Department of Environmental Conservation

Division of Lands and Forests

Hunter Mountain Wild Forest

Unit Management Plan

November 1995

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation

GEORGE E. PATAKI, *Governor* MICHAEL D. ZAGATA, *Commissioner*

HUNTER MOUNTAIN WILD FOREST

UNIT MANAGEMENT PLAN

NYS DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION
DIVISION OF LANDS AND FORESTS
NOVEMBER 1995

STATE OF NEW YORK
DEPARTMENT OF
ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION
ALBANY, NEW YORK 12233-1010

MICHAEL D. ZAGATA
COMMISSIONER

SEP 26 1995

TO: The Record

FROM: Michael D. Zagata

RE: Unit Management Plan (UMP)
Hunter Mountain Wild Forest

A UMP for the Hunter Mountain Wild Forest has been completed. The UMP is consistent with the guidelines and criteria of the Catskill Park State Land Master Plan, the State Constitution, Environmental Conservation Law, and Department rules, regulations and policies. The UMP includes management objectives for a five year period and is hereby approved and adopted.

Commissioner Zagata

The following Department employees were contributors to the Hunter Mountain Unit Management Plan:

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PREFACE

An editorial appearing in The Catskill Mountain Eagle a while back concluded that tourism would be the major source of jobs for this region in the future. It argued that an abundance of pristine forestland, mountain lakes and streams will attract people from crowded cities to recreate in numerous outdoor activities. This certainly is a plausible argument and one embraced by the Hunter Mountain Unit Management Team as we prepared the Hunter Mountain Unit Management Plan. We recognized the growing popularity of the Catskills and particularly the Hunter Mountain Area and are aware of the ever increasing demand for diverse recreational opportunities. We also recognize that careful planning is essential to providing recreational opportunities consistent with the pristine quality of land, water and wildlife of the Catskills. Hence, it is within these parameters that our Unit Management Team has written its five year management plan.

The following plan provides information relative to existing natural and man-made resources, a historical perspective of the area, constraints and issues affecting the Unit, goals and objectives for future management, and a schedule of projects to fulfill these goals and objectives.

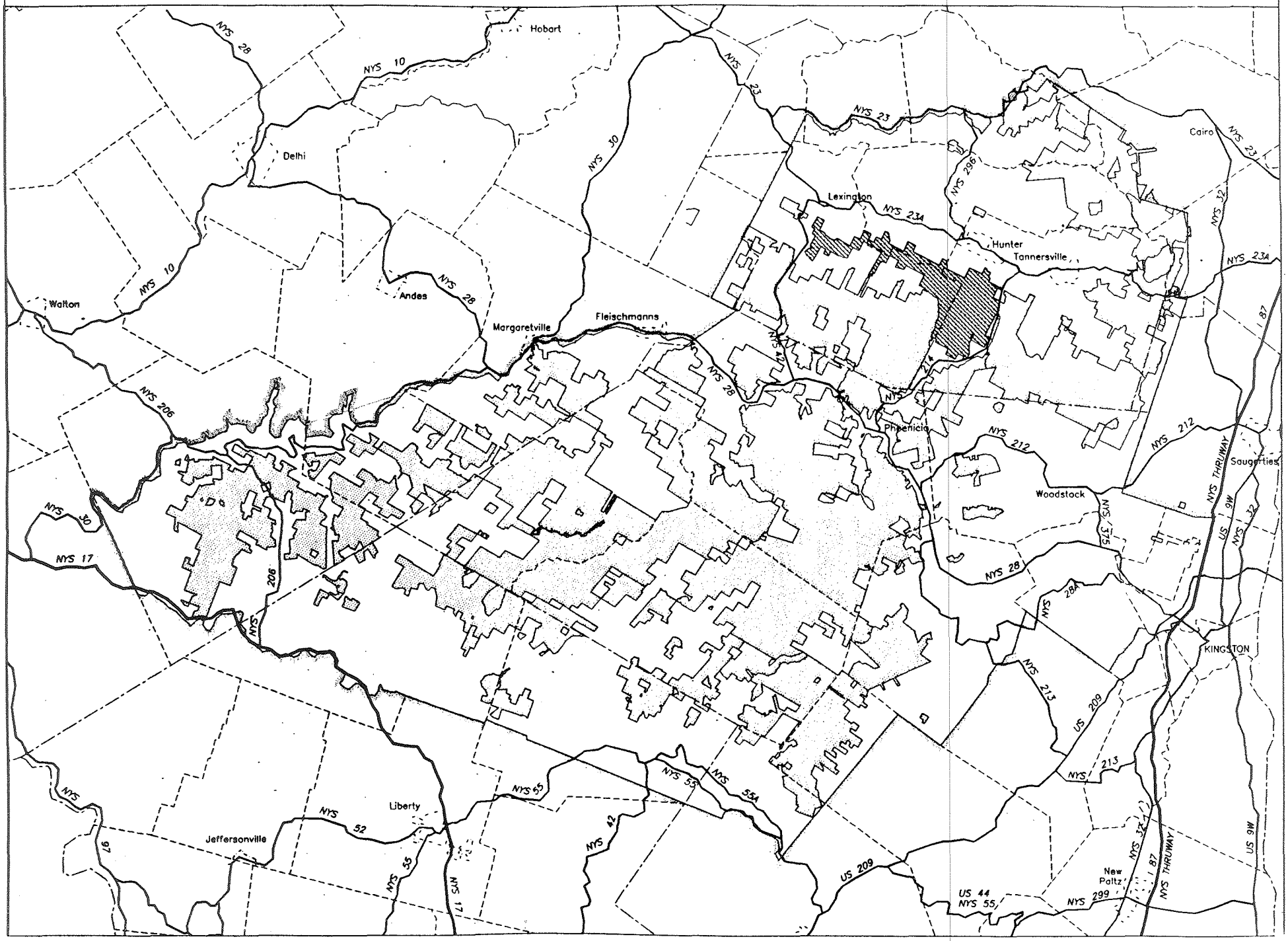
The plan represents management objectives and not a work plan of commitments. Actual accomplishments are contingent on sufficient staff and funds to carry them out. The goals and needs presented in this Unit Management Plan improves the chances that some funding will be provided.

The Hunter Mountain Unit Management Plan is a combined effort of the Unit Management Team and the public. We appreciate the interest and support for the plan and pledge to continue a working relationship with interested parties in carrying out management objectives over the life of the plan and in the plan's revisions when deemed necessary.

The plan is in keeping with the basic guidelines for Wild Forest Classification set forth in the Catskill Park State Land Master Plan and the Forest Preserve Unit Management Planning Policy and Procedure Handbook.

Location of Hunter Mountain Wild Forest

2-25-94



I. *INTRODUCTION*

A. *Area Description*

1. Location

Hunter Mountain Wild Forest is a designated management unit in the northeast portion of the Catskill Park, partly in the Towns of Hunter (5,648 ac.), Jewett (935 ac.) and Lexington (4,265 ac.), Greene County, New York. The unit is one large parcel which extends westerly from NYS Route 214 to the hamlets of Westkill and Lexington, a distance approaching 7 miles. These lands are within the Hardenburgh Patent, being parts of Great Lots 21-24.

The Unit is generally bounded in the North by private lands, several of which border the Schoharie Creek and Rte. 23 and on the South by private lands several of which extend to the Spruceton Road and the Westkill Creek. Although public roads generally ring the unit, access to State land is limited because private land separates State land from the roads over much of the unit. Three other Unit Management Areas generally bound the Hunter Mountain Wild Forest. They include the Indian Head-Plateau Mt. Wilderness Area to the East, the Westkill Wilderness Area to the South and the Halcott Mt. Wild Forest to the West.

2. Access

Access to Hunter Mountain Wild Forest is limited to the eastern portion of the Unit, namely Hunter Mountain. There are several points of access to Hunter Mountain from Route 214 and the eastern terminus of the Spruceton Road but there is virtually no developed public access to the unit along the north and west boundaries of Hunter Mountain over a distance of five to six miles.

Principal access points include:

NYS Rt. 214.

1. A former camp located approximately one and one-half miles south of the Village of Hunter acquired by the Department in the 70's provides public parking and access to the Becker Hollow Trail leading to the summit of Hunter Mountain.

2. The Devil's Tombstone Campground and Day-Use area located about three miles south of Hunter Village provides parking (day-use fee charged) and public access to the unit over a portion of the Devil's Path Trail.

3. Approximately four miles farther South along Route 214 in the Hamlet of Lanesville, the Diamond Notch Road leads to the unit from its intersection with Route 214 about a mile and one half to a state parking area and the southerly terminus of the Diamond Notch Trail leading to the summit of Hunter Mountain.

Spruceton Road

The eastern terminus of the Spruceton Road has two developed access points.

1. The Spruceton Trail, a former jeep trail used to access the fire tower, is the most popular point of access to the unit. The trail is probably the least severe in terms of hiking and has a large parking area at the trailhead.

2. Continuing eastward a bit farther to the end of the Spruceton Road, is another parking area and the Northern Terminus of the Diamond Notch Trail, also a popular access point for hikers and wilderness campers. There is also a parking area near the trailhead.

3. About halfway through the Spruceton Valley there is a finger of state land extending from Evergreen Mountain to the Spruceton Road. However, the Westkill stream interrupts access to State land across this finger thereby requiring a stream crossing to reach the main area of the unit. While access is legal, few hikers access the unit from this point because of the stream and lack of developed parking and trail.

Route 23A

On the outskirts of the Village of Hunter, there is an access point to Hunter Mountain from Deming Road, a dead-end town road which intersects with Route 23A. Unfortunately, this access is in the form of an easement for administrative purposes (DEC use) and not open to the public. This access, known as the Taylor Hollow Road, was used as a jeep trail when Hunter Mountain fire tower was manned.

The last point of access to the mountain is over the Colonel's Chair Trail. The trail begins on land belonging to Hunter Mountain Ski Center and continues to State land where it intersects the Spruceton Trail. The trail is open to all who will pay the price of a chair lift ride to the trailhead at the Colonel's Chair.

These trails are used primarily to access the Summit of Hunter Mountain, although the Devil's Path continues outside the Unit. None of the trails, however, extend west of Hunter Mountain. As a result, most recreational activity is confined to Hunter Mountain. The area west of Hunter Mountain receives very limited traffic as it is trailless and access is poor. Any plan for future trail development depends upon DEC's ability to secure points of access west of Hunter Mountain.

3. Size

The Hunter Mountain Wild Forest is comprised of a single, elongated, irregularly-shaped parcel of land containing 10,850+ acres. As previously mentioned, the unit lies within three towns (5,648 ac. Hunter, 935 ac. Jewett, and 4,265 ac. Lexington) in Greene County.

4. Topography

Generally, the unit can be characterized as mountainous. It is made up of the peaks of six named mountains east to west including Hunter Mountain at 4,040 feet, Southwest Hunter at 3,740 feet, Rusk Mountain at 3,680 feet, Evergreen Mountain at 3,360 feet, Pine Island Mountain at 3,140 feet and Packsaddle Mountain at 3,100 feet. The peaks form an east-west ridge from the Devil's Tombstone Campground along Route 214 to the Hamlets of Lexington and Spruceton along Route 42, a distance of approximately seven miles. The area is rugged with the western portion of the area considered remote because of its lack of access and developed trail system. There are several year round and seasonal streams which either flow to the Schoharie to the North or the Westkill to the South.

B. History

Introduction - The following section is not intended as a comprehensive history of the communities in which this unit of Forest Preserve lies. The intent here is to relate a history of lands in and around the unit along with events which directly impacted these lands and natural resources. Sometimes the whole Catskill Mountain Region had to be included in the text to illustrate the relationship of the event at the local level.

The terrain of the mountains presented a physical barrier to the native American. There's no doubt that the mountain areas were at times used for hunting and trapping and that the valleys were used as passages through the mountains for thousands of years. But it was in the lowlands of the Hudson, Mohawk, Catskill, Esopus and lower Schoharie Valleys where populations of native Americans left a more significant impression of their societies.

It was also a physical barrier to the European settlers of the Hudson River Valley and the valleys of the Schoharie, Esopus and Catskill Creeks. The majority of the land was not tillable and was inhabited by wild animals. Besides, in 1708, a handful of wealthy English subjects received title to an empire of 1.5 million acres in the Catskills called the Hardenburgh Patent, and made themselves and their heirs landlords for the next two hundred years; the farmer could neither settle nor purchase any lands in the area but instead had to lease it from a landlord.

There were few settlers before 1800 in the vicinity of the mountaintop. Squatters did quietly settle some land earlier than that but little is known of them; some were reportedly Tory "cowboys" from Putnam County whose property was confiscated by the Whigs before the War of Independence (1775-83). (J. VanVechten Vedder, History of Greene County Vol. 1, 1651-1800, Hope Farm Press, Cornwallville, NY 1985.)

At the end of the French and Indian War in 1759, the fringes of the Hunter-Lexington area in the valleys of the Esopus and Schoharie were settled. But it was after the War of Independence when veterans began moving west to land grants. Some of them moved into the Catskills as land was either too expensive or not available in the valleys.

In Lexington, John Maben settled on the Lexington flats in 1777 on a lease given him by Robert Livingston; Jerome VanValkenburgh settled in the Westkill Valley in 1780. A few years later, many Yankees from Connecticut, Massachusetts and Columbia and Dutchess Counties of New York State settled the area, especially areas of Lexington, Jewett, Ashland, Windham and Prattsville in the northern Catskills; one only has to look at the architecture of the older buildings in these communities to discover the New England influence. In fact, New Goshen was the name of what is now the Town of Lexington and was named after the Connecticut town. Silas Fowler, originally from Massachusetts and a veteran of the battle of Lexington there, was instrumental in having the town renamed Lexington (Vedder). Farmers began settling Greenland, later renamed Hunter, in the late 1700's also. Settlers moved up from the Hudson and the Esopus and many moved up the Schoharie from the Mohawk to Prattsville, Lexington, Jewett and Hunter. In 1814, Greenland was renamed Hunter reportedly after John Hunter, a wealthy landlord from the New York City area who leased to many of the new settlers (Vedder).

At first, very little of the land which is now Forest Preserve in this Wild Forest Unit was ever cleared and farmed; but later, as forest was cleared for other reasons, farms expanded their livestock herds and pastured much of the gentle and moderate slopes on the mountains. It was the "other reasons"--economic enterprises--that made the greatest impact on the dense virgin forests of the area.

Of course, there was early lumbering but this was selective and concentrated in the valleys where timber was more accessible and where transportation was available. Small, family-oriented mills predominated in conjunction with land clearing and sporadic farm and community building. Lack of accessibility, good transportation, and convenient markets deferred the cutting of timber in the deeper mountain areas.

Tanning was the first extensive human disturbance in the mountain area. In the leather tanning process, hemlock trees were cut down and the bark of the trees peeled; the bark was then used to tan the leather hides. Tanneries sprang up in the Catskill Mountains, seemingly overnight. It was easier to transport the heavy hides to the hemlock source rather than ship the very bulky bark to the leather source. Tanneries existed in the Catskills from about 1800 until about 1880, but the major manufacturing period was 1810 to the late 1830's. It lasted in the area until the hemlock ran out. The Mexican War (1846-48) and the American Civil War (1861-65) kept a few of the declining mills in business, but the tanneries disappeared in the 1880's.

Locally, there were many tanneries. Local historians have recorded quite a few tanneries but it is doubtful if all of them were listed and recognized; records for the upper Schoharie drainage, south of Prattsville, list 20 tanneries. (Michael Kudish, Vegetational History of the Catskill High Peaks, State Univ. Coll. of Forestry at Syracuse University, PhD Thesis, 1971).

The Village of Tannersville was appropriately named. The Village of Hunter was first called Edwardsville after Colonel William Edwards who built there one of the largest tanneries in New York State in 1817. The New York Tannery Company produced 5,000 hides a year at its peak; it burned in 1830. In its thirteen years of operation, it is estimated that the mill consumed about 163,000 cords of hemlock bark. (Kudish). Although the Village was eventually renamed and Edwards' name disappeared, the prominent northern spur of Hunter Mountain, where the Hunter Mountain Ski Bowl now operates, was named the Colonel's Chair in honor of Edwards.

There are two other mills listed for Hunter, four in Jewett along the lower Eastkill and three in Lexington along the Schoharie and the Westkill. The Bray Tannery stood north of the present hamlet of Lexington in 1819 and stayed in business to about 1856. (Vedder) (Beers)

Also in Lexington was the Bushnell and Hare mill located in Westkill and the Pratt and Watson mill in the Spruceton valley. In Jewett were the Graham, the Pratt, and the Pratt and Brunner mills. Hunter also had the Patch and the Kiersted mills. (Beers). There was an instant need for tannery workers and bark peelers and fellers. The work was unpleasant and dangerous and did not pay well - in other words, tailor-made for recent immigrants to the area. Rough settlements of crude wood huts sprang up around a tannery. Soon came the churches and schools. St. Mary of the Mountain Roman Catholic Church in Hunter was organized in 1840 to serve the many Irish immigrant workers. (Evers)

The tanneries decimated the hemlock growth of the mountain slopes. What happened to the hemlock logs? At first, some of it could be milled for lumber, but the vast number of logs soon became a glut on the market. The logs then remained in the woods to rot or to become fuel for raging forest fires. Historian Alf Evers, in The Catskills; from Wilderness to Woodstock, p.338, describes the situation like this; "..bleaching trunks which a long dry spell would convert into fire - blackened wastes. ... As the mountain cover of matted roots and decaying leaves and branches burned out here and there, the very earth of the Catskills was migrating to the valleys and the sea below..."

The life of the tannery business was relatively short, but its impact on the mountains and its people was great.

The opening up of transportation corridors to the mountains for agriculture and tanning coincided with the demand of a rapidly-growing nation for wood. Milling and timber cutting expanded here until a levelling-off about 1900. There were so many sawmills in the Catskills in the 19th century that no official census was taken; over 200 were estimated in the last three decades of the 19th century. Hardwoods were the main source of timber during this period.

Furniture manufacturing began in 1835 near the earlier site of the New York Tannery. Samuel Chichester, a contractor who had worked on the construction of the Catskill Mountain House, built a chair factory there. Twenty years later, chair factories were common. George Fromer was another chair manufacturer in Hunter in 1846. (Evers) By 1860's "furniture and woodenware making had displaced tanning as the economic basis of life in Hunter". (Evers) Frank Chichester (Samuel's son) in 1863 bought land in the Stony Clove valley, built a chair factory, and started a settlement he named Chichester. Many of the laborers were imported from NYC. This mill, first run by water power and then by steam in later years, brought chair and cradlemaking to its peak volume; 3600 chairs and 900 rocking cradles per week. (Evers). Furniture making decreased around the turn of the century but lingered somewhat into 35 years of the 20th century. Many Catskill hamlets owe their locations to a long-forgotten sawmill or chair factory.

The many furniture mills extracted large amounts of hardwood and spruce from the adjacent mountains. Other wood-using or forest-related industries also extracted timber. There reportedly was a small wood distillation plant in Lexington, a turning mill in Jewett on the lower Eastkill and a pulp mill in Hunter, according to J. B. Beers (History of Greene County, J. B. Beers & Cox, New York, 1884).

In 1851, Mark Carr of Hunter sent two wagon loads of balsam fir Christmas trees to New York City and the New York State Christmas tree industry was born; eventually, the whole Catskill region was exporting trees to the market - until the balsams ran out. (Evers)

Another use of the area forests, which may seem odd today, but was quite common throughout the state, was the periodic pasturing of hogs by hog growers in years when beechnuts and acorns were plentiful. Supposedly the resultant pork was in great demand in city markets.

Agriculture prospered in the 1800s. Livestock pastures followed up the mountain slopes as they were cut for timber. Other industries followed the sawmills and furniture plants. Eventually, the railroad came to the area. The Stony Clove and Catskill Mountain Railroad organized in January 1881; most of the directors were also directors of the Ulster and Delaware Railroad. By April, there were 400 men working on the first stretch of track from Phoenicia to Edgewood. The 14.4 mile line reached Hunter Village the next year. This was quick work considering the route the line had to travel through Stony Clove Notch. The first ten miles rose 1,273 feet in elevation; the rise was often 150' in a mile and there was one stretch that reached a grade of 180' rise in a mile. In 1893 the line merged with the Ulster and Delaware and converted from narrow to standard gauge in 1899. (William F. Helmer, Rip Van Winkle Railroads, Howell-North Books, 1970. & Gerald M. Best, The Ulster and Delaware Golden West Books, 1972).

The rail served local commerce and agriculture well. A lot of produce, lumber and chairs were shipped to Kingston and even world-wide through this rail line.

The many mills and lumbering companies are mostly forgotten or relegated to lists in local history books. But one company in this once-bustling industry stands out by its great size and unique operation - the Fenwick Lumber Company which operated on the slopes of Hunter Mountain out of Stony Clove from 1906-1917.

A predecessor to the Company, the Slawson Company from Steuben County, had bought over 2,000 acres of steep land west of Edgewood in 1903 and began cutting timber; they had a right of way to the railroad and thus ready markets. They went bankrupt in 1906; supposedly they built a long wooden chute to bring logs from the high ridge to the mill in the valley below but the logs reached such a velocity in their descent that the chute was destroyed. The Pennsylvania firm that bought it resold it quickly to the Fenwick Lumber Company of Fenwick, West Virginia.

What made the Fenwick operation unique was the construction of a mile-long inclined tramway (a 1500' elevation differential and an average grade of 28%) down the south side of Hunter Mountain to the sawmill on Myrtle Brook near Edgewood. Another tramway extended down the Spruceton side of the Mountain. The two tramways met at an elevation of over 3500'.

The labor force was large: the company imported Hungarian immigrants and many experienced workmen from its other operations and provided good employment for locals. Horses were used for skidding logs to spur tracks that paralleled the slope. Logs were brought down to the mill on flatbed cars operated by steel cables. The mill sat on Myrtle Brook at the base of the steep descent at about 1900' elevation. Finished lumber was taken down to the RR siding in Edgewood. The company provided living quarters, a mess hall, equipment maintenance staff, and a blacksmith shop.

The operation was also unique to the area because of its size. It was big industry and large in comparison to even the tanneries and furniture mills and other factories that operated in the area. It lasted until 1917. (Karl VanValkenburgh, "Worth Remembering; the Fenwick Lumber Co.")

It's been 75 years since the end of operations of the Fenwick. The forest has grown back and none of the operation is evident except to those who know where to look and how to read the remains. Almost all of the site is within the NYS Forest Preserve today.

Clean air, green forests and mountain scenery brought another industry to the area and to the entire Catskills - tourism. Until the mid 1800's it seemed that only the local residents sensed the full extent of these mountains. The resorts of the eastern Catskills, like the Catskill Mountain House, advertised that they were in the center of the Mountains and hardly recognized the mountains to the west. In fact, it was thought until 1880 that Kaaterskill High Peak and Overlook Mountain were the highest peaks of the Catskills. But in 1880, Arnold Guyot, a Swiss geologist, published his study of the Catskill region in the American Journal of Science. He had studied the entire Appalachian chain but gave the Catskills great emphasis. He measured all the mountain heights of the Catskills with uncanny accuracy. He recognized that Hunter Mountain, at 4040', was the second highest peak in the Catskills. Guyot's assistant was Samuel E. Rusk for whom Rusk Mountain is named.

The study put these Mountains in a different perspective and many people wanted to visit them. This, along with better transportation (the railroad) and the development of a true national middle class, which was becoming mobile, gave impetus to an expanded tourism business. The genteel 'grand' hotels of the eastern Catskills would not cater to the middle class or many ethnic groups but the new unpretentious hotels would. The Hunter-Lexington area began really expanding its hotel and boarding house capacity to accommodate this eager new clientele. The railroad from Phoenicia to Hunter was a big factor in the development of the hotel business in this area as it had in Ulster and Delaware Counties.

The hotel and boarding houses prospered into the first third of the 20th Century but the popularity of this kind of vacation waned. The southern Catskills provided night clubs. The automobile could take anyone wherever there were roads. Some Hotels still survive but in much fewer numbers.

Another new venture began in 1960 - skiing. It fit right in with the idea of growth in tourism and utilized the natural setting of the area and its mountains. Israel and Orville Slutsky, natives of the area, opened Hunter Mountain Ski Area with two lifts and New York's first snowmaking equipment on the slopes of the Colonel's Chair, a north spur of Hunter Mountain. The ski area has expanded in the last thirty years to one of the largest areas in the northeast.

In 1974, a local newspaper, The Fleischmanns Flyer, wrote an editorial about the demise of the old hotels and the changing economic times of the Catskill Mountains. It said, in part, "But the Catskills have a strange way of covering every grand scheme with second growth timber. The tanneries, the mountainside farms, the bluestone quarries, the wood-turning industry, the grand hotels. Each in its turn has blossomed, spinned off top profits for owners from elsewhere and vanished under new deciduous growth." (John G. Mitchell, The Catskills; Land In the Sky, The Viking Press, New York, 1977.)

The forest, in the Catskills, everything keeps coming back to that. (Mitchell).

C. Forest Preserve

The establishment of the Forest Preserve concept in 1885 was for practical reasons of land and water conservation. Although wildland preservation and the concept of wilderness had nothing to do with the original Forest Preserve establishment, these have been nurtured in the medium of the Preserve and its "forever wild" mandate.

New York State's acquisition of lands for Forest Preserve in this Unit didn't begin until the twentieth century. Some original public domain land did exist in the area before this but it was very little acreage; some of it was on the slope of Hunter Mountain and part on the ridge west of Evergreen. The rest of the lands comprising the Unit were purchased during various Acquisition Bond Acts. Major purchases were: Rusk Mountain in 1900, Stony Clove Notch in 1909, summit of Hunter in 1921, Evergreen in 1925, Diamond Notch in 1932, a connector piece across the Spruceton Valley from Evergreen to Mink Hollow in the mid-1960s and the uppermost Spruceton Valley and Becker Hollow in the mid-1970s.

Two roads once traversed part of the Unit. The Diamond Notch Road was a public road that was an extension of the Spruceton Road through Diamond Notch to Lanesville. The Town of Lexington officially abandoned their section through Forest Preserve lands; the Town of Hunter portion through State land has not been maintained for many years. The second road went from the Spruceton Road up Hunter Brook to Jones Gap and down the Deming Road side to just west of the Village of Hunter. It was built 1877-84. It crossed three Towns - Lexington, Jewett and Hunter. A private spur road ran from the height of land in the Jones Gap easterly to the summit of Hunter Mountain. New York State still uses this road system for vehicular access to the fire tower on Hunter Mountain from Spruceton. There are several log roads still visible in the Becker Hollow area which was the land most recently purchased.

The original firetower on Hunter Mountain was built in 1909 near what is now the intersection with the Becker Hollow Trail. This wooden tower was 40' tall and built at a cost of $225.21. It was one of the first three fire towers that were constructed in the Catskills that year. A steel tower replaced the wooden one in 1917. This tower was removed and reset at the present site in 1953.

The original trail up Hunter Mountain went up Mossy Brook (Shanty Hollow) and was established locally in the 19th century before the State owned any land in the area. When lands were purchased for Forest Preserve, the State took over the maintenance of this trail as well as the spur trail to the Colonel's Chair and the footpath to the Mountain through Becker Hollow to the east; records indicate that the Conservation Department maintained these three trails before 1933. The Shanty Hollow Trail had to be closed in 1973 because due to the expansion of the Hunter Mountain Ski Area.

Devil's Tombstone Campground, the first Forest Preserve Campground, was established in Stony Clove in 1926. The Devil's Path Trail up Hunter Mountain from the Campground was built in 1935; the trail went to the area where the old Fenwick logging railroad crossed the ridgeline at 3500'. This piece of the Devil's Path was continued westerly into Diamond Notch in 1975.

There are three leantos in the Unit. The John Robb leanto on the Spruceton (blue) Trail has an unknown construction date but was built before 1950 and probably around 1935. The Devil's Acre leanto on the Devil's Path south of Hunter summit was built in 1935 and replaced in 1967. The Diamond Notch leanto was built in 1968. Two other leantos once existed in the Unit. One, at the Spruceton Trail crossing of the

Hunter Brook, was removed in the 1960s because it was only 0.5 miles from the trailhead. A second was located near the Hunter summit at a 4000' elevation; it was removed in the 1970s to conform to the policy limiting leantos to 3500' elevation or below.

D. Wildlife

The Hunter Mountain Wild Forest unit lies at northern edge of the Catskill Peaks ecozone. The area consists mostly of steep forested slopes with some areas of spruce and fir at the highest elevations. The extensive northern hardwood forests of the area provide habitat for a variety of wildlife species. In general, species which require open land and early successional forest stages would be less abundant in the Unit than species which use the older age forest. There has never been a formal inventory of the animal species for this area. Chambers, in his handbook, Integrating Timber and Wildlife Management, 1983, (available at DEC Wildlife Offices in Stamford and Schenectady), compiled an extensive list of wildlife presumed to live within the Catskill Peaks ecozone, and further qualified his list by categorizing species by forest type, forest stage, and special habitat needs. Based on these criteria, 49 species of mammal, 14 species of reptile and 19 species of amphibian may be found in the Hunter Mountain Wild Forest (Appendix B).

Records compiled from 1980-1985 for The Atlas of Breeding Birds in New York State, (1988), list all breeding bird species for the area which includes Hunter Mountain Wild Forest. Combined with the species from Chamber's List, 119 bird species could occur in or adjacent to the Unit (Appendix B).

White-tailed deer are an important component of the Unit's fauna. The DEC collects data from returned tags from successful hunters to determine the number of deer which were taken each hunting season. The five-year average buck take for the Town of Hunter is 1.07 bucks per square mile and for the Town of Lexington, 1.96 bucks/sq. mi. Because of the mix of habitat and topography in the Towns, the deer herd is not uniformly distributed. Fewer deer would be expected in the mature forest of the Unit than in the mixed open and forest land at lower elevations where they would find more understory browse.

The Unit is within the occupied portion of the northern Catskill Black Bear range. Bears are regularly harvested by big game hunters in the Unit and adjacent lands. Overharvest is prevented by season timing and duration. Large tracts of state-owned land such as the Hunter Mountain Wild Forest Unit are becoming more important to black bears as other areas become increasingly developed.

Fishers were transferred into the Catskills throughout a five year (1976-1980) trap and transfer program with the goal of establishing a self-perpetuating fisher population. Since the inception of a limited-bag trapping season in 1985, several fisher have been taken adjacent to the area. Sightings of fisher in the Town of Hunter suggest that fisher presently inhabit the Unit.

E. Critical and Significant Habitats

Several species listed as threatened or endangered by New York State (ECL 6NYCRRL82.5) occur within the Unit. Timber rattlesnakes (threatened), can be expected to wander into the Hunter Mt. area from dens outside the Unit and can be expected to use portions of the Hunter Mt. Wild Forest for their summer range.

The peregrine falcon, (Endangered), may pass over the area on migration or use nesting habitat on the steepest rock ledges in or near the Unit. The bald eagle (Endangered) may also pass over the area during migration. The red shouldered hawk might breed in the lowest elevations, in addition to passing through on migration.

Species of Special Concern are those which are not yet recognized as endangered or threatened but for which documented concern exists for their continued welfare in New York. No additional legal protection is derived from their listing. One such species, the eastern bluebird, has been "confirmed" as a breeder either in or adjacent to the Unit in the Breeding Bird Atlas. Other special concern species which may occur in the Unit are so noted in Appendix B.

The National Audubon Society's Blue List (indicating species for which there appear to be non-cyclical population declines or range contractions) includes the hairy woodpecker, a confirmed breeder in the Unit. The mountain peaks over 3,500 feet within the Unit, with red spruce-balsam fir-paper birch forest, are considered potential habitat for a subspecies of the gray-cheeked thrush called Bicknell's thrush.

F. Fisheries

The Unit is drained by 26 tributary streams totaling about 17 miles divided almost equally among the three watersheds and including nine direct or secondary tributaries to Schoharie Creek, nine direct or secondary tributaries to Stony Clove Creek and eight direct or secondary tributaries to the West Kill (Appendix C). No waters in the area are

stocked but both Schoharie Creek and the West Kill are stocked with trout along the area boundaries and the tributaries serve as spawning and nursery areas for trout.

Fishes indigenous to trout streams in the Catskill portion of New York are found in the tributary system of the area. No endangered, threatened or species of special concern occur among the area fish species. Brook trout, a Catskill native, occur with introduced brown and rainbow trout; rainbow trout are dominant in the Stony Clove Creek system and brown trout dominant in the other two drainages. Some associated fishes include blacknose and longnose dace, cutlips minnow, common shiner, creek chub and fallfish, all minnows. White suckers, tesselated darters and slimy sculpins occur as bottom dwellers.

The mountainous topography provides high gradient stream beds, some with only seasonal flows. Some tributaries are beaver-dammed, providing fish a refuge during otherwise dry conditions, but also prohibiting fish migration.

G. Geology

The Catskill Mountains were not formed in the same fashion as most mountain ranges. They weren't created by volcanic activity, faulting or folding or metamorphism (change by heat and pressure). They are, however, the result of a great mountain-building episode in earth's history.

The Catskill Region is a plateau of sedimentary rock. These rocks were originally sediments laid down in an ancient shallow sea some 395 million years ago in the Paleozoic Era of geologic history.

A time existed in the Paleozoic called the Middle Devonian Period when a great uplift occurred in the earth's crust. The great Acadian Mountains emerged in what is now the northeastern United States and the Canadian Maritime Provinces. Stretching far west of these new mountains a shallow inland sea existed. For 50 million years or so, the Acadians eroded and cascaded their sediments into this great sea to form what is known as the Catskill Delta. The Delta extended into western New York and beyond. In the Catskill region the wedge of sediment was thousands of feet thick. This wedge can still be seen in the layers of rock that slope regionally toward the West. By the end of the Devonian, the Acadian Mountains were significantly reduced in elevation by erosion and the Delta no longer received sediments.

Not too long after the Acadian Mountains formed, another uplift began (about 300 million years ago) that helped create the Appalachian Mountains. Both the Acadian and Appalachian episodes account for the last great mountain building in eastern North America. However, slow regional uplifting continued into the Mesozoic Era. As a result of this uplifting, the Catskill Delta arose as part of the larger Appalachian Plateau. The Catskill Delta then became a plateau of horizontal sedimentary rock strata tilting slightly east to west.

As the Delta emerged from the sea, it began to erode and still erodes today. In fact, many of the mountain peaks, especially in the central and eastern Catskills (where the coarsest gravel from the ancient Delta was deposited) are capped with a massive coarse, quartz-rich conglomerate rock which is very resistant to erosion. The rock beneath this resistant unit is composed of more erodible shales, siltstones and sandstones. A combination of erosion and resistant conglomerate "caprock" gives the Catskills their characteristically long, flat-topped ridges and great uniformity of summit elevations.

Much of the geologic history of the Catskills is still unknown for the time after the Paleozoic. Nearly continuous erosion was responsible for removing any geologic clues that would reveal what had occurred through the period of time extending back about 200 million years.

But, about 10 million years ago, in the Middle Cenozoic Era, a series of world-wide glacial advances and retreats began that significantly altered the topography, soils and drainage of the areas affected, including the Catskills. Four significant glacial periods are known to have existed in what is now North America. The last glacial ice sheet of North America started its retreat in New York about 20,000 years ago. Until 18,000 to 12,000 years ago, ice covered what is now the Catskill Mountains.

The great forces of moving ice, perhaps a mile thick, scoured and sculptured the hills and valleys, formed lakes and new streams, changed the course of many other streams and deposited rock debris. Most of today's Catskill Mountain slopes and U-shaped valleys were formed by the scouring of glacial ice. The erosional forces of ice moving through a valley causes the widening and deepening of the valley into the classic "U-shape" profile. Steep "V-shape" valleys as seen at Devil's Tombstone is the result of stream erosion and not glacial scouring. Since many valleys were reshaped by ice, many streams were left "hanging" above the new valley floor, thus forming plentiful and spectacular waterfalls.

Ground-up rock and debris accumulated in and under the glacial ice. This mixture of boulders, gravel, sand, silt and clay deposited under a glacier formed a dense soil called "till". Most of the debris pushed and moved around by the glacier was deposited at the ice margins. Large amounts of water cascading from the melting ice deposited sediment and formed features such as kames and terraces. Swollen rivers flowed through many of the valleys depositing more sediment forming a layer of outwash sand and gravel. The tremendous topographical changes created by glaciation is softened by the natural forces of weathering and by the forest cover that developed in soils deposited by the ice and formed after the ice.

Geologic history has produced waterfalls, cloves, steep valley and mountain slopes, rock cliffs and terraces and gentle hills - - all the appealing natural features that constitute the Catskills.

Soils

Soils provide the basic support, nutrients, and water reservoir for the plant and animal communities within the Wild Forest Unit. These soils are derived from till deposited by glaciers.

The primary soil on the Hunter Mountain Wild Forest is the Vly-Halcott Complex (Vh-C,D,F) with variable slopes of 3% to 55%, and covering almost all of the ridge area and upper slopes. The slopes are non-uniform and frequently occur in a series of steps. The Vh complex is on the tops and sides of benches and on bedrock-controlled ridges. The complex consists of about 40% of the moderately-deep, well to excessively drained Vly soils, about 35% of the shallow, somewhat excessively-drained to moderately well-drained Halcott soils and 25% other soils. Rock outcrops occupy 2% to 10% of the surface areas. Vly and Halcott soils are so intermingled that they are not mapped separately. Soils are shallow to bedrock. The erosion hazard is moderate to very severe depending on steepness of slope. This soil comprises 7,600 acres or 70% of the Wild Forest.

The second most-common soil, with 2,020 acres or 19% of the Forest, is the Elka Channery Loam (Em-C,D,F). This is a very deep stony and well-drained soil on irregular slopes of valley sides at higher elevations. It is a glacial till derived from reddish sandstone and siltstone. Slopes vary from 5% to 70%. The erosion hazard increases from moderate to very severe as the steepness of slope increases.

The Lewbeach and Willowemoc Channery Silt Loams (LmD) cover 790 acres or 7% of the area. These are very deep, moderately well-drained on tops and sides of hills at high elevations. They are moderately steep (15%-35%) in general and very bouldery. This is glacial till derived from reddish sandstone, siltstone and shale. In this unit, these soils are found on the southerly slopes toward the Westkill at 2400' elevation and below. The erosion hazard is severe.

The Lewbeach Channery Silt Loam (LgF) only covers about 250 acres. It is similar to the last described soil, but is normally in convex slopes and is very steep. This soil is wet in spring, has only moderate permeability and has very severe erosion hazard. In this unit, it is found in close proximity to the Westkill and the Hunter Brook.

There are 135 acres of Tunkhanock Gravelly Loam (Tu and TV). These are in stratified sand and gravel. The fan at the outlet of Hunter Brook where it enters the Westkill is a Tunkhanock soil. The slope phase of this soil is a small area west of Edgewood; a former gravel pit can be found here.

There are two other soil types that cover only 60 acres of the unit, but are unique in that one, the Tor Flaggy Loam (Tr) is on the highest ridges of the unit at 3500' to 3700' while the Ochrepts (Oc) is on a floodplain at 1900'. Tor is a shallow, poorly drained, seasonably wet and nearly level soil; the spruce flat along the truck trail on the ridge just northwest of Hunter Mountain summit is a Tor soil. Ochrepts is a collective group of soils formed in water-deposited sediments on floodplains, channel bars and some intermittent waterways; this soil is found in the upper Edgewood Stream and along Hollow Tree Brook south of Diamond Notch.

H. Forests

This Wild Forest Unit is entirely forested with a wide diversity of plant species determined by soils, topography, climate, man's use, natural disturbance and chance distribution of seeds and spores.

The Catskill Mountain Region contains the southernmost outpost of boreal coniferous forest (red spruce-balsam fir-paper birch) in glaciated eastern North America. Stands of spruce, fir and spruce-fir can be found on, and near, the summit of Hunter Mountain. Red spruce still persists-barely-on the summit of Rusk Mt. to the west of Hunter. There are some on the ridge to the east of Rusk. But blowdown and/or drought has changed the seedbed and soil moisture conditions here to favor balsam fir.

By the next summit to the west, Evergreen, red spruce, and balsam fir have disappeared; the predominent tree is sugar maple. Travelling west from Evergreen through the Unit to the summit of Pine Island Mountain, one finds no more boreal forest; the ridge forest has changed to all hardwood species, primarily sugar maple, white birch, black cherry and American beech. (Kudish).

There is a stand of red spruce in a cove in the Westkill Valley east of Spruceton between 1900' and 2300' in elevation.

The sugar maple-beech-yellow birch forest (Northern hardwoods) comprises most of the forest on all slopes. It is the most widespread forest type on all the mountains of the Unit. Moist flats and ravines harbor mixtures of hemlock and hardwood; hemlock also often occurs here in small pure stands. At low elevations east of Spruceton, some white pine mixes with the hemlocks and hardwoods.

Major man-made and natural disturbances have somewhat altered the original forest. The first major man-made disturbance was the leather tanning industry from the early 1800's through the 1860's. Locally, the tanning industry prospered between 1817 and 1840. The hemlock, which provided the bark used for tanners to tan leather hides, grew primarily below 3000' in elevation. There were several tanneries in the Hunter-Prattsville vicinity so almost all locally available hemlock was removed from the slopes. As the tanneries business slowed, general heavy lumbering followed into the first quarter of the 20th century. (See the History section for a description of one of the more unique large timber operations--the Fenwick Lumber Co.). Furniture mills in the Chichester-Phoenicia area utilized much local hardwood and spruce; many sawmills sprang up in the mountains to feed wood to the furniture mills and other secondary wood industries.

Agriculture also removed much woodland primarily for pastureland for domestic livestock. On more moderate slopes, forest cover was completely removed to a considerable elevation on the mountains of the Unit. Forest fires can be both natural or man-made but the result is the same. Fires are common and usually burn just a few acres and superficially at that. So history usually concentrates on the severe fires, those that burn hundreds of acres and destroy the existing forest too. It is reported that 2000 acres of the ridge lying west of Evergreen Mountain burned in 1891. The annual fire reports say that 3000 acres of Stony Clove Notch burned in 1903-the sign along NY Route 214 says 1893; Plateau Mountain suffered badly as did the east slope of Hunter Mountain. At the turn of the century, a slide on the East wall of Diamond Notch,

estimated to have occurred about 1890-1910, removed all vegetation and soil helping to create a landslide-prone bouldery talus slope with very little vegetation even today. The area was also reportedly logged during this period.

Much of Hunter Mountain reportedly burned around this same time but no year can be substantiated. In 1907, a large fire occurred on the ridge known as Colonel's Chair. Ed West reported to Mike Kudish that much of Hunter Mountain burned over once (maybe relates to the Diamond Notch fire). No fire records or reports exist of major fires before European settlement, but they obviously have occurred over the centuries. Wind at times can be a significant natural force in altering vegetation. The non- tropical hurricane of November 25, 1950 which caused forest blowdown all over the northeast, blew down several acres of forest on the north spur of Hunter (the Colonel's Chair). A hurricane in 1954 blew over 20 to 30 acres of red spruce on a ridge west of Hunter summit (it was mapped).

The long drought of the 1960's killed off more large red spruce on Hunter Mountain that postdated heavy logging and that had survived the hurricanes of 1950 and 1954. Balsam fir seedlings and saplings replaced the spruce.

In spite of many climates and man-made disturbances, the forest has returned and again blanketed the slopes. And the overall composition of the forest in the Forest Preserve hasn't changed too much from the forest at the time of European settlement; this fact is backed by records of early historians, botanists and surveyors.

"The forest. In the Catskills, everything keeps coming back to that." (<u>The Catskills; Land in the Sky</u>. Mitchell & Winters, 1977)

II. ***INVENTORY OF FACILITIES*** - See Appendix E (Facilities Map)

A. ***Trails*** - (6)

- Spruceton - from Spruceton Rd. to summit of Hunter Mtn. (tower) 3.35 miles
- Diamond Notch - Spruceton Rd. south over former Diamond Notch Road to Lanesville - 3.0 miles
- Devils's Path - Devil's Tombstone Campground to Diamond Notch Falls - 4.5 miles
- Colonel's Chair - from intersection with Spruceton Trail to end at chairlift at Hunter Mt. Ski Bowl - 1 mile
- Becker Hollow - from Rte. 214 to Spruceton Trail - 2.3 mi.
- Hunter Mtn. - Spur Trail connecting Becker Hollow with Hunter Mt. Summit - .3 miles

B. ***Barriers*** - (7)

- North and south terminus of Diamond Notch Trail (2) Gates
- Trailhead for Spruceton Trail (1) Gate
- Entrance to gravel pit south of Devil's Tombstone (1) boulder
- Trailhead to Becker Hollow Trail (1) Gate
- Deming Truck Trail at State boundary (1) Boulder/Gate
- Private ROW leading across State land in vicinity of Schoolhouse Brook (1) Gate

C. ***Trailheads with Maintained Parking*** - (5)

- Becker Hollow Trail - off Rte. 214
- Devil's Tombstone Campground - Devil's Path (day use fee)
- Diamond Notch/Southern Terminus - Diamond Notch Rd.
- Diamond Notch/Northern Terminus - Spruceton Rd.
- Spruceton Trail - Spruceton Rd.

D. ***Bridges*** - (5 Foot Bridges)

- Diamond Notch - Westkill Crossing
- Diamond Notch - Hollow Tree Brook - 2
- Becker Hollow - Becker Hollow Brook
- Spruceton Trail - Hunter Brook

E. ***Leantos, Fireplaces & Privies***

- John Robb - Spruceton Trail
- Diamond Notch Leanto - Diamond Notch Trail
- Devil's Acre - Devil's Path Trail (no privy)

F. ***Trail Registers*** - (6)

- Spruceton Trail - 200± ft. from trailhead
- Diamond Notch Trail - 200± ft. from southerly trailhead
- Intersection of Diamond Notch and Devil's Path trails
- Colonel's Chair Trail at intersection with State land
- Becker Hollow Trail - 200± ft. from trailhead
- Devil's Path - 500 ft. from parking area at campground

G. ***Informational Bulletin Boards*** - (4)

- Parking Area - Trailhead of Spruceton Trail
- Parking Area - Trailhead of Becker Hollow Trail
- Parking Area - Devil's Tombstone (Devil's Path)
- Intersection of Devil's Path & Diamond Notch Trails

H. ***Signing*** - See Appendix D

I. ***Fire Tower & Cabin - Summit of Hunter Mountain*** - See Appendix F

J. ***Vistas*** - (6) Refer to Facilities Map (Appendix E) for location

- Diamond Notch Trail - Midway - Westkill to west and Hunter Mt. to northeast (2)
- Hunter Mtn. Trail - South of Summit, facing east and west (2)
- Hunter Mtn. Fire Tower - Summit, 360° panoramic view of surrounding mountains, most popular vista in the Unit (1)
- Devil's Path - approximately 3 miles from Campground - view is westward through Spruceton Valley (1)

K. ***Boundary Lines*** - Approximately 24 miles of boundary line.

III. ***MANAGEMENT AND POLICY***

A. ***Past Management***

Past management of Forest Preserve lands has been guided by the "forever wild" clause of Article XIV of the State Constitution. Specific management activities were primarily concerned with fire control, protection of the forest and fish and wildlife management. In 1985, the Department completed a Catskill Park State Land Master Plan which provided additional management guidelines as well as classifying forest preserve lands into four basic categories (Wilderness, Wild Forest, Intensive Use and Administrative).

The Hunter Mountain Fire Tower played a very important role in forest fire presuppression and suppression fire management in the subject Unit and adjacent forested lands. It was seasonally manned until 1990 when budgetary constraints eliminated this form of protection. Because of the fire tower, it was necessary to maintain good vehicular access to the summit as well as provide accommodations for the person manning the tower. A telephone line was also strung from Hunter Village to the tower. With good access roads and other trails, the summit became a very popular place for people to visit. Leantos were built to accommodate overnight hikers. Hunter Mountain was also a popular destination for horseback riders who were allowed to ride on hiking trails at the time.

Although the tower is no longer manned, the area continues to be a very popular recreation area. It is in close proximity to a popular tourist destination, the Village of Hunter. There are many and varied access trails leading to the summit, and there is a fine view from the tower. (See Appendices E & F)

B. Constraints and Issues

1. Constraints

This Unit Management Plan has been developed within the constraints of Article XIV of the New York State Constitution, Article 9 of the Environmental Conservation Law, Title 6 of the Codes, Rules and Regulations of the State of New York, the Catskill Park State Land Master Plan and established policies for the administration of Forest Preserve lands by the Division of Lands and Forests.

2. Issues

Numerous issues regarding Public Use and Management of the Unit are of concern to the public and the Department.

a) Conflicting Uses - Strong interest from a variety of recreational users suggests that recreational opportunities be expanded. Organizations representing mountain bikers and horseback riders have asked the Department to provide trails for these uses. There is concern that there will be conflicts between various types of recreational use.

b) New Trail Construction - Trails are limited to the eastern portion of the Unit primarily on Hunter Mountain and there is expressed interest in expansion of the trail system westward.

There is also support for development of a trail from the Village of Hunter to the summit of Hunter Mountain which does not follow any public roads.

Some have suggested that the Becker Hollow Trail be relocated to avoid excessively steep slopes.

c) Access and Parking - Public access to state land is limited on the northern and western sides of the unit. New trail development is dependent on the establishment of additional access.

Some people object to the fee that it charged for use of the parking area at Devil's Tombstone Campground.

d) Acquisition - The Unit is a contiguous parcel of land extending from Lanesville at Route 214 on the east to Westkill/Lexington along Rte. 42 to the west some seven miles. Selective acquisition of fee or easements from willing sellers would consolidate state land, improve access, and provide additional land for trail construction. The establishment of public access to state land from Route 23A via the old Deming Road is one example.

The Department recognizes that there is a concern about the use of eminent domain. Our acquisition policy is to only deal with willing sellers.

There is also a concern that the state may intend to purchase extensive acreages and a feeling that it is undesirable to increase the size of state holdings.

e) Protection of Trailless Peaks - Rusk Mountain at 3600 feet is a trailless peak. Some individuals prefer the challenge of climbing mountains which do not have trails. If a ridge trail is constructed, it would eliminate the "trailless" character of this mountain and the others along this ridge unless a trail could be located in an area which was at a lower elevation far from the summits.

f) Care, Custody, and Control - We are experiencing a protracted sluggish economy and funds for maintenance, surveys, facility improvements and development are very scarce and expected to remain so. There is concern that the Department may overextend its resources and not be able to adequately take care of the area. Adequate support for expansion of recreational uses may have to be supplemented by other non-state sources, i.e. volunteers, gifts, grants, etc.

g) Education & Enforcement - Expansion of the trail system and increasing recreational use will result in more people in the Unit. Forest Rangers will be needed to handle the increased usage through education and enforcement where appropriate.

h) Camping Opportunities - Camping in the Spruceton Valley has been somewhat of a nuisance to many adjacent residents in the past. Current regulations prohibit camping within 150' of a road, trail, or stream. Regular patrols and enforcement of these regulations has essentially eliminated this problem.

i) Volunteer Trail Maintainers - In recent years there has been tremendous growth in interest in volunteerism for the maintenance of hiking trails and lean-tos. Most of hiking trails in the Catskills have been "adopted" by individuals over the last decade. The New York New Jersey Trail Conference has coordinated most of the volunteer efforts in the Hunter Mountain Unit. In most cases, volunteers have done a good job of maintaining hiking trails. Occasionally, work has been improperly done or not done at all. Volunteers also tend to develop a proprietary interest in their hiking trails which sometimes makes it more difficult for them to accept other types of recreational use on trails. Some hikers have indicated they will not help maintain trails where other types of recreational use is allowed. However, other recreational users, including equestrians, mountain bicyclists, and snowmobilers have offered to help maintain trails.

j) Water Quality - Water quality is continuously threatened as more and more people recreate within the Unit. Both streams and springs could be contaminated by over use and neglect of existing regulations. New York City's Department of Environmental Protection is particularly concerned with any use or development that might threaten water quality in the reservoir system which provides drinking water for city residents.

k) Trespass - Existing state boundary lines should be maintained on a regular schedule. In areas where the boundary lines are unclear or were never properly surveyed, a new survey is essential in order to help prevent trespass. The current cost of contract surveys is approximately twice that of a DEC survey crew. However, because of staffing losses, Region 4 has only one survey crew available to cover state lands and other survey needs in nine counties.

l) Use of Old Town Roads - Some individuals have asked the Town of Hunter to reopen old town roads which have not been maintained for decades. This could potentially open old roads on the forest preserve to snowmobiles, four wheel drive vehicles, motorcycles, etc. However, some legal opinions indicate that the town does not have the authority to reopen a road once it has not been maintained or used for seven years.

m) Fire Tower A fire tower and supporting structure (cabin) are located at the summit of Hunter Mountain, the second highest peak in the Catskills and are not presently being utilized by the Department. Several issues involve these structures, their use and location. Some feel the structures are technically inappropriate on Forest Preserve lands as they are no longer used and, therefore, should be removed. Some feel the structures pose a serious and needless liability to the State in their current state of disrepair. Some people feel the tower has historic value and should be restored and its use be incorporated with programs of the proposed Catskill Interpretive Center. Some are proponents of the tower for fire protection as it once was. Finally some argue that restoration and maintenance of the tower is necessary as it offers a significant vista with panoramic views of surrounding mountains, none of which exist without the tower because trees otherwise block the view at the Summit.

n) Herd Paths Several unofficial trails have been developed over the years to the summits of so called "trailless" peaks such as Rusk Mountain. Since these trails are usually unmarked, it increases the chances that some hikers will get disoriented and lost. In fact, DEC Forest Rangers have had to conduct searchs on several occasions caused in part by unmarked trails.

IV. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

A. Goals

1. Protect and preserve the natural resources within the Unit.

2. Provide diverse recreational opportunity to the public with safeguards to protect the resource from overuse, misuse and degradation.

B. Objectives

1. Land Management Objectives

   a. Boundary line identification and maintenance to help prevent public and private trespass.

   b. Acquire additional lands from willing sellers for access and consolidation by pursuing fee interest, easement interest, life or term use estate and other methods.

   c. Protect the Unit from wildfire.

   d. Construct and maintain facilities in accordance with DEC specifications and in consultation with user groups. (i.e. trails, parking areas, bridges, etc)

   e. Identify and protect critical habitat for rare or endangered species of plant and animals when and where occurrences of individuals are documented.

2. Wildlife Management Objectives

   a. Maintain all native wildlife species at levels compatible with their natural environment.

   b. Maintain hunting, trapping and other wildlife related recreational activities.

3. Fisheries Management Objectives

a. Perpetuate the resident fish population in all streams occurring within the Unit.

b. Maintain recreational fishing opportunities within the Unit.

4. Public Use Management Objectives

a. Monitor the intensity and compatibility of permitted uses within the Unit as well as the conditions within the Unit resulting from public use. Take appropriate action to prevent overuse/degradation of the area.

b. Educate visitors to use and enjoy the wild forest without adverse environmental impacts.

c. When education is unsucessful, control adverse and illegal uses through enforcement of the Environmental Conservation Law and Department Rules and Regulations.

d. Provide and maintain adequate parking areas at access points to the Unit.

e. Provide for search and rescue operations as needed.

5. Water Quality Management

a. Protect the waters of the Unit from pollution by controlling public use of the stream corridors.

b. Maintain, protect and improve the springs within the Unit as they impact the aquatic communities and provide potable water to hikers and campers.

V. PROJECTED USE & MANAGEMENT

Management Overview

The release of the draft plan for Hunter Mountain Wild Forest generated discussion about the use of state forest preserve land. The draft plan emphasized multiple recreational opportunities on the unit. Some felt that multiple use recognition was long overdue. Others felt that conflicts between user and resource degradation would result.

State Forest Preserve Lands have always been open for most non motorized types of outdoor recreation. Although hunting, fishing, hiking and camping have historically been the most popular forms of recreation, the use of the Forest Preserve is not limited to these pursuits. There has been increased use of state land in the winter months for both nordic skiing and snowshoeing. Rock climbing has grown in popularity as well as mountain biking. Horseback riding has always been permitted, except on marked hiking trails. Less vigorous pursuits include nature study, photography, and even painting. Within the past thirty years, snowmobile trails have also been designated on Forest Preserve lands.

We believe the use of Hunter Mountain Wild Forest will increase over the next several years. Greater demand for wildland recreation coupled with proximity to a popular tourist destination ensure increased activity. Add to this, community interest in promoting diverse recreational use of state land, and we have the potential for a very popular multiple use area.

One of the concerns expressed by some is that mountain bicycles have shown up on many hiking trails in the Catskills, including some on Hunter Mountain Wild Forest trails. Mountain biking has grown significantly in popularity in the past several years. However, because this is a relatively new use, there are no DEC regulations which control the use of mountain bicycles in the Catskill Forest Preserve. The Catskill State Land Master Plan is also silent on the subject. In summary, there is no regulation or policy restricting the use of mountain bicycles on any trail in the Catskills. Furthermore, no determination has yet been made as to whether or not restrictions are warranted in the Catskills.

This plan does not address the mountain bicycle issue. That usage is currently legal and at such low levels in the Hunter Mountain Wild Forest that we feel it does not pose a significant threat to the resource or to other recreationists, when conducted in a safe and considerate manner. However, we expect this question will be addressed in the revision of the Catskill State Land Master Plan which is in progress.

Considerable interest was expressed in the expansion of horseback riding opportunities during the development of this plan. Hiking trails are generally not well suited for horses because they lack sufficient width and an adequate base. Horseback trails are expensive to build in mountainous terrain. Consequently, the most logical place to provide suitable trails is on old roads, since they usually have the necessary width and base to support horses and riders without the need for a major investment in trail construction.

This plan includes some expansion in horseback riding opportunities on old roads. However, before additional resources are invested in horse trails, we feel it is prudent to carefully monitor this use over the five year life of the plan. There are concerns that horses may create serious erosion problems on some trails. There are concerns with the suitability of the trails in the area because of their steepness and the lack of water. There are concerns with the potential for conflicts with other recreationists. Finally, there are concerns that the actual level of demand may not justify the considerable cost of new trail construction in this part of the Catskills. Other horsetrail facilities on state land in the region are somewhat underutilized. We should have much better answers to these questions after a few years of experience.

Department staff recognize that allowing hikers, horses, and mountain bikes on the same trail is controversial. However, we believe that some of the old roads on the unit are wide enough for shared use if the various users show courtesy and respect for each other. We also believe that projected levels of use by either horses or mountain bicycles are not great enough to create significant problems. This situation will be monitored. If shared use results in conflicts, the Department may choose to restrict trail use.

Expansion of the trail system westward on a new ridge trail was proposed in the draft version of this plan but withdrawn in the final. The original proposal was motivated by three factors; expressed interest by equestrians, the gift of a trail easement from Route 42 to state land, and a grant for construction of a trail along this ridge that would be open for horses and hikers. The proposal was withdrawn in the final version because we determined that construction of a horse trail at this elevation is contrary to the current Catskill State Land Master Plan. Furthermore, the trail easement has still not been obtained. Without the easement, there is no access to state land on the west side of the unit. Finally, the time frame for use of the grant funds expired.

Restoration of the fire tower and adjacent buildings for use as educational facilities is proposed. The tower is a point of interest for many who visit the mountaintop. It also provides a platform from which to get a panoramic view of the surrounding mountains. This view is not possible at ground level. Without the fire tower, the summit of Hunter Mountain would lose much of its appeal.

This plan affirms our intent to improve access to state land, specifically by pursuing trail easements from Route 42 and from the Village of Hunter. If these easements can be secured, they will provide the opportunity for additional trail development which can be considered by amendment or when this plan is updated in five years.

As new activities increases recreational use within the Unit, DEC staff must be alert to overuse, incompatibility, and a general degradation of the area. The plan will be cautiously implemented to allow feedback from the public and DEC staff as well as to assess impacts from particular activities.

We believe the actions proposed in this five year plan are compatible with one another and will not exceed the capacity of the resource to withstand use. The plan provides order and purpose as it sets target dates to implement new activities and allows time to determine and assess impacts. All in all, the plan proposes to provide a variety of recreational offerings but not without regard to our primary goal of protecting and preserving the natural resources of the Unit.

A. Facilities Development and/or Removal

Action 1

Restore and reinforce the fire tower at the summit of Hunter Mountain. The fire tower is a focal point on Hunter Mountain and necessary in order to get any view from the top. Reinforcement of the structure is necessary to provide for the safety of the public who climbs the tower. (cost - $40,000)

Action 2

Restore the observers cabin at the summit of Hunter Mountain. The cabin can be used as a headquarters by Assistant Forest Rangers, volunteers, or other personnel stationed at the summit. (cost - $25,000)

Action 3

Assign either a Department employee or a volunteer to the fire tower during the summer season to interact with the public. Explore the possibility of having the fire tower "adopted" by a volunteer organization. (cost - DEC staff or volunteer)

Action 4

Work with the Village of Hunter and Hunter Highlands to develop a trail from the village leading to the Becker Hollow Trail and the summit of Hunter Mountain. A parking area and a substantial portion of the trail will have to be constructed on private land and land owned by the Village of Hunter. (cost - unknown)

Action 5

Relocate the Becker Hollow trail, leading from Route 214, to reduce its steepness and potential for erosion. (cost - $2,500)

Action 6

Remove the telephone line from Hunter Mountain. The line was originally installed to provide communication from the fire tower on Hunter Mountain but is now in disrepair and no longer usable. Cellular technology and radio communication have made the telephone line obsolete. (cost - $4,000)

Action 7

Enlarge the parking area at the Diamond Notch Trailhead at its southern terminus to accomodate trailers. This will provide an opportunity for equestrians who must trailer their horses. (cost - $5,000)

Action 8

Enlarge the parking area at the snow plow turn around on the Diamond Notch Trailhead at its northern terminus to accomodate trailers. Contact the Town of Hunter and ask if they are willing to plow an area large enough to accomodate winter parking. This will provide an opportunity for equestrians who must trailer their horses and for improved winter access. (cost - $5,000)

Action 9

Construct hitching posts for those trails which will accommodate horses at trailheads and near the fire tower. This will help keep horses from areas where they are not desired. (cost - $500)

Action 10

Construct a new state land access parking area along Spruceton Road and bridge suitable for horses across Westkill Creek at this location. This will facilitate access for both equestrians and other recreational users. (cost - $10,000)

Action 11

Work with volunteers to clear a loop horsetrail north of the new Spruceton Road parking area. This will provide some additional riding opportunities at a minimal cost. (cost - DEC staff & volunteers)

Action 12

Construct a parking area on Route 42 to provide access to the trail easement leading to state land after the easement has been secured. This will facilitate access for recreational users. (cost - $4,000)

Action 13

Construct an information board at the beginning of the Colonel's Chair Trail with consent of Hunter Mountain Ski Center. This will provide information to visitors about use of state land. (cost - $250)

Action 14

Replace and/or rehabilitate the three bridges on the Diamond Notch Trail to make them safe and suitable for horses. (cost - $4,000)

Action 15

Install a post and rail fence to prevent horses from damaging the area around the John Robb leanto and nearby spring. (cost - $200)

Action 16

Install a horse trough, utilizing a plastic water pipe from the spring, near the trail across from the John Robb lean-to. This will provide water for horses in an area which will not adversly impact the spring. (cost - $200)

Action 17

Erect "No Horses Beyond This Point" signs at the fire tower, the John Robb leanto and the spring. These are all sensitive areas and every precaution should be taken to keep horses away. (cost - DEC staff)

Action 18

Install bog bridges for hikers at two wet areas on the trail between the John Robb leanto and the fire tower. (cost - DEC staff)

B. Maintenance and Rehabilitation of Facilities

Action 1

Re-open and maintain existing vistas throughout the Unit. Many vistas are overgrown and no longer usable. See Facility Map indicating locations of vistas (V). (cost - DEC staff)

Action 2

Maintain existing leantos (3) and privies within the Unit. (cost - $3,000)

Action 3

Repair and maintain hiking trails, bridges and parking areas within the Unit. Expand the maintenance effort of volunteers by soliciting and organizing groups on a regular and as-needed basis. (cost - DEC staff & volunteers)

Action 4

Make arrangements for winter plowing at the trailheads on Spruceton Road and Devil's Tombstone. (cost - $500)

Action 5

Maintain trail registers at the trailheads of existing trails on the Unit. (cost - DEC staff)

Action 6

Maintain boundary lines on the Unit on a seven year cycle. (cost - DEC staff)

Action 7

Survey all unclear or unsurveyed lines on the unit and blaze and paint the boundaries. (cost - DEC staff)

Action 8

Designate suitable portions of the Spruceton Trail and the Diamond Notch Trail for horse use. These trails were originally old roads and therefore suitable for horses without major new construction. However, all three bridges on the Diamond Notch Trail must be upgraded to horsetrail standards. (cost - $4,000)

Action 9

Work with volunteers and volunteer organizations to coordinate, direct, and monitor their trail maintenance activities. (cost - DEC staff)

Action 10

Rehabilitate the Diamond Notch Road to the enlarged parking area. (cost - $10,000)

Action 11

Ditch wet areas on the Spruceton trail between the John Robb leanto and the fire tower to facilitate drainage.

C. Public Use Management and Controls

Action 1

Closely monitor trail use to identify and resolve problems, educate recreationists, and enforce the ECL and DEC rules and regulations. (cost - DEC staff)

Action 2

Post all rules and regulations regarding activities within the Unit on all trailhead bulletin boards along with information concerning safe and considerate use of mountain bicycles. (cost - DEC staff)

Action 3

Prepare and publish a color brochure detailing the Hunter Mountain Wild Forest recreational uses including rules and regulations governing those uses. (cost - $1,000)

Action 4

Continue designating camping areas with signage and control illegal uses through education and enforcement of the ECL. (cost - DEC staff)

Action 5

Initiate and maintain a dialogue with representatives of other recreational and volunteer groups, (NY/NJ Trail Conference, Horseback Riding and Mountain Biking Organizations) to coordinate activities within the Unit, to identify problems and resolve conflicts. (cost - DEC staff)

Action 6

Conduct an annual survey of trail users on the Spruceton and Diamond Notch Trails to determine the level of incompatibility between equestrians, hikers, and mountain bicyclists. (cost - DEC staff)

Action 7

Be prepared to restrict or prohibit recreational uses which create significant conflicts with other users or which clearly threaten environmental integrity.

D. Fish and Wildlife

Action 1

Manage and protect wildlife species through enforcement of the Environmental Conservation Law and pertinent Rules and Regulations.(cost - DEC staff)

Action 2

Because of constraints on traditional habitat management, active management of wildlife populations will be accomplished primarily through hunting and trapping regulations developed for broad wildlife management units and deer management units. (cost - DEC staff)

Action 3

Continue to manage the fisheries of all waters within the Unit under current statewide general regulations. (cost - DEC staff)

Action 4

Survey/examine all areas on which expansion of any recreational opportunity is planned for critical plant and animal habitat. (cost - DEC staff)

E. Land Acquisition

Action 1

Continue negotiations to obtain a trail easement by gift from Rte. 42 in the Town of Lexington to State land at the western end of the Unit. (cost - gift & DEC staff)

Action 2

Continue negotiations to obtain a trail easement by gift from the Village of Hunter and Hunter Highlands to State land at the northern end of the Unit. (cost - gift & DEC staff)

Action 3

Pursue additional land acquisition for access, parking areas and consolidation within the Unit. Although funding sources are currently unavailable for acquisition, gifts of land/easements should be considered as well as assistance from third party conservation groups, i.e. The Nature Conservancy, The Trust for Public Land, the Open Space Institute, New York-New Jersey Trail Conference and others.

F. Fire Management

Continue to monitor and protect the Unit from fire in accordance with Article 9 of the ECL. (cost - DEC staff)

G. Search and Rescue

Continue to respond to search and rescue emergencies in accordance with established procedures.

H. Water Quality Protection

Action 1

Strictly enforce the ECL and DEC rules and regulations with regard to the prohibition of camping within 150' of any stream. (cost - DEC staff)

Action 2

Provide for and maintain bridges at stream crossings to minimize streambank erosion. (cost - DEC staff)

Action 3

Conduct annual inspections of waterbars on all trails to identify maintenance needs and then followup to make sure required maintenance is completed to minimize trail erosion. (cost - DEC staff)

Action 4

Include information on sanitary practices and hygene in the woods on all bulletin boards at trailheads. (cost - DEC staff)

Action 5

Maintain all springs near trails and rehabilitate those in need by annually clearing sediment and vegetative debris and relining with large stones as needed. (cost - DEC staff)

I. SEQR Requirements

The provisions of the State Environmental Quality Review Act have been met. Actions proposed in this UMP will not result in any significant environmental impact. A Negative Declaration has been filed. A copy of the assessment form (EAF) and the Negative Declaration is included in the Appendices.

VI. SCHEDULE FOR IMPLEMENTATION/BUDGET

The following schedule will be implemented over five years, if funding is provided. Estimated costs are in addition to normal program funding.

Year - 1996 Construction Projects	Estimated Cost
○ Restoring and reinforcing the fire tower at the summit of Hunter Mountain to provide for safe public use as an observation platform.	$40,000
○ Bulletin Boards, registration boxes and signage at trailheads.	$ 2,000
○ Winter plowing of trailheads.	$ 500
○ Install hitching post for horses at Spruceton Road and Diamond Notch Trails	$ 500
○ Expand parking area at Spruceton Road end of Diamond Notch	$ 5,000
○ Construction of parking area at Spruceton Rd. Gravel surface.	$ 5,000
○ Construction of horse bridge at Spruceton Road parking area.	$ 5,000
○ Restoring and reinforcing the three bridges on the Diamond Notch Trail for horse use.	$ 4,000
○ Annual recurring maintenance springs, trails, leantos, paint, signage, vistas, parking areas.	$ 5,000
○ Printing color map of area	$ 1,000
○ Bulletin Board at Colonel's Chair	$ 250
○ Bulletin Board at Fire Tower	$ 250
○ Fence at John Robb Leanto	$ 200
○ Pipe and horse trough at spring	$ 200
Personnel Needed	
○ Assistant Forest Ranger - 6 mos.	$ 6,000
○ Forest Ranger (25% of time)	$12,000
○ Survey Crew (12% of time)	$13,000
Total Expenses Year 1	$99,990

Year - 1997	Construction Projects	Estimated Cost
○	Restoration of cabin at the summit of Hunter Mt. (include replacement of Privy)	$25,000
○	Enlarge parking area at the southern terminus of Diamond Notch Trail	$ 5,000
○	Rehabilitate the road leading to the Diamond Notch parking area.	$10,000
○	Replace privies on the Spruceton and Diamond Notch Trails.	$ 3,000
○	Construct parking area on Route 42 in Westkill	$ 4,000
○	Annual recurring maintenance	$ 5,000
	Personnel Needed	
○	Forest Ranger (25% of time)	$12,000
○	Assistant Forest Ranger - 6 mos.	$ 6,000
○	Survey Crew (12% of time)	$13,000
Total Expenses Year 2		$83,000

Year - 1998	Project	Estimated Cost
○	Complete restoration of improvements at summit of Hunter Mtn.	$10,000
○	Annual recurring maintenance	$5,000
	Personnel Needed	
○	Forest Ranger (25% of time)	$12,000
○	Assistant Forest Ranger - 6 mos.	$ 6,000
○	Survey Crew (12% of time)	$13,000
Total Expenses Year 3		$46,000

Year - 1999	Construction Projects	Estimated Cost
○	Develop a trail from the Village of Hunter leading to the summit of Hunter Mtn.	$10,000
○	Relocate Becker Hollow trail to modify its steepness	$ 2,500
○	Trail registers, bulletin board and signage for new trail.	$ 2,000
○	Annual recurring maintenance	$ 5,000
	Personnel Needed	
○	Forest Ranger (25% of time)	$12,000
○	Assistant Forest Ranger - 6 mos.	$ 6,000
Total Expenses Year 4		$37,500

Year - 2000	Construction Projects	Estimated Cost
	○ Remove telephone line and poles from the Unit.	$ 4,000
	○ Annual recurring maintenance	$ 5,000
	Personnel Needed	
	○ Forest Ranger (25% of time)	$12,000
	○ Assistant Forest Ranger - 6 mos.	$ 6,000
	Total Expenses Year 5	$27,000
	Total Estimated Cost over 5 Years	$293,400

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617.21
Appendix F
State Environmental Quality Review

NEGATIVE DECLARATION

Notice of Determination of Non-Significance

Identifying # 95-PPM-4-4

Project Number _____ Date 10/4/95

This notice is issued pursuant to Part 617 of the implementing regulations pertaining to Article 8 (State Environmental Quality Review Act) of the Environmental Conservation Law.

The NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation, as lead agency, has determined that the proposed action described below will not have a significant effect on the environment and a Draft Environmental Impact Statement will not be prepared.

Name of Action:

Implementation of the Hunter Mountain Wild Forest Unit Management Plan

SEQR Status: Type I [X]
Unlisted [ ]

Conditioned Negative Declaration: [ ] Yes
[X] No

Description of Action:

The plan identifies various resources located throughout the 10,850± acre Hunter Mountain Wild Forest, within the Catskill Forest Preserve. It recognizes constraints and issues and develops goals and objectives which will govern future management within the Unit.

Specific projects proposed in the plan include: Restoration of the structures at the summit of Hunter Mountain and incorporating their use with the Catskill Interpretive Center, a multiple use trail from the Spruceton Valley to the vicinity of Evergreen Mountain (approximately one mile), a

(See Attachment)

Location: (Include street address and the name of the municipality/county. A location map of appropriate scale is also recommended.)

Greene County, parts of the Towns of Hunter, Lexington and Jewett. New York State Forest Preserve Lands designated as the Hunter Mountain Wild Forest (see attached location map).

Reasons Supporting This Determination:
(See 617.6(g) for requirements of this determination; see 617.6(h) for Conditioned Negative Declaration)

The area will be managed in accordance with the Wilderness Guidelines established in the Catskill Park State Land Master Plan as well as constraints set forth in Article XIV of the NYS Constitution, and Section 9 of the Environmental Conservation Law. Management activities proposed in this plan have also been addressed in the final Environmental Impact Statements; Forest Preserve Interior Recreation Management Program, 11/9/91 and acquisitions for Conserving Open Space in New York State, 6/19/92.

The Commissioner's Organization and Delegation Memorandum #84-06 regarding tree cutting on Forest Preserve lands will be strictly adhered to when new facilities are constructed or existing ones modified. Project activities not covered by this document will undergo a site specific environment assessment.

Construction of the proposed facilities will be carried out in accordance with guidelines established in the Division of Operation's handbook for building trails, parking areas, bridges and leantos. Parking areas for 15-20 cars and/or trailers will be constructed with a minimum of tree cutting and soil disturbance and will be located to provide off road parking with safe and

(See Attachment)

If Conditioned Negative Declaration, provide on attachment the specific mitigation measures imposed.

For Further Information:

Contact Person: Peter Innes, Acting Regional Forester

Address: NYS DEC
Route 10, Jefferson Road; Stamford, NY 12167

Telephone Number:
(607) 652-7364

For Type I Actions and Conditioned Negative Declarations, a Copy of this Notice Sent to:

Commissioner, Department of Environmental Conservation, 50 Wolf Road, Albany, New York 12233-0001

Appropriate Regional Office of the Department of Environmental Conservation

Office of the Chief Executive Officer of the political subdivision in which the action will be principally located.

Applicant (if any)

Other involved agencies (if any)

Description of Action: (Continued)

horsetrail across the Westkill, construction of two parking areas, expansion of two parking areas, relocation of the Becker Hollow Trail to reduce its steepness, reconstruction and modification of parts of the Diamond Notch and Spruceton trails to accommodate horses and mountain bikes; remove telephone lines from Hunter Mountain, and maintain existing trails; leantos and other facilities within the unit, and construction of a new trail from the Village of Hunter to the summit of Hunter Mountain, a distance of 2.4 miles.

The plan proposes to conduct these management activities within the Unit over a five year period from the date of the plan's adoption.

Reasons Supporting This Determination:

appropriate access to public land. Trail construction and maintenance will include the use of culverts, waterbars, switchbacks and drainage ditches to mitigate soil erosion and compaction. Multiple use trails will be closed to horses and mountain bikes during wet, muddy conditions when potential for erosion is severe.

Information boards will be constructed at trailheads and maintained with materials that convey the rules governing Forest Preserve uses in general and to instruct users in low impact camping, sanitation and safety practices.

There may be a temporary increase in sedimentation during construction with no long lasting impact on the stream. The proposed bridge will provide an elevated walkway for horses thereby protecting the Westkill from horse impact.

Significant habitat or rare and endangered species identified within the Unit by the Natural Heritage Program will not be adversely impacted by the actions contained in the plan.

The NYS OPRHP Archaeological Inventory map shows no known historic or archaeological sites within the boundaries of the Unit.

Signage at the trailheads of the multiple use trails will contain information and instruction relative to the shared use of these trails by horsemen, mountain bikers and hikers.

The area in general will become more accessible to the public, but public use is not anticipated to significantly increase as a result of the proposals put forth in the plan. Impacts associated with the implementation of this plan were evaluated in a full environmental assessment form. All impacts were determined to be minor, affecting a relatively small percentage of the total project area.

Appendix B

Species Occurrence List for Hunter Mountain Wild Forest

COMMON NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME	LS	SR
Mammals			
masked shrew	Sorex cinereus	U	S5
smoky shrew	S. fumeus	U	S5
long-tailed shrew	S. dispar	U	S4
water shrew	S. palustris	U	S4
least shrew	Cryptotis parva	U	SH
northern short-tailed shrew	Blarina brevicauda	U	S5
star-nosed mole	Condylura cristata	U	S5
hairy-tailed mole	Parascalops breweri	U	S5
little brown bat	Myotis lucifugus	U	S5
Keen's bat	M. keenii	U	
small-footed bat	M. leibii	USC	S2
silver-haired bat	Lasionycteris noctivagans	U	S4B,S2N
eastern pipistrelle	Pipistrellus subflavus	U	S3
big brown bat	Eptesicus fuscus	U	S5
red bat	Lasiurus borealis	U	S5B,S2N
hoary bat	L. cinereus	U	S4B,S2N
black bear	Ursus americanus	G	S5
raccoon	Procyon lotor	G	S5
fisher	Martes pennanti	G	S4
ermine	Mustela erminea	G	S5
long-tailed weasel	M. frenata	G	S5
mink	M. vison	G	S5
river otter	Lutra canadensis	G	S5
striped skunk	Mephitis mephitis	G	S5
coyote	Canis latrans	G	S5
red fox	Vulpes vulpes	G	S5
gray fox	Urocyon cinereoargenteus	G	S5
bobcat	Lynx rufus	G	S4
woodchuck	Marmota monax	U	S5
eastern chipmunk	Tamias striatus	U	S5
gray squirrel	Sciurus carolinensis	G	S5
red squirrel	Tamiasciurus hudsonicus	U	S5
southern flying squirrel	Glaucomys volans	U	S5
northern flying squirrel	G. sabrinus	U	S5
beaver	Castor canadensis	G	S5
deer mouse	Peromyscus maniculatus	U	S5
white-footed mouse	P. leucopus	U	S5
southern bog lemming	Synaptomys cooperi	U	S4
southern red-backed vole	Clethrionomys gapperi	U	S5
meadow vole	Microtus pennsylvanicus	U	S5
rock vole	M. chrotorrhinus	U	S4
woodland vole	M. pinetorum	U	S5
muskrat	Ondatra zibethica	G	S5
meadow jumping mouse	Zapus hudsonius	U	S5
woodland jumping mouse	Napaeozapus insignis	U	S5

COMMON NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME	LS	SR
porcupine	Erethizon dorsatum	U	S5
varying hare	Lepus americanus	G	S5
eastern cottontail	Sylvilagus floridanus	G	S5
white-tailed deer	Odocoileus virginianus	G	S5
Reptiles			
snapping turtle	Chelydra serpentina	U	S5
wood turtle	Clemmys insculpta	GSC	S4
northern water snake	Nerodia sipedon	U	S5
brown snake	Storeria dekayi	U	S5
redbelly snake	S. occipitomaculata	U	S5
common garter snake	Thamnophis sirtalis	U	S5
eastern ribbon snake	T. sauritus	U	S5
eastern hognose snake	Heterodon platyrhinos	USC	S3S4
ringneck snake	Diadophis punctatus	U	S5
racer	Coluber constrictor	U	S5
smooth green snake	Opheodrys vernalis	U	S5
rat snake	Elaphe obsoleta	U	S5
milk snake	Lampropeltis triangulum	U	S5
timber rattlesnake	Crotalus horridus	PT	S3
Amphibians			
Jefferson salamander	Ambystoma jeffersonianum	USC	S4?
blue-spotted salamander	A. laterale	USC	S4
spotted salamander	A. maculatum	USC	S5
red-spotted newt	Notophthalmus viridescens	U	S5
dusky salamander	Desmognathus fuscus	U	S5
mountain dusky salamander	D. ochrophaeus	U	S5
redback salamander	Plethodon cinereus	U	S5
slimy salamander	P. glutinosus	U	S5
four-toed salamander	Hemidactylium scutatum	U	S5
spring salamander	Gyrinophilus porphyriticus	U	S5
red salamander	Pseudotriton ruber	U	S5
two-lined salamander	Eurycea bislineata	U	S5
American toad	Bufo americanus	U	S5
spring peeper	Pseudacris crucifer	U	S5
gray treefrog	Hyla versicolor	U	S5
bullfrog	Rana catesbeiana	G	S5
green frog	R. clamitans	G	S5
wood frog	R. sylvatica	G	S5
pickerel frog	R. palustris	G	S5

COMMON NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME	LS	SR	BBA
Birds				
great blue heron	Ardea herodias	P	S5	PO
mallard	Anas platyrhynchos	G	S5	C
turkey vulture	Cathartes aura	P	S4	PO
Cooper's hawk	Accipiter cooperii	PSC	S4	PO
northern goshawk	A. gentilis	P	S4	PO
sharp-shinned hawk	A. striatus	P	S4	N
red-shouldered hawk	Buteo lineatus	PT	S4	PO
broad-winged hawk	B. platypterus	P	S5	C
red-tailed hawk	B. jamaicensis	P	S5	PR
American kestrel	Falco sparverius	P	S5	N
ring-necked pheasant	Phasianus colchicus	G	SE	PO
ruffed grouse	Bonasa umbellus	G	S5	C
wild turkey	Meleagris gallopavo	G	S5	C
American crow	Corvus brachyrhynchos	G	S5	C
northern raven	C. corax	PSC	S4	N
killdeer	Charadrius vociferus	P	S5	PO
spotted sandpiper	Actitis macularia	P	S5	PO
mourning dove	Zenaida macroura	P	S5	PO
black-billed cuckoo	Coccyzus erythropthalmus	P	S5	PR
yellow-billed cuckoo	C. americanus	P	S5	PR
eastern screech owl	Otus asio	P	S5	N
great horned owl	Bubo virginianus	P	S5	PR
barred owl	Strix varia	P	S5	PR
long-eared owl	Asio otus	P	S3	N
northern saw-whet owl	Aegolius acadicus	P	S3	N
common nighthawk	Chordeiles minor	PSC	S4	N
chimney swift	Chaetura pelagica	P	S5	PO
ruby-throated hummingbird	Archilochus colubris	PB	S5	C
belted kingfisher	Ceryle alcyon	P	S5	C
red-headed woodpecker	Melanerpes erythrocephalus	P	S5	C
yellow-bellied sapsucker	Sphyrapicus varius	P	S5	C
downy woodpecker	Picoides pubescens	P	S5	C
hairy woodpecker	P. villosus	PB	S5	C
northern flicker	Colaptes auratus	P	S5	C
pileated woodpecker	Dryocopus pileatus	P	S5	C
olive-sided flycatcher	Contopus borealis	P	S5	PR
eastern wood-pewee	C. virens	P	S5	PR
yellow-bellied flycatcher	Empidonax flaviventris	P	S3	PR
alder flycatcher	E. alnorum	P	S5	PO
willow flycatcher	E. traillii	P	S5	PO
least flycatcher	E. minimus	P	S5	C
eastern phoebe	Sayornis phoebe	P	S5	C
great crested flycatcher	Myiarchus crinitus	P	S5	PR
eastern kingbird	Tyrannus tyrannus	P	S5	C
tree swallow	Tachycineta bicolor	P	S5	C
northern rough-winged swallow	Stelgidopteryx serripennis	P	S5	C
bank swallow	Riparia riparia	P	S5	PO
cliff swallow	Hirundo pyrrhonota	P	S5	C

COMMON NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME	LS	SR	BBA
barn swallow	H. rustica	P	S5	C
blue jay	Cyanocitta cristata	P	S5	C
black-capped chickadee	Parus atricapillus	P	S5	C
tufted titmouse	P. bicolor	P	S5	PO
red-breasted nuthatch	Sitta canadensis	P	S5	C
white-breasted nuthatch	S. carolinensis	P	S5	PR
brown creeper	Certhia americana	P	S5	PR
house wren	Troglodytes aedon	P	S5	C
winter wren	T. troglodytes	P	S5	PR
golden-crowned kinglet	Regulus satrapa	P	S5	PO
blue-gray gnatcatcher	Polioptila caerulea	P	S5	PO
eastern bluebird	Sialia sialis	PSC	S5	C
veery	Catharus fuscescens	P	S5	PR
gray-cheeked thrush	C. minimus	P	S2S3	PR
Swainson's thrush	C. ustulatus	P	S5	PR
hermit thrush	C. guttatus	P	S5	C
wood thrush	Hylocichla mustelina	P	S5	C
American robin	Turdus migratorius	P	S5	C
gray catbird	Dumetella carolinensis	P	S5	C
northern mockingbird	Mimus polyglottos	P	S5	PO
brown thrasher	Toxostoma rufum	P	S5	C
cedar waxwing	Bombycilla cedrorum	P	S5	C
European starling	Sturnus vulgaris	U	SE	C
solitary vireo	Vireo solitarius	P	S5	C
yellow-throated vireo	V. flavifrons	P	S5	C
warbling vireo	V. gilvus	P	S5	C
red-eyed vireo	V. olivaceus	P	S5	C
Nashville warbler	Vermivora ruficapilla	P	S5	PO
yellow warbler	Dendroica petechia	PB	S5	C
chestnut-sided warbler	D. pensylvanica	P	S5	C
magnolia warbler	D. magnolia	P	S5	PR
black-throated blue warbler	D. caerulescens	P	S5	C
yellow-rumped warbler	D. coronata	P	S5	C
black-throated green warbler	D. virens	P	S5	PR
blackburnian warbler	D. fusca	P	S5	C
prairie warbler	D. discolor	P	S5	PO
blackpoll warbler	D. striata	P	S3	C
black-and-white warbler	Mniotilta varia	P	S5	C
American redstart	Setophaga ruticilla	P	S5	C
ovenbird	Seiurus aurocapillus	P	S5	C
northern waterthrush	S. noveboracensis	P	S5	C
Louisiana waterthrush	S. motacilla	P	S5	C
mourning warbler	Oporornis philadelphia	P	S5	PR
common yellowthroat	Geothlypis trichas	P	S5	C
Canada warbler	Wilsonia canadensis	P	S5	PR
scarlet tanager	Piranga olivacea	P	S5	C
northern cardinal	Cardinalis cardinalis	P	S5	C
rose-breasted grosbeak	Pheucticus ludovicianus	P	S5	C
indigo bunting	Passerina cyanea	P	S5	PR

COMMON NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME	LS	SR	BBA
rufous-sided towhee	Pipilo erythrophthalmus	P	S5	PR
chipping sparrow	Spizella passerina	P	S5	C
field sparrow	S. pusilla	P	S5	C
savannah sparrow	Passerculus sandwichensis	P	S5	C
song sparrow	Melospiza melodia	P	S5	C
swamp sparrow	M. georgiana	P	S5	PO
white-throated sparrow	Zonotrichia albicollis	P	S5	C
dark-eyed junco	Junco hyemalis	P	S5	C
bobolink	Dolichonyx oryzivorus	P	S5	PR
red-winged blackbird	Agelaius phoeniceus	P	S5	C
eastern meadowlark	Sturnella magna	P	S5	PR
common grackle	Quiscalus quiscula	P	S5	C
brown-headed cowbird	Molothrus ater	P	S5	C
northern oriole	Icterus galbula	P	S5	C
purple finch	Carpodacus purpureus	P	S5	C
house finch	C. mexicanus	P	SE	C
red crossbill	Loxia curvirostra	P	S3	PO
pine siskin	Carduelis pinus	P	S5	PO
American goldfinch	C. tristis	P	S5	C
evening grosbeak	Coccothraustes vespertinus	P	S5	C
house sparrow	Passer domesticus	U	SE	C

KEY

LS - LEGAL STATUS
- P - PROTECTED
- U - UNPROTECTED
- E - ENDANGERED
- T - THREATENED
- SC - SPECIAL CONCERN
- G - GAME SPECIES
- B - BLUE LISTED

SR - STATE RANKING
- S1 - 5 OR FEWER OCCURRENCES
- S2 - 6-10 OCCURRENCES
- S3 - 21-100 OCCURRENCES
- S4 - SECURE IN NEW YORK STATE
- S5 - VERY SECURE IN NEW YORK STATE

BBA - BREEDING BIRD ATLAS RECORD
- C - CONFIRMED BREEDER
- PR- PROBABLE BREEDER
- PO- POSSIBLE BREEDER
- N - NO BREEDING RECORD

Fish species collected from Schoharie Creek watershed upstream from the Prattsville fish barrier or stony clove.

FAMILY CYPRINIDAE: CARPS AND MINNOWS

central stoneroller Campostoma anomalum
cutlips minnow Exoglossum maxillinqua
common shiner Luxilus cornutus
golden shiner Notemigonus crysoleucas
bluntnose minnow Pimephales notatus
blacknose dace Rhinichthys atratulus
longnose dace Rhinichthys cataractae
creek chub Semotilus atromaculatus
fallfish Semotilus corporalis

FAMILY CATOSTOMIDAE: SUCKERS

white sucker Catostomus commersoni
northern hog sucker Hypentelium nigricans

FAMILY ICTALURIDAE: BULLHEAD CATFISHES

brown bullhead Ameirus nebulosus
stonecat Notorus flavus
margined madtom Noturus insignis

FAMILY SALMONIDAE: TROUTS

rainbow trout Oncorhynchus mykiss
brown trout Salmo trutta
brook trout Salvelinus fontinalis

FAMILY CYPRINODONTIDAE: KILLIFISHES

banded killfish Fundulus diaphanous

FAMILY COTTIDAE: SCULPINS

slimy sculpin Cottus cognatus

FAMILY CENTRARCHIDAE: SUNFISHES

rockbass ambloplites rupestris
pumpkinseed bass Lepomis gibbosus
smallmouth bass Micropterus dolomieu
largemouth bass Micropterus salmoides

FAMILY PERCIDAE: PERCHES

tesselated darter Etheostoma olmstedi
yellow perch Perca flavescens

APPENDIX C

Hunter Mountain Area Drainages (In or Bordering Preserve)

Water & T	Code	Item#	Class.*	Standard*	Miles
Schoharie Creek (9)	879.6				5.47
T133b		269	C	C	.38
T133b-1		269	C	C	1.38
T133c		269	C	C	.38
T136		269	C	C	.04
T141		271	A	A	.19
T141-1		271	A	A	.19
T145		276	A	A(T)	1.52
T145-2		278	C	C	.57
T145-3		278	C	C	.77
Stony Clove Creek(9)	862.6				5.95
Mainstem		585	B	B(T)	.38
T4-2-1		602			.47
T4-2		602	All in Preserve		.57
T4-1		601	D	D	.19
T4		600	C	C(T)	.28
T7-2			All in Preserve		.66
T7-1		606	All in Preserve		.85
T7		605	C	C	2.08
T14		612	All in Preserve		.47
West Kill (8)	879.6				5.25
T4A1		255	C	C	.38
T6		255	C	C	.38
Mainstem		251	C	C(TS)	.28
T8		256	C	C(T)	.09
T9-1		258	All in Preserve		.47
T9		258	All in Preserve		2.08
T10		258	All in Preserve		.43
Source		251	C	C(TS)	1.14

Tributary Names

Schoharie Creek	T141	Shanty Hollow
	T145	Becker Hollow
Stony Clove Creek	T4	Hollow Tree Brook
	T7	Myrtle Brook
West Kill	T6	Schoolhouse Brook
	T8	Herdman Brook
	T9	Hunter Brook

* Note: (Class. =) Classifications and Standards are for Sections not in Forest Preserve.

Appendix D

TRAIL SIGNS

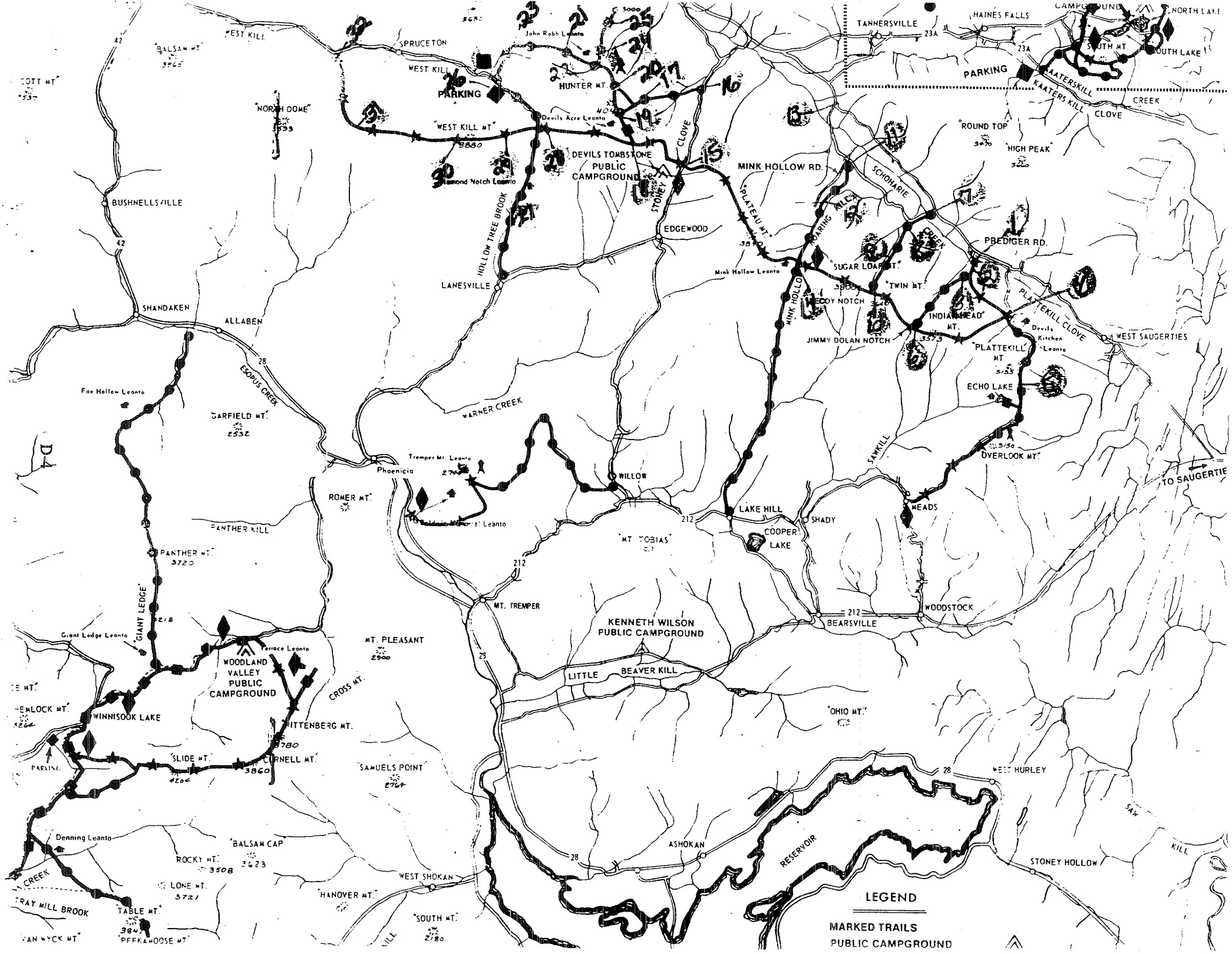
Legend	Arrow/ Color	Miles	Location	Sign/Trail Jct #'s
Platteau Mt. Lookout	L&R/R	1.23	At trail crossing	30/15
Mink Hollow Lean-to		4.3	N. end of Devil's	
Indian Head Mt.		8.40	Tombstone Campsite	
Platte Clove		12.72		
Devil's Acre Lean-to 1600'	L&R/R	2.15	Same	31
Diamond Notch Falls		4.38		
Hunter Mt. 2029'		3.75		
Spruceton Road		7.15		
Westkill Mt.		6.90		
Hunter Mt. 2220'	L&R/B	2.05	At start of Becker	32/16
Hunter via Shanty Hollow		5.90	Trail to Hunter Mt.	
Spruceton Road		5.64	on Stony Clove	
Hunter Mt. Observatory		2.31		
Hunter Mt. Fire Tower	R /Y	.35	Jct. of Spring Trail off Becker Trail, above 3500' sign	32A/17
Hunter Mt.	R /B	.32	Same	32B
Hunter Mt. Fire Tower		1.62		
John Robb Lean-to	R /B	2.90	Trail jct near Devil's	33/18
Hunter Mt. Observatory		1.65	Acre Lean-to	
Devil's Acre Lean-to	L /R	.10	Same (see sing #53)	34
Devil's Tombstone Campsite	L /R	2.15	Same	35
Plateau Mt. Lookout	L /R	3.88	Same	
Devil's Acre Lean-to	L /Y	1.35	Old Tower Site,	36/19
Devil's Acre Tombstone Campsite		3.35	Hunter Mt. Lean-to	
Westkill Mt. Summit		6.09	(W.Cline)	
Colonel's Chair & Chair Lift	R /B	2.10	Post at present tower	36A/20
John Robb Lean-to		1.30	site and trail to	
Jct. Old Hunter Rd.		1.65	Spruceton	
Spruceton Rd.		3.35		
Devil's Acre Lean-to	L /B	1.70	Same	36B
Rt. 214 Stony Clove		2.36		
Devil's Tombstone Campsite		3.75		
Westkill Mt. Summit		.54		

* Arrow: L=Left, R=Right Color: R=Red, Y=Yellow, B=Blue

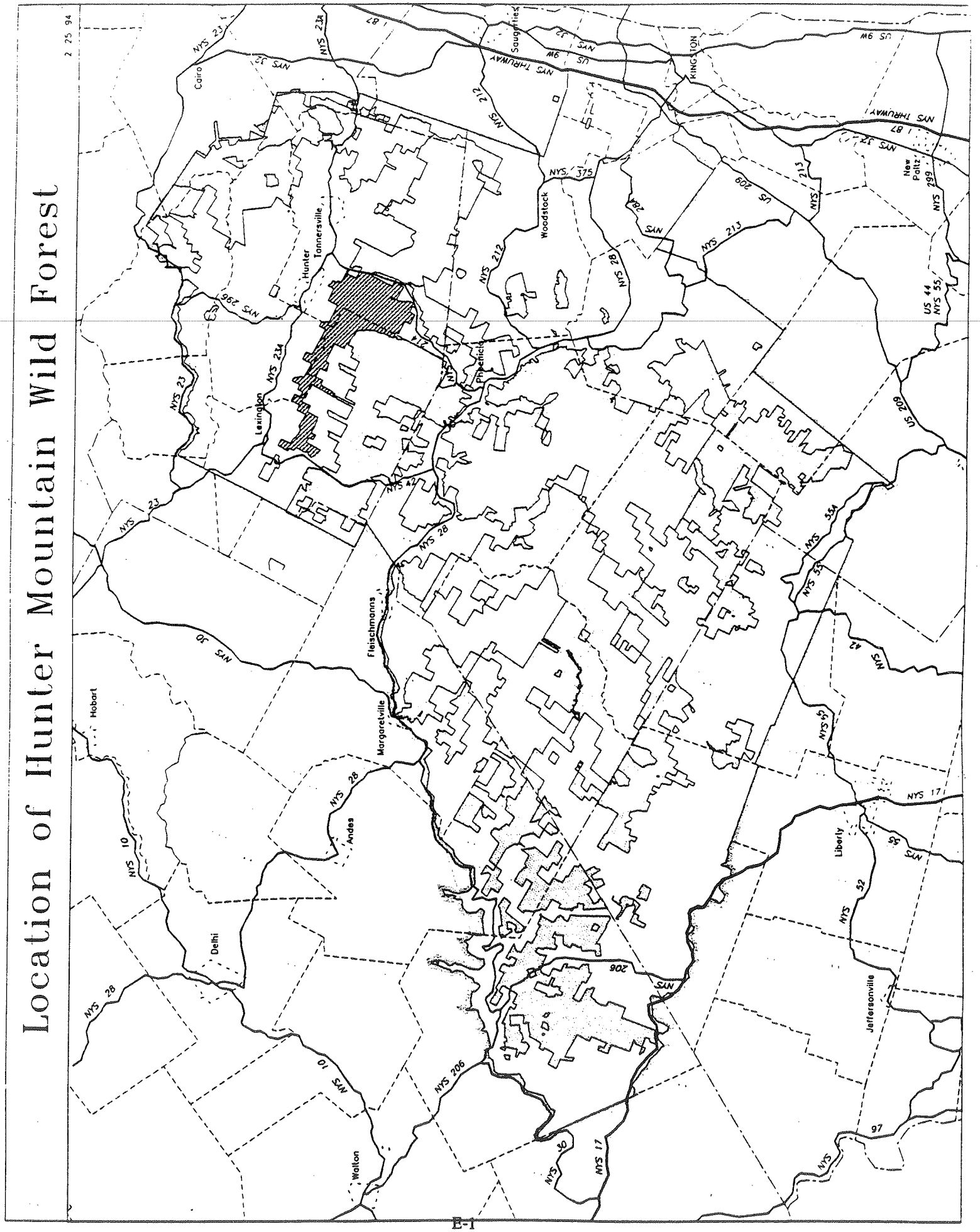
Legend	Arrow/ Color	Miles	Location	Sign/Trail Jct #'s
State Rte. 214	R /B	2.36	Same	37
To Hunter Mt. Tower	R /B	.35	Same	38
Colonel's Chair John Robb Lean-to Spruceton Road	R /B	2.35 1.60 3.65	Same	39
John Robb Lean-to	L /B	.30	Jct. Hunter Mt. Trail & Spring Trail (by old lean-to site)	40/21
Colonel's Chair & Chair Lift	R /Y	1.10	Jct. Shanty Hollow & trial from Spruceton	41/22
Hunter Mt. Devil's Acre Lean-to Devil's Tombstone Campsite	L /B	1.00 2.70 4.72	Same	42
John Robb Lean-to Spruceton Road	R /B	.30 2.45	Same	43
Hunter Mt. Tower 1100' John Robb Lean-to Devil's Tombstone Campsite	R /B	1.70 .60 5.45	Jct. Old Hunter Rd & Trail to Hunter Mt. (Top of Demming's Notch) Taylor Hollow	44/23
Spruceton Road	L /B	1.80	Same	45
Hunter Mt.	L /Y	1.80	Where trial leaves last ski trail at State line	46/24
Hunter Mt. Devil's Acre Lean-to Devil's Tombstone Campground	L /Y	2.05 3.70 5.76	At top of Colonel's Chair	47/25
Trail to John Robb Lean-to Platte Clove Road Hunter Mt. 1945' Devil's Tombstone Rte. 214	L&R/B	2.40 19.97 3.50 3.46	Jct. Old Hunter Rd & Spruceton Rd by large Parking lot	(48)/26
Trail to Diamond Notch Falls Diamond Notch Lean-to Devil's Acre Lean-to Lanesville -Jct of Rte 214 Westkill Mt. Summit Spruceton Road via Westkill Devil's Tombstone Rte. 214	L&R/B	1.00 1.46 3.23 3.46 3.52 8.21 5.38	Same	(49)

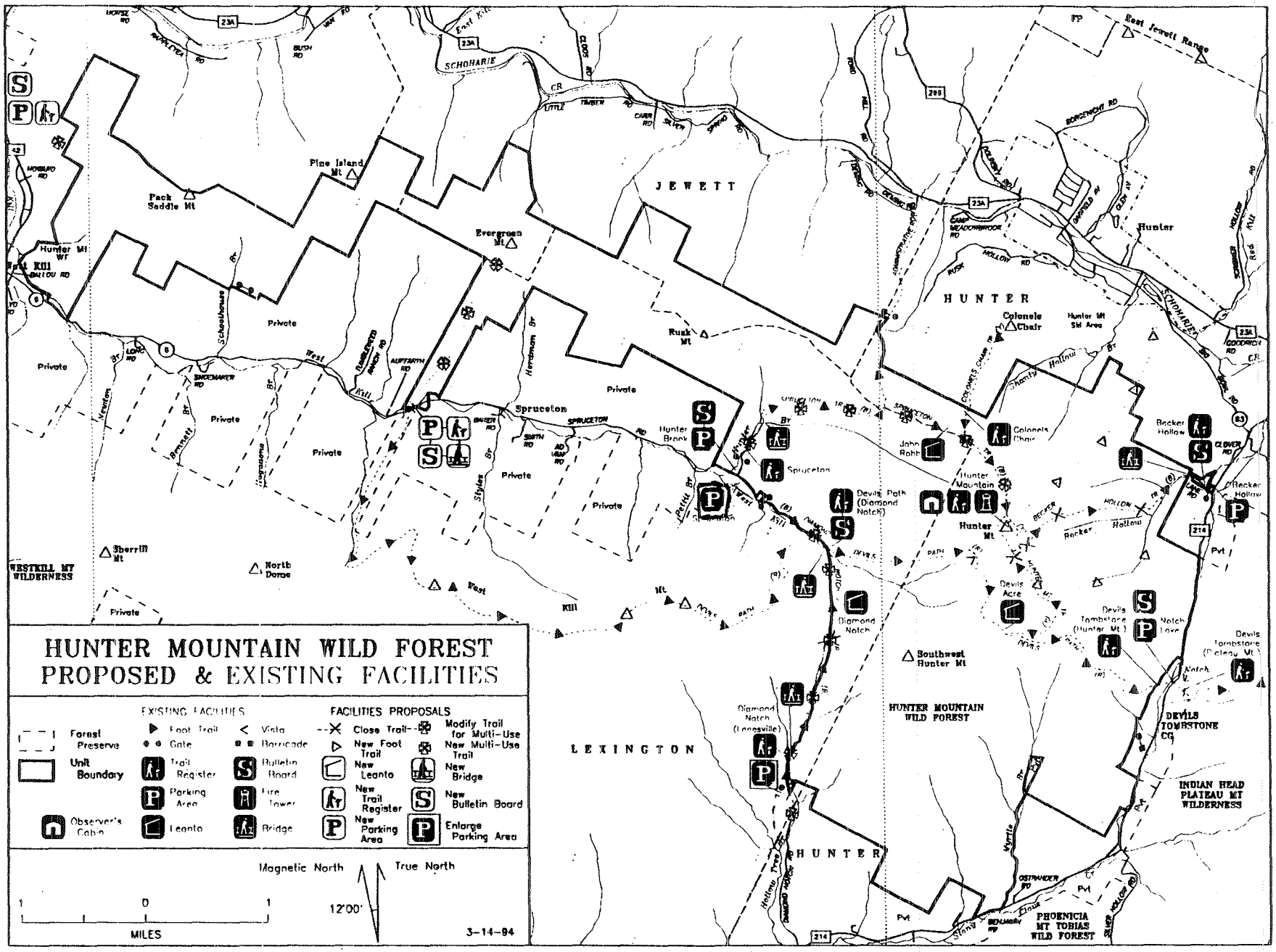
Legend	Arrow/ Color	Miles	Location	Sign/Trail Jct #'s
Diamond Notch 1310'	R&L/B	2.97	Start of Diamond Notch	50/27
Hunter Mt. Tower via Red Trail		7.39	trail on Stony Clove Rd	
Westkill Mt. Summit		5.76	Route 214	
Lanesville	R&L/B	1.10	Parking lot in Diamond by gate, Lanesville side	51
Spruceton Road	R /B	3.40	Same	52
Buttermilk Falls	L /R	2.30	Jct Red & Yellow Trails	53/18
Diamond Notch Lean-to		2.69	near Devil's Acre Lean-to	
Westkill Mt. Summit		4.80		
Rte 214 Lanesville		5.76		
Devil's Acre Lean-to	L /R	2.30	Trail jct by Buttermilk	54/28
Hunter Mt. Fire Tower		3.93	Falls	
Devil's Tombstone Campsite		4.40		
Spruceton-Old Hunter Road Jct	L /B	1.00	Same	55
Diamond Notch Lean-to	R /B	.46	Same	56
Rte. 214 Lanesville		3.46		
Buck Ridge Lookouts	R /R	2.41	Same	57
Westkill Mt. Summit		2.51		
Mink Hollow		5.68		
Spruceton Road		7.21		

* Arrow: L=Left, R=Right Color: R=Red, B=Blue, Y=Yellow


TANNERSVILLE
HAINES FALLS
CAMPGROUND
NORTH LAKE
SOUTH MT.
SOUTH LAKE
PARKING
KAATERSKILL
KAATERS KILL
CLOVE
CREEK
ROUND TOP
HIGH PEAK
SPRUCETON
WEST KILL
PARKING
HUNTER MT.
WEST KILL MT.
Devils Acre Leanto
DEVILS TOMBSTONE PUBLIC CAMPGROUND
STONEY CLOVE
MINK HOLLOW RD.
SCHOHARIE
PLATEAU MT.
Mink Hollow Leanto
SUGAR LOAF MT.
TWIN MT.
PREDIGER RD.
INDIANHEAD MT.
JIMMY DOLAN NOTCH
PLATTEKILL CLOVE
Devils Kitchen Leanto
PLATTEKILL MT.
ECHO LAKE
WEST SAUGERTIES
OVERLOOK MT.
TO SAUGERTIES
SAWKILL
MEADS
WOODSTOCK
BEARSVILLE
SHADY
LAKE HILL
COOPER LAKE
MT. TOBIAS
WILLOW
EDGEWOOD
LANESVILLE
HOLLOW TREE BROOK
Diamond Notch Leanto
BUSHNELLSVILLE
SHANDAKEN
ALLABEN
ESOPUS CREEK
WARNER CREEK
Fox Hollow Leanto
GARFIELD MT.
Phoenicia
Tremper Mt. Leanto
ROMER MT.
PANTHER KILL
PANTHER MT.
GIANT LEDGE
Giant Ledge Leanto
WOODLAND VALLEY PUBLIC CAMPGROUND
Terrace Leanto
MT. PLEASANT
CROSS MT.
MT. TREMPER
KENNETH WILSON PUBLIC CAMPGROUND
LITTLE BEAVER KILL
WINNISOOK LAKE
WITTENBERG MT.
SLIDE MT.
CORNELL MT.
SAMUELS POINT
OHIO MT.
WEST HURLEY
Denning Leanto
BALSAM CAP
ROCKY MT.
LONE MT.
HANOVER MT.
WEST SHOKAN
ASHOKAN
RESERVOIR
STONEY HOLLOW
TABLE MT.
PEEKAMOOSE MT.
SOUTH MT.
LEGEND
MARKED TRAILS
PUBLIC CAMPGROUND

APPENDIX E


Location of Hunter Mountain Wild Forest
2 25 94
Cairo
Saugerties
KINGSTON
Woodstock
New Paltz
Hunter
Tannersville
Lexington
Phoenicia
Fleischmanns
Margaretville
Hobart
Andes
Delhi
Walton
Liberty
Jeffersonville
NYS THRUWAY
US 9W
NYS 32
NYS 212
NYS 375
NYS 28A
NYS 213
US 209
NYS 299
US 44
NYS 55
NYS 23
NYS 23A
NYS 296
NYS 28
NYS 30
NYS 10
NYS 206
NYS 17
NYS 42
NYS 55A
NYS 52
NYS 97


HUNTER MOUNTAIN WILD FOREST
PROPOSED & EXISTING FACILITIES
EXISTING FACILITIES
Forest Preserve
Unit Boundary
Observer's Cabin
Foot Trail
Gate
Trail Register
Parking Area
Leanto
Vista
Barricade
Bulletin Board
Fire Tower
Bridge
FACILITIES PROPOSALS
Close Trail
New Foot Trail
New Leanto
New Trail Register
New Parking Area
Modify Trail for Multi-Use
New Multi-Use Trail
New Bridge
New Bulletin Board
Enlarge Parking Area
Magnetic North
True North
12°00'
1 0 1
MILES
3-14-94
JEWETT
HUNTER
LEXINGTON
HUNTER
Pine Island Mt
Pack Saddle Mt
Evergreen Mt
Rusk Mt
Hunter Mt
Spruceton
Hunter Brook
Colonels Chair
Hunter Mountain Ski Area
Hunter Mt
Southwest Hunter Mt
Diamond Notch
Diamond Notch (Longsville)
Devils Path (Diamond Notch)
Devils Acre
Devils Tombstone (Hunter Mt)
Devils Tombstone (Plateau Mt)
Becker Hollow
Sberrill Mt
North Dome
WESTKILL MT WILDERNESS
HUNTER MOUNTAIN WILD FOREST
DEVILS TOMBSTONE CG
INDIAN HEAD PLATEAU MT WILDERNESS
PHOENICIA MT TOBIAS WILD FOREST
SCHOHARIE CR
East Jewett Range
Private
Pvt

APPENDIX F

Hunter Mountain Trail Register
Statistics from 1989 -1992

Use is roughly measured from trail register statistics which indicates the number of people in a hiking party , their length of stay (day, overnight, several nights), and destination. Signing-in at registers is voluntary so figures can be assumed to be on the conservative side; and also registers and register sheets are periodically vandalized. However, the register tally shows approximate numbers of users and especially indicates trends over a period of time.

Hunter Mountain Wild Forest Trail Register Tally.

Days of Use (Day Users plus Overnights)

Trail/Register	1989	1990	1991	1992
Devil's Path/Hunter	1045	1266	1442	1629
Devil Path/Diamond Notch	1521	1937	1824	1395
Diamond Notch/Lanesville	455	961	1707	1100
Becker Hollow	1014	1282	1810	1286
Colonel's Chair	595	623	600	620
Spruceton/Hunter Mtn.	926	1533	1448	1352
Hunter Mtn./Fire Tower	1800	(register destroyed not replaced)		

APPENDIX G

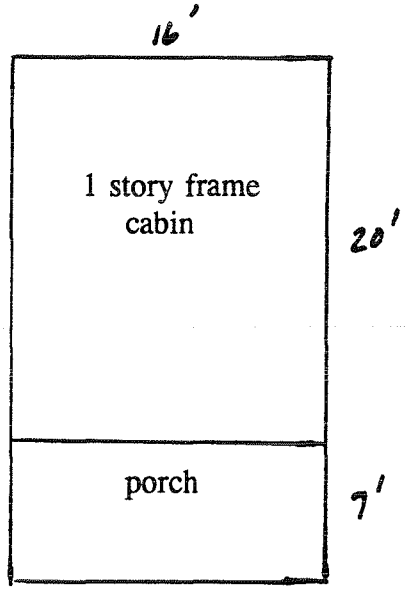
HUNTER MOUNTAIN WILD FOREST

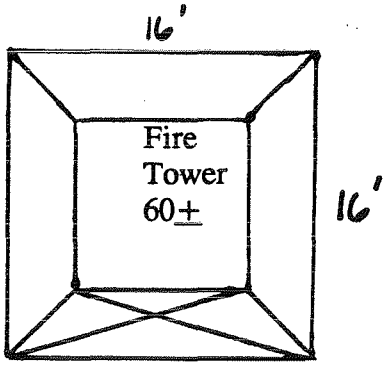
The focal point of this Wild Forest is the presently-unmanned firetower. Hunter Mountain is the second highest peak in the Catskill Mountains; with a tower at the summit, there is 360 degrees of panoramic views - but no view at all without a tower. The following photographs will display the summit of the Mountain, the present man-made structures and their condition and will show the viewshed that is available. Photography is of September 1992.

The forest surrounding the clearing at the Mountain's summit is less than 100 years old and is still growing. The dominant balsam fir has an average height of 35 feet; the scattered red spruce is taller. In another 30 years, the fir will probably reach a maximum height of about 55 to 60 feet. At that time, a tower of 50 feet at the summit will be the minimum necessary to get above the trees to obtain a vista of 360 degrees. As the photos show, there is no view now from ground level at the summit.

Of the highest ten peaks of the Catskills, Hunter is the only one with a tower and thus a unique panoramic vista. The other peaks have limited viewing points instead. At 4,040 feet elevation, Hunter is only 140 feet less in elevation than Slide Mountain in Ulster County. It is the only peak (of the top ten) that has a road accessing the summit. And there has been a State-maintained tower here since 1909. These factors of uniqueness and accessibility are reasons for retention and maintenance of the firetower on this site.

SKETCH MAP OF IMPROVEMENTS
AT SUMMIT OF HUNTER MOUNTAIN
(Approximate Dimensions and Location)





APPENDIX H
COMMENTS RECEIVED ON HUNTER MT UMP

The following comments were received in response to the draft unit management plan for Hunter Mountain Wild Forest. The comments we received were very useful in the preparation of the final version of the plan. However, final decisions were not reached based solely on the numbers of individual opinions that were received by DEC staff.

General Concerns

- DEC should undertake a study of access needs on the area.
Response We agree that there is a need for better public access to forest preserve lands and will continue to try and improve the situation.

- Protection of the environment should be DEC's first priority, not economic development.
Response Agreed.

- Taking down the telephone line is a good idea.
Response Agreed.

- Taking down the telephone line is a waste of money.
Response We feel improvement of the natural character of the area is worth the relatively small cost of removal. However, this project is low priority.

- Airplane overflights should be prohibited to protect wilderness qualities.
Response DEC does not have the authority to prohibit overflights.

- There should be no new camping facilities at the end of Spruceton Valley.
Response None are proposed.

- Stony Clove cliffs should be off limits to ice climbing.
Response We do not feel that the level of current use poses a threat significant enough to prohibit the activity.

- Detached parcel on the East Jewitt Range should be included in this unit.
Response This parcel is not contiguous with the rest of the Hunter unit and consequently is not included.

Hunter Mountain Tower

- Preservation of the fire tower is a good idea.
Response Agreed.

- The use of the observers cabin for educational exhibits is a good idea.
Response Agreed.

Land Acquisition

- The proposals are good.
Response Agreed.

- East Jewitt Range should be considered for future acquisition.
Response This area is not contiguous with the Hunter unit and consequently was not considered for acquisition needs.

Leantos

- The John Robb leanto should be removed eventually, not rebuilt.
Response We feel the leanto serves a useful function and does not threaten the environmental integrity of the area. However, it should be relocated eventually further from the trail.

Maintenance & Enforcement

- Trail use regulations should be strictly enforced.
Response Agreed.

- More DEC staff is needed on the trails to educate first, enforce second.
Response Agreed.

- There should be some provision in the plan for maintenance of the area.
Response Agreed. This section was supplemented in the final version of the plan.

- Provision should be made in the budget for Forest Rangers and Assistant Forest Rangers.
Response Agreed. This section was supplemented in the final version of the plan.

- Provision should be made in the budget to provide staff for the Hunter Mountain fire tower.

Response Agreed. This section was supplemented in the final version of the plan.

- The cost of maintaining new facilities will be significant and not achievable in these difficult fiscal times.
Response Our approach has been to plan for what is desireable rather than limit plans to current resources.

Multiple Use Trail Proposal

- This is a good idea, opportunities should be provided for horses and mountain bicycles.
Response Agreed. The opportunities for horseback riding and mountain bicycle use should be provided.

- Multiple use trails do not work, many uses are fundamentally incompatible, discouraged in the Catskill State Land Master Plan, cost of maintainence and construction would be high and this money could be better spent elsewhere.
Response We believe some level of multiple use on existing trails is not only practical but necessary to adequately meet recreational demand. There is not enough suitable land or resources to construct separate trails for each type of trail use. However, tolerance and consideration from all recreationists is necessary.

- A better design for such trails is needed along with an identified funding source for future maintenance.
Response The plan has been revised to reflect these concerns.

- There is no discussion on how to prevent illegal vehicular use of multiple use trails.
Response Vehicular trail use is currently illegal and was never proposed.

- Trails for horses and mountain bicycles should be developed and maintained by those constituencies in new locations.
Response We have received many offers from these constituencies for this type of assistance. However, since public land and finances are both limited, we feel that it is reasonable to provide for multiple use on some trails.

- On an individual basis, horses and mountain bicycles are much more damaging to trails than hikers.
Response This should not preclude consideration of these uses in appropriate areas.

- The issue of multiple use trails should be addresed in the revised Catskill State Land Master Plan.
Response Agreed.

- Trails for horses and mountain bicycles should be restricted to lower elevations.
Response This option will be considered in the next revision of the Catskill State Land Master Plan.

- Mountain Bicycles, horses, and hikers should have specific trails designated solely for their use.
Response We do not have sufficient resources or a large enough land base to provide totally separate trail systems. We believe some level of multiple use of trails is not only practical, but necessary to adequately meet recreational demand. However, tolerance and consideration between all recreational users is necessary.

New Packsaddle Trail

- This is a good idea.
Response This proposal was withdrawn in the final version of the plan. The Catskill State Land Master Plan prohibits construction of horse trails over 2,700' elevation except on existing roads. There is no existing road corrider on this ridge and consequently this trail would have violated the Master Plan.

- This is a good idea, but only for a hiking trail which avoids Rusk Mountain in order to keep it trailless.
Response At this time we do not have any access to state land from Route 42. We would like to reconsider a trail if and when access is obtained on the Western end of this ridge.

- This is a bad idea, this ridge is environmentally sensitive with wilderness qualities, Rusk and Evergreen Mts. should remain trailess, the terrain is rough and steep, construction costs would be very high, many areas are above 2.700' and the Catskill State Land Master Plan prohibits horsetrails above this elevation.
Response This proposal was withdrawn in the final version of the plan. The Catskill State Land Master Plan prohibits construction of horse trails over 2,700' elevation except on existing roads. There is no existing road corrider.

- The cost of construction will be much higher than estimated because of the rugged terrain.
Response The proposed trail was not included in the final version of the plan.

- An environmental assessment should be made before a project of this extent is implemented.
Response An environmental assessment was made. We determined that the project would not have any large and important impacts on the environment. The assesment and negative declaration have been included in the plan.

- The proposed new lean-to on this ridge is a bad idea.
Response The lean-to was not included in the final version of the plan.

- There should be provision for removal of sick and injured horses.
Response The trail was not included in the final version of the plan.

- There is no provision for water for horses on the proposed Packsaddle Trail.
Response The proposal was not included in the final version of the plan.

- There is alternative access to Route 42 according to NYSDOT quad map, so an easement is not needed.
Response We are not aware of any existing access to Route 42.

Public Information

- The proposals are good.
Response Agreed.

Trail & Parking Area Improvements

- Parking fee at Devils Tombstone Campground is inappropriate.
Response There is a charge for use of the campground facility. The parking area is considered part of the facility. Other non-fee parking areas are avaiable to access this area.

- New parking areas should not be built to accomodate horse trailers.
Response We believe it is desireable to accomodate these recreational users.

- There should be a budget item for winter plowing of Spruceton and Diamond Notch parking areas.
Response Agreed. This section was supplemented in the final version of the plan.

- New snowmobile trails should not be proposed.
Response Snowmobile trails were not proposed.

- Improving the Hunter Mt. and Diamond Notch trails and providing for parking is a good idea.
Response Agreed.

- New trails should not be added because there are not enough resources, such as money, DEC staff and/or volunteers, to provide for proper construction and followup maintenance.
Response Our planning approach has been to propose what is desireable, rather than limit our ideas to what current resources will support.

- Mountain bikes should be prohibited from all wilderness areas in the Catskills.
Response This option will be considered in the next revision of the Catskill State Land Master Plan.

- There should be an overall survey of horsetrail and mountain bicycles trail needs in the Catskills before individual trails are proposed.
Response DEC intends to prepare a Catskill Use and Information Plan within the next year or two which should address this concern.

- The proposed new trail from the Village of Hunter should be incorporated with the Becker Trail rather than create a new trail.
Response We feel a trail from the Village of Hunter is desireable.

- Any new trails will damage the wilderness quality of the region.
Response Only one small new trail is proposed which we believe will not detract from the wild character of the area.

- Critical plant and animal habitats should be evaluated before any new trails are constructed or existing trails modified.
Response They were considered but none were effected.

- Taylor Hollow administrative road should be opened as a public trail.
Response Agreed, but public rights to use this road are questionable and need to be secured first.

- Shanty Hollow Trail should not be abandoned.
Response This trail is currently not in use.

Trails - Becker Hollow

- The existing trail provides a challenge and should not be closed without more justification.
Response Additional justification was provided in the final version of the plan.

- The proposed relocation of the trail and addition of a feeder trail from the Village of Hunter is a good idea.
Response Agreed, although this is not a high priority.

Trails - Colonels Chair

- This trail needs better marking on private land.
Response Agreed. This should be accomplished as part of routine trail maintenance activities.

- A trail should not require a fee to enter from private land.
Response According to the property owner, there is no fee to walk up the mountain.

Trails - Diamond Notch

- Reconstruction of the Diamond Notch Trail for horses and mountain bicycles is a good idea.
Response Agreed.

- This trail is suitable for horses, but not mountain bicycles.
Response We believe multiple use on part of this trail is safe and practical. At this time there is no policy or regulation concerning the use of mountain bicycles. However, tolerance and consideration from all recreationists is necessary.

- The cost of parking area expansion is underestimated.
Response The cost figures were reevaluated and increased before the final version of the plan.

- Reconstruction of the trail for horses will degrade scenic quality and threaten the quality of Hollow Tree Brook and proposed spring rehabilitation.
Response We do not believe the projected level of use will result in significant problems. However, trail conditions and user conflicts will be monitored and restrictions will be made if necessary.

Trails - Spruceton

- Horse use of this trail is incompatible with hiking.
Response We believe some level of multiple use is not only practical but necessary to adequately meet recreational demand. The anticipated level of use is not high enough to cause serious problems. However, tolerance and consideration from all recreationists is necessary.

- The state will be liable for injury related accidents because of the incompatibility of this trail for multiple use.
Response We believe multiple use on part of this trail is safe and practical. However, tolerance and consideration from all recreationists is necessary.

- Horses should only be allowed as far as the John Robb Leanto.
Response We feel that equestrians should have the opportunity to ride to the fire tower.

Vista Clearing

- Vistas should be maintained.
Response Agreed.

- New vistas should be opened up.
Response Any vista clearing must be done in conformance with the Catskill State Land Master Plan.

Water Quality

- DEC is not maintaining streambanks as it agreed to in 1936.
Response Streambank stabilization has been done in the past. However, such work is strictly regulated because of the potential for inadvertant damage to water quality and the creation of future problems.

- The plan should address management of the spring which supplies Devils Tombstone Campground.
Response The campground and associated water supply are not part of the Hunter Mountain unit.

- There are no specific actions identified to prevent or minimize the threat of degredation of water quality.
Response Additional information was added in the final version of the plan.

- The plan does not say how springs will be developed and/or protected.
Response Additional information was added in the final version of the plan.

- There is no provision to protect stream banks from random crossings by horses and/or mountain bicycles.
Response While there is no regulation which restricts stream crossings by horses or mountain bicycles, we believe the number of such crossings is minimal and not a significant problem.

- Parking lots need good citing and design to prevent erosion and sedimentation.
Response Agreed.

Wildlife Management

- The proposals are good.
Response Agreed.