

# FOREST PRESERVE DETAILED PROJECT WORK PLAN

**Fiscal Year 2023**  
**Project # CO-WP-320**

<u>Region</u> 3	<u>Project Title</u> Long Path Re-route
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<u>Project Type</u>	<u>Town(s)</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Management Unit</u>
New Construction	Rochester & Wawarsing	Ulster	Sundown Wild Forest

Description of Desired Condition(s) for Project

As approved in the 2019 Sundown Wild Forest Unit Management Plan Revision, and 2023 Sundown Wild Forest Amendment, DEC proposes to re-route the Long Path by removing it from the public highways. The Long Path, in this location, currently includes a lengthy 10-mile road walk traversing State Route 209, Lundy Road, Rogue Harbor Road, and Upper Cherrytown Road. This proposed trail reroute would eliminate that road walk and instead, traverse through several miles of Vernooey Kill State Forest as well as eight miles of Catskill Forest Preserve lands within the Sundown Wild Forest. The Long Path at this location will be a DEC marked and maintained foot trail that will allow for the use of mountain bikes. The trail is planned in the spirit of creating a foot trail compatible with the management and protection of Wild Forest areas. The routes have been carefully planned to preserve the wild forest setting and character. The trails are sinuous, and traverse through the landscape in a natural fashion that blends in and follows the curvature of the landscape.

Description of Project Specifications

The Long Path reroute is proposed to be approximately eight miles long on lands classified as forest preserve. The proposed treadway width is expected to be generally 4' wide with some sections up to 6' in width where necessary for turns and sections of steeper cross slope. The proposed trail connects with existing trails, creating a more viable and cohesive hiking and mountain biking experience. The reroute will enhance the existing Vernooey Kill Falls and Sundown Wild Forest trail network by providing trail connectivity to lands and trails both north and south of the proposed trail reroute.

Mitigation of Environmental Impacts: Trail layout has been refined with the aid of a professional trail crew (Tahawus Trails) in a way that seeks to avoid drainages and seeps to the greatest extent. Treadway construction will be routed to avoid cutting of large trees and will be installed at a sustainable grade using current Best Management Practices whenever possible. Tree cutting will be kept to the minimum necessary to establish the trail tread/trail corridor and includes routing the trail around large trees and concentrating on removal of smaller understory trees blocking the route. Implementation of this plan is expected to manage and reduce indiscriminate recreational impact by concentrating use on maintained trails.

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

### Trees to be Removed:

A total of 950 trees over 3 inches in diameter and 480 trees between 1-3 inches in diameter have been tallied for cutting (tally attached) to create the eight mile trail. Whenever possible, trail construction will be completed keeping minimization of tree cutting and the health and quality of the trees in mind. Much of the proposed route traverses areas thick with mountain laurel where a minimum amount of tree cutting will be required.

### Earthwork and Disturbance:

Treadway development and grading will be kept to a minimal earthen treadway along a sustainable grade. Most of the trail will traverse level and rolling terrain with minimal slope, following a curvilinear alignment to match the terrain. Areas of wet or poorly drained soils will be avoided in order to mitigate erosion. Some earthwork will be necessary in order to provide adequate trail inslope and outslope gradient along sidehills and to install water control devices such as drainage dips. Trail benches will be composed of consolidated mineral soil utilizing full bench cut techniques to create a firm and stable trail tread. Crowning of the trail tread will likely be minimal but will be utilized on occasion in areas where the trail route is not conducive to shedding water through outslope or other techniques.

Trail crews will perform work with a combination of hand and mechanized equipment. A powered wheelbarrow and a mini excavator will be used to perform the rough trail excavations and to set the treadway and water control devices for increased sustainability in the finished trail. Final shaping will be performed with hand tools. Excavation into the trail bed will be conducted only when necessary to remove protruding roots and rocks which pose a hazard to users of the trail. Any excavation into the trail bed to remove protruding roots or rocks that cause a hole will be filled with a combination of mineral soil/aggregate mix and fully compacted.

### Impacts to Streams, Waterbodies, and Wetlands:

Trail construction will not take place within wetland areas. Silt fencing will be placed around limits of disturbance during construction when working near stream channels or swales as per NYS Standards and Specifications for Erosion and Sediment Control. Any areas where ditching has been crossed by machinery or a vehicle will be restored to operational condition. Surface and ground water will be controlled during all phases of construction to prevent erosion and siltation both on site and to off-site locations. Facilities within the unit will be monitored for natural resource degradation. If action is warranted, appropriate measures will be taken to address specific areas of concern.

### Identification of Rare, Threatened or Endangered Species:

Timber rattlesnakes, a protected species, are found in high numbers in this area. All facilities and proposed management activities need to consider the presence of this species. Before undertaking any trail construction within 1.5 miles of a known rattlesnake den location between April 1 to October 31, Lands and Forests will consult with the Division of Fish and Wildlife Management staff to review proposed action for potential impacts to timber rattlesnakes or critical habitat as prescribed in DEC's guidelines. A Timber Rattlesnake Protection Plan developed by the Division of Fish and Wildlife Management will include direction for monitoring and mitigation. This plan, in addition to on-site timber rattlesnake training for personnel provided by appropriate regional wildlife staff, will provide both Department and contract staff with necessary information to appropriately handle any potential timber rattlesnake encounters. If conditions dictate, the use of an on-site trained monitor may be necessary for some aspects of construction activities.

### Activities that can be undertaken using a Trained Monitor includes:

- Sweep/search the work area before any clearing of vegetation and prior to initial ground disturbance. Check under equipment and carefully inspect the work area each and every day before

starting work. Re-inspect the work area before restarting work after any significant periods of inactivity.

- Provide the education and encounter training to any personnel that do not attend the initial training session.
- Monitor and record snake activity and encounters. Work will be stopped and will not resume until the snake has left the work area. The crew will maintain and keep on-site an inspection and encounter logbook.
- Special Attention will be given to inspecting stockpiled materials, such as large rocks within the limits of disturbance.
- Notify DEC if rattlesnakes are injured or killed during work activities.

### Analysis of Project Location and Design Alternatives

Alternative #1 - Build two parallel trails that each allow for different types of recreation. The first trail, a foot trail designed purely for hiking, would remove the Long Path from public highways and provide a rugged hiking experience. In a two-trail system, the foot trail portion was initially proposed to closely follow the western banks of the Vernooy Kill stream traversing north from the southernmost section of the Vernooy Kill State Forest up through the Sundown Wild Forest until it connects with the existing section of the Long Path at Vernooy Falls. The second trail, in a proposed two-trail system, would be a multi-use snowmobile/equestrian/mountain bike trail that would follow the path of the selected, preferred alternative. This trail would begin at the Cutler Road Parking Area near the intersection of Cutler Road and Lundy Road traversing north through Vernooy Kill State Forest and then up through Sundown Wild Forest until reaching the existing trail network near Vernooy Falls (route shown on attached map).

A two-trail system was not selected as the preferred alternative due to challenges associated with siting and construction of the proposed foot path through areas with unique timber rattlesnake populations and habitat. A two trail system was also found to be duplicative and would require significantly more tree cutting and natural resource disturbance.

Alternative #2 - Build one multiuse trail built to snowmobile trail (ONR2 Class B) standards. The trail would be designed to accommodate various types of users within the Catskill Forest Preserve including hikers, mountain biker, cross country skiers and snowmobilers when conditions are appropriate. One of the goals of allowing snowmobile access through this area is to create more opportunities for access for people with disabilities by creating a more viable system of trails connecting several destinations of interest (Vernooy Falls and Brownville Pond). It is not expected that this stretch of trail will receive a substantial amount of foot traffic during times when conditions are appropriate for snowmobiles. Allowing for the use of snowmobiles would enhance the existing Vernooy Kill Falls and Sundown Wild Forest snowmobile trail network and could provide a viable trail system of about 20 miles for all users of this multi-use trail, however; the trail would need to be built slightly wider than a traditional foot trail.

After further evaluation of the forest characteristics and the desired conditions for public use and experience of the Forest Preserve in the Vernooy Kill Falls region, DEC has concluded that constructing a trail to accommodate snowmobiling would not be appropriate for this reroute and is hereby removing snowmobiling as an allowed use on the proposed trail segment. This alternative would also require more tree cutting and a more disruptive level of earthwork than a traditional, narrower trail.

Alternative #3 - The No-Action Alternative. The Long Path is a trail extending from New York City to John Boyd Thatcher State Park outside of Albany, connecting a series of landmarks along the way. While road walking is an essential means of connecting the trail to communities along its route, every effort is made to keep the trail off roads where possible. The "No-Action" alternative was not

considered the preferred alternative due to DEC and partner goals of connecting the Long Path through forested areas.

Alternative #4 - (Preferred Alternative) – Construct foot trail that allows and conforms well to the use of mountain bikes. The proposed 10-mile reroute (including approximately 2 miles on Vernooy Kill State Forest) in the Vernooy Kill Falls region presents a unique opportunity to fulfill the spirit of the Long Path by highlighting the wild character of the Forest Preserve, one of New York’s most notable landmarks. Consistent with the Bicycle Management Guidance, this trail will offer a sense of solitude, remoteness, and self-reliance not only to bicyclists but to all permitted user groups. The trail will follow the natural contours of the terrain as much as possible and will be laid out to balance and minimize tree-cutting, rock removal, and terrain alteration. Furthermore, the trail segment will be designed specifically to allow compatible activities such as hiking, biking, snowshoeing, and skiing as identified in the 2019 UMP & 2023 UMP Amendment.

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

The 2019 Sundown Wild Forest Unit Management Plan Revision proposes infrastructure changes that may require motorized equipment. Trail construction may require motorized equipment to carry in materials and tools in excess of 40 pounds and to aid in the efficiency of trail construction. To make the most efficient use of time during the construction season, it will be necessary to allow the entrance of small, tracked mini excavators and walk behind wheelbarrows. A Conceptual Use Plan for Administrative Access by Motor Vehicles in Wild Forest Areas (CP-17 Appendix A) has been approved for this area of the Sundown Wild Forest. Access will be granted for motorized equipment via existing trails and roadways. During construction, operators of low-impact motorized equipment will conduct their work in optimal environmental conditions and in a manner that will not contribute to any potential degradation of the wild forest setting. All work will be done with appropriate DEC oversight.

#### Description of Applicable Standards for Accessibility by People with Disabilities

Consistent with ADA requirements, the Department incorporates accessibility for people with disabilities into the planning, construction and alteration of recreational facilities and assets supporting them. Modification of the Long Path to fully accessible standards would result in a fundamental alteration in the nature of the service, and an undue financial or administrative burden to the Department in the case of this project. Implementation of this project will aim to make the facilities accessible to the largest population possible without making assumption about any particular user’s ability.

#### Other Relevant Considerations

Tahawus trail - contract work-project for Region 3 during spring 2023. The portions of trail within Vernooy Kill State Forest have already been constructed. Trail connection anticipated and advocated for by the New York – New Jersey Trail Conference (NYNJTC).

Prepared by (Name & Title): Michael Callan, Forester 2  
Phone: (845) 256-3004

Date: 11/8/2023

**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 type="checkbox"/>		
Mineral Resources	Mining	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Materials Management	Solid Waste Mgt. Fac.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Water	Dam Safety Review	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
	Const. in Flood Hazard	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
	Public Water Supply	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
	SPDES	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Spills Management	Petro. Bulk Storage	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Lands and Forests	Unit Management Plan	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
	Tree Cutting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
	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 type="checkbox"/>		
	Wild Scenic & Rec. River	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Compliance Services	Other Protection of Waters	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
	EAF	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
	Negative Declaration	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
	Env. Impact Statement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
	Water Quality Cert.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
DEC (other)	CP-17	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
	Commissioner (aircraft, motorized equipment)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
	Flight Request	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
	Contract Clearance Sh.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
	DOB Exemption	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Other Agencies	APA MOU	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
	APA Wetlands Permit	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
	Corps. of Engineers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
	Building Permits	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
	Local Permits	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
	Easements	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
	Highway Enter DOT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
	Wastewater Disposal	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		

## **Forest Preserve Work Plan Attachments**

For

Construction of New Facilities and Expansion or  
Modification of Existing Facilities

Sundown Wild Forest – Long Path Reroute

Page 2 ... Tree Tally Information

Page 3 ... Preserve Level Map

Page 4... .Management Unit Level Map

Page 5 ... Long Path Reroute Map (Sundown & Vernooy Kill SF)

Page 6... Long Path sample plot map (Just Sundown)

Pages 7 - 12 Excerpts from the 2019 Sundown Wild Forest Unit

Management Plan and 2023 Sundown Wild Forest Unit Management Plan  
Amendment

# Tree Tally - Estimated tree cutting necessary for Long Path reroute in the Sundown Wild Forest .

Long Path reroute sapling estimate - (Saplings 1-3" diameter).

Long Path Reroute sapling estimate - (Saplings 1-3" Diameter) - Derived from 10% sample based on 8 mile long, 6 foot wide corridor									
SPECIES	American Beech	Striped Maple	White Pine	Sugar Maple	Red Maple	Hop Hornbeam	Chestnut Oak	Black Birch	
TOTALS from 10% sample	43	4	6	2	4	1	3	1	64
Extraction from Sample *(7.5)	322	30	45	15	30	8	22	8	480
Percent Species	67.1875	6.25	9.375	3.125	6.25	1.5625	4.6875	1.5625	

Sapling estimate derived from a 10% sample. We established 40 plots that were 105.6 feet in length x 8 feet wide along an 8 mile trail. All saplings between 1-3" in diameter were counted in each plot. The majority of saplings counted were American beech (*Fagus grandifolia*).

8 miles = 42,240 feet

105.6 feet \* 40 plots = 4,224 linear feet of trail sampled, or 33,792 square feet; 0.8 acres sampled

480 tree saplings between 1-3" estimated for cutting

Long Path reroute tree tally (3" and above)

LONG PATH RE-ROUTE - SUNDOWN WILD FOREST - 4' Wide Trail Treadway - 6' wide Cleared Corridor												
SPECIES	American Beech	Red Maple	Black Birch	Chestnut Oak	Black Cherry	Hemlock	Red Oak	Sugar Maple	Basswood	White Oak	Striped Maple	
DBH Class												
4(3.0-4.9)	188	18	0	0	0	28	0	0	0	0	11	
6(5.0-6.9)	135	6	24	0	0	23	0	0	0	0	4	
8(7.0-8.9)	99	8	9	0	0	24	0	14	0	0	1	
10(9.0-10.9)	57	11	26	6	0	31	0	9	0	0	0	
12(11.-12.9)	8	9	30	5	3	24	0	41	0	0	0	
14(13-14.9)	9	1	23	5	1	5	0	5	0	1	0	
16(15-16.9)	1	1	5	0	0	5	1	11	0	0	0	
18(17-18.9)	5	0	1	0	0	3	2	0	0	0	0	
20(19-20.9)	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	9	1	1	0	
22(21-22.9)	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	5	0	0	0	
24 (23+)												
TOTALS	501	54	117	17	4	144	4	93	1	2	15	
												TOTAL TREES
												950

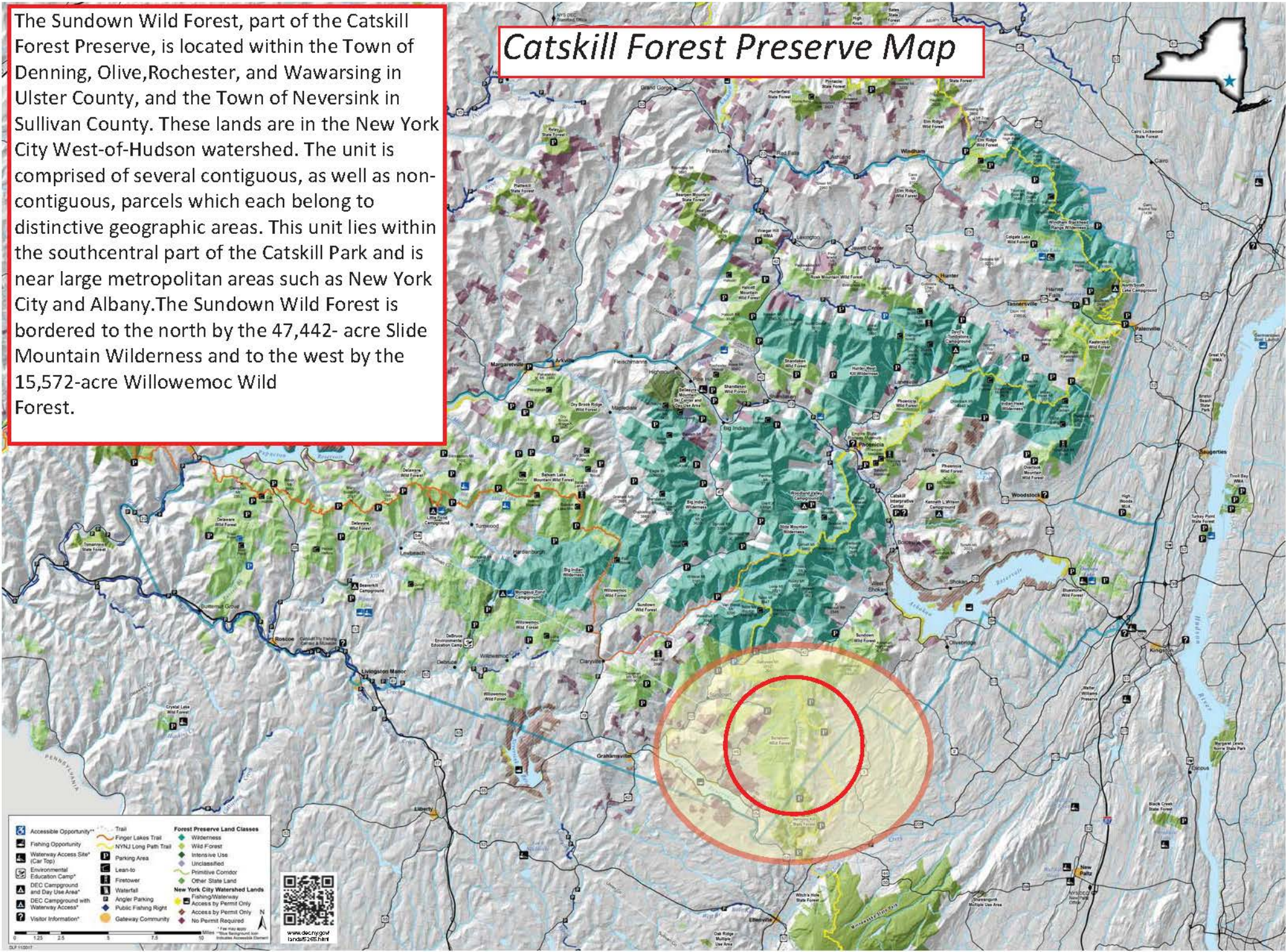
950 trees over 3" in diameter

480 tree between 1-3" diameter

8 mile long trail - cleared to a 6' wide corridor with a 4' wide treadway

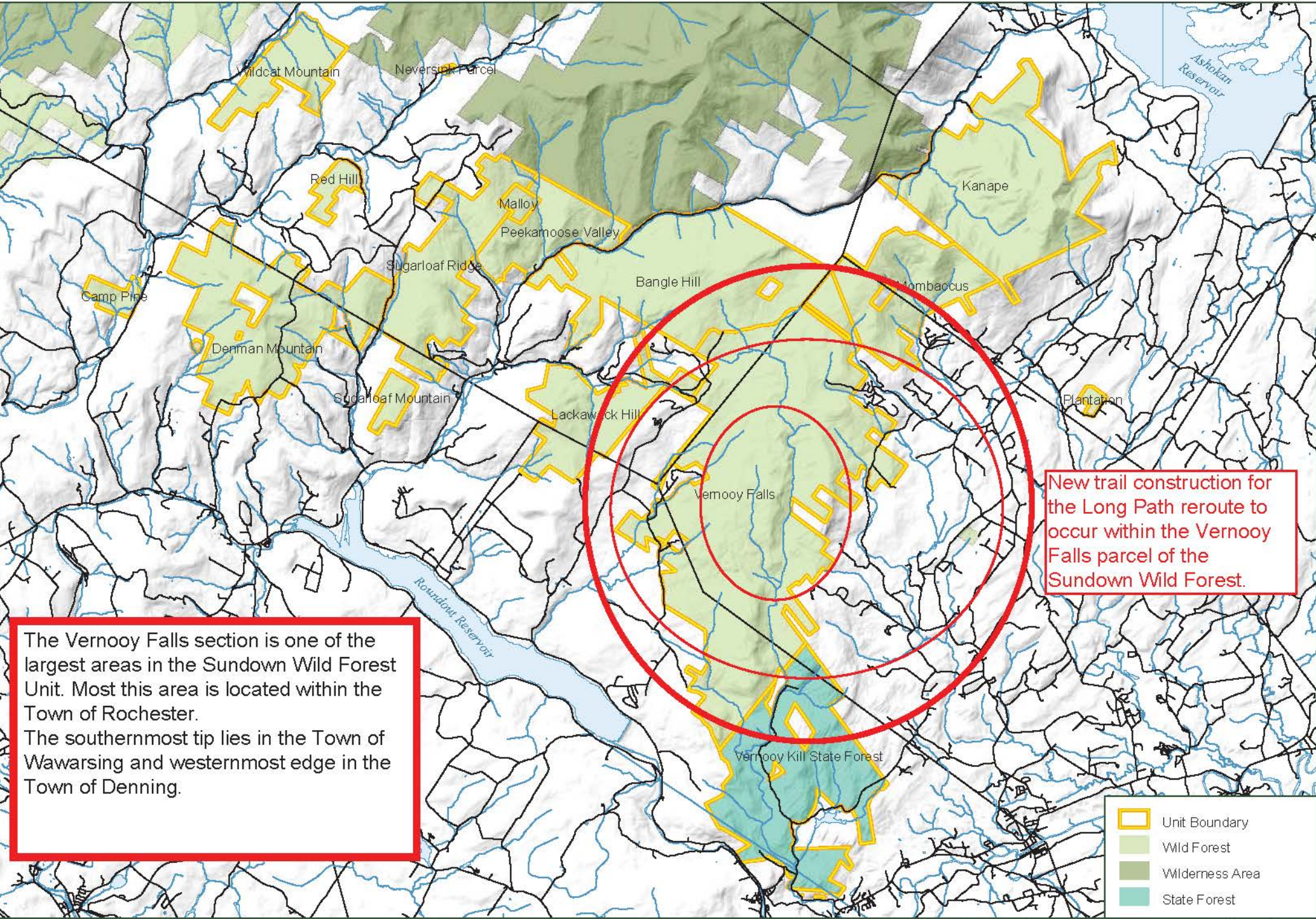
The Sundown Wild Forest, part of the Catskill Forest Preserve, is located within the Town of Denning, Olive, Rochester, and Wawarsing in Ulster County, and the Town of Neversink in Sullivan County. These lands are in the New York City West-of-Hudson watershed. The unit is comprised of several contiguous, as well as non-contiguous, parcels which each belong to distinctive geographic areas. This unit lies within the southcentral part of the Catskill Park and is near large metropolitan areas such as New York City and Albany. The Sundown Wild Forest is bordered to the north by the 47,442- acre Slide Mountain Wilderness and to the west by the 15,572-acre Willowemoc Wild Forest.

# Catskill Forest Preserve Map





# Sundown Wild Forest Management Unit Map



New trail construction for the Long Path reroute to occur within the Vermooy Falls parcel of the Sundown Wild Forest.

The Vermooy Falls section is one of the largest areas in the Sundown Wild Forest Unit. Most this area is located within the Town of Rochester. The southernmost tip lies in the Town of Wawarsing and westernmost edge in the Town of Denning.

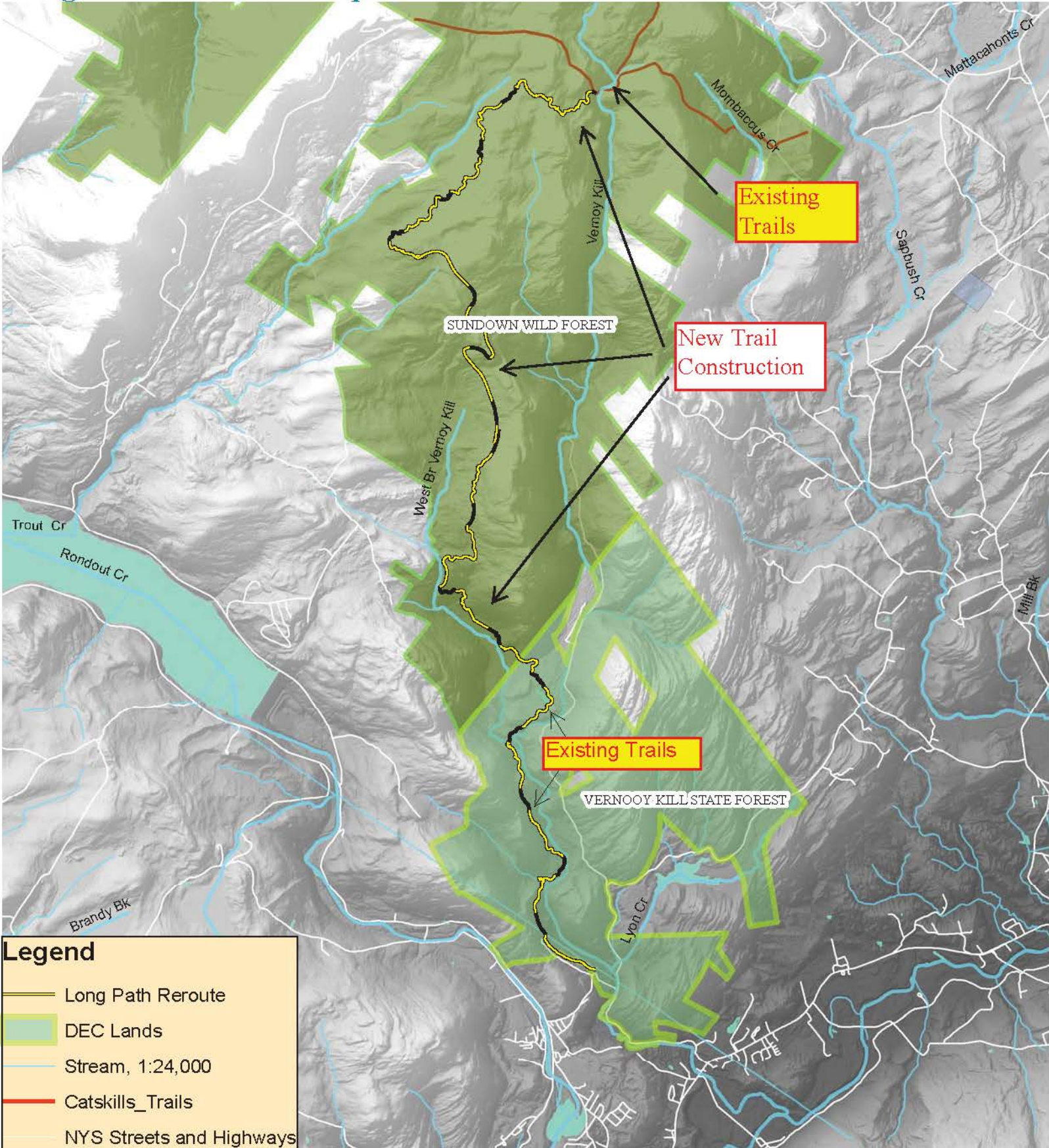
- Unit Boundary
- Wild Forest
- Wilderness Area
- State Forest



# Sundown Wild Forest

## Long Path Reroute Map

Catskill Forest Preserve

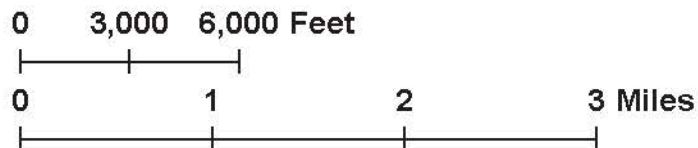


**Legend**

- Long Path Reroute
- DEC Lands
- Stream, 1:24,000
- Catskills\_Trails
- NYS Streets and Highways



Department of Environmental Conservation

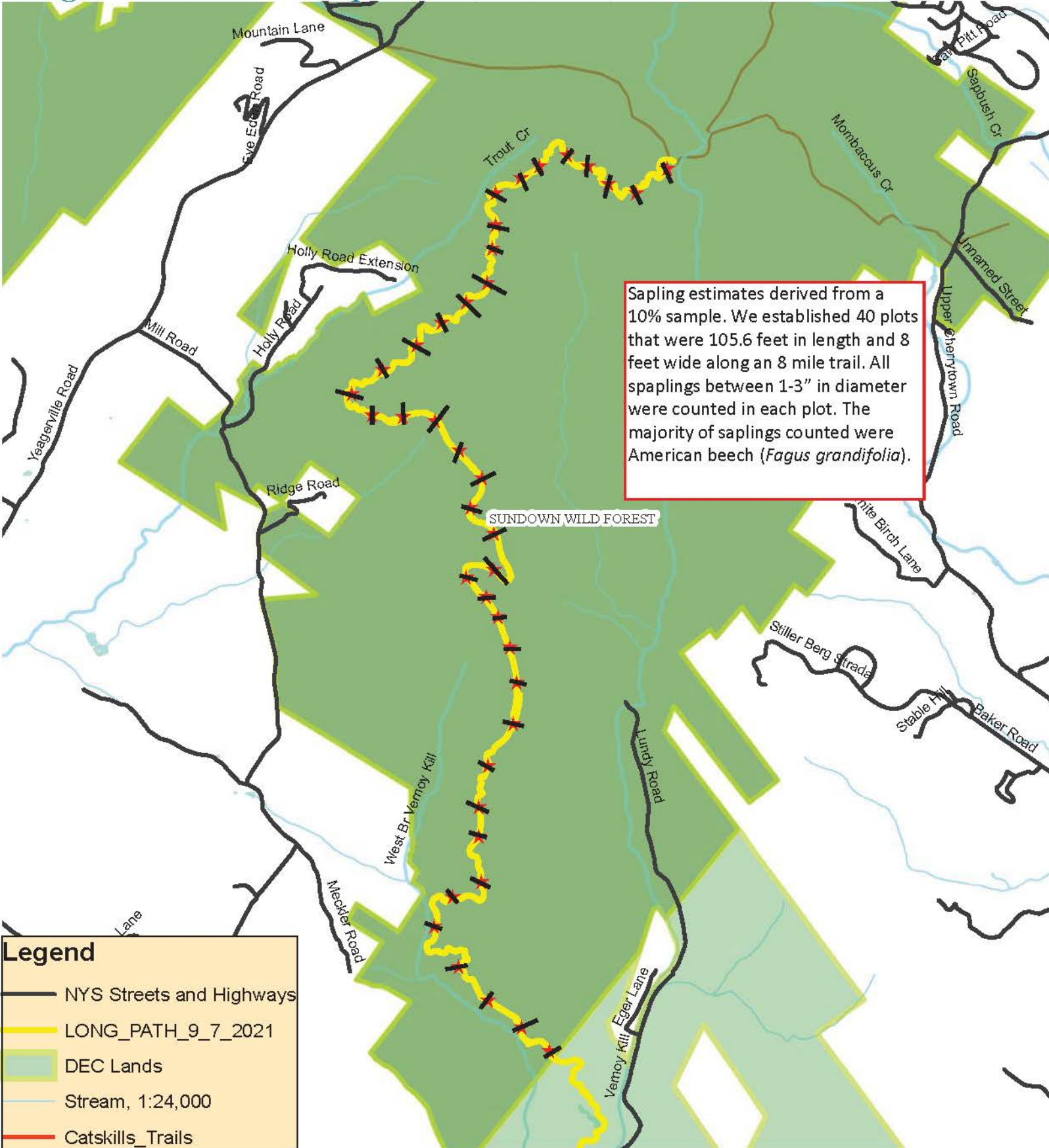


# Sundown Wild Forest

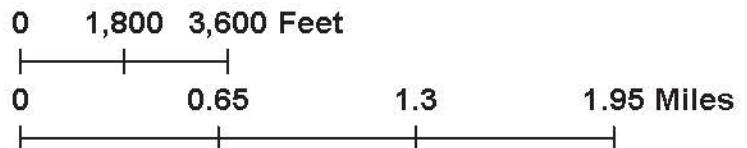
## Long Path Reroute Map

## \* Sapling sample Plot Map

Catskill Forest Preserve



Department of Environmental Conservation



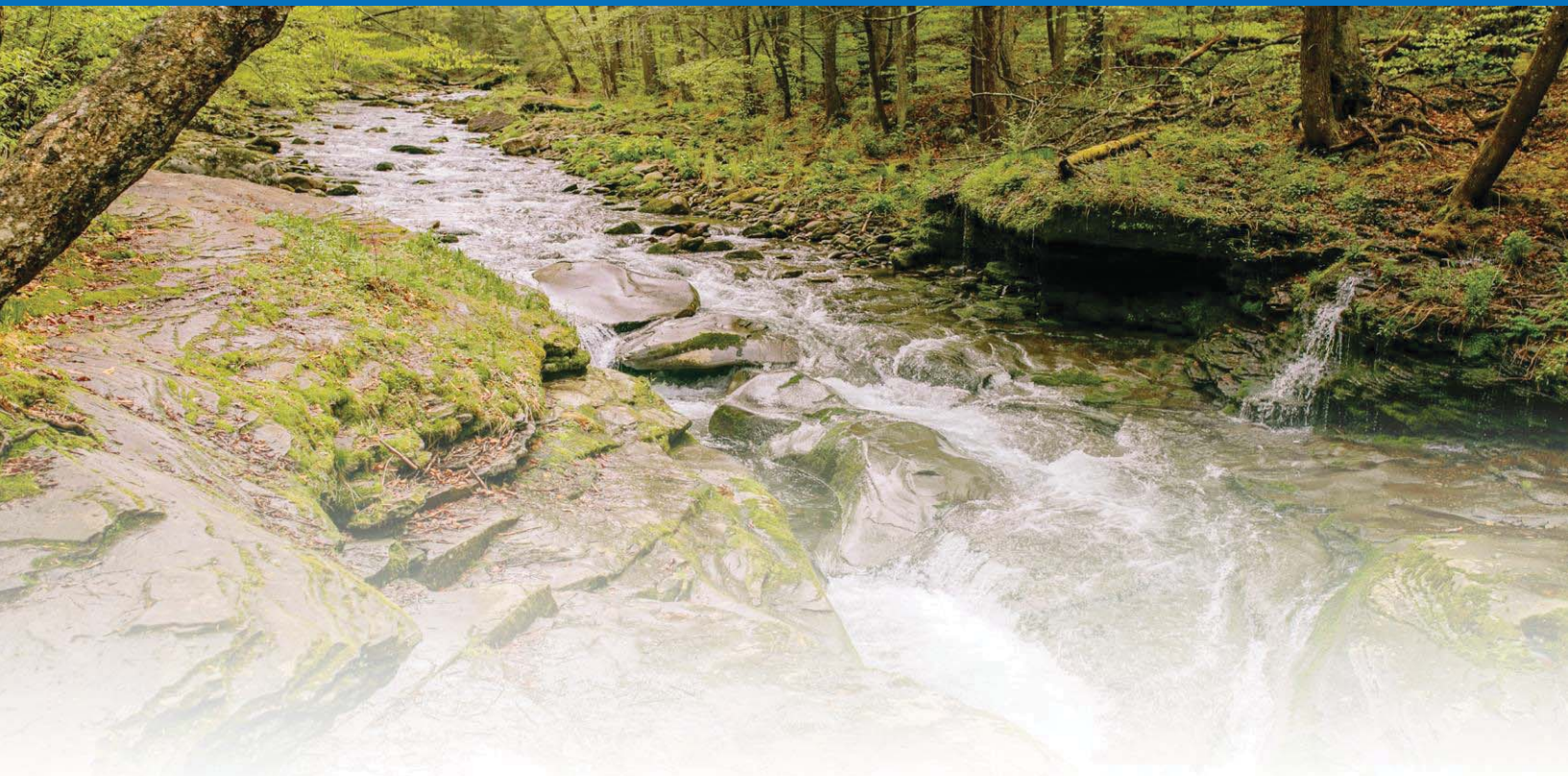


Department of  
Environmental  
Conservation

# SUNDOWN WILD FOREST And VERNOOY KILL STATE FOREST

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## Unit Management Plan



**NYS DEC, REGION 3, DIVISION OF LANDS AND FORESTS**

21 South Putt Corners Rd., New Paltz, NY 12561  
r3.ump@dec.ny.gov

## f. Proposed Projects

*\* Project # 1 is predominantly located within the Vernooy Kill State Forest section (Section V) of this plan. Due to the proposed relocation of the Long Path and for clarity, project # 1 is described in both the Vernooy Kill Falls and the Vernooy Kill State Forest sections of this plan.*

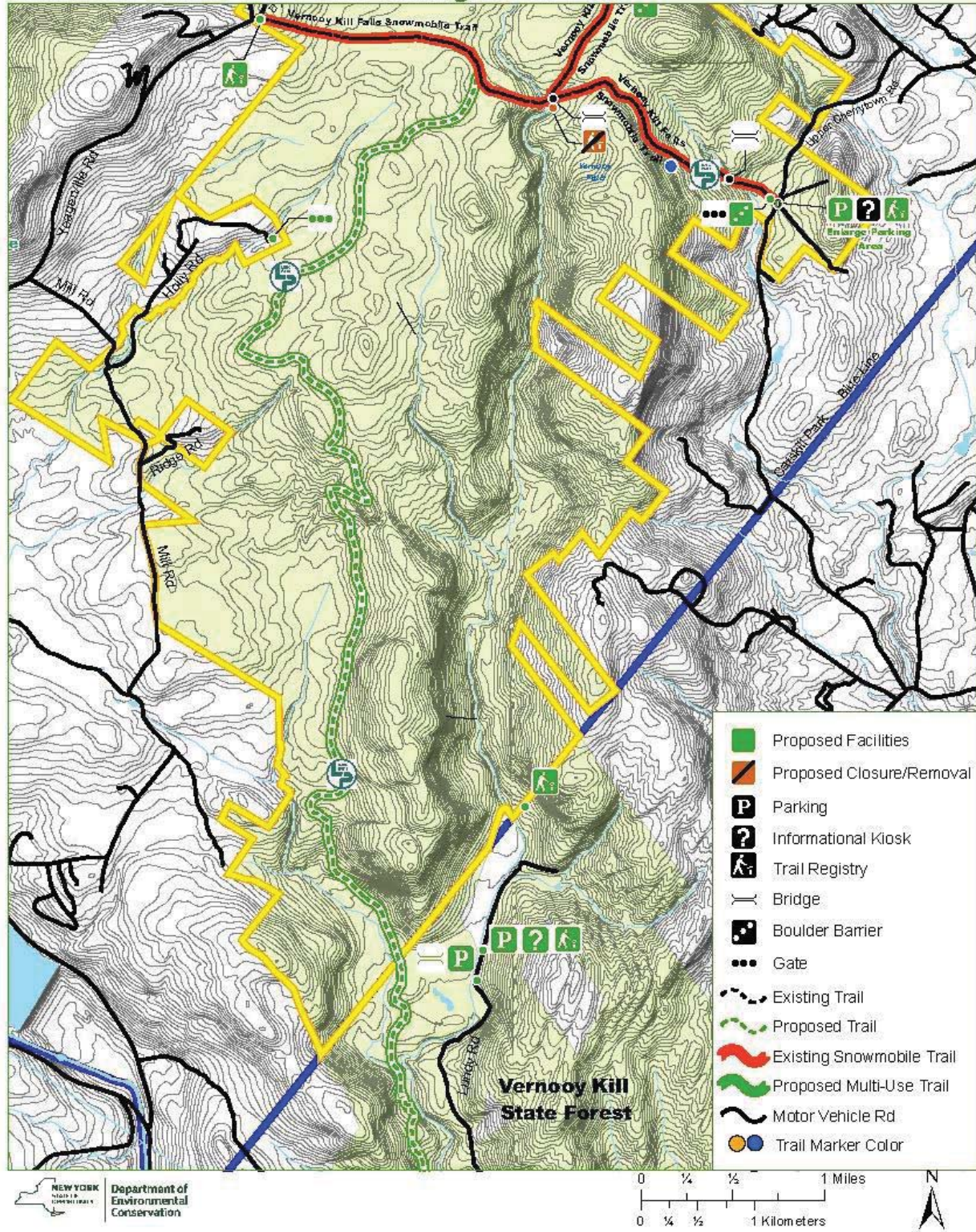
1. Re-route the Long Path by removing it from the public highways. The Long Path currently follows State Route 209 to Lundy Road to Rogue Harbor Road to Upper Cherrytown Road to the DEC parking area at Upper Cherrytown Road. This project is described in conjunction with projects proposed and described in Section V. Vernooy Kill State Forest.

The Long Path will now be routed up Lundy Road in the Town of Wawarsing, and will cross over to the west side of the Vernooy Kill Stream on the Cutler Road Bridge. The trail will then turn north and enter the proposed Cutler Road Parking Area and will head northwest across the gravel pit where it will join with Phillips Road. Phillips Road is a dirt road which services the Vernooy Kill State Forest as an access road and is gated at its junction with Cutler Road to prevent unauthorized motor vehicle access. The Long Path will follow Phillips Road north for about one mile to the north end of the old field area where the access road to the former Dunlop Farm crosses the Vernooy Kill. The Long Path will then continue on Phillips Road past the old Dunlop Farm site. Here the road gains elevation on its route north towards Brownville. At Brownville, the trail needs to gain the height of land on the west side of the airstrip for the trip north to Vernooy Kill Falls. This may require either a route across the airstrip and potential switch backs from the airstrip to the height of land or routing the trail on the old jeep trail which leads from Brownville to Sholam Mechler Road to a point where the trail can then turn north for a gradual ascent up the ridge leading towards Vernooy Kill Falls. The trail will continue north beyond the Catskill Park Blue Line boundary. This boundary defines the end of the Vernooy Kill State Forest and the beginning of the Vernooy Kill Falls section of the Sundown Wild Forest. The trail will travel north, west of the ridge, where it will join the Greenville section of the existing snowmobile trail on the west side of the upper Vernooy Kill Falls. This section of the proposed relocation of the Long Path from State Route 209 north to Vernooy Kill Falls will be about 10 miles. This proposed trail will enhance the existing Vernooy Kill Falls snowmobile trail and will provide a viable trail system of about 20 miles for all users of this trail.

The Long Path at this location will be a DEC marked and maintained multi-use trail and will include the use of snowmobiles. The trail leading from the Upper Cherrytown Road Parking Area up to Vernooy Kill Falls will no longer be marked as part of the Long Path but will remain a DEC marked and maintained multi-use trail. The Long Path will cross the West Branch of the Vernooy Kill, as well as other tributaries to the Vernooy Kill Stream, and may require bridges at several locations.

2. To prevent motor vehicle trespass where the Long Path joins Trails End/Spencer Road near Gray's Camp, large boulders will be installed. These boulders will be placed such that there will still be room for parking or turning around for at least one vehicle at this junction.
3. Improved signage is needed in several locations along the Long Path, especially where the Long Path leaves Spencer Road in the Town of Denning and heads toward Riggsville and Bangle Hill, as well as the intersection near "Gray's Camp" on Trails End Road. These signs will include destinations and mileages for each direction.
4. At the Upper Vernooy Falls Trail, near its junction with Trails End Road, large rocks are needed next to the gate to prohibit motor vehicle trespass.
5. A large rock is needed adjacent to the gate across from the Upper Cherrytown Road Parking Area to prohibit unauthorized motor vehicle access.
6. Maintain and mark Bear Spring Road as public access. Clarify access rights of owner of private land inholding near Bear Spring and Trails End Roads. Establish a clear and consistent policy to deal with driveway access to this parcel through Forest Preserve lands. Consider for acquisition if offered by willing seller.
7. Delineate a parking area at the start of the Upper Vernooy Kill Falls Trail, at its junction with Trails End Road and install a "Forest Preserve Parking Area" sign. Install an informational kiosk with Forest Preserve regulations, a map of the area and general information. Rehabilitate the large campsites and monitor for adverse impacts.
8. Maintain/stabilize all existing designated trails and bridges. Maintain trail registers and improve signage throughout the area.
9. Maintain woods road which starts near the end of Holly Road for continued administrative access. As discussed in Section I, this was once a major public road which continued to the mill at Vernooy Kill Falls. Close with a gate if unauthorized use becomes a problem.
10. Work in close cooperation with the Division of Fish and Wildlife and Natural Heritage to study rare and endangered species sites, particularly rattlesnake

Sundown Wild Forest Unit Management Plan Vernooey Falls (South)





Department of  
Environmental  
Conservation

# SUNDOWN WILD FOREST

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## Amendment

to the

### 2019 Sundown Wild Forest and Vernooy Kill State Forest Unit Management Plan



**NYS DEC, REGION 3, DIVISION OF LANDS AND FORESTS**

21 South Putt Corners Road, New Paltz, NY 12561  
r3.ump@dec.ny.gov



## **Vernooy Kill Falls Region**

In the vicinity of the Vernooy Kill State Forest and the Vernooy Kill Falls section of the Sundown Wild Forest, the Long Path traverses a significant amount of mileage on public motor vehicle roads. As a way to improve the safety and experience of hikers, the 2019 UMP proposed a new 10-mile trail segment of the Long Path to re-route the “trail” off public roads and onto the adjacent State land. The segment was identified in the UMP as a multiple-use trail, which included the proposed use of snowmobiles in order to connect the pre-existing Vernooy Kill Falls Snowmobile Trail to points south.

After further evaluation of the forest characteristics and the desired conditions for public use and experience of the Forest Preserve in the Vernooy Kill Falls region, DEC has concluded that constructing a trail to accommodate snowmobiling would not be appropriate for this reroute and is hereby removing snowmobiling as an allowed use on the proposed trail segment. Furthermore, the trail segment will be designed specifically to allow compatible activities such as hiking, biking, snowshoeing and skiing as originally identified in the 2019 UMP. Consistent with the DEC’s Management Guidance on the Siting, Construction, and Maintenance of Singletrack Bicycle Trails on Forest Preserve Lands in the Adirondack and Catskill Parks (“Bicycle Management Guidance”), this trail will offer a sense of solitude, remoteness, and self-reliance not only to hikers and bicyclists, but to all permitted user groups.

### **Desired Conditions for the Vernooy Kill Falls**

The Long Path is a trail extending from New York City to John Boyd Thatcher State Park outside of Albany, connecting a series of landmarks along the way. While road walking is an essential means of connecting the trail to communities along its route, every effort is made to keep the trail off roads where possible.

The proposed 10-mile reroute in the Vernooy Kill Falls region presents a unique opportunity to fulfill the spirit of the Long Path by highlighting the wild character of the Forest Preserve, one of New York’s most notable landmarks. The trail will follow the natural contours of the terrain as much as possible and will be laid out to balance and minimize tree-cutting, rock removal, and terrain alteration.