



CLHCC RECREATION & PUBLIC USE SUBCOMMITTEE

December 8, 2023, 1:00pm

Pittsburg Fire Station

Pittsburg NH

In Attendance

Members	Staff
Charlie Levesque, Chair	Jake DeBow, NHFG
Harry Brown	John Sojka, NHFG
Toby Owen	Maggie Machinist, DFL
Darrin Jock	Johanna Lyons, DPR
Shawn Hagan	Clint Savage, BoT
Ray Gorman	Dwayne Covell, BoT
Scott Mason	Brian Parise, DPR
	Bennett Lohmeyer, LandVest
Other	Dave DeGruttola, LandVest
Gail Hanson, Chair CLHCC	Pete Kenney, BoT
Arnold Davis, State Representative	Dianne Mattot, DPR

I. Welcome and Introductions

II. Acceptance of Minutes

- a. Harry motioned to adopt the minutes from the 9/27/23 meeting. Darrin seconded the motion. All in favor of adoption.

III. Recreation User Group Presentations

Cohos Trail Assn, Kim Nielson, and Sue Wentworth

a. The Cohos Trail is now 25 years old. The 170 mile goes from Crawford Notch to the Canadian border and is maintained by a dedicated group of volunteers.

b. Kim reviewed the 5 concepts presented in the proposal.

i. Concept 1 – refurbish the “telephone line trail” to create a loop to the summit of Deer Mountain. The trail work would include trail structures and water diversion.

- 1. It is recommended that the trail be run through the Trails for People and Wildlife tool.
- 2. NHFG would like to be included in the planning of the trail if approved. The summit of Deer Mtn is over 2,700’ and located in a SMA.
- 3. Harry motioned the inclusion of the proposal in the plan, seconded by Darrin. All in favor.

ii. Concept 2 – Relocate the trail from the Deadwater Road to Corridor 131 for 2+/- miles.

- 1. Winter use is expected to be low and don’t anticipate conflict.
- 2. Pending abutting landowner permission for trail relocation.



3. Harry motioned the inclusion of the proposal in the plan, seconded by Toby. All in favor.
- iii. Concept 3 & 4 – These proposals were removed from consideration because they are on the CLNA and need to be coordinated with NHFG.
- iv. Concept 5 – This concept proposes to rehab the Deer Mtn Fire Tower to become a viewing platform. Kim feels this is the greatest untapped resource in the North Country and could be a draw for visitors.
 1. The project would restore the stairs, deck, and rail.
 2. It was suggested the tower be dedicated to Sandy Young's memory, however, Toby suggested that the tower recognize the watchmen who staffed it and to rename the trail for Sandy.
 3. There is coalition of partners who are committed to make it happen. Funding could come from the Tillotson Fund, Northern Boarders, local fund raising.
 4. There is a fair amount of planning and design needed, in addition who will be the responsible party (DNCR or landowner) for the fire tower structure.
 5. Harry motioned the inclusion of the proposal in the plan, seconded by Shawn. All in favor.

Other Recreational User Groups

- a. The ATV proposal for expanded use will not be moving ahead. Status Quo will continue.
- b. The NH Horse Council withdrew their proposal after a meeting with Johanna. They acknowledged that the property is managed differently than the state reservations and they will need to build a user group to assist DPR with the management of the use for future access. Johanna has committed DPR to working with the NHHHC if in future they want to hold an event to bring their members for a visit.

IV. Comment Analysis

- a. Charlie remarked that the summary table and short analysis document were well prepared.
- b. After review of the comments the committee does not recommend any additional public use or facilities be included in the plan.

V. Next Steps

- a. Johanna will work on including the Cohos Trail information in the plan and clean up the draft document. Her goal would be to have a public information session late winter to get public comment and bring a final draft to the Rec Sub-Committee in spring concurrent with the spring CLHCC meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 2:30pm.

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 High 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.

Lyons, Johanna

From: Kim Nilsen <thepaintfarm444@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 9:17 PM
To: Lyons, Johanna
Subject: COHOS: Two images regarding the Cohos Trail 5-Year Plan Concepts
Attachments: Snowmobile Route 131. North segment.jpg; 5 YEAR PLAN. Deer Mt. Area.jpg

EXTERNAL: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

Hello Johanna,

Here are two images of the map with black lines or marks on them.

1. 5-Year Plan. Deer Mt. Area.jpg. This highlights four of the five different items in the Cohos Trail wish list, including...
 - A. Refurbishing the old jeep route on the northeast flank up Deer Mt. to connect with the Deer Mountain Firetower Trail near the summit.
 - B. New bog bridge string next to Third Connecticut Lake.
 - C. New trail concept from the end of the gravel-base of Sophie's Lane to Fourth Connecticut Lake Trail.
 - D. Refurbishing the Deer Mountain firetower.

2. Snowmobile Route 131. North segment.jpg

A. This is an image with a black line that represents the northern leg of the existing Route 131 snowmobile trail. We wish to use this segment of that long route. (The dotted line is a very rough approximation of the existing Cohos Trail route north of the Diamond Ponds area to Whipple Ridge. I don't have the new map at home to use, which shows the accurate treadway. I keep giving them away. This old map should suffice to illustrate the Route 131 trail, however.)

Kim



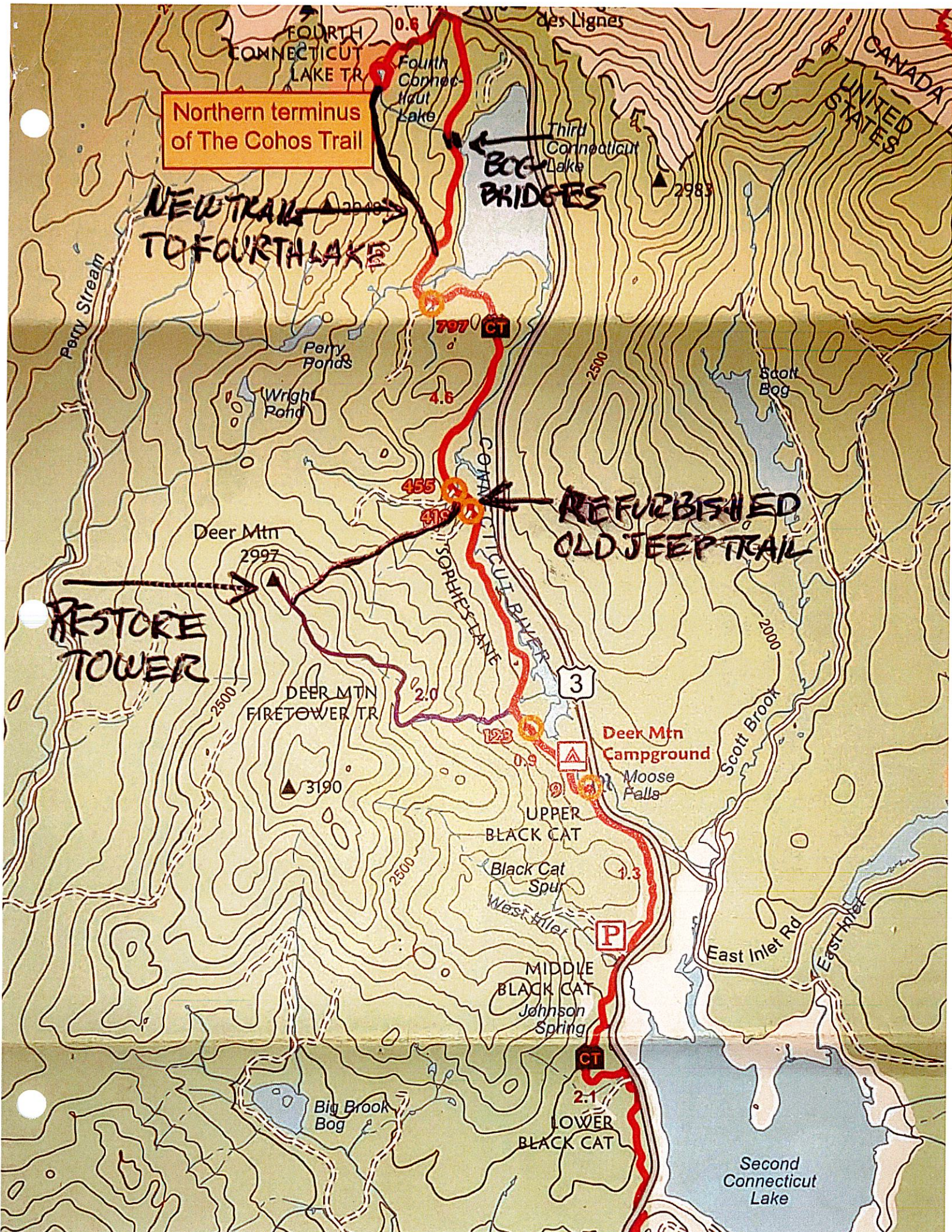
Northern terminus of The Cohos Trail

NEW TRAIL TO FOURTH LAKE

BOG BRIDGES

REFURBISHED OLD JEEP TRAIL

RESTORE TOWER



CLHWF Comment Analysis

34 Comments received.

- 11 self-identified resident or leaseholder

Support Facilities

- A few suggested locations to add a pit toilet (East Inlet ramp, fisher areas). Mostly encouraging maintaining the existing facilities before adding new.
- Swimming
- Accessible fishing area
- Bicycle trails, XC ski, snowshoe
- Picnic tables

Concerns Existing Use

- ATV Use – no surprise, either for the activity or against
 - Connect to Colebrook/Errol
 - Keep trail system open later
- Roads
 - Maintenance and access

New Recreation

- Camping
- XC ski
- Mtn Biking
- Horseback riding

Comments

- Support for rustic, undeveloped landscape
- Open roads earlier
- Repair Deer Mtn Dam (Moose Falls Dam)
- ATV pro and con

Name	Resident	Leaseholder	ZIP Code	Miles	Support Facilities	Concerns Existing	New Recreation	Comments
Babula	no		03856	100	Maintain existing	Remember people enjoy driving on the roads	Camping spots	Exploring in a vehicle to view wildlife, fishing, hunting. I am not an ATVer but do not have a problem with them.
Beaurivage	Yes		03222	NA	No	ATVs ruining the road system, woods trails, off-trail snowmobiling	No	Limit access to the ATV clubs & community no matter how much you give them it is never enough. The work on the streak is that OHRV & ATVer have "ruined Pittsburg" and made "life difficult" for "locals". Retired NH Registered hunting & fishing guide.
Benson, E	Yes		03846	50	Pit toilets, focus efforts on maintaining existing infrastructure and don't create new ones if you can't maintain.	Expansion of ATV trails. Consider classifying E-Bikes classifications that will be allowed as you look to the future. Regulate like USFS.	Ebike. Compatible with ATV/Mtn bike/ebike. Issues with excessive speeds. Recommend biking stay on forestry roads and not ATV trails.	Thank you for the hard work in preserving this valuable resource for our state.
Benson, P	Yes		03846	200		Road access for campowners. Some concern about scope of ATV use & access as a secondary use	Ski/Snowshoe. Guiding. No conflicts. Level slope and mystique of the area	Keep it rustic, undeveloped & quiet! Limited motorized recreation.
Brooks	No		03576	100	Use roads for ATV traffic to enjoy the beauty of the region		ATV use of roads. There are areas that will be a joy for the rest of the recreational users. Composting bathroom facilities and picnic tables.	Enjoyed hiking to Stubb Hill Pond for fishing.

Name	Resident Leaseholder	ZIP Code	Miles	Support Facilities	Concerns Existing	New Recreation	Comments
Davis	Never visited	03588					I am concerned how carbon credits may effect the timber industry and recreational use of the property. State Representative Coos#2
DeWitt, Marc	No	03592	150	Outhouses at East Inlet boat ramp would be really helpful	Where are the maintained bicycle trails?	Bicycle trails/horseback riding	We love it here and will keep coming
DeWitt, MB	No	03592	200	Outhouse at East Inlet		Mountain bike trails	
DeWitt, Mike	No	03572	150			Bicycle trails/horseback riding - explore into Maine. Overnight campsites in addition to Deer Mtn.	Keep Open.
Doscher	No	03281	50-75	Toilets - at key entry points for anglers (likely not on headwaters lands but on GRH)	The expansion of ATV activity in the deep wood reduced my number of trips there each year		Oppose ATV expansion.
Evankow	Never visited	03581			Recreational OHRV riding destroys peace and quiet and habitat for moose and other woodland creatures who live in the forest and who are facing increasing stresses from warming winters and habitat loss, not to mention the other primary users of the land. Use of state lands for off-road connector trails also increases OHRV traffic past homes in nearby towns... etc.		
Falcon	No	03221	75-100			Overnight camping	I really like to be able to access the remote areas by regular vehicles, not just ATVs or snowmobiles. Enjoy some of the more remote fishing opportunities.
Gorman		03576		Better information	Need a connecting trail between Pittsburg and Colebrook OHRV club		It's a gem of the North Country. Need to be used for tourism & forestry!
Hughes-Cross	No						Logging is a staple of the North Country. Ensure it remains a perpetual paradise as conserved by easement.

Name	Resident Leaseholder	ZIP Code	Miles	Support Facilities	Concerns Existing	New Recreation	Comments
Siegler	Yes	05037	150		Expansion of ATV use would significantly impact my enjoyment & activities on the CLHWF		Expansion of ATV use will significantly increase road maintenance costs while adding large amounts of ambient noise to one of the few places left in NH without the sound of motorized vehicles.
Sprague	Yes	03781	150	We enjoy the primitive nature of Magalloway road & lands			We feel the area should be and continue to be off limits to quads & ATV traffic. We sited our camp for the solitude and opening up the Magalloway/Northwoods/Hellsgate area will destroy the pristine nature of the area.
Stohl	Yes	03576	100-200	working outhouses	do not add any more miles of ATV use		Co-Sponsored the legislation for the tract.
Tufts	Yes	03592		For swimming areas			
Walker	No	03106	100	Accessible fly fishing access			
Whitburn	No						The working forest should be turned over to the federal government and they should create a national park.

Recreation Plan Outline 110123

1. Goals and Objectives
2. Permitted Recreational Uses
 - a. Policies for public use management
 - b. Conflict resolution
 - c. Waste Management
3. Description of current public use, recreational improvements, and features
4. Proposed new public use and recreational improvements.
5. Public Use Monitoring Plan
6. Maps
 - a. Recreational improvements and recreational features
 - b. Kiosks
 - c. Pit toilets
 - d. Trails
 - e. Parking lots

5.B.i.c Public Access and Recreational Use Management Plan shall include, at minimum, the following elements:

1. The **goals and objectives** for access by the public and the management of such access;
2. Those **recreational uses** that will be **permitted** on the Property;
3. The **policies** that will govern access by the public and the Permitted Recreational Activities;
4. A **narrative description of existing and planned Recreational Improvements**, including Visitor Support Facilities and other structures and a description of the use of existing Recreational Improvements during the term of the prior Recreation Plan and any management concerns;
5. A **map** showing the locations of the Fee Owner's **Recreational Improvements**, both existing and proposed during the term of the Recreation Plan, which information shall be provided by the Fee Owner, and the Easement Holder's Recreational Improvements, both **existing and proposed** during the term of the Recreation Plan, including, but not limited to, roads, trails and other improvements;
6. A **narrative description** of and designation through maps of the **locations of outdoor recreational features** including, but not limited to, roads, trails and other improvements and a description of the use of such recreational features during the term of the prior Recreation Plan and any management concerns;
7. **Examples of conflicts**, if any, between recreational activities and other uses of the Property permitted under this Easement, the responses to such conflicts and the process or proposed process for resolving them;
8. A **description of proposed new or additional uses** of the Property by the public, proposed responses to such proposed uses, and a process for determining whether such uses are acceptable to the Easement Holder and the Fee Owner;
9. A description of the **methods of collecting, storing, and removing rubbish, garbage, debris and waste materials** left by the public use of the Property and a summary of the results of such management during the prior Recreation Plan; and
10. A **monitoring plan** of public use on the Property and, **specifically in Special Management Areas** and in areas that are ecologically fragile or that contain rare and exemplary natural communities, populations of rare species, or natural heritage or cultural features, to ensure that these areas are not degraded or the Purposes of this Easement diminished. A summary of the results of the monitoring during the prior Recreation Plan shall also be included.

Connecticut Lakes Headwaters Working Forest Recreation Program

Public Access and Recreation Management Plan

For the property owned by:

Connecticut Lakes Realty Trust

And

State of New Hampshire
Department of Natural and Cultural Resources

Adopted XX/XX/XXXX



STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
DEPARTMENT of NATURAL and CULTURAL RESOURCES
OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

172 Pembroke Road Concord, New Hampshire 03301
Phone: 271-2411 Fax: 271-2629

Connecticut Lakes Headwaters Working Forest
Public Access and Recreation Management Plan

The Division of Parks and Recreation in consultation with the Connecticut Lakes Headwaters Citizens Committee and state agencies who have regulatory or programmatic responsibilities for the area conserved by the Headwaters Conservation Easement per Section 5B has prepared this plan for review and approval by the fee owner.

On behalf of the State of New Hampshire, this plan amendment has been approved by:

Sarah Stewart, Commissioner
Department of Natural and Cultural Resources

Date

On behalf of the CONNECTICUT LAKES REALTY TRUST, (a Trust formed pursuant to agreement dated March 12, 2002, and recorded in the Registry of Coos County, New Hampshire), this plan amendment has been approved by:

Shawn Hagan
Director of Forest Operations
Connecticut Lakes Realty Trust

Date

Introduction:

The Connecticut Lakes Headwaters Working Forest Recreation Program, managed by the Division of Parks and Recreation, works closely with local organizations, businesses and the private landowner to provide high-quality nature-based recreation. This partnership is codified by RSA 12-A:9-b with the creation of the Connecticut Lakes Headwaters Citizen Committee.

The *Grant of Conservation Easement*¹ is the primary management document for the Connecticut Lakes Headwaters property consisting of the terms, covenants, restrictions and affirmative rights granted to the Easement Holder and the Fee Owner. Section 5B of the Easement requires the Division to develop in consultation with the Landowner a *Public Access and Recreational Use Management Plan* which is consistent with the Purposes, Stewardship Goals, Stewardship Plan and Road Management Agreement and must state how and in what time frame DNCR plans to achieve or progress toward attaining Easement Stewardship goal 2.C.xiii.²

Plan Requirements³

1. The goals and objectives for access by the public and the management of such access.
2. Those recreational uses that will be permitted on the Property.
3. The policies that will govern access by the public and the Permitted Recreational Activities.
4. A narrative description of existing and planned Recreational Improvements, including Visitor Support Facilities and other structures and a description of the use of existing Recreational Improvements during the term of the prior Recreation Plan and any management concerns.
5. A map showing the locations of the Fee Owner’s Recreational Improvements, both existing and proposed during the term of the Recreation Plan, which information shall be provided by the Fee Owner, and the Easement Holder’s Recreational Improvements, both existing and proposed during the term of the Recreation Plan, including, but not limited to, roads, trails, and other improvements.
6. A narrative description of and designation through maps of the locations of outdoor recreational features including, but not limited to, roads, trails and other improvements and a description of the use of such recreational features during the term of the prior Recreation Plan and any management concerns.
7. Examples of conflicts, if any, between recreational activities and other uses of the Property permitted under this Easement, the responses to such conflicts and the process or proposed process for resolving them.
8. A description of proposed new or additional uses of the Property by the public, proposed responses to such proposed uses, and a process for determining whether such uses are acceptable to the Easement Holder and the Fee Owner.
9. A description of the methods of collecting, storing, and removing rubbish, garbage, debris and waste materials left by the public use of the Property and a summary of the results of such management during the prior Recreation Plan.
10. A monitoring plan of public use on the Property and, specifically in Special Management Areas and in areas that are ecologically fragile or that contain rare and exemplary natural communities, populations of rare species, or natural heritage or cultural features, to ensure that

¹ CLH Easement Preamble, p. 3

² CLH Easement 5.B.i.a-b, p.25

³ CLH Easement, 5.B.i.c, p.25-26

these areas are not degraded, or the Purposes of this Easement diminished. A summary of the results of the monitoring during the prior Recreation Plan shall also be included.

The Property and It's Managers:

In 2001 the Trust for Public Lands purchased 171,500 acres of commercial forest land, the single largest contiguous private ownership in New Hampshire from International Paper Company. This area comprises the northern-most tip of the state, about one fortieth of its total area. Working with other conservation organizations and the State, the Trust for Public Lands developed a long-term conservation strategy for maintaining timber production, natural values, and public use of the property.

To realize the collective vision for the property, the Trust:

- Sold 146,400 acres (about 229 sq miles) to a private landowner, the Connecticut Lakes Realty Trust, to be managed as a Working Forest with land use restrictions.
- Designated and conveyed to the State of New Hampshire, Department of Natural and Cultural Resources, 269 miles of the 424-mileplus network on the Working Forest to be managed for public access and recreation and forest management activities.¹
- Conveyed 25,000 acres to the State of New Hampshire, Fish and Game Department to protect highly sensitive Natural Areas.
- Conveyed 100 acres to the State of New Hampshire, Department of Natural and Cultural Resources, through fee simple sale to accommodate future expansion of the Deer Mountain Campground which abuts the Working Forest; and
- Obtained a conservation easement on the Working Forest and fee ownership of the other properties through \$13,500,000 in grants from the Forest Legacy Program and Land and Community Heritage Investment Program (LCHIP) and \$10,000,000 from General Fund appropriations.

The three current management organizations are the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources through its Forests and Lands and Parks and Recreation divisions, the Fish and Game Department and the private landowner. The management of the property is also guided by the Connecticut Lakes Headwaters Citizen Committee.

Recreation Goals and Objectives:

Two foundational documents provide the direction for public access and recreation management on the headwater property. First the "Connecticut Lakes Headwaters Partnership Task Force Report" that stated on page 13.

"We see the [Property's lands] continuing to provide the many economic, recreation and natural resource benefits they have provided New Hampshire citizens and visitors for generations. These lands will remain as a large block of largely undeveloped productive/working forest while continuing their substantial contribution to the local and regional culture and economy. Public access for recreation will be assured as will the conservation of ecologically sensitive resources and places."

And second, the stewardship goal for public access and recreation is prescribed in section 2.C.xiii⁴ of the easement and it states;

2.C.xiii Maintenance and enhancement of a range of non-motorized, natural resource-based, outdoor recreational opportunities for the public, as well as maintaining opportunities for snowmobiling on Designated Snowmobile Trails (as defined in Section 5.A), and motorized recreational uses by the public on Designated Roads (as defined in Section 5.D) as agreed to by the parties.

Permitted Recreational Uses:

The permitted recreational uses are listed in the property easement (section 5.A.i-vi) or documented to have been a permitted public, non-commercial use and are described as "natural resource-based". The following definitions were clarified in the initial plan and have been adopted to mean;

- Natural Resource-based Use means any outdoor recreational activity which depends upon backwoods setting for its pursuit and enjoyment.
- Primary Use means any natural resource-based use which is explicitly allowed under the terms of the Grant of Conservation Easement (Section 5.A.i.a) or documented to have been a permitted *public, non-commercial use* at the time of the Easement.
- Secondary Use means any natural resource-based *public* use which is not explicitly allowed under the terms of the Grant of Conservation Easement or was included as a use which did not exist at the time of the Grant of Easement and were permitted through the Initial Plan.

Primary uses include the following:

- Bicycling*
- Camp Leases
- Boating
- Nordic skiing
- Dog sledding#
- Driving for pleasure*
- Open space enjoyment
- Fishing
- Gathering wild edibles

⁴ CLH Easement p. 7

- Hiking
- Hobby mineral collecting
- Hunting
- Nature observation
- Photography
- Picnicking
- Shed hunting
- Snowmobiling#
- Snowshoeing
- Swimming
- Target and skeet shooting
- Trapping
- Walking
- Wildlife viewing

* Use permitted on designated roads (see baseline documentation)

Use permitted on designated snowmobile trails (see baseline documentation)

Secondary uses include the following:

- ATVs*
- Camping
- Equestrian Use
- Special Use Permits

* Use permitted on designated roads (see baseline documentation)

What was the Planning Process?

The Connecticut Lakes Headwaters Citizen Committee established a Recreation and Public Use Sub-Committee to assist the Division in the development of this plan. The Committee met X times to solicit and evaluate proposals for new or expanded recreational use and make recommendations. In addition, a survey was released. Guided by the input received, the Division then made final decisions about the contents of this plan with the Landowner.

Survey Results – insert table

Plan Approval / Denial

A close working relationship is required between DNCR and the Landowner in developing and implementing the Public Access/Recreation Management Plan. This plan needs to be coordinated with the Landowner's Stewardship Plan and the Road Management Plan.

Guiding Principles

The Division will:

1. Management Capacity. Permit during the life of this Plan only the intensity and types of recreational uses and public access for which it and other partnering state agencies have sufficient resources to manage and enforce effectively. The goal will always be to be creative, resourceful, and streamlined;
2. Protection of Primary Uses. Permit new uses allowed on the property under the Easement, hereinafter referred to as “secondary uses” (defined in 3.4.1.1 below), only to the extent to which they do not degrade the experiential qualities of the uses specifically listed in Section 5.A.i.a. of the Easement, hereinafter referred to as “primary uses.” The listed primary uses include hunting, fishing, trapping, picnicking, swimming, hiking, cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, nature observation, snowshoeing, and enjoyment of open space. Secondary uses permitted under this recreation and public access plan must fit the spirit and letter of the Easement. They may vary as times change and may include activities requiring commercial or special use permits;
3. Intensity Thresholds. Identify limits for the numbers of people able to use the property without impairing its experiential qualities and, if such numbers are exceeded or close to being exceeded at the time of any subsequent update of this Plan, identify within the update those management policies and actions intended to achieve such limits. The goal will always be to implement management tools before problems become too great to overcome effectively. Until such thresholds can be objectively identified, the Division will continue using the characterization expressed in the Interim Plan and supported through public opinion during the planning process: in general, the recreational intensity goal will be low density, involving few encounters with persons other than in one’s own party.
4. Partnerships. Continue to build and maintain a strong relationship with the Connecticut Lakes Timber Company, adjacent Landowners, and host communities; and actively encourage volunteerism and cooperation among user group organizations to promote shared responsibility for stewardship and for ensuring positive user behavior, to the extent to which such organizations can provide reliable support and sources of funding and resources; and
5. Capital Investments. Make capital investments in roads and other support facilities in a manner that avoids deferred maintenance (and higher costs later) and in keeping with the rustic and, in parts, remote backcountry character of the property, legal responsibilities to the fee

owner, and budget constraints.

Evaluation Criteria for Changes in Use or Management

In evaluating management decisions such as whether to permit Secondary Uses or close or open a road, the Division will consider and apply the following criteria:

Legal Requirements Criteria

To be acceptable, a change in use or management action must:

1. Be consistent with the Easement to protect forest land, achieve multiple use conservation purposes, and provide opportunities for natural resource-based outdoor recreation (Easement 1.1A);
2. Not degrade the long term capability of the property to produce forest products (2.A.ii);
3. Not cause non-forest uses allowed in the Easement to exceed 10 % of the property (2.A.iii);
4. Meet the management intent for Special Management Areas (2F):
 - a. High Elevation Zones
 - b. Riparian Areas
 - c. Wetlands
 - d. Wildlife Management Areas
 - e. Natural Heritage Areas
 - f. Cultural Heritage Areas;
5. Be in accordance with all applicable local, state, and federal laws and regulations (2.N); and
6. Conform with any provisions pertaining to specific uses covered in the Easement, including but not limited to the following:
 - a. Signage – Not exceed 8 square feet in size or be artificially illuminated (5.S and 5.K);
 - b. Trail Construction and Maintenance – Be carried out in accordance with the then-current generally accepted best management practices for the sites, soils, and terrain of the Property (3.F.v and 5.N.iii). The most current standards are: “Best Management Practices for Erosion Control During Trail Maintenance and Construction” (State of NH, DRED, Division of Parks and Recreation, Trails Bureau, 2004);
 - c. Camps – Not exceed more than 125 licensed Sites (3.J.ix);
 - d. Groomed Snowmobile Trails – Not exceed two hundred fifty (250) miles (5.A.v);
 - e. Visitor Support Facilities – Not exceed 1,000 square feet footprint of impervious surfaces and a height of 25 feet (5.N) (see footnote 5, Chapter 2.0).

Setting and Experiential Qualities Criteria

To be acceptable, a change in use or management action must be consistent with the Vision and Guiding Principles contained in this Plan. In particular, it must:

1. Maintain and/or enhance the backwoods character of designated Forest Recreation Areas;
2. Maintain the informal, remote, and dispersed qualities of the property;
3. Maintain a reasonable balance of uses, especially between motorized and non-motorized uses, on the property;
4. Avoid conflicts with enjoyment of the primary uses allowed on the property, especially those which depend upon a quiet and peaceful setting for a more solitary experience;
5. Maintain or enhance the separation of uses, especially motorized and non-motorized uses, which may conflict with one another; and
6. Contribute to the local quality of life.

Environmental Criteria

In addition to conforming to the Easement requirements for Special Management Areas, to be acceptable, a change in use or management action must:

1. Avoid conflicts with management of Connecticut Lakes Natural Areas managed by the NH Fish and Game Department;
2. Protect and maintain surface and ground water quality and watershed integrity;
3. Prevent or, where no alternative route is possible, minimize soil erosion;
4. Maintain the scenic quality and working forest character of the property;
5. Protect seasonal wildlife nesting and other sensitive habitats;
6. Minimize noise; and
7. Promote a healthy planet by using appropriate technology and mechanization.

Administrative Criteria

To be acceptable, a change in use or management action must:

1. Avoid unsafe conditions and liability issues related to logging and other land management activities;
2. Be within the capacity of DRED, other State agencies, supporting organization(s) or other partners to adequately fund and execute implementation, maintenance, enforcement and monitoring of the use and associated facilities in the Forest;
3. Minimize potential violations and consequent effects on State programs and resources, user experience, environment, and physical setting of the Forest;
4. Promote cooperation and coordination among land managers, law

- enforcement agencies, user groups, and organizations to enhance management and law enforcement of the property; and
5. Promote understanding and a respectful relationship between users and the Working Forest.
 6. Be mindful of:
 - a. Connecticut Lakes Timber Company's Stewardship Plan (2E);
 - b. Relevant State policies and other local, regional, and State plans including but not limited to:
 - i. NHF&G Connecticut Lakes Natural Areas Stewardship Plan,
 - ii. State of NH Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP),
 - iii. State of NH ATV Plan,
 - iv. Connecticut River Joint Commissions' Corridor Management Plan,
 - v. Connecticut River Scenic Byway Management Plan, and
 - vi. Local master plans.

Technical Requirements / Needs of Use Criteria

To be acceptable, a change in use or management action must:

1. Meet Best Management Practices (BMP) as outlined in the Easement or State of NH or other acceptable BMPs and technical specifications for the stated use;
2. Strive to achieve USDA Forest Service Accessibility Guidelines for Outdoor Recreation Facilities and Trails (See USDA Forest Service "Accessibility Guidebook for Outdoor Recreation and Trails", May 2006); and
3. Be flexible in its placement and design relative to changes in forest management activities, especially logging operations.

Management Policies and Strategies for Specific Recreational Use

Recreation Management

The Division and the Landowner share authority for managing, providing improvements for, and charging fees for outdoor, natural resource-based recreation and access on the property. The State has responsibility for public use and access, while the Landowner may permit its employees, invitees, and others as stipulated in the Easement to engage in recreation, education, and access. The Division and the Connecticut Lakes Headwaters Citizen Committee both have the authority to approve or deny any Landowner proposal for commercial fee-based activities. The Connecticut Lakes Headwaters Citizen Committee also has the authority to approve or deny the Division's proposal for any Visitor Support Facilities.

Wildlife Management

The Division has delegated authority for the management of hunting, fishing and trapping on the Working Forest through an Interagency Agreement (appendix X).

Public Safety, Emergency Management, and Enforcement

The NH Fish and Game Department has authority under State laws to enforce hunting, fishing, trapping and off-highway vehicle use and other such regulations on the property. It also provides search and rescue services and works closely with local police. DNCR also has the authority to enforce state laws related outdoor fires, camping, and off highway recreational vehicle use. The Coos County Sheriff Department and Local Police Departments also provide enforcement through cooperative agreements with the state agencies.

General Public Access Policies

Public Use: The State may control or limit public use and access in the interest of public safety or compliance with the Easement. This could include restrictions on the type, timing, and location of uses needed to:

1. Achieve compatibility with the property's management objectives including protection of fish and wildlife habitat values, unique or important natural communities or sites, and water quality.
2. Manage recreational use to reduce conflicts between recreational activities; or
3. Manage recreational use in a manner that does not unreasonably adversely impact the Landowner's use of the property for production of forest products.

Camp Lease Areas Off-limits. The public is not granted any rights of access on lots leased by the Landowner for private camps on the property.

Signage: In keeping with signs used historically on the Property, signs on the Working Forest will be designed to be rustic and relatively inconspicuous. The Division will consult with the Landowner with respect to the design, size, and location of signs (Easement 5.S). No new sign, except with the mutual consent of the Division and Landowner, shall exceed eight (8) square feet in size or be artificially illuminated. (Easement 2.K).

In general, signs will be limited to:

1. Entrance signs at major access points.
2. Boundary signs (as needed).
3. Safety warning signs (as needed and appropriate).
4. Signs identifying trailheads or entrance points to formal recreational facilities; and
5. Permanent signs placed at regular intervals, but at minimum at the beginning of and at intersections along the Designated Roads, to advise the public that the Designated Roads are used for Forest Management Activities (Easement 5K).

Dam Safety and Upkeep: Dams and their impoundments are important recreational and ecological attributes of the property. The dams are owned by the landowner. The Fish and Game Department has obtained a conservation easement from the landowner to replace and

maintain the dam at Big Brook Bog. Other dams will be maintained or replaced on a case-by-case basis dependent on funding and future use.

Statutes and Administrative Rules: DNCR administrative rules and public use statutes apply to the use of the state-owned roads and easement interests held by the state of New Hampshire per RES 101.06.

Existing Recreation Improvements – need a table and map with coordinates

The Division of Parks and Recreation has been the primary manager of public use and recreation for the last 20 years. Much effort is devoted to road management to provide access to the property in general and to key recreational sites including, Magalloway Fire Tower, Garfield Falls, Little Hellsgate Falls, the Canyon at Indian Stream Gorge and for recreational purposes such as hunting, fishing, wildlife observation and driving for pleasure.

Major improvements accomplished include construction of parking lots, installation of pit toilets, new gates, bridges, upgrading hiking trails to the Magalloway Fire Tower and other recreational sites, and viewshed improvements.

Recreation Management Units – Do we want to keep them from the 2007 plan?

General Recreational Use Policies and Actions

Non-Motorized Dispersed Use: These involve walking on informal trails or bushwalking to hunt, trap, fish, picnic, swim, cross-country ski, snowshoe, observe nature, or otherwise enjoy open space.

Policies

1. Opportunities compatible with a working forest will be maintained for bushwalking and seclusion in certain parts of the property to accommodate non-motorized users throughout the season.

Non-Motorized Trail Use: The most popular existing trails are at Garfield Falls and Magalloway Mountain. Other formal trails are at Little Hellsgate Falls, Boundary Pond, Indian Stream Canyon, and Sheehan Pond. The Cohos Trail has been an active partner in maintaining and relocating the trail portions that travel through the property.

Policies

1. Continue to manage and maintain hiking and access trails in good, safe, environmentally-sound, and experientially appropriate condition.
2. Site any new trail directly through the Forest without a protected buffer area in recognition of the Forest's primary use for timber management.
3. Reevaluate, in a timely fashion, any proposal from one or more organizations willing to partner in the development and management of a trail.
4. The Division will continue to collaborate with the Cohos Trail Association on trail management and relocations as needed because of forestry operations.

Snowmobile Use: The Bureau of Trails and local clubs groom and maintain between 150 to 250 miles of snowmobile trail depending on forest management activities and the snowmobile grant-in-aid program.

The **current average of 150 miles** of groomed trails is well within the maximum of 250 miles of groomed trail allowed under the Easement (5.A.v). The specific trails open for snowmobile use change from year-to-year in response to annual changes in land management needs of the Landowner or the Bureau of Trail.

Policies

1. No additional net parking capacity will be developed on the northern end of the Forest to avoid detrimental impacts on the Natural Area. However, to improve safety, the location of parking may be shifted to the Connecticut Lakes State Forest and possibly the Magalloway Road.
2. Annual snowmobile networks will be configured, managed, and monitored to create a manageable, enforceable, and family-oriented system. Except for temporary connectors, only the system of designated roads and trails approved in this Plan may be used for design and layout of the trail system.
3. The Division will continue to work in partnership with the local snowmobile club(s), Landowner, and NHFG in the planning and management of the annual network, which will be determined approximately six months prior to the snowmobiling season (mid-December).
4. Under the terms of the Easement, in the event that the Landowner or Division chooses to temporarily or permanently relocate any of the Designated Snowmobile Trails, the State and Landowner will work together, in consultation with the clubs, to designate an alternate route which will be created and maintained at the expense of the State.
5. Snowmobiling events require a Special Use Permit in advance.
6. A map of the groomed trail system will be created annually by local organizations or the state and made available to the public free or for purchase, depending on funding.
7. Marking of trails with signs will be performed in accordance with the "Trail Signing Handbook: Guidelines for Signing Snowmobile Trails" (State of New Hampshire), or such successor standard, to indicate location of the trail, direct snowmobile uses in appropriate areas, provide safety warnings where needed, and restrict access by vehicles other than snowmobiles.
8. Trail maintenance will be performed using best management practices as described in "Best Management Practices for Erosion Control During Trail Maintenance and Construction" (State of New Hampshire), or such successor standard. These provisions will apply to maintenance performed during both the winter and off-season periods. Maintenance activities include, but are not limited to, installation and replacement of bridges and culverts, protection of bridge surfaces from damage due to snowmobiling, rock and stump removal, smoothing the trail surface, placement of gravel and natural fill, installation of broad-based dips, water bars and ditches to divert runoff, removal of fallen trees, cutting back encroaching vegetation, and wintertime grooming.

9. Snowmobile use will be monitored on the Working Forest to ensure that current ecological conditions and the purposes of the Easement are not degraded by snowmobile use, and that snowmobiling activity is done in compliance with existing state laws and administrative rules.
10. Removal of any litter from the trails and any signs that are intended exclusively for the management of snowmobile use shall occur following each snowmobiling season.
11. The Landowner will be named in the State's general liability policy for the public's use of all Designated Snowmobile Trails; and
12. Any new proposals from organizations for new facilities or improvements must also meet the requirements of the General Policy for Public Use. In addition, such a proposal must describe:
 - a. The balance of responsibilities between DNCR and local snowmobile clubs; and
 - b. The equality of grooming and maintenance responsibility among any cooperating clubs.

Bicycling on Designated Roads: Bicycle use is only allowed on Designated Roads under the Easement (5.A.iv.b) and continues to be a dispersed use on the roads. Bicycles can be used on Designated Roads unless posted closed to bicycles and all wheeled vehicles.

Policies

1. Bicyclists are encouraged to check safety conditions before they head for the Forest and to choose routes with low traffic and away from forest management operations.
2. Bicycles may be use on Designated Roads when closed to motorized vehicle use except if there is a public safety hazard or road conditions do not support bicycle use.
3. Class 1, 2 and 3 electric bicycles are permitted on the Designated Roads.
4. "Fat Tire" bicycle use is not permitted on non-motorized trails since they are only permitted on designated roads per the easement.

ATV Riding on Designated Roads: The ATV trail connector from the XYZ trail system to Perry Stream Land and Timber system has been in place since 2003. During this plan update the club proposed several loops through the property and a connection to the businesses located by the First Connecticut Lake. The landowner is not supportive of additional ATV use on the roads but would support connection with the First Connecticut Lake businesses if a route permission can be acquired.

Policies

1. The Cedar Stream and Hall Stream designated ATV trails will continue to be permitted (see Map X).
2. If closure of an existing trail becomes necessary, the landowner has committed to work with state agencies and club to establish a temporary alternative route.

Equestrian Use: The Grant of Conservation Easement specifically allows the Landowner to exercise its fee right to "engage in and permit its employees and invitees to conduct non-commercial natural resource-based outdoor recreational activities, including, but not limited to,

camping, hunting, fishing, trapping, hiking, nature study, bird watching, walking, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, snowmobiling and *horseback riding* (Easement section 3A.)” The document is silent, however, on public equestrian activity. Furthermore, the Easement does not limit any such use to Designated Roads.

In 2013 the Division convened a group of local individuals to build a volunteer organization and a pilot equestrian trail plan was developed. Two trail systems were identified, and temporary landowner permission secured. With limited manpower and no funding, the pilot was discontinued. The 2017 amendment did not bring any alternatives or action items to accommodate equestrian use.

During the planning period for the current plan, the NH Horse Council submitted comments and provided alternatives for consideration to allow horse use on the roads with few limitations.

The NH Horse Council was invited to a meeting with the recreation subcommittee to discuss the equestrian community needs.

Policies

1. The Division, in response to the formation of an equestrian club or friends group will work with the group to establish riding areas, on trails or roads and present to the Landowner for concurrence.

Boating and Paddling: People use motorboats and paddle canoes and kayaks on the Connecticut Lakes and River. The Forest, however, has little water frontage except on small ponds. It has been customary for members of the public to store their small boats on many of the ponds.

Policies

1. Boats left more than 24 hours on the property must be registered with the Landowner.
2. The Division will work in cooperation with the Landowner to remove boats left without permission and derelict boats.

Hunting, Fishing and Trapping: These sporting activities continue to be dominant uses on the property and are managed by the New Hampshire Fish and Game Department.

While hunting use relative to certain habitats and associated game species occurs throughout the Forest, it is recognized that on-going forest management does impact the productivity of locations over time. Areas receiving heavier hunting pressure today may change as young forests mature and are harvested.

It is also important to recognize that native brook trout populations occur on some of the streams and their tributaries on the west and southwestern portion of the Forest. For the most part, these streams are more remote and take a bigger effort to access than the more popular and higher use streams such as the Connecticut River, and Indian and Perry Streams. The remote character of these streams is important to their experiential values and should be maintained.

Policies

1. Continue current cooperation and coordination with NHFG for fishing, hunting, and trapping activities per the General Public Use Policy.

Public Information and Education:

The Division of Parks and Recreation maintains a webpage with information about the public use and recreational features of the property and gate status for the state-owned roads. Kiosks on the property are maintained by staff. Information on the kiosks include a property map, rules signs and other information. The major roads are signed with the road name and mile markers. The are designated landing zones for medical response.

Conflict Resolution: The management of any property is a balance between uses. Open communication between the Landowner and Easement Holder is the most important tool to avoiding conflict. The Division has the added responsibility of negotiating conflict issues between the recreational users. Issues that cannot be resolved between the DNCR and the Landowner and between recreational users shall be referred to the Connecticut Lakes Headwaters Citizen Committee per RSA 12-A:9-b.V-d to provide advice on the management plan required by the Easement.

Policies

1. Avoid conflicts with enjoyment of the primary uses allowed on the property, especially those which depend upon a quiet and peaceful setting for a more solitary experience.
2. Maintain or enhance the separation of uses, especially motorized and non-motorized uses, which may conflict with one another.
3. Avoid conflicts with management of Connecticut Lakes Natural Areas managed by the NH Fish and Game Department.
4. Avoid conflicts with forest management activities.
5. Coordination of road management must be closely tied to recreation planning to help avoid conflicts among uses and enhance the user experience.
6. Manage the road system and uses on roads to minimize conflicts between uses, especially motorized and non-motorized, and between logging operations and recreation use.

Waste Management: Division staff collects trash on their normal rounds and disposes of it in a dumpster at Lake Francis State Park.

Policies

1. The property has signs directing the public to carry-out their waste.

Monitoring Plan:

The Easement (section 5.B.i.c.10) requires a summary of the results of monitoring, specifically in Special Management Areas and other such fragile places, to ensure their protection during implementation of the Recreation Plan.

The responsibility for monitoring the terms of the Easement is shared between the Division of Forests and Lands and the Fish and Game Department. Monitoring activities are financially supported through the Monitoring Endowment and reported in the annual Endowment Report per RSA 216:8,9 and 11.

The Division's Great North Woods Regional Supervisor informally monitors recreation impacts and responded to Landowner concerns. Monitoring recreational use and facility maintenance or enhancement needs has been addressed through on-going site inspections and observations by Division staff and a significant ongoing presence of NHF&G personnel. No formal process is in place. Administrative and facility physical needs are addressed as the Division has the ability to do so. User safety and emergency repairs are given first priority.

Budgets, Endowments and Landowner Contribution:

Three endowments were established when the State acquired the easement for the headwater's property; Stewardship, Monitoring and Roads to assist in funding the management responsibilities outlined in the Easement and management plans.

Each endowment has a specific purpose. The Endowments are apportioned between DNCR and NHFG by a Memorandum of Agreement. The Division of Parks and Recreation subsidizes the cost of staff that supports the property including, trails and parks bureau staff in addition to administrative support by the division and commissioner's offices.

The Stewardship Endowment purpose is for habitat and public use management of 25,000 acres of natural areas owned by the State, and for the purposes of recreation use, and the conservation easement management of 146,400 acres within the Connecticut Lake Headwaters Tract. In the 2017 plan update, the stewardship endowment was also used to support road maintenance and management as long as the work directly benefitted public access and was not used to support forest management and timber harvesting.

The Monitoring Endowment was established to ensure that the tract will be managed according to the legal agreements embodied within the conservation easement, which is recorded in its entirety in the Coos county registry of deeds. The NHFGD and DNCR use this funding to manage the Connecticut Lakes Natural Areas, monitor timber harvests and other forest management activities and the special management areas.

The Road Endowment was established to support road maintenance managed by the state agencies. The state owns over 269 miles of roads on the Connecticut Lakes Natural Area and Connecticut Lakes Headwaters property. The roads while providing easy access to recreational sites remains the largest operational responsibility and expense for the Division.

Landowner Contribution

Section 5.E of the Conservation Easement requires the Fee Owner and the Easement Holder to enter into a Road Management Agreement with respect to the maintenance and management of certain roads on the Property subject to the Conservation Easement. This agreement was last updated in 2014 and expired in 2017. The Road Agreement is the document that outlines

maintenance standards and the landowner’s annual contribution to the State’s expenses of maintaining the roads by paying a “Base Amount” and a “Usage Fee”, a negotiated per cord fee for timber removed from the Property. These fees are deposited into “Dedicated Maintenance” and “Dedicated Capital” accounts as described in the Road Management Agreement between DNCR and the Landowner.

Implementation Plan – Describe in a table the improvements, including what roads will use the stewardship funds and a map if needed.

~ END~