain bike and backcountry ski trails. This report identifies many miles of existing roadways and trails. An attempt has been made to identify and prioritize existing sustainable trails that can be utilized in the development of the First Wilderness Trail. Utilizing existing trails enhances the historical experience and reduces construction costs.

The other significant factors that determine the functional areas include; land ownership, existing trail infrastructure, connectivity to local communities, access, natural features that facilitate or prohibit trail development, criticalness to adjacent trail portions and the project as a whole, trail construction requirements, and political subdivision.

FWT TOTAL MILEAGE SUMMARY	
Existing Off-Road Trails	35.9 miles
New Construction Off-Road Trails	25.5 miles
Dirt Road Trails	15.3 miles
Paved Road Trails	14.5 miles
Water Trails	5.4 miles
Potential Private Land Corridor	2.6 miles
<i>New State Land Trails Mileage</i>	<i>22.8 miles</i>
TOTAL	99.3 miles

The highest likelihood of success for a public-private trail system will be enhanced by limiting the number of landowners involved. The development of a palatable recreation easement for private landowners should go a long way to achieving access for the trail. This could mean limiting trail usage during hunting seasons, locating the trail along boundaries so as not to conflict with other uses, and providing liability coverage.

Generally, large Adirondack landowners feel a greater commitment to their immediate communities than to state agencies. The creation of a few trail sections near communities and on public lands will generate interest in allowing the trail to expand onto adjacent private land sections. Creating a leadership role for the local communities and counties in the development of this public/private partnership-based trail will be essential to its success.

APPENDIX A
Construction Requirement Analysis

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENT ANALYSIS

Funding and Predevelopment

1. Conduct design and engineering of the trail, including but not limited to, boundary and topographic surveys, establishment of the official trail route, development of uniform trail design standards, and a determination of additional infrastructure that will be necessary for the trail to be safely used by the public. It is recommended that new trails be constructed as natural surface, single track trails. At least two estimates for building materials, labor, and overhead costs from local suppliers and contractors will be required to properly assess the total project cost.
2. Consult with NYS DEC on potential amendments to Unit Management Plans (UMPs) for public lands and for conservation easements where necessary. For more information and assistance with the process, contact:

NYS DEC Region 5 Lands and Forests Offices
Warrensburg Sub-Office
(518) 623-1270
landsforests@dec.ny.gov

3. Obtain an agreement on the route and type of trail from all private property owners. Purchasing a trail easement and/or signing a binding agreement between municipal governments and the private landowner may be required to allocate land for a public trail. Potential partnership options include the use of a revocable trail agreement, a trail or conservation easement, or the acquisition of the necessary land through a gift or sale.
4. Identify a source to build and install signage.
5. Identify a source to purchase and install bike racks.
6. Apply for funding assistance for future projects through:
 - First Wilderness Heritage Corridor (Warren County and the New York State Department of State (NYS DOS)). The annual deadline for this application is in July.
 - Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program (RTCA) through the National Park Service (NPS). The annual deadline for this application is in June.
 - Urban and Community Forestry Program through the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYS DEC). The annual deadline for this application is in July.

Trail Area 1: Town of Corinth to Town of Hadley/Lake Luzerne

Segment A: Corinth Park and Beach to Proposed Takeout

1. Purchase and install a public bike rack at the Proposed Takeout.
2. Install descriptive signage and a map of the trail with listed allowable uses at Corinth Park and Beach and in Lake Luzerne at the entrance to the proposed takeout off Bay Road or on the Chamber of Commerce property at 37 Main Street.

Trail Area 2: Town of Hadley/Lake Luzerne to Town of Warrensburg

Segment A: Proposed Takeout to Bear Slides Trailhead

1. Utilize professional assistance for design and construction of the trail. Support trail construction with Town Parks and Highway personnel. Trail construction oversight and administration is needed throughout the project.
2. Install trail markers and signage. It is recommended that descriptive signage and a map of the trail with listed allowable uses be posted at the Bear Slide Trailhead. Additional signage should include regulatory signage on allowable trail uses with wayfinding at the Bear Slide Trailhead and trail markers installed along the trail as desired by each Town.

Trail Area 3: Town of Warrensburg to Town of Chester

Segment A: Bear Slides Trailhead to Hickory Hill Ski Area

1. Purchase and install a public bike rack at the parking lot for the Hickory Hill Ski Area.
2. Utilize professional assistance for design and construction of the trail. Support trail construction with Town Parks and Highway personnel. Trail construction oversight and administration is needed throughout the project.
3. Install trail markers and signage. It is recommended that descriptive signage and a map of the trail with listed allowable uses be posted at the parking lot for Hickory Hill Ski Area. Additional signage at the parking lot should include regulatory signage on allowable trail uses with wayfinding. Trail markers should be installed along the trail as desired by the Town.

Segment B: Hickory Hill Ski Area to Hudson River Nature Trails

1. Purchase and install a public bike rack at the parking lot for Paper Mill Park and the Warren County Fish Hatchery.
2. Consult with the Town Engineering Department and Highway Crew on the results of the trail feasibility study and surveys in relation to available financial, technical and labor resources. Consider developing a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the construction of a long span suspension bridge over Schroon River by the Paper Mill Park parking lot off of River Street. Construction of this bridge is necessary to complete the recommended route for the trail.
3. Construct the long span suspension. Provide construction overnight and administration as needed.
4. Utilize professional assistance for design and construction of the trail. Support trail construction with Town Parks and Highway personnel. Trail construction oversight and administration is needed throughout the project.
5. Install trail markers and signage. It is recommended that descriptive signage and a map of the trail with listed allowable uses be posted at the parking lot at the Hudson River Nature Trails

parking lot off Golf Course Road. Additional signage should include regulatory signage on allowable trail uses and wayfinding signage at the entrance to the bridge over Schroon River, at the Warren County Fish Hatchery, and at the Paper Mill Park parking lot. Trail markers should be installed along the trail as desired by the Town.

Segment C: Hudson River Nature Trails to Potter Brook Road

1. Obtain a recreational agreement from SUNY ESF for a public trail through Pack Forest. To discuss the process with SUNY ESF, contact:

Kirstin L. Seleen
Forest & Natural Resources Management
518-402-1278
klseleen@esf.edu

2. Purchase and install a public bike rack at the Pack Forest North Gate parking lot.
3. Utilize professional assistance for design and construction of the trail. Support trail construction with Town Parks and Highway personnel. Trail construction oversight and administration is needed throughout the project.
4. Install trail markers and signage. It is recommended that descriptive signage and a map of the trail with listed allowable uses be posted at the Pack Forest North Gate parking lot. Additional signage should include regulatory signage on allowable trail uses and wayfinding signage at the parking lot off Golf Course Road, the Pack Forest North Gate parking lot and where the trail exits onto Potter Brook Road. Trail markers should be installed along the trail as desired by the Town.

Trail Area 4: Town of Chester

Segment A: Potter Brook Road to Riparius Bridge

1. Purchase and install a public bike rack at the Riparius Bridge parking lot.
2. Utilize professional assistance for design and construction of the trail. Support trail construction with Town Parks and Highway personnel. Trail construction oversight and administration is needed throughout the project.
3. Install trail markers and signage. It is recommended that descriptive signage and a map of the trail with listed allowable uses be posted at the Riparius Bridge parking lot. Additional signage should include regulatory signage on allowable trail uses and wayfinding signage at all parking lots, and trail markers along the trail as desired by the Town.

Trail Area 5: Town of Johnsburg

Segment A: Riparius Bridge to Johnsburg Town Hall

1. Obtain and file a Highway Work Permit for Non-Utility Work (PERM 33) and supplementary forms with the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) to convert part of right-of-way for State Route 8 in Riparius to a new pedestrian/bike trail. The Town will be responsible for the construction, maintenance and conformance of a trail. Work should begin within 30-days of permit validation. Additional requirements and responsibilities are detailed

on the PERM 33 application form. For more information and assistance with the permitting process, contact:

Gaetano Tedesco
New York State Department of Transportation
(518) 457-9934
Gaetano.tedesco@dot.ny.gov

2. Purchase and install a public bike rack at Johnsburg Town Hall.
3. Utilize professional assistance for design and construction of the trail. Support trail construction with Town Parks and Highway personnel. Trail construction oversight and administration is needed throughout the project.
4. Install trail markers and signage. It is recommended that descriptive signage and a map of the trail with listed allowable uses be posted at Johnsburg Town Hall. Trail markers should be installed along the trail as desired by the Town.

Trail Area 6: Town of Chester to Town of Minerva

Segment A: Johnsburg Town Hall to Moxham Mountain Trailhead

1. Discuss with the Town Engineering Department, the Town Highway Crew and NYS DEC on the results of the trail feasibility study and surveys in relation to available financial, technical and labor resources. Select the most cost effective, feasible option for the trail to the Moxham Mountain Trailhead based on the results of these consultations.
2. If Option B is selected, obtain and file a Highway Work Permit for Non-Utility Work (PERM 33) and supplementary forms with the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) to convert part of the right-of-way for State Route 28N to a new pedestrian/bike trail. The Town will be responsible for the construction, maintenance and conformance of a trail. Work should begin within 30-days of permit validation. Additional requirements and responsibilities are detailed on the PERM 33 application form. For more information and assistance with the permitting process, contact:

Gaetano Tedesco
New York State Department of Transportation
(518) 457-9934
Gaetano.tedesco@dot.ny.gov

3. Utilize professional assistance for design and construction of the trail. Support trail construction with Town Parks and Highway personnel. Trail construction oversight and administration is needed throughout the project.
4. Install trail markers and signage. It is recommended that descriptive signage and a map of the trail with listed allowable uses be posted at the Moxham Mountain Trailhead. Install regulatory signage on allowable trail uses and wayfinding at the Moxham Mountain Trailhead and trail markers along the trail as desired by the Town.

Trail Area 7: Town of Minerva to Town of Newcomb

Segment A: Moxham Mountain Trailhead to North Woods Club Road

1. Utilize professional assistance for design and construction of the trail. Support trail construction with Town Parks and Highway personnel. Trail construction oversight and administration is needed throughout the project.
2. Install trail markers and signage. It is recommended that descriptive signage and a map of the trail with listed allowable uses be posted at the North Woods Club Road Pull-Off. Additional signage should include regulatory signage on allowable trail uses and wayfinding signage with the descriptive signage at the pull-off, and trail markers installed along the trail as desired by the Town of Minerva.

Segment B: North Woods Club Road to Huntley Pond and the Blue Ledges Trailhead

1. Utilize professional assistance for design and construction of the trail. Support trail construction with Town Parks and Highway personnel. Trail construction oversight and administration is needed throughout the project.
2. Install trail markers and signage. It is recommended that descriptive signage and a map of the trail with listed allowable uses be posted at the Blue Ledges Trailhead. Additional signage should include regulatory signage on allowable trail uses and wayfinding signage at the Blue Ledges Trailhead, and trail markers installed along the trail as desired by the Town.

Segment C: Huntley Pond and the Blue Ledges Trailhead to Polaris Club Bridge

1. Utilize professional assistance for design and construction of the trail and Blue Ledges Trailhead improvements. Support trail construction with Town Parks and Highway personnel. Trail construction oversight and administration is needed throughout the project.
2. Install trail markers and signage. It is recommended that descriptive signage and a map of the trail with listed allowable uses be posted at the Polaris Club Bridge parking lot. Install regulatory signage on allowable trail uses and wayfinding signage at the Polaris Club Bridge parking lot and at the intersection of the new trail which extends the Blue Ledges Trail and Duck Pond Trail. Trail markers should be installed along the trail as desired by the Towns.

Trail Area 8: Town of Newcomb

Segment A: Polaris Club Bridge to State Route 28N

1. Utilize professional assistance for design and construction of the trail. Support trail construction with Town Parks and Highway personnel. Trail construction oversight and administration is needed throughout the project.
2. Install regulatory signage on allowable trail uses and wayfinding signage where the new trail meets State Route 28N, and trail markers installed along the trail as desired by the Town.

Segment B: State Route 28N to Great Camp Santanoni

1. Obtain and file a Highway Work Permit for Non-Utility Work (PERM 33) and supplementary forms with the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) to convert part of the right-of-way for State Route 28N to a new pedestrian/bike trail. The Town will be responsible for the construction, maintenance and conformance of a trail. Work should begin within 30-days of permit validation. Additional requirements and responsibilities are detailed

on the PERM 33 application form. For more information and assistance with the permitting process, contact:

Gaetano Tedesco
New York State Department of Transportation
(518) 457-9934
Gaetano.tedesco@dot.ny.gov

2. Utilize professional assistance for design and construction of the trail. Support trail construction with Town Parks and Highway personnel. Trail construction oversight and administration is needed throughout the project.
3. Install trail markers and signage. It is recommended that descriptive signage and a map of the trail with listed allowable uses be posted at parking lot at the Lake Harris trailhead and the entrance to the Great Camp Santanoni. Additional signage should include regulatory signage on allowable trail uses and wayfinding signage with the descriptive signage, and trail markers installed along the trail as desired by the Town.

Segment C: Great Camp Santanoni to Santanoni Range Trailhead

1. Utilize professional assistance for design and construction of the trail. Support trail construction with Town Parks and Highway personnel. Trail construction oversight and administration is needed throughout the project.
2. Install trail markers and signage. It is recommended that descriptive signage and a map of the trail with listed allowable uses be posted at the Santanoni Range Trailhead. Additional signage should include regulatory signage on allowable trail uses and wayfinding signage with the descriptive signage and where the new trail intersects with existing trails, and trail markers installed along the trail as desired by the Town.

APPENDIX B

**New York State Recreational Use Statute, Sample Trail Use Agreement & Partnership
Options**

New York Recreational Use Statute

New York Consolidated Laws
GENERAL OBLIGATIONS LAW
ARTICLE 9: Obligations of Care
TITLE 1: Conditions on Real Property

§9-103. No duty to keep premises safe for certain uses; responsibility for acts of such users

1. Except as provided in subdivision two,
 - a. An owner, lessee or occupant of premises, whether or not posted as provided in Section 11-2111 of the environmental conservation law, owes no duty to keep the premises safe for entry or use by others for hunting, fishing, organized gleanings as defined in Section Seventy-One of the agriculture and markets law, canoeing, boating, trapping, hiking, cross-country skiing, tobogganing, sledding, speleological activities, horseback riding, bicycle riding, hand gliding, motorized vehicle operation for recreational purposes, snowmobile operation, cutting or gathering of wood for non-commercial purposes or training of dogs, or to give warning of any hazardous condition or use of or structure or activity on such premises to persons entering for such purposes;
 - b. An owner, lessee or occupant of premises who gives permission to another to pursue any such activities upon such premises does not thereby
 - (1) Extend any assurance that the premises are safe for such purpose, or
 - (2) Constitute the person to whom permission is granted an invitee to whom a duty of care is owed, or
 - (3) Assume responsibility for or incur liability for any injury to person or property caused by any act of persons to whom the permission is granted.
 - c. An owner, lessee or occupant of a farm, as defined in Section Six Hundred Seventy-One of the labor law, whether or not posted as provided in Section 11-2111 of the environmental conservation law, owes no duty to keep such farm safe for entry or use by a person who enters or remains in or upon such farm without consent or privilege, or to give warning of any hazardous condition or use of or structure or activity on such farm to persons so entering or remaining. This shall not be interpreted, or construed, as a limit on liability for acts of gross negligence in addition to those other acts referred to in Subdivision Two of this section.
2. This section does not limit the liability which would otherwise exist
 - a. For willful or malicious failure to guard, or to warn against, a dangerous condition, use, structure or activity; or
 - b. For injury suffered in any case where permission to pursue any of the activities enumerated in this section was granted for a consideration other than the consideration, if any, paid to said landowner by the state or federal government, or permission to train dogs was granted for a consideration other than that provided for in Section 11-0925 of the environmental conservation law; or
 - c. For injury caused, by acts of persons to whom permission to pursue any of the activities enumerated in this section was granted, to other persons as to whom the person granting permission, or the owner, lessee or occupant of the premises, owed a duty to keep the premises safe or to warn of danger.
3. Nothing in this section creates a duty of care or ground of liability for injury to person or property.
HISTORY: Add, L 1963, Ch 576.

Sample
Agreement Between

_____, (town or organization) with offices located at _____,
_____, and _____
("Property Owner"), residing or with offices at _____,
To establish a hiking trail for public use across private property.

Refer to attached Exhibit A, which indicates the routing of the trail.

Property owner agrees to allow the _____ to mark and maintain a ten foot right-of-way for the _____ trail across a portion of the property, located in the Town of _____, Essex County, State of New York Tax Lot _____, indicated in Exhibit A. This section of trail will be used exclusively for non-motorized use (or only specific activities if so desired). No camping or open fires are allowed on the property.

Volunteer trail workers will perform the seasonal work of trail marking and maintenance. Marking will consist of small markers on trees along the route. Basic maintenance will consist of pruning of bushes and trees necessary to clear the foot path.

Property Owner reserves the right to require a relocation of the trail of any part of the trail to a different portion of the property if the need arises. In determining the route of said trail or a relocation, the _____ will work cooperatively with the Property Owner to determine the most appropriate location

Property Owner may, at any time, revoke this permission upon 60 days' written notice to the _____. If Property Owner contacts to sell the property, or any part thereof abutting or intersecting the trail, the _____ shall be notified at a time of the signing of the contract to enable it to negotiate renewal of this permission with the purchaser.

Signed and dated by both parties

PARTNERSHIP OPTIONS FOR EXPANDING RECREATION

Liability

One of the first questions asked by someone considering trail access across their land is that of liability: “What happens if someone is hurt? Can I be sued?” Fortunately, New York has a Recreational Use Statute that limits the liability of landowners that allow access to their land for certain recreational activities (NYS General Obligations Law subsection 9-103; please see full text below). The activities listed in the law include those most commonly associated with trails, such as hiking, bicycle riding, horseback riding and cross-country skiing. The law applies to landowners whether or not they grant permission for the use of their property, provided that they do not either (a) charge a fee, or (b) willfully or maliciously fail to guard against hazards. If these two conditions are observed, the landowner who allows public access is no more liable than the landowner who posts their land against trespassing.

The law provides important protection from liability, but unfortunately, nothing can prevent someone from suing a landowner, even if the lawsuit turns out to be groundless. Fortunately, most homeowners’ insurance provides coverage to the owner in case someone is hurt on their property, whether or not they are there with permission. This means that the insurance company will handle any legal action, protecting the landowner from most of the inconvenience and/or cost. The definition of “residence” in homeowners’ insurance usually extends to the yard, other structures, and vacant land as long as it is not actively farmed or used for timbering. Landowners who conduct these kinds of activities usually have farm owner commercial liability insurance, which usually provides similar protection. In some cases, the local entity may also have liability insurance (or self-insurance) and may be able to extend that coverage to participating landowners as “additional insured” parties on its policy.

The combination of the State’s Recreational Use Statute and typical homeowners’ insurance provides effective protection against the risk of litigation. While it is impossible to promise that a trail-related lawsuit will never occur, it is true that they are uncommon. Elsewhere in the State, the Finger Lakes Trail Conference and the NY-NJ Trail Conference together maintain over 1700 miles of trail-much of it on private land. In their decades of experience, neither has ever experienced a trail-related lawsuit.

Maintenance

Often the next question asked by someone considering trail access across their land is that of maintenance. Each town has a group of individuals who have agreed to work with walkways and maintain the trails. If you want, you may become an active trail crew member and maintain the portion of the trail which crosses your property, or just call the local contact if there is a problem. Otherwise, the trail crew will contact you before any maintenance is performed.

Trail Partnership Options

Landowners considering allowing public use of a part of their land have a range of options to draw from. Depending on their plans for your property, you may prefer a temporary or more permanent arrangement for hosing the trail. There is a lot of room for flexibility, and since the interests and concerns of every landowner are as different as the land itself, trail access agreements are most often tailored individually. Any of the following tools can be adapted so that it works to best advantage of all concerned.

Revocable Trail Agreement

This is a simple written agreement that sets out clear terms for trail use and maintenance, and allows either party the option of terminating the agreement at any time, should circumstances change.

The advantage of a revocable agreement is that it allows the landowner and trail organization to try out a potential trail alignment together, but without a long-term commitment. In some cases, a simple written agreement may serve as a “trial run” for a more permanent form of access agreement (please see our sample below).

Easement

An easement is a voluntary legal agreement between a landowner and another entity (such as a land trust, trail group, or municipality) that is used to establish certain rights or limitations for the use of a piece of land. Easements are very flexible and can be readily adapted to individual landowners’ interests. The title to the property remains with the landowner, who continues to be able to sell, lease or mortgage the land, or leave it to heirs. At the same time, certain rights specified by the landowner are conveyed to the holder of the easement. An easement is a legal document that is filed with the deed to the property at the county clerk’s office. While some easements are short-term agreements, most are permanent, and run with the title to the land.

A trail easement can be used to extend to the public the right to use a portion of land for specified recreational uses, such as hiking and cross-country skiing. The landowner may restrict the specified uses of the trail corridor and may require the party that holds the trail easement to meet certain management conditions, such as providing vegetation screening.

A landowner may use a conservation easement to legally provide long-term protection for their land. The landowner continues to own the title to the land, and may include provisions for continue certain uses, such as farming timbering, or trial use, or it may be used to simply protect wetlands, wildlife habitat or other special features. Since a conservation easement limits the future development of the land, it may qualify the landowner for a reduction in property taxes. If the conservation easement is conveyed as a gift, and subject to certain standards specified in the IRS code, the landowner may also be able to qualify for an income tax benefit.

*Final Layout of First Wilderness Trail
NYS Contract C1000670; First Wilderness Heritage Corridor Component #2*

In some cases, a combination of trail access or protection strategies may be appropriate. For example, a narrow trail easement may provide for trail access through a corridor on limited portion of a property, while a conservation easement may be used to provide long-term protection for the surrounding woodlands or fields. The approach may also be kept flexible. For example, a landowner may prefer a floating trail easement, which provides for trail access through a certain area of their property without specifying an exact route. This allows the trail to be relocated in case the need should arise.

Gift or Sale of Land

A landowner may prefer to donate or sell a part of their land to establish a trail corridor. In this case, the landowner transfers full ownership, or fee simple interest, to a trail organization. Some might consider an outright contribution of property, or alternatively, a “bargain sale,” in which the owner agrees to sell property at less than the full market value and donate the difference. In either case, the landowner may be eligible for significant benefits in terms of income and property taxes.