
FOREST PRESERVE DETAILED PROJECT WORK PLAN

Fiscal Year 2024-2025

Project # 2024-RB-061

CO-WP 379

<u>Region</u> 5	<u>Project Title</u> Giant Lean-to
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<u>Project Type</u> New Construction	<u>Town(s)</u> Keene	<u>County</u> Essex	<u>Management Unit</u> Giant Mountain Wilderness Area
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Description of Desired Condition(s) for Project

The desired conditions for this project are to provide a well-designed and constructed lean-to based camping opportunity that minimizes natural resource impacts and creates a long-lasting facility which enhances the user's wilderness camping experience, while helping avoid unintended impacts of the users during their stay.

Choosing a suitable location ensures initial and long-term environmental protection. These facilities will include the lean-to, an appropriately surfaced apron (social area), with a designed fire pit, signage, social trails, and privy.

The current lean-to has come to the end of its useful life and is in need of full replacement. Unfortunately, the current site has the lean-to sited directly on drainages that increase the natural resource impacts from people moving about the undeveloped site during their stay. A new location was chosen, a short distance away, to provide for an appropriately sited replacement and long-term sustainability of the use.

Description of Project Specifications

This project will include tree cutting, helicopter delivery of materials, site work (earthwork), signage installation, removal of the old lean-to, site restoration and a baseline survey of the facilities afterwards.

To provide for the safe construction of the lean-to, the delivery of materials, and to minimize health and safety issues of the users, up to 44 trees between one and three inches in diameter at breast height (DBH) and nine trees over three-inches DBH will be cut. Approximately 16 trees between one and three-inches DBH and six trees above three-inches DBH will be cut associated with the lean-to and support facilities. If the opening does not provide a risk-free area for the helicopter insertion of the materials, the backup site will include 28 trees between one and three-inches DBH and three trees above three-inches DBH to be cut that is several hundred feet from this location. This location was chosen given previous storm damage, topography and safety of the access. Extensive under growth in this area should hasten the regeneration after cutting.

All trees will be felled, cut up and removed from the immediate work area of the lean-to.

Site work for the lean-to will consist of sourcing four larger stones to set the lean-to corners on. These stones will be set in a square approximately 16 feet by 18 feet, with the organic material cleared and the stones set on mineral soil or a suitable column of onsite crushed rock. This will ensure a stable foundation for the lean-to, with a target of at least one foot of clearance below the base logs. This clearance will assist in air flow to avoid moisture build up issues. Stones will be sourced from the local area with many surface stones present.

The apron pad in front of the lean-to will be an area approximately 16 feet by 18 feet, which will include the fire pit inside it. Organic material will be removed from the area. Removed organic material will be dispersed in areas sourced for materials. Retention stones will be set around the perimeter of the site to retain the fill material placed inside. Retention rocks can be set adjacent to the base of the Deacon Log, with up to two inches of gap between it, but not touching. The retention rocks by the deacon log should be set with flat tops to facilitate safe footing in this area. The remaining retention perimeter will maintain the height established at the deacon log with up to ten percent slope to the opposite end at the 18-foot mark. Any retention stone will be set to provide an infinity edge with high contact (high contact retention stones are set to avoid the sawtooth nature of stone setting, with the tops of the stones at or below the final tread layer, to help sheet water off), set on mineral soil or crush with proper batter into the slope.

Inside the retained area, foundation rocks will be added to fill the void, based on depth of organic materials to be removed. Foundation rocks will not come higher than four inches from the top of the final surface height. After foundation rocks are set large angular crush will be inserted in the voids to help increase drainage and support of the pad. This will be topped with finer crush (zero to one- and one-half inch) to not exceed four inches below the target depth. The entire area will be surfaced with four to six inches of mineral soil and compacted.

The fire pit will be made within the apron, with the front of the fire pit not being closer than four feet from the front drip edge of the lean-to. Large flat foundation stones will be set in the apron, to serve as the base of the fire pit. Gaps in the stones filled with crushed stone. The area under the fire pit will not be surfaced with mineral soil. Fire ring rocks will be set around the foundation rocks, partially buried in crush to resist movement. Target height of the fire ring rocks off the flat foundation stones is eight to 10 inches. The fire ring should not exceed 30 inches inside width. The shape of the fire pit can be rounded or squared based on available stone. The fire pit is not intended to have a higher backstop.

The lean-to is prebuilt from cedar logs and disassembled prior to flights. The Adirondack 46ers have volunteered to prebuild and donate the lean-to structure. Assistance came from Lean2Rescue and the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) provides materials and supplies.

Once the site is cleared the foundation rocks will be established for the lean-to to be assembled on once it is flown to the site.

The privy will be established in an area that is suitable for future movement, at least 150 feet from streams and screened from the social area. A hole will be dug nearby at least three feet deep with the privy assembled over the hole.

Access and social trails will be laid out and cleared between the hiking trail, the lean-to, and the privy. The access trails will have a three-foot trail corridor width and be cleared eight to ten-feet high. Layout will seek to avoid the need for any tread hardening but be done to allow for easy surfacing if the future use results in compaction that exceeds three inches below the duff layer or channels water.

Signage will be installed along the trail pointing to the lean-to. Privy signage will be installed to guide users to the privy. Located on the lean-to will be identification signage for the lean-to and appropriate rules and regulations information or Leave No Trace messaging.

Closure of the old lean-to site will include the removal of roofing. This roofing will be flown out of the woods during the delivery of the materials to the site. The existing wooden structure will be torn down. Unsafe hardware will be removed and the logs and natural lumber will be dispersed in the area. The existing fire pit will be disassembled. Given the drainage challenges at the existing site, it is not believed that this area will receive any camping use.

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

The current lean-to has come to the end of its useful life. The existing site of the Giant Lean-to has several small drainages that flow under the actual lean-to, in addition to creating multiple stream crossings to get to it, from the trail, and to the associated privy. A new location was selected that takes into account not only surface water flows and access, but topography and forest type.

Analysis of Project Location and Design Alternatives

The primary alternative for this project would be to not replace the lean-to. The installation of the new lean-to will provide an enjoyable user experience and concentrate environmental impacts where they can be mitigated through siting and design. This is the only lean-to present in this wilderness area and is located along a more remote and less popular portion of the unit. The lean-to provides a destination-based camping location to help create alternative camping opportunities that can assist in dispersing use in the unit, and/or provide more opportunities for solitude based lean-to camping. This route is popular for groups seeking a backpacking experience or loop hike and is in contrast to camping that happens on the Giant Washbowl side of the unit.

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

During the off-peak season (spring and fall) a helicopter flight mission will be utilized for a day to insert the materials and tools for the project and flyout nonnative trash and debris from the old lean-to. This single day of helicopter use will greatly benefit the project and provides an appropriate compromise when considering the net positive impact of a wilderness camping experience in this portion of the Giant Mountain Wilderness, and its sole lean-to based camping experience.

If work for this project is conducted during the off-peak windows in the spring and fall, a chainsaw may be utilized for clearing the site. Given the remote nature of the location, the work crew will have the option of utilizing the chainsaw at this time.

Description of Applicable Standards for Accessibility by People with Disabilities

The site where the lean-to will be installed, nor the trail leading to it, meets accessibility standards as they are native surfaced hiking paths that generally follow the contours of the terrain and are contained to a 12-inch to 20-inch tread surface. Since this proposal does not suggest overall site design to comply with accessibility standards, this lean-to will be built following the current standard Adirondack lean-to design.

Other Relevant Considerations

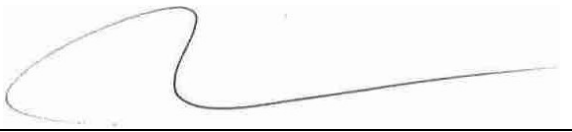
The quarry sites for the stone and soil used in this project will vary based on available sources and locations relative to the site. The primary goal is to source materials from locations that are not

visible to future users and do not contribute to environmental impact. Quarry sites and the paths used to transport materials will be naturalized to minimize the visual impact, prevent any erosion, and facilitate any vegetative growth in the area. As possible quarries will be feathered to blend with the surrounding terrain, or larger woody debris will be placed to fill the area where soil was removed and assist with naturalization.

Prepared by (Name & Title): Tate Connor, Giant Mountain Wilderness Land Manager Date: 8/21/2024
Phone: (518) 897-1283

Approvals:

Comments:



Regional Program Manager
Date: 1/16/2025



Regional Director
Date: 10/28/2025



On Behalf of the Division Director
Date: 7/8/2025

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"/>	Tate Connor	2004 GMWA UMP
	Tree Cutting	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tate Connor	Approved via this work plan
	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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tate Connor	Submitted 9-4/24 with Draft
	Commissioner (aircraft,motorized equipment)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tate Connor	Submitted 9-4-24 with Draft
	Flight Request	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tate Connor	To be requested upon approval
	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"/>		
	APA Wetlands Permit	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
	Corps. of Engineers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input 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"/>		

FOREST PRESERVE WORK PLAN TREE TALLY

Project Name: Giant Lean-to

State Land Unit: Giant Mountain Wilderness Area

County: Essex

Town: Keene

Date Talled: 12/6/23

Talled By: T. Connor

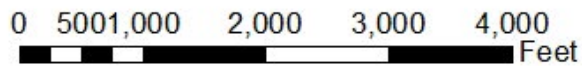
Species	Diameter														Total	
	1 to 3	4	6	8	10	12	14	16	18	20	22	24	26	28		30
P. Birch	2				1	1										4
Aspen	3					1										4
Striped Maple	25	3														28
Balsam Fir	14	1	1		1											17
Total	44	4	1		2	2										53

Note: 1"- 3" size class are trees from 1.0" to 2.9" DBH. 4" size class are trees from 3.0" to 4.9". 6" size class are trees from 5.0" to 6.9".



Giant Lean-to Replacement

Giant Mountain Wilderness Area





New York State
Department of Environmental Conservation

Division of Lands & Forests
Region 5

Unit Management Plan

Giant Mountain Wilderness Area
Towns of Elizabethtown and Keene

Boquet River Primitive Area
Town of Elizabethtown

Essex County, New York

January 2004

Lead Agency:
New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
625 Broadway
Albany, NY 12233-4254

Prior to the advent of light-weight backpack tents, lean-tos were erected for user convenience and to provide shelter from inclement weather. The structures were often built immediately adjacent to trails and close to water and firewood sources. They were sometimes clustered in scenic areas to accommodate increased visitor demand and to facilitate maintenance. Many were afforded stone and concrete fireplaces, pit privies, and picnic tables.

During the summer season, lean-to sites are generally dominated by novice users and/or large groups. Many do not bring tents or possess adequate camping gear. This lack of proper equipment and personal shelter causes serious safety problems when the lean-tos are full and visitors are forced to seek shelter elsewhere.

The APSLMP acknowledges lean-tos as conforming structures in units classified as Wilderness, provided they meet minimum setback distances (100 ft.) from water and have proper sight and sound separation distances from adjoining campsites or other lean-tos (APSLMP 2001, Page 21.).

The GMWC presently has only one lean-to.

Objectives:

- Limit lean-tos to appropriate locations as prescribed by the APSLMP.

Management Actions:

- Any future lean-to(s) will be set back a minimum distance of 100 feet or more from the water as required by the APSLMP. This same minimum setback will also apply to trails where feasible.
- The maximum capacity of a lean-to site (including associated tent camping) shall not exceed 8 persons.
- Communicate any facility changes to the public through the media, the Unit's information and education programs, trailhead messages, and personal contact.
- No new lean-tos are proposed at this time. Should the Department decide to make any such proposal, it will be done as an amendment to this UMP.

SANITATION

Present Conditions:

Improper waste disposal can affect the environment and the health and safety of wilderness visitors. Most overnight use is concentrated around lakes and streams. As use increases, water quality protection becomes increasingly important. Some hikers have reported contraction of protozoan parasitic diseases, such as giardiasis, from contaminated drinking water sources. Improper disposal of human waste in the backcountry, coupled with high concentrations of users, compounds this problem. Soaps, shampoos, and other wastes affect the delicate chemical/biological balance of area waters. Soap suds and leftover food scraps can be found on the shores of many lakes and streams.

Public cooperation with the "pack it out" policy for litter removal has helped considerably. However, litter still remains a problem in some areas, i.e. trailhead parking facilities, popular campsite and lean-to locations, and in fire rings. Broken glass and unburned refuse take much expense, time to clean-up and are a safety risk to Department staff and volunteers cleaning up these areas.

Proper human waste disposal is of critical importance in regularly visited places. DEC uses pit privies (outhouses) in areas where use levels are usually high and adequate dispersal of "catholes" - buried