

THE COHOS TRAIL ASSOCIATION

CONNECTICUT LAKES HEADWATERS WORKING FOREST FIVE YEAR PLAN CONCEPTS

Below is a list of Cohos Trail Association project concepts that we would like State officials to review and, perhaps, work into the upcoming Connecticut Lakes Headwaters Working Forest five-year plan.

1. RESTORE THE OLD JEEP LANE AT DEER MOUNTAIN Highest Priority

The Cohos Trail Association would like to restore (brush out) the existing but impassable old jeep lane up Deer Mountain on the northeast flank of the peak to the vicinity of the firetower on the north summit. This would be a maintenance effort in reality, as the old obliterated lane still exists and could be brushed out without undue difficulty. It would be a hiking trail, but might be able to be used by snowmobiles in winter.

If this jeep lane were to be revamped, it would provide a link to the existing Deer Mountain Fire Tower Trail and create a thru-trail over the mountain and a loop path experience when coupled with Sophie's Lane in the valley. It would provide a fine destination loop hike for people who are staying at the Deer Mountain State Campground, and it would provide a direct thru-hike over the mountain for hikers on the Cohos Trail, allowing them to get off Sophie's Lane for two miles.

If the Deer Mountain Firetower were ever given the green light to be restored, the old jeep lane could facilitate moving materials to the summit via snowmobile.

2. UTILIZE TWO MILES OF ROUTE IN CLARKSVILLE High Priority

Utilize the Snowmobile Route 131's northern two miles in Clarksville on the opposite side (east side) of the Cedar Stream south branch brook from the Deadwater Road. This is an existing way. All we at the Cohos Trail Association would like to do is incorporate that into the Cohos Trail and get off the Deadwater Road entirely. We would sign and blaze the route as is customary. We would maintain the trail in the warmer weather months.

3. PUNCHEON SPANS AT THIRD LAKE, NORTHWEST SHORE AREA Middle Priority

Create a 75-foot bog bridge string just off the snowmobile-traveled way and a few feet to the west side of Sophie's Lane next to Third Connecticut Lake where the trail is low and prone to wet feet most of the year.

4. SHORT PATH FROM THIRD LAKE TO FOURTH LAKE Middle Priority

We would like to propose eventually creating a new trail from Third Connecticut Lake from Sophie's Lane to the north northwest up the boundary headlands to Fourth Connecticut Lake Trail's southern side by the pond (fen). This would permit a thru-trail experience for all hikers instead of sending people up and back on the Fourth Conn. Lake Trail to finish or start the Cohos Trail thru-hike. This would eliminate the out-and-back experience.

5. RESTORE RAILINGS AND DECKS ON DEER MOUNTAIN FIRE TOWER

High priority for late in the five-year plan

There is a great deal of interest in restoring the stairways, landings, and railings on the superstructure of the long abandoned Deer Mountain Firetower, and there has been for some years. The Cohos Trail Association would like to partner with the State and with other clubs in the New England region to assist in the restoration of that wonderful steel structure.

The restoration would culminate in a viewing platform forty feet above the forest floor. There would not be a need to restore the watchman's cab on the tower as it once existed.

We at the association think it would be possible to generate, through grants and fundraising efforts, a fair sum of money to help underwrite the restoration effort. Also, we think of the tower restoration as a fitting memorial to long-time Pittsburg resident and CLHWF manager Sandy Young who passed away recently.

That is the sum of our concepts for the CLHWF five-year plan. These are sketches and not fully fleshed out plans, of course. If any one or more of these items were to be approved, we would not commence work without furnishing a plan for approval through the normal channels.

Thank you for taking the time to review these ideas.

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