

FOREST PRESERVE DETAILED PROJECT WORK PLAN

Fiscal Year Click to enter Fiscal Year

Project # CO-WP-324

<u>Region</u> 6	<u>Project Title</u> Otter Creek Horse Trail Turnpike Construction
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<u>Project Type</u>	<u>Town(s)</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Management Unit</u>
Modification of Existing Structure/Improvement	Watson & Grieg	Lewis	Independence River Wild Forest

Description of Desired Condition(s) for Project

Protection of natural resources and Wild Forest character are the paramount management consideration for trails in the Independence River Wild Forest. Providing horseback riding and other compatible trail opportunities on the Otter Creek Trail network is desirable and should be encouraged where compatible with these guidelines, while protecting the unique experience the Otter Creek trails provide equestrian users. The sections of trail addressed by this work plan have particularly wet/muddy tread surfaces because they are not adequately constructed for equestrian use. Horse trails should be cleared 6-foot wide, with a 4-foot wide tread. Ground vegetation will be present within the cleared trail width; however, the ideal tread will be bare mineral soil.

The Otter Creek trail network should be sited, maintained, and improved to reflect a resilient and sustainable design. Well drained tread that follows reasonable grades and avoids topographic fall lines and valleys is the end goal for all trails within the Otter Creek Trail System. While it is ideal to achieve drainage through trail alignment and grade reversals, this is most easily done when lengthy reroutes or new trails are constructed. On existing trails, issues such as erosion and mud holes should be addressed promptly to minimize permanent scars on the landscape and may employ suboptimal techniques such as installation of trail drainage structures that require regular maintenance or rerouting short segments of trails that exhibit particularly degraded trail conditions. These techniques should also be employed proactively at trail locations where future trail problems are anticipated. Trail improvements which may be considered include but are not limited to bridges, turnpike, timber or rock water bars and check steps, and reroutes using limited bench cuts and switchbacks. Not all these trail improvements are necessary throughout the entire trail system, but all are appropriate for consideration in warranted locations. Trails should be improved to the minimum threshold at which they exhibit resiliency to indefinite future equestrian use.

Description of Project Specifications

Turnpike will be installed at wet or muddy locations along Erie Canal, Pitcher Pond, Jumper, Frost Pocket and Twin Ponds Trails. Installation of turnpike will consist of 1) Placing geotextile fabric across existing trail as needed (fabric will be cut to a width so it will be completely covered by fill); and 2) Spreading turnpike tread (gravel fill). Fill will not be wider than 4 feet and will be spread 6-10 inches deep with a slight crown, to raise

tread higher than the ground immediately adjacent to the trail tread. All fill that is placed will be crushed granite (3/4 minus or similar as approved by DEC staff). Off-Highway-Vehicles (OHVs) <6 feet in width will be used to transport gravel on trails identified in this work plan and a tractor will be used to load gravel at identified gravel stockpile locations. All motorized equipment will display a “DEC Administrative Use” sign and meet requirements of Commissioner Policy 17.

Any work completed under Volunteer Stewardship Agreement 19-06-LO-27 or successor agreements will meet all requirements of the Volunteer Stewardship Agreement.

Erie Canal Trail

A total of 50-feet of turnpike will be installed along the section of the Erie Canal Trail between Confusion Flats Road and Pitcher Pond Trail (0.35 miles/~1,848 feet). This amounts to 2.7% of this section of trail that will be improved with turnpike. Turnpike locations are labeled in the field with pink flagging and are listed below. Gravel will be stockpiled near the Erie Canal Trail/Confusion Flats Road intersection and transported over Erie Canal Trail to reach project sites. The turnpike to be installed will be no wider than 4-feet.

Flag	Latitude	Longitude	Turnpike Length
415	43.72192	-75.3041	10
416	43.72127	-75.3038	10
417	43.72104	-75.3035	15
418	43.72084	-75.3034	15

Images: Examples of locations along Erie Canal Trail where turnpike will be installed. Muddy sections of trail are difficult to see with fall leaf cover but are apparent for much of the summer season.



Pitcher Pond Trail

A total of 200-feet of turnpike will be installed along Pitcher Pond Trail (1.4 miles/~7,392 feet). This amounts to 2.7% of Pitcher Pond Trail that will be improved with turnpike. Turnpike locations are labeled in the field with pink flagging and are listed below. Gravel will be stockpiled near the Erie Canal Trail/Confusion Flats Road intersection, and/or the end of Pitcher Pond Road and may be transported over Erie Canal Trail and Pitcher Pond Trail to reach project sites.

Flag	Latitude	Longitude	Turnpike Length
419	43.719174	-75.301992	10
420	43.719165	-75.301793	5
421	43.718746	-75.300191	15
422	43.718637	-75.299944	20
423	43.718219	-75.299311	5
424	43.718064	-75.298982	10
425	43.717813	-75.298475	5
426	43.717589	-75.298131	5
427	43.717222	-75.297506	5
428	43.717005	-75.297209	5
429	43.716797	-75.297144	5
430	43.716313	-75.29662	5
431	43.715933	-75.296626	5
432	43.715598	-75.296359	5
433	43.715412	-75.295472	5
434	43.716148	-75.294651	10
435	43.716167	-75.294386	5
436	43.716253	-75.294328	5
437	43.716326	-75.294015	5
438	43.716381	-75.293822	5
439	43.716908	-75.291873	5
440	43.716862	-75.290845	5
441	43.71683	-75.290484	5
442	43.716834	-75.289962	5
443	43.716775	-75.28928	5
444	43.716852	-75.289191	5
445	43.71727	-75.288624	5
446	43.717964	-75.288232	5
447	43.718694	-75.287148	10
448	43.719204	-75.286535	10

Images: Examples of locations along Pitcher Pond Trail where turnpike will be installed.



In addition to the 200-feet of turnpike described along Pitcher Pond Trail above, 80-feet (1.1% of Pitcher Pond Trail) of framed check steps will be installed to cover exposed roots and prevent future erosion near Pitcher Pond. The majority of the current trail tread in the vicinity of these check steps is holding up well, however the downslope orientation of the exposed tree roots along this section of trail are particularly hazardous to horses should they step on them and slip. While a 330-foot reroute was considered as an alternative, tree cutting and extensive bench cutting would be required, and the soil composition along with the presence of large white pine trees adjacent to the reroute would likely lead similar trail conditions over time.

Check steps will consist of imported larch poles, which will be pinned to the ground with rebar. Poles will be pinned perpendicular to the trail tread every 10-feet (with minor adjustments to avoid large tree roots) and will be pinned parallel to the entire 80-foot section of trail. Steps will be backfilled with $\frac{3}{4}$ " minus crushed granite aggregate. Gravel will be stockpiled near the end of Pitcher Pond Road and transported over the short section of Pitcher Pond Trail to reach the project site.

Images: Hill facing uphill (left) and facing downhill (right)



Jumper Trail

Geotextile fabric is exposed in ten (10) locations along Jumper Trail where it crosses the Independence River Wild Forest. No meaningful increase in linear feet of fill will be added, but fill depth will be increased, and length of fill may be extended up to two feet beyond fabric. Any exposed fabric in addition to the ten counted locations in 2022 will also be covered. Gravel will be stockpiled near the Erie Canal Trail/Confusion Flats Road intersection, and/or Mikes Road in the Otter Creek State Forest and may be transported over Erie Canal Trail and Jumper Trail to reach project sites.

Images: Inadequate gravel was used to cover geotextile fabric in the past. Additional gravel will be added to improve the natural look of the trail and remove tripping hazards.



Frost Pocket Trail

A total of 365-feet of turnpike will be installed along Frost Pocket Trail (1.3 miles/~6,864 feet). This amounts to 5.3% of Pitcher Pond Trail that will be improved with turnpike. Turnpike locations are labeled in the field with pink flagging and are listed below. Gravel will be stockpiled near the McPhilmy Road/Proceeding Trail intersection, and/or Cleveland Lake Road and may be transported over the short section of Proceeding Trail between McPhilmy Road and Frost Pocket Trail and Frost Pocket Trail itself to reach project sites.

Flag	Latitude	Longitude	Turnpike Length
386	43.781236	-75.31062	10
387	43.782105	- 75.309577	10
388	43.785137	- 75.306193	15
389	43.786576	- 75.303549	NO
390	43.786546	- 75.303558	15
391	43.786287	- 75.302884	30
392	43.786513	- 75.302679	5
393	43.787009	- 75.302757	10
394	43.787404	- 75.302673	35
395	43.788094	- 75.301709	40
396	43.790328	- 75.300782	15
397	43.790253	- 75.299802	15
398	43.790058	- 75.298306	10
399	43.790283	- 75.296948	50
400	43.790512	- 75.296782	20
401	43.791814	- 75.295679	20
402	43.792094	- 75.295287	15
403	43.792438	- 75.295095	20
404	43.792763	- 75.295088	25
405	43.792879	- 75.295021	5

Images: Examples of locations along Frost Pocket Trail where turnpike will be installed.





Twin Ponds Trail

A total of 195-feet of turnpike will be installed along Twin Ponds Trail (0.8 miles/~4,224 feet). This amounts to 4.6% of Twin Ponds Trail that will be improved with turnpike. Turnpike locations are labeled in the field with pink flagging and are listed below. Gravel will be stockpiled near the Blue Jog Road/Icicle Trail intersection and be transported Icicle Trail and Twin Ponds Trail to reach the project sites.

Flag	Latitude	Longitude	Turnpike Length
406	43.742853	75.308911	5
407	43.743112	75.308752	10
408	43.743187	75.308484	10
409	43.74341	75.308144	25
410	43.743498	75.307448	20
411	43.744705	75.306631	20
412	43.744863	75.306596	15
413	43.745095	75.305957	75
414	43.74384	75.299919	15

Images: Examples of locations along Twin Ponds Trail where turnpike will be installed.



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

No trees or vegetation will be cut as part of this work plan, and earthwork/manipulation of soils is limited to installation of fill that will be 4-feet wide to serve as a durable trail tread. While crushed granite fill will be imported to the site, aesthetically, it is nearly indistinguishable from the native bank-run gravel soils found throughout this area. By creating a durable trail surface, turnpike will halt the continued widening of the existing trail, where users circumnavigate wet/muddy conditions on the trail.

No streams, waterbodies or wetlands are located at or immediately adjacent to project locations, and no impacts to these natural features will occur as a result of this work plan. No rare, threatened, or endangered species, plant communities, or habitats are present within $\frac{1}{4}$ mile of the work sites. The New York State Natural Heritage Program has identified and mapped boreal heath barrens and successional northern hardwood communities in the vicinity of the project areas – both have “excellent or good” estimated viability and additional displacement including road intrusions are the primary threat to these communities. Since informal trail use is prolific in this area, encouraging use of designated and maintained trails by improving their condition is one tool to decrease further fragmentation of these communities by informal trails.

Analysis of Project Location and Design Alternatives

Alternative designs that were considered to the turnpike described in this work plan include: no action, closure of trails, rerouting/relocation of trails, or installing alternative turnpike structures.

Undertaking no action to address particularly wet/muddy trail tread is not a preferred alternative because trails that are not adequately constructed for ongoing equestrian use result in erosion, mud and permanent scars on the landscape. Poorly designed and constructed trails also indirectly lead to an increase in environmental impacts associated with informal trails and off-trail use to circumnavigate poor trail conditions.

Closure of particularly wet/muddy trails is a viable consideration. However, since off-trail riding is currently permitted in the Independence River Wild Forest, formal closure of wet/muddy trails is unlikely to halt future use of these corridors unless they are truly unrideable. Rather, these corridors would likely continue to receive use yet not be maintained. Trail closures should be considered in the context of the entire trail system in order to retain connectivity and encourage riders to stay on formally designated trails that will be resilient to ongoing equestrian use. Trails for which turnpike is proposed in this work plan provide meaningful value to the trail system as a whole and can be made resilient to ongoing equestrian use with a nominal amount of trail improvement. As such, trail closure is not a preferred alternative.

Turnpike is appropriate to install in trail locations where: 1) rerouting the trail over better drained soils or designing the trail to facilitate better drainage are not viable solutions, and 2) the trail is intended to be maintained in its current location for the foreseeable future. In locations where trails can be rerouted over better drained soils or designed to facilitate drainage, these are preferred solutions for wet/muddy trail tread. In locations where turnpike is proposed in this work plan, rerouting the trail would require tree cutting, soil excavation, and/or alternative routes would traverse soils that are similar to the current route, resulting in similarly wet/muddy trail conditions over time. For these reasons, rerouting trails has not been determined to be the preferred alternative in these locations.

Alternative turnpike design components considered include log frames on each side of the trail to contain fill and/or installing turnpike using native bank-run gravel or crushed limestone. Imported $\frac{3}{4}$ minus crushed granite aggregate has been selected as fill. This material compacts particularly well and is therefore more resilient to equestrian use than native bank-run gravel. Crushed granite is also more natural looking than crushed limestone, being almost indistinguishable in appearance from native bank-run gravel. Bank-run gravel is far less resilient to stock traffic than crushed granite, and framing logs would likely need to be installed to prevent fill from spreading in width over time. While pinned logs are useful to contain fill width in particularly deep mud and/or standing water situations, aesthetically log framed trails look less natural. Crushed granite tends to compact well enough that fill does not spread significantly beyond the initial spread width. For these reasons, in consideration of trail conditions that do not necessitate a frame, log frames will not be used for turnpike in this work plan.

Description of Use of Motorized Equipment and/or Motor Vehicles (if any)

Off-Highway-Vehicles (OHVs) <6 feet in width will be used to transport gravel on trails identified in this work plan, and a tractor will be used to load gravel at gravel stockpile locations. All motorized equipment will display a "DEC Administrative Use" sign and meet requirements of Commissioner Policy 17. Care will be taken to limit construction days to times when conditions are relatively dry so motor vehicles will not damage other portions of the trails. Conceptual Use Plan #1237 (2023) applies. A successor Conceptual Use Plan for future years or standalone administrative use request may be required at the time work is scheduled.

Description of Applicable Standards for Accessibility by People with Disabilities

The Americans with Disability Act (ADA) requires that new construction and alteration projects be designed to be accessible to people with disabilities. Exemptions from these requirements are allowed in situations where terrain and other factors make compliance impracticable. It would be impractical to improve short segments of existing trails to meet accessibility standards, while not improving the rest of these trails to these standards.

The current trail tread which will be improved through implementation of this work plan is not accessible, nor will the new turnpike. However, the installation of turnpike will somewhat improve accessibility by creating a more level, firm and stable trail surface. Since the vast majority of use on these trails is by equestrian riders, the presence of accessible mounting platforms at other locations within the Otter Creek Horse Trail network provides access for some equestrian riders with disabilities.

Other Relevant Considerations

A significant amount of turnpike installation is outlined in this work plan. However, it should be noted that in some cases, the most problematic wet/muddy locations may be addressed, while turnpike installation along other sections of the same trail are postponed.

This work plan was developed based off of a list of wet/muddy tread problem areas. Rather than spot treating individual wet holes, all locations anticipated to benefit from turnpike in the future have been identified for trail segments included in this work plan. Trail segments are defined as portions of a trail between intersections with another road or trail. Trail segments not included in this work plan have not yet been evaluated. Additional turnpike on other trail segments may be proposed in the future, as appropriate.

Work will be carried out by a combination of DEC staff, contractors, and the Friends of Otter Creek Volunteer Stewardship group.

Prepared by (Name & Title): Matthew Nowak
Phone: 315-376-3521

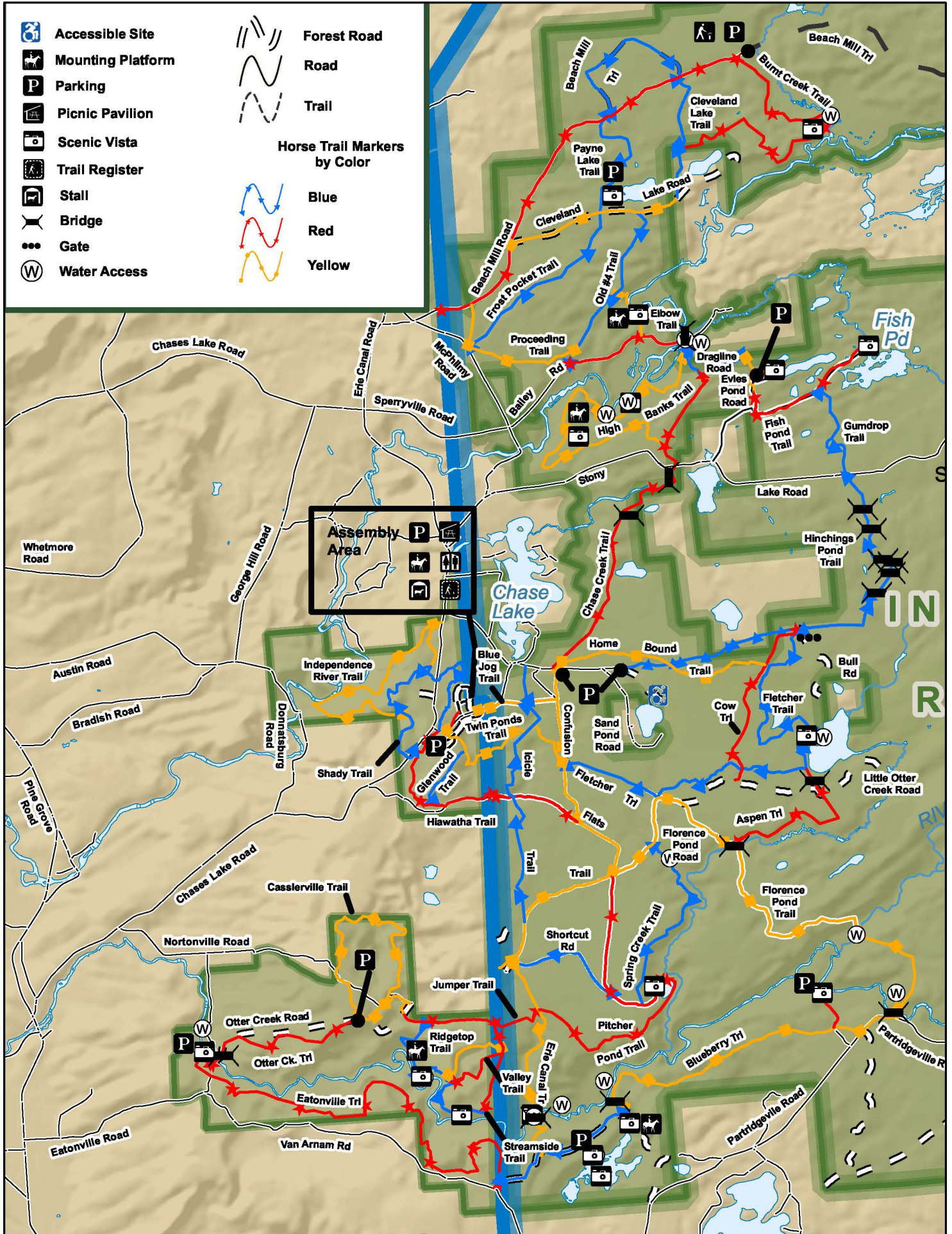
Date: 1/17/2024

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	M. Nowak	All trails where work will occur are listed facilities in the Independence River Wild Forest.
	Tree Cutting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		No tree cutting will occur.
	Protected Native Plants	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
	Historic Preservation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input 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"/>		Completed for Independence River Wild Forest UMP.
	Negative Declaration	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		Completed for Independence River Wild Forest UMP.
	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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	M. Nowak	Conceptual Use Plan #1237 (2023) applies. A successor Conceptual Use Plan for future years or stand alone administrative use request may be required at time a work.
	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"/>		SL2022-0027 response attached – “rehabilitation” and no UMP amendment required.

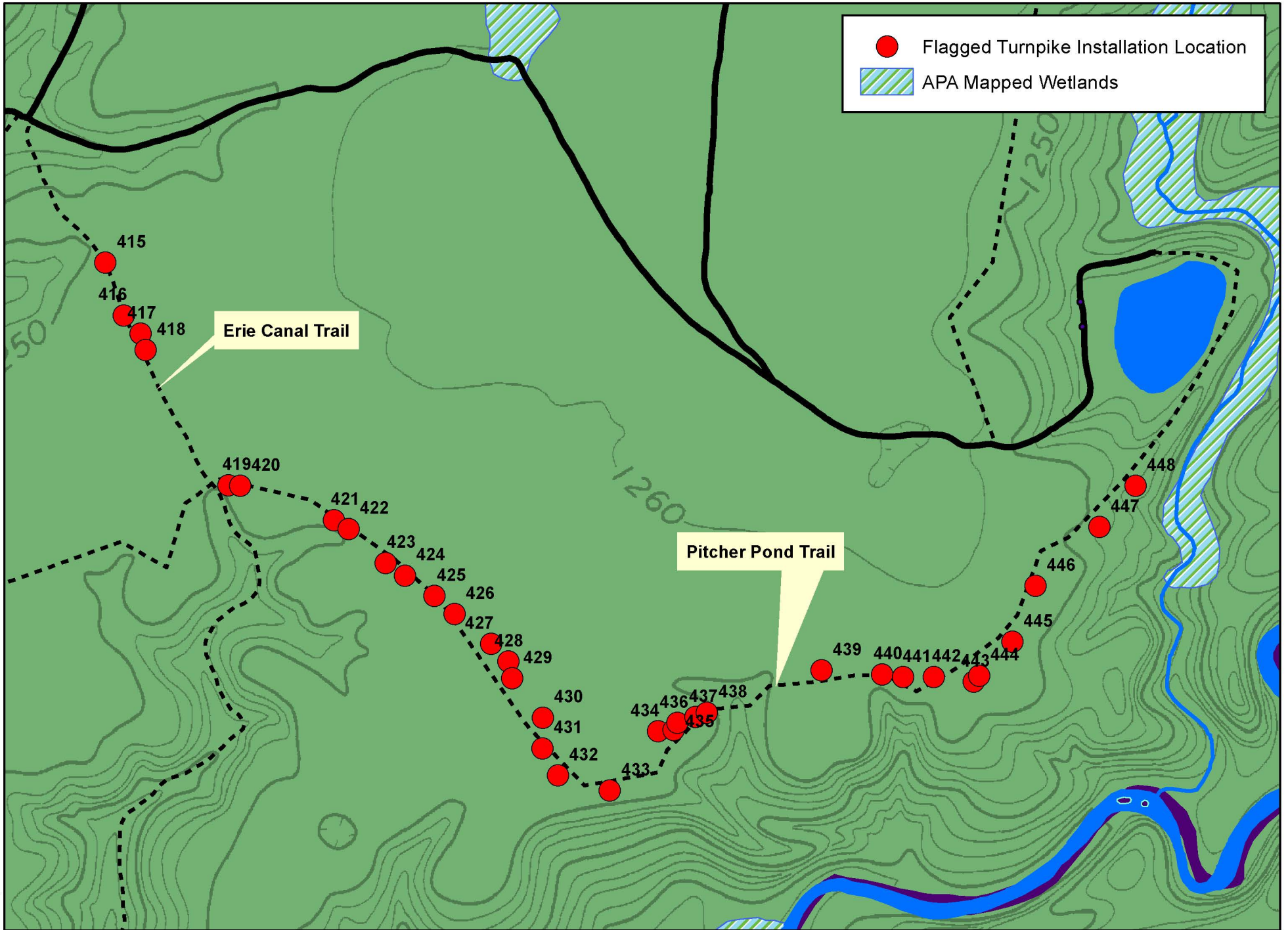
APA Wetlands Permit	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		SL2022-0027 response attached. No wetlands are present at project sites.
Corps. of Engineers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Building Permits	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
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"/>		

Otter Creek Horse Trails



Erie Canal Trail and Pitcher Pond Trail Turnpike

Independence River Wild Forest



0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles

Jumper Trail Turnpike

Independence River Wild Forest

Exposed Fabric

JumperTrail

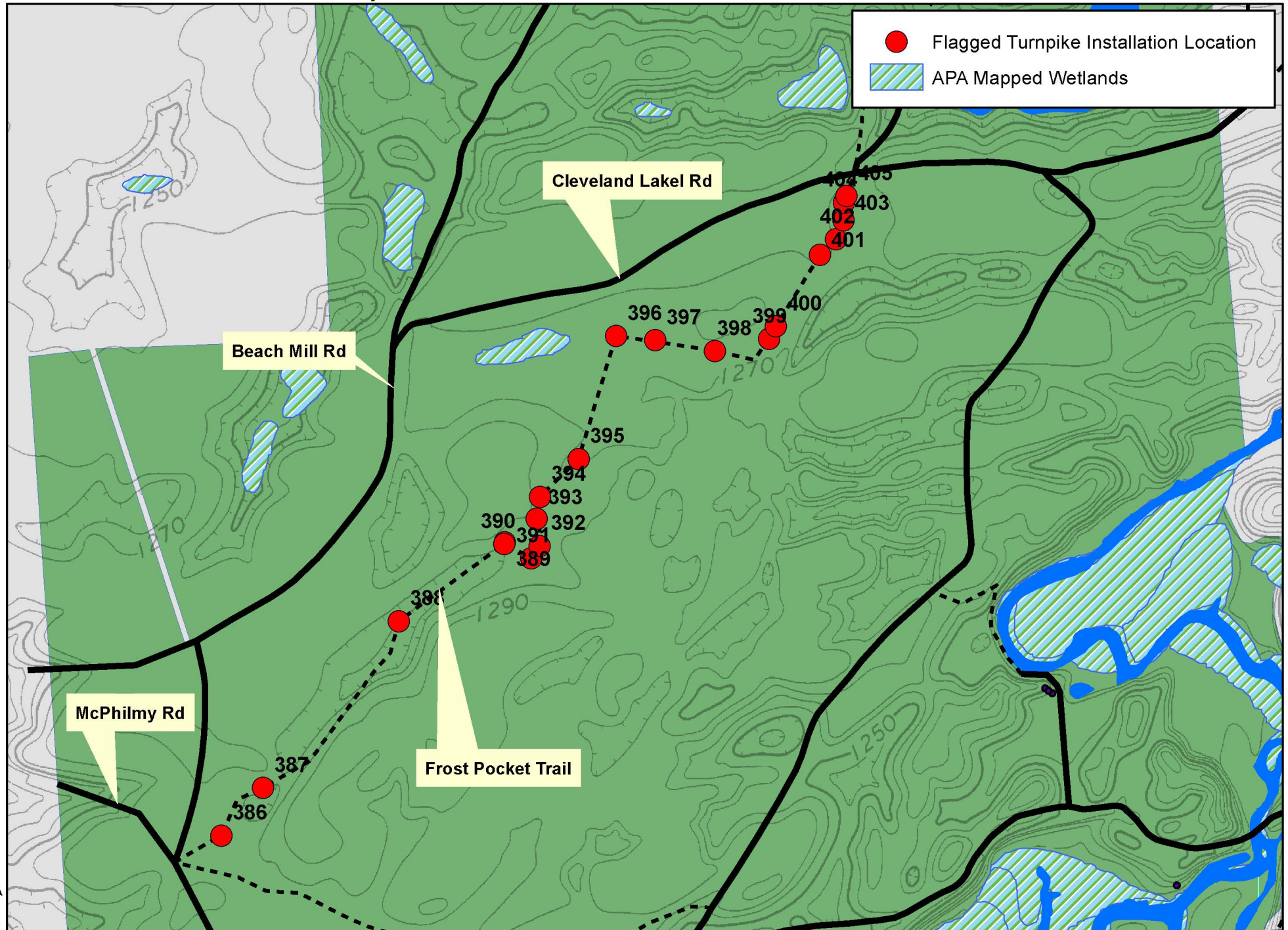
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0 0.075 0.15 0.3 Miles



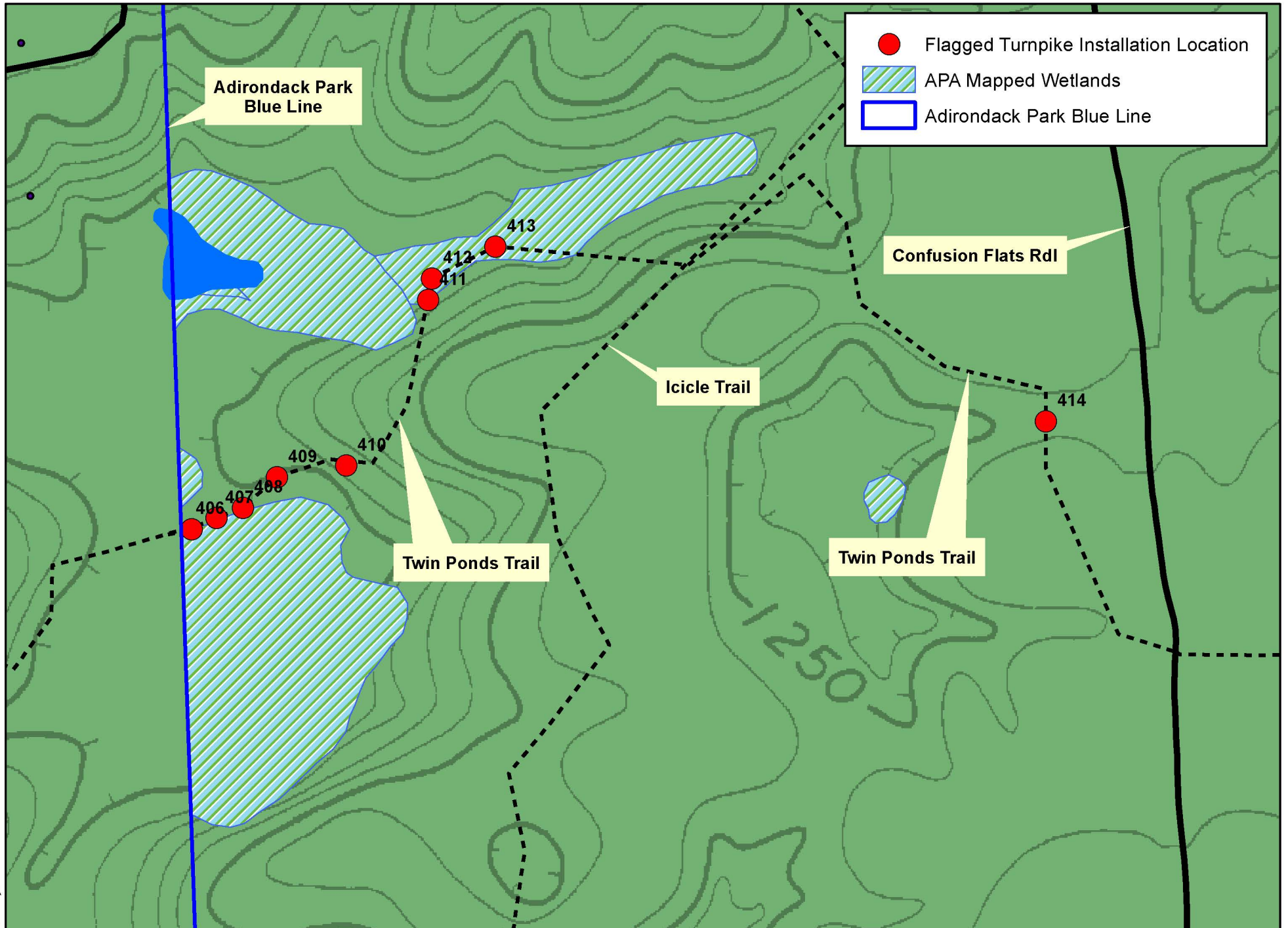
Frost Pocket Trail Turnpike

Independence River Wild Forest



Twin Ponds Trail Turnpike

Independence River Wild Forest





**Adirondack
Park Agency**

KATHY HOCHUL
Governor

BARBARA RICE
Executive Director

July 12, 2023

Matt Nowak
DEC Region 6 sub office
Lowville, NY

RE: State Land Consultation Determination SL2022-0027
Otter Creek Horse Trail Network Turnpiking

Dear Mr. Nowak:

Pursuant to the “MOU Between the Adirondack Park Agency and the Department of Environmental Conservation Concerning Implementation of the State Land Master Plan for the Adirondack Park,” Four foot wide earthen turnpiking for the purpose of horse trail tread stabilization is “rehabilitation” of a conforming structure on lands classified as Wild Forest. The tread stabilization described in this consultation therefore does not require an amendment to the Independence River Wild Forest unit management plan before it may be undertaken.

The locations identified within this consultation where turnpiking is contemplated were not evaluated for their potential wetland involvement. If you believe that wetlands are potentially present at any of these sites, please provide further details on the character of the site to the Agency via the attached wetlands permit application and arrange for a field visit with Agency staff before undertaking the project.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Agency.

Sincerely,

/s/ Megan Phillips

Deputy Director, Planning

Enclosure: Wetlands Permit Application

cc: Josh Clague, DEC Lands and Forests
Fred Munk, Supervisor of Natural Resources, Region 6
Keith Rivers, Regional Forester, Region 6

State Land Consultation

File Number:



**Adirondack
Park Agency**

KATHY HOCHUL
Governor

BARBARA RICE
Executive Director

STATE LAND PROJECT CONSULTATION FORM

Completion of this form is required to receive a determination of Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan (APSLMP) and/or Unit Management Plan compliance and wetland jurisdiction for all DEC State land projects from the Agency. A site visit by Agency staff may be required depending on the complexity of the project, the natural resources involved and the level of documentation provided.

Part 1

(To be completed by DEC staff)

A. Project Identification

Project Name:

DEC Contact Person:

Telephone:

Email:

B. Project Location and Other Information

State Land Unit:

Region:

Town:

County:

Is a UMP for this unit completed and approved? Yes No

(If yes, please attach a copy of the cover page and all pages relevant to this project.)

Is the proposal to replace an existing structure? Yes No

If yes:

a) When was the structure constructed?

b) Will the new structure be the same size and located in the same place?

Yes No (Describe in the narrative, section D.)

C. Prior Agency Contact

Has there been prior contact (including any wetland delineation work) with the Agency regarding this project? Yes No

If yes, name of contact person(s) and date(s) (approximate, if not known):

Contact person: Date:

D. Project Description

Provide a brief, narrative description as precisely as possible with any additional location information necessary. Include/attach map(s), photograph(s) and plan(s) whenever possible. (attach another sheet if needed)

Install turnpike on several of the Otter Creek Horse Trails in the Independence River Wild Forest. Detailed project description attached.

If the proposed project is determined to be compliant with the APSLMP but jurisdictional for wetlands, the Agency can determine if the project qualifies for *General Permit 2005G-1R* or if an individual Article 24 Freshwater Wetlands permit will be required. If either of these wetlands permits is applied for, additional information about the project will likely be requested. Agency staff can provide the appropriate permit application form with the return of this completed State Land Consultation Form, if requested.

Submitted by:

Date:

Return this form to the Agency (preferably electronically) for APA staff completion of Part 2.

Part 2

(To be completed by APA staff)

ADIRONDACK PARK STATE LAND MASTER PLAN COMPLIANCE REVIEW

Planning Status (check one)

- A) The project, as planned, is described sufficiently in an approved UMP and does not require additional consultation with APA State land staff before being undertaken.
- B) The project is proposed in insufficient detail in an approved UMP and so does require additional consultation with APA State land staff before being undertaken.
- C) The project is not proposed in an approved UMP and – via this submission - is the subject of consultation with APA State land staff to determine if it may be undertaken, as per Section V of the DEC/APA MOU.

DEC/APA Consultation Guidelines

Planning Status “A” Projects:

- The proposed project has been determined by the APA Board, via approval of a UMP, to conform to APSLMP guidelines and criteria in all respects other than potential wetland impacts.
- IF the result of the “Preliminary APA Wetlands Jurisdiction Assessment” (page 6) is an APA staff conclusion that jurisdictional wetlands:
 - WILL NOT be involved or affected by the proposed project, THEN, the project may be undertaken.
 - MAY BE involved or affected by the proposed project, THEN, the Agency can determine if the project qualifies for *General Permit 2005G-1R* or an individual Article 24 Freshwater Wetlands permit and may request additional information.

Planning Status “B” Projects:

- The proposed project, via review and approval of a UMP, has received conceptual approval by the APA Board but must still be reviewed by APA State land staff in sufficient detail before it may be determined to conform to APSLMP guidelines and criteria in all respects other than potential wetland impacts.
- IF the result of the “Preliminary APA Wetlands Jurisdiction Assessment” (page 6) is an APA staff conclusion that jurisdictional wetlands:
 - WILL NOT be involved or affected by the proposed project, THEN, the project may be undertaken.
 - MAY BE involved or affected by the proposed project, THEN, the Agency can determine if the project qualifies for *General Permit 2005G-1R* or an individual Article 24 Freshwater Wetlands permit and may request additional information.
- IF the result of the “APSLMP Compliance Review” is a conclusion that the proposed project:
 - DOES NOT CONFORM to APSLMP guidelines and criteria regardless of wetland impacts, THEN, the project should not be undertaken by DEC staff.

Planning Status “C” Projects:

- The project has NOT been proposed within a UMP approved by the APA Board, and so it has not been determined to conform to APSLMP guidelines and criteria. It must therefore be determined by APA State land staff to meet the definition of “ordinary maintenance,” “rehabilitation” or “minor relocation” of conforming structures or improvements as per Section V of the DEC/APA MOU if it is to be undertaken without being included in such a UMP.
- IF the result of the determination is that the proposed project:
 - CANNOT BE so defined, THEN, the project should not be undertaken by DEC staff at this time.
 - CAN BE so defined, THEN, the Agency can determine if the project qualifies for *General Permit 2005G-1R* or an individual Article 24 Freshwater Wetlands permit and may request additional information.
- IF the result of the “Preliminary APA Wetlands Jurisdiction Assessment” (page 6) is an APA staff conclusion that jurisdictional wetlands:

- WILL NOT be involved or affected by the proposed project, THEN, the project may be undertaken.
- MAY BE involved or affected by the proposed project, THEN, the Agency can determine if the project qualifies for *General Permit 2005G-1R* or an individual Article 24 Freshwater Wetlands permit and may request additional information.

APA State Land Staff Determination Regarding Consistency with the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan

Staff have determined the proposed project – in all respects other than potential wetlands impacts – conforms , does not conform , to the guidelines and criteria of the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan.

/s/ Megan Phillips

7/12/23

Deputy Director, Planning or designee

Date

Rationale for Determination

Turnpike structures proposed to improve and stabilize tread surfaces along higher traffic equestrian trails identified within this work plan conform with the State Land Master Plan. Further review is provided in the attached memo to file.

PRELIMINARY APA WETLANDS JURISDICTION ASSESSMENT

1) Is the proposed project located in a wetland? Yes No

2) Does the project involve any of the following activities whether or not it is located in a wetland? Yes No

Discharge of liquid wastes into (or so as to drain into) a wetland, including sewage treatment effluent within 100' of a wetland? Yes No

Any other form of pollution of a wetland? Yes No

Any activity that may substantially impair the functions served by, or the benefits derived from, wetlands?

Yes No

APA RASS Staff Preliminary Assessment Regarding Adirondack Park Freshwater Wetlands Jurisdiction

Staff have determined that wetlands subject to the review jurisdiction of the Adirondack Park Agency may , will not be involved or affected by the proposal.

Supervisor, Natural Resource Analysis or designee

Date

Rationale for Determination

Wetland involvement determinations were not made as a part of this consultation.

If the project is determined to be jurisdictional for wetlands, the Agency will determine if the project qualifies for *General Permit 2005G-1R* or an individual Article 24 Freshwater Wetlands permit and may request additional information.

Form completed by APA State Land member:

Completion Date:

Distribution:

DEC Contact:

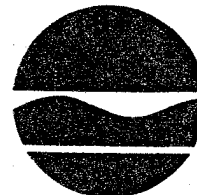
Regional Forester:

Natural Resources Supervisor of Region:

Forest Preserve Coordinator, Central Office:

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation

R.D. #3, Box 22-A, Lowville, New York 13367
(315) 376-3521 or 785-2310 FAX 376-8059



Langdon Marsh
Acting Commissioner

June 20, 1994

To: Independence River Wild Forest Unit Management Plan
Reviewer, Interested Citizens, Municipal Officials,
Agency and Department Staff


Re: Independence River Wild Forest Unit Management Plan-
1994 Horse Trail Amendment

We are writing you to inform you of the specifics of a proposed amendment to the Independence River Wild Forest Unit Management Plan that would establish an additional + 10.5 miles of horse trail in the Otter Creek Horse Trail System. If you are receiving one of these letters, you are either one of the original unit management plan reviewers, an individual or organization that has indicated an interest in the IRWF and/or the Otter Creek Horse Trail System, an official of the Town or County the project is located in, or a member of the Adirondack Park Agency or DEC Staff that will be reviewing the project.

I have included a copy of the Full Environmental Assessment Form that we are using in our State Environmental Quality Review (SEQR). I would especially call attention to the map which is part of the form and the attached Part I, Section D. Informational Details. The map should quickly orient you to the location of the trails we propose to build. The informational details is essentially a narrative that describes the project, what we propose to do in terms of trail clearing, why we are proposing individual trails and any impacts we expect.

If you have any questions or concerns you may reach me at (315)376-3521. Or, if you prefer, you may write to us at the address on the letterhead.

Sincerely,


Bernard J. Davies
Supervising Forester

BJD:saw

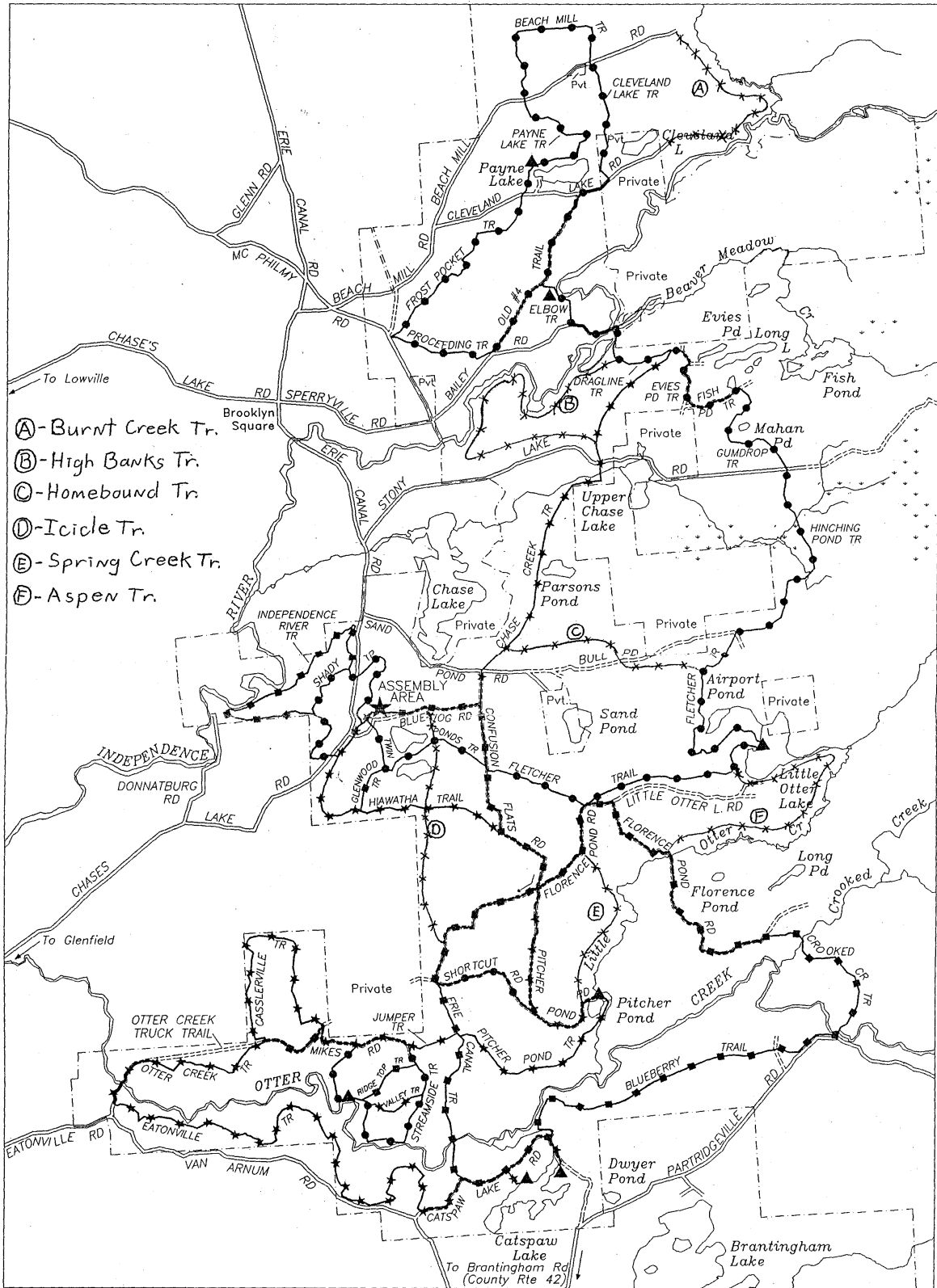
Suggested ENB Insertion

Region 6 - DEC, as lead agency, has determined that the proposed Independence River Wild Forest Unit Management Plan - 1994 Horse Trail Amendment will not have a significant environmental impact.

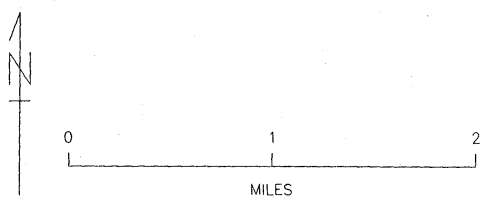
The action involves the expansion of the existing trail system by designating and/or construction of six new trails with a combined length of 10.5 miles. The project is located entirely on the Independence River Wild Forest and is in the Towns of Watson and Greig, Lewis County.

CONTACT: Bernard J. Davies, R.D. #3, Box 22-A, Lowville,
New York 13367 (315) 376-3521

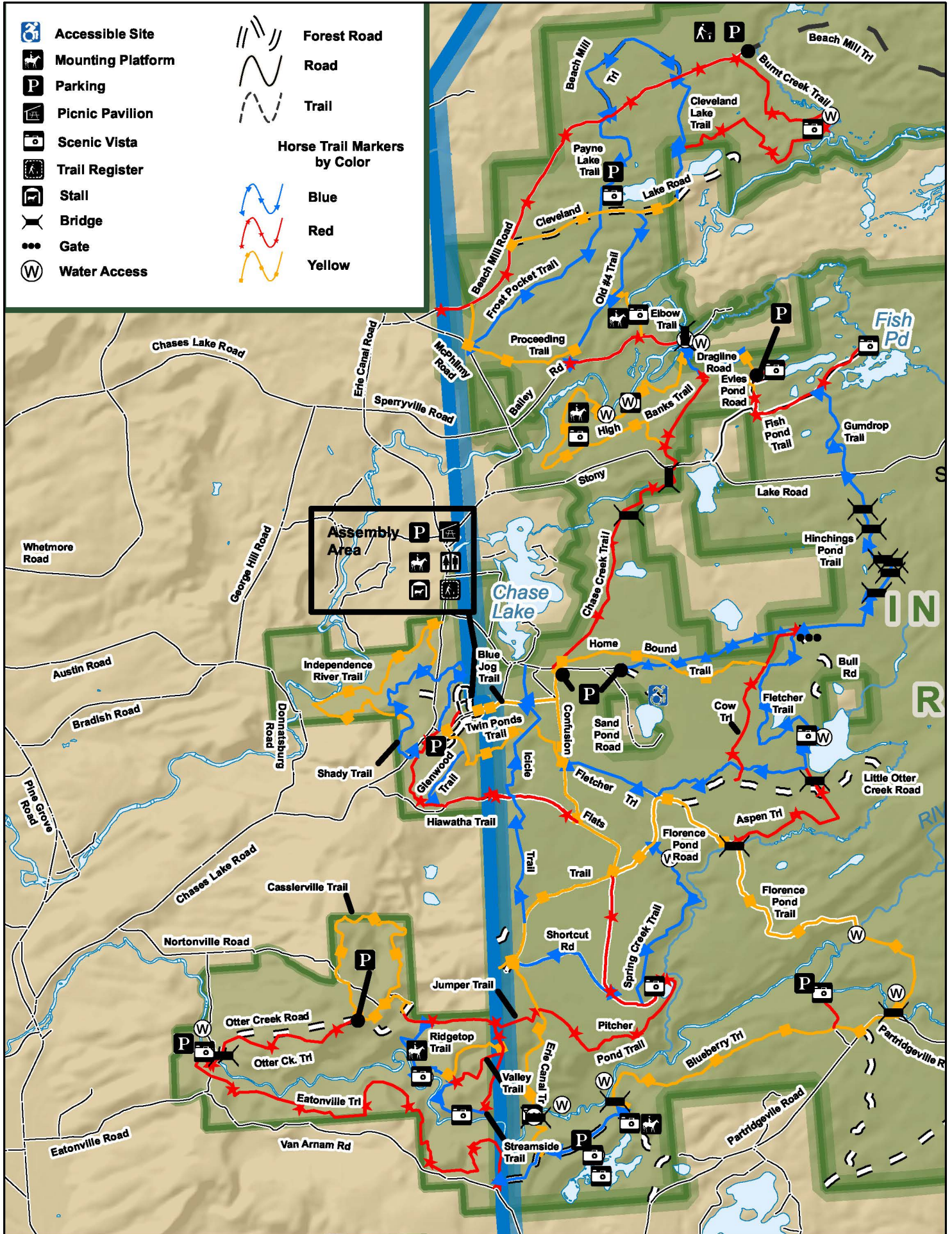
PROPOSED 1994 ADDITIONS TO THE OTTER CREEK HORSE TRAIL SYSTEM



- *—*— Red Trail
- Blue Trail
- Yellow Trail
- ==== Public Road
- Jeep Road
- *— Trail on Road
- x—x— Proposed Trails
- ★ Assembly Area
Parking, stalls, water
- ▲ Scenic Point
- - - - State Land Boundary
- Wetlands



Otter Creek Horse Trails



Icicle Trail Before Turnpike (2016)



Icicle Trail After Turnpike (2022)

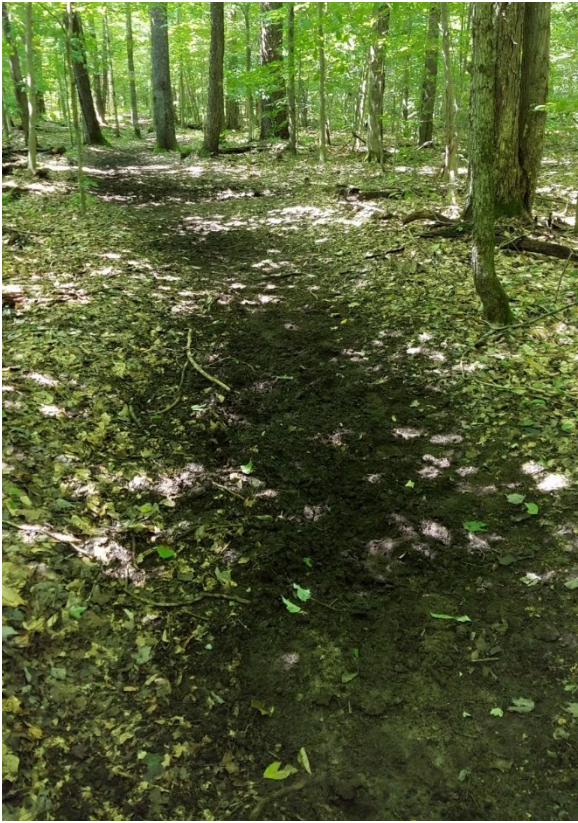
Project was completed in 2017. Tape measure open to 4-foot width.





Jumper Trail Before Turnpike (2018)



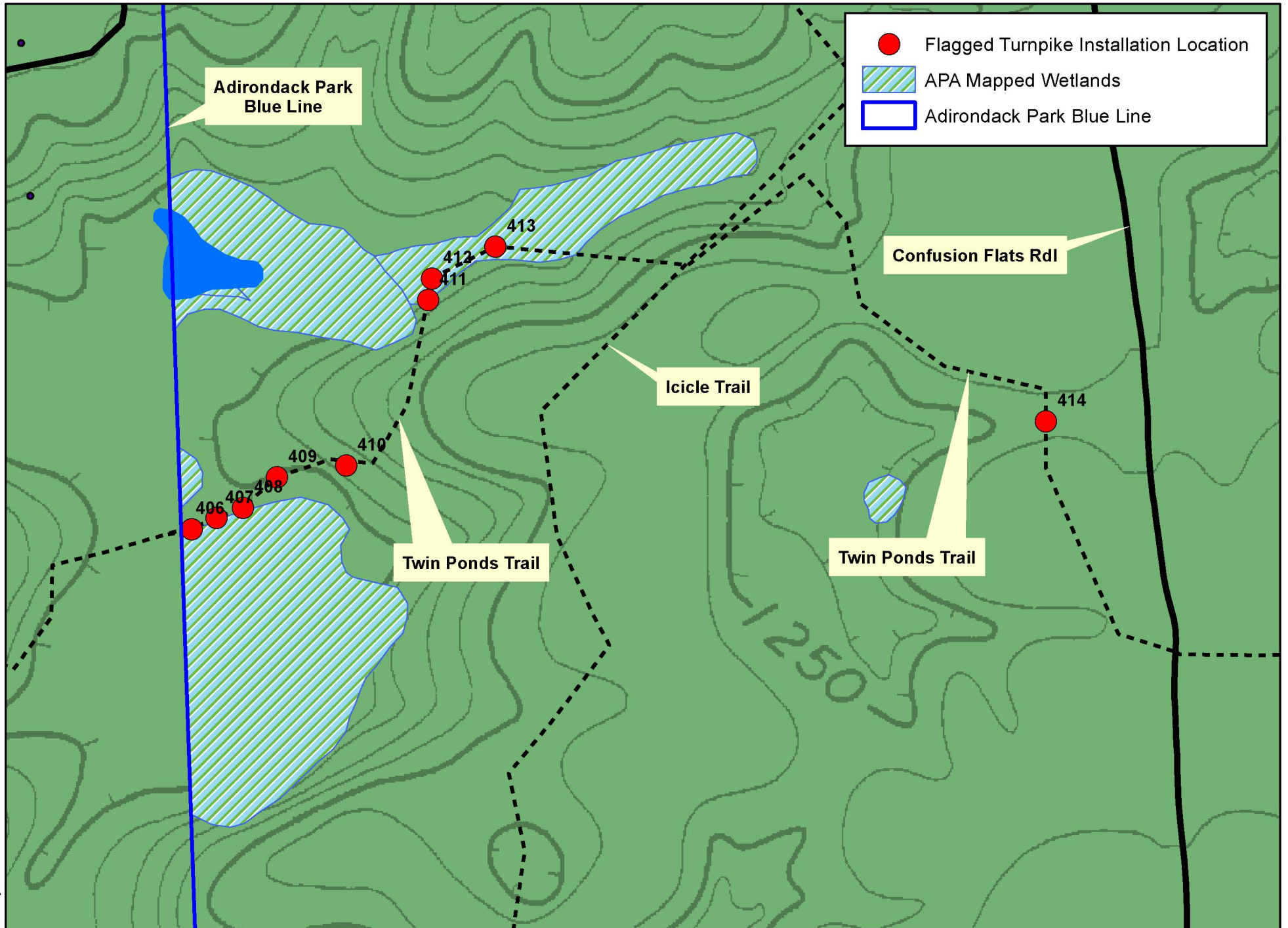


Jumper Trail After Turnpike (2022)



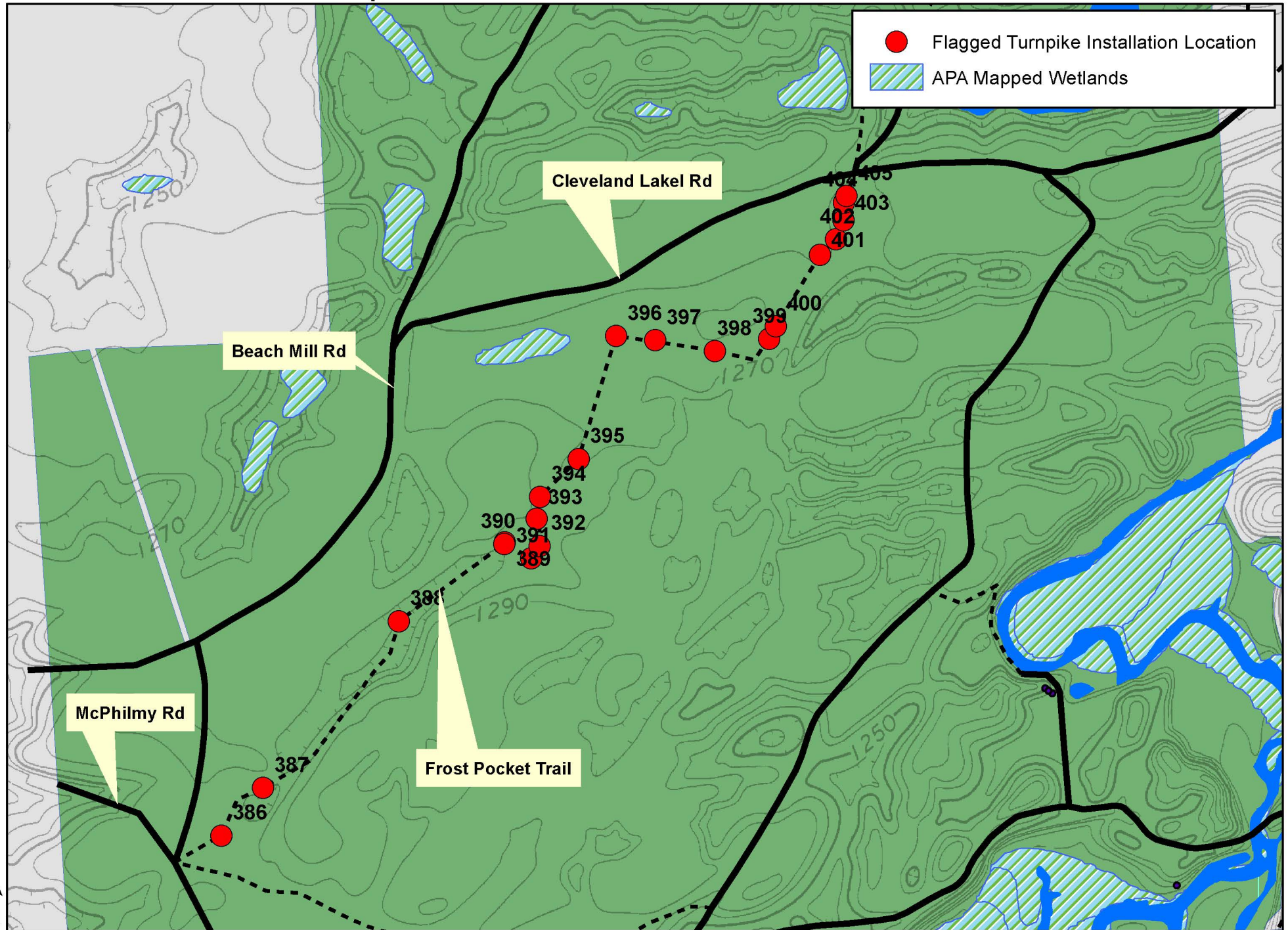
Twin Ponds Trail Turnpike

Independence River Wild Forest



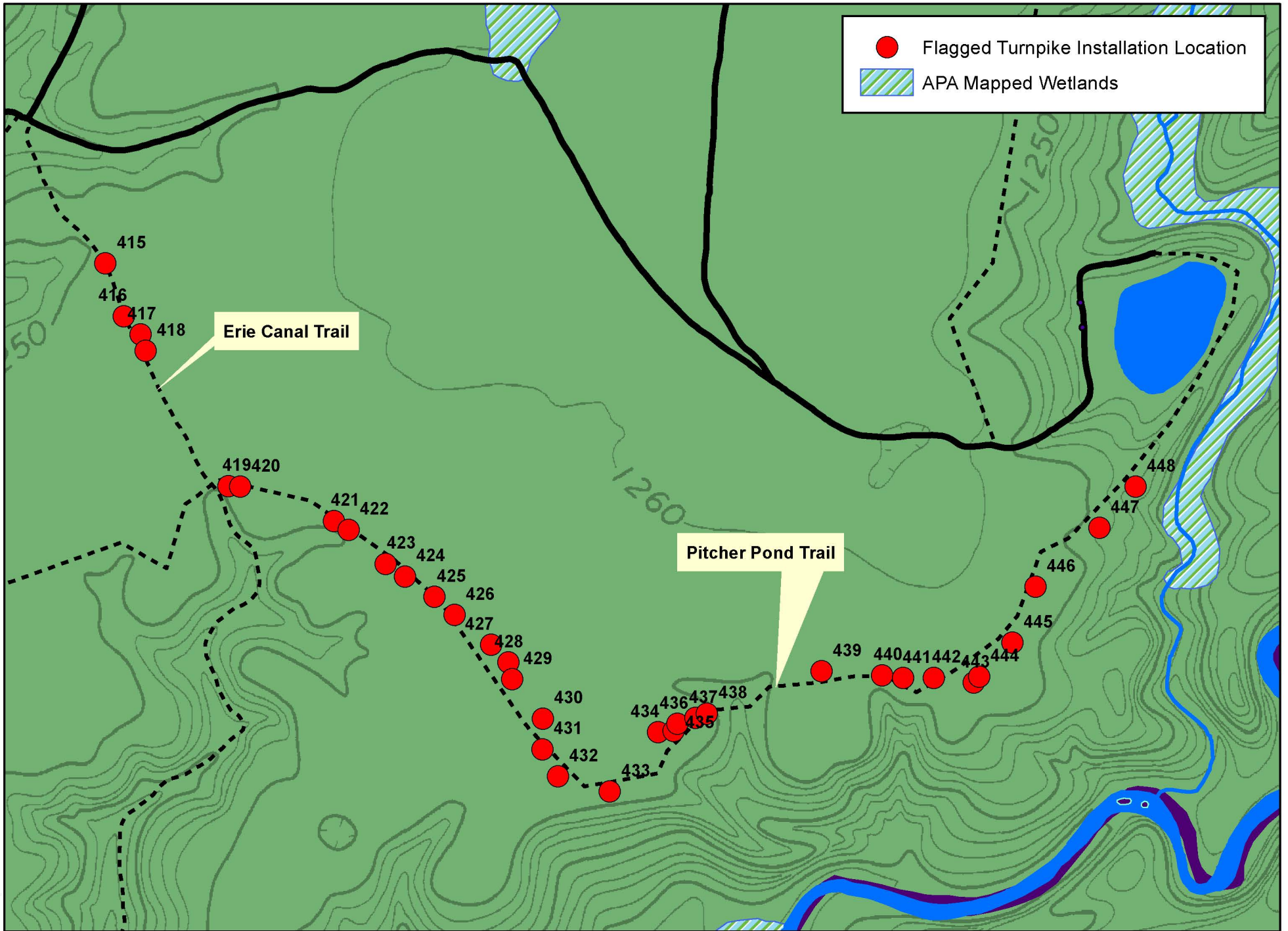
Frost Pocket Trail Turnpike

Independence River Wild Forest



Erie Canal Trail and Pitcher Pond Trail Turnpike

Independence River Wild Forest





New York State
Adirondack
Park Agency

KATHY HOCHUL
Governor

BARBARA RICE
Executive Director

Inter-Agency Staff Consultation

MEMORANDUM

TO: File, SL2022-0027

FROM: Matthew McNamara, EPS 1

DATE: July 12, 2023

RE: Independence River Wild Forest – Otter Creek Horse Trails
Turnpike Construction and Equestrian Trails

The following memorandum is a staff-level interpretation pursuant to the APA-DEC MOU concerning implementation of the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan (APSLMP). The opinion provided herein is solely a response to the Department's requested consultation and is meant to assist Department staff in understanding and applying the provisions of the State Land Master Plan. Changes to the project proposal may change the interpretation provided. This opinion is not applicable to other sites or projects.

This consultation asks if 4' wide turnpiking on equestrian trails in a Wild Forest setting conforms with the APSLMP. The manager proposes to use imported material to construct four-foot wide turnpiking to stabilize the existing tread surface in locations where tread churning has caused braiding, deep mud, and widening.

The Otter Creek Horse Trails network within the Independence River Wild Forest is uniquely positioned to support equestrian use due to the presence of a well-designed Assembly area, a proximal network of trails that are accessible to a diversity of rider abilities, and a dedicated community of trail stewards that are prepared to assist the Department with trail maintenance and management. Slopes and terrain in the area are generally less extreme than other parts of the Adirondacks, which lends itself to equestrian use. Popular equestrian trails within the Otter Creek Horse Trails network are subject to intensive tread surface disturbance due to the churning effect of hooves on the soil. Typical trail tread management challenges such as braiding/widening due to obstacles in the tread surface, erodible slopes, and traversing wet areas are also exacerbated by the relatively intensive tread disturbance that characterizes equestrian trails.

The APSLMP acknowledges the unique challenges associated with horse trails through the distinction between Wilderness and Wild Forest. New horse trails in Wilderness are limited to: "...those that can be developed by conversion of appropriate abandoned

roads, snowmobile trails, or administrative roads...” (2019 APSLMP p.24). This limitation on the placement of horse trails in Wilderness is intended to direct use to areas where the tread surface can withstand the heavy tread churning effect of hooves. In Wild Forest areas, more flexibility is provided for the placement of horse trails, and the tread surface must be suitably designed and prepared for the use when no previous tread stabilization is available. Certain parts of the Otter Creek Horse Trails network benefit from the conversion of legacy roads and well drained sandy loam soils.

In consideration of the APSLMP language referenced above and after reviewing the proposed remediation using turnpiking provided within the consultation, Agency staff find that the turnpiking proposed in the consultation is conforming with the APSLMP. Pursuant to the APA-DEC MOU, the placement of turnpiking at the locations identified in this consultation is considered “rehabilitation” of the trails where it will be placed.