

Forest Preserve Work Plan
for
Construction of New Facilities and Expansion or
Modification of Existing Facilities
Fiscal Year 2023
Project # **2023-NV-005**

<u>Region</u> 5	<u>Project Title</u> Panther Mountain Trail Re-route
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<u>Project Type</u> New Construction	<u>Town(s)</u> Arietta	<u>County</u> Hamilton	<u>Management Unit</u> Ferris Lake Wild Forest
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Description of Desired Condition(s) for Project:

Panther Mountain Trail is a 0.8-mile foot trail leading to a scenic overlook of Piseco Lake and the surrounding landscape. The short distance and close proximity of two State campgrounds have led to high use levels on the trail. This level of use and the steep grade of the trail have contributed to soil loss within the current trail. The initial stretch of trail is a gullied-out corridor that has become the drainage. Water flows down the middle of the trail eroding the soil and exposing rocks. This work plan seeks approval to install a 1,102-foot re-route at the start of the trail. This work is necessary to reduce erosion and provide a sustainable trail segment.

The objective of this project is to protect natural resources and improve the user experience by avoiding a slippery section of eroded trail. The desired condition is a sustainably built trail that blends into the area terrain, sheds water, and requires minimal maintenance. Use of the trail is expected to remain at current levels with some increase as trail improvements are implemented.

The Unit Management Plan for Ferris Lake Wild Forest is currently in draft form. This project is considered a minor trail relocation of an existing facility which is allowed per the DEC/APA MOU.

Description of Project Specifications:

The re-route begins 80 feet southwest of the current trailhead. The initial stretch leads away from the former trail corridor heading west toward a small unnamed stream. The route then follows the stream for short distance before turning north along a side slope gaining elevation before heading east to reconnect with the Panther Mountain Trail along a natural shelf on the side hill, a total distance of 1102 feet. The open hardwood forest type of the project area allows for flexibility with trail layout. The route was designed to use natural openings in the forest to avoid tree cutting.

The trail will be built and maintained to Class IV specs. The tread will be constructed to a 24-inch width and out-sloped where possible to shed water. The re-route was designed to follow the natural contours of the forest floor as much as possible. Bench cuts will be constructed along two switch backs.

The former trail corridor will have 1,117 feet of it closed. Downed woody debris will be placed at the former trailhead to block off the route to discourage use. Trail signs will direct users to the new route. The former corridor which has become a stream bed will continue to drain the hillside.

Description of Measures Taken to Avoid, Mitigate and Minimize Impacts to Natural Resources:

A.) Trees to be Removed:

No trees greater than or equal to 1-inch DBH will be cut for any action involved in this project.

B.) Earthwork & Disturbance:

The organic duff layer will be raked off the entire length of the re-route. The trail will be out-sloped which will require minor excavation. The route uses two switch backs to gain elevation and bench cuts will be installed with each switchback. Bench cutting will require more excavation on the uphill side of the trail and the area of impact may be double the trail width in these areas.

C.) Impacts to Streams, Waterbodies, and Wetlands:

The trail re-route comes close to a small unnamed stream but will not impact the flow. Trail construction will not impact the stream. No additional waterbodies or wetlands are near the project location.

D.) Identification of Rare, Threatened, or Endangered Species:

A search of available GIS databases yielded no known occurrences of RTE species at or within ¼ mile of the project area.

Analysis of Project Location and Design Alternatives:

The project location is within a Northern hardwood forest with a fairly open understory. Soils in the project area are moderately well drained and suitable for trail construction.

An alternative to trail construction was considered and includes implementing improvements on the existing trail. Installation of drainage controls such as water bars and check steps are unlikely to stop the erosion. The existing corridor is too deeply gullied, and any drainage control is likely to prove ineffective at this point. The no action alternative is not recommended as the trail would continue to erode and expose rocks. New trail construction using sustainable trail design is the preferred option to obtain the desired condition described in this work plan.

Description of Use of Motorized Equipment and/or Motor Vehicles, if any:

No motorized equipment or vehicles will be used.

Description of Applicable Standards for Accessibility by People with Disabilities:

This project is a modification of an existing facility that is currently not built to ADA standards. The trail corridor leading to both project sites does not possess the required average slope needed to be in compliance with ADA specifications. Due to these factors the project will not incorporate ADA design features.

Other Relevant Considerations: Click to enter other relevant considerations.

Prepared by (Name & Title): Jonathan DeSantis

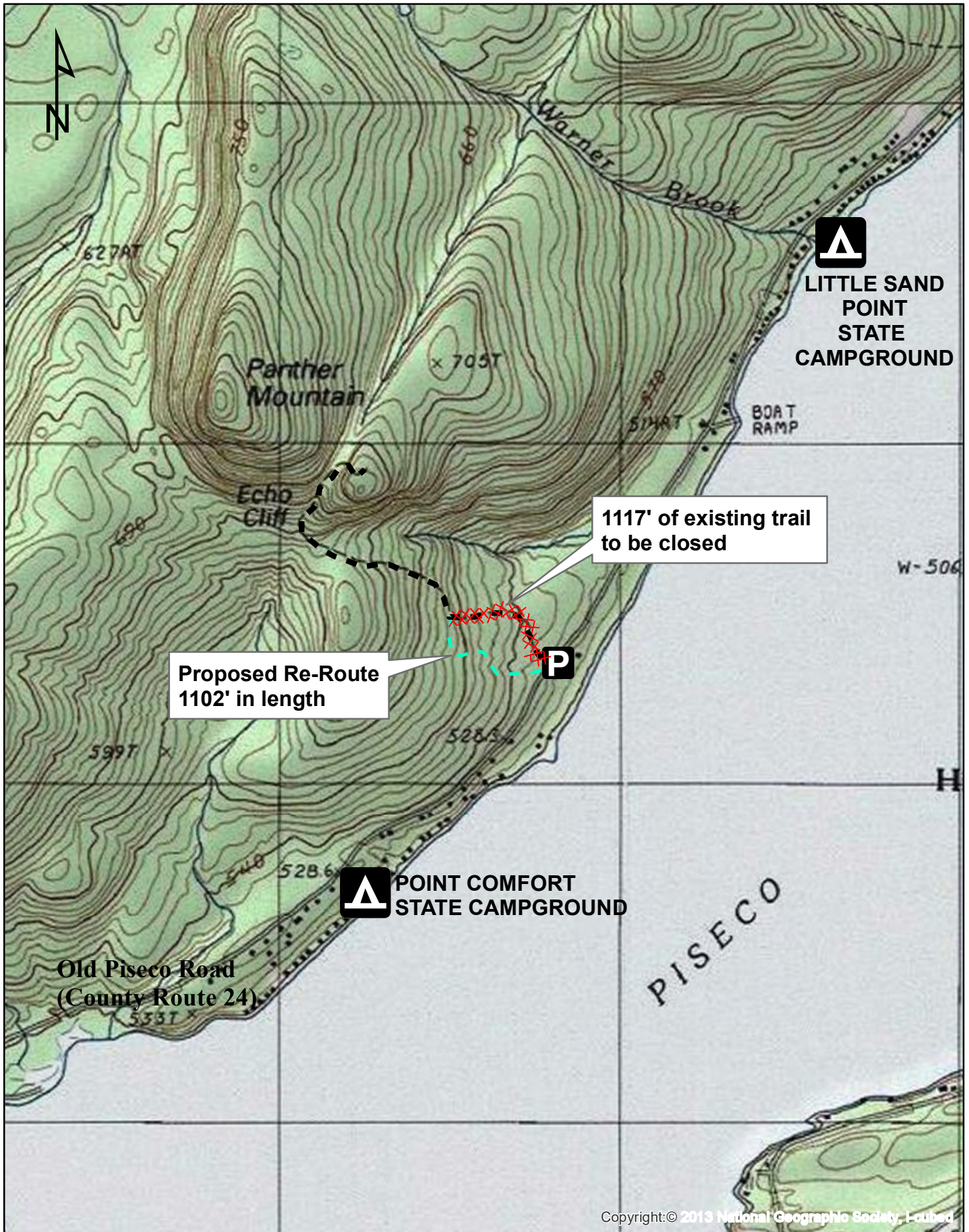
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Date: 3/1/2023

REGULATORY CLEARANCE CHECKLIST – STATE LANDS and CONSERVATION EASEMENT PROJECTS

PROGRAM	PERMIT	REQUIRED		SECURED BY	COMMENTS
		YES	NO	(NAME)	
Air Resources	Restricted Burning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Mineral Resources	Mining	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Materials Management	Solid Waste Mgt. Fac.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Water	Dam Safety Review	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
	Const. in Flood Hazard	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
	Public Water Supply	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
	SPDES	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Spills Management	Petro. Bulk Storage	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Lands and Forests	Unit Management Plan	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
	Tree Cutting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
	Protected Native Plants	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
	Historic Preservation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Fish and Wildlife	Freshwater Wetlands	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
	Wild Scenic & Rec. River	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Compliance Services	Other Protection of Waters	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
	EAF	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
	Negative Declaration	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
	Env. Impact Statement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
	Water Quality Cert.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
DEC (other)	CP-17	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
	Commissioner (aircraft, motorized equipment)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
	Flight Request	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
	Contract Clearance Sh.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
	DOB Exemption	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Other Agencies	APA MOU	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	NYSDEC	activity allowed per MOU
	APA Wetlands Permit	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
	Corps. of Engineers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
	Building Permits	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
	Local Permits	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
	Easements	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
	Highway Enter DOT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
	Wastewater Disposal	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		

Panther Mountain Re-Route Location Map



0 0.075 0.15 0.3 0.45 0.6 Miles

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Photo 1: Current trail corridor at the beginning of Panther Mountain.



Photo 2: Current Panther Mountain Trailhead. The trail has become the drainage and requires rerouting



Photo 2: Open hardwood forest where the re-route is laid out.

