



# North Creek Recreational Trail Plan

Prepared for the Town of Johnsbury

August 2019

*Cover Photo Courtesy of Visit North Creek*



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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The North Creek Recreation Trail Plan Advisory Committee would like to thank the many citizens of Town of Johnsbury for contributing their ideas toward the creation of this plan and for their commitment to improving their community.

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## INTRODUCTION

The Town of Johnsbury Recreational Trail Plan is an initiative to expand and improve the Town's recreational trail network and associated amenities, with a particular focus on such active recreation trail uses as mountain biking, hiking, and backcountry skiing near the Hamlet of North Creek and Gore Mountain (see the location map at the end of this section). Trails are more than just paths blazed through the woods. They enhance the local economy, celebrate the natural environment, bring community members together, and promote a healthy and active lifestyle. This plan builds off local and regional efforts to incorporate outdoor recreation into the core of the community. The following themes were central to the creation of this plan.

### Community Development

Developing and enhancing outdoor recreation opportunities is, at its core, a community development initiative. Outdoor recreation is often leveraged for its ability to draw outside spending into the community. However, trails and recreational facilities also benefit existing residents by providing opportunities for



*Backcountry skiers use various types of equipment to explore the landscape*

socialization, the maintenance of physical and mental health, and alternative transportation.

### Environmental Stewardship

The Town of Johnsbury has long recognized that its environmental setting and resources are key community assets. This plan approaches recreational development from an environmental sustainability perspective. Trail routing, design, and use have been carefully planned to avoid damaging important resources, while at the same time fostering an appreciation of and providing access to the environment.

### Grassroots Approach

Most recreational planning in the Adirondack Park is initiated at the state and regional level. A top-down approach is often crucial to developing plans that encompass multiple municipal jurisdictions, various state land management units, and sensitive environmental habitats. The downside of the top-down approach is that the needs of individual communities are considered after the 'big picture' ideas. This plan started with the question "what type of recreational development is desired by and is best for the community?" It then considers how to fit this vision into existing regional trail plans.

### Professionally Designed Trails

There are many examples of community-initiated trail planning efforts that result in a series of lines drawn over a map without regard for actual user experience or site conditions. In the same way that designing a road network requires the technical expertise of an engineer, trail networks also need guidance from professional experts. This plan was guided by professional trail builders and dedicated user groups and the resulting recommendations are



## INTRODUCTION

grounded by deep technical knowledge and passion.

### Purpose Built Trails



*A rider descends "Snakes Tongue"*

Adirondack trails are becoming victims of their own success as increasing numbers of visitors are using old or improperly designed trails. Purpose built trails are intended to withstand

user pressure and provide an excellent user experience. No one trail is ideal for biking, skiing, and hiking - each activity has its own design considerations.

### Connectivity

New York State and the wider region is in the midst of a trail building boom. As the network of long-distance trails continues to strengthen, there will be more opportunities for local municipalities to 'get a lot for a little' by investing in local connections to these growing trail networks. Strategic local improvements will leverage these state investments in regional trails.

### Implementable Actions

This plan prioritizes trail improvements and provides design guidance and cost estimates, as well as a roadmap through the complex sequence of administrative approvals required to develop trails on public land

## LOCATION MAP

The Hamlet of North Creek and Gore Mountain are located in the Town of Johnsburg, in New York's Adirondack Park. Just over 20 miles from the Adirondack Northway (I-87), the area is accessible to the greater New York, New England, and Canadian population centers.



## BACKGROUND

This project is the convergence of the efforts of local recreational enthusiasts who have been quietly toiling in the forests and hills to maintain and develop a world class trail network. The Town of Johnsbury recognizes that these recreational trails are an important community asset deserving of municipal support. This is following the trend of rural communities across the nation that are awakening to the fact that outdoor recreation development is intrinsically tied to economic and community development.

Outdoor recreation is considered by many to be a pursuit, a hobby, or a pastime, but a new effort by the federal government to quantify the economic impacts of outdoor recreation is changing policy-makers minds. According to the Federal Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA), the outdoor recreation industry accounted for two percent of the entire 2016 US Gross Domestic Product. According to a recent study, consumer spending on outdoor recreation is approximately \$887 billion, and generates 7.6 million jobs, which exceeds employment in computer technology and construction. In New York State, the outdoor recreation industry generates \$41.8 billion in consumer spending, generating 313,000 jobs and \$3.6 Billions in state and local tax revenue.

These staggering numbers, combined with the growing knowledge that the economic struggles facing Adirondack communities are not a direct result of land use policies that promote environmental protection but simply the trend in



*Johnsbury has a wealth of recreation assets to build upon*

rural communities across the country, is lending support to the idea of municipally supported outdoor recreation.

This plan aims to leverage renewed interest in active, modern recreation, as well as increased state investment in the Gore Mountain Ski Center, focusing particularly on the increase in recreational offerings beyond lift service alpine skiing (e.g., Nordic ski trails, backcountry skiing, mountain biking, snowshoeing, and hiking). For years the Hamlet of North Creek has worked to capitalize on visitation to Gore Mountain. The Town, working with the local business community, has established programs like the ski shuttle and events like the RideOn Mountain Bike Festival. This plan complements these existing efforts and supports the Town's efforts to integrate outdoor recreation into the core of the community.

## EXISTING PLANS

Outdoor recreation and trail planning have played a central role in various local and regional planning initiatives over the years. This plan builds off and supports the following plans.

**The Hamlets to Huts Initiatives “Adirondack Community-based Trails and Lodging System” report (2017):** This report provides a conceptual and practical foundation for developing a recreation-based tourism network of interconnected trails and lodging facilities, much like existing European models. Portions of this ‘Hamlets to Huts’ system are already operational, including the North Creek to Indian Lake route.

**First Wilderness Corridor (2000 and Present):** In 1995, Warren County purchased a 40-mile right-of-way of the former Adirondack Branch of the Delaware and Hudson Railroad line between the Town of Corinth in Saratoga County and the Hamlet of North Creek. Since purchasing, Warren County has been developing the corridor as a focal point for outdoor recreation, heritage tourism, and local community development. In 2019, the First Wilderness Trail Plan was unveiled, which outlines town to town trail connections throughout the corridor.

**Ski Bowl Park Enhancement Plan (2001):** This master plan for Ski Bowl Park outlines various concepts for improving and expanding amenities in Ski Bowl Park. Significant portions of this plan are still relevant today and are reflected in the basecamp concepts included in this plan.

**Town of Johnsbury Comprehensive Plan (2005) and subsequent updates:** The vision statement of the Town’s 2005 Comprehensive Plan is directly reflected in the efforts of this plan: “*The*

*Town of Johnsbury should remain as a scenic, rural, residential community for both year-round and seasonal residents with services provided primarily in the hamlet areas. North Creek hamlet should be revitalized as a tourist destination and service center with closer linkage to the Gore Mountain Ski Center. The local economy should be supported by enhanced tourism/recreation trade as well as by business and industry compatible with the town’s rural and scenic character.”*

**Gore Mountain Unit Management Plan (2002), Vanderwhacker Wild Forest UMP, Siamese Ponds UMP, and subsequent amendments:** This policy document for the management and development of recreation facilities at Gore Mountain has been updated to support the expansion of more ski trails and associated facility improvements.

**Adirondack Park Trail Plan for the North Country National Scenic Trail (2015):** The North Country National Scenic Trail will be 4,600 miles when complete, connecting North Dakota to New York. It is intended to connect through the Town of Johnsbury from east to west. The North Country Trail Association offers guidance on how to become a “Trail Town” and capitalize on the benefits that the Trail can bring to the area.

**North Creek and Ski Bowl Circulation/Capacity Analysis:** The Adirondack/Glens Falls Transportation Council (A/GFTC) is evaluating existing and proposed connections between the hamlet of North Creek and Ski Bowl Park. This study will evaluate existing intersections and propose enhanced pedestrian connectivity and intersection realignments.



## CASE STUDY: KINGDOM TRAILS, VT

The Kingdom Trails network in Vermont is an example of a successful, community driven trail network that has grown from a modest trail system into a national destination. Started in 1994 by residents and business owners in the area surrounding Burke, Vermont, the trail network has grown to include over 100 miles of purpose-built trails. In 2018, the trails were used by over 140,000 mountain bikers, cross-country skiers, and hikers. Today, Kingdom Trails is consistently rated as one of the “Best Mountain Bike Trails in North America” and hosts massive outdoor industry events.

The trail system depends on the cooperation of over 60 private land owners. Users pay modest annual or daily membership fees that help maintain and develop trails. These fees support paid welcome center staff and a trail crew. The Kingdom Trails network has developed an excellent web presence to market the area and inform visitors of trail conditions and events. Their web presence supports sponsorships and cross marketing with local businesses.

Kingdom Trails are noted for their easy access to a charming village and the accommodation of a diverse range of riding abilities. The marketing department also works to accommodate the Quebecois market and offers signage and advertisements in French.

The surrounding area has seen an uptick in economic activity. Rental shops have been established, and accommodations market their proximity to Kingdom Trails. Rabbit Hill Inn markets a mountain biking, dining, and accommodation package.

Kingdom Trails benefit from a partnership with the Burke Mountain ski resort that has extended its season because of the new opportunities.



*NEMBAfest attracts thousands of visitors to Vermont, supporting local businesses*



*Trails are designed for a wide range of users and attract entire families*



*Special care is taken to ensure ongoing support from willing landowners*



## PLANNING PROCESS

To develop this plan, professional trail evaluation assistance was complimented by extensive public and stakeholder engagement. The Town of Johnsburg benefits from an enthusiastic group of community minded outdoor recreationists who are generous with their ideas.

The Advisory Committee comprised Town of Johnsburg residents, including elected officials, recreational enthusiasts, business owners, members of trail groups, and others who have been deeply involved with local community development initiatives. The Advisory Committee helped to inventory existing conditions, identify connections between assets, and set project priorities. The Advisory Committee met throughout the planning process, and members had multiple opportunities to participate in field site visits (hiking, skiing, biking) with a professional outdoor recreation developer.

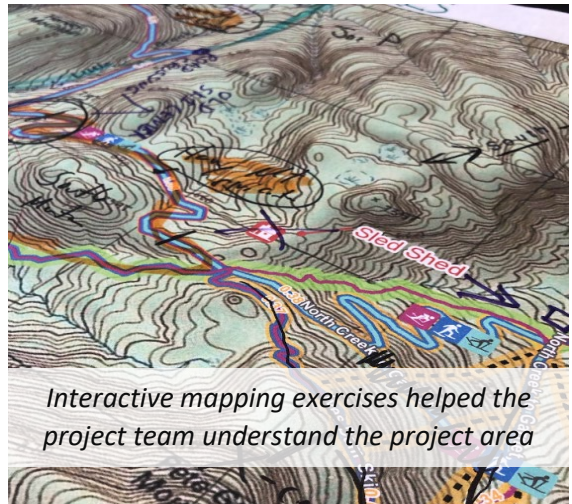
In addition to multiple Advisory Committee meetings, a public workshop was held at the Tannery Community Center in North Creek (see Appendix D). The Public Workshop was an opportunity for members of the community to learn about the project and to provide input during an interactive mapping exercise. At this event, community members pointed out possible trail connections, existing informal trails, and high priority connections.

Stakeholder meetings - both formal and informal - were held to solicit input and advice from the community.

The project team conducted extensive site visits to evaluate the condition of existing trails, inform the type and location of improvements, and determine the most appropriate routing of new trail connections.



*Community members gather at the Tannery Community Center to discuss the project*



*Interactive mapping exercises helped the project team understand the project area*



*Community members reviewed draft maps and provided direct feedback on issues and opportunities*

## EXISTING CONDITIONS

There are currently 47 miles of trails in the trail network study area. Ninety-three percent (approximately 44 miles) of trails are on publicly-owned land. The majority (over 37 miles) traverse land owned by the state, with the remainder traversing land owned by the Town of Johnsbury. Just over three miles of trails traverse privately-owned land (see Appendix A).

In total, the 47-mile trail network consists of 20 trails. As shown in following adjoining table and the “Winter Use Trail Network (Existing & Proposed)” figure, current winter trail uses include backcountry skiing (on all or portions of 13 of the trails, totaling over 38 miles), snowshoeing (on all or portions of 12 of the trails, totaling over 24 miles), and cross-country skiing (on all or portions of four of the trails, totaling over six miles). Current summer trail uses include hiking (on all or portions of 14 trails, totaling over 41 miles) and biking (on all or portions of 12 trails, totaling over 13 miles). The adjoining table provides an overview of existing trail statistics and the map “Existing and Proposed Trail Network” identifies their locations.

All the existing trails in the network are located within Adirondack Park and subject to Adirondack Park Agency (APA) regulations, which vary by APA land classification (refer to the “Existing & Proposed Trail Network” figure). These APA land classifications include NYS Siamese Ponds Wilderness Area, NYS Vanderwhacker Wild Forest, and NYS Gore Mountain Intensive Use (GMIU). In addition, lands owned by the Town of Johnsbury are designated for low-intensity and hamlet development, and privately-owned land is designated for resource management, low-intensity, and industrial use development.

Existing Trail Network*		
Trail Name (Primary)	Miles	Jurisdiction
11 Mountain to Old Farm	12.43	NYS
Alternative	0.86	Town of Johnsbury
Balm of Gilead Mountain	0.49	NYS
Botheration Loop	3.20	NYS
Carol Thomas Trail	0.25	Town of Johnsbury
Halfway Brook	3.69	NYS
Heart Brake	0.91	Town of Johnsbury
Hoot	0.34	Town of Johnsbury
Ives Dam Ski	0.60	NYS
Long Trail	2.56	Town of Johnsbury
North Creek to Garnet	1.54	Private lands
On the Rocks	0.20	Town of Johnsbury
Puffer Pond	4.19	NYS
Rabbit Pond Ski	1.47	NYS & private lands
Raymond Brook Ski	3.94	NYS
Roaring Brook Ski	1.22	NYS
Schaefer	3.51	NYS & Town of Johnsbury
Second Pond	2.68	NYS
Ski Bowl Connector	1.56	Private lands
Ski Bowl Loop Trail	1.32	Town of Johnsbury

*\*Note: Many of the distances listed for existing bike trails are 10% to 15% longer than the distances listed here that were derived from GPS data. Wheel measuring a trail is a more accurate way to determine actual distance. This discrepancy was accounted for in the cost estimates (Appendix C).*

## MASTER TRAIL PLAN

Throughout the planning process, site visits, the public workshop, Advisory Committee meetings, and review of existing regional trail initiatives (both planned and under construction) were used to create a master list of trail expansions and improvements.

The trail locations on the map represent a narrow corridor that is appropriate for a recreationally sound and environmentally sustainable trail. The trail locations were site verified to conform to the recreational expectations of the Advisory Committee and user groups.

Extensive public and stakeholder input allowed the project partners to finetune trail routes, evaluate the need to connect to different destinations, and understand how the proposed trail plan would bolster other community initiatives.

All the proposed new trails were professionally site assessed for practicality, recreational soundness, environmental sustainability, and administrative feasibility. Existing trails and proposed trails were skied, hiked, or biked where possible.

The following Winter and Non-Winter Use Trail Network Maps (next page) are the result of these extensive efforts. The maps show existing trails that are officially recognized by the NYSDEC and local government, proposed trails, and unofficial trails that already exist but are not recognized as part of an area's Unit Management Plan or formalized by easement or land ownership.

The trails are symbolized by their primary use and secondary uses. The goal is to design new trails and improve existing trails based on the desired primary use. However, secondary uses will need to be taken into consideration as well.

The major proposed and existing uses are symbolized as follow:



**Mountain Biking:** Mountain biking trails are designed differently from hiking trails. Bike trails have a flow line, climbing turns, banked turns, rollers, rock ride overs, and rolling contour and grade reversal design. Simply allowing a bicycle on a hiking trail and calling it a bike route is not desirable or sustainable. The International Mountain Bicycling Association's (IMBA) Guide to Building Sweet Singletrack and NYSDEC's relevant Management Guidance provide a good basis of design.



**Hiking:** Existing and proposed hiking trail should be designed to provide a wide range of user experiences, ranging from short beginner hikes to more expert multi-day hikes through the Forest Preserve Wilderness Areas.



**Cross-country:** This style of skiing is not as technical as backcountry skiing and the trails include fewer extreme ascents and descents. These trails may or may not be machine groomed in accordance with NYSDEC regulations.



**Backcountry Skiing:** Specialized skiing equipment that allows skiers to ascend and descend more technical terrain. Trails for this use are designed in accordance with NYSDEC guidelines and are suitable for intermediate to advanced skiers. The Draft Forest Preserve Ski Touring Trail Development Guidelines provide a good basis of design.



**Snowshoeing:** Snowshoeing trails are designed like regular hiking trails and do not have any special design criteria.

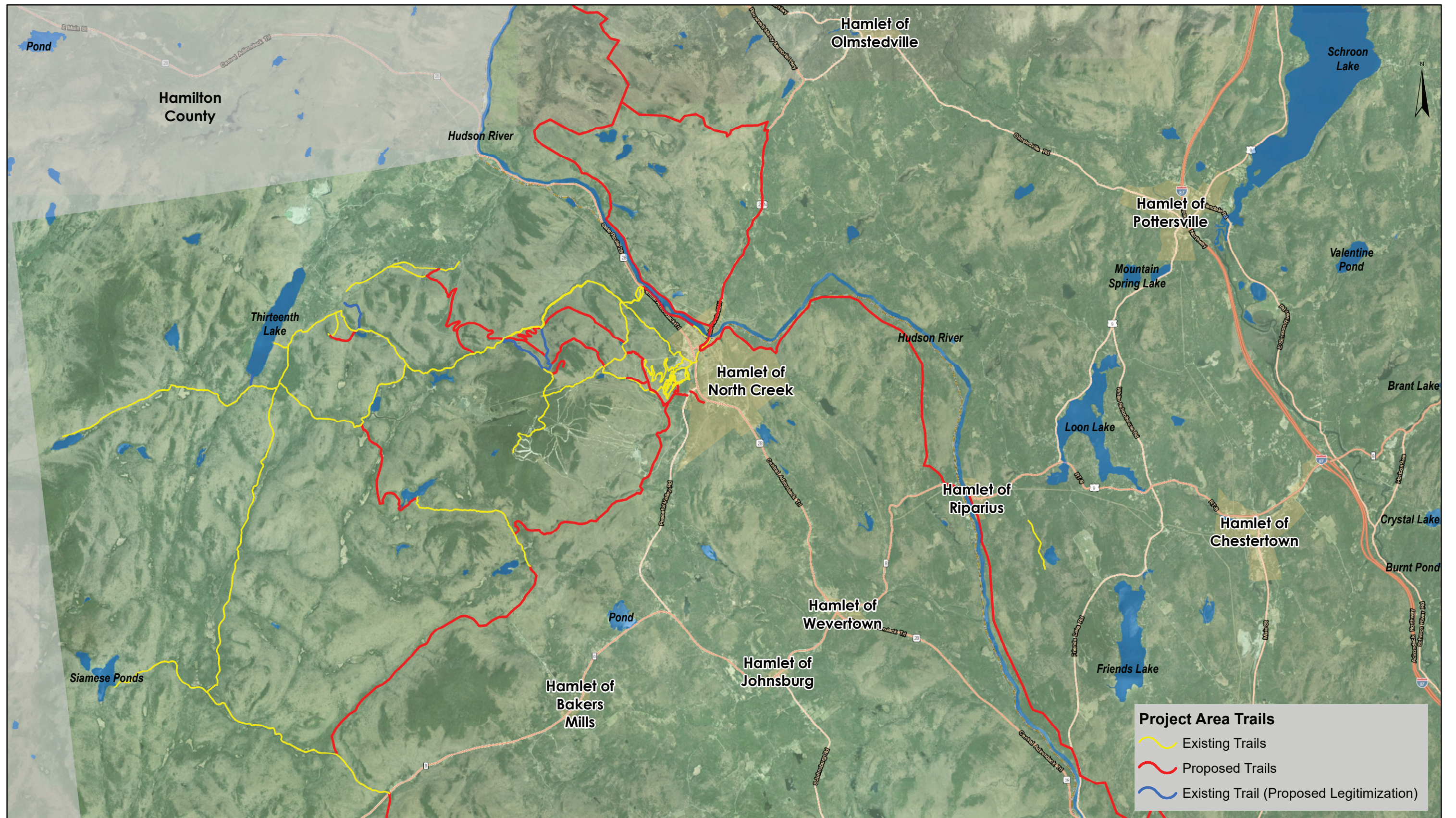














## TRAIL DEVELOPMENT: MULTIPRONGED APPROACH

Given the time, administrative, and financial commitment required to develop such a large-scale trail effort, it is suggested that the project be done incrementally. The following section outlines a multipronged approach that will allow the community to initiate various aspects of the project at once without being overwhelmed. However, given the scope of this effort, the community will need to be opportunistic, jumping into various aspects of the project as prospects arise (e.g. offer of an easement, funding awards, etc.).

It is worth noting that this approach will allow different aspects of the project to progress simultaneously. Various land ownerships and classifications means that the period between planning and actual project implementation varies greatly. Projects on municipally controlled lands, like Ski Bowl Park, can move rapidly ahead while those on private lands or NYS Forest Preserve Lands will take longer due to the necessity of acquiring long-term recreation easements or approvals. For example, GMIU area lands have Unit Management Plan (UMP) requirements favorable to recreational trail development that can be addressed quickly. Vanderwhacker Wild Forest (VWF) and Siamese Ponds Wilderness (SPW) UMP amendments will generally take the longest due to more restrictive use. One large private land owner has property with potential projects that span many phases of the Expansion Plan. A single agreement with this land owner would allow multiple projects to move forward as funding becomes available. As such, it is recommended that this effort be undertaken immediately.

Compiling projects of similar land ownership or administration into groups to address approval needs is advantageous and is preferred over individually submitted projects. From a user perspective, a trail is a singular feature, but trails may traverse various administrative boundaries, and those tasked with implementing this plan should pay close attention to the various approvals needed for each improvement and approach them holistically, particularly with NYSDEC.

Administrative planning and approval for multiple projects in each land designation should proceed at the same time to bring the recreational and economic benefit to the communities in a reasonable time frame. Each planning phase can build off and benefit from the infrastructure in the prior phases. Individual projects can be stand alone and benefit the existing trail system if opportunities become available to move them ahead.

Input from stakeholders at the NYSDEC supports this approach since it recognizes their internal land planning and management scheme, which favors periodic updates to individual unit management plans. The following section outlines a five-phase approach to improving and expanding the existing trail system. This includes:

**Component 1:** Retain Critical Infrastructure

**Component 2:** Improve Ski Bowl Park Area

**Component 3:** Raymond Brook Valley

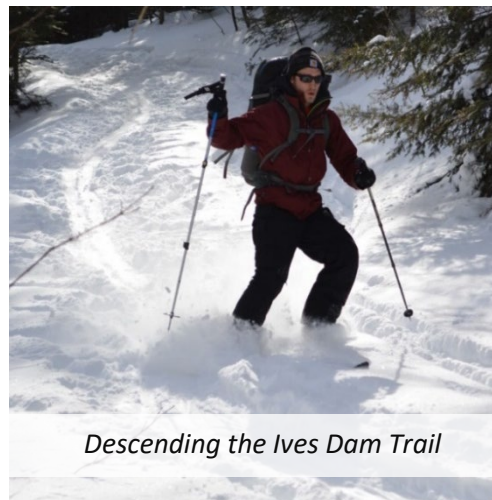
**Component 4:** Community Connections

**Component 5:** “Basecamp” Development

## COMPONENT 1: RETAIN CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Planning for the expansion of trail-based infrastructure in the North Creek Ski Bowl Park area should initially focus on retaining existing critical infrastructure through long-term agreements. Expansion of the trail system is predicated on cooperation between the Town of Johnsburg, adjacent private land owners, and state entities. These various groups should maintain a dialogue beyond this planning effort to ensure a cohesive recreational experience. The Town should work with the private landowners and NYS to secure permanent recreational easements.

Ive's Dam Trail and the Ski Bowl Connector Trail are critical trails that provide excellent user experiences, as well as access to various other trails.



### COMPONENT 1: ACTION ITEMS

Trail Segment	Relevant Jurisdiction	Next Steps
Ive's Dam Trail	Private	Explore Easement Opportunities
Ski Bowl Connector Trail	Private and Town	Secure Access or Realign Segment

## COMPONENT 2: IMPROVE SKI BOWL PARK AREA

This component should focus on trails closely connected to Ski Bowl Park that expand and improve existing recreational opportunities, add new recreational experiences, and connect adjacent parts of the local community. The Ski Bowl Park to Peaceful Valley Road connector trail will serve as an important connection between the businesses and residential areas on Peaceful Valley Road and Ski Bowl Park. The Rabbit Pond Trail needs trail tread improvements for bike use. Since the NYSDEC already recognizes this trail as a bike trail, there will be minimal administrative hurdles before work can begin on this project. In addition to these select trail connections, the Town has previously identified a number Ski Bowl Park-related improvements, including enhancements to the beach area, as well as improved access along NYS Route 28. The latter includes the development of a new intersection that is critical to improving both vehicle and pedestrian access to Ski Bowl Park from downtown. It is also a placemaking opportunity that will allow motorists to identify a key point of access along a locally significant highway.



## COMPONENT 2: ACTION ITEMS

Trail Name	Jurisdiction	Next Steps
Ski Bowl to Peaceful Valley Road Connection	Town and Private Lands	Secure easement
Lower Schaefer Trail: Gorge Circumvent	Gore Mountain Intensive Use	Work with Town and volunteers
Little Gore Summit Trail: Hiking & Snowshoeing	Gore Mountain Intensive Use	Work with Gore Mountain
Rabbit Pond Trail: Bike Tread Improvement	Vanderwhacker Wild Forest	Work with Town and volunteers
Rabbit-Shed Trail	Vanderwhacker Wild Forest	Work with NYSDEC and APA
Rabbit Pond Lean-to	Vanderwhacker Wild Forest	Work with NYSDEC and APA

## COMPONENT 3: RAYMOND BROOK VALLEY

This component should focus on the creation of a new multi-season backcountry destination. This includes backcountry skiing, mountain biking, cross-country skiing, and hiking in the Raymond Brook Valley. The most important aspect is the development of the North Creek to Garnet Hill connection. This will require collaboration with NYSDEC and various private land owners. The creation of more ski trails, a warming hut, and mountain biking in this area that feeds into Ski Bowl Park, is on the route to adjacent communities, and has shuttle assisted Ride-Up-Slide-Down experience available, will add a new facet to the local recreation economy. These trails will be attractive to recreationists looking for full day adventures off the beaten path.



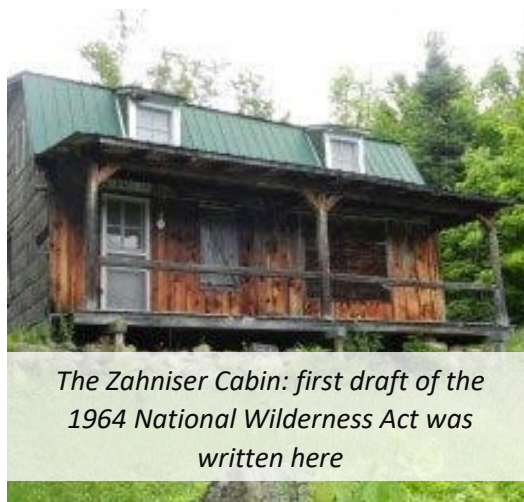
## COMPONENT 3: ACTION ITEMS

Name	Jurisdiction	Next Steps
Little Pete Mountain Trail	Private & Gore Mountain Intensive Use	Secure land access and work with NYSDEC and APA
Raymond Brook Trail	Private & Vanderwhacker Wild Forest	Secure land access and work with NYSDEC and APA
Raymond Brook Warming Hut or Lean-to	Private or Vanderwhacker Wild Forest	Secure land access and work with NYSDEC and APA
North Creek to Garnet Cross-country Skiing and Bike Trail	Private & Vanderwhacker Wild Forest	Secure land access and work with NYSDEC and APA
Pete Gay Traverse	Private, Vanderwhacker Wild Forest, and Gore Mountain Intensive Use	Secure land access and work with NYSDEC and APA

## COMPONENT 4: COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

This component focuses on creating Hamlet and community connections, loop trails, and new linkages and experiences. This component is somewhat regional, with aspects of it taking place further from the Ski Bowl Park area. This phase creates larger loops and cross-country experiences for big days or multi-day experiences.

New community connections with the Hamlets of North River (and Garnet Hill) and Bakers Mills would be created with the proposed trail expansions. For example, the previously noted North Creek to Garnet Hill trail connection would link the existing Ski Bowl Park system to the Garnet Hill Lodge system, greatly increasing the attractiveness of the Town of Johnsbury's mountain biking offerings.



In addition, a large skiing and hiking loop, circumventing Gore Mountain, would be created. This would create a new long-distance, recreational cross-country skiing and trekking experience that could be accessible to a wide range of abilities. The "Wilderness Trail" would create a loop and connection to the Zahniser historical site where the 1964 Wilderness Act was drafted. While trail development within the Forest Preserve will require coordinate with and support from NYSDEC and the APA, trail development within Wilderness Areas will require even more consideration to ensure the integrity of the landscape.

Expansion of the Riverfront Trail north from the rail station towards the terminus of the Raymond Brook Ski Trail, could also be explored or developed. This would serve as a user-friendly trail for residents and visitors to the Hamlet of North Creek, as well as an off-road connection from the Raymond Brook Trail to the Hamlet.

### COMPONENT 4: ACTION ITEMS

Name	Jurisdiction	Next Steps
Second-Bother Trail	Siamese Ponds Wilderness	Work with NYSDEC & APA
Balm of Gilead Mountain Loop	Siamese Ponds Wilderness	Work with NYSDEC & APA
Ward Hill Trail	Siamese Ponds Wilderness & Gore Mountain Intensive Use	Work with NYSDEC & APA
Chatamac Trail	Siamese Ponds Wilderness	Work with NYSDEC & APA
Riverfront Trail	Private	Additional Planning and Explore Easement Opportunities

## COMPONENT 5: "BASECAMPS" DEVELOPMENT

This component focuses on creating social gathering and shelter locations that have ready access to nearby recreation activities and trailheads. These locations should have such user amenities as parking,



water, bathrooms, and shelters. Camping opportunities could also be considered. For example, the popularity of van conversion campers among the outdoor recreation community could be accommodated by providing specifically designed overnight parking accommodations. The basecamp areas may also include space for nearby businesses to lease and provide food, retail, or other related services (e.g., gear, repair, etc.). The design of structures could be flexible. For example, yurts could be used as temporary buildings. Ultimately, the intent is to create a meeting point and a place to clean up before going into town to enjoy local businesses. The “Basecamp” concept on the following page serves to illustrate the types of low impact amenities that could be provided to bolster the recreational appeal of Ski Bowl Park and to offer high-quality amenities to recreationists. This location was selected as an example because of its proximity to existing facilities and infrastructure and may serve the winter use community. This would prevent any potential conflicts with beachgoers during warmer months. When planning and developing the proposed basecamps, the following concepts should be considered:



*Key Elements of the Concept:*

- Programmable space for businesses or community initiatives;
- Low cost of implementation;
- Amenities targeted at active outdoor recreationists;
- Facilities and location that complement and support local businesses; and,
- Complement existing efforts to improve Ski Bowl Park.

In addition to the Ski Bowl Park basecamp concept, there are opportunities to enhance the existing Carol Thomas Trailhead behind the Town Hall. This trailhead is closer to downtown North Creek and already serves as a gathering point for mountain bikers who utilize the trail as a stepping off point for the Ski Bowl Park trail system. A screened structure with a central fireplace would be most suitable for this location as it is primarily for summer use.

**COMPONENT 5: ACTION ITEMS**

Name	Jurisdiction	Next Steps
Ski Bowl Park Pond Basecamp (Winter Use Focus)	Town	Additional Planning, Design, and Development
Carol Thomas Trailhead Basecamp (Mountain Biking Focus)	Town	Additional Planning, Design, and Development







## PLAN ALTERNATIVES

Many of the trails included in this plan travel through various administrative and ownership boundaries. The trails proposed by this plan are intended to be feasible from a permitting and constructability standpoint. However, there are various levels of review that must take place for many of the proposed trails to be built. The APA and NYSDEC will need to approve any amendments to the various UMPs. In some areas, the trail routing will require cooperation from willing landowners, which may change with the passage of time or change in ownership.

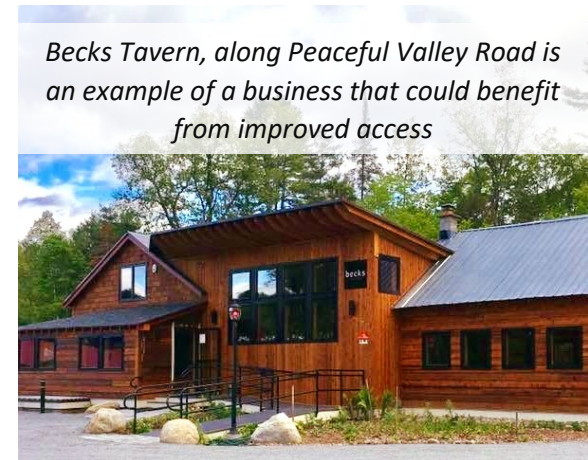
Alternative strategies are needed due to the reliance on private land recreational easements to achieve the Town's recreational objectives. If agreements cannot be achieved, then alternatives that most closely resemble the original objectives can be pursued. These strategies will shift development projects onto public lands. The suggested alternatives will be less desirable than the proposed improvements, but they will serve as acceptable alternatives for the purposes of this plan.

Potential development strategies that may require alternatives include the following:

### **Peaceful Valley Road Access Trail (Component 2)**

The proposed trail between Ski Bowl Park and Peaceful Valley Road would be located on private land. If an agreement cannot be achieved, a trail located on GMIU state land between the Ski Bowl Park and the ski center entrance road would be the alternative. This trail is also proposed in the recreation plan as the

Ward Hill Trail and Gore Mountain Circumvent Loop. The trail would require a large bridge to cross Roaring Brook.



### **North Creek to Garnet Hill Trail (Component 3)**

The proposed trail between the Sled Shed and the top of the South Mountain Pass would be located on private land. If an agreement cannot be achieved, a switchback type of trail on Vanderwacker Wild Forest state land, between the Sled Shed and South Mountain Pass, would be the alternative.

### **Raymond Brook and Garnet Hill Connector Warming Hut (Component 3)**

A warming hut for winter activities could be considered on private lands near the original Raymond Brook Trail. This would require willing landowners. If an agreement cannot be achieved, a lean-to on Vanderwacker Wild Forest state land, uphill of the Sled Shed, could be the alternative. This would require coordination and approval with NYSDEC and the APA

## WAYFINDING

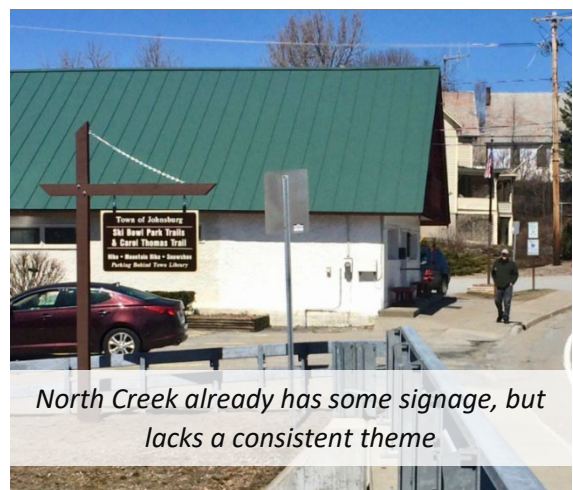
Wayfinding is a coordinated system of signage and mapping that allows users to understand and comfortably explore an area. Good wayfinding highlights local assets, encourages more in-depth visitation, and enhances appreciation and understanding of an area.

The Town of Johnsbury has established various multi-use trails in the Hamlet of North Creek. The Carol Thomas Trail and the Riverfront Trail both connect directly to downtown and are accessible to users of all abilities but are not easily found by visitors to the area.

The Town of Johnsbury should develop a wayfinding strategy to complement their trail development efforts. This could include vehicular and pedestrian signs, trail interpretive signs, entrance signs, trail wayfinding, and trail kiosks. A good wayfinding system weaves together history, recreation, and other attractions into one coherent experience. In the past, municipalities have had various signage programs - one for the Chamber of Commerce, another for trails, and another for historical attractions, which can confuse a visitor who is most likely interested in all three topics. An example of a wayfinding signage strategy that the Town of Bolton is currently considering is provided on the next page.

Trail wayfinding is largely managed by NYSDEC. However, local connections and trails on municipal land should be well marked and easy to navigate. For example, a visitor to the Depot Museum should be aware of their proximity to Ski Bowl Park and the Riverfront Trail. This will encourage visitors to stay in the Town of Johnsbury longer and increase visitor spending and enjoyment. Future roadway improvements along NYS Route 28 (intersection improvements)

should incorporate enhanced wayfinding so that visitors to Gore Mountain and Ski Bowl Park are aware of complementary attractions in the Hamlet of North Creek.





EXAMPLE WAYFINDING SIGNAGE SYSTEM





## IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

The successful implementation of this plan will require multiple permissions from the Town of Johnsburg, NYSDEC, APA, Gore Mountain Ski Center, Olympic Regional Development Authority (ORDA), and various businesses and private land owners. Cooperation and communication between these various groups will need to be ongoing and deliberate to achieve true success. While the multipronged approach outlined above is a helpful framework, perhaps the most important initiative is communication with these various stakeholders. As such, early outreach with property owners and state agencies is key. Fortunately, many private property owners have been engaged throughout the planning process, and the Town of Johnsburg is committed to working with the NYSDEC and APA to ensure not only proper approval of the trails, but their long-term sustainability.





To assist with this effort, the Implementation Considerations Reference Table below is intended to help the various stakeholders understand what is needed to advance the various components. The table is organized by land owner or classification. Below is glossary of commonly used acronyms.

**Unit Management Plan (UMP):** A guidance document for a specific portion of state land that outlines the types of trails, locations of trails, and other recreational amenities and maintenance schedules. The NYSDEC and APA review any changes to UMPs. The Siamese Ponds Wilderness, GMIU area, and the Vanderwhacker Wild Forest are all managed under different UMPs.

**Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan (SLMP):** Plan designed to guide the preservation, management, and use of state lands by all interested state agencies. Originally approved in 1973 and most recently updated in 2016, amendments to UMPs must be in accord with the SLMP.

IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS REFERENCE TABLE

Land Owner or Classification	Implementation Notes
<b>JOHNSBURG TOWN PARK LANDS (SKI BOWL PARK)</b>  <p>Note: Least restrictive development and most allowed uses</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allowable and proposed uses include: mountain biking, hiking, cross-country skiing, Nordic skiing, and snowshoeing</li> <li>• As municipally designated park lands, improvements here are required to be recreationally based</li> <li>• Action on Town land requires Town Board approval and may be reviewed by Park Committee</li> <li>• Due to connection and proximity, improvement here must work in collaboration with Gore Mountain Ski Center winter &amp; summer activities</li> <li>• Recreational development at Ski Bowl Park needs to take both community users and the local recreation economy into consideration</li> </ul>

Land Owner or Classification	Implementation Notes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connections to adjacent properties and businesses need to be addressed</li> <li>• Trail connections to lands outside of town jurisdiction will need to address state land classification issues (types of allowed activities), as well as how users will traverse Gore Mountain Ski Center facilities that require admission fees.</li> <li>• Municipally controlled land is the easiest land classification to make improvements and changes on. This would allow for quick trail construction, maintenance, and changes with little restriction</li> <li>• There is more flexibility on municipally controlled lands to create high-quality recreational trails experiences without consideration of the constraints placed on lands controlled by the NYSDEC</li> </ul>
<p><b>PRIVATE LAND: BARTON MINES, FRONT STREET DEVELOPMENT, HENDERSON, AND GARNET HILL LODGE</b></p> <p> Note: Least restrictive development and most allowed uses</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recreational trail development will require recreation agreement between the Town and property owner</li> <li>• Town Board approval will be required</li> <li>• Easiest land classification (Private Lands) to make improvements and changes on.</li> <li>• Would allow quick trail construction, maintenance and changes with little restriction.</li> <li>• Would be able to create high quality recreational trails &amp; experiences without the compromises required on state lands</li> <li>• For the Barton Mines properties, recreation agreement may allow for the development of a temporary yurt type structure for a warming hut and trail destination</li> <li>• For Front Street properties, Multiple land donations and recreation agreements have already been completed. Possibility of utilizing park land donations for multiple uses</li> <li>• For Henderson and Garnet Hill, existing trail system would be utilized. Would require proper signage to keep the public on the limited trail access and off trails requiring paid admission</li> </ul>
<p><b>GORE MOUNTAIN INTENSIVE USE AREA (NYS FOREST PRESERVE)</b></p> <p> Note: Moderate permitting and development difficulty</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allowable and proposed uses include: hiking, mountain biking, backcountry skiing, Nordic skiing, and snowshoeing</li> <li>• Recreational improvements must adhere to allowable uses of state land, as defined in the State Land Master Plan</li> <li>• The “Intensive Use” state land classification allows the greatest latitude in recreation development</li> <li>• All new trail developments will need to be added to the UMP for the Intensive Use Area. The Gore Mountain UMP, unlike many other UMPs is updated and amended frequently</li> <li>• Recreational trail development must work with Gore Mountain’s development Plans</li> </ul>

Land Owner or Classification	Implementation Notes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trail development needs to work in correlation with adjacent land classifications as all trails will be connected to other properties</li> <li>• “Intensive Use” classification allows the greatest latitude and quickest time periods for trail development on state land</li> </ul>
<p><b>VANDERWHACKER WILD FOREST (NYS FOREST PRESERVE)</b></p> <div data-bbox="207 993 272 1056"> </div> <p>Note: Moderate permitting and development difficulty</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allowable and proposed uses include: hiking, mountain biking, backcountry skiing, Nordic skiing, and snowshoeing</li> <li>• Recreational improvements must adhere to the allowable uses of state land, as defined in the State Land Master Plan (SLMP)</li> <li>• New trail developments in the Vanderwhacker Wild Forest would need to be addressed through the UMP process. These improvements should be introduced as amendments</li> <li>• Forest Preserve- Wild Forest designations are preferred for the type of trail development proposed in this plan for mountain biking, cross-country skiing and backcountry skiing</li> <li>• State Agency guidance proposes intensive trail development in front country areas near population centers</li> <li>• This state land area and classification allows the construction and maintenance of high-quality trails</li> <li>• Chainsaws can be used for maintenance all year</li> <li>• Precedent allows a limited amount of maintenance to be done utilizing motor vehicles/snowmobiles</li> <li>• Trail construction by small machines can be approved.</li> <li>• Biking and skiing trails on the Forest Preserve are very under-represented in comparison to hiking and snowmobiling</li> <li>• The mountain bike trail system proposed in this plan is based on the trail systems described for Wild Forest in the APA bike trail guidance document “Siting, Construction and Maintenance of Singletrack Bike Trails on Forest Preserve Lands in the Adirondack Park</li> <li>• The Backcountry Ski decent trails in this plan are in areas that are most appropriate for the development of modern recreationally sound ski recreation, site aspect, elevation and a location that is preferable for this type of recreation</li> </ul>
<p><b>SIAMESE PONDS WILDERNESS AREA (NYS FOREST PRESERVE)</b></p> <div data-bbox="207 1717 289 1791"> </div> <p>Note: Highest level of permitting and development difficulty</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allowable uses include: hiking, Nordic skiing, and snowshoeing</li> <li>• Recreational improvements must adhere to allowable uses of state land, as defined in the State Land Master Plan (SLMP)</li> <li>• New trail developments would need to be addressed through the UMP process. These improvements should be introduced as amendments</li> <li>• New trail development proposed in this plan has been limited to only critical linkages and to the periphery of the Wilderness including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Trails connecting the communities of North River/Garnet Hill to Bakers Mills and North Creek. (Second Pd.-Botheration)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Land Owner or Classification	Implementation Notes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Trails creating a loop hiking &amp; backcountry skiing opportunity. (Wilderness Tr.)</li> <li>• Proposed new trail development has taken advantage of existing trails/paths to limit the amount of new trail construction</li> <li>• Only primitive trail standards are required for proposed new trail development in this area. Narrow trail widths, limited bridges and minimal maintenance</li> </ul>

## PROJECT PARTNERS

Developing the envisioned network of trails will require communication and collaboration between multiple partners. The Town of Johnsbury, the North Creek Business Alliance, the NYSDEC, the APA, the ORDA, the Warren County Planning Department, and the Siamese Ponds Wilderness Trail Improvement Society will all need to stay engaged and informed of efforts to develop the Town of Johnsbury's recreational trail system. Detailed trail design and construction should be performed by, or under the supervision of, experienced and professional trail builders (see Appendix B and preliminary cost estimates and funding considerations section below).

The Siamese Ponds Wilderness Trail Improvement Society (Society) has been the driving force behind ensuring that the Town of Johnsbury's trails are well maintained. The group consists of many long-term residents who have a wealth of experience and institutional knowledge of the area, as well as trail maintenance techniques. As an all-volunteer group, the Society relies upon engaged and passionate citizens. The Town of Johnsbury and the business community should continue to partner with the Society to identify new volunteers and to support their fundraising efforts.



## PRELIMINARY COST ESTIMATES & FUNDING CONSIDERATIONS

Based on the proposed concept plans, several aspects of the plan will require detailed plans. It is suggested that the Town and its project partners employ professional trail designers and builders to the maximum extent practical. Such experts are not only aware of the design standards for the various proposed user groups, but they also have an eye for identifying high quality user experiences and avoiding potential environmental impacts. Additional portions of the plans will require more detailed engineering, particularly select elements of the proposed basecamps, trail crossing, wayfinding signage, and other significant Ski Bowl Park enhancements. Finally, select portions of the plans will require various permits or approvals; however, the full scope and level of effort to obtain these permits will be determined during the design process

With respect to project costs, preliminary cost estimates for improvements to existing trails and the construction of new ones are included at the end of this section. The estimates include design, administrative, permitting, materials, and labor (at prevailing and local wages). As such, the use of donated materials and labor will reduce the overall cost. Whenever possible, estimates for miscellaneous items, including signage and trailhead features, are provided as well. Because these estimates are conceptual in nature, a large contingency is included. However, it is important to note that certain funding sources may increase the cost of these projects due to administration and programmatic requirements. For example, federal transportation funding (often administered or distributed by NYS Department of Transportation or NYS Office of Park, Recreation, and Historic Preservation's recreation trails program) often requires significant reporting and adherence to select design specifications, which can drive up the

overall cost of a project. As such, when certain grant funding is being considered, these additional costs should be taken into account and budgeted for accordingly. Finally, these estimates will likely increase year-to-year due to inflation. The preliminary estimates for the approximately 23 miles of new trails is approximately \$1.2 million using local forces and \$1.7 million using prevailing wages. The estimate to improve the 47 miles of existing trails is \$470,000 using local forces and \$640,000 using prevailing wages. However, it is important to note that a significant amount of these trails is on state lands. As such, this work is often done by state workers or with volunteer stewardship groups.

There are various grant funding programs available for trail development and the provision of recreational amenities. No one source or agency will fund all the projects, and many grants and programs require local matching funds or another funding source. All potential opportunities should be explored to secure the most financial support possible to bring the project to fruition. Funding sources and strategies are ever-changing, so it is important to continually re-examine priorities and to evaluate possible alternatives and implementation strategies of this plan.

The most effective strategy toward securing funding from New York State is through the Consolidated Funding Application (CFA) process. The annual CFA process is highly competitive. The future project area is part of the Capital District Region Economic Development Council (CDREDC). Therefore, applications submitted during the CFA are reviewed and considered by CDREDC and the respective funding agency. The following select funding opportunities should be considered for implementing the Town of



Johnsburg Recreational Trail plan (please note this list does not include a number of non-profit funding opportunities, including the Land Trust Alliance that has provided money for similar projects in the area):

### **Priority Project Funding**

As part of the CFA process, REDCs identify priority projects that align with their respective economic development plan. If the REDC identifies a project as a priority for the region, there is a greater likelihood of receiving funding. There is a separate priority project application that is included in the CFA process.

### **NYS Department of State (NYSDOS) Local Waterfront Revitalization Program**

As a designated inland waterway community (based on the Hudson River), the Town of Johnsburg is eligible to apply for funding through the NYSDOS Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP). The Town of Johnsburg is part of the First Wilderness Heritage Corridor, a program funded via LWRP, and may want to consider pursuing additional LWRP funds for implementation.

### **Adirondack Smart Growth**

A collaboration between the NYSDEC and NYSDOS prioritizes and funds projects that exhibit smart growth planning and activities throughout communities in the Adirondack Park. The grant program supports planning projects that foster sustainable development practices, environmental protection, and livability in Park communities. Projects can be for visioning or strategic planning processes.

### **A/GFTC Make the Connection Program**

This program is intended to assist with small-scale projects that “will improve the region’s bicycle and pedestrian travel network.” Announced on an annual basis, the Make the Connection Program requires a 20 percent local

match and can be used for a variety of small projects. Funding for this program is limited, and project administration can be technically difficult in relation to award amount due to administrative requirements. Nevertheless, the program may help implement select portions of the plan, particularly alternative transportation connections along roadways.

### **NYS Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation (OPRHP) Municipal Grants**

OPRHP offers funding for the acquisition, development, and planning of parks, trails, and recreational facilities; to preserve, rehabilitate, or restore lands, waters, or structures for park, recreation, or conservation purposes; and for structural assessments or planning. However, it is important to note that OPRHP appears to provide limited funding to Adirondack Park communities. It has been suggested that this is due to the presence of the NSYDEC and APA. The Town of Johnsburg should stay abreast of OPRHP programs and the availability of funding within the Adirondack Park.

### **NYSDOT Transportation Alternative Program (TAP)**

TAP funding can cover alternative transportation projects including “on- and off-road pedestrian and bicycle facilities, infrastructure projects for improving non-driver access to public transportation and enhanced mobility, community improvement activities, and environmental mitigation.” Because the proposed improvements are primarily focused on transportation alternatives, several aspects of the plan may be eligible for funding through the TAP program, particularly the improvements for roadside trails, riverfront trail, shared roadway, and intersection improvement. However, the more active recreation-based trail system would likely not be eligible.

### **Environmental Facilities Corporation Green Innovation Grant Program**

The Green Innovation Grant Program (GIGP) provides grants on a competitive basis to projects that improve water quality and demonstrate green stormwater infrastructure. Funding can be used for standalone water quality projects or in conjunction with development projects that incorporate green infrastructure practices. This may include porous pavements or landscaping design features (e.g., bio-retention basins, swales, rain gardens, etc.).

### **Market New York**

This program was established to strengthen tourism and draw visitors by promoting destinations, attractions, and special events.

Eligible projects include marketing initiatives, physical construction projects, and the recruitment and/or execution of meetings, conferences, festivals, competitions, and trade shows.

### **Arts and Culture Initiatives/Heritage Projects**

The NYS Council on the Arts invites applications for the planning or implementation of arts, culture, and heritage initiatives or workforce investment. These categories include projects in mapping, master planning, branding, and marketing; women's suffrage commemoration; and administrative, artistic, fellowship, or resident artist positions in workforce development.

Appendix A:

## INVENTORY & ANALYSIS

## NORTH CREEK SKI BOWL – Inventory and Analysis

### INTRODUCTION

The Town of Johnsbury has been home to a vibrant assortment of outdoor recreation for over a century. The town realizes that a recreation plan is essential to continue its development as a successful outdoor recreation destination. Enhanced/expanded public access and the creation of modern recreationally viable trails and infrastructure for skiing, biking, and hiking are key to this effort. New York State (NYS), the Town of Johnsbury, and private land owners have built a network of multi-use trails, which forms a base to build a much larger and more varied recreational experience,. The goals of the draft Recreational Trail Development Plan are to create a large, modern, and viable outdoor recreational experience, connect communities, and enhance the local recreational experience

This document provides an inventory and analysis of the existing trail network, as well as presenting the new trail connections proposed.

### EXISTING TRAIL NETWORK

The study area and existing trail network is presented in the “Existing and Proposed Trail Network” figure, with mileage, jurisdiction, and use information for each trail provided in **Table 1**. The original source ArcGIS attribute tables used in formulating **Table 1**, as well as all figures referenced in this document, is included in **Appendix A**.

There are currently approximately 47 miles of trails in the study area trail network. Ninety-three percent (approximately 44 miles) of trails are on publicly-owned land (refer to the “Existing and Proposed Trail Network” figure). The majority (over 37 miles) traverse land owned by the State, with the remainder traversing land owned by the Town of Johnsbury. Just over three miles of trails traverse privately-owned land.

In total, the 47-mile trail network consists of 20 trails. As shown in **Table 1** and the “Winter Use Trail Network (Existing & Proposed)” figure, current winter trail uses include backcountry skiing (on all or portions of 13 of the trails, totaling over 38 miles), snowshoeing (on all or portions of 12 of the trails, totaling over 24 miles), and cross country skiing (on all or portions of four of the trails, totaling over six miles). Current summer trail uses include hiking (on all or portions of 14 trails, totaling over 41 miles) and biking (on all or portions of 12 trails, totaling over 13 miles) (refer to Table 1 and the “Non-Winter Use Trail Network (Existing & Proposed)” figure).

All the existing trails in the network are located within Adirondack Park and, as such, are subject to Adirondack Park Agency (APA) regulations, which vary by APA land classification (refer to the “Existing & Proposed Trail Network” figure). These APA land classifications include NYS Siamese Ponds Wilderness Area, NYS Vanderwhacker Wild Forest, and NYS Gore Mountain Intensive Use. In addition, lands owned by the Town of Johnsbury are designated for low-intensity and hamlet development, and privately-owned land is designated for resource management, low-intensity, and industrial use development.

**TABLE 1: EXISTING STUDY AREA TRAILS<sup>1</sup>**

Trail Name (Primary) <sup>2</sup>	Miles	Jurisdiction	Current Uses
11 Mountain to Old Farm	12.43	NYS	Backcountry skiing, hiking
Alternative	0.86	Town of Johnsburg	Biking
Balm of Gilead Mountain	0.49	NYS	Backcountry skiing, snowshoeing, hiking
Botheration Loop	3.20	NYS	Backcountry skiing, snowshoeing, hiking
Carol Thomas Trail	0.25	Town of Johnsburg	Hiking, biking
Halfway Brook	3.69	NYS	Backcountry skiing, snowshoeing, hiking
Heart Brake	0.91	Town of Johnsburg	Biking
Hoot	0.34	Town of Johnsburg	Biking
Ives Dam Ski	0.60	NYS	Backcountry skiing, snowshoeing, hiking, biking
Long Trail	2.56	Town of Johnsburg	Biking
North Creek to Garnet	1.54	Private lands	Cross country skiing, snowshoeing, backcountry skiing, biking, hiking
On the Rocks	0.20	Town of Johnsburg	Biking
Puffer Pond	4.19	NYS	Backcountry skiing, snowshoeing, hiking
Rabbit Pond Ski	1.47	NYS & private lands	Backcountry skiing, snowshoeing, biking, hiking
Raymond Brook Ski	3.94	NYS	Cross country skiing, backcountry skiing, snowshoeing, biking, hiking
Roaring Brook Ski	1.22	NYS	Backcountry skiing, snowshoeing
Schaefer	3.51	NYS & Town of Johnsburg	Snowshoeing, hiking
Second Pond	2.68	NYS	Backcountry skiing, snowshoeing, hiking
Ski Bowl Connector	1.56	Private lands	Cross country skiing, snowshoeing, backcountry skiing, biking, hiking
Ski Bowl Loop Trail	1.32	Town of Johnsburg	Cross country skiing, snowshoeing, backcountry skiing, hiking, biking

**Notes:**

<sup>1</sup> Refer to detailed GIS attribute table provided in **Appendix A** for complete source data.

<sup>2</sup> In several instances multiple trails are shared; in such instances, the trail is included only under its primary trail name.

## PROPOSED TRAIL NETWORK EXPANSION

As noted above, the existing trail network forms a base to build a much larger and more varied recreational experience, which is being developed as part of the draft Recreational Trail Development Plan. The new trails were identified based on extensive field research, stakeholder input, consideration of



terrain and environmental conditions (e.g., slope, wetlands, stream crossings), land ownership, and compliance with applicable APA land use regulations and trail regulations. New trails were identified to provide greater connectivity, diversity of user skill and ability, and expanded user experience.

As presented in the “Existing & Proposed Trail Network” figure, an additional approximately 24 miles of additional trails are proposed as part of the draft Recreational Trail Development Plan. Mileage, jurisdiction, and use information for each proposed trail is provided in **Table 2**. The original source ArcGIS attribute tables used in formulating **Table 2**, as well as all figures referenced in this document, is included in **Appendix A**.

**TABLE 2: PROPOSED STUDY AREA TRAILS<sup>1</sup>**

Trail Name (Primary) <sup>2</sup>	Miles	Jurisdiction	Current Uses
Balm of Gilead Mountain	0.55	NYS	Backcountry skiing, snowshoeing, hiking
Chatamac	5.25	NYS	Backcountry skiing, hiking
Ives Dam Trail	0.98	NYS & private lands	Backcountry skiing, snowshoeing, biking, hiking
Little Pete Mountain	0.43	NYS & private lands	Backcountry skiing, snowshoeing, hiking
Lower Schaefer Connector	0.93	NYS	Snowshoeing, hiking
North Creek to Garnet	4.06	NYS & private lands	Cross country skiing, snowshoeing, backcountry skiing, biking, hiking
Original Raymond Brook	0.53	NYS & private lands	Backcountry skiing, biking, hiking
Pete Gay Traverse	1.36	NYS & private lands	Backcountry skiing, biking, hiking
Rabbit-Shed	1.65	NYS	Backcountry skiing, biking, hiking
Raymond Brook Headwall Climb	0.94	NYS	Cross country skiing, snowshoeing, biking, hiking
Second Brother	2.54	NYS	Backcountry skiing, hiking
Ward Hill	4.52	NYS	Backcountry skiing, hiking
Riverfront Trail	1.06	Private	Hiking, Snowshoeing
Peaceful Valley	.5	NYS & Private	Biking, backcountry skiing
Summit Village Connector	.3	NYS	Biking, hiking, snowshoeing, backcountry skiing

**Notes:**

<sup>1</sup> Refer to detailed GIS attribute table provided in **Appendix A** for complete source data.

<sup>2</sup> In several instances multiple trails are shared; in such instances, the trail is included only under its primary trail name.

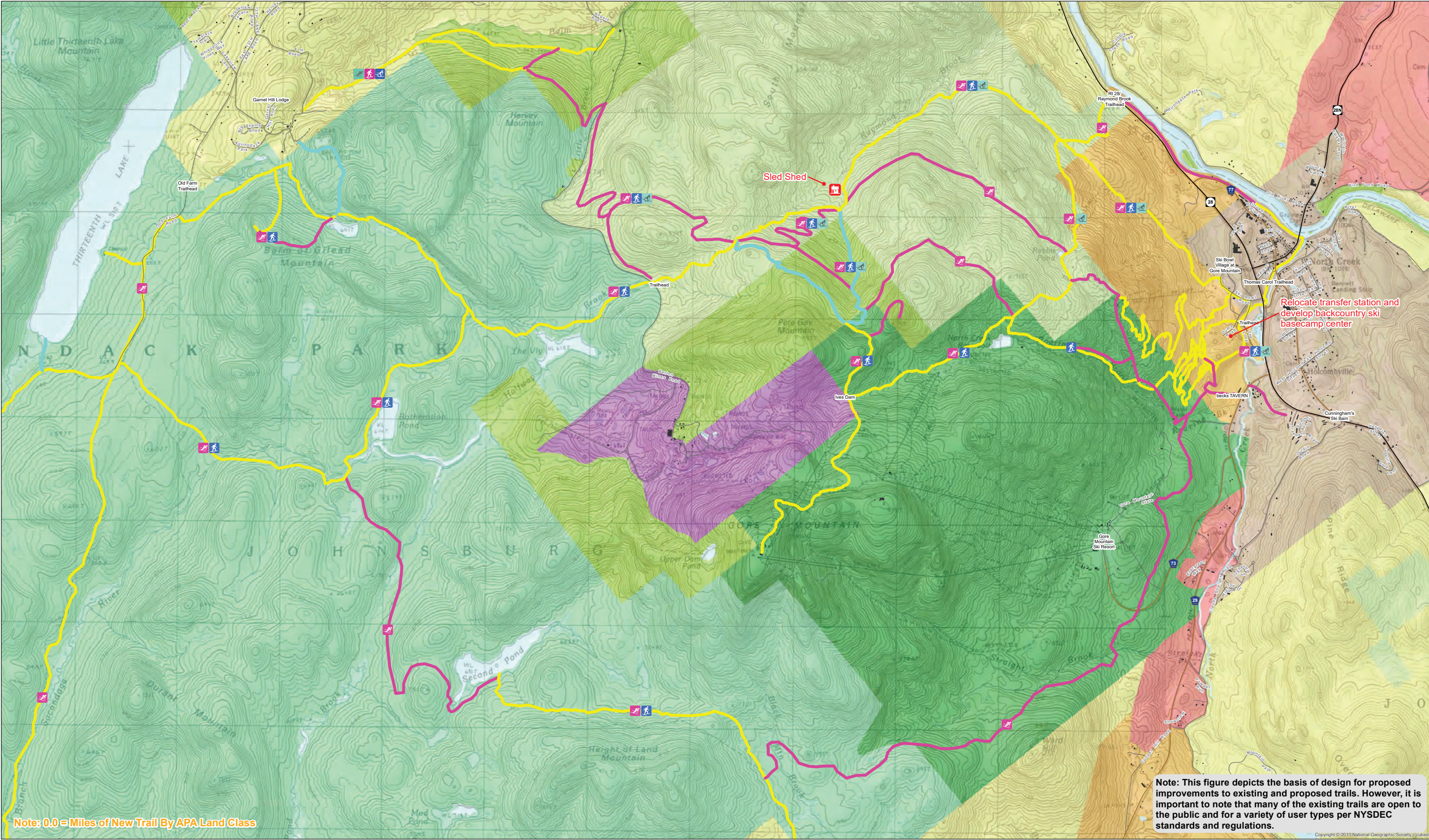
As shown in **Table 2**, 15 new trails are proposed as part of the draft Plan. In total, the 15 trails would add approximately 26 miles to the study area trail network. All 26 miles are envisioned to be suitable for hiking, with approximately 22 miles (on all or portions of ten new trails) suitable for backcountry skiing, approximately ten miles (on all or portions of six new trails) suitable for biking, approximately eight miles (on all or portions of seven trails) suitable for snowshoeing, and approximately five miles (comprising two

new trail) suitable for cross country skiing (see the “Winter Use Trail Network (Existing & Proposed)” and “Non-Winter Use Trail Network (Existing & Proposed)” figures).

In terms of land ownership, as presented in **Table 2** and the “Existing & Proposed Trail Network” figure, approximately 88 percent of the new trail miles (a total of 21 miles) would traverse land owned by the State, with the remaining 12 percent (approximately three miles) traversing privately-owned land. As the proposed trails would all be located within Adirondack Park, any future trail development would need to comply with APA trail development standards.

If the draft Recreational Trail Development Plan’s recommendations were fully implemented, the total mileage of trails within the study area network would increase to approximately 71 miles, addressing the project goals of creating a large, modern, and viable outdoor recreational experience, connecting communities, and enhancing the local recreational experience.





Note: 0.0 = Miles of New Trail By APA Land Class

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Johnsburg Recreational Trail Development Plan

# Proposed Trail Network & APA Land Classification

## Project Area Trails

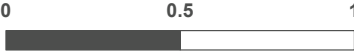
- Existing (all seasons)
- Proposed (all seasons)
- Proposed Existing

## Private Land Classification

- Hamlet
- Moderate Intensity
- Low Intensity
- Rural Use
- Resource Management
- Industrial Use

## State Land Classification

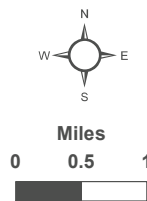
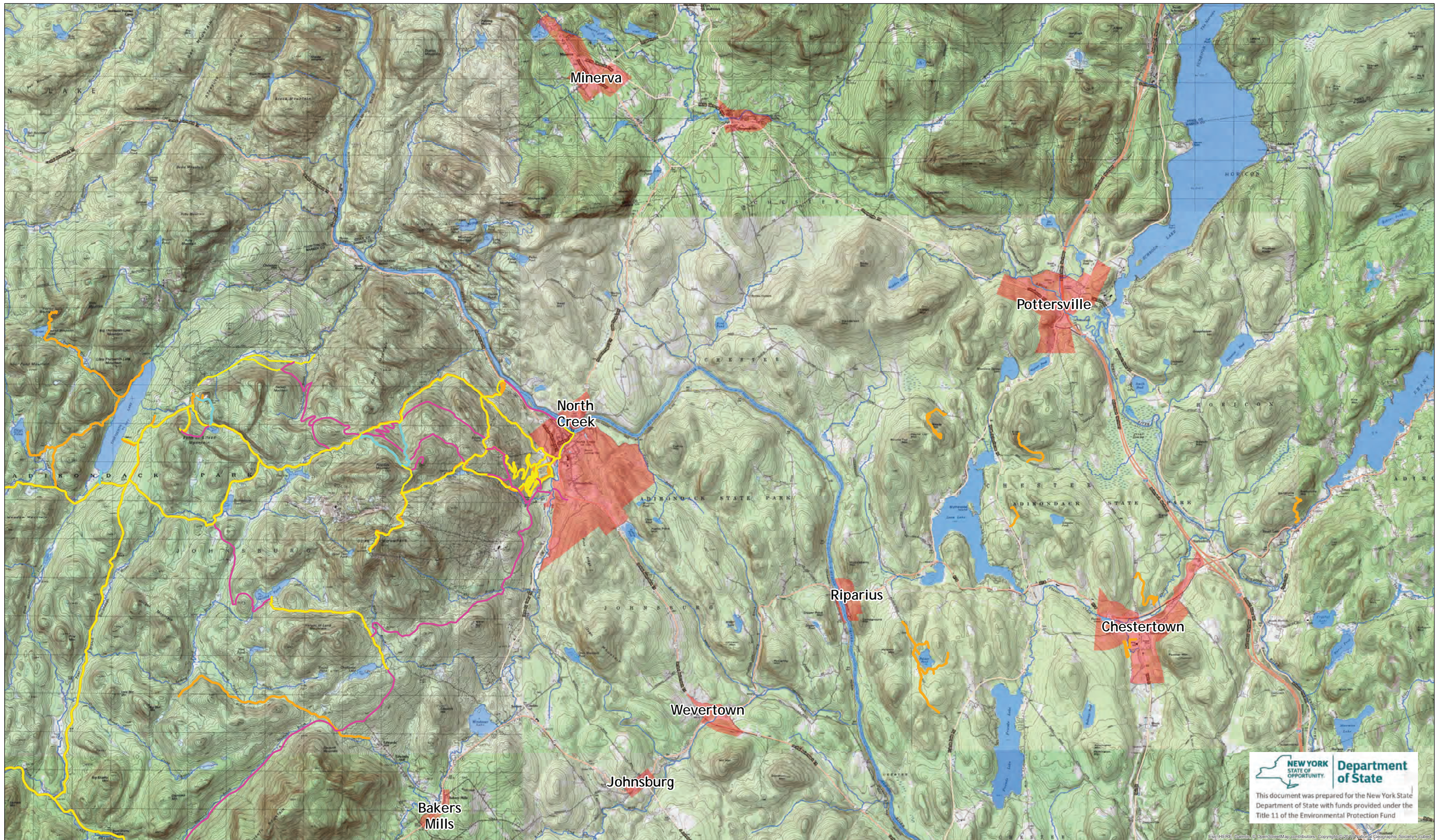
- Wilderness
- Primitive
- Wild Forest
- Intensive Use



Town of Johnsburg, Warren County









*Johnsburg Recreational Trail Development Plan*




## Broader Area Context

Town of Johnsburg, Warren County

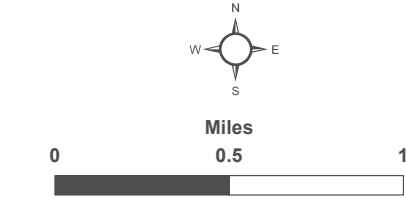
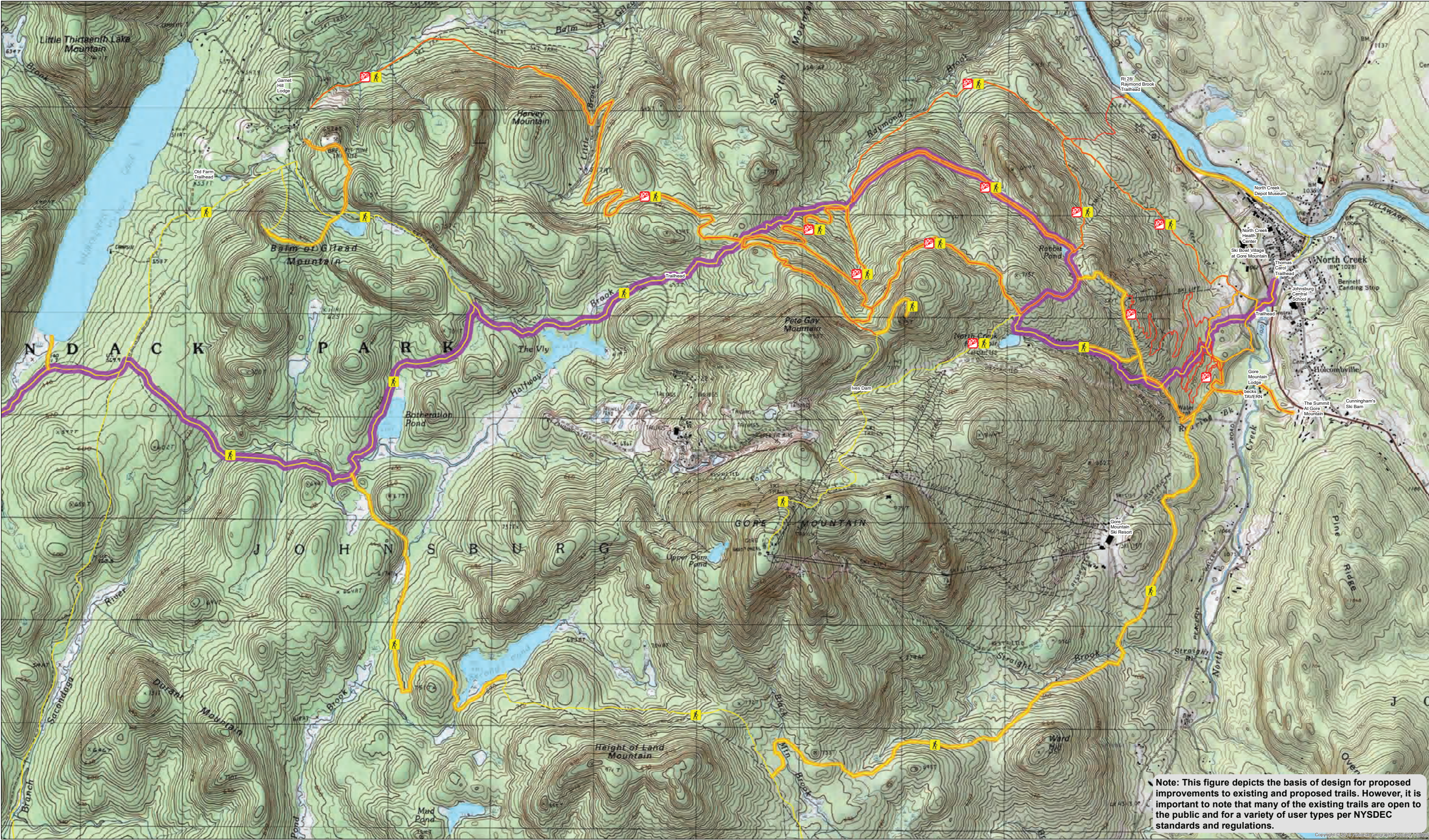
### Legend

-  Existing Recreation Trails
-  Hamlets

### Project Area Trails

-  Existing (all seasons)
-  Proposed (all seasons)
-  Proposed Existing





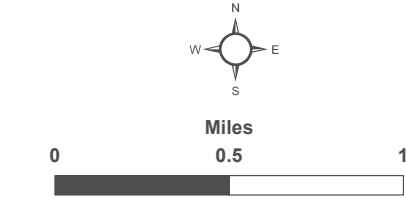
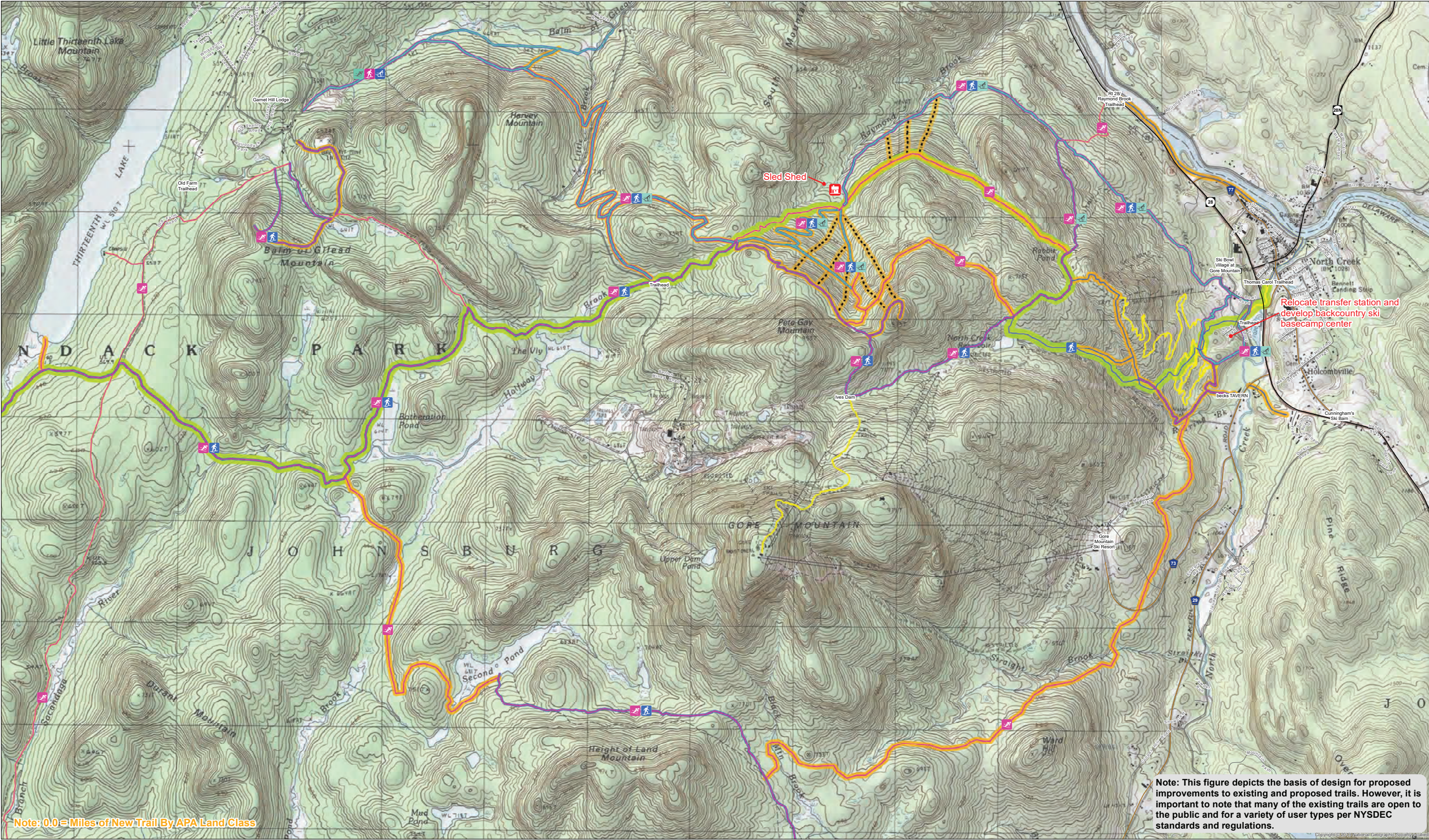
Johnsburg Recreational Trail Development Plan

# Non-Winter Use Trail Network (Existing & Proposed)

Town of Johnsburg, Warren County

- North Country National Scenic Trail
- Biking
- Hiking
- Existing
- Proposed





Johnsburg Recreational Trail Development Plan

# Winter Use Trail Network (Existing & Proposed)

Town of Johnsburg, Warren County

- North Country National Scenic Trail
- Backcountry Skiing
- Cross Country Ski
- Snowshoeing
- Backcountry Ski Descent
- Existing (other seasons)
- Proposed



Appendix B:

## COST ESTIMATES

# CHAZEN ENGINEERING, LAND SURVEYING & LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE CO., D.P.C.

Dutchess County Office

Phone: (845) 454-3980

20 Elm Street, Suite 110, Glens Falls, Ny 12801

Phone: (518) 824-1920

Capital District Office

Phone: (518) 273-0055

## CONCEPT LEVEL

Web: www.chazencompanies.com

Date: July, 2019

### Opinion of Approximate Costs for North Creek Ski Bowl Proposed Trails Chazen Project No. 91819.00

Description	Length (Ft)	Crossings*	Unit Price (Ft) Local Wage**	Unit Price (Ft) Prevailing Wage**	Total: Local	Total: Prevailing
<b>Trail</b>						
11th Mountain to Fish Pond Trail	21,000	1	\$6.50	\$8.00	\$141,500.00	\$173,000.00
Balm of Gilead Mountain Loop	3,000	0	\$6.50	\$8.00	\$19,500.00	\$24,000.00
Chatamac	28,000	0	\$6.50	\$8.00	\$182,000.00	\$224,000.00
Gore Base Connector	3,000	0	\$6.50	\$8.00	\$19,500.00	\$24,000.00
Gore to Summit	2,000	0	\$6.50	\$8.00	\$13,000.00	\$16,000.00
Ives Dam Trail	5,500	0	\$6.50	\$8.00	\$35,750.00	\$44,000.00
Joe Pete Connector	1,500	0	\$6.50	\$8.00	\$9,750.00	\$12,000.00
Little Pete Mountain	2,500	0	\$6.50	\$8.00	\$16,250.00	\$20,000.00
Lower Schaefer Connector	5,000	0	\$6.50	\$8.00	\$32,500.00	\$40,000.00
North Creek to Garnet	16,000	1	\$6.50	\$8.00	\$109,000.00	\$133,000.00
Original Raymond Brook	5,000	1	\$6.50	\$8.00	\$37,500.00	\$45,000.00
Pete Gay Traverse	7,500	0	\$6.50	\$8.00	\$48,750.00	\$60,000.00
Rabbit Shed	9,000	1	\$6.50	\$8.00	\$63,500.00	\$77,000.00
Raymond Brook Headwall Climb	5,000	0	\$6.50	\$8.00	\$32,500.00	\$40,000.00
River Trail	6,000	0	\$6.50	\$8.00	\$39,000.00	\$48,000.00
Second Brother	14,000	2	\$6.50	\$8.00	\$101,000.00	\$122,000.00
South Mountain Traverse	3,000	0	\$6.50	\$8.00	\$19,500.00	\$24,000.00
Ward Hill	28,000	2	\$6.50	\$8.00	\$192,000.00	\$234,000.00
Water Tower Trail	4,000	0	\$6.50	\$8.00	\$26,000.00	\$32,000.00
Existing Trail Improvements***	257,000	TBD	\$1.63	\$2.00	\$417,625.00	\$514,000.00
<b>Misc</b>						
Trail Marker Allowance (~200' spacing)	2,000		\$0.50	\$2.00	\$1,000.00	\$4,000.00
Trailhead / Crossing Signage Allowance	100		\$150.00	\$350.00	\$15,000.00	\$35,000.00
Kiosks Allowance	4		\$1,500.00	\$2,500.00	\$6,000.00	\$10,000.00
<b>Subtotal Trail Improvements Work:</b>					<b>\$1,578,125.00</b>	<b>\$1,955,000.00</b>

\*Crossings assume average cost of \$5,000

\*\*Varying unit prices reflect the use of prevailing wages or local forces

\*\*\*Existing Trail Improvements assumes 25 percent of new build development cost (unit price) and is extrapolated for the entire existing trail network

Appendix C:

## MEETING NOTES



# Town of Johnsburg Recreational Trail Development Plan

## *Community Recreation Group: Meeting Notes*

Date: December 19, 2018

Location: Tannery Pond Community Center

### Attendees:

- Chris Belden – Warren County Planning
- Kelly Nessel – Friends of the Town of Johnsburg Parks
- Richard Carlson – Upper Hudson Trails Alliance (UHTA)
- Pete Gilbertson
- Andrea Hogan, Supervisor – Town of Johnsburg
- Wayne LaMothe – Warren County Planning
- Ed Orr – UHTA
- Rick Morse
- Dave Putnam
- Steve Tomb
- Steve Ovitt – Wilderness Property management
- Chris Round and Paul Cummings- The Chazen Companies

### Introduction and Overview

Participants introduced themselves. Steve Ovitt (Wilderness Property Management) introduced the project and the overall project goals. The plan focuses on making North Creek a year-round recreation destination by enhancing recreation opportunities. The project focuses principally on expanding the Ski Bowl Park and surrounding back-country opportunities (e.g. mountain biking, backcountry skiing, snowshoeing, etc.).

The project scope includes a review of existing conditions, trail systems, and, explores ways to expand the trail system to provide greater connectivity to other trails, resources and nearby hamlets. The goal of the effort is to provide the Town a plan that will allow them to communicate to various agencies the desired uses of state and local lands within the Town of Johnsburg.

The existing trail network and work completed to date was reviewed. This effort included field visits, mapping, review of previous plans and stakeholder outreach. A series of maps and background information was presented. A copy of the material is attached to this meeting summary.

Steve Ovitt and Paul Cummings (the Chazen Companies) explained the initial mapping, the planned trail connections, their primary seasonal uses and their secondary uses. Participants asked a series of questions and provided feedback on the mapping products. Discussion on what additional amenities are needed at the trailheads, as well as what additional connections should be explored.

Brandon Gap in Vermont was highlighted as an example of an area with a robust network of trails, offering a diverse use experience, year-round for hiking. This can be used as a reference point.

The draft Adirondack Park Agency (APA) guidance (October, 2018) regarding backcountry trail development and maintenance was also discussed.

## Trail Concepts

The committee was introduced to the proposed trail concepts and hierarchy. Certain trail segments would be principally designed or designated for winter or summer use (and vice versa). Some trails would be designated for one primary use while others would be designated for multiple uses.

## General Discussion and Comments:

- There are ongoing conversations with Barton Mines regarding public access with the goal of securing access
- Wilderness history/ glacial erratic in Chaleman Hill Road area
- Eventual Siamese Pond Loop benefit
- The plan will include physical/visual wayfinding recommendations.
- What alternative connections are there?
- There was a warming hut on Barton Mine lands
- Public access may include costs. There is a conversation with ADK Land Trust
- Grants may help support funding
- Perhaps a Cunningham's connector (90-acre zoned hamlet/on Hudson River) should be explored.
- Additional recreation trails connections/access could include:
  - Collins Clearing
  - Power lines (for snowmobile)
- Connect to Cunningham's – Lease land
- Should explore other Ski Bowl amenities/ access including Hamlets to Huts facilities, "base camp" hang out area near transfer station/ landfill
- Potential conflict between paid vs free trail use at Gore. How to address co-mingling of users?
- Uphill vs downhill traffic on the ski bowl. Ski center does not like uphill traffic. May need two trails to accommodate with formal signage to demarcate.
- Concern about loss of Ski Bowl connection (potential lease issue)
- Most committee members agreed that representatives from Gore Mountain should be involved.
- Town grants use of Ski Bowl Park to Gore. The Town No longer has use of Pavilion during Winter because of Nordic Center
- The Ski Bowl is designated Parkland and subject to certain restrictions on what constitutes recreational use.
- Does the expansion of trails address the Issues of use of private lands (note: most potentially involved private land owners have been consulted during planning process)?
- Emergency services need to be considered in the development of this plan, including how to address emergency call for aid from remote uses and first aid.
- There is only one point of access, how will this impact need for maintenance, breakdown and emergency response.

Next Steps:

- Prepare for public workshop
- Develop cost estimates and identify funding opportunities
- Identify APA land use designation and develop a strategy for navigating the NYSDEC Unit Management Plan (UMP) amendment process
- Identify priorities and timing of improvements
- Identify other strategic partners

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# Town of Johnsburg Recreational Trail Development Plan

## *Public Workshop*

**Date:** January 9, 2019

**Location:** Tannery Pond Community Center

The first public outreach event for the Town of Johnsburg Recreational Trail Development project was held in North Creek at the Tannery Pond Community Center on Wednesday, January 9<sup>th</sup> from 6 pm 8 pm. Members of the project team including the Chazen Companies and Wilderness Property Management presented preliminary project concepts to an audience of approximately 35 people. A question and answer session and an interactive mapping exercise followed the presentation. The intent of the public workshop was to introduce the project to the public, inform them about the planning process, gather some preliminary input, and to provide additional resources for the public to stay up to date on the project and learn about future public engagement opportunities.



### ***Summary of Feedback and Questions from Attendees***

#### **Who was on the Committee?**

- Andrea Hogan – Town Supervisor
- Dick Carlson
- Steve Tomb
- Ed Orr
- Pete Gilbertsen
- Dave Putnam
- Kelly Nestle



#### **Who will responsible for emergency rescues?**

The NYSDEC is obligated to provide rescue services to anyone on their land.

#### **What type of trail would have the most beneficial economic impact?**

It is hard to determine which user group will have the greatest economic impact on the area (mountain biking, Nordic skiing, show-shoeing, etc). However, many of the proposed trails are for multiple purposes and will cater to various user groups and seasons.

#### **Was there any consideration for canoe carries, or how the trail would serve someone carrying a canoe?**

Canoe carries were not a primary consideration in the design of the proposed trail system, however the project team is open to any recommendations.

### Will this presentation be available to the public?

Yes, the presentation will be posted on the Town of Johnsburg website.

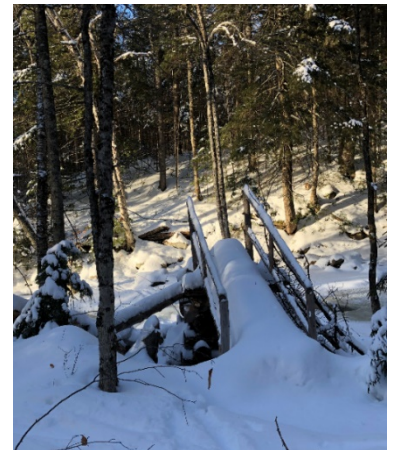
### How will the recommendations of trail project be paid for?

This resulting plan will allow local and county governments as well as not-for-profit groups to seek additional grant funding through the NYS grant funding program. This plan will be developing detailed cost estimates for various elements of the trail system, which provides valuable support for future grant applications.

Breakout sessions were held after the presentation to review trail concept maps and to collect input from participants. Some input was captured in list format below, and other updates/edits to the maps will be incorporated directly into revised drafts for internal committee discussion:

### Notes from the mapping exercise:

- There are trails leading to the two ponds east of Thirteenth Lake that were most likely established by fishermen/women. Some may even be blazed (marked)
- Residents noted that the area east of Route 73 (the main road to Gore Mountain Ski area) has potential for mountain biking
- The ski shed was incorrectly marked on the map
- The Bothereation Pond Trail intersects the East Branch of the Sacandaga River. The bridge at that crossing needs replacement.
- To develop the trail network as a tourism draw there will need to be a marketing effort including social media, package deals, bikes and beers, etc
- The “Kingdom Trails” network in the area of Burke Vermont is an excellent example of how trails and supportive facilities can be leveraged for economic development and quality of life (see link: [www.kingdomtrails.org](http://www.kingdomtrails.org) )
- North Creek needs better wayfinding, including updates to underutilized kiosk near Bar Vino
- There are multiple locations for alternative parking lots/ access points
  - o Downtown
  - o Train station
  - o Ski Bowl
- A “Downtown Loop” is almost complete (see culvert under 28, just north of Peaceful Valley Road) and would encourage visitors to use the trails to connect work and business.



*Washed out Bridge on Bothereation Pond Ski Trail*

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# Town of Johnsburg Recreational Trail Development Plan

## *Committee Meeting*

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**Date:** April 10, 2019

**Time:** 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm

**Location:** Town of Johnsburg Library

### Attendees:

Pete Gilbertson, Rick Morse, Kirsten Seleen (NYSDEC), Ed Orr, Anne Morse, Andrea Hogan, Kelly Nesse, Steve Tomb, Dick Carlson, David Putnam, Steve Ovitt (Wilderness Property Management), Ethan Gaddy (Chazen), Paul Cummings (Chazen).

### **Meeting Summary**

This meeting was held to review the existing conditions memorandum (1/28/2019), review input from the January 2019 public workshop, view updated mapping, review preliminary 'basecamp' concept drawings, and to prioritize trail development projects.

### **Existing Conditions Memo**

Committee members briefly reviewed an existing conditions memorandum that was prepared for the project. The memo provides detailed jurisdictional and physical information about the existing and proposed trail network. In addition to informing this project, it will serve as a useful technical reference for future grant applications related to the recreational trail network.

The existing conditions memo reflects trail distances that were reviewed at the public workshop. Subsequent revisions to the proposed trail network will need to be reflected in the final draft of the memo.

### **Public Workshop Discussion**

Committee briefly discussed the January 9<sup>th</sup> public workshop at Tannery Pond Community Center. Turnout at the event was estimated to be about 35 people. Overall many on the committee felt it was a good turnout.

### **Map Update Discussion**

The Committee spent time reviewing updates to the trail mapping that resulted from the public workshop and additional site visits by Steve Ovitt.

- Committee members noted the inclusion of the Riverfront trail and a proposed expansion of the trail along the Hudson River from the rail station to the Route 28/ Raymond Brook Ski Trail. This trail was viewed favorably because it would offer a moderate trail for a variety of users, would connect the existing trailhead to downtown and would provide a scenic user experience. Committee member noted that there had been previous discussions about installing a bridge to Sullivan Island. The proposed trail expansion would require cooperation from existing rail operator or Warren County. Due to the uncertain future plans for the rail-corridor, pursuing this trail segment will require additional parking.



- A representative from the NYSDEC noted that there were a wide range of groups interested in expanding the trail network in or through the study area. The representative explained that reaching out to these various groups would be of benefit to this effort. It was noted that many stakeholders have been engaged including Hamlets to Huts, SPITS, ORDA/ Gore Mountain, various private land owners and user groups. All agreed continued feedback from the regulatory committee as the project advances was essential.
- Committee members noted that the Pete Gay ski traverse is excellent. What was the possibility of having some sort of backcountry lodge in that area? A lodge would need to be developed on private land owned by Barton Mines. This would require willing participation from the existing land owners.
- NYSDEC representative mentioned that there was funding available for trail groups. SPTIS (Siamese Pond Trail Improvement Society) is a robust group that holds Volunteer Stewardship Agreements with the NYSDEC
- Committee member noted that approximately 15 years ago, a local snowmobiling group secured access and developed trails throughout town. However, the trails are no longer active. Would it be possible to re-use these trails as part of the overall trail network plan? It was noted that due to the specific and temporary nature the leases utilized by snowmobile clubs that the trails were most likely on private lands and not available to other uses. Another Committee member noted that some private landowners may have declined to renew snowmobile access thus reducing snowmobiling opportunities in the community.
- Committee members had a brief discussion on recreational easements and access in NYS. The NYS Recreational Use Statute and General Obligations Law was discussed.

### Review of Concept Drawings for Basecamp Area

The Committee reviewed concept drawings of two different “basecamp” layouts at the existing Ski Bowl Park. The drawings portray a series of huts or yurts on the edge of the existing park and beach area. The intent of presenting these drawings to the Committee was to elicit response and to evaluate the appropriateness of the location, layout, and design.

- Committee members noted that, as drawn, the concept drawings might interfere with park redevelopment plans, including planned refurbishing of the beach area and a shower area. However, after further review it was noted that some elements might dovetail with the proposed concepts.
- Committee member noted that from their perspective -as a user of the trail system- that they liked the idea, but that it might be better if these yurt type facilities were closer to downtown.
- Committee members expressed concern that if the yurts/structures were to host retail and dining that they would be competing with downtown businesses. Some noted that it might help attract more users that could then go downtown.
- Committee members agreed that the yurt/basecamp idea would provide necessary utility to outdoor recreationists. However, the Committee generally agreed that the existing Carol Thomas Trailhead could be programed in a similar fashion and better connect people to downtown, particularly for cyclists
- Committee members noted that instead of yurts, perhaps a small campground for recreational vehicles/sprinter vans would be appropriate. The Town could provide electrical hookups and

access to bathing/restroom facilities. Provision for some future yurt type facilities should be considered.

### Priority Discussion

The Recreational Trail Development Plan includes a wide range of suggested trail improvements and expansion. Implementing the plan will require a phased approach. Committee members were asked to provide input on what trails and recreational improvements were higher priority as well as able to be swiftly implemented.

- The Ski Bowl Connector is a high priority trail. Committee members noted that it would be important to ensure that the trail is maintained. Potential maintenance agreements should be examined to ensure that there are no lapses. Pending Gore Mountain Expansion plans will need to be considered as the Town continues to develop their trail network.
- The trail connection between Garnet Hill and North Creek was deemed the most important trail to develop for the purposes of expanding the recreational trail network and elevating the Town's status as an outdoor recreation destination. Committee member noted that Garnet Hill Lodge would be opening their mountain biking trails to the public for free starting next season. This would allow riders to leave a car in North Creek, ride a shuttle (municipal or otherwise) to Garnet Hill Lodge and to ride back into North Creek afterwards (or the opposite).
- Committee members noted that it would be beneficial to strengthen and maintain the assets that the Town already has and then to build outwards from them. This is also referred to as the "hub and spoke" model.
- Included in the discussion of improving existing assets was a conversation about signage and wayfinding. The Town has been successful in developing trails, but improved signage would increase awareness and support. Wayfinding would be a 'low hanging fruit.'
- Committee members noted that the weak link in the Town system was the Carol Thomas parking area.
- Improved crosswalks between trail areas throughout town and at Carol Thomas would also be an immediate and important step to improve trail facilities that would not require to much effort.
- NYSDEC representative noted that the sequencing of trail improvements would be partially contingent on the timing of NYSDEC's update of a Unit Management Plan (UMP). The Adirondack Park Agency raises the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act issue of segmentation when the NYSDEC attempts to make frequent, piecemeal updates to UMPs. The NYSDEC noted that they would prefer to update UMPs on multiyear intervals instead of one amendment after another. For the purposes of this project it will be important to maintain contact with the NYSDEC to ensure that the proposed trail improvements and expansions are considered during the next round of amendments. No specific date for when the next round of amendments was mentioned.
- The NYSDEC representative noted that it could be helpful to continue to reach out to various groups that have interests in trail development in the area and to coordinate with them in advance of the next round of UMP amendments.
- Committee member raised the idea of working with elected officials to lobby for UMP amendments at a faster pace than the NYSDEC would typically prefer.

- The NYSDEC representative noted that there is a robust grant program for purchasing easements. This program is tied to the 2016 NYS Open Space Conservation Plan ([https://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/lands\\_forests\\_pdf/osp2016final1.pdf](https://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/lands_forests_pdf/osp2016final1.pdf))
- NYSDEC noted that existing trails that were designated by bicycle use could be improved without needing any additional approvals beyond updating workplans that are part of existing Voluntary Stewardship Agreements (VSAs).
- One Committee member outlined priority improvements for consideration
  1. Rabbit Pond trail (for biking)
  2. Develop the Riverfront Trail
  3. Develop the trail from Becks Tavern to the water tank
  4. Develop a basecamp at Carol Thomas trailhead, with consideration that yurts are fairly simple to install

## Next Steps

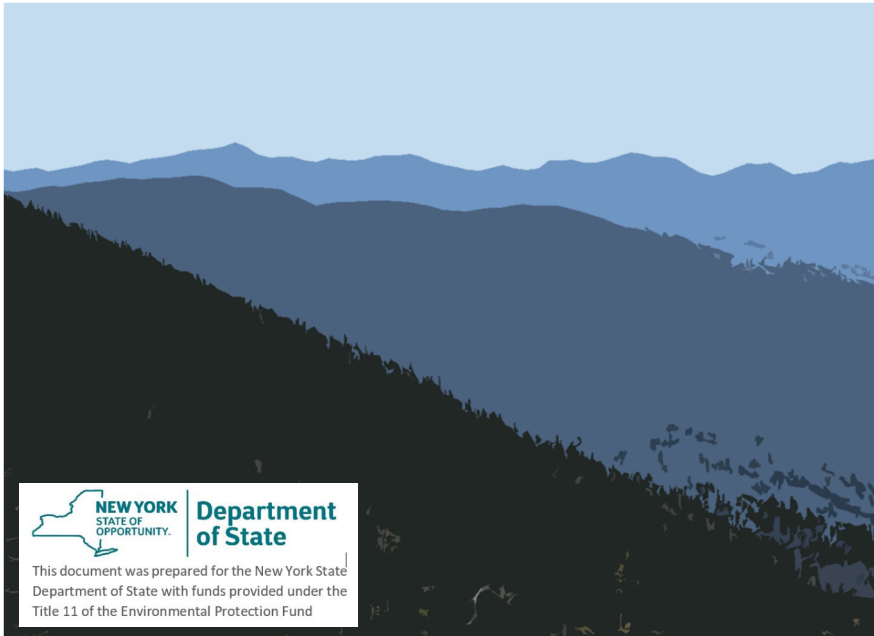
- Committee members should provide input on what trail improvements/expansions and recreational facilities they deem most important to the plan
- Revise figures base on committee input
- Circulate updated trail network maps
- Prepare cost estimates
- Prepare draft plan
- Consider preparing a grant application for upcoming Consolidated Funding Application window.

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Appendix D:

## PUBLIC WORKSHOP PRESENTATION



# JOHNSBURG RECREATIONAL TRAIL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Community Workshop | January 9, 2019

# INTRODUCTIONS & AGENDA

- Existing & Proposed Recreational Trail System Overview
- Winter Related Uses
- Nonwinter Related Uses
- Select Features & Characteristics
- Land Use & Regulatory Setting
- Environmental Resources
- Next Steps



# PROJECT OVERVIEW



EXISTING &  
PROPOSED TRAILS



WINTER USES



NON-  
WINTER USES



SELECTED  
FEATURES  
CHARACTERISTICS



LAND USE  
SETTING

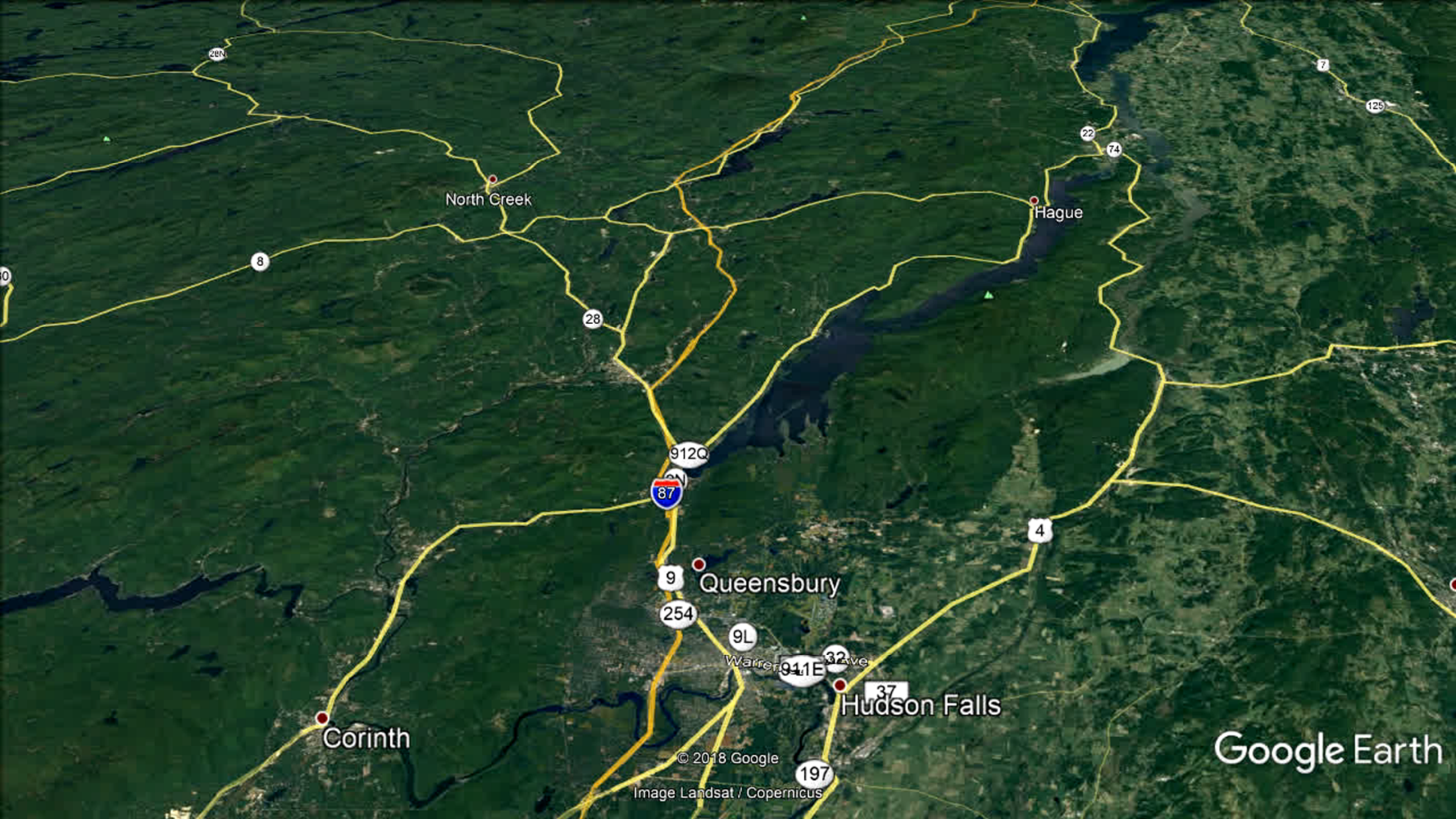


ENVIRONMENTAL  
RESOURCES



# EXISTING & PROPOSED TRAILS



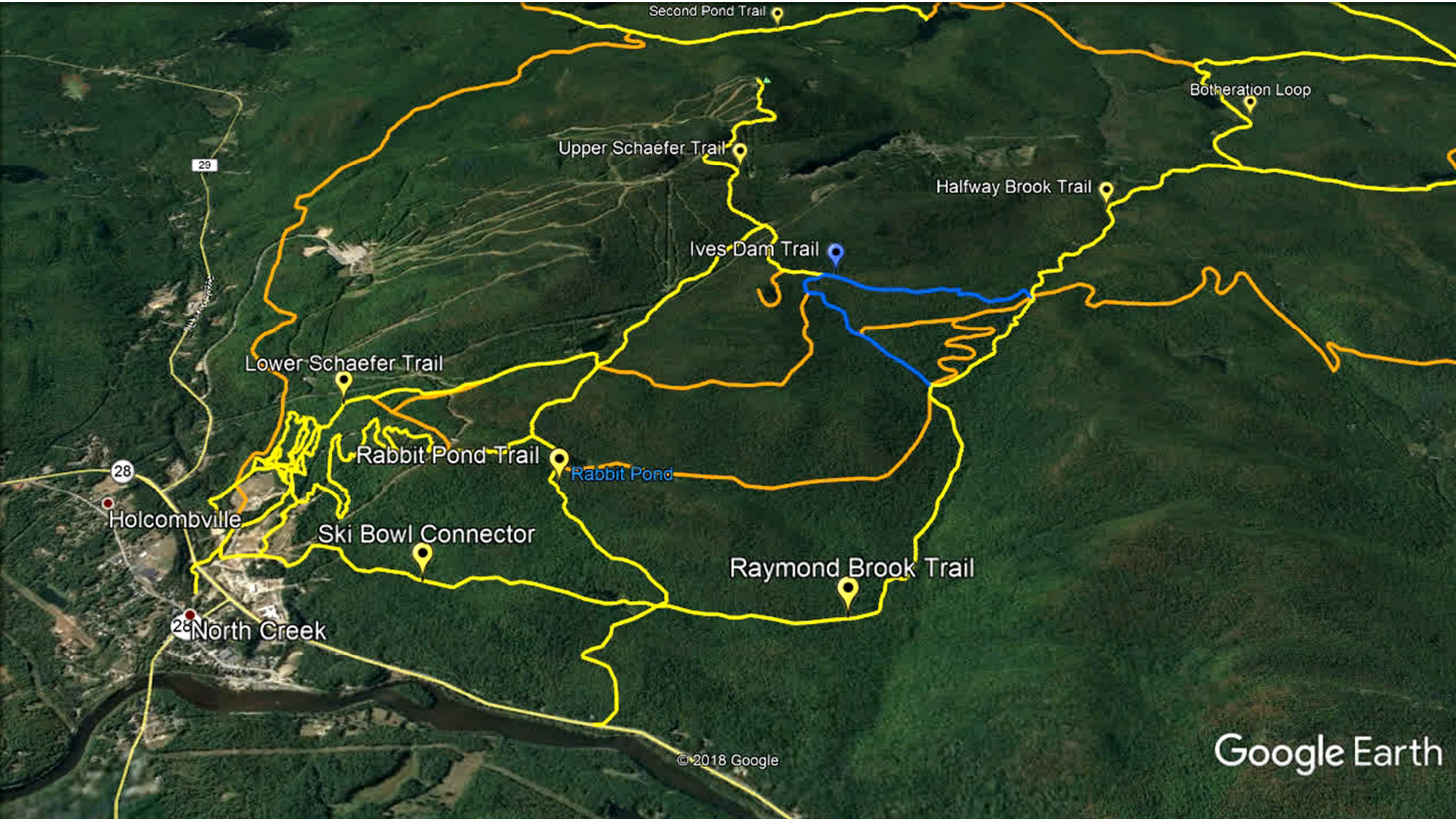


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Image Landsat / Copernicus

Google Earth





Second Pond Trail

Botheration Loop

Upper Schaefer Trail

Halfway Brook Trail

Ives Dam Trail

Lower Schaefer Trail

Rabbit Pond Trail

Rabbit Pond

Ski Bowl Connector

Raymond Brook Trail

North Creek

Holcombville

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Google Earth



# EXISTING TRAILS INCLUDE

- Ski Bowl Loop Trail
- Ski Bowl Mountain Bike Trail Network
- Raymond Brook Trail
- Ski Bowl Connector
- Schaefer Trail
- Rabbit Pond Ski Trail
- Roaring Brook Trail
- Ives Dam Trail
- Halfway Brook Trail
- Botheration Loop Trail
- Second Pond Trail
- Balm of Gilead Mountain
- 11<sup>th</sup> Mountain to Old Farm Trail
- Puffer Pond Trail

Approximately 47 miles of existing trail

Approximately 23 miles of proposed trail

# WINTER USES





# WINTER USES





# WINTER USES:

- Expanded winter recreational opportunities
- Provide for a diversity of uses
- Offer trails for all user abilities
- Connect key community assets through a robust trail network
- Mitigate potential user group conflicts through select dedicated trails, signage, and design





# Winter Use Trail Network (Existing & Proposed)

North Creek To Garnet  
Hill "Trunk Line"

Backcountry Ski  
Area, Access, and  
"Basecamp"

Gore Mountain Loop

Relocate transfer station and  
develop backcountry ski  
basecamp center

- Backcountry Skiing
- Cross Country Ski
- Snowshoeing
- Backcountry Ski Descent
- Existing (other seasons)
- Proposed
- North Country National Scenic Trail

Note: This figure depicts the basis of design for proposed improvements to existing and proposed trails. However, it is important to note that many of the existing trails are open to the public and for a variety of user types per NYSDEC standards and regulations.





**NON-  
WINTER USES**



# NONWINTER USES





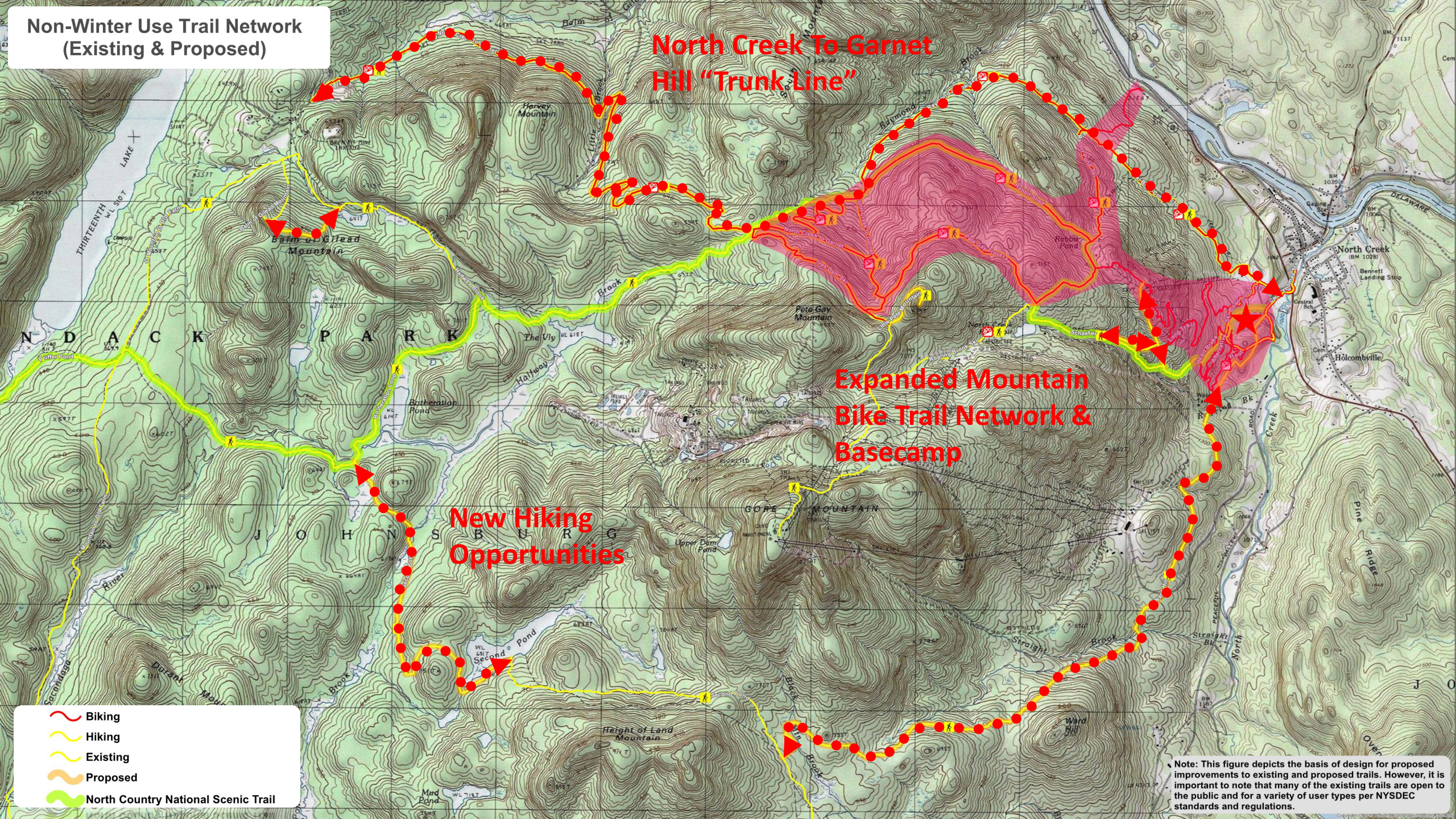
# NONWINTER USES

- Expanded nonwinter recreational opportunities
- Provide for a diversity of uses
- Offer trails for all user abilities
- Connect key community assets through a robust trail network
- Mitigate potential user group conflicts through select dedicated trails, signage, and design





**Non-Winter Use Trail Network  
(Existing & Proposed)**



**North Creek To Garnet Hill  
"Trunk Line"**

**Expanded Mountain  
Bike Trail Network &  
Basecamp**

**New Hiking  
Opportunities**

- Biking
- Hiking
- Existing
- Proposed
- North Country National Scenic Trail

**Note:** This figure depicts the basis of design for proposed improvements to existing and proposed trails. However, it is important to note that many of the existing trails are open to the public and for a variety of user types per NYSDEC standards and regulations.

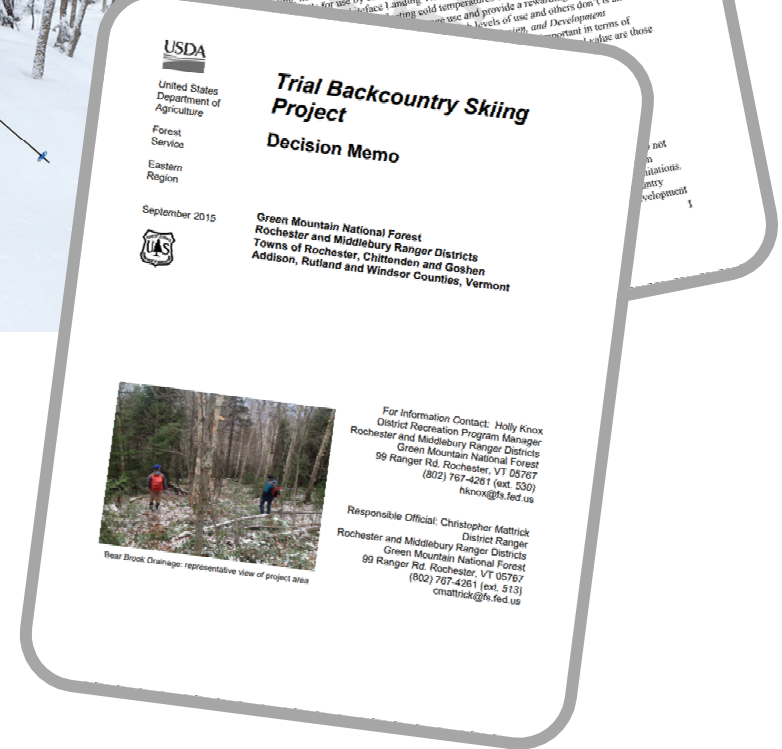
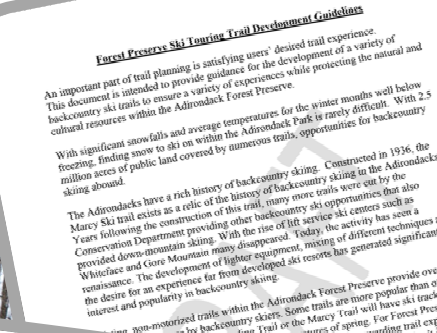
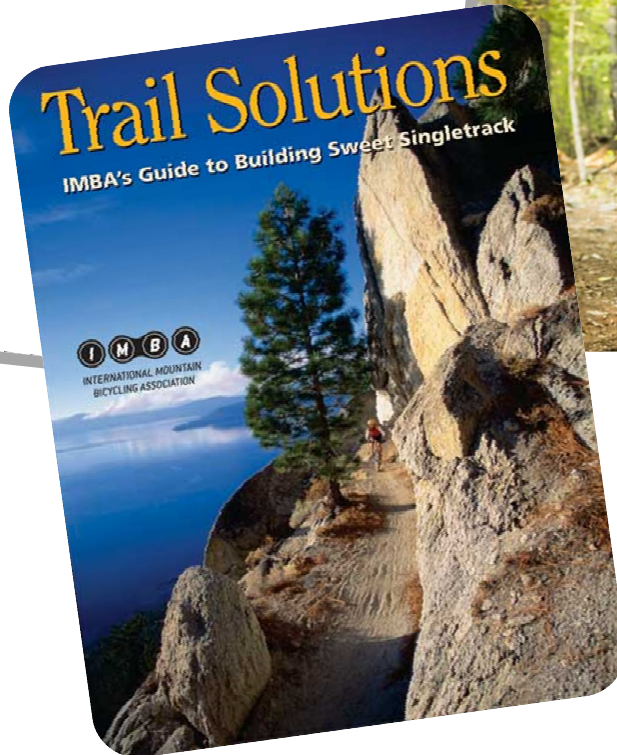
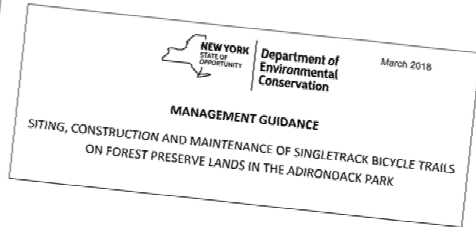




# SELECTED FEATURES CHARACTERISTICS



# TRAIL DESIGN: SPECIFIC TO THE PRIMARY USE



- APA Trail Standards
- IMBA Standards
- NCST Trail Standards



# AMENITIES & ACCOMMODATIONS





# AMENITIES & ACCOMMODATIONS



- Dedicated “basecamp” or hangout area
- Possible small-scale services
- Possible “Hamlets to Huts” accommodations
- Backcountry warming hut



# AMENITIES & ACCOMMODATIONS

- Continue and expanded shuttle services
- Dedicated parking area
- Robust wayfinding and trail related signage
- Simple/fixed bike repair stations
- Restroom facilities







# LAND USE SETTING



# LAND CLASSIFICATIONS & SELECT OWNERSHIP

## APA Land Classifications:

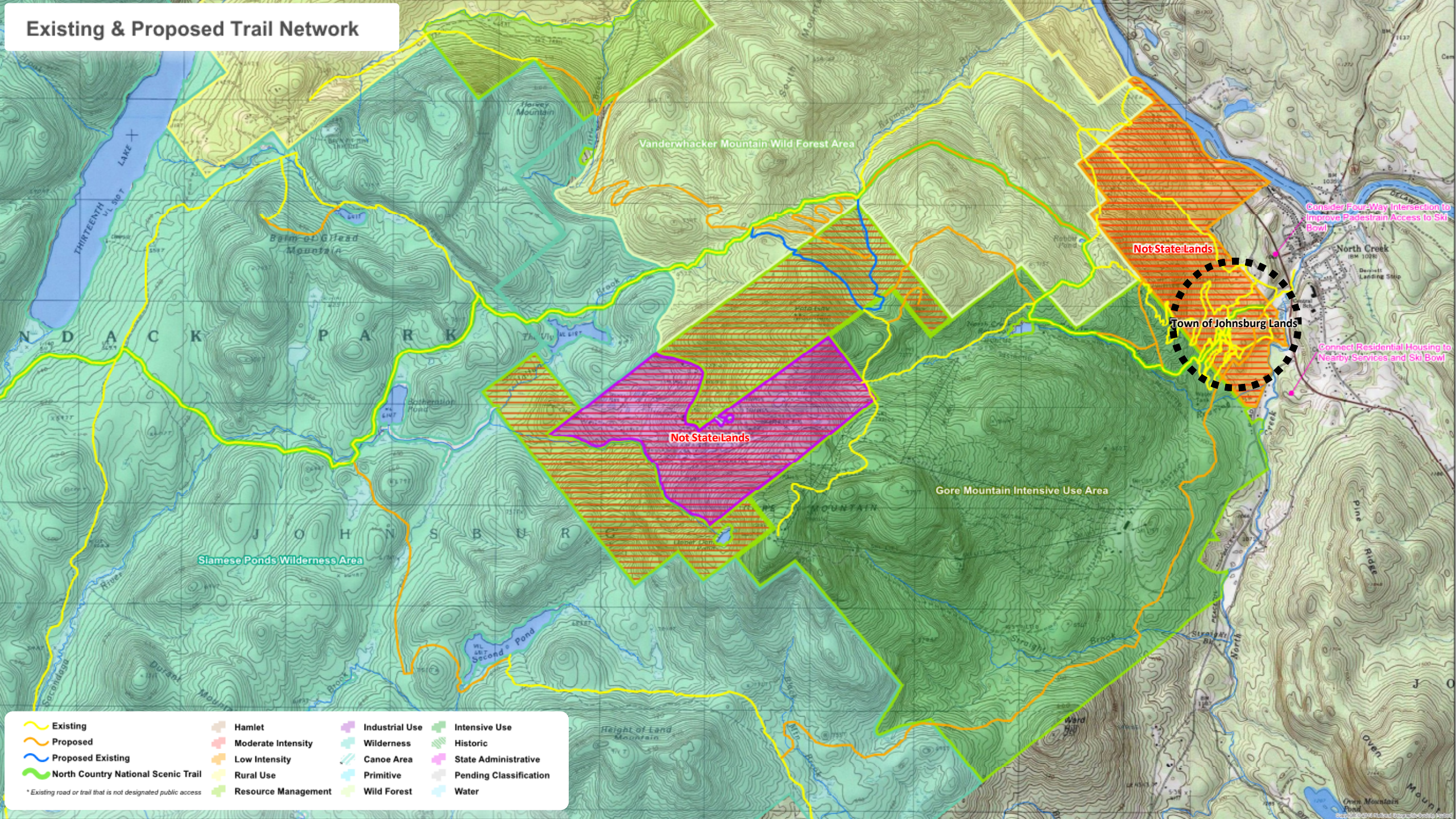
- Gore Mountain Intensive Use Area
- Siamese Ponds Wilderness Area
- Vanderwhacker Wild Forest Area

## Select Land Owners & Partners

- Town of Johnsburg
- Barton Mines
- FrontStreet Mountain Development



# Existing & Proposed Trail Network





# TRAIL APPROVAL CONSIDERATION

- Recreational improvements must adhere to allowable uses of state land, as defined in the State Land Master Plan
- All new trail development will need to be added to the area's Unit Management Plan (UMP). UMP's are updated and amended frequently
- Trails must be designed, developed, and maintained in accordance with their respective classification (Intensive Use, Wild Forest, Wilderness, etc.)



# ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES



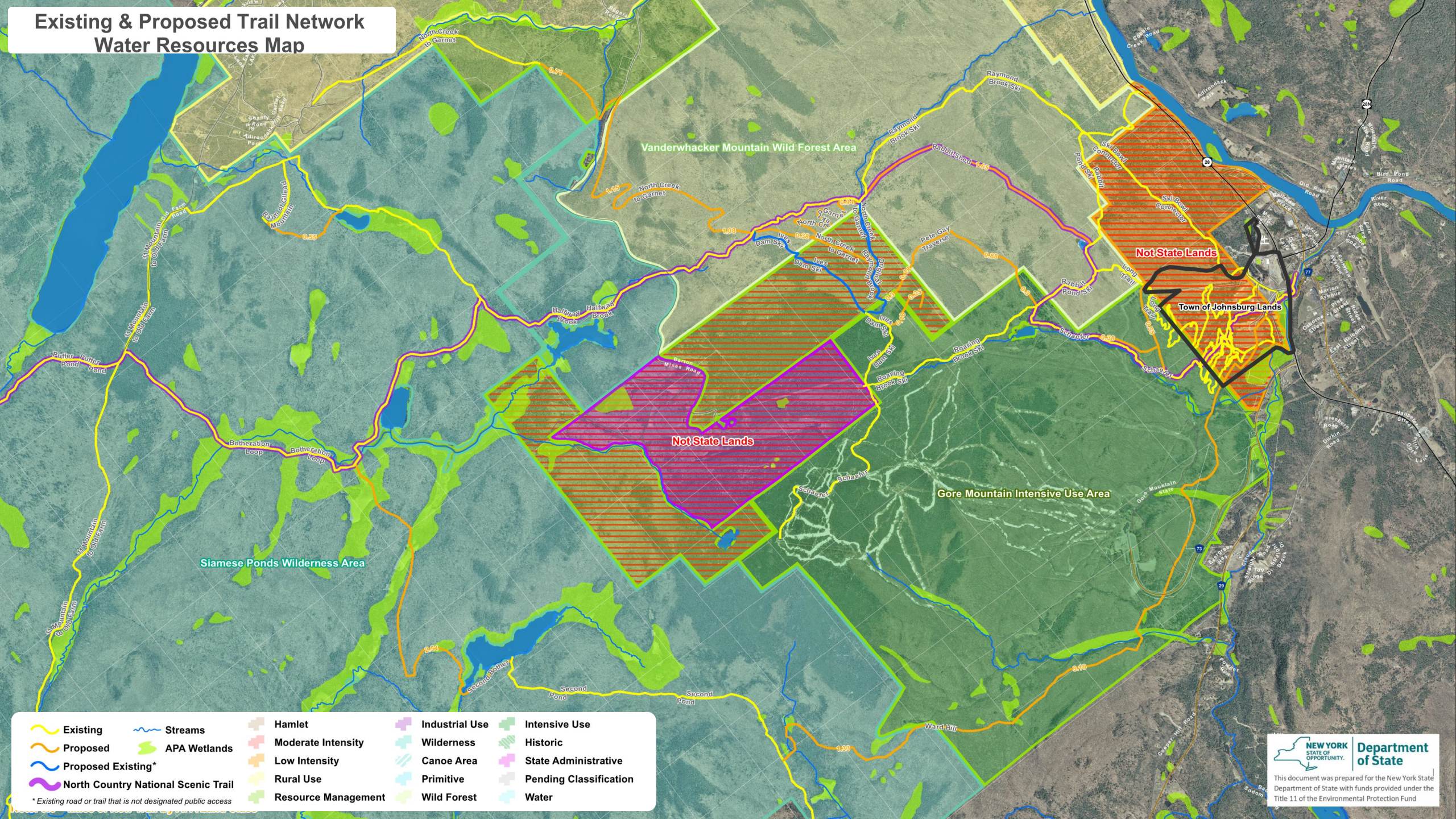


# ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES & CONSIDERATION

- Adhere to NYSDEC and professional trail design standards in order to mitigate potential environmental impacts
- Mitigate potential impacts to water resources and steep slopes through proper design or avoidance
- Minimize clearance for or improved trails by adhering to trail design standards



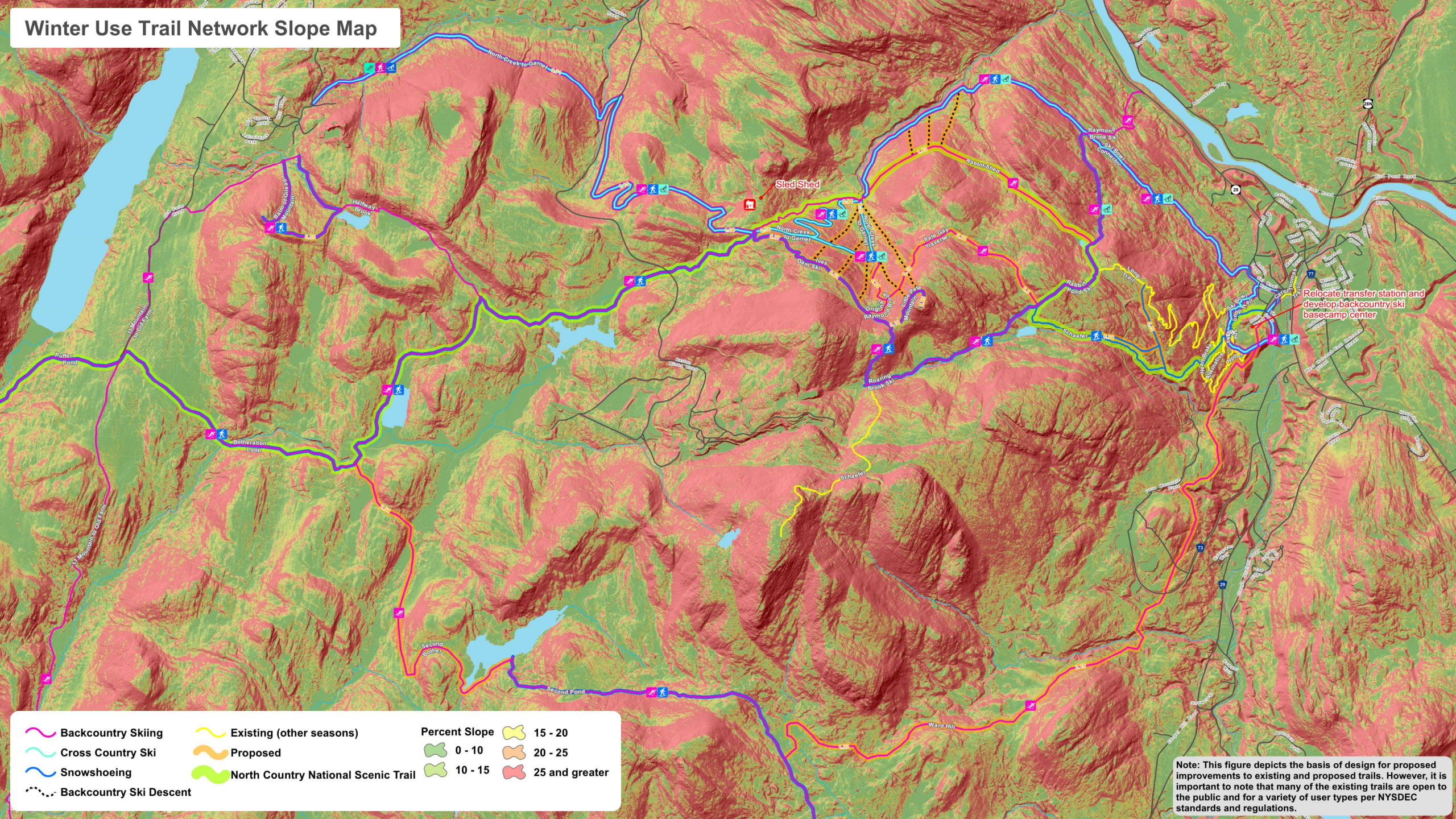
# Existing & Proposed Trail Network Water Resources Map



- |   |              |                     |                |                        |
|---|--------------|---------------------|----------------|------------------------|
| Existing  | Streams      | Hamlet              | Industrial Use | Intensive Use          |
| Proposed  | APA Wetlands | Moderate Intensity  | Wilderness     | Historic               |
| Proposed Existing*  |              | Low Intensity       | Canoe Area     | State Administrative   |
| North Country National Scenic Trail                           |              | Rural Use           | Primitive      | Pending Classification |
| * Existing road or trail that is not designated public access |              | Resource Management | Wild Forest    | Water                  |



# Winter Use Trail Network Slope Map



Backcountry Skiing

Cross Country Ski

Snowshoeing

Backcountry Ski Descent

Existing (other seasons)

Proposed

North Country National Scenic Trail

Percent Slope

0 - 10

10 - 15

15 - 20

20 - 25

25 and greater

Note: This figure depicts the basis of design for proposed improvements to existing and proposed trails. However, it is important to note that many of the existing trails are open to the public and for a variety of user types per NYSDEC standards and regulations.



# NEXT STEPS...

- Revise propose plans and concepts based on public and stakeholder input
- Develop select cost estimates based on proposed plan
- Develop priority actions and implementation strategy based on plan and input.
- Prepare draft and final plan for final consideration



# THANK YOU!

Steve Ovitt  
Wilderness Property Management Inc.  
(518) 683-2005  
wildpropmang@gmail.com

Paul Cummings, AICP, LEED AP  
The Chazen Companies  
(518) 824-1930  
pcummings@chazencompanies.com



Appendix E:

## SAMPLE RECREATION AGREEMENT



## Appendix E: Sample Recreation Agreement

*(adapted from "Getting Involved: A Community Trail Handbook for Landowners")*

[Date]

[Grantor of Access / Landowner]

[Address]

[City, NY Zip]

Dear \_\_\_\_\_:

Thanks in large part to the cooperation and support we have received from you, [Grantor / Landowner of Access], the [name of newly established trail] has now become a reality. The [name of local trail group, municipality, or land trust] is truly appreciative of the level of trust and cooperation you have given us.

The trail corridor now being created will follow the designated flagged path previously agreed to, taking care to not disturb any wetlands or other vital habitats in any manner or otherwise interfere in your operations or use of the property. Any changes that may be required will be cleared with you first, and if parking areas seem necessary, they will be built with your approval and direction. The route will be marked by the agreed to trail markers in a way that will not harm the tree, and all signs will be submitted for your approval. The path will be checked by [list organization, land trust, individual who will take on maintenance of the trail] on a regular basis to assure that it remains clean and in good condition.

This letter will serve as a revocable agreement that can be modified or terminated at your request. This agreement also recognizes that both you and we are relying on the protections afforded under the New York State General Obligation law § 9-103.

We look forward to a long and mutually beneficial partnership in the true sense of the word. Our continued thanks for your help. Should you decide to amend or suspend the agreement you agree to give our group 30 days notice so that appropriate provisions for trail continuity and accommodation of trail users can be made.

Most sincerely,

[name of representative of local trail group, municipality, or land trust]