

# THE COHOS TRAIL ASSOCIATION

Post Office Box 82, Lancaster, NH 03584

## THE CONNECTICUT LAKES HEADWATERS WORKING FOREST FIVE-YEAR PLAN

Below are a series of new bypass trail initiatives designed to permit the 170-mile Cohos Trail to establish a more permanent route from Dixville to the Canadian border, a route that moves the trail off all all Ride The Wilds ATV lanes and all tertiary roads, provides pathways for nonmotorized recreation activity, possibly including equestrian riding where feasible or desirable, and opens footways to North Country geological features that are not readily reached by anyone now. It is the Cohos Trail Association's hope that the majority of these ideas may be incorporated into the upcoming Connecticut Lakes Headwaters Working Forest five-year plan.

All proposed routes within this document will be GPSed in 2016 so that accurate coordinates are available for administrative, planning, and on-the-ground work in the future. The maps provided with this document are approximations of where the individual bypass trails would be developed.

### 1. COLEMAN STATE PARK NORTH TO THE EASTERN SHORE OF LAKE FRANCIS

Easement and Landowners: CLHWF and Lyme Timber Corp.

Map: See Attachment #1

**ABSTRACT:** This trail project calls for the development of a foot path/equestrian trail from Coleman State Park northward over nearly seven miles of largely elevated terrain to Cedar Stream Road and the access lane and bridges into the Lake Francis Trail at the southeastern-most inlets of Lake Francis. The route would include new pathway over the northernmost hill of Dead Water Ridge, much of the terrain on Whipple Ridge, upland between the ridge and Carr Pond, and two low hills just south of Cedar Stream Road. The new trail would then cross directly over

Cedar Stream Road and drop immediately down to the access lane and bridges at the inlets to Lake Francis.

The Cohos Trail Association deems this trail concept as the most critical of all potential projects that could be developed in the region from Stewartstown to the Canadian border. Because nearly 15 miles of the original route of the Cohos Trail in this region is now utilized by ATV traffic, the association deems it essential for safety and potential conflict reasons to get off motorized corridors and open a new foot trail in forested terrain. This proposal also calls for the possibility of the trail to be trimmed tall enough and wide enough to accommodate riders on horseback. This trail would be open to any and all nonmotorized recreational activity.

## 2. DEER MOUNTAIN SUMMIT TO FOURTH CONNECTICUT LAKE OPTIONS

Easement and Landowners: CLHWF, Lyme Timber Corp., NH Fish & Game,

The Nature Conservancy

Map: See attachment #2

ABSTRACT: This concept has two parts. One or the other option could be taken into consideration, or both could be developed if the various parties agree to do so.

### Option #1: Deer Mountain Loop Trail

This option calls for creating a new pathway from the summit of Deer Mountain where the firetower superstructure still stands down the east-northeast flank of the mountain about a quarter mile to a junction with the terminus of an old logging skidway and tote lane. The skidway would be brushed out and improved so that the whole of it down into the valley could be followed easily. Coupled with the quarter mile cut at the top of the peak, this would create the northern segment of a loop trail.

The loop would be created by joining this option and the Sophie's Lane road in the valley to the recently reopened Deer Mountain Firetower Trail on the southeastern flank of the mountain. Such a loop trail would likely be a considerable benefit to the state's Deer Mountain Campground nearby.

## Option #2: Through Trail to Fourth Connecticut Lake

This option calls for the construction of an all new trail from the Deer Mountain Firetower Trail terminus at the summit of the mountain where the firetower superstructure still stands all the way to the Nature Conservancy loop path that circles Fourth Connecticut Lake.

The route of this trail – a distance of approximately four miles -- would stay largely on the height of land between Deer Mountain summit and the boundary lake. It would pass Wright Pond, two of the three Perry Ponds, and eventually ascend to Fourth Connecticut Lake.

The purpose of this trail would be to stay out of the Connecticut River valley altogether and off Sophie's Lane over its entire length. Coupled with the Deer Mountain Firetower Trail and the Fourth Connecticut Lake Trail, this would make a long pathway in interesting boreal and mixed hardwood terrain, a trail that is readily accessed from Deer Mountain Campground or from the vicinity of the Port of Entry station at the Canadian border.

## 3. CARR RIDGE ROAD BRIDGE AND CONNECTICUT RIVER SOUTH TO LAKE FRANCIS STATE CAMPGROUND

Easement and Landowners: TransCanada, the Society for the Protection of NH Forests, and the State of New Hampshire

Map: See attachment #3

**ABSTRACT:** This is by far the shortest trail concept and much of it is already in place. There is a commonly used angler trail that runs north out of Lake Francis Campground and parallels the Connecticut River's western riverbank for almost but not quite the entire length up to Carr Ridge Road. This trail concept calls for simply extending the angler trail a short distance along the river so that the trail reaches a junction with the Carr Ridge Road. This is such a short pathway and runs on essentially level terrain that creating the new path would take little more than a short day of volunteer crew work.

The purpose of this new trail along the river would be to take hikers off the River Road altogether as they make their way south to Lake Francis Campground so they may camp for the night. This would, of course, eliminate the road walk and allow hikers and fishermen to move close to the river. It would greatly improve the hiking experience in the area.

#### 4. DEER MT. CAMPGROUND BRIDGE BELOW MOOSE FLOWAGE DAM AND SHORT ACCESS TRAIL TO THE RECENTLY REOPENED DEER MT. FIRETOWER TRAIL

Easement and Landowners: State of NH, CLHWF, Lyme Timber Corp.

Map: See attachment #4

Photographs: Nepalese Bridge. Love Bridge

**ABSTRACT:** This option calls for developing a new foot bridge and a quarter mile link trail out of the Deer Mt. Campground to the Deer Mountain Firetower Trail trailhead lane. The purpose of this concept is to bring the Cohos Trail route directly into Deer Mountain Campground and then allow hikers to pass directly out of the campground to the north to reach trails on Deer Mountain. This direct access would improve nonmotorized recreational experience in the area.

The main feature of this concept would be the creation of a small covered pedestrian bridge below the Moose Flowage dam at campground site #28. This bridge would be designed and built by the Cohos Trail Association with assistance from the State of New Hampshire. It could either be a simple Nepalese-style open-sided covered bridge (see photograph) or a close-sided covered bridge in the style of the small, charming, and pedestrian-only covered bridge on the Mohawk River on the property of Dana Bartlett (see photograph) in East Colebrook.

The purpose of this bridge would be to route hikers in and out of the campground across the Connecticut River, instead of the current situation whereby hikers have to swing away from the campground on Sophie's Lane to reach the trail on Deer Mt. or farther north. This would eliminate that road walk altogether.

The bridge would likely be an attraction for campers at the campground. If the structure was sided, it would provide something of an observation blind for viewing wildlife on Moose Flowage marsh.

## RELATED TRAIL INITIATIVE

The following information and project below does not directly impact the Connecticut Lakes Headwaters Working Forest lands and easements, but borders the CLHWF lands and would substantially impact the overall nonmotorized recreating experience in the entire region. Because of that fact, it is included here.

### 5. KELSEY NOTCH REGION TO WILDERNESS SKI AREA SUMMIT

Landowners: The Nash Stream Forest (State of NH), Wagner Forest Management, SPNHF, Balsams View LLC, Dixville Capital LLC, Town of Columbia

Map: See attachment #5

**ABSTRACT:** This existing-ways bypass is intended to remedy problems that have arisen on the Cohos Trail route due to the advent of the Ride The Wilds ATV system and the widening of the old Dixville Peak service road for the purpose of the construction and maintenance of the Brookfield Energy wind turbines that now are in place on the mountain. The Kelsey Notch Road and the Dixville Peak service lane are both now ATV routes.

The Cohos Trail Association would like to move off these ATV corridors and run new bypass trail northward from the existing Kelsey Notch Trail along the Nash Stream Forest/Columbia township boundary to and directly across the Kelsey Notch Road. From there the new bypass would rise gradually over two low summits on the southwest arm of Dixville Peak into SPNHF easement lands, then reach the existing Dixville Bypass path on the Cohos Trail. This Dixville Bypass would be elongated about two-fifths of a mile so that it would stay off the service road on the north side of the mountain and directly reach the old pathway into the Wilderness Ski Area that the Cohos Trail utilizes now.

## CONCLUSION

Interest in the Cohos Trail is growing rapidly now that it is a decade and a half old and is garnering a good deal of media attention. But the trail needs to be improved in the Stewartstown, Clarksville and Pittsburg areas if it is to generate the sort of hiking traffic that the trail does now

to the south, in the Dixville Notch country, in Nash Stream Forest, in the Kilkenny (WMNF), and in Pondicherry Wildlife Refuge.

The new trail bypass ideas listed above and the pedestrian bridge concept at Deer Mountain Campground represent a sincere effort to make the Cohos Trail a truly dynamic foot path that will attract more and more nonmotorized recreators to the region and will, perhaps, prompt residents and outdoor groups in the region to create even more hiking opportunities in the far northern regions of Coos County.

With the White Mountains becoming increasingly crowded (2 million hiker visits per year), there are those who are seeking new terrain to hike in. The Cohos Trail takes full advantage of those individuals who are seeking a new experience. To provide the best hiking opportunities possible, the trail needs to be completely separate from Ride The Wilds ATV traffic, provide some potential for other forms of nonmotorized recreation, and reach new and interesting terrain that will improve the overall hiking experience and stimulate interest in the entire Cohos Trail system in the region.

The Cohos Trail Association is one of the most active trail groups in New Hampshire, according to New Hampshire Trails Bureau volunteer-hour data. Within just a few years, the club could make a reality of any or all of the ideas listed above. We humbly ask that these ideas be incorporated into the CLHWF 5-Year Plan so that we may be in a position to move forward should permission to do so be granted.

Thank you.

ATTACHMENTS:

Five maps

Two photographs

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# MAP 1

PROPOSED  
NEW HIKING  
TRAIL FROM  
COLEMAN STATE  
PARK TO  
LAKE FRANCIS  
INLETS

DIA  
US

STREAM  
ROAD

NEW  
TRAIL

CARR  
POND

WHIPPLE  
RIDGE  
TERRAIN

NEW  
TRAIL

Deadwater

WHIPPLE  
RIDGE  
TERRAIN

NEW TRAIL  
OPTION 1

NEW TRAIL  
OPTION 2

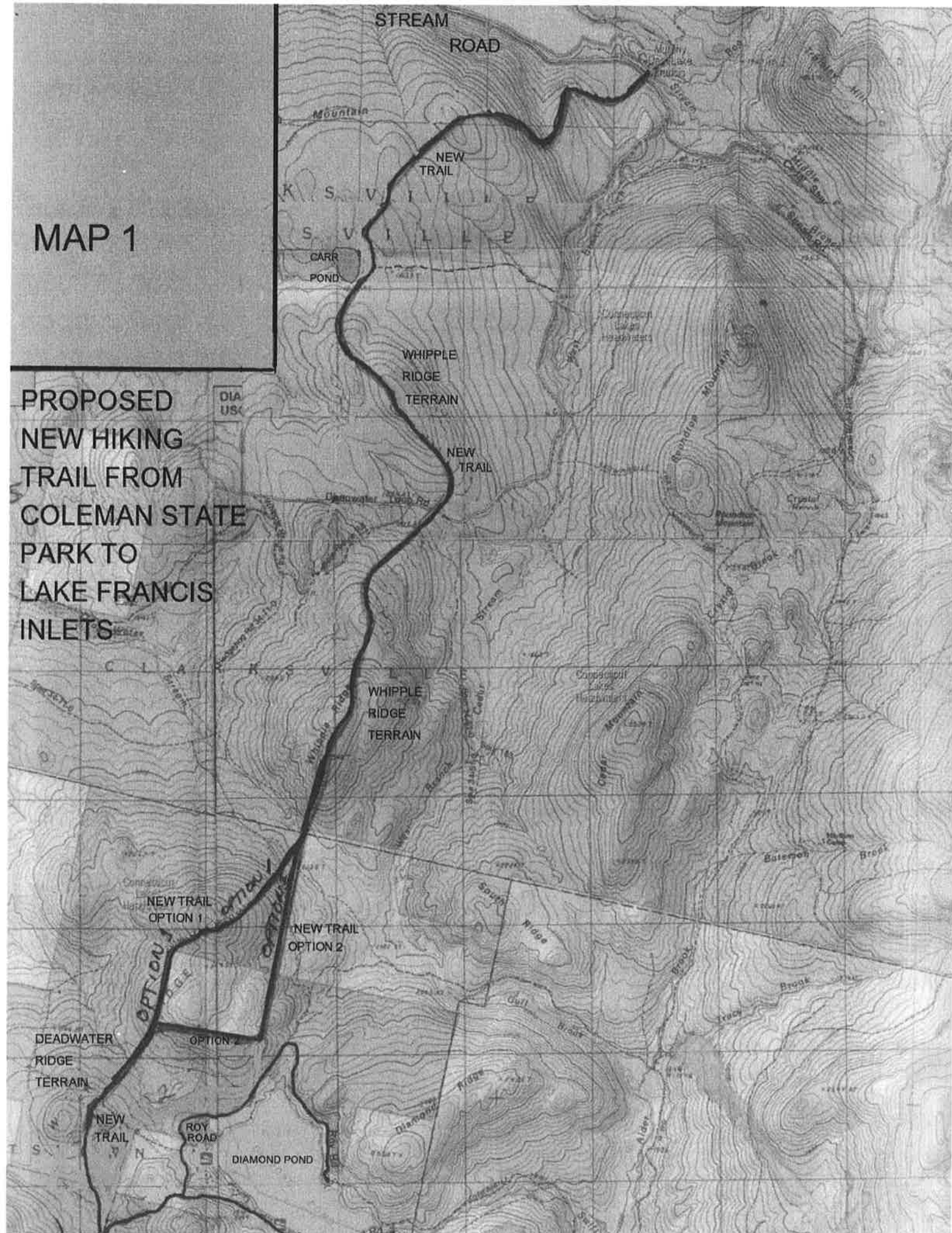
DEADWATER  
RIDGE  
TERRAIN

NEW  
TRAIL

ROY  
ROAD

DIAMOND POND

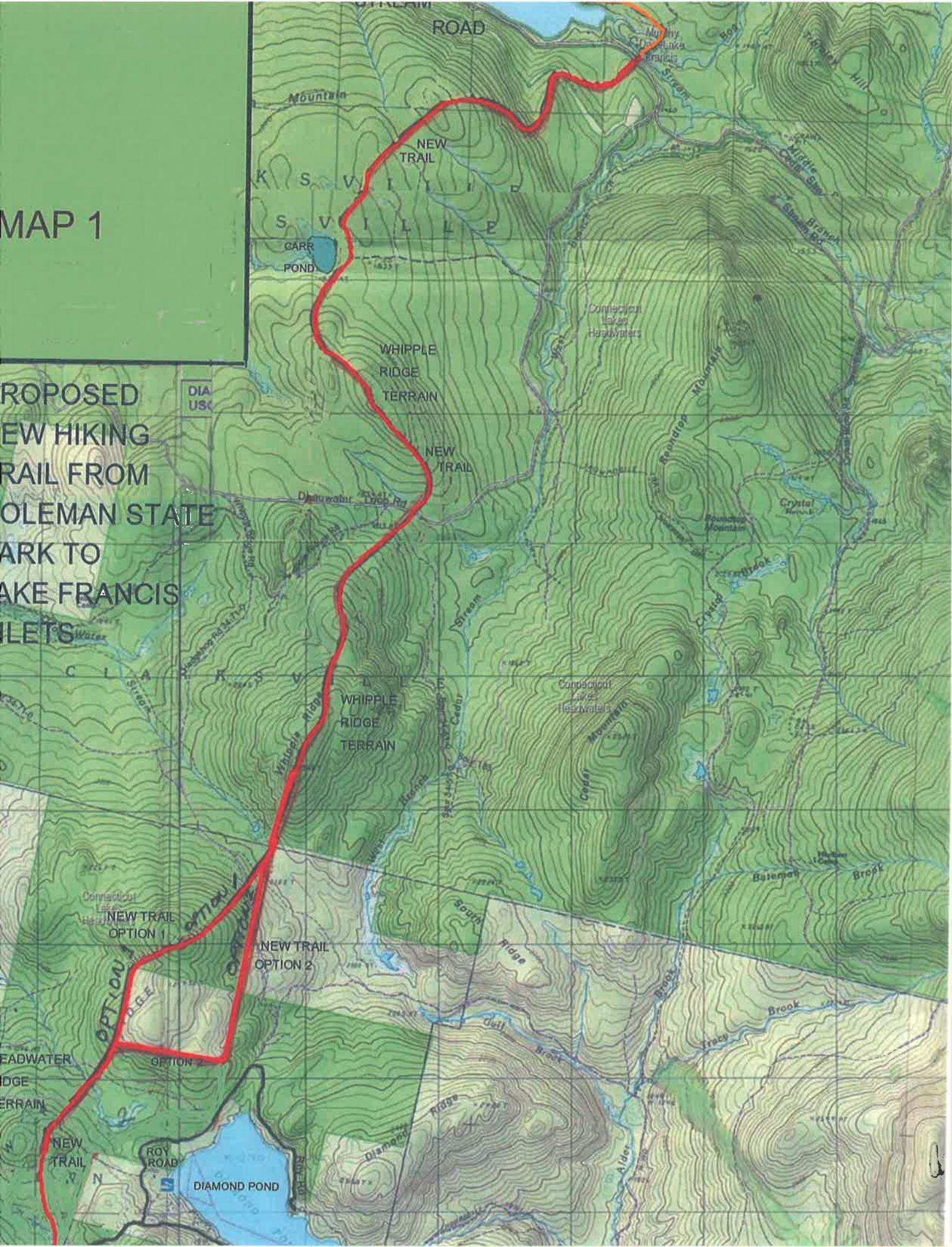
DIAMOND





# MAP 1

PROPOSED  
NEW HIKING  
TRAIL FROM  
COLEMAN STATE  
PARK TO  
LAKE FRANCIS  
TRAIL





71°15'30"W 71°15'0"W 71°14'30"W 71°14'0"W 71°13'30"W 71°13'0"W 71°12'30"W 71°12'0"W  
323000 324000 325000 326000 327000

**SECOND CONNECTICUT LAKE**  
**USGS 7.5' Quad- Tile: 006NW**

# MAP 2

PROPOSED  
FOOT TRAIL  
FROM DEER  
MOUNTAIN  
FIRETOWER  
TO FOURTH  
CONNECTICUT  
LAKE TRAIL

AND

PROPOSED  
TRAIL TO  
CREATE A  
LOOP TRAIL  
SYSTEM FROM  
THE TOWER TO  
TWO SEPARATE  
TRAILHEADS  
ON THE VALLEY  
FLOOR ALONG  
SOPHIE'S LANE

FOURTH CONNECTICUT LAKE  
STATE PRESERVE

Existing  
Trail (orange)

Proposed  
New Trail  
(red)

Proposed  
New Trail  
(red)

SOPHIE'S  
LANE

Deer Mt.  
Firetower

Existing  
Trail  
(orange)

Proposed  
Loop Trail

(dotted line  
is new trail)

(solid red is  
logging track)

Connecticut  
Lakes  
Headwaters

Perry Ponds

Perry Loop

Connecticut  
Lakes  
Natural Area

Stream

CONNECTICUT LAKES  
STATE FOREST

Connecticut  
Lakes  
Forest

3

CONNECTICUT LAKES  
STATE FOREST

# MAP 3

CARR RIDGE ROAD

bridge

SNOWMO  
RIVER  
ROAD

PROPOSED  
ROUTE  
USING  
ANGLER  
PATH AND  
FORMER  
LOGGING  
LANE

EXISTING  
ROUTE  
OF THE  
COHOS  
TRAIL  
(ORANGE)

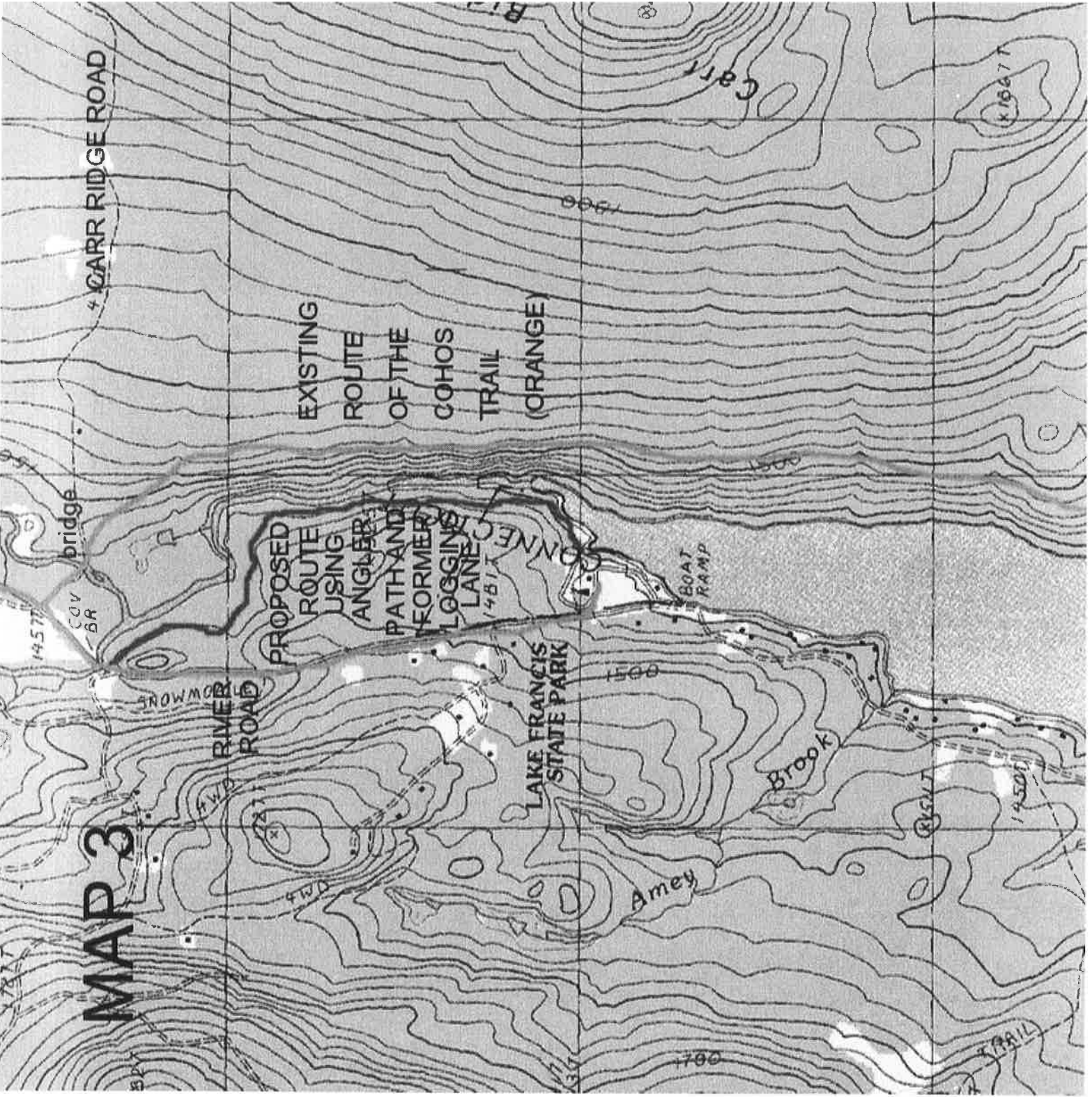
LAKE FRANCIS  
STATE PARK

Amey

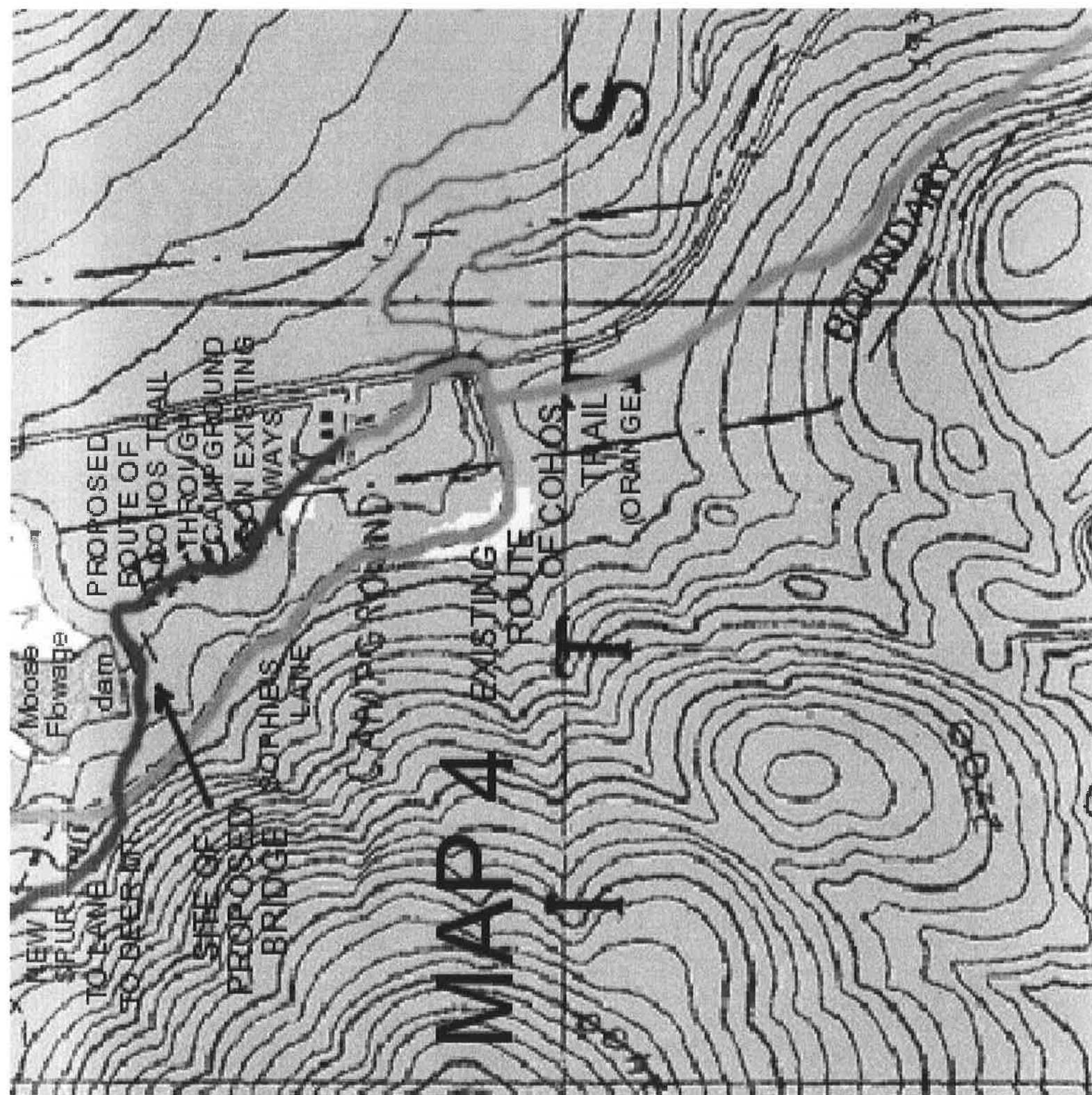
Brook

BOAT  
RAMP

TRAIL







# MAP 5

A topographic map of a mountainous area, likely in the Colorado Rockies, showing contour lines and a proposed trail route. The map is oriented with North at the top. A trail route is marked with a line, starting from the bottom left and heading towards the top right. The text is overlaid on the map, describing the proposed trail.

PROPOSED  
KELSEY NOTCH  
TRAIL FROM  
EXISTING  
COHOS TRAIL  
ROUTE TO  
THE OLD  
SERVICE LANE  
TO WILDERNESS  
SKI AREA.

Data from NH GRANIT as of September 2014.  
NH GRANIT and cooperating agencies make no claim  
to validity or reliability or to any implied uses of these data.  
Topographic base: © 2013 National Geographic Society

# COHOS TRAIL REROUTE CONCEPT

