



Department of
Environmental
Conservation

LAKE GEORGE WILD FOREST

Stewardship Plan

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NYS DEC, REGION 5, DIVISION OF LANDS AND FORESTS

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I. Introduction

The Lake George Wild Forest is comprised of approximately 72,000 acres spread over 13 towns in Warren, Washington and Essex counties.

A Revised Public Draft Unit Management Plan for the Lake George Wild Forest is currently in being prepared pursuant to the APA/DEC interagency consultation process. The Department is responsible to manage public use in a manner that is protective of the natural resources and provides for safe and sustainable facilities that accommodate the numbers of people anticipated in these areas. This Interim Stewardship Plan has been prepared to address (2) immediate and significant management actions within the Lake George Wild Forest that involve new land use and development and are not considered routine maintenance pursuant to the APA/DEC Memorandum of Understanding Concerning Implementation of the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan.

A. Background Purpose and Goals

Potash Mountain

Potash Mountain, located in the Town of Lake Luzerne, is a prominent rocky-top summit visible from many local roads and surrounding areas. The summit of Potash Mountain is Forest Preserve within the Lake George Wild Forest. This parcel is land-locked with no public access. The Harris Land Trust, an adjacent property owner, is planning to construct a trail which connects with the State boundary on Potash Mountain to provide public access to the formerly land-locked parcel. The Forest Preserve portion of Potash Mountain consists of steep, bouldery terrain with thin and somewhat sparse vegetation. The slopes of this mountain have also been used by nesting peregrine falcons. It is anticipated that once the adjacent trail on private land is constructed, people will be able to access the summit of Potash Mountain. Public use will be established via unmarked herd paths unless a sustainable trail is designated on the Forest Preserve. Unmarked herd paths could cause negative impacts to the resource and have the potential to cause safety issues for users. Resource impacts will likely include; trampling of vegetation, erosion and people wandering close to and interfering with peregrine falcon nesting sites. User safety issues will likely be an issue because herd paths typically occur in poor locations, do not involve proper trail construction techniques, trail markers and features that increase resource protection and user safety.

Management Actions

- Construct and mark two carefully-planned, safe and sustainable foot trail segments. A 0.51 mile-long trail that will begin at the end of the private land trail and end at an outlook / vantage point on Potash Mt. and a 0.19 mile-long loop trail to the summit of Potash Mt. These trails will include the appropriate trail features that will provide users the opportunity for a safe experience while providing a sustainable tread. The features will include but are not limited to; switchbacks, steps, benching and trail markers.
- Install a kiosk along the new trail to serve as an information center and place to house a register book, map and information on the sensitivity of the area and the proper and safe way for people to enjoy the facility

Pole Hill Pond

Pole Hill Pond is located in the Town of Bolton on the Northwest Bay Tract. When DEC purchased this parcel there was a network of existing trails located primarily along old skid roads. Many of the skid roads had drainage issues. The trail system in this area provides public access to Pole Hill Pond.

The Department plans to re-route one segment of particularly poor trail. This re-route, 260' in length, would relocate the trail from a poorly drained old skid road to a sustainable location on well-drained upland soils. This re-routed trail would be considered ordinary maintenance under the DEC / APA MOU. The new re-routed trail will cross the same drainage that the existing skid road currently crosses. The current route does not have a bridge and requires people to scale the bank on either side which is causing visible erosion to this area.

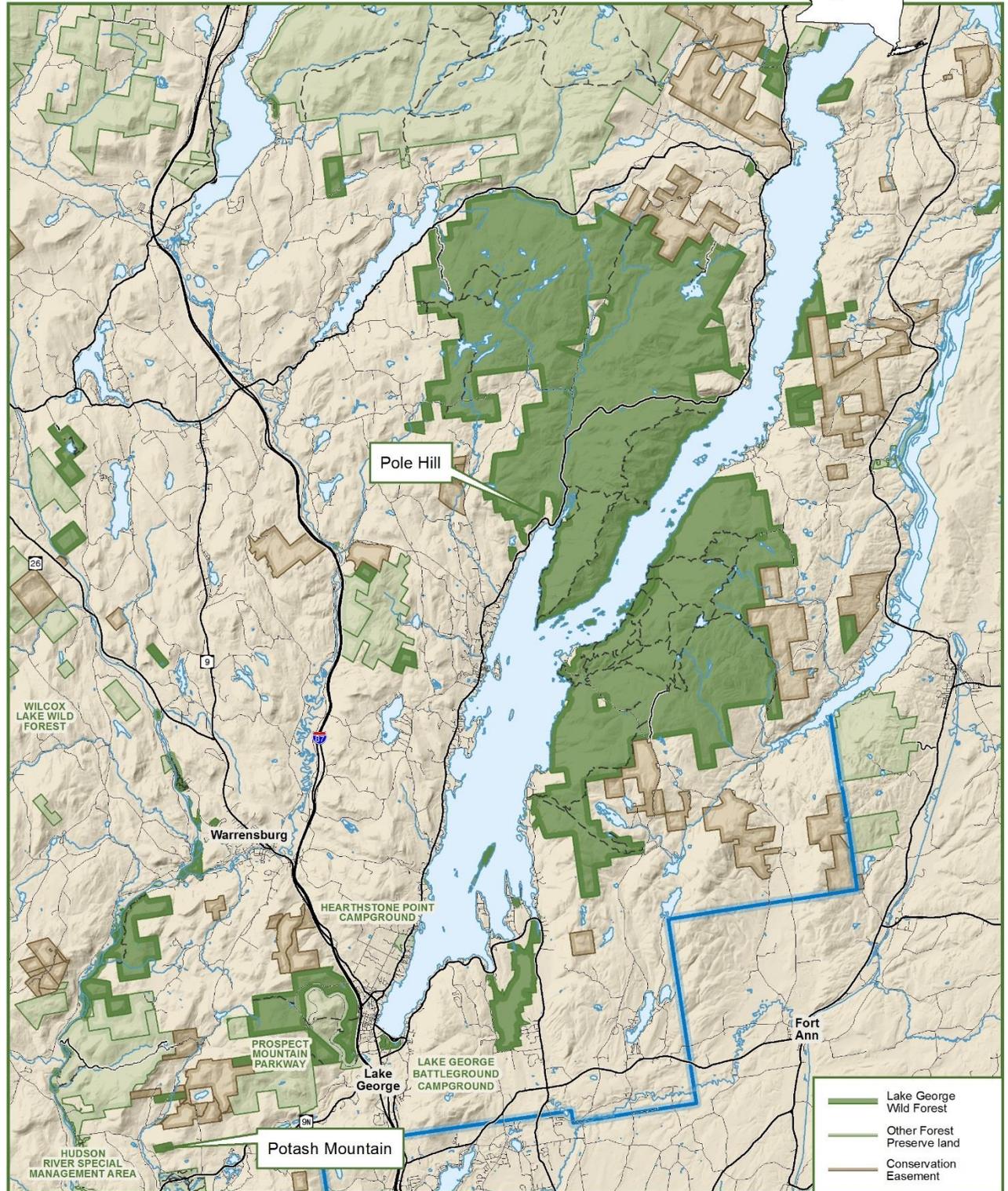
Management Action

- Construct a 24' bridge across the stream on the new re-routed trail. The bridge will eliminate the need for trail users to scale the stream banks which will likely cause erosion in this new stream crossing location. The bridge will also provide a safer means for people to cross the stream.

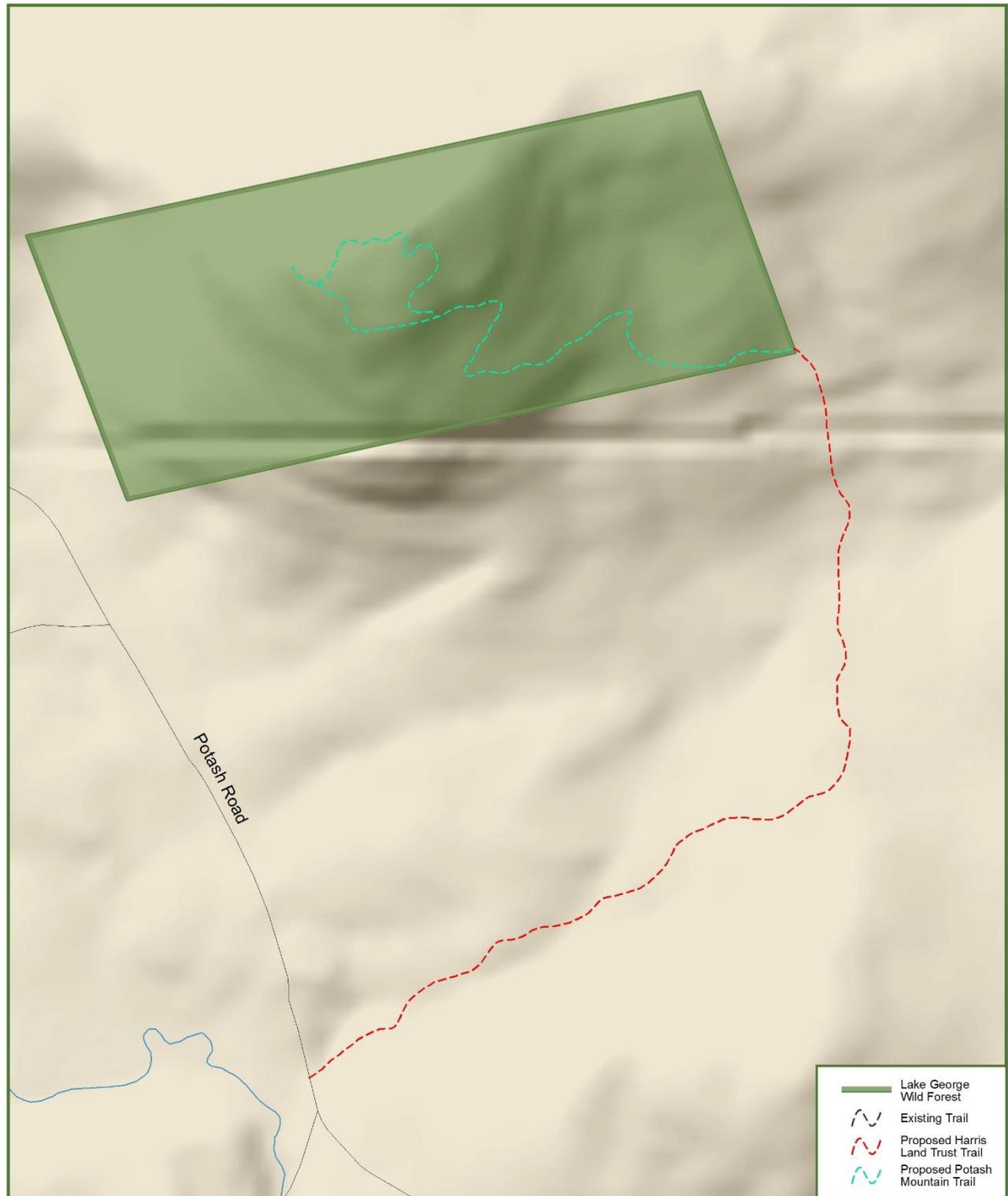
II. Conclusion

The Lake George Wild Forest is a popular area. The Unit Management Plan, when complete, will have provisions to deal with the many important issues that are faced in this area. The current situations at Potash Mountain and Pole Hill Pond risk creating both a dangerous situation for the public as they endeavor to enjoy these areas as well as an imminent threat to the natural resource. For this reason, the management actions in this plan have been proposed to be implemented immediately. Through successful construction of these facilities, the Department will fulfill its mission to conserve, improve and protect New York's natural resources and environment while enhancing the safety and welfare of the people of the state.

Lake George Wild Forest



Lake George Wild Forest - Potash Mountain



Lake George Wild Forest - Pole Hill Pond

